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 96 E/01)

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Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001225/12
alla Commissione
Antonio Cancian (PPE) e Giovanni La Via (PPE)
(9 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Controllo sull'utilizzo dei finanziamenti della BCE agli istituti di credito privati

La Banca centrale europea finanzia gli istituti di credito privati al tasso favorevole dell'1 %, e questo apre la strada a tre scenari possibili:

1. gli istituti di credito privati procedono ad una ricapitalizzazione come da obbligo imposto dall'Autorità bancaria europea (European Banking Authority);

2. gli istituti di credito privati investono il denaro ottenuto al tasso dell'1 % acquistando titoli di stato che corrispondono interessi a tassi molto più elevati (fino al 7 %);

3. gli istituti di credito privati finanziano le aziende e le famiglie evitando il credit crunch in un momento così delicato.

Il terzo scenario — in questo drammatico momento — sembra essere quello preferibile: può, quindi, la Commissione europea indicare come si controllano gli investimenti che gli istituti di credito definiscono utilizzati per finanziare le aziende e le famiglie?

Se la Banca centrale europea non è certa del modo in cui sono utilizzati questi finanziamenti, non ritiene la Commissione che sia opportuno individuare canali alternativi per garantire un utilizzo degli investimenti a favore delle famiglie e delle aziende?

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

Le misure di sostegno rafforzato al credito recentemente lanciate dalla Banca centrale europea (BCE) sono finalizzate a sostenere le attività di prestito delle banche e la liquidità nei mercati monetari dell'area dell'euro. La BCE non pone condizioni sul modo in cui utilizzare i crediti. Spetta alle banche interessate decidere come utilizzare questi prestiti, in funzione di valutazioni relative ai rischi ed ai rendimenti.

Le operazioni di rifinanziamento a lungo termine (LTRO) effettuate dalla BCE nel dicembre 2011 e nel febbraio 2012, insieme alle modifiche dei requisiti di ammissibilità delle garanzie, hanno avuto un impatto iniziale positivo sul sistema bancario in quanto hanno compensato per le banche l'impossibilità di accedere al finanziamento all'ingrosso o interbancario e hanno ridotto i rischi di liquidità. 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. Tuttavia, queste misure di per sé non garantiscono l'afflusso di credito all'economia reale. Occorre che le banche con problemi di bilancio compiano significativi sforzi di ristrutturazione che dovrebbero avere come conseguenza un settore bancario meglio capitalizzato e più resiliente e migliorare ulteriormente le condizioni per l'afflusso del credito alle imprese e alle famiglie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001225/12
to the Commission
Antonio Cancian (PPE) and Giovanni La Via (PPE)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: Monitoring of the use of ECB funds by private credit institutions

The European Central Bank finances private credit institutions at a favourable rate of 1 %, and this opens the way for three possible scenarios:

1. Private credit institutions recapitalise, as they are required to do by the European Banking Authority;

2. Private credit institutions invest the money obtained at a rate of 1 % by purchasing government bonds that pay out interest at much higher rates (up to 7 %);

3. Private credit institutions finance businesses and households to avoid any worsening of the credit crunch at this time of economic crisis.

The third scenario seems preferable in the current dramatic economic climate. Can the Commission indicate, therefore, how investments by credit institutions which have been declared as being used to finance businesses and households are monitored?

If the European Central Bank is not certain of the manner in which these funds are used, does the Commission not consider it appropriate to identify alternative means to ensure that the investments are used to support households and businesses?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 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.

The longer-term refinancing operations (LTROs) carried out by the ECB in December 2011 and February 2012, together with the changes in collateral eligibility requirements, had an initial positive impact on the banking system as they compensated for banks' lack of access to wholesale or interbank funding and reduced liquidity risks. 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. However, these measures by themselves do not ensure that credit will flow to the real economy. Significant restructuring efforts by banks with weak balance sheets need to be made, which should result in a better capitalised and more resilient banking sector and should further improve the conditions for credit to flow into private companies and households.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001226/12
alla Commissione
Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(14 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Super bonus destinati ai dirigenti delle banche

In tempi di crisi, le famiglie alle prese con le nuove ristrettezze economiche sono particolarmente attente e sensibili ai consumi e agli sprechi. Sfortunatamente la stessa cosa non si può dire di una parte del settore bancario.

Recentemente il Commissario europeo per il mercato interno, Michel Barnier, ha pubblicamente espresso la sua indignazione per il livello dei bonus che alcune banche ancora concedono ai loro dirigenti, nonostante la situazione economica tutt'altro che favorevole. Si tratta di un fatto ancora più inaccettabile se si considera che alcune di queste banche hanno beneficiato di investimenti pubblici.

Tale situazione non è tollerabile in un momento economico simile e richiede una risposta forte. L'Unione europea si è già mossa in passato su questo tema e sappiamo che sono già state avviate procedure di infrazione verso soggetti che non hanno rispettato la normativa europea.

In riferimento a quanto detto sopra, si prega la Commissione di rispondere alle seguenti domande:

1. quali sono i provvedimenti che l'Unione europea prevede di adottare verso coloro che non rispettano la normativa europea?

2. Ha l'Unione europea intenzione di pubblicizzare adeguatamente queste iniziative, onde far capire ai cittadini europei di non essere disinteressata al tema?

Risposta data da Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(19 marzo 2012)

La direttiva 2010/76/CE ([1]) (CRD III) istituisce un quadro normativo che conferisce alle autorità di vigilanza bancaria il potere di applicare e far rispettare una serie di obblighi in tema di politiche remunerative delle banche, tra l'altro in ordine a governo societario, struttura e divulgazione delle informazioni sui bonus. Alle banche beneficiarie di intervento pubblico straordinario sono imposti obblighi particolari, di cui i servizi della Commissione stanno studiando l'attuazione a livello di Stati membri e di autorità nazionali riservandosi di intervenire opportunamente in caso di inosservanza. Nel contempo l'Autorità bancaria europea sta esaminando il rispetto delle sue linee guida in materia e le prassi seguite dalle banche nazionali.

La CRD IV proposta dalla Commissione ([2]) — attualmente in discussione al Parlamento e al Consiglio — prevede ulteriori obblighi di divulgazione delle informazioni sul pagamento di bonus superiori a determinate soglie.

Per ulteriori informazioni la Commissione rimanda l'onorevole parlamentare alle risposte fornite alle interrogazioni scritte E-010790/2011 e E-009912/2011 degli onn. Chountis e De Rossa ([3]).

La Commissione seguirà da vicino sia l'applicazione degli obblighi di legge vigenti sia l'evoluzione delle prassi remunerative delle banche e non esiterà a proporre gli ulteriori interventi che si rendessero necessari.

([1]) Direttiva 2010/76/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 24 novembre 2010 , che modifica le direttive 2006/48/CE e 2006/49/CE per quanto riguarda i requisiti patrimoniali per il portafoglio di negoziazione e le ricartolarizzazioni e il riesame delle politiche remunerative da parte delle autorità di vigilanza — Testo rilevante ai fini del SEE, GU L 329 del 14.12.2010, pagg. 3-35.
([2]) COM(2011)453 definitivo.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=IT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001226/12
to the Commission
Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Super-bonuses for bank managers

In times of crisis, families struggling with the new economic squeeze are particularly careful about, and aware of, what they consume and waste. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of part of the banking sector.

The European Commissioner for the internal market, Michel Barnier, has recently publicly expressed his indignation at the levels of bonuses that some banks continue to award their managers, despite the entirely unfavourable economic situation. This situation is all the more unacceptable in that some of these banks have benefited from public investment and it cannot be tolerated in a similar economic context. It therefore requires a strong response. The European Union has already acted on this matter in the past and we know that infringement proceedings have already been initiated against parties which have not complied with European legislation.

With reference to the above, would the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What measures does the European Union plan to take with regard to those who fail to comply with European legislation?

2. Does the European Union intend to publicise these measures in an appropriate manner in order to show European citizens that it is taking an interest in the matter?

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

Directive 2010/76/EC ([1]) ('CRD III') establishes a regulatory framework which empowers banking supervisors to apply and enforce a range of requirements on the remuneration policies of banks, including with regard to the governance, structure and disclosure of bonuses. Particular requirements apply to banks which benefit from exceptional government intervention. The Commission services are examining the implementation of these requirements in the Member States and by national authorities and will take appropriate action if non-compliance is detected. At the same time, the European Banking Authority (EBA) is examining the compliance with its guidelines on this matter and practices applied by national banks.

The Commission's 'CRD IV' proposal ([2]) currently under discussion in the Parliament and Council contains additional disclosure requirements with regard to bonus payments above certain thresholds.

For further details the Commission would also refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-010790/2011 and E-009912/2011 by Mr Chountis and Mr De Rossa ([3]).

The Commission will carefully follow both the application of the existing legal requirements and the development of banks' remuneration practices and will not hesitate to propose further action as necessary.

([1]) Directive 2010/76/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2010 amending Directives 2006/48/EC and 2006/49/EC as regards capital requirements for the trading book and for re-securitisations, and the supervisory review of remuneration policies (Text with EEA relevance), OJ L 329, 14.12.2010, p. 3-35.
([2]) COM(2011) 453 final.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001227/12
à la Commission
Agnès Le Brun (PPE)
(9 février 2012)

Objet: Normes minimales relatives à la protection des porcs

Le 1er janvier 2013, la directive 2001/88/CE, établissant des normes minimales relatives à la protection des porcs, entrera en vigueur dans l'ensemble de l'Union européenne. Elle prévoit notamment des règles visant à améliorer le bien-être des truies gestantes.

Selon un rapport de Rabobank, seules 40 exploitations sur 100 sont pour l'instant aux normes de la directive. Une majorité d'observateurs estiment que de nombreuses exploitations ne seront toujours pas aux normes à la date butoir de mise en œuvre de la directive.

Considérant que la plupart des principaux pays producteurs de porcs sont concernés par ces retards, il semble qu'il soit nécessaire de trouver une solution au niveau européen.

1. La Commission considère-t-elle également qu'il y aura des retards dans la mise en œuvre de la directive 2001/88/CE? Dispose-t-elle d'études lui permettant d'évaluer la situation?

2. Si ces retards sont avérés, notamment dans leur ampleur, la Commission envisage-t-elle d'accorder un délai supplémentaire pour la pleine mise en œuvre de la directive?

Réponse donnée par M. Dalli au nom de la Commission
(2 mars 2012)

C'est avant tout aux États membres qu'il incombe d'appliquer la directive relative à la protection des porcs ([1]). La Commission, elle, s'informe régulièrement de l'avancement de la mise en application des dispositions en matière de conduite en groupe des truies dans les États membres. D'après les informations fournies jusqu'à présent par vingt-cinq États membres, trois de ceux-ci sont déjà aux normes et onze autres, parmi lesquels de grands producteurs de porcs, le seront d'ici au 1er janvier 2013.

La Commission s'emploie depuis plusieurs années avec les États membres et les parties prenantes à veiller à l'introduction progressive des mesures nécessaires en matière de conduite en groupe des truies. Pour 2012, il existe déjà un plan d'action. La Commission use de tous les moyens à sa disposition pour contraindre les États membres à se mettre en conformité avec la législation pour le 1er janvier 2013.

La Commission n'a pas l'intention de proposer un report de la date butoir précitée. Les États membres ont bénéficié d'une période transitoire pour appliquer ces dispositions. Un report créerait une situation de concurrence déloyale pour les producteurs qui ont déjà investi pour se mettre en conformité avec la législation de l'Union sur le bien-être des animaux dans le délai imparti. La Commission engagera des procédures d'infraction contre les États membres qui ne seront pas aux normes le 1er janvier 2013.

([1]) Directive 2008/120/CE du Conseil établissant les normes minimales relatives à la protection des porcs (JO L 47 du 18.2.2009, p. 5), qui codifie la directive 2001/88/CE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001227/12
to the Commission
Agnès Le Brun (PPE)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: Minimum standards for the protection of pigs

On 1 January 2013, Directive 2001/88/EC laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs will come into force across the European Union. In particular, it lays down rules designed to improve the welfare of pregnant sows.

According to a Rabobank report, only 40 in 100 holdings currently comply with the directive's standards. Most observers believe that many holdings will still not comply with these standards before the deadline for the implementation of the directive.

As most of the main pork-producing countries are affected by these delays, it seems a solution at European level is required.

1. Does the Commission also believe there will be delays in the implementation of Directive 2001/88/EC? Does it have any studies enabling it to assess the situation?

2. If these delays, and particularly their extent, are confirmed, does the Commission plan to grant an extension for the full implementation of the directive?

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

Member States are primarily responsible for the implementation of the directive on the protection of pigs ([1]). The Commission is monitoring regularly the state of implementation of group housing of sows in the Member States. From the data received so far from 25 Member States, three Member States already comply and eleven Member States, among them major pig producers, will comply by 1 January 2013.

The Commission has been working for several years with Member States and stakeholders to ensure a progressive implementation of group housing of sows. For 2012, an implementation plan is already in place. The Commission is using all the tools at its disposal to push Member States to reach compliance by 1 January 2013.

The Commission does not intend to propose postponing the legal deadline of 1 January 2013 for the implementation of group housing of sows. A long transitional period was granted to allow Member States to implement this measure. Postponing the legal deadline would create a situation of unfair competition for those producers who already invested to comply with EU animal welfare legislation on time. The Commission will launch infringement procedures against non-compliant Member States as of 1 January 2013.

([1]) Council Directive 2008/120/EC laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs, OJ L 47, 18.2.2009, p. 5 codifies Directive 2001/88/EC.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001228/12
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(9 februari 2012)

Betreft: Bijensterfte — Betrokken pesticides

De afgelopen jaren is er veel te doen geweest over de achteruitgang van het bijenbestand in Europa en in andere delen van de wereld. Het is de Europese Commissie zelf die in haar communicatie van 2010 (COM(2010)0714) het Europees Parlement en de Europese Raad op de mogelijke gevolgen daarvan wees. In dit debat wordt vaak spontaan de link gelegd met de aanwezigheid van pesticiden in ons leefmilieu.

Recent is er een belangwekkende wetenschappelijke ontwikkeling wat dit betreft. Er wordt naar verluidt in nog niet gepubliceerd onderzoek van Dr. Jeff Pettis van het USDA Bee Research Laboratory in Beltsville (US), waar de Britse krant The Independent de hand op kon leggen, aangetoond dat neonicotinoïde pesticides mede de oorzaak zijn van de onnatuurlijk hoge bijensterfte. Zo is er bijvoorbeeld Imidacloprid, een nicotinederivaat (door Bayer Crop Sciences op de markt gebracht onder namen zoals Gaucho, Admire, Merit, Advantage, Confidor, Provado en Winner) waarnaar in de hierboven vermelde publicatie expliciet verwezen wordt.

Gezien het belang van bijen voor het behoud van onze biodiversiteit, maar ook voor de economie — bijen bestuiven het overgrote deel van alle planten die we voor consumptie telen — is het noodzakelijk dat we de nodige maatregelen nemen tegen de achteruitgang van de bijen.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de recente conclusies van Dr. Pettis en zo ja, hoe worden deze beoordeeld?

2. Heeft de Commissie plannen om pesticiden die specifiek genoemd worden als potentieel schadelijk voor bijen, zoals Imidacloprid, Clothianidin, Thiamethoxam, e.a. van de markt te laten halen of om dit te doen met neonicotinoïde pesticiden in het algemeen?

3. Voorziet de Commissie zelf nu al in (financiering van) onderzoek naar bijensterfte? Zo ja, kan de Commissie een overzicht geven van de betrokken studies?

Antwoord van de heer Dalli namens de Commissie
(20 maart 2012)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van het door het geachte Parlementslid genoemde wetenschappelijke artikel. Het onderzoek van Jeffrey Pettis en zijn collega's is inmiddels gepubliceerd ([1]).

De Commissie heeft Duitsland, dat was belast met de oorspronkelijke beoordeling van imidacloprid, gevraagd om commentaar op de resultaten van het gepubliceerde onderzoek en zet dit onderzoek op de agenda van een van de eerstkomende vergaderingen van het Permanent Comité voor de voedselketen en de diergezondheid.

De goedkeuring van een stof kan worden herzien naar aanleiding van negatieve signalen uit de praktijk of wetenschappelijk onderzoek. In dit stadium is een verbod op imidacloprid en/of andere neonicotinoïden echter niet gerechtvaardigd.

([1]) Pesticide exposure in honey bees results in increased levels of the gut pathogen Nosema.Pettis JS, Vanengelsdorp D, Johnson J, Dively G. Naturwissenschaften feb. 2012; 99(2):153-8. Epub 13 jan. 2012.

De Commissie geeft financiële steun aan verscheidene onderzoeksprojecten op het gebied van bijen. Het project Bee Doc [2] is toegespitst op plagen en ziekten bij honingbijen en op het kwantificeren van de gevolgen van interacties tussen parasieten, ziekteverwekkers en bestrijdingsmiddelen voor de sterfte van honingbijen. Het project is specifiek gericht op subletale en chronische blootstelling aan bestrijdingsmiddelen, en onderzoekt welke invloed de bijenhouderspraktijken op de gezondheid van de bijenkolonies hebben. Ook is er het project STEP [3], waarin wordt gekeken naar de aard en de mate van de achteruitgang van zowel wilde als gedomesticeerde bestuivers. Bovendien is er het op het mkb gerichte project Cleanhive [4], dat diagnose-instrumenten voor *Nosema* spp. ontwikkelt die zijn aangepast aan de behoeften van de bijenhouders. In totaal bedraagt het door de EU uitgetrokken budget voor de bijengezondheid in het zevende kaderprogramma voor onderzoek ongeveer 10 miljoen euro. Tot slot heeft de COST-actie COLOSS [5] een netwerk van onderzoekers en belanghebbenden in heel Europa opgebouwd om de ontwikkelingen in het verlies aan bijenkolonies te volgen en de krachten van de deelnemers aan nationale onderzoeksprogramma's te bundelen.

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(2) http://www.bee-doc.eu/
(3) www.step-project.net
(4) http://cleanhive.cric-projects.com/
(5) http://www.coloss.org/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001228/12
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: Bee mortality linked to pesticides

There has been much ado in recent years about the decline in the bee population in Europe and other parts of the world. The European Commission has itself highlighted the possible consequences of this decline in its 2010 communication (COM(2010)0714) to the European Parliament and the Council. This debate often generates spontaneous references to the presence of pesticides in our environment.

Compelling scientific evidence has recently emerged in this connection. According to reports, a study, not yet published, by Dr Jeff Pettis of the USDA Bee Research Laboratory in Beltsville (US), obtained by the British newspaper, *The Independent*, shows that neonicotinoid pesticides are contributing to the unnaturally high mortality among bees. Thus, the aforesaid publication refers explicitly to a nicotine derivative called imidacloprid (sold by Bayer Crop Sciences under such trade names as Gaucho, Admire, Merit, Advantage, Confidor, Provado and Winner).

Given the importance of bees for the conservation of our biodiversity as well as for the economy — bees pollinate the majority of all the plants grown for our consumption — it is imperative that we take the necessary measures against the decline of the bee population.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the recent findings of Dr Pettis and, if so, how does it assess them?

2. Does the Commission intend to have the pesticides which are specifically described as being potentially harmful to bees, such as imidacloprid, clothianidin, thiamethoxam et al, removed from the market or to do this with regard to neonicotinoid pesticides in general?

3. Is the Commission itself currently financing research into bee mortality? If so, can the Commission provide an overview of the research involved?

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

The Commission is aware of the scientific article the Honourable Member refers to. The research from Jeffrey Pettis and colleagues has, in the meantime been published ([1]).

The Commission asked Germany, which was in charge of the original assessment of imidacloprid, to provide their views on the results listed in the published research and will raise it for discussion in a forthcoming meeting of the Standing Committee of the Food Chain and Animal Health.

The approval of a substance may be reconsidered in the light of adverse evidence revealed by experience or scientific research. However, at this stage, a ban of imidacloprid and/or other neonicotinoids is not justified.

The Commission is providing financial support to several research projects on bees. The Bee Doc project ([2]) is looking at honeybee pests and diseases and quantifying the impact of interactions between parasites, pathogens and pesticides on honeybee mortality. The project specifically addresses sub lethal and chronic exposure to pesticides and screens how apicultural practices affect colony health. There is also the STEP project ([3]) looking at the nature and extent of decline in both wild and domesticated pollinators. In addition an SME-targeted project CLEANHIVE ([4]) is developing diagnostic tools for *Nosema spp*. adapted to the needs of beekeepers. In total the EU budget dedicated to bee health research amounts to approximately EUR 10 million in the Seventh Research Framework Programme. Finally the COLOSS ([5]) COST action has built up a network of researchers and stakeholders across Europe to follow the evolution of colony losses and to join forces of participants in national research programmes.

([1]) Pesticide exposure in honey bees results in increased levels of the gut pathogen Nosema. Pettis JS, Vanengelsdorp D, Johnson J, Dively G. Naturwissenschaften. 2012 Feb;99(2):153-8. Epub 2012 Jan 13.
([2]) http://www.bee-doc.eu/.
([3]) www.step-project.net.
([4]) http://cleanhive.cric-projects.com/.
([5]) http://www.coloss.org/.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-001229/12
za Komisijo
Romana Jordan Cizelj (PPE)
(9. februar 2012)

Zadeva: Tretje poročilo o o uporabi finančnih sredstev, namenjenih za razgradnjo jedrskih elektrarn ter izrabljenega jedrskega goriva in jedrskih odpadkov

Cilj EU na področju energetike je njen trajnostni razvoj ter zmanjšanje izvozne odvisnosti. Jedrska energija je nizkoogljični in cenovno konkurenčen vir energije. Glavno vodilo pri uporabi jedrske energije je načelo „varnost na prvem mestu" (safety first principle). Varnost poleg varnega obratovanja jedrskih elektrarn pomeni tudi varno ravnanje z jedrskimi odpadki ter njihovo varno odlaganje in razgradnjo.

Evropska komisija je leta 2006 v svojem Priporočilu o upravljanju finančnih sredstev za razgradnjo jedrskih objektov, izrabljenega goriva in radioaktivnih odpadkov (2006/851/Euratom) pozvala, da morajo imeti države članice za razgradnjo jedrskih elektrarn ter za ravnanje z jedrskimi odpadki in izrabljenim jedrskim gorivom na voljo posebna finančna sredstva, ki se morajo uporabljati transparentno in namensko. Pri vsem tem naj bi se upoštevalo tudi načelo onesnaževalec plača. Komisija v tem okviru ter v okviru svojih pristojnosti iz Pogodbe Euratom vsako leto objavi poročilo o zbiranju finančnih sredstev, namenjenih za razgradnjo jedrskih elektrarn ter izrabljenega jedrskega goriva in jedrskih odpadkov. Doslej je pripravila že dve takšni poročili, prvega leta 2004 in drugega leta 2007.

Ljudje pri uporabi jedrske energije kot enega ključnih problemov največkrat izpostavljajo problem odlaganja jedrskih odpadkov in razgradnje. Zaradi zaupanja ljudi je pomembno, da imajo na voljo ustrezne informacije o zbiranju finančnih sredstev v te namene, zato Komisijo sprašujem:

1. Kdaj bo pripravila tretje poročilo o zbiranju finančnih sredstev, namenjenih za razgradnjo jedrskih elektrarn ter izrabljenega jedrskega goriva in jedrskih odpadkov?

2. Ali namerava na osnovi doslej zbranih informacij pripraviti kakšne nove aktivnosti na področju zbiranja finančnih sredstev, namenjenih za razgradnjo jedrskih elektrarn ter izrabljenega jedrskega goriva in jedrskih odpadkov?

Odgovor komisarja Oettingerja v imenu Komisije
(27. februar 2012)

1. Tretje poročilo o uporabi finančnih sredstev za razgradnjo jedrskih elektrarn ter gospodarjenje z izrabljenim gorivom in radioaktivnimi odpadki naj bi bilo sprejeto konec junija 2012.

2. Rezultati za Komisijo (only in the heading)ne ocene bodo podlaga za nadaljnje dejavnosti na tem področju, s katerimi se bodo zagotovila ustrezna finančna sredstva, ko bo to potrebno.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001229/12
to the Commission
Romana Jordan (PPE)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: Third report on the use of financial resources intended for the decommissioning of nuclear power plants and the management of nuclear spent fuel and nuclear waste

The EU's objective in the energy field is to achieve sustainable development of the energy sector and a reduction in its dependence on imports. Nuclear power is a low-carbon source of energy and one which is competitively priced. The guiding principle in the use of nuclear energy is 'safety first'. In addition to the safe operation of nuclear power plants, safety also means safe management of nuclear waste and its safe disposal and decommissioning.

In 2006, in its Recommendation on the management of financial resources for the decommissioning of nuclear installations, spent fuel and radioactive waste (2006/851/Euratom), the Commission called on the Member States to earmark special financial resources for the purpose of decommissioning nuclear power plants and the management of nuclear waste and nuclear spent fuel, and to ensure that such activities are managed in a transparent way and used only for the said purpose. In all this, the 'polluter pays' principle needs to be observed. In this context and within its powers under the Euratom Treaty, the Commission publishes annual reports on the earmarking of funds for the decommissioning of nuclear power plants and the management of nuclear spent fuel and nuclear waste. So far it has produced two such reports, the first in 2004 and the second in 2007.

When it comes to the use of nuclear energy, people mostly stress the disposal of nuclear waste and decommissioning as the key problems. In order to maintain people's confidence, it is important that they are given appropriate information on the earmarking of funds for these purposes. I would therefore ask the Commission:

1. When will it draw up a third report on the earmarking of financial resources for the decommissioning of nuclear power plants and management of nuclear spent fuel and nuclear waste?

2. Does it intend, on the basis of information it has gathered previously, to undertake any new activities with a view to earmarking financial resources for the decommissioning of nuclear power plants and management of nuclear spent fuel and nuclear waste?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2012)

1. The third report on the use of financial resources earmarked for decommissioning and the management of spent fuel and radioactive waste is expected to be adopted by the end of June 2012.

2. The outcome of the Commission's assessment will be the basis for further activities in this domain, with a view to making sure that adequate financial resources will be available when required.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001231/12
to the Commission
Kay Swinburne (ECR)
(8 February 2012)

Subject: Volcker rule on trading and market-making activities

It seems that the current draft of the US Volcker rule preventing US banks from proprietary trading seeks to exclude US Treasuries and other US government debt from the proprietary capital rules. However, it does not seem to include equivalent exemptions for non-US sovereign debt.

In order to comply with the Volcker framework, it would seem that many US and international investors with US branches may be prevented from investing in the EU sovereign debt markets, owing to the regulatory reach beyond US markets.

These rules, as they are currently being considered, could severely impact on EU sovereign debt markets, which could lead to a significant loss of liquidity, as both US and other international banks may no longer be able to invest.

Is the Commission intending, on behalf of EU-regulated banks and financial institutions, to raise an objection before the consultation deadline of 13 February 2012?

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

The Honourable Member refers to the consultation by a number of US regulators on 'Prohibitions and Restrictions on Proprietary Trading and Certain Interests In, and Relationships with, Hedge Funds and Private Equity Funds', implementing Section 619 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act ('Dodd-Frank Act'). The consultation period has been extended to 13 February 2012.

The Commission has intensively discussed the draft regulation with the US authorities in the context of its Regulatory dialogue and in specific bilateral discussions. These contacts have confirmed that the current draft regulation could raise a number of concerns related to its scope, to the narrowness of the exemptions as well as the discriminatory provisions on sovereign bonds and on foreign asset management funds. The Commission raised these concerns in its formal response to the US consultation and continues to do so in its ongoing discussions with the US authorities in order to find an agreeable solution to these issues.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001232/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(10 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ενίσχυση της απασχόλησης και της ανάπτυξης μέσω των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων

Η οικονομική κρίση έχει μετατραπεί, για την ΕΕ, σε κοινωνική κρίση και κρίση της απασχόλησης. Σε αυτή την κατεύθυνση, και δεδομένων των υψηλών ποσοστών ανεργίας που σημειώνουν κάποια κράτη μέλη, αλλά και του ευρωπαϊκού μέσου όρου που δεν παρουσιάζεται ικανοποιητικός, η ΕΕ στο πλαίσιο της Στρατηγικής για την ερχόμενη δεκαετία «Ευρώπη 2020» φαίνεται να θέτει ιδιαίτερα υψηλούς στόχους για την αύξηση της απασχόλησης και την ενίσχυση της βιώσιμης ανάπτυξης γενικότερα. Κεντρικό μοχλό σε αυτή την προσπάθεια τόνωσης της απασχόλησης — μέσω ενεργητικών και παθητικών πολιτικών απασχόλησης (ενίσχυσης της πρόσβασης στην κατάρτιση και την εκπαίδευση, δημιουργίας νέων και ποιοτικών θέσεων εργασίας, αποτελεσματικής αντιμετώπισης και πρόληψης της ανεργίας κ.λπ.) — διαδραματίζουν τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία και πιο συγκεκριμένα τα κονδύλια που διατίθενται για τη συγχρηματοδότηση πολιτικών που εξυπηρετούν αυτό το στόχο.

Με βάση τα παραπάνω ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πόσα χρήματα από τον ευρωπαϊκό προϋπολογισμό διατέθηκαν για την ενίσχυση της απασχόλησης και της ανάπτυξης για το 2011; Πόσα από αυτά τα χρήματα τελικώς χρησιμοποιήθηκαν και πόσα έμειναν αδιάθετα; Με ποιό τρόπο θα αξιοποιηθεί το αδιάθετο ποσό;

2. Ποιά τα ποσοστά απορροφητικότητας των κρατών μελών αναφορικά με κονδύλια που σχετίζονται με την προαγωγή της απασχόλησης και την καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας; Πού οφείλονται οι διαφορές που παρουσιάζουν;

3. Δεδομένου ότι κάποια κράτη μέλη όπως η Ελλάδα παρουσιάζουν ιδιαίτερα υψηλά ποσοστά ανεργίας, υπήρξε η πρέπουσα αξιοποίηση των διαθέσιμων πόρων, και αν όχι για ποιό λόγο;

4. Ποιά πιστεύει ότι αποτελούν προσκόμματα για την αποτελεσματική και επαρκή αξιοποίηση των σχετικών κονδυλίων; Προτίθεται να συνδράμει τα κράτη μέλη, και με ποιό τρόπο ώστε να βελτιώσουν τα ποσοστά απορροφητικότητάς τους;

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

1. Τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία είναι τα κύρια μέσα για την απασχόληση και την ανάπτυξη, το δε Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο (ΕΚΤ) είναι το κύριο μέσο για την αύξηση της απασχολησιμότητας των εργαζομένων. Το 2011 ο προβλεπόμενος προϋπολογισμός για πληρωμές από το ΕΚΤ ήταν 7,69 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ και στην πραγματικότητα πληρώθηκαν 9,52 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ. Τα αδιάθετα ποσά του προϋπολογισμού που αναφέρονται σε πρόσφατες ανακοινώσεις αφορούν τον συνολικό προϋπολογισμό της περιόδου 2007-2013, όπου περίπου 22 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ από το ΕΚΤ παραμένουν αδιάθετα. Μετά το άτυπο Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο της 30/1/2012, πραγματοποιήθηκαν διμερείς συνεδριάσεις μεταξύ οκτώ κρατών μελών και της Επιτροπής προκειμένου να συζητηθούν τρόποι επιτάχυνσης της χρήσης των ταμείων ([1]).

2. Οι λεπτομέρειες των ποσών από το ΕΚΤ που δεν διατέθηκαν στα κράτη μέλη παρατίθενται σε παράρτημα το οποίο διαβιβάζεται απευθείας στον κ. βουλευτή και στη Γραμματεία του Κοινοβουλίου.

3. Οι δυσκολίες κατάλληλης διάθεσης των κονδυλίων ήταν ιδιαίτερα σημαντικές στην Ελλάδα, όπου η χρηματοπιστωτική κρίση ήταν πολύ σοβαρότερη από ό,τι στην υπόλοιπη ΕΕ και είχε διαρθρωτικό χαρακτήρα. Τα κονδύλια χρησιμοποιήθηκαν καταλλήλως προκειμένου να αυξηθεί η απασχολησιμότητα, αλλά τα προγράμματα είχαν καταρτιστεί πριν από την κρίση και την αύξηση της ανεργίας την οποία προκάλεσε. Τα κράτη μέλη έχουν τροποποιήσει τα προγράμματά τους ώστε να προσαρμοστούν στις πρόσφατες ανάγκες των πολιτικών για την απασχόληση.

4. Τα βασικά εμπόδια είναι οι διοικητικές και χρηματοπιστωτικές δυσκολίες σε εθνικό επίπεδο. Οι τροποποιήσεις της σχετικής νομοθεσίας επιτρέπουν στην Επιτροπή να πραγματοποιήσει πληρωμές αυξάνοντας το ποσοστό συγχρηματοδότησης της ΕΕ κατά δέκα ποσοστιαίες μονάδες. Αυτό σημαίνει ότι η εθνική συνεισφορά μπορεί να μειωθεί σε μια χρονική στιγμή κατά την οποία οι εθνικοί προϋπολογισμοί υφίστανται πολύ μεγάλες πιέσεις. Μέχρι τούδε, οι χώρες που επωφελούνται από τον μηχανισμό αυτό είναι η Ελλάδα, η Ιρλανδία, η Πορτογαλία, η Ουγγαρία, η Λετονία και η Ρουμανία.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/12/57&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001232/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Structural Fund support for employment and growth

Now that the economic crisis has developed into a social and employment crisis for the EU, as reflected in the high unemployment of certain Member States and the unsatisfactory average figures for Europe as a whole, the EU, as part of the Europe 2020 strategy for the next decade, is setting itself a number of particularly ambitious objectives for increasing employment and promoting sustainable growth in general. The key role in this attempt to revive employment — through active and passive employment policies (increasing access to training and education, creation of new and good jobs, effectively combating and preventing unemployment etc.) — is played by structural funds and more specifically by the funds available for co-financing policies which serve this purpose.

On this basis, will the Commission say:

1. What EU budget appropriations were earmarked for measures to increase employment and growth in 2011? How much was utilised and how much remained unallocated? How will the unallocated amount be utilised?

2. What are the take-up rates of funding for measures to promote employment and combat unemployment in the various Member States? What are the reasons for the disparities between them?

3. Given that some Member States, such as Greece, have particularly high unemployment rates, were the funds used appropriately and if not, for what reason?

4. Which does it believe are the obstacles to effective and adequate use of these funds? Does it intend to help the Member States to improve their take-up rates and, if so, how?

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

1. The Structural Funds are the main instruments for employment and growth, the European Social Fund (ESF) being the main tool to increase employability of workers. In 2011, the foreseen budget for ESF payments was EUR 7.69 billion and EUR 9.52 billion were actually paid. The unallocated budget refered to in recent communications concerns the overall 2007-13 budget where around EUR 22 billion of ESF funds remain unallocated. Following the Informal European Council of 30.1.2012, bilateral meetings have been held between eight Member States and the Commission to discuss how to accelerate use of the funds ([1]).

2. The detail of ESF uncommitted budget by Member States is in annex, transmitted directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat.

3. Difficulties in using the funds appropriately have been particularly significant in Greece, where the financial crisis has been much more severe than in the rest of the EU and of a structural nature. The Funds have been used appropriately in increasing employability but the programmes were designed before the crisis and its resulting rise in unemployment. Member States have modified their programmes to adapt to the recent needs in employment policies.

4. The main obstacles are administrative and financial difficulties at national level. The modifications to the regulation enable the Commission to make payments by increasing the EU co-financing rate by 10 percentage points. This means that the national contribution can be reduced at a time that national budgets are under extreme pressures. To date, the countries that benefit from this mechanism are Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Hungary, Latvia and Romania.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/12/57&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001233/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(10 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ακριβότερα προϊόντα στην Ελλάδα απ' ότι σε άλλες χώρες της ΕΕ

Σύμφωνα με πρόσφατη έρευνα του υπουργείου Ανάπτυξης, Ανταγωνιστικότητας και Ναυτιλίας της Ελλάδος διαπιστώθηκε ότι στην ελληνική αγορά παρατηρούνται σημαντικά υψηλότερες τιμές στα προϊόντα ευρείας κατανάλωσης σε σχέση με τις αγορές άλλων έξι χωρών της ΕΕ (Γερμανία, Μ. Βρετανία, Γαλλία, Ιταλία, Ισπανία, Βουλγαρία).

Ειδικότερα, από την έρευνα προκύπτει ότι στην Ελλάδα είναι πολύ υψηλότερες οι τιμές σε δημητριακά, απορρυπαντικά, είδη προσωπικής υγιεινής και αναψυκτικά.

Σημειώνεται ότι μεγάλο μέρος τόσο του χονδρικού όσο και του λιανικού εμπορίου διαθέσεως των προϊόντων αυτών προέρχονται από αλυσίδες καταστημάτων που δραστηριοποιούνται ή έχουν την έδρα τους σε άλλες χώρες της ΕΕ. Ιδιαίτερα οι προμηθευτές αυτοί διαθέτουν τα προϊόντα στις υπό σύγκριση χώρες σε χαμηλές τιμές. Θα μπορούσαν λοιπόν να διατεθούν και στην Ελλάδα στις αντίστοιχες τιμές διαθέσεως στις αναφερόμενες χώρες πέραν ενός λογικού κόστους μεταφοράς.

Δεδομένων των ανωτέρω καθώς και της δυσχερούς οικονομικής κατάστασης στην οποία βρίσκεται η Ελλάδα, και της επακόλουθης μείωσης της αγοραστικής δύναμης των πολιτών.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Είναι ενήμερη για αυτήν την έρευνα και με ποιους τρόπους προτίθεται ενδεχομένως να δράσει για να εξασφαλιστεί η τήρηση των κανόνων του ανταγωνισμού με βάση τους κανόνες της ΕΕ;

2. Δεδομένου ότι τα είδη στα οποία καταγράφονται οι υψηλότερες τιμές αφορούν προϊόντα ευρείας κατανάλωσης, ποιά μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει για μεγαλύτερη διαφάνεια στη διαμόρφωση των τιμών ώστε να προστατευτούν οι πολίτες και να μην μειωθεί η αγοραστική τους δύναμη;

Απάντηση του κ. Almunia εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Μαρτίου 2012)

1. Όσον αφορά τα βασικά προϊόντα διατροφής και τα προϊόντα καθημερινής κατανάλωσης, η Επιτροπή επιθυμεί να επισημάνει στο Αξιότιμο Μέλος τη δημόσια διαβούλευση που πραγματοποίησε η ελληνική εθνική αρχή ανταγωνισμού (ΕΑΑ) μεταξύ Δεκεμβρίου 2010 και Μαΐου 2011. Η ελληνική ΕΑΑ είναι σε θέση να προβαίνει σε περαιτέρω δράσεις. Πράγματι, το 2011 διεξήγαγε τομεακή έρευνα στον τομέα των οπωροκηπευτικών με βάση τα αποτελέσματα αυτής της διαβούλευσης.

2. Η Επιτροπή και οι ΕΑΑ θα διερευνήσουν κάθε σοβαρή ένδειξη μη ανταγωνιστικής συμπεριφοράς εντός της ΕΕ, όπως η εφαρμογή διακρίσεων ως προς τις τιμές και ο κατακερματισμός της αγοράς στις ανωτέρω αγορές. Η Επιτροπή και οι ΕΑΑ έχουν παρέμβει στις περιπτώσεις κατά τις οποίες διακυβεύτηκε η πρόσβαση σε ανταγωνιστικές προμήθειες στην αλυσίδα εφοδιασμού τροφίμων εις βάρος οικονομικών φορέων και καταναλωτών κατά παράβαση των άρθρων 101 και 102 της ΣΛΕΕ. Η Επιτροπή καταρτίζει λεπτομερή έκθεση σχετικά με τα πιο σημαντικά μέτρα επιβολής της εφαρμογής, υποστήριξης και παρακολούθησης που έχουν λάβει οι ΕΑΑ και η Επιτροπή τα τελευταία έτη στον τομέα των τροφίμων. Η Επιτροπή θα ενημερώσει το Κοινοβούλιο κατά τη δημοσίευση της έκθεσης εντός του τρέχοντος έτους.

3. Η διαμόρφωση των τιμών εξαρτάται από εξωτερικούς και εσωτερικούς παράγοντες, όπως το κόστος των εισροών, τις δομές της αγοράς και τα κανονιστικά πλαίσια. Οι αγορές τροφίμων εξετάζονται από τις υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής και από ενδιαφερόμενους παράγοντες στο φόρουμ υψηλού επιπέδου για τη βελτίωση της λειτουργίας της αλυσίδας εφοδιασμού τροφίμων, που δημιουργήθηκε το 2010. Επιπλέον, για να αυξηθεί η διαφάνεια και η προβλεψιμότητα των τιμών, η Eurostat εξακολουθεί να αναπτύσσει το μέσο παρακολούθησης των τιμών τροφίμων που τέθηκε σε εφαρμογή το 2009 με σκοπό να καλύψει με τις στατιστικές του, μεταξύ άλλων, πιο λεπτομερή στοιχεία για τις τιμές και μεγαλύτερο αριθμό αλυσίδων εφοδιασμού τροφίμων ([1]).

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/hicp/methodology/prices_data_for_market_monitoring.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001233/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Products more expensive in Greece than in other EU Member States

According to a recent study by the Greek Ministry of Development, Competitiveness and Shipping, mass-market products cost considerably more in Greece than in six other EU countries (Germany, United Kingdom, France, Italy, Spain, Bulgaria).

According to the study, this applies in particular to cereals, detergents, personal hygiene products and soft drinks.

It should be noted that many of these products are traded by wholesale and retail chains with branches or registered offices in other EU Member States, which sell their products relatively cheaply in the other countries mentioned above. They could therefore supply these products to Greece at similar prices with the addition of reasonable transport costs.

In view of this and taking into account Greece's unfavourable economic situation and the resulting loss of the purchasing power of its citizens;

1. Is the Commission aware of this study and what action does it intend to take to ensure compliance with EU competition rules?

2. Given that the most expensive items are mass-market products, what measures does it intend to take to ensure greater pricing transparency to protect consumers and prevent their purchasing power from being eroded?

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

1. With regard to basic nutritional products and products for daily consumption the Commission would like to point out to the Honourable Member the public consultation that the Greek national competition authority (NCA) carried out between December 2010 and May 2011. The Greek NCA is well-placed to carry out any follow-up actions. Indeed it launched in 2011 a sector inquiry in the fruit and vegetables sector on the basis of the results of that consultation.

2. The Commission and NCAs will investigate any serious indications of anticompetitive behaviour such as intra-EU price discrimination and market segmentation in the above markets. The Commission and NCAs have intervened where access to competitive supplies in the food supply chain has been jeopardised to the detriment of operators and consumers in violation of Articles 101 or 102 TFEU. The Commission is preparing a detailed report of the most significant enforcement, advocacy and monitoring actions taken by NCAs and the Commission in recent years in the food sector. The Commission will inform the Parliament of this report when published this year.

3. Price formation depends on external and internal factors, such as the cost of inputs, market structures and regulatory frameworks. Food markets are being examined by Commission services and stakeholders in the High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Food Supply Chain set up in 2010. Furthermore, in order to increase price transparency and predictability Eurostat is continuing to develop the Food Price Monitoring Tool launched in 2009 in order to cover with its statistics, *inter alia*, more detailed price information and a greater number of food chains ([1]).

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/hicp/methodology/prices_data_for_market_monitoring.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001234/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(10 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Κλάδος της μεταποίησης

Πρόσφατη έρευνα καταγράφει πτώση ρεκόρ της παραγωγής και μεγάλη μείωση της απασχόλησης στον τομέα της ελληνικής μεταποίησης.

Οι επιχειρήσεις δυσκολεύονται να αποκτήσουν πρόσβαση σε κεφάλαια κίνησης και οι εταιρείες δεν καταφέρνουν να χρησιμοποιήσουν τα πιστωτικά τους όρια και τους συνήθεις τρόπους πληρωμής προκειμένου να διεξάγουν τις επιχειρηματικές τους δραστηριότητες με ομαλό τρόπο.

Η εξασθένηση των νέων παραγγελιών είχε ως συνέπεια την δραματική μείωση της παραγωγής. Λόγω της μειωμένης παραγωγής, οι ελληνικές επιχειρήσεις συνεχίζουν να απολύουν προσωπικό.

Δεδομένων αφενός, της δυσχερούς οικονομικής συγκυρίας στην οποία έχει περιέλθει η Ελλάδα και αφετέρου του γεγονότος ότι αντίστοιχα προβλήματα παρατηρούνται και σε άλλους τομείς στην πλειοψηφία των κρατών μελών, το πρόβλημα είναι ευρωπαϊκό και χρήζει ευρωπαϊκής αντιμετώπισης.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Με ποιούς συγκεκριμένους τρόπους προτίθεται να ενισχύσει τις επενδύσεις στα κράτη μέλη, ιδιαίτερα για τις μικρομεσαίες επιχειρήσεις που αποτελούν την ραχοκοκαλιά της οικονομικής ανάπτυξης της ΕΕ, στοιχείο απαραίτητο για την ανάπτυξη και την ανταγωνιστικότητα της Ένωσης;

2. Μπορεί να μας δώσει περαιτέρω στοιχεία για το ποιούς μηχανισμούς έχει στην διάθεση της και αν προτίθεται να τους κινητοποιήσει για την χρηματοδότηση του κλάδου της μεταποίησης και την αποφυγή μαζικών απολύσεων;

3. Ποια μέτρα θα λάβει προκειμένου να αναλυθούν και να εναρμονιστούν οι διατάξεις των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ με την κοινοτική οδηγία 75/129 ΕΚ για τις ομαδικές απολύσεις;

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

1. Η βοήθεια προς τις ΜΜΕ της ΕΕ για να ξεπεράσουν την κρίση και να βελτιώσουν την ανταγωνιστικότητά τους είναι σημαντικό στοιχείο της στρατηγικής της Επιτροπής για τη δημιουργία περισσότερων και καλύτερων θέσεων εργασίας. Η υλοποίηση της πρωτοβουλίας «Small Business Act» (SBA) για την Ευρώπη ([1]) και η ανασκόπησή της έχουν επιταχυνθεί με σκοπό να επικεντρωθούν οι προσπάθειες στην πρόσβαση στη χρηματοδότηση και τις αγορές και στη μείωση του διοικητικού φόρτου. Έχει διαμορφωθεί ενισχυμένη διακυβέρνηση, ώστε να εξασφαλιστεί η υλοποίηση των αρχών και των δράσεων της SBA. Η Επιτροπή ενθαρρύνει επίσης τα κράτη μέλη να χρησιμοποιήσουν τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία για να προάγουν την ανάπτυξη των ΜΜΕ και τη δημιουργία θέσεων εργασίας.

2. Σε ό,τι αφορά την καλή διαχείριση των διεργασιών αλλαγής, είναι αναγκαία η αποτελεσματικότερη εφαρμογή των πρακτικών σε θέματα πρόβλεψης, προετοιμασίας και διαχείρισης της αναδιάρθρωσης των επιχειρήσεων σε όλη την ΕΕ. Η Επιτροπή εξέδωσε πρόσφατα πράσινη βίβλο ([2]) για το θέμα αυτό, με την οποία καλεί τους οικονομικούς και κοινωνικούς φορείς, τα κράτη μέλη κα τα ευρωπαϊκά θεσμικά όργανα να υποβάλουν τις προτάσεις τους, προτού δρομολογηθούν νέες πρωτοβουλίες στον τομέα αυτό.

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο (ΕΚΤ) και το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Προσαρμογής στην Παγκοσμιοποίηση μπορούν, επίσης, να διαδραματίσουν έναν υποστηρικτικό ρόλο για τους εργαζομένους που θίγονται από τις αναδιαρθρώσεις, ώστε να διευκολυνθεί η επανένταξή τους στην αγορά εργασίας.

([1]) COM(2008)394 τελικό και COM(2011)78 τελικό αντιστοίχως.
([2]) COM(2012)7 τελικό.

3. Η Επιτροπή έχει αναλύσει την εφαρμογή της οδηγίας 98/59/ΕΚ, με την οποία κωδικοποιείται η εφαρμογή των οδηγιών 75/129/ΕΚ και 92/56/ΕΚ στα κράτη μέλη ([3]). Αξιολογείται η λειτουργία και ο αντίκτυπος της νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ για την ενημέρωση των εργαζομένων και τη διαβούλευση με αυτούς σε εθνικό επίπεδο ([4]). Ωστόσο, εναπόκειται στις αρμόδιες εθνικές αρχές να εξασφαλίζουν ότι οι κανόνες με τους οποίους μεταφέρονται οι οδηγίες στο εθνικό δίκαιο εφαρμόζονται υπό το φως των ειδικών περιστάσεων κάθε περίπτωσης ξεχωριστά.

([3]) Βλέπε: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=707&langId=en&intPageId=215.
([4]) Ειδικότερα, οι οδηγίες 98/59/ΕΚ, 2001/23/ΕΚ και 2002/14/ΕΚ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001234/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Manufacturing sector

A recent study shows a record fall in production and significant job losses in the Greek manufacturing sector.

Businesses are finding it difficult to gain access to working capital and companies are not managing to use their credit lines and usual methods of payment to conduct their operations normally.

The decline in new orders has caused a dramatic decrease in production, as a result of which Greek businesses are continuing to shed their workforce.

Given on the one hand, the unfortunate economic situation of Greece and on the other hand, the fact that similar problems can be seen in other sectors in the majority of Member States, this is a European problem which requires a European response.

In view of this:

1. In what specific ways does the Commission intend to increase investments in Member States, particularly for small and medium-sized undertakings, which are the backbone of EU economic growth and necessary for the development and competitiveness of the EU?

2. Can it provide further information on what instruments it has at its disposal and if it intends to use them for financing the manufacturing sector and avoiding collective redundancies?

3. What measures will it take to ensure that the provisions applicable in the EU Member States are examined carefully and brought into line with Council Directive 75/129 EEC relating to collective redundancies?

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

1. Helping EU SMEs to overcome the crisis and improve their competitiveness is an important element of the Commission's strategy to create more and better jobs. The implementation of the 'Small Business Act' (SBA) and the Review thereof ([1]) have been accelerated, with the focus on the access to finance and markets and the reduction of burdens. Reinforced governance has been set up to ensure the implementation of the SBA principles and actions. The Commission also encourages Member States to use the Structural Funds to promote SMEs growth and to create employment.

2. With regard to sound management of the processes of change, more effective application of best practices in anticipating, preparing for and managing corporate restructuring through the EU is necessary. The Commission recently published a Green Paper ([2]) on this subject, inviting economic and social stakeholders, Member States and the European institutions to submit their contributions before launching new initiatives in this area.

The European Social Fund (ESF) and the Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) can also play a role in supporting workers affected by restructuring, to help them get back into work.

3. The Commission has analysed the implementation of Directive 98/59/EC, which consolidates Directives 75/129/EC and 92/56/EC, in the Member States ([3]). It evaluates the operation and impacts of EU legislation on information and consultation of workers at national level ([4]). It is, however, for the competent national authorities to ensure that the rules transposing the directives are applied in the light of the specific circumstances of individual cases.

([1]) Respectively COM(2008) 394 final and COM(2011) 78 final.
([2]) COM(2012) 7 final.
([3]) See: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=707&langId=en&intPageId=215.
([4]) In particular, Directives 98/59/EC, 2001/23/EC and 2002/14/EC.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001235/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(9 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Negata la libertà su cauzione a un cristiano accusato di «blasfemia» in Pakistan

Il 30 gennaio 2012 l'organizzazione Human Rights Without Frontiers ha riferito che un giovane pakistano di religione cristiana è stato accusato di aver profanato il Corano in base a quanto previsto dalla legge sulla blasfemia vigente in Pakistan, nonostante le scarse prove a carico del giovane.

Il 5 dicembre 2011, Khuram Masih, 23 anni, è stato arrestato nei pressi di Lahore in seguito alle accuse mossegli dal suo padrone di casa, secondo il quale Masih avrebbe utilizzato pagine del Corano per preparare il tè. Masih sostiene invece che le accuse contro di lui sono false e che a spingere il padrone di casa ad accusarlo è in realtà un litigio sull'affitto avvenuto tra i due. La sezione 295-B della legge in materia di blasfemia prevede che la profanazione volontaria del Corano o l'utilizzo di un suo estratto in maniera offensiva siano punibili con l'ergastolo. Il giudice incaricato del caso ha rifiutato di concedere la libertà provvisoria su cauzione, adducendo a motivo la «delicatezza» del caso e il fatto che tale concessione avrebbe alimentato accesi sentimenti religiosi e causato «gravi inconvenienti». Attualmente, si stanno compiendo notevoli sforzi perché del caso di Masih si occupi la Corte Suprema di Lahore, dopo che i precedenti avvocati del giovane hanno delegato il compito a un nuovo avvocato.

Asif Aqeel, direttore esecutivo dell'Iniziativa per lo sviluppo delle comunità (Community Development Initiative, CDI), ha sottolineato che chi viene accusato di blasfemia «è costretto a passare diversi mesi o addirittura anni in carcere senza vedersi concessa la libertà provvisoria su cauzione, soltanto perché i giudici non vogliono mettere a rischio la propria vita sfidando i fondamentalisti religiosi».

Riguardo al problema delle leggi in materia di blasfemia vigenti in Pakistan, l'Alto Rappresentante ha rilasciato una dichiarazione dopo l'assassinio del ministro pakistano delle minoranze, Shahbaz Bhatti, in cui «richiede alle autorità pakistane di fare tutto il possibile per garantire la protezione di coloro che nel governo e nella società civile si sono pronunciati su questi temi, e di assicurare alla giustizia i responsabili di questo crimine».

1. È l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente a conoscenza del caso di Khuram Masih?

2. Quali iniziative è disposto l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente a intraprendere per persuadere le autorità pakistane a incoraggiare le autorità giudiziarie di Lahore, viste le scarse prove a carico dell'indiziato, a concedere la libertà provvisoria su cauzione al signor Masih?

3. Secondo il rappresentante dell'UE in Pakistan, quali progressi, se ve ne sono stati, sono stati compiuti dal governo pakistano dall'assassinio di Shahbaz Bhatti e del governatore della provincia del Punjab, Salmaan Taseer, nella revisione delle leggi in materia di blasfemia vigenti in Pakistan, dal momento che molti segnalano che tali leggi vengono invocate per regolare questioni personali?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ringrazia l'onorevole parlamentare per aver richiamato la sua attenzione su questo caso.

L'Unione europea ha ripetutamente sollevato con il governo del Pakistan il problema della costante applicazione della legge sulla blasfemia nell'ambito del dialogo sui diritti umani e continuerà a farlo. L'UE è dell'avviso che, nella sua forma attuale, la legge sulla blasfemia possa dar luogo ad abusi e ha invitato il governo pakistano a modificarne gli aspetti più controversi; ritiene inoltre che il Pakistan dovrebbe prendere seriamente in considerazione la completa abrogazione della legge sulla blasfemia e della pena di morte.

L'Unione ha ribadito la propria posizione più di recente il 7 febbraio 2012, in sede di commissione mista con il Pakistan. In futuro, nell'ambito del piano d'impegno quinquennale UE-Pakistan recentemente adottato, si dovrebbe intensificare il dialogo sui diritti umani e sullo Stato di diritto per garantire un maggiore impegno in settori prioritari.

Per quanto riguarda le autorità giudiziarie, l'UE sostiene progetti gestiti dalla sua delegazione in Pakistan volti a migliorare la qualità dell'applicazione della legge e il funzionamento del sistema giudiziario in Pakistan, iniziando dalle province del Punjab e del Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001235/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Christian in Pakistan charged with 'blasphemy' is denied bail

On 30 January 2012, the organisation Human Rights Without Frontiers reported that a young Pakistani Christian man had been charged with desecrating the Quran under the country's blasphemy law, even though there was scant evidence against him.

On 5 December 2011, 23-year-old Khuram Masih was arrested near Lahore after his landlord accused him of using pages of the Quran to prepare tea. Masih contends that he had been falsely accused in the case because he had had an argument with his landlord over the rent for his house. Section 295-B of the blasphemy law makes wilful desecration of the Quran, or use of an extract in a derogatory manner, punishable with life imprisonment. The judge overseeing the case refused to grant bail on the grounds that the case was 'sensitive', and bail for the accused would fan religious sentiments and cause 'a great mishap'. Efforts are now being made for his case to be heard in the Lahore High Court after his previous lawyers gave power of attorney to a new lawyer.

Asif Aqeel, the executive director of the Community Development Initiative (CDI), noted that those who are accused of blasphemy 'have to spend several months, even years, in jail without bail, just because the judges are unwilling to put their own lives at risk from religious extremists'.

With regard to the problem of Pakistan's blasphemy laws, the High Representative issued a statement after the assassination of the country's Minister of Minorities, Shahbaz Bhatti, in which she 'urged the Pakistani authorities to do their utmost to ensure the protection of those in the Government and civil society who have spoken out on these matters, and to bring to justice those responsible for this crime'.

1. Is the High Representative/Vice-President aware of the case of Khuram Masih?

2. What steps is the High Representative/Vice-President prepared to take to persuade the Pakistani authorities to encourage the judicial authorities in Lahore, given the scant evidence against the accused, to grant Mr Masih bail?

3. According to EU representatives within Pakistan, what, if any, progress has been made within the Pakistani Government, since the assassination of Shahbaz Bhatti and the Governor of Punjab province, Salmaan Taseer, to review the country's blasphemy laws, as many report that they are being invoked to settle personal feuds?

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

The HR/VP thanks the Honourable Member for drawing this case to her attention.

The EU has repeatedly raised the continued application of the blasphemy laws with the Government of Pakistan as part of the human rights dialogue and will continue to do so. It is the EU's view that the blasphemy laws in their present form are open to abuse. The EU has encouraged the Government of Pakistan to amend the more controversial aspects of the blasphemy legislation. Furthermore the EU maintains that total repeal of the blasphemy laws and the death penalty, should be considered by Pakistan.

The EU reiterated its position most recently at the Joint Commission with Pakistan on 7 February 2012. For the future, under the recently agreed EU-Pakistan five-year Engagement Plan, dialogue on human rights and on rule of law are expected to intensify in order to ensure a deeper level of engagement on priority areas.

Concerning the judicial authorities, the EU is supporting projects, managed by the EU's Delegation in Pakistan, intended to improve the quality of law enforcement and the functioning of the judiciary, beginning in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001238/12
to the Commission
Kay Swinburne (ECR)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: Third-country regulatory impact upon capital markets

How is the Commission monitoring or intending to monitor third-country regulatory impacts on the EU capital markets?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2012)

The Commission closely monitors the progress as regards the implementation of the G20 commitments in terms of financial services legislation in other jurisdictions. To this end, and the Commission is engaged in financial regulatory dialogues with a number of third countries in order to exchange information about respective legislative plans. So far, legislative dialogues are regularly held with the USA, Japan, China, Russia, Brazil, India and Switzerland.

Given that financial markets and transactions are truly global, it is important that all G20 members implement the G20 commitments in a consistent way, avoiding regulatory arbitrage, overlaps and conflicting requirements.

Where possible adverse effects are identified, the Commission works closely with its partners to eliminate them or mitigate them as far as possible. One recent example of this is the so-called 'Volcker rule' proposed in the USA prohibiting proprietary trading by banks. Whilst fully sharing the objective of this rule, a number of potential adverse and unintended consequences were identified for EU institutions and EU markets. This issue has been raised in bilateral letters and contacts with American counterparts.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001240/12
to the Commission
Kay Swinburne (ECR)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: Promoting growth by cutting red tape

In 2007, the European Commission established the High Level Group of Independent Stakeholders on Administrative Burdens. At the time, the benefits of cutting red tape were estimated at 1.5 % of GDP. Five years later, EU Member States are struggling to kick-start growth in times of austerity. Reducing the burden on businesses remains a costless and straightforward way to encourage investment and growth; however the aims of the High Level Group appear not to have been achieved.

1. Does the Commission feel that the HLG's advice has been adequately acted upon, especially in the area of financial services ([1])?

2. What concrete steps has the Commission taken to reduce the amount of unnecessary legislation in the EU, such as withdrawing outdated directives?

3. Will a second extension of its mandate be necessary when the HLG's current mandate expires at the end of 2012?

4. Can the Commission provide an updated assessment of the economic benefit that could be achieved by reducing bureaucracy further?

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

In its 2006 Strategic Review of Better Regulation ([2]), the Commission proposed to reduce administrative burden in the EU by 25 % by 2012. It set up the 'High Level Group of Independent Stakeholders on Administrative Burdens' (HLG) in 2007.

The recommendations of the group helped the Commission proposing measures that could reduce red tape, provided they are all adopted by Council and Parliament, by 33 % (i.e. up to EUR 40 billion savings). It can therefore be considered that the Commission has exceeded its objective.

Amongst the 11 proposals for a reduction of administrative burden from the HLG in the area of financial services, 7 have already been adopted, equivalent to savings amounting to EUR 145 million. In 2009 the Commission tabled a proposal to revise the 'Prospectus Directive'. The new directive ([3]) (adopted in 2010) sets less comprehensive disclosure requirements for small companies.

The reduction of regulatory burden has become an integral part of the impact assessments that Commission initiatives undergo before being proposed to the Council and the Parliament. Moreover, according to the Commission's recent report on minimising regulatory burden on SMEs ([4]), the impact on SMEs of new or revised legislation are assessed and the regulatory requirements are only applied to small businesses when it is an absolute must to reach the objective of the regulation. Besides, by simplifying and codifying legislation, the Commission has reduced the *acquis* by almost 10 % since 2005.

President Barroso recently asked the chair Dr Stoiber to continue his work under a prolonged mandate. The group could go further and focus more on small businesses and administrative reforms in the Member States.

([1]) See its opinion from July 2009: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/smart-regulation/files/hlg_opinion_070709_finser_en.pdf
([2]) COM(2006) 689 final.
([3]) Directive 2010/73/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2010 amending Directives 2003/71/EC on the prospectus to be published when securities are offered to the public or admitted to trading and 2004/109/EC on the harmonisation of transparency requirements in relation to information about issuers whose securities are admitted to trading on a regulated market, OJ L 327, 11.12.2010.
([4]) COM(2011) 803 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001241/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(9 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Aumento delle persecuzioni contro le case-chiesa in Cina

Nel 2011 alcuni gruppi di difesa dei diritti umani attivi in Cina hanno segnalato l'aumento delle persecuzioni nei confronti delle chiese clandestine. All'inizio dell'anno un rappresentante del gruppo ChinAid ha affermato che negli ultimi cinque anni le persecuzioni sono diventate sempre più feroci, facendo riferimento al numero di cristiani arrestati, condannati e sottoposti ad abusi e torture. Secondo il servizio radio-televisivo Voice of America, vi sono circa 15 milioni di protestanti e 5 milioni di cattolici che frequentano le chiese registrate ufficialmente. Tuttavia, secondo gli esperti, a tale cifra occorre sommare altri 50 milioni di persone che si riuniscono nelle cosiddette chiese clandestine o nelle case-chiesa, le quali rifiutano di sottomettersi al controllo dello Stato.

La costituzione cinese garantisce la libertà di religione, ma soltanto nelle chiese sottoposte al controllo dello Stato. Esponenti della Fondazione Cardinal Kung, che vigila sul trattamento dei cristiani cattolici in Cina, affermano inoltre che i cattolici si trovano a vivere in una situazione di continua tensione, costretti a pregare nelle case o nei campi per paura di essere scoperti dalle autorità cinesi. Nell'aprile 2011, il quotidiano britannico Daily Telegraph ha riportato la notizia dell'arresto di almeno 50 membri di una chiesa clandestina di Pechino nell'ambito della repressione attuata nei confronti delle chiese non registrate. Sembra inoltre che alcuni membri abbiano perso la casa e il posto di lavoro a causa della campagna ufficiale diretta alla chiusura delle chiese.

1. Alla luce dell'aumento delle persecuzioni nei confronti delle comunità cristiane e delle case-chiesa in tutta la Cina, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante chiedere alle autorità cinesi di rivedere il processo di registrazione delle chiese, affinché un numero maggiore di cristiani possa praticare il proprio credo in maniera libera e sicura?

2. Può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante riferire se il tema delle case-chiesa sia stato discusso durante le recenti riunioni del dialogo UE-Cina sui diritti dell'uomo? In tal caso, quali sono state le risposte delle autorità cinesi?

3. Può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante fornire informazioni circa il futuro delle persone che sono detenute a causa della repressione contro le case-chiesa?

4. Con riferimento alla relazione sulla libertà religiosa internazionale redatta dal Dipartimento di Stato americano, intende il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante prendere in considerazione la possibilità di un esame periodico della libertà di religione nel mondo?

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

L'UE attribuisce grande importanza alla situazione dei diritti umani in Cina ed è particolarmente preoccupata delle restrizioni imposte alla libertà di religione. L'UE ha espresso la propria preoccupazione, ancora una volta, durante l'ultimo incontro nell'ambito del dialogo sui diritti umani UE-Cina nel giugno 2011. In questa occasione ha nuovamente sollecitato la Cina ad agevolare l'esercizio del culto semplificando il sistema di registrazione delle case-chiesa e accelerando il processo decisionale in materia. Le autorità cinesi hanno risposto che la legislazione nazionale consente alle case-chiesa di ottenere la registrazione ufficiale, ma che è necessario svolgere un esame approfondito di ciascun caso per evitare abusi. Più di recente, in occasione del 14° vertice UE-Cina del 14 febbraio 2012, l'UE ha espresso preoccupazione per il segnalato arresto di fedeli cristiani in relazione alle loro convinzioni e attività religiose. L'UE continuerà a seguire da vicino la situazione dei singoli casi che destano preoccupazione e ad esortare le autorità cinesi a tutelare la libertà di religione o di credo quale garantita dalla costituzione cinese e conformemente agli impegni internazionali del paese. L'UE pubblica una relazione annuale sui diritti umani e sulla democrazia nel mondo, che comprende una sezione sulla libertà di pensiero, di coscienza, di religione o di credo. Di conseguenza non reputa necessaria una relazione riguardante unicamente la libertà di religione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001241/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Chinese 'house churches' face increased persecution

In 2011 a number of human rights groups based in China reported that the persecution of so-called 'underground' churches is on the rise. Earlier in the year, a representative of the group ChinaAid said that 'in the past five years, every year, the degree of persecution increased'. This relates to the number of Christians arrested, sentenced, abused and tortured. The news service Voice of America reports that there are about 15 million Protestants and five million Catholics who worship at registered churches. Experts say an estimated 50 million others are believed to pray at so-called 'underground' or 'house' churches, which refuse to submit to government regulation.

China's constitution allows for freedom of religion, but only in state sanctioned churches. Staff at the Cardinal Kung Foundation, which monitors the treatment of Roman Catholics in China, also report that Catholics constantly struggle to worship discretely in homes or in fields to avoid being discovered by the authorities. In April 2011, the UK's *Daily Telegraph* reported that at least fifty members of an underground church in Beijing were detained as part of a crackdown on unregistered churches. It is alleged that some members lost their homes and jobs as part of an official campaign to shut down the church.

1. In light of the rise in persecution of Christian communities and 'house churches' across China, is the High Representative/Vice-President prepared to ask the Chinese authorities to review the registration processes for churches in order to allow more Christians to practice their religion freely and safely.

2. Can the HR/VP state whether or not the subject of 'house churches' has been discussed at recent rounds of the EU-China human rights dialogue? If so, what have been some of the responses from the Chinese authorities?

3. Can the HR/VP offer any information about the fate of individuals who have been detained as part of crackdowns on 'house churches'?

4. In reference to the US Department of State International Religious Freedom Report, would the HR/VP consider establishing a periodic review for freedom of religion around the world?

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

The EU attaches great importance to the human rights situation in China. It is particularly concerned by restrictions to the freedom of religion. The EU raised its concern once again at the last round of the EU-China human rights dialogue which took place in June 2011. On this occasion, it reiterated its call to China to facilitate the exercise of religion by simplifying the registration system of house churches and speeding up decision making in this respect. The Chinese authorities replied that the national legislation allows house churches to obtain official registration, but that in each case a thorough examination is warranted to prevent abuses. Most recently, the EU's concern about reported imprisonment of Christian practitioners in relation with their religious beliefs and activities was raised at the 14th EU-China Summit which took place on 14 February 2012. The EU will continue to follow closely the situation of individual cases of concern and to urge the Chinese authorities to protect the freedom of religion or belief as guaranteed by the Chinese Constitution and in compliance with China's international commitments. The EU publishes an annual report on human rights and democracy in the world, which includes a section on freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief. In this light, the EU does not believe that a further report solely on freedom of religion is necessary.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-001242/12
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Robert Goebbels (S&D)
(9 février 2012)

Objet: VP/HR — Arrestations arbitraires, par Israël, de députés palestiniens

Les élections au Conseil législatif palestinien de janvier 2006 ont été saluées à l'époque par l'ensemble de la communauté internationale, y compris les observateurs de l'UE, comme absolument démocratiques. Toutefois, l'État d'Israël ne s'est jamais accommodé de cette élection démocratique et a arrêté, enlevé et déporté à maintes reprises des députés palestiniens régulièrement élus, ce qui va à l'encontre de tout le droit international et est passible de sanctions devant la Cour de justice pénale internationale.

Or, l'État d'Israël ne se sent pas concerné par le droit international. Non seulement il fait condamner par des tribunaux spéciaux des députés palestiniens à des peines de prison, mais il continue à harceler des hommes politiques vivant à Jérusalem-Est, territoire illégalement occupé par Israël.

Israël a ainsi procédé, le 30 juin 2010, à l'arrestation de M. Abu Teir. Suite à cette arrestation, les députés Atoun et Omran Totah, ainsi que l'ancien ministre Abu Arafah, ont trouvé asile au siège de la Croix rouge internationale à Jérusalem.

M. Atoun a été enlevé à la fin du mois d'octobre de l'année dernière. Le 23 janvier de cette année, MM. Totah et Arafah ont été enlevés à leur tour du bâtiment de la Croix rouge.

Comment réagit l'Union européenne face à ces enlèvements arbitraires?

L'Union envisage-t-elle d'adopter des sanctions politiques et économiques contre l'État d'Israël pour amener celui-ci à libérer tous les députés palestiniens encore détenus dans ses prisons?

Par quels autres moyens la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante entend-t-elle amener l'État d'Israël à respecter le droit international?

Réponse donnée par Mme Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(25 avril 2012)

Depuis quelques années, l'Union européenne suit les cas de députés palestiniens placés en rétention administrative en Israël. Le 23 juillet 2007, le Conseil Affaires étrangères a appelé Israël à relâcher immédiatement les députés palestiniens détenus dans le pays. L'UE a également suivi de près, au travers de sa représentation à Jérusalem-Est, le cas de députés palestiniens qui, depuis juillet 2010, se sont réfugiés, pour échapper à des ordres d'expulsion, dans les locaux du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge (CICR) à Jérusalem-Est. En mars 2011, elle a également soulevé publiquement cette question au sein du Conseil des Droits de l'homme.

Suite aux récentes arrestations de M. Mohammed Totah, membre du Conseil législatif palestinien, ainsi que de M. Khaled Abu Arafeh, ancien ministre aux affaires de Jérusalem, les missions de l'UE à Jérusalem et Ramallah ont publié une déclaration locale, le 28 janvier 2012, exprimant leur préoccupation. Elles ont également fait référence aux arrestations de M. Aziz Dweik, président du Conseil législatif palestinien, ainsi que de MM. Khaled Tafesh et Abduljabbar Foqaha, membres du Conseil législatif palestinien. L'UE considère que de tels agissements ne servent pas les efforts visant à renforcer la confiance, dans lesquels l'Union est pleinement impliquée et qui ont pour objectif la reprise de négociations de paix directes. Elle fait régulièrement part de ses préoccupations, au gouvernement israélien, concernant les pratiques de rétention administrative en l'absence de charges.

L'UE a également appelé à maintes reprises Israël à respecter les obligations lui incombant au titre du droit international, notamment de la quatrième Convention de Genève.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001242/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Robert Goebbels (S&D)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Arbitrary arrests of Palestinian ministers by Israel

The Palestinian Legislative Council elections in January 2006 were hailed at the time by the wider international community, including EU observers, as fully democratic. However, the State of Israel has never accepted this democratic election and has repeatedly arrested, seized and deported regularly elected Palestinian MPs, which goes against all international law and is punishable by the International Criminal Court.

However the State of Israel is not concerned with international law. Not only is it using special courts to pass prison sentences on Palestinian MPs, but it continues to harass politicians living in East Jerusalem, a territory illegally occupied by Israel.

In regard to the latter, Israel arrested Mr Abu Teir on 30 June 2010. Following this arrest, the MPs Mr Attoun and Mr Omran Totah as well as the former minster Abu Arafah, took refuge at the International Red Cross headquarters in Jerusalem.

Mr Attoun was seized from there at the end of October last year. On 23 January this year, Mr Totah and Mr Arafah were in their turn seized from the Red Cross compound.

What is the EU's reaction to these arbitrary arrests?

Does the EU plan to adopt political and economic sanctions against Israel to prevail upon the State to release all the Palestinian MPs still held in its prisons?

By what other means does the High Representative intend to prevail upon the State of Israel to respect international law?

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

The EU has been following the cases of Palestinian legislators held in administrative detention in Israel for a number of years. On 23 July 2007, the Foreign Affairs Council called for the immediate release of Palestinian legislators detained by Israel. Through its representation in East Jerusalem, the EU has also followed closely the case of Palestinian legislators who, since July 2010, had found shelter against deportation orders in the office of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in East Jerusalem. The EU also raised this matter publicly at the Human Rights Council in March 2011.

Following the recent arrests of Palestinian Legislative Council member Mohammed Totah and former Minister for Jerusalem Affairs Khaled Abu Arafeh, the EU Missions in Jerusalem and Ramallah issued a local statement on 28 January 2012 expressing their concern. They also made reference to the arrests of PLC Speaker Aziz Dweik and PLC members Khaled Tafesh and Abduljabbar Foqaha. The EU considers that such actions are not conducive to the confidence building efforts, in which the EU is fully engaged, aiming at the resumption of direct peace negotiations. The EU regularly raises its concerns about the practice of administrative detention without charge with the government of Israel.

The EU has also continuously called on Israel to adhere to its obligations deriving from international law, such as the Fourth Geneva Convention.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001244/12
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(9 februarie 2012)

Subiect: Restricții la exporturile către Federația Rusă, ca urmare a apariției virusului Schmallenberg

Serviciul Federal pentru Control Veterinar și Fitosanitar al Federației Ruse a anunțat instituirea unor restricții provizorii la importul de animale vii și de material reproductiv din Germania, Belgia, Franța și Olanda, în contextul apariției în UE a virusului Schmallenberg.

Poate Comisia estima impactul acestor restricții asupra producătorilor europeni? Are Comisia în vedere limitarea circulației animalelor pe teritoriul UE?

Răspuns dat de dl Dalli în numele Comisiei
(20 martie 2012)

În ianuarie 2012, în urma depistării virusului Schmallenberg (SBV) în UE, au fost temporar suspendate importurile de bovine, ovine și caprine vii, precum și de material genetic de la acestea provenind din Belgia, Germania, Țările de Jos, Regatul Unit și Franța, precum și importurile de carne și subproduse din carne de oaie și de capră provenind din Belgia, Germania și Țările de Jos. La 27 februarie 2012, Federația Rusă nu a informat Comisia cu privire la măsuri adoptate în ceea ce privește alte state membre ale UE.

Conform statisticilor disponibile, exporturile de produse menționate anterior aveau o valoare de 57,1 milioane EUR pentru primele 11 luni din 2011. Principalele exporturi în cauză erau de bovine vii din Germania și Țările de Jos, în timp ce Belgia și Regatul Unit nu au exportat niciunul din aceste produse.

Impactul acestor măsuri va depinde, bineînțeles, de durata acestora. Comisia lucrează în strânsă legătură cu Federația Rusă pentru garanta că măsurile restrictive adoptate sunt ridicate de îndată ce este posibil.

UE nu aplică nicio restricție comercială în legătură cu virusul SBV și nici cu orice alt virus similar (Orthobunyavirus) privind animalele vii, carnea și laptele acestora sau subprodusele de origine animală.

Comisia a solicitat Agenției Europene pentru Siguranța Alimentară (EFSA) să acorde de urgență asistență tehnică și științifică cu privire la riscurile posibile legate de acest virus. EFSA va colecta datele epidemiologice din statele membre și va evalua impactul infecției virale.

Mai multe informații cu privire la acest aspect sunt disponibile la următoarea adresă de internet: http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/schmallenberg_virus/index_en.htm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001244/12
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: Restrictions on imports to the Russian Federation as a result of the emergence of the Schmallenberg virus

The Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Supervision of the Russian Federation has announced the introduction of provisional restrictions on the importation of live animals and reproductive materials from Germany, Belgium, France and the Netherlands in the context of the emergence of the Schmallenberg virus in the EU.

Can the Commission estimate the impact of these restrictions on European producers? Does the Commission envisage restricting movements of animals in the EU?

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

In January 2012, following the detection of the Schmallenberg virus (SBV) in the EU, the temporarily suspended imports of live cattle, live sheep and goats as well as their genetic materials from Belgium, Germany, The Netherlands, the United Kingdom and France, and sheep and goat meat and by-products from Belgium, Germany and The Netherlands. As of 27 February 2012, the Russian Federation has not informed the Commission of measures taken for other EU Member States.

According to the available statistics, exports of the abovementioned products represented EUR 57.1 millions for the first 11 months in 2011. The main exports concerned live cattle from Germany and The Netherlands, while Belgium and the United Kingdom did not export any of those products.

The impact of these measures will of course depend on their duration. The Commission is working in close contact with the Russian Federation to ensure that the restrictive measures adopted are lifted as soon as possible.

The EU does not apply any trade restrictions in relation to the SBV virus as well as any other similar virus (Orthobunyavirus) on live animals, their meat, milk or animal by-products.

The Commission has asked the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA) to provide urgent scientific and technical assistance on the possible risks related to this virus. EFSA will collect the epidemiological data from Member States and will assess the impact of the virus infection.

Further information on this issue is available at the following webpage:
http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/schmallenberg_virus/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001245/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(9 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Dati sulla vendita dei farmaci di fascia C in Europa

Le farmacie italiane sono uno dei settori cui si riferisce il decreto «salva Italia» sulle liberalizzazioni adottato in Italia dal Consiglio dei Ministri. Secondo la riforma, per favorire la concorrenza e per abbassare i prezzi, il numero delle farmacie in Italia aumenterà di circa 6mila unità, che si aggiungeranno alle attuali 17mila.

Inoltre un precedente decreto del Governo, poi modificato in sede parlamentare, aveva previsto che potessero essere venduti fuori dalle farmacie i farmaci di fascia C, ovvero i farmaci destinati alla cura di patologie anche molto serie come antidolorifici, antinfiammatori, ansiolitici, antipsicotici, antidepressivi e anoressizzanti, per la cui vendita ora è necessaria l'esibizione della ricetta medica. Attualmente, invece, questa tipologia di farmaco si può acquistare soltanto in farmacia.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, s'interroga dunque la Commissione per sapere:

1. se può tracciare un quadro generale sulla vendita dei farmaci di fascia C in Europa, specificando in quali Stati membri sono eventualmente in commercio fuori dalle farmacie;

2. se può fornire i dati relativi a come sia organizzato il sistema delle farmacie in ciascun Paese europeo e quale sia il rapporto tra abitanti e farmacie in ciascuno Stato membro.

Risposta data da John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(2 marzo 2012)

La direttiva 2001/83/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 6 novembre 2001, recante un codice comunitario relativo ai medicinali per uso umano [1] stabilisce le regole e le responsabilità per la distribuzione all'ingrosso dei medicinali nell'ottica della loro sicurezza e qualità. Tuttavia, la distribuzione dei medicinali al pubblico, comprese le vendite al dettaglio e le vendite in farmacia, non è disciplinata dalla legislazione farmaceutica dell'UE ed è di competenza degli Stati membri.

Pertanto, la Commissione non dispone del quadro di insieme e dei dati richiesti dall'onorevole deputato.

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[1] GU L 311 del 28.11.2001.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001245/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: Data on the sale of Group C medicines in Europe

Italian pharmacies are one of the areas covered by the 'Save Italy' decree on liberalisations adopted in Italy by the Council of Ministers. Under the reform, the number of pharmacies in Italy will increase by around 6 000, to be added to the current 17 000, in order to promote competition and lower prices.

In addition, a previous government decree, which was subsequently amended in parliament, had provided for Group C medicines to be sold in points of sale other than pharmacies. Group C medicines are used in the treatment of serious pathologies and include painkillers, anti-inflammatories, anxiolytics, antipsychotics, antidepressants and anorectics, which are only sold at present on prescription. Currently, however, this type of drug can only be bought in a pharmacy.

In light of these facts:

1. Could the Commission provide a general overview of the sale of Group C medicines in Europe, specifying in which Member States it is possible for them to be sold in points of sale other than pharmacies?

2. Could it provide data on how the pharmacy system is organised in each European country and on the ratio between population and pharmacies in each Member State.

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

Directive 2001/83/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use ([1]) establishes rules and responsibilities for the wholesale distribution of medicinal products with regard to their safety and quality. However, the dispensation of medicinal products to the public, including retail and pharmacy sales, is not regulated by the EU pharmaceutical legislation and is under the competence of the Member States.

Therefore, the Commission is not in the possession of the overview and data requested by the Honourable Member.

([1]) OJ L 311, 28.11.2001.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001246/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(9 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Ritardi nei pagamenti PAC 2011

In Italia l'Agenzia per le erogazioni in agricoltura (Agea), ente statale che riveste funzioni di organismo di coordinamento e di organismo pagatore nell'ambito dell'erogazione dei fondi dell'Unione Europea ai produttori agricoli, sta ritardando senza motivo i pagamenti per le domande PAC 2011. Sembra che questi ritardi siano dovuti a vicende interne all'ente.

Assieme agli incrementi fiscali introdotti dall'ultima manovra del Consiglio dei ministri, questi ritardi stanno mettendo in ginocchio tutto il comparto, tanto che le associazioni di categoria si stanno organizzando per azioni di protesta. In un momento storico molto delicato di crisi economica globale e col prezzo dei prodotti agricoli e dell'olio in caduta libera, gli agricoltori sono in grave difficoltà. L'agenzia statale avrebbe dovuto liquidare entro il novembre 2011 tutte le pratiche che, invece, restano bloccate. L'aspetto ancor più grave è che non vengono fornite motivazioni o spiegazioni e non viene comunicata alcuna data o previsione, nonostante l'Unione Europea abbia espresso il suo consenso.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza del ritardo nelle erogazioni PAC 2011 per gli agricoltori,

2. se intende verificare le ragioni per cui Agea sta procedendo in enorme ritardo ai pagamenti per le domande PAC,

3. quali provvedimenti intende prendere per far sì che gli agricoltori ricevano le erogazioni il prima possibile?

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

L'interrogazione dell'onorevole parlamentare sembra riferirsi ai pagamenti relativi alle domande presentate nel 2011 per gli aiuti diretti. In base all'articolo 29, paragrafo 2 del regolamento (CE) n. 73/2009 del Consiglio ([1]), tali pagamenti dovranno essere effettuati tra il 1° dicembre 2011 e il 30 giugno 2012.

Se la Commissione dovesse aver notizia in futuro di eventuali ritardi in proposito, esaminerà la questione attentamente e prenderà le misure del caso secondo le possibilità previste dalla normativa europea.

([1]) GU L 30 del 31.1.2009, pag. 16.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001246/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: 2011 CAP payment delays

In Italy, the Agenzia per le Erogazioni in Agricoltura (AGEA — agricultural payments agency), a government coordination and payment body that handles disbursement of EU funds to farmers, is delaying payments for 2011 CAP claims for no reason. These delays appear to be due to internal problems at the agency.

Together with the tax increases introduced in the Council of Ministers' latest measures, these delays are bringing the whole sector to its knees, so much so that trade unions are organising protest action. At this extremely difficult point in time, due to the global economic crisis, and with the price of agricultural products and oil in free fall, farmers are experiencing serious difficulties. The state agency should have settled all the claims by November 2011, but they are still held up. The worst part is that no reasons or explanations have been given, nor any date or estimated date, even though the EU has approved payment.

In light of the above:

1. Is the Commission aware of the delay in 2011 CAP payments for farmers?

2. Does it intend to ascertain the reasons why AGEA is so behind with payments of CAP claims?

3. What measures does it intend to take to ensure farmers receive payment as soon as possible?

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

The question of the Honourable Member would appear to refer to payments in relation to claims made in 2011 for direct aids. According to Article 29 (2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 73/2009 ([1]), such payments would have to be made within the period from 1 December 2011 to 30 June 2012.

Should the Commission in the future be informed of any possible delays in this regard, it will investigate the issue closely and if necessary take appropriate measures according to the possibilities available in EU legislation.

([1]) OJ L 30, 31.1.2009, p. 16.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001247/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(9 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Allarme febbre dengue

Secondo l'ultimo rapporto dell'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità (OMS), oltre 2,5 miliardi di persone rischiano attualmente di contrarre la febbre dengue; ciò significa che oltre il 40 % della popolazione del pianeta potrebbe esserne infettato. L'OMS ha stimato che ogni anno l'epidemia rischia di colpire circa 50-100 milioni di persone in tutto il mondo. Inizialmente il virus è stato isolato nel Sud-Est asiatico, ma l'aumento dei casi è principalmente dovuto alla rapida urbanizzazione di alcune zone e alla carenza di adeguate condizioni igieniche nella periferia delle grandi città e nelle zone vicine a bacini d'acqua stagnante, che possono causare la pericolosa proliferazione della zanzara Aedes Aegypti.

Considerato che prima del 1970 solo nove paesi avevano registrato forti epidemie di dengue, mentre oggi tale febbre è endemica in oltre 100 Stati, si chiede alla Commissione se intenda, vista la gravità della diffusione di questa malattia, intervenire con un programma finalizzato a garantire idonee misure di profilassi e mettere in atto controlli sanitari sulle persone che accedono al territorio europeo.

Risposta data da John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(20 aprile 2012)

La Commissione è consapevole dei rischi determinati dalla febbre Dengue. Il Centro europeo per la prevenzione e il controllo delle malattie (ECDC) assicura il monitoraggio della Dengue per identificare i cambiamenti significativi nell'epidemiologia di questa malattia e pubblica mappe delle aree dell'UE esposte al rischio di specie di zanzare invasive che possono veicolare la Dengue. La trasmissione locale della Dengue in Europa è stata segnalata per la prima volta in Francia e in Croazia nel 2010. Nel 2011 e nel 2012 non sono stati segnalati casi autoctoni in Europa. Inoltre, nel contesto del Settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico, 2007-2013, la Commissione patrocina dieci progetti di ricerca sulla Dengue per un corrispettivo di più di 20 milioni di EUR.

La legislazione vigente sulle malattie trasmissibili copre la sorveglianza e il controllo delle febbri emorragiche virali, compresa la Dengue, e gli eventi legati alla Dengue vanno segnalati alla rete comunitaria per il tramite del Sistema di allarme rapido e di reazione (SARR). Per quanto concerne i controlli sanitari ai punti d'ingresso nell'UE, la Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputato alla propria risposta alle interrogazioni scritte E-1361/07 ed E-1935/07 ([1]) in cui fornisce una descrizione dettagliata delle possibilità già in atto in virtù dell'acquis UE in tema di migrazioni e frontiere per rifiutare l'ammissione o l'entrata di cittadini di paesi terzi per motivi di sanità pubblica.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001247/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: Dengue fever warning

According to the latest report by the World Health Organisation (WHO), more than 2.5 billion people are currently at risk of contracting dengue fever. This means that over 40 % of the world's population could be infected. The WHO has estimated that around 50-100 million people throughout the world are likely to be affected by the epidemic each year. Initially, the virus was confined to south-east Asia, but the rise in the number of cases is mainly due to the rapid urbanisation of certain areas and to the lack of adequate hygiene conditions in the outskirts of large cities and in areas close to sources of stagnant water, which may result in a dangerous proliferation of the Aedes Aegypti mosquito.

Today the fever is endemic in over 100 countries, whereas before 1970 only nine countries had recorded a serious dengue fever epidemic. In view of this fact and of the seriousness of the spread of this disease, will the Commission introduce a programme designed to ensure appropriate preventive measures and to carry out health checks on people entering the European Union.

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(20 April 2012)

The Commission is aware of the risks posed by contracting Dengue Fever. The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) monitors Dengue to identify significant changes in disease epidemiology, and publishes maps of EU areas at risk of invasive mosquito species which are potential vectors of Dengue. Local transmission of Dengue in Europe was for the first time reported in France and Croatia in 2010. There have been no autochthonous cases in Europe in 2011 or in 2012. In addition, in the context of the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development, 2007-2013, the Commission is also supporting 10 research projects on Dengue totalling more than EURO 20 million.

The current legislation on communicable diseases covers surveillance and control of viral haemorrhagic fevers, including Dengue, and events due to Dengue should be reported through the Early Warning and Response System (EWRS) to the Community Network. As far as health checks upon entry are concerned, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer given to written questions E-1361/07 and E-1935/07 ([1]) in which a detailed description of the already existing possibilities under EU migration and border *acquis* to refuse admission or entry of third-country nationals for public health reasons was given.

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001248/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(9 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Celiaci pericolo glutine anche nei cosmetici

La questione sollevata al congresso dell'American College of Gastroenterology di Washington è che anche i cosmetici potrebbero costruire un rischio per i celiaci. L'attenzione è rivolta principalmente a rossetti, balsami e matite per labbra, dentifrici e collutori che entrano a contatto con le mucose della bocca e possono essere ingeriti. Il rischio è dovuto principalmente alla scarsa informazione che fanno le case produttrici. Da un'indagine svolta sul mercato risulta che solo il 20 % dei prodotti fornisce informazioni dettagliate sui componenti presenti. Mentre le indicazioni sugli alimenti sono complete, non si può dire lo stesso per i cosmetici, anche quando si tratta di prodotti che vanno in contatto con le mucose, le labbra ed il viso.

L'industria cosmetica usa i derivati di grano, frumento, farro, segale, kamut e orzo, che possono contenere tracce della frazione lipoproteica del glutine. Si ipotizza che l'ingestione accidentale di tracce di rossetti e matite, contenenti glutine, possa esacerbare i sintomi della celiachia e sono poche le aziende cosmetiche che dichiarano «gluten free» i propri prodotti.

Considerando che la celiachia è la più frequente intolleranza alimentare a livello mondiale e che in Europa un cittadino su cento è celiaco e per ogni celiaco diagnosticato ce ne sono 4 che non sanno di esserlo, chiedo alla Commissione se intenda implementare i controlli anche sui prodotti cosmetici al fine di tutelare e proteggere il consumatore.

Risposta data da John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(20 marzo 2012)

Uno dei principali obiettivi della direttiva Cosmetici 76/768/CEE ([1]) è assicurare che sul mercato UE vengano immessi soltanto cosmetici sicuri. In tale contesto la Commissione ha inoltrato una richiesta di parere al comitato scientifico della sicurezza dei consumatori (CSSC) sull'uso sicuro delle proteine idrolizzate del frumento nei prodotti cosmetici ([2]). Sulla base di tale valutazione la Commissione contemplerà le opportune misure regolamentari che potrebbero consistere in prescrizioni in tema di etichettatura, limiti d'uso delle concentrazioni, ecc.

I requisiti generali di etichettatura contenuti nella direttiva Cosmetici sono volti ad assicurare che i consumatori vengano adeguatamente informati in relazione ai cosmetici che usano. La direttiva fa obbligo ai fabbricanti di indicare sui cosmetici l'elenco degli ingredienti. L'indicazione dell'elenco degli ingredienti sull'etichetta del cosmetico, parti dei quali potrebbero essere ingerite, consente ai celiaci di venire a conoscenza della presenza di ingredienti che potrebbero nuocere loro e di evitare, all'occorrenza, il prodotto in questione.

La direttiva Cosmetici non fa obbligo ai fabbricanti di indicare «gluten-free» sui loro prodotti cosmetici. Tuttavia, quando dichiarano espressamente l'assenza di glutine, i fabbricanti devono assicurare che, sull'etichetta all'atto della commercializzazione e nella pubblicità del prodotto cosmetico, non vengano usati testi, denominazioni, ecc. tali da implicare che il prodotto possegga caratteristiche o funzioni che non ha.

([1]) Direttiva 76/768/CEE del Consiglio, del 27 luglio 1976, concernente il ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri relative ai prodotti cosmetici, GU L 262 del 27.9.1976.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/consumer_safety/docs/sccs_q_031.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001248/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: Danger for coeliacs: gluten also found in cosmetics

The American College of Gastroenterology meeting in Washington has raised the question that even cosmetics could pose a risk for coeliacs. The main cause for concern would be lipsticks, lip balms, lip pencils, toothpastes and mouthwashes that come into contact with the mucous membranes of the mouth and can be ingested. The risk is mainly due to the lack of information provided by manufacturers. A market survey showed that only 20 % of products come with detailed information about their ingredients. Although food labelling is comprehensive, the same cannot be said for cosmetics, even with regard to products that come into contact with the mucous membranes, lips and face.

The cosmetics industry uses corn, wheat, spelt, rye, kamut (khorasan wheat) and barley derivatives that may contain traces of gluten lipoprotein fraction . The assumption is that accidental ingestion of traces of lipsticks and lip pencils that contain gluten could exacerbate symptoms of coeliac disease, and very few cosmetic companies actually declare their products to be 'gluten-free'.

Given that coeliac disease is one of the more common food intolerances globally and that, in Europe, one in every hundred people is a coeliac and, for every coeliac diagnosed, there are four others who are not aware that they have the condition, does the Commission intend to introduce controls on cosmetic products in order to safeguard and protect consumers?

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

One of the main objectives of the Cosmetics Directive 76/768/EEC (1) is to ensure that only safe cosmetic products are placed on the EU market. In this context, the Commission has issued a request for an opinion by the Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety (SCCS) on the safe use of hydrolysed wheat proteins in cosmetic products (2). On the basis of this evaluation, the Commission will consider the appropriate regulatory measures, which could consist in labelling requirements, limits for use concentrations, etc.

The general labelling requirements contained in the Cosmetics Directive shall ensure that the consumers are appropriately informed in relation to the cosmetic products they use. The directive requires the manufacturers to indicate on the cosmetic product the list of ingredients. The indication of the list of ingredients on the labelling of the cosmetic product, parts of which could be ingested, permit to the persons suffering of coeliac disease to be informed of the presence of ingredients that could harm them and to avoid, if need be, that product.

The Cosmetics Directive does not oblige manufacturers to indicate 'gluten-free' on their cosmetic products. However, when expressly claiming the absence of gluten, the manufacturers must ensure that, in the labelling, making available on the market and advertising of the cosmetic product, text, names, etc. shall not be used to imply that the product has characteristics or functions which it does not have.

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(1) Council Directive 76/768/EEC of 27 July 1976 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to cosmetic products, OJ L 262, 27.9.1976.
(2) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/consumer_safety/docs/sccs_q_031.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001249/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(9 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Diabete giovanile

Il diabete di tipo I colpisce circa 500 000 giovani di età inferiore ai 14 anni nel mondo e, in fase ritardata più rara, talvolta anche gli adulti. Questa forma di diabete porta a una rapida distruzione delle cellule pancreatiche che producono insulina a causa di un'anomala reazione del sistema immunitario, rendendo così necessaria la somministrazione esterna dell'insulina ai pazienti per il controllo della glicemia.

Negli ultimi anni si è affermato un più efficace metodo «alternativo»: il trapianto da donatore di isole pancreatiche (le cellule del pancreas che producono insulina), che vengono impiantate nel fegato del ricevente attraverso una semplice infusione in vena. Il fegato, così «ingegnerizzato», assolve dunque anche alla funzione del pancreas, iniziando a produrre insulina. È stata scoperta una nuova molecola (Reparixin) in grado di migliorare l'efficacia di questo trapianto. Oggi, grazie alla nuova molecola, è possibile ridurre significativamente le frequenti reazioni infiammatorie e il potenziale rigetto delle isole trapiantate. Attualmente, a livello internazionale, dieci pazienti sono in trattamento con la nuova molecola e due sono diventati totalmente indipendenti dalle iniezioni di insulina.

Considerando l'importanza della ricerca, soprattutto in campo medico, si chiede alla Commissione se intenda attuare i programmi a sostegno della ricerca medico-scientifica, sensibilizzando i cittadini e garantendo nuove frontiere per la cura di questa patologia.

Risposta data da Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(19 marzo 2012)

La Commissione è consapevole del grave problema rappresentato dal diabete di tipo 1, nonché delle prospettive offerte dal trapianto di isole pancreatiche per curare la malattia. Nel settembre 2011, l'Agenzia europea per i medicinali ha assegnato la qualifica di medicinale orfano al medicinale «Reparixin» (iscritto nel registro comunitario dei medicinali orfani sotto il numero EU/3/11/912) ([1]), per la proprietà del farmaco di prevenire le crisi di rigetto dopo il trapianto di isole pancreatiche.

Come sottolineato dall'onorevole parlamentare, i risultati preliminari presentati in occasione del congresso CTS (Cell Transplant Society)/IXA (International Xenotransplant Association) dell'ottobre 2011 mostrano che la reparixina riduce il potenziale rigetto delle isole pancratiche trapiantate.

La ricerca sul diabete di tipo 1 è da sempre una priorità del Settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico (7° PQ 2007-2013), che vi destina uno stanziamento di circa 35 milioni di euro. Tra gli ambiti presi in considerazione figurano lo studio dell'eziologia della malattia (DIABIMMUNE ([2])BETABAT ([3])), lo sviluppo di immunoterapie per il ripristino delle cellule beta (NAIMIT ([4])) e la valutazione della funzione del trapianto (XENOME ([5])).

La ricerca sul ruolo e la sopravvivenza delle cellule pancreatiche è condotta specificatamente nel quadro del progetto IMIDIA ([6]), sostenuto nell'ambito dell'IMI, l'iniziativa in materia di medicinali innovativi ([7]). I ricercatori del progetto IMIDIA hanno messo a punto la prima linea di cellule beta umane adeguata per valutare i farmaci che agiscono sul funzionamento delle cellule beta ([8]).

([1]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/medicines/human/orphans/2011/10/human_orphan_000978.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac058001d12b&murl=menus/medicines/medicines.jsp&jsenabled=true
([2]) http://www.diabimmune.org
([3]) http://betabat.ulb.ac.be/
([4]) http://naimit.eu
([5]) http://www.xenome.eu/introduction.aspx
([6]) http://www.imi.europa.eu/sites/default/files/uploads/projects/documents/factsheets/imi-1st-call-factsheets-imidia_en.pdf
([7]) L'IMI è un partenariato pubblico-privato fra l'UE e la Federazione europea delle industrie e delle associazioni farmaceutiche (EFPIA) volto a promuovere lo sviluppo di farmaci migliori e più sicuri per il paziente.
([8]) The Journal of Clinical Investigation, volume 121, numero 9, settembre 2011; http//www.jci.org

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001249/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: Type 1 diabetes

Type 1 diabetes affects around 500 000 young people under the age of 14 across the world and, in some rare delayed cases, sometimes even adults. This form of diabetes leads to rapid destruction of the insulin-producing pancreatic cells due to an abnormal reaction of the immune system, thus making external administration of insulin necessary in order for patients to be able to control blood glucose levels.

In recent years, a more effective 'alternative' method has become known: donor transplantation of pancreatic islets (insulin-producing pancreas cells), which are transplanted to the recipient's liver by simple venous infusion. The 'engineered' liver therefore also performs the function of the pancreas, generating the production of insulin. A new molecule (Reparixin) with the ability to improve the effectiveness of this transplant has been discovered. Today, thanks to this new molecule, it is possible to reduce significantly the frequent inflammatory reactions and the potential rejection of transplanted islets. On an international level, ten patients are currently being treated with this new molecule and two have become totally independent of insulin injections.

Considering the importance of research, especially in the field of medicine, does the Commission intend to implement programmes in support of medical-scientific research, raising the awareness of citizens and ensuring new frontiers for the treatment of this disease?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(19 March 2012)

The Commission is aware of the burden posed by diabetes 1 and the prospects offered by islet transplantation to revert the disease. The European Medicines Agency granted in September 2011 the orphan designation (EU/3/11/912) ([1]) to reparixin, for the prevention of graft rejection in islet transplantation.

As pointed out by the Honourable Member, preliminary results presented at the Cell Transplant Society/International Xenotransplant Congress (October 2011) showed that reparixin reduces the potential rejection of transplanted islets.

Research on type 1 diabetes has been a priority throughout the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013), with some EUR 35 million devoted to this subject. Areas tackled include the understanding of its etiology (DIABIMMUNE ([2]), BETABAT ([3])), the development of immunotherapies aimed at beta-cell restoration (NAIMIT ([4])) and the role of transplantation (XENOME) ([5]).

Research focused on pancreatic islet cell function and survival is being specifically addressed by the IMIDIA ([6]) project, supported within the frame of the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) ([7]). The IMIDIA consortium has generated the first β-human cell line suitable for the evaluation of drugs targeting β-cell function ([8]).

([1]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/medicines/human/orphans/2011/10/human_orphan_000978.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac058001d12b&murl=menus/medicines/medicines.jsp&jsenabled=true
([2]) http://www.diabimmune.org
([3]) http://betabat.ulb.ac.be/
([4]) http://naimit.eu
([5]) http://www.xenome.eu/introduction.aspx
([6]) http://www.imi.europa.eu/sites/default/files/uploads/projects/documents/factsheets/imi-1st-call-factsheets-imidia_en.pdf
([7]) IMI is a public-private partnership between the EU and the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA), aiming to speed up the development of better and safer medicines for patients.
([8]) *The Journal of Clinical Investigation*, Volume 121, Number 9, September 2011; http//www.jci.org

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001251/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(9 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Il Fondo monetario internazionale: un ostacolo alla regolamentazione dei mercati finanziari dell'UE

Un noto quotidiano finanziario ha pubblicato la proposta tedesca, contenuta in una nota informale, di creare un commissario europeo designato dai ministri delle Finanze dell'eurozona, con il potere di opporre il veto alle decisioni di bilancio assunte dal governo greco; in realtà la Grecia esclude di cedere all'UE la sua sovranità in tema di politiche di bilancio.

La proposta sembra richiamare l'idea della costituzione di un Fondo monetario europeo da affiancare al Fondo monetario internazionale, nonostante gli evidenti fallimenti dell'austerità economica imposta dal FMI: dal sistema di voto «un dollaro, un voto», alle misure economiche fondate sulla riduzione delle spese dello Stato, alla politica monetaria deflazionista e all'apertura dei mercati locali agli investimenti esteri.

Il tutto nel quadro di una liberalizzazione eccessivamente rapida dei mercati finanziari e dei capitali, che ha portato quasi sempre a far crollare i prezzi delle materie prime e alle continue speculazioni finanziarie nei paesi in via di sviluppo. Al riguardo basterebbe analizzare — come illustri economisti internazionali hanno suggerito — i dati relativi ai flussi di capitali, per rendersi conto che hanno un andamento pro-ciclico, ossia defluiscono da un determinato paese in tempi di recessione, proprio quando il paese ne ha più bisogno e affluiscono verso il paese nel periodo di rapida espansione, esasperando le pressioni inflazionistiche.

In considerazione di ciò, chiedo alla Commissione di riferire se l'esperienza greca non abbia mostrato che il FMI presenta un sistema fallimentare e all'interno dell'UE costituisce un enorme «moral hazard», che potrebbe contribuire a determinare più difficoltà politiche tra i paesi dell'UE nella regolamentazione degli strumenti tecnici e finanziari necessaria per affrontare la crisi economica attuale.

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

L'UE sta rispondendo alla crisi del debito sovrano con una strategia su due fronti, intesa cioè a creare stabilità finanziaria durevole nonché crescita economica ed occupazione sostenibili. Secondo la Commissione, per ripristinare la fiducia nelle finanze pubbliche e sostenere la crescita è necessario un ulteriore risanamento, che deve essere integrato da politiche e riforme intelligenti, in grado di rilanciare la crescita. I paesi UE vulnerabili stanno adottando iniziative importanti in questa direzione, risanando le finanze pubbliche e attuando riforme strutturali cruciali, necessarie per una ripresa durevole.

L'approccio dell'assistenza finanziaria esterna sulla base di condizioni in grado di garantire dette politiche può funzionare e in effetti sta dando prova di efficacia, come dimostrano i numerosi esempi di assistenza del Fondo monetario internazionale o di assistenza congiunta UE/FMI.

L'esperienza degli Stati membri conferma inoltre che politiche responsabili e orientate alla stabilità sono un presupposto necessario per beneficiare di mercati finanziari liberalizzati, e che l'assenza di un quadro politico improntato alla stabilità può trasformare il potenziale vantaggio rappresentato dall'apertura dei mercati di capitali in un possibile meccanismo di amplificazione degli squilibri soggiacenti.

Inoltre, fin dall'inizio della crisi nel 2008, sono stati tratti importanti insegnamenti sulle cause della crisi stessa, nonché su come prevenire e contenere eventuali crisi future. L'FMI ha potenziato di conseguenza le proprie attività di sorveglianza e di assistenza politica e ha adattato i propri meccanismi e strumenti in modo da rispondere al meglio alle necessità di tutti i suoi membri. Alla luce di tutto ciò, riteniamo che l'FMI continuerà ad essere un partner importante per l'UE in materia di sorveglianza, assistenza politica e assistenza finanziaria.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001251/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: International Monetary Fund: an obstacle to the regulation of EU financial markets

A leading financial newspaper has published Germany's proposal — set out in an informal memorandum — for a new European Commissioner appointed by the eurozone finance ministers, with the power to veto budget decisions taken by the Greek Government. Greece is ruling out the possibility of ceding control of its budget policies to the EU.

The proposal appears to revive the idea of establishing a European monetary fund in addition to the International Monetary Fund, despite the obvious failings of the austerity measures imposed by the IMF, including the 'one dollar, one vote' voting system, economic measures aimed at reducing state spending, deflationary monetary policy and the opening-up of local markets to foreign investment.

All of these measures have been imposed in the context of excessively rapid liberalisation of the financial and capital markets, which in almost every instance has caused the price of raw materials to collapse and given rise to continual financial speculation in developing countries. As has been suggested by leading international economists, an analysis of capital flow data shows a pro-cyclical trend whereby capital flows out of a country in recession — just when that country needs it most — and into a country undergoing rapid expansion, thereby exacerbating inflationary pressures.

In the light of the above, does the Commission not agree that the Greek experience has shown that the IMF system is disastrous, and that within the EU it represents a serious 'moral hazard' which may contribute to further political difficulties among the Member States as regards the technical and financial regulatory instruments needed in order to address the current economic crisis.

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

The EU is responding to the sovereign debt crisis with a twin strategy to create lasting financial stability and sustainable economic growth and employment. In the view of the Commission, further consolidation is necessary to restore confidence in public finances and sustained growth. It must be complemented by smart and growth-enhancing policies and reforms that underpin new growth. Vulnerable EU countries are taking important steps in this direction, consolidating public finance and implementing crucial structural reforms needed for a lasting recovery.

The approach of external financial assistance built on conditions to ensure such policies can and does work. Many examples of International Monetary Fund (IMF) assistance or joint EU/IMF assistance have shown so.

Experience of our Member States has also confirmed that responsible and stability-oriented policies are a prerequisite for benefitting from liberalised financial markets, and that the absence of such a stable and stability-oriented policy framework can indeed transform that potential advantage of open capital markets into a possible mechanism of amplifying underlying imbalances.

Furthermore, since the onset of the crisis in 2008, important lessons have been drawn regarding its causes, and the prevention and mitigation of future crises. The IMF has accordingly improved its surveillance activities and policy advice and adapted its tools and instruments in order to better meet the needs of its whole membership. Against this background, we consider that the IMF will continue to be an important partner of the EU in the areas of surveillance, policy advice and assistance.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001252/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(9 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Provider mobile britannico senza controllo

Migliaia di utenti di un provider mobile britannico sono stati vittime di una truffa. Una vulnerabilità avrebbe permesso l'invio di numeri di telefono a siti web «non verificati» in automatico tramite un messaggio testuale di facile lettura.

Considerato che i tentativi di truffa attraverso falsi login sono sempre più diffusi e che il numero di utenti, anche minorenni, che accedono ai siti web per mezzo di smartphone o apparecchi simili è in aumento, potrebbe far sapere la Commissione se intende implementare i sistemi di controllo attraverso una rete a livello europeo che permetta di selezionare e filtrare le informazioni, contrastando la proliferazione di fenomeni come lo scam e il phishing e garantendo un margine di sicurezza soprattutto per i più giovani?

Risposta data da Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(13 marzo 2012)

L'interrogazione fa riferimento a un caso che ha interessato una rete di telefonia mobile britannica nel gennaio 2012. L'operatore mobile in questione ha riconosciuto la divulgazione accidentale di numeri telefonici di propri clienti a siti web cui gli stessi avevano avuto accesso utilizzando la connessione dati mobile.

La sicurezza dei dati personali sulle reti di telecomunicazione è stata oggetto di un riesame del quadro normativo per le comunicazioni elettroniche, divenuto applicabile negli Stati membri nel maggio 2011. Nello specifico, la direttiva 2002/58/EC relativa al trattamento dei dati personali e alla tutela della vita privata nel settore delle comunicazioni elettroniche riveduta (ePrivacy) richiede ai fornitori di servizi di prendere misure tecniche e organizzative che permettano di garantire la protezione dei dati personali da divulgazioni non autorizzate o illecite. Il fornitore di servizi ha l'obbligo di notificare ogni eventuale violazione di dati personali all'autorità nazionale competente e, nel caso in cui la violazione comporti gravi ripercussioni per i dati personali e la privacy dell'utente, anche al diretto interessato. Le suddette disposizioni sono state recepite nella normativa del Regno Unito, che conferisce i poteri di sorveglianza all'ICO (Information Commissioner's Office), l'autorità britannica per la protezione dei dati. Alla Commissione risulta che, date le denunce ricevute, l'ICO stia esaminando la questione con l'operatore mobile coinvolto nel caso citato.

Inoltre, è opportuno ricordare che l'ENISA, l'Agenzia europea per la sicurezza delle reti e dell'informazione, ha pubblicato nel dicembre 2010 una relazione sui rischi relativi alla sicurezza informatica per gli utenti di smartphone, con indicazione di opportunità e raccomandazioni. A tale relazione ha fatto seguito, nel novembre 2011, la pubblicazione di orientamenti per la creazione di applicazioni sicure per gli smartphone destinati agli sviluppatori.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001252/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: UK mobile phone provider fails to exercise control

Thousands of users of a UK mobile phone provider have been victims of fraud. A vulnerability allowed telephone numbers to be automatically sent to unverified websites by means of an easy-to-read text message.

Given that fraud attempts via false login are becoming ever more widespread, and that the number of users, including minors, accessing websites using smartphones or similar devices is on the increase, can the Commission say whether it intends to implement a Europe-wide control system network making it possible to select and filter information, in order to tackle the proliferation of phenomena such as scams and phishing and guarantee safety margins, particularly for the younger generation?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2012)

This question appears to be related to an incident which occurred in January 2012 on one of UK's mobile networks. The mobile operator acknowledged accidental disclosure of customers' mobile phone numbers to websites accessed using their mobile data connection.

Personal data security on electronic communications networks was addressed by the reform of the EU regulatory framework for electronic communications, which became applicable in the Member States in May 2011. In particular, the reinforced ePrivacy Directive 2002/58/EC requires service providers to take appropriate technical and organisation measures to protect personal data against unauthorised or unlawful disclosure. In case of a personal data breach, the providers must notify the competent national authority and also the individuals affected, when the breach is likely to adversely affect their personal data or privacy. These provisions have been transposed in UK law, which confer supervision powers to the Information Commissioner (the ICO). The Commission understands that, in view of the complaints received, the ICO is examining the matter with the operator concerned.

Furthermore, it should also be noted that the European Network and Information Security Agency — ENISA — published in December 2010 a report on information security risks, opportunities and recommendations for users of Smartphones. It was followed-up by the publication in November 2011 of Guidelines for developers to design secured applications for Smartphones.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-001255/12
adresată Comisiei
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(9 februarie 2012)

Subiect: Prima de instalare pentru tinerii fermieri

În România, prima de instalare pentru tinerii fermieri se ridică la 40 000 de euro și poate fi obținută prin accesarea măsurii 112.

În acest an, Guvernul a decis că, pentru accesarea măsurii 112, o condiție obligatorie pentru aplicanți este ca aceștia să fie absolvenți de liceu sau de școală profesională cu profil agricol.

Având în vedere faptul că o bună parte din agricultorii activi tineri au absolvit doar școli profesionale cu profil ne-agricol sau că unii dintre ei au început o activitate agricolă foarte tineri și nu au avut timp să își termine studiile,

1. consideră Comisia că introducerea acestui criteriu obligatoriu pentru accesarea măsurii 112 este justificată?

2. acceptarea proiectelor depuse de absolvenții de școli profesionale, altele decât cele cu profil agricol, trebuie aprobate special de către CE; în acest sens, care ar fi motivele acestor aprobări speciale?

Răspuns dat de dl Cioloș în numele Comisiei
(28 februarie 2012)

În conformitate cu articolul 22 din Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1698/2005 al Consiliului ([1]), ajutorul pentru tinerii fermieri în cadrul măsurii 112 „Instalarea tinerilor agricultori" se acordă persoanelor care dețin competențe și calificări profesionale suficiente.

De la aprobarea acestuia în 2008, programul de dezvoltare rurală al României (PNDR) a stabilit că nivelul de studii minim necesar pentru a avea acces la măsura 112 este acela de absolvent de liceu agricol/școală profesională sau liceu în alte domenii decât agricultura, dar cu realizarea a 150 de ore de formare în domeniul agricol.

Autoritățile române au prezentat recent Comisiei o propunere de modificare a PNDR care are ca scop flexibilizarea nivelului de studii minim necesar în cadrul măsurii 112. Conform propunerii, absolvenții de școli profesionale cu profil ne-agricol vor fi, de asemenea, eligibili în cadrul acestei măsuri. Fiindcă această modificare este în prezent în curs de evaluare de către Comisie, autoritățile române au anunțat că aprobarea proiectelor prezentate de absolvenții școlilor respective va fi condiționată de acceptarea de către Comisie a modificării PNDR.

În ceea ce privește ultimul punct al întrebării dumneavoastră scrise, vă rugăm să aveți în vedere faptul că programele de dezvoltare rurală sunt puse în aplicare în gestiune partajată cu statele membre, care dețin responsabilitatea deplină pentru aprobarea proiectelor individuale.

([1]) Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1698/2005 al Consiliului din 20 septembrie 2005 privind sprijinul pentru dezvoltare rurală acordat din Fondul European Agricol pentru Dezvoltare Rurală (FEADR) JO L 277, 21.10.2005, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001255/12
to the Commission
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: Setting-up payment for young farmers

The setting-up payment for young farmers in Romania stands at EUR 40 000 and can be obtained through measure 112.

This year, the Government has decided that, in order to access measure 112, an obligatory condition for applicants is that they must have graduated from secondary school or an agricultural school.

Taking into consideration that a good number of young farmers have only graduated from a non-agricultural vocational school and that some of them started farming at a young age and have not had time to finish their studies,

1. Does the Commission consider that the introduction of this obligatory criterion for accessing measure 112 is justified?

2. The acceptance of projects submitted by graduates from non-agricultural vocational schools must be specially approved by the Commission. In this regard, what would be the basis for these special approvals?

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

In accordance with Article 22 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 ([1])support for young farmers under measure 112 'Setting up of young farmers' shall be granted to persons who possess adequate occupational skills and competence.

From its approval in 2008, the Romanian Rural Development Programme (RDP) established the minimum required educational level in order to access measure 112 as having graduated from agricultural high school/vocational school graduate or high school in areas other than agriculture, but having undertaken 150 hours of training in the agricultural field.

The Romanian authorities have recently submitted to the Commission a proposed modification of the RDP aiming to make more flexible the minimum required educational level under measure 112. According to the proposal, graduates from non-agricultural vocational schools will also be eligible under this measure. As this modification is currently under assessment by the Commission, the Romanian authorities have announced that the approval of projects submitted by those graduates will be subject to the acceptance of the RDP modification by the Commission.

As regards the last point of your written question, please note that rural development programmes are implemented under shared management with the Member States, who have the fully responsibility for approving individual projects.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 of 20 September 2005 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). OJ L 277, 21.10.2005, p. 1.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001256/12
an die Kommission
Gesine Meissner (ALDE)
(9. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Immunität für von US-Streitkräften gecharterte zivile Handelsschiffe

Ist der Kommission bekannt, in welchen Häfen der EU-Mitgliedstaaten, so wie beispielsweise in den Niederlanden, zivile Handelsschiffe, die von den Streitkräften der USA gechartert werden, diplomatische Immunität genießen und sich auf diese Weise unter anderem der Hafenstaatkontrolle entziehen können? Hält die Kommission dies für vereinbar mit europäischem Recht?

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

Der Kommission sind keine Fälle bekannt, in denen für solche Schiffe ein diplomatischer Status geltend gemacht oder diplomatische Immunität beantragt oder gewährt wurde. In jedem Fall ist die diplomatische Immunität eine Angelegenheit, die in die Zuständigkeit der Mitgliedstaaten fällt, und zu der sich die Kommission nicht äußern kann.

Das System der Hafenstaatkontrolle in der Europäischen Union wird durch die Richtlinie 2009/16/EG ([1]) geregelt, wo es (in Artikel 3 Absatz 1) wie folgt heißt: „Diese Richtlinie gilt für Schiffe, die einen Hafen oder Ankerplatz eines Mitgliedstaats anlaufen, in dem eine Schnittstelle Schiff/Hafen erfolgen soll, und ihre Besatzung." Allerdings ist in Artikel 3 Absatz 4 folgendes festgelegt: „Fischereifahrzeuge, Kriegsschiffe, Flottenhilfsschiffe, Holzschiffe einfacher Bauart, staatliche Schiffe, die für nichtgewerbliche Zwecke verwendet werden, und Vergnügungsjachten, die nicht dem Handelsverkehr dienen, sind vom Anwendungsbereich dieser Richtlinie ausgeschlossen".

Ausgehend von den von der Frau Abgeordneten übermittelten Informationen könnten die Schiffe, um die es hier geht, d. h. von den Streitkräften der USA gecharterte zivile Schiffe, entweder in die Kategorie „Flottenhilfsschiffe" oder in die Kategorie „staatliche Schiffe, die für nichtgewerbliche Zwecke verwendet werden" fallen, und folglich nicht der Hafenstaatkontrolle unterliegen.

([1]) ABl. L 131 vom 28.5.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001256/12
to the Commission
Gesine Meissner (ALDE)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: Immunity for civilian merchant ships chartered by US armed forces

Does the Commission know in which EU Member State ports, in the Netherlands for example, civilian merchant ships chartered by the US armed forces enjoy diplomatic immunity, thus enabling them to avoid port State controls, among other things? Does the Commission consider this compatible with European law?

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

The Commission is not aware of any issue relating to the diplomatic status of these vessels or whether diplomatic immunity has been claimed or granted in respect of these vessels, in any event the issue of diplomatic immunity is a question of national competence upon which the Commission is unable to comment.

The system of Port State Control within the European Union is regulated by Directive 2009/16/EC ([1]) which provides (Article 3(1)) that the directive 'shall apply to any ship and its crew calling at a port or anchorage of a Member State'. However Article 3(4) sets out that 'Fishing vessels, warships, naval auxiliaries, wooden ships of a primitive build, government ships used for non-commercial purposes and pleasure yachts not engaged in trade shall be excluded from the scope of this directive'.

On the basis of the information provided by the Honourable Member it would appear that the vessels she refers to, civilian vessels chartered by the United States Military, could fall within the category of either naval auxiliary or government ships used for non-commercial purposes and for this reason may not be subject to Port State Control.

([1]) OJ L 131, 28.5.2009.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001257/12
an die Kommission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(9. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Entscheidung der Kommission zu dem Verkauf von Wohnungen durch die BayernLB

Die BayernLB ist aufgrund von Vorgaben der Kommission im Rahmen eines Beihilfeverfahrens gezwungen, ihre 92-prozentige Beteiligung an dem Wohnungsunternehmen GBW-AG zu verkaufen.

Nach Aussagen des bayerischen Finanzministers Söder kann der Kauf der Beteiligung nicht durch den Freistaat Bayern erfolgen, da dies angeblich die Kommission verbiete.

1. Inwieweit kann die Kommission den Verkauf zwingend oder maßgeblich bestimmen?

2. Muss der Verkauf der Beteiligungen im Rahmen eines Bieterverfahrens ablaufen oder besteht die EU nicht zwingend auf einem Bieterverfahren, sondern würde auch eine direkte Veräußerung an ein kommunales Konsortium akzeptieren?

3. Zum Bieterverfahren:

a) Welche Regeln gelten für ein Bieterverfahren?

b) Wann wären sie verletzt?

c) Bei Einzelverträgen mit den Mietern?

d) Bei Sozialcharta mit strengem Inhalt?

e) Mit welcher Begründung? Schließlich steht es auch bei Aufnahme weiterer „Vertragsbedingungen im weiteren Sinne“ jedem Bieter frei, ein Gebot zum Erwerb der Anteile abzugeben.

4. Wäre es möglich, dass der Freistaat die Anteile erwirbt oder gar sich kostenlos überschreiben lässt, oder verstieße dies gegen Beihilferichtlinien? Für den Fall, dass der Freistaat Bayern nicht erwerben darf: Wieso wird der Freistaat schlechter gestellt als jeder andere Interessent?

5. Dient der Verkauf der Beteiligung

a) der Einhaltung wettbewerbsrechtlicher Vorgaben des EU-Rechts,

b) der Rückzahlung der Staatshilfen oder

c) allen oben genannten Punkten?

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

1. Beim Beihilfeverfahren BayernLB handelt es sich um ein laufendes Verfahren, in dem noch keine abschließende Entscheidung getroffen wurde. Die Kommission kann sich zu laufenden Verfahren grundsätzlich nicht äußern. Es ist allerdings festzuhalten, dass die Kommission dem Mitgliedstaat ohne abschließende Entscheidung grundsätzlich weder Verkaufs- noch sonstige Verpflichtungen auferlegen kann.

2-4. Aus beihilferechtlicher Sicht ist sicherzustellen, dass der Erwerb nicht mit Beihilfen an den Erwerber verbunden ist. Wie ein Bieterverfahren konkret auszugestalten ist, hängt vom Einzelfall ab.

5. Sollte ein Verkauf der GBW-Beteiligung stattfinden, so würde dies als Eigenbeitrag zu den Umstrukturierungskosten/Beitrag zur Lastentragung gewertet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001257/12
to the Commission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: Commission decision on the sale of apartments by BayernLB

Stipulations made by the Commission as part of a state aid monitoring procedure have forced BayernLB (the Bavarian State bank) to sell its 92 % share in housing enterprise GBW AG.

According to Bavarian Finance Minister Markus Söder, the shareholding cannot be bought up by the Bavarian State because this is apparently prohibited by the Commission.

1. To what extent can the Commission enforce or significantly determine conditions for the sale?

2. Must the shareholding be sold via a bidding procedure or would the EU accept a direct sale to a municipal consortium?

3. In relation to the bidding procedure

a) What are the rules for such a bidding procedure?

b) What would constitute an infringement of those rules?

c) Individual contracts with tenants?

d) A social charter with strict content?

e) On what grounds? After all, even subject to additional ‘contractual conditions in the broad sense’, any bidder is at liberty to make an offer for the shareholding.

4. Would it be possible for the Bavarian State to purchase the shareholding or acquire it by means of a transfer at no cost, or would this infringe the aid guidelines? If the Bavarian State is not permitted to acquire the shareholding, why is it thus placed in a worse position than any other interested party?

5. Is the purpose of the sale of the shareholding

a) to comply with the requirements of EU competition law,

b) to enable state aid to be paid back, or

c) both of the above?

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

1. The procedure in the BayernLB state aid case is still ongoing and no final decision has yet been made. The Commission cannot pronounce on these matters while proceedings are under way. In any case, it should be noted that the Commission cannot impose disposal or other obligations on a Member State before a final decision is taken.

2-4. Under the state aid rules, it must be ensured that the purchase does not involve state aid to the buyer. The specific arrangements for the bidding procedure depend on the individual case.

5. Should the holding in GBW be sold, the sale would be considered to be an own contribution to the restructuring costs/a contribution to a share of the burden.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001258/12
an die Kommission
Jörg Leichtfried (S&D)
(9. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Luxussteuer in Italien

Seit dem 27. Dezember 2012 ist in Italien die sogenannte Luxussteuer in Kraft. Damit werden Luxusautos, Boote und Luftfahrzeuge besteuert. Gemäß Artikel 16 Ziffer 11 des Decreto Salva Italia gilt diese Bestimmung für Luftfahrtzeuge, welche im nationalen Luftfahrtregister aufgeführt sind. Laut Ziffer 14 sollen den in Ziffer 11 genannten Beträgen auch ausländische, nicht in der italienischen Luftfahrzeugrolle eingetragene Luftfahrzeuge unterliegen, sofern sich der Aufenthalt auf mehr als 48 Stunden erstreckt. Ausgenommen von der Abgabe sind Staatsluftfahrzeuge oder gleichgestellte Luftfahrzeuge in deren Auftrag, die Flugrettung und Flugschulen. Außerdem ausgenommen sind Luftfahrzeuge, die im Eigentum oder im Betrieb des Aero Club d'Italia stehen. Fraglich ist, ob diese Abgabenbefreiung der italienischen Sportluftfahrt — bzw. die Nichtbefreiung der ausländischen Sportluftfahrt — gegen das Gleichheitsgebot verstößt, da ausländische Vereine ohne Zweifel schlechter gestellt sind als inländische. Diese Abgabe belastet somit ausschließlich private und ausländische Luftfahrzeughalter. Gerade kleine gemeinnützige Sportvereine werden von dieser Abgabe schwer getroffen und belastet. Dies hätte negative Auswirkungen auf den italienischen Tourismus, und somit wäre die Einführung dieser Abgabe kontraproduktiv.

1. Ist der Kommission dieser Zustand bekannt?

2. Ist eine solche Bestimmung mit dem Unionsrecht vereinbar?

3. Erkennt auch die Kommission in dieser Bestimmung einen Verstoß gegen das Diskriminierungsverbot?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(21. März 2012)

Bei der Europäischen Kommission ist eine Beschwerde eingegangen, in der es um die Frage der Gleichbehandlung europäischer Flugsportvereine im Rahmen des Decreto Salva Italia geht. Der Herr Abgeordnete wird daher darüber unterrichtet, dass die Kommission von der in seiner Anfrage geschilderten Situation Kenntnis hat und die Angelegenheit derzeit untersucht.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001258/12
to the Commission
Jörg Leichtfried (S&D)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: Taxes on luxury goods in Italy

A so-called luxury goods tax applies in Italy as of 27 December 2012. This tax applies to luxury cars, boats and aircraft. According to Article 16(11) of the 'Salva Italia' Decree Law, this provision applies to aircraft listed in the national aircraft register. According to paragraph 14, the charges set out in paragraph 11 are also to apply to foreign aircraft not listed in the Italian aircraft register if they spend more than 48 hours in the country. State aircraft or comparable aircraft operating on the State's behalf, rescue aircraft and flying schools are to be exempt from the levy. The exemption also applies to aircraft owned or operated by the Aero Club d'Italia. It is open to question whether the exemption for Italian flying clubs, or rather the non-exemption for foreign flying clubs, contravenes the principle of equality, because foreign clubs are clearly placed at a disadvantage in comparison with domestic clubs. This levy thus only affects private and foreign aircraft operators and will hit small, non-profit-making clubs particularly hard. This would have a negative impact on Italian tourism, thus making the introduction of this levy counterproductive.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. Is a provision of this kind compatible with Union law?

3. Does the Commission also consider that this provision infringes the ban on discrimination?

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

The European Commission received a complaint which raises the issue of the equal treatment of European flying clubs under the 'Salva Italia' Decree Law. The Honourable Member of the European Parliament is therefore informed that the Commission is aware of the situation outlined in his enquiry and is currently investigating the matter.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001259/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(10 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Νέες αντι-μειονοτικές ενέργειες των αλβανικών αρχών, κατά παράβαση του κράτους δικαίου

Την Παρασκευή 27 Ιανουαρίου 2012, ομάδα ανδρών της αλβανικής αστυνομίας, καταπατώντας κάθε έννοια του κράτους δικαίου, χωρίς να επιδείξουν ένταλμα εισαγγελικής αρχής, εισέβαλαν βίαια και με καλυμμένα τα πρόσωπα στην οικία του προέδρου της μειονοτικής οργάνωσης «Ομόνοια», της Περιφέρειας Κορυτσάς και αντιπροέδρου του κόμματος «Εθνική Ελληνική Μειονότητα για το Μέλλον» (MEGA), κ. Ναούμ Ντίσο. Προκάλεσαν μάλιστα σοβαρές φθορές εντός της κατοικίας του. Τα γεγονότα αυτά έγιναν σε συνέχεια καταφανώς αβάσιμων κατηγοριών για δήθεν «βεβήλωση τάφων» στην Μπομποστίτσα Κορυτσάς -κάτι που αποτελεί σκόπιμη διαστρέβλωση των πραγματικών γεγονότων, τα οποία ουδεμία σχέση έχουν με τις κατασκευασμένες κατηγορίες κατά του ελληνικής καταγωγής αλβανού πολίτη, Ναούμ Ντίσο.

Η περίπτωση Ντίσο αποτελεί το πιο πρόσφατο επεισόδιο, σε μια σειρά αντιμειονοτικών ενεργειών των αλβανικών αρχών, όπως εκείνα που συνέβησαν κατά τη διάρκεια της πρόσφατης διαδικασίας απογραφής μετά την εμφανώς υπαγορευμένη από πολιτικές σκοπιμότητες απόφαση του Συνταγματικού Δικαστηρίου της Αλβανίας να μην αναγράφεται η εθνικότητα των ερωτωμένων σε συνδυασμό με πρακτικές συστηματικού εκφοβισμού τους, με αποτέλεσμα να μην μπορούν να ασκήσουν ελεύθερα το ατομικό δικαίωμα του αυτοπροσδιορισμού. Ιδιαίτερη σημασία έχει ότι οι πρακτικές αυτές των αλβανικών αρχών εφαρμόζονται κατά κύριο λόγο σε περιοχές όπου το αλβανικό κράτος αρνείται να αναγνωρίσει την ύπαρξη Εθνικής Ελληνικής Μειονότητας (για παράδειγμα περιοχές Κορυτσάς, Πρεμετής, Λεσκοβικίου, Χιμάρας κ.ά.).

Κατόπιν αυτών, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Είναι ενήμερη για τα πρόσφατα αυτά γεγονότα;

2. Θεωρεί ότι η Αλβανία, που επιδιώκει να είναι υποψήφια προς ένταξη στην ΕΕ χώρα, ικανοποιεί τα κριτήρια για πλήρη σεβασμό των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων και για την προστασία των δικαιωμάτων των μειονοτήτων;

3. Προτίθεται να επισημάνει ακόμα μια φορά στις αλβανικές αρχές τις υποχρεώσεις της έναντι της Εθνικής Ελληνικής Μειονότητας, όπως αυτές απορρέουν από τις Διεθνείς Συμβάσεις και Πρωτόκολλα τα οποία έχει υπογράψει η Αλβανία;

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

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος στην απάντησή της στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-000864/2012 του κ. Σαλαβράκου ([1]).

Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη σχετικά με την περίπτωση του κ. Naum Disho (γνωστού και ως κ. Nahum Ntiso) και της καταδίκης του σε φυλάκιση ενός χρόνου για τη βεβήλωση τάφων στο νεκροταφείο της Μπομποστίτσα κατά τη διάρκεια έργων για την ανέγερση μνημείου προς τιμήν δύο Ελλήνων στρατιωτών που απεβίωσαν το 1940. Η Επιτροπή δεν δύναται να σχολιάζει μεμονωμένες υποθέσεις και δικαστικές αποφάσεις. Σε περίπτωση που ο ενδιαφερόμενος επιθυμεί να διαμαρτυρηθεί σχετικά με τη μεταχείρισή του από τις αρχές επιβολής του νόμου, του συνιστάται να απευθυνθεί στα αρμόδια αλβανικά όργανα, όπως το Γραφείο του Συνηγόρου του Πολίτη.

Το αλβανικό Σύνταγμα παρέχει προστασία των αστικών, οικονομικών, κοινωνικών και πολιτικών δικαιωμάτων των μειονοτήτων. Το νομικό και πολιτικό πλαίσιο της Αλβανίας που διέπει τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα, καθώς και τον σεβασμό και την προστασία των μειονοτήτων, έχει ήδη σε μεγάλο βαθμό θεσπιστεί και ανταποκρίνεται, σε γενικές γραμμές, στα ευρωπαϊκά και διεθνή πρότυπα. Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί στενά τις εξελίξεις της κατάστασης στον τομέα της προστασίας των μειονοτήτων και παρουσιάζει τα αποτελέσματα της αξιολόγησής της στην ετήσια έκθεση προόδου της. Η χώρα ενθαρρύνεται να εντείνει τις προσπάθειες της για την εφαρμογή των δεσμεύσεων που έχει αναλάβει σε αυτόν τον τομέα σύμφωνα με τις συστάσεις της συμβουλευτικής επιτροπής στους κόλπους της Σύμβασης-Πλαισίου για την Προστασία των Εθνικών Μειονοτήτων.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001259/12
to the Commission
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Fresh action by the Albanian authorities targeting minorities in breach of national law

On Friday, 27 January 2012, a number of Albanian police officers with their faces concealed forced their way into Mr Nahum Ntiso's home in a manner totally inadmissible under national law and without showing any official warrant issued by the public prosecutor. Mr Ntiso is the leader of the Korytsa regional branch of 'Omonia' a minority organisation, and deputy leader of the political party 'Ethnic Greek Minority for the Future' (MEGA). The intruders caused serious damage to the premises. These events occurred following clearly unfounded allegations of the apparent 'desecration of graves' in Bobostitsa, Korytsa — a deliberate distortion of the facts, to which the fabricated allegations against Mr Nohum Ntiso, an Albanian citizen of Greek origin, bear no relation whatsoever.

The Ntiso affair is the latest episode in a series of anti-minority actions by the Albanian authorities, in line with similar incidents that occurred during the recent census, following the clearly politically-motivated decision by the Albanian Constitutional Court not to record the ethnicity of citizens. This, together with the systematic intimidation of minorities, has prevented them from freely exercising their individual right of self-determination. Of special significance is the fact that these tactics by the Albanian authorities are being used mainly in areas where the Albanian State refuses to recognise the existence of an ethnic Greek minority (e.g. in the Korytsa, Premeti, Leskovikio, Himara areas, etc.).

In view of this:

1. Is the Commission aware of these recent events?

2. Does it think that Albania, which hopes to be considered for accession to the EU, can fully meet the criteria of respect for human rights and for the protection of minority rights?

3. Does the Commission intend once more to point out to the Albanian authorities their obligations with regard to the ethnic Greek minority under the international conventions and agreements to which Albania is a signatory?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the reply given to previous Written Question E-000864/2012 by Mr Salavrakos ([1]).

The Commission is aware of the case of Mr Naum Disho (also referred to sometimes as Mr Nahum Ntiso) and his sentencing to a one-year prison sentence for the desecration of graves in Boboshtice cemetery during building works on a monument for two Greek soldiers who died in 1940. The Commission cannot comment on individual cases and court decisions. Should the person concerned have any grievances regarding his treatment by the law enforcement authorities, he is encouraged to address the relevant Albanian institutions such as the People's Advocate Office.

The Albanian Constitution provides for the protection of the civil, economic, social and political rights of minorities. The Albanian legal and policy framework regulating human rights and the respect for and protection of minorities is largely in place and broadly corresponds to European and international standards. The Commission follows closely developments in the situation of minority protection and presents its assessment in its annual Progress Report. The country is encouraged to upgrade its efforts to implement commitments in this field in line with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee of Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001260/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(10 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Κίνδυνος απαξίωσης της ακίνητης περιουσίας λόγω αδυναμίας πληρωμής φόρων και στεγαστικών δανείων

Ανησυχία προκαλούν τα αποτελέσματα πρόσφατης έρευνας που εκπόνησε στην Ελλάδα εταιρεία ερευνών για τον κλάδο των ιδιόκτητων ακινήτων σύμφωνα με τα οποία:

— Ένας στους δύο ιδιοκτήτες (50,8 %) δηλώνει ότι δεν θα μπορεί να πληρώσει τον επόμενο χρόνο τους φόρους στα ακίνητα (ΕΤΑΚ, ειδικό τέλος μέσω ΔΕΗ κ.λπ.)

— το 48,2 % δηλώνει ότι το 2012 δεν θα μπορεί να εξοφλεί έγκαιρα τις δόσεις του δανείου που πήρε για αγορά ακινήτου όταν σήμερα ένας στους έξι ιδιοκτήτες (16,5 %) δηλώνει ότι εξοφλεί κανονικά και έγκαιρα τις δόσεις.

— Το ποσό που εκταμιεύουν οι ιδιοκτήτες για να πληρώσουν το φοροεισπτρακτικό μέτρο του τέλους ακίνητης περιουσίας αντιστοιχεί σε 1 ως 4 ενοίκια ετησίως, χωρίς να υπολογίζονται οι λοιπές επιβαρύνσεις (φόρος εισοδήματος, ΦΑΠ, δημοτικά τέλη, κ.λπ., αλλά και οι νέες επιβαρύνσεις, όπως ενεργειακά πιστοποιητικά, πιστοποιητικά ηλεκτρολόγων, ζημιές, απλήρωτα μισθώματα κ.λπ.

Δεδομένου ότι:

— οκτώ στους δέκα Έλληνες έχουν κάποιας μορφής ιδιοκτησία (διαμέρισμα, μονοκατοικία ή επαγγελματικό χώρο) και σχεδόν οι μισοί (43,6 %) έχουν πάρει στεγαστικό δάνειο για αγορά ακινήτου, βάσει των παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Υπάρχουν διαθέσιμα στοιχεία σχετικά με τη μέση επιβάρυνση της ακίνητης περιουσίας από την κρατική φορολογία ανά κράτος μέλος και σε ποιο ύψος κυμαίνεται αυτή;

2. Με δεδομένο ότι η στέγη και, κατά συνέπεια, η ατομική ιδιοκτησία αποτελεί δικαίωμα, με ποιους τρόπους προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να διασφαλίσει την προστασία της από αλλεπάλληλες φοροεισπρακτικές επιδρομές, με τις οποίες το κράτος καθίσταται ουσιαστικά συνιδιοκτήτης στην ακίνητη περιουσία του μέσου έλληνα πολίτη και καθιστά ασύμφορη ακόμα και τη διατήρησή της;

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

1. Η δομή της φορολογίας ακίνητης περιουσίας διαφέρει σημαντικά μεταξύ των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ, όπως και τα έσοδα από τον τομέα αυτόν, όπως φαίνεται στον πίνακα που αποστέλλεται απευθείας στο Αξιότιμο Μέλος και στη Γραμματεία του Κοινοβουλίου. Ενώ ορισμένες χώρες βασίζονται περισσότερο στους φόρους επί των συναλλαγών, στην πλειονότητα των κρατών μελών το μεγαλύτερο μέρος του ποσού των φόρων ακίνητης περιουσίας προέρχεται από περιοδικούς φόρους. Δεδομένου ότι τους εν λόγω φόρους τους διαχειρίζονται συχνά οι αρχές τοπικής αυτοδιοίκησης (π.χ. στη DE, PL, FR, IT, κ.λπ.), τα σχετικά ποσοστά διαφέρουν μεταξύ των δικαιοδοσιών, παρότι τα ανώτατα όρια μπορούν να καθορίζονται σε κεντρικό επίπεδο (π.χ. στην Πολωνία) ή με αποκεντρωμένο τρόπο (π.χ. για τον «taxe d'habitation» και τον «taxe foncière» στη Γαλλία). Το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου μπορεί να συμβουλευθεί τη βάση δεδομένων «Taxes in Europe» ([1]), για λεπτομερείς πληροφορίες σχετικά με το σχεδιασμό των φόρων ακίνητης περιουσίας στα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ.

2. Εφόσον τηρούν τις υποχρεώσεις τους βάσει της Συνθήκης, τα κράτη μέλη μπορούν να σχεδιάζουν τα φορολογικά τους συστήματα (συμπεριλαμβανομένης της φορολόγησης της ακίνητης περιουσίας) για να επιτύχουν τους πολιτικούς στόχους τους κατά το δοκούν. Θα πρέπει να σημειωθεί ότι αρκετά κράτη μέλη (π.χ. LV, FR, DE, HU) έχουν αυξήσει τους περιοδικούς φόρους ακίνητης περιουσίας τα τελευταία χρόνια για την παγίωση των εσόδων ([2]). Σε περιόδους επιτακτικών δημοσιονομικών αναγκών, οι μεταρρυθμίσεις αυτές — στο πλαίσιο μιας γενικής μεταστροφής από τους άμεσους φόρους που προκαλούν στρεβλώσεις — είναι επιθυμητές και από την προοπτική της τόνωσης της ανάπτυξης. Πράγματι, η οικονομική βιβλιογραφία εκτιμά ότι οι φόροι ακίνητης περιουσίας (παράλληλα με τους φόρους κατανάλωσης και τους περιβαλλοντικούς φόρους) είναι λιγότερο επιζήμιοι για την ανάπτυξη από ό,τι οι φόροι εισοδήματος και οι φόροι επί της εργασίας.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/gen_info/info_docs/tax_inventory/index_en.htm

([2]) Η έκθεση για τις φορολογικές μεταρρυθμίσεις στα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ διατίθεται στον ακόλουθο ιστότοπο:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2011/pdf/ee-2011-5_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001260/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Danger of property depreciation resulting from inability to pay taxes and mortgages

Concern has been caused by the recent findings of a research company regarding the private property sector in Greece, according to which:

— Half the property owners (50.8 %) state that they will be unable to pay property taxes (ETAK flat-rate property tax, the special charge collected by the Public Power Corporation — DEI, etc.) next year.

— 42.8 % say that in 2012 they will not be able to make their mortgage repayments on time, just one-sixth of owners (16.5 %) now indicating that they are making their repayments regularly and on time.

— The amount that owners are paying in taxes and property charges equates to one to four rents annually, without taking into consideration other taxes (income tax, VAT, municipal taxes, etc.), as well as new charges, such as energy certificates or electrician's certificates, not to mention damage, unpaid wages, etc.

Given that eight out of ten Greeks have some form of property (flat, one-family house or office) and almost half (43.6 %) have a mortgage, can the Commission provide the following information:

1. Is information available regarding average national property tax by Member State? How much is it?

2. Given that entitlement to a home and hence property ownership are individual rights, how does the Commission intend to protect property ownership from repeated tax raids through which the State effectively assumes joint ownership of the average Greek citizen's property, thus making it uneconomical to maintain?

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

1. The structure of property taxation varies widely across EU Member States, as does the revenue from this area, as shown in the table sent directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat. While some countries rely more on transaction taxes, in the majority of Member States the bulk of the tax taken from property comes from recurrent taxes. As the latter are often administered by the local authorities (e.g. in DE, PL, FR, IT, etc) the relevant rates differ across jurisdictions, although the ceilings might be determined in a centralised (e.g. in PL) or decentralised way (e.g. for the *taxe d'habitation* and *taxe foncière* in FR). The Honourable Member may consult the 'Taxes in Europe' database [1] for detailed information on the design of property taxes in the EU Member States.

2. Provided they observe their Treaty obligations, Member States may design their tax systems (including property taxation) to meet their policy objectives as they see fit. It should be noted that several Member States (e.g. LV, FR, DE, HU) have increased recurrent taxes on immovable property in the past years to consolidate revenues [2]. In times of pressing budgetary needs, such reforms — in the framework of a general shift away from distortionary direct taxes — are desirable also from a growth-enhancing perspective. Indeed, the economic literature finds that property taxes (alongside consumption and environmental taxes) are less detrimental to growth than income and labour taxes.

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(1) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/gen_info/info_docs/tax_inventory/index_en.htm
(2) Report on Tax Reforms in the EU Member States, available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2011/pdf/ee-2011-5_en.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001261/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(10 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Κίνδυνος κατασχέσεων περιουσιακών στοιχείων σε φορολογούμενους που δεν πληρώνουν το τέλος ακινήτων

Στο πλαίσιο της γενικότερης δυσκολίας των Ελλήνων πολιτών να αντεπεξέλθουν στην αποπληρωμή του δυσβάσταχτου φόρου για τα ακίνητα, κατατέθηκε επιπλέον τροπολογία στην ελληνική Βουλή που υπογραμμίζει ότι: μετά παρέλευση τεσσάρων μηνών από τη λήξη της προθεσμίας πληρωμής της πρώτης δόσης του έκτακτου ειδικού τέλους ακίνητης περιουσίας που επέβαλλε η κυβέρνηση, την είσπραξη του χρέους θα αναλαμβάνει η αρμόδια εφορία, εφαρμόζοντας ακόμα και μέτρα αναγκαστικής είσπραξης, όπως για παράδειγμα κατασχέσεις περιουσιακών στοιχείων, σε όσους φορολογούμενους δεν πληρώνουν το εν λόγω τέλος.

Η συγκεκριμένη τροπολογία έρχεται σε συνέχεια της πρόσφατης έκδοσης εντολών διακοπής ρεύματος για χιλιάδες καταναλωτές, από τη Δημόσια Επιχείρηση Ηλεκτρισμού (ΔΕΗ) της χώρας, η οποία έχει αναλάβει να εισπράξει μέσω των τιμολογίων της το τέλος ακινήτων, καθώς είχε εκπνεύσει η προθεσμία των 80 ημερών που παρέχει η ελληνική νομοθεσία για την αποπληρωμή του. Ενέργεια κατάφορα άδικη, που έρχεται σε αντίθεση με τις ασφαλιστικές δικλείδες που παρέχει η ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία και τις διατάξεις του νόμου για την προστασία των ευάλωτων καταναλωτών, καθώς και την εξαίρεση καταναλωτών από διακοπή ρεύματος, βάσει σχετικής υπουργικής απόφασης.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Δεδομένης της δυσκολίας των ελληνικών νοικοκυριών να ανταποκριθούν, για αντικειμενικούς λόγους, σε πλήθος έκτακτων φόρων, πώς κρίνει το ενδεχόμενο εφαρμογής της εν λόγω τροπολογίας όταν αυτή μάλιστα έρχεται και σε άμεση αντίθεση με την ανάγκη προστασίας της περιουσίας εκατοντάδων χιλιάδων πολιτών που αντιμετωπίζουν συνθήκες ένδειας;

2. Με δεδομένο ότι δεν υπάρχει ακόμα ξεκάθαρη εικόνα του ποιοι φορολογούμενοι συγκαταλέγονται στις ευάλωτες ομάδες και στις κατηγορίες που για αντικειμενικούς λόγους αδυνατούν να πληρώσουν το τέλος, πώς μπορεί να προστατευτεί η περιουσία αυτών των ομάδων;

3. Υπάρχουν περιπτώσεις κρατών μελών που έχουν εφαρμόσει παρόμοια μέτρα αναγκαστικής είσπραξης φορολογικών υποχρεώσεων με κατάσχεση περιουσιακών στοιχείων; Και αν ναι, υπό ποιες προϋποθέσεις (ύψος οφειλών, χρονικά περιθώρια αποπληρωμής);

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

1. Τα μέτρα δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης μπορούν να οδηγήσουν βραχυπρόθεσμα σε συρρίκνωση της οικονομικής δραστηριότητας. Από την πείρα προκύπτουν, ωστόσο, αποτελεσματικοί τρόποι για τη μείωση του δημοσίου ελλείμματος. Πρώτον, η δημοσιονομική εξυγίανση που βασίζεται στις δαπάνες έχει πιο μακροπρόθεσμα αποτελέσματα σε σχέση με αυτή που βασίζεται στα έσοδα. Δεύτερον, η φορολόγηση των περιουσιακών στοιχείων είναι λιγότερο στρεβλωτική από τους φόρους εισοδήματος. Ο μη περιορισμός του υψηλού δημόσιου ελλείμματος θα επιδείνωνε τις μεσοπρόθεσμες προοπτικές του ελληνικού λαού, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των πλέον ευάλωτων πληθυσμιακών ομάδων.

2. Η νομοθεσία της ΕΕ για την ενεργειακή αγορά περιλαμβάνει διατάξεις για την προστασία των καταναλωτών και εγγυήσεις για τους ευάλωτους πελάτες. Τα κράτη μέλη (ΚΜ) ([1]) είναι υποχρεωμένα να προβούν στη λήψη κατάλληλων μέτρων και σε ικανοποιητικές διασφαλίσεις για την προστασία των ευάλωτων καταναλωτών. Η Επιτροπή αναλύει την εφαρμογή των κανόνων αυτών στα κράτη μέλη.

Πάντως, η ελληνική νομοθεσία για τον φόρο ακίνητης περιουσίας προβλέπει ότι η έκτακτη εισφορά ανέρχεται σε 0,5 ευρώ ανά τετραγωνικό μέτρο για συγκεκριμένες κοινωνικές κατηγορίες, όπως είναι οι πολυμελείς οικογένειες ή τα άτομα με αναπηρίες. Επιπλέον, η έκτακτη εισφορά δεν εφαρμόζεται σε ακίνητα που είναι ιδιοχρησιμοποιούμενα και ανήκουν, μεταξύ άλλων, σε μακροχρόνια ανέργους, ενώ αφήνει τις λεπτομερείς ρυθμίσεις των κανονισμών της σε υπουργική απόφαση.

([1]) Κράτη μέλη.

3. Λογαριασμοί για προϊόντα και υπηρεσίες κοινής ωφέλειας έχουν ήδη χρησιμοποιηθεί σε ορισμένες ευρωπαϊκές χώρες για την είσπραξη δημοτικών φόρων ή τελών τηλεοπτικών υπηρεσιών. Οι ρυθμίσεις για την είσπραξη των φόρων, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της προσφυγής σε κατάσχεση περιουσιακών στοιχείων, είναι θέμα αρμοδιότητας των ΚΜ. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει αντίρρηση για την τέτοιου τύπου είσπραξη φόρων και για τους μηχανισμούς επιβολής του νόμου, εφόσον συμμορφώνονται με τις ισχύουσες κανονιστικές διατάξεις.

Τέλος, το πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής στοχεύει στην ενίσχυση των δημοσιονομικών της Ελλάδας μέσα από την αναδιάρθρωση του εισπρακτικού μηχανισμού και του συστήματος δημοσιονομικής διαχείρισης.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001261/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Danger of confiscation of assets of taxpayers who fail to pay the property charge

At a time when Greek citizens are in general struggling to pay heavy property taxes, an amendment has been tabled by the Greek Parliament to the effect that, on the expiry of four months from the deadline for payment of the first instalment of the temporary special property charge imposed by the Government, the amount outstanding will be collected by the competent tax office, thus being enforceable by measures such as the confiscation of assets of those taxpayers who have failed to make payment.

The specific amendment follows the recent instructions by DEI, the Greek Public Power Corporation, which has undertaken to collect the property charge by including it on its bills, to cut off the electricity supply to thousands of consumers on expiry of the statutory 80-day deadline for payment of the charge. This is grossly unfair, removing as it does the safety net provided under European and Greek law to safeguard vulnerable consumers, while infringing the specific ministerial decision regarding exemptions from power cutoffs.

In view of this:

1. Given the genuine difficulties encountered by Greek households in paying a multitude of special taxes, what view does the Commission take of the implementation of this amendment which is the direct opposite of what is needed to protect the assets of hundreds of thousands of citizens threatened with poverty?

2. In the absence of any clear definition of which taxpayers fall into categories acknowledged as vulnerable or genuinely unable to afford the charge, how can the assets of these groups be protected?

3. Have any other Member States imposed similar compulsory tax collection measures enforceable by confiscation of assets? If so, subject to what conditions (amounts owed, payment deadlines)?

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

1. Fiscal consolidation measures may lead in the short term to a contraction in economic activity. Experience points nonetheless to effective ways of reducing the public deficit. Firstly, expenditure based consolidation has longer lasting effects, relative to revenue based consolidation. Secondly, property taxes are less distortionary than income taxes. Failing to curb the high public deficit will only aggravate the medium-term prospects of the Greek people, including the most vulnerable.

2. The EU energy market legislation contains provisions on consumer protection and guarantees for vulnerable customers. Member States (MS) ([1]) are obliged to take appropriate measures and ensure satisfactory safeguards to protect vulnerable customers. The Commission is analysing the application of these rules in MS.

In any case, the Greek law providing for the property tax specifies that the special levy shall be EUR 0.5 per square meter for specific social categories, such as large families or the disabled. In addition, the special levy is not applied to a property that is owner-occupied and belongs, *inter alia*, to a long-term unemployed, while leaving the details of its regulations to a ministerial decision.

3. Utility bills have been used in some European countries for the collection of municipal taxes or broadcast reception fees. The arrangements for collection of taxes, including the recourse to confiscation, are a matter of MS' competence. The Commission does not object to this tax collection and enforcement mechanisms as long as they comply with applicable regulations.

Lastly, the economic adjustment programme aims at strengthening Greece's fiscal institutions through a restructuring of its revenue administration and public financial management system.

([1]) Member States.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001262/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(10 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Αναγκαία η άμεση και αποτελεσματική αντιμετώπιση του φαινομένου υποσιτισμού μαθητών σε ελληνικά σχολεία, με την ευρωπαϊκή συνδρομή

Όπως προκύπτει από δημοσιεύματα στον Τύπο, αλλά και μαρτυρίες, ανακοινώσεις και στοιχεία δασκάλων, καθηγητών και συλλόγων γονέων και κηδεμόνων, αυξάνονται με δραματικούς ρυθμούς τα περιστατικά μαθητών με ενδείξεις υποσιτισμού και λιποθυμικά επεισόδια λόγω ασιτίας σε σχολεία της χώρας. Από την πλευρά του το αρμόδιο υπουργείο Παιδείας, Δια Βίου Μάθησης και Θρησκευμάτων ανακοίνωσε πρόσφατα ότι πρόκειται να θέσει σε εφαρμογή πιλοτικό πρόγραμμα σε 18 σχολεία περιοχών της πρωτεύουσας που εμφανίζουν έντονα κοινωνικοοικονομικά προβλήματα, ώστε να προσφέρονται δωρεάν με κουπόνια μικρογεύματα σε όλους τους μαθητές των σχολείων αυτών.

Παρά τις καλές προθέσεις, οι πρωτόγνωρα δύσκολες, για την ελληνική κοινωνία, οικονομικές συνθήκες επιτάσσουν συνολική και όχι αποσπασματική παρέμβαση των αρμόδιων αρχών για την άμεση και ουσιαστική αντιμετώπιση του φαινομένου σε όλη του την έκταση.

Βάσει των παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Είναι ενήμερη σχετικά με τα προαναφερθέντα περιστατικά; Ποια άλλη κράτη μέλη αντιμετωπίζουν ίδια ή παρόμοια ζητήματα;

2. Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη το μέγεθος της οικονομικής κρίσης και τις δυσκολίες χρηματοδότησης που αντιμετωπίζει η χώρα, με ποιό τρόπο μπορεί να συνδράμει η ΕΕ την προσπάθεια για την ουσιαστική αντιμετώπιση του εν λόγω φαινομένου; Ποια είναι τα διαθέσιμα χρηματοδοτικά εργαλεία που θα μπορούσαν να αξιοποιηθούν προς αυτή την κατεύθυνση;

3. Υπάρχουν διαθέσιμες καλές πρακτικές κρατών μελών αναφορικά με παρεμβάσεις κοινωνικής υποστήριξης, εκπαιδευτικής ενίσχυσης και προνοιακής παροχής σε περιοχές με αυξημένο αριθμό οικογενειών που αντιμετωπίζουν συνθήκες ένδειας;

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

1. Όπως τονίζεται στην ετήσια έρευνα για την ανάπτυξη το 2012, υπάρχουν ενδείξεις ότι το ποσοστό των παιδιών που ζουν υπό συνθήκες φτώχειας ή κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού παρουσιάζει αύξηση σε μερικές χώρες της ΕΕ. Αυτό φαίνεται από τους δείκτες που μετρούν π.χ. το ποσοστό των παιδιών που απειλούνται από τη φτώχεια, των παιδιών που ζουν σε νοικοκυριά που αντιμετωπίζουν σοβαρή υλική στέρηση ή σε νοικοκυριά με χαμηλή ένταση εργασίας. Τα στοιχεία είναι διαθέσιμα από την Eurostat.

2. Η οικονομική υποστήριξη από την ΕΕ είναι επιλέξιμη για δράσεις που στοχεύουν στη βελτίωση της κατάστασης των παιδιών, μεταξύ άλλων μέσω του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης και του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Ταμείου. Όσον αφορά, ειδικότερα, τη στέρηση τροφίμων, το πρόγραμμα «Τρόφιμα υπέρ των πλέον απόρων» (που αποσκοπεί στη διανομή τροφίμων στους πλέον απόρους πολίτες της ΕΕ) διέθεσε στην Ελλάδα πάνω από 20 εκατομμύρια ευρώ στο πλαίσιο του ετήσιου προγράμματος για το 2011. Ένα ακόμη μεγαλύτερο κονδύλιο, ύψους σχεδόν 21,7 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ, θα διατεθεί στην Ελλάδα στο πλαίσιο του ετήσιου προγράμματος για το 2012 μόλις ολοκληρωθεί η τρέχουσα τροποποίηση του κανονισμού (ΕΕ) αριθ. 562/11 της Επιτροπής ([1]). Υπάρχουν δύο πρόσθετα προγράμματα που μπορούν επίσης να συμβάλλουν: πρόκειται για το πρόγραμμα «Φρούτα στα σχολεία» ([2]), με στόχο τους μαθητές από το νηπιαγωγείο έως τη δευτεροβάθμια εκπαίδευση, και το ευρωπαϊκό καθεστώς διάθεσης γαλακτοκομικών προϊόντων στα σχολεία ([3]), μέσω του οποίου τα παιδιά μπορούν να λαμβάνουν επιδοτούμενα υγιεινά γαλακτοκομικά προϊόντα.

([1]) ΕΕ L 152 της 11.6.2011.
([2]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 288/2009 της Επιτροπής, ΕΕ L 94 της 8.4.2009.
([3]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 657/2008 της Επιτροπής, ΕΕ L 183 της 11.7.2008.

3. Η Επιτροπή προωθεί τη βελτίωση των ορθά τεκμηριωμένων πολιτικών όσον αφορά την κατάσταση των ευάλωτων παιδιών, μεταξύ άλλων με την κοινωνική ανοικτή μέθοδο συντονισμού (και το πρόγραμμά της ανασκόπησης από ομοτίμους) και με την ευρωπαϊκή συμμαχία για τις οικογένειες. Εξάλλου, η Επιτροπή σκοπεύει να παρουσιάσει σύσταση για την παιδική φτώχεια εντός του έτους, με σκοπό την καθοδήγηση σε τομείς όπως η υποστήριξη των οικογενειών, η πρόσβαση στις υπηρεσίες (συμπεριλαμβανομένων της φροντίδας των παιδιών, της στέγασης, της υγείας και της εκπαίδευσης) και η συμμετοχή των παιδιών.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001262/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Need for immediate and effective measures and EU assistance in response to malnutrition among Greek school pupils

According to press articles corroborated by testimonies, statements and observations from teachers and associations of parents and guardians, the number of Greek school pupils showing signs of malnutrition and fainting from hunger is increasing dramatically. The Ministry for Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs has recently announced that it intends to launch a pilot project for the provision of free meal coupons for all pupils at 18 schools located in districts of Athens facing severe social and economic problems.

Despite such good intentions, the unprecedented economic problems afflicting Greek society call for a comprehensive rather than a piecemeal approach by the competent authorities so as to deal with the problem as a whole in a direct and effective manner.

In view of this:

1. Is the Commission aware of the problem? Which other Member States are facing similar difficulties?

2. Considering the extent of the economic crisis and the financing difficulties faced by Greece, how will the EU support this attempt to combat the problem effectively? What financing instruments are available for this purpose?

3. Are there any examples of good practices followed in Member States in terms of social support, educational assistance and welfare benefits in areas where an increased number of families are facing poverty?

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

1. As underlined in the Annual Growth Survey 2012, there are indications that the percentage of children living in poverty or social exclusion is on the rise in a number of EU countries. This is illustrated by indicators such as those measuring the rate of children at risk of poverty, living in severely materially deprived households or in households with low work intensity, available from Eurostat.

2. EU financial support is eligible for actions aimed at improving children's situation, among others through the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund. Regarding food deprivation more specifically, the 'Food for the needy' Programme (which aims to distribute food products to the most needy citizens of the EU), allocated Greece more than EUR 20 million under the 2011 annual plan. An even higher allocation, almost EUR 21.7 million, will be available for Greece under the 2012 annual plan, following the ongoing amendment of Commission Regulation (EU) 562/11 ([1]). Two additional schemes can also contribute, namely the School Fruit Scheme ([2]), which targets children in educational establishments, from nurseries to secondary schools, and the European School Milk Scheme ([3]), through which children can receive subsidised healthy dairy products.

3. The Commission promotes the improvement of evidence-based policies on the situation of vulnerable children, among others through the Social Open Method of Coordination (and its peer review programme) and the European Alliance for Families. Besides, the Commission intends to present a recommendation on child poverty this year, which will aim at providing guidance in areas such as support to families, access to services (including childcare, housing, health and education) and children's participation.

([1]) OJ L 152, 11.6.2011.
([2]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 288/2009, OJ L 94, 8.4.2009.
([3]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 657/2008, OJ L 183, 11.7.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001263/12
to the Commission
Brian Simpson (S&D)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Metal and cable theft from railways

Is the Commission aware of the serious problem of metal and cable theft taking place on UK and European railways, which is not only endangering life but costing the industry millions of euros?

Can the Commission indicate what steps it intends to take with Member States to stop not only the thefts but also the fact of the stolen goods being transferred across national borders and sold to scrap metal dealers over whom there is no control or regulation?

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

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the reply it provided to Question E-008787/2011 ([1]).

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

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-001264/12
до Комисията
Андрей Ковачев (PPE)
(10 февруари 2012 г.)

Относно: 2014 г. — Европейска година на борбата с мозъчните заболявания

Обединение от около 200 организации, водени от Европейския мозъчен съвет, отправи искане към европейските институции да обявят 2014 г. за Европейска година на борбата с мозъчните заболявания. Искането беше подкрепено от полското председателство на Съвета на ЕС. През ноември 2011 г. се проведе конференция на експерти под надслов „Първи европейски ден на борбата с мозъчните заболявания — застаряване, инсулт, болест на Алцхаймер: търсене на иновативни решения“. Направените след конференцията заключения съдържат препоръка от страна на полското председателство за определяне на 2014 г. за Европейска година на борбата с мозъчните заболявания. Заключенията бяха представени на заседание на Съвета (EPSCO) на 2 декември 2011 г.

Предвид гореизложеното, би ли могла Комисията да се произнесе дали подкрепя тази инициатива за Европейска година на борбата с мозъчните заболявания? Какви конкретни стъпки предприема тя във връзка с въпросите, които би поставила една такава година?

Отговор, даден от г-жа Гейгън-Куин от името на Комисията
(20 март 2012 г.)

Комисията приканва уважаемия член на Парламента да се позове на отговорите, предоставени от Комисията на писмени въпроси E-011832/2011 и E-012578/2011 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001264/12
to the Commission
Andrey Kovatchev (PPE)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: 2014, 'European Year of the Brain'

A coalition of some 200 organisations, led by the European Brain Council, has called on the European institutions to make 2014 the European Year of the Brain. This call has been backed up by the Polish Council presidency. In November 2011 a conference of experts was held under the title 'First European Day of the Brain — Ageing, Stroke and Alzheimer's Disease: Finding Innovative Solutions'. The post-conference conclusions contained a recommendation on the part of the Polish presidency that 2014 be designated the European Year of the Brain. These conclusions were presented at a Council meeting (EPSCO) on 2 December 2011.

In view of the above, can the Commission state whether it supports this initiative for a European Year of the Brain? What concrete steps is it taking to deal with the issues that such a year would address?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Questions E-011832/2011 and E-012578/2011 ([1]).

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

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-001265/12
till kommissionen
Anna Hedh (S&D)
(10 februari 2012)

Angående: Investering i alkoholpolitik

Kan kommissionen, efter rådets slutsatser från december 2009 om alkohol och hälsa, upplysa parlamentet om den förväntade tidsplanen för att definiera prioriteringarna för nästa fas i kommissionens arbete om alkoholrelaterade skador?

Det är mycket troligt – om inte säkert – att de investeringar som görs nu i en effektiv alkoholpolitik kommer att rädda liv i framtiden. Kan kommissionen därför berätta för parlamentet hur mycket pengar den har investerat i alkoholpolitiken tidigare, och hur mycket den planerar att investera i framtiden?

Svar från John Dalli på kommissionens vägnar
(19 mars 2012)

Kommissionen verkar för att minska den skadliga alkoholkonsumtionen inom ramen för förebyggandet av icke-överförbara sjukdomar och särskilt genom EU-strategin ([1]) för att stödja medlemsstaterna i arbetet med att minska de alkoholrelaterade skadorna, som antogs 2006. Kommissionen arbetar också tillsammans med berörda parter för att inom EU samordna åtgärder för att nå specifika mål, såsom att öka medvetenheten om skadlig alkoholkonsumtion, minska ungdomarnas exponering för marknadsföring av och reklam för alkohol samt genomföra åldersgränser.

Eftersom alkoholpolitiken faller under medlemsstaternas befogenheter, är kommissionens uppgift att stödja utvecklingen och utbytet av kunskap och god praxis. För att fullgöra denna uppgift använder sig EU av olika finansieringsinstrument.

Sedan 2007 har man inom EU:s ramprogram för forskning beviljat ungefär 49 miljoner euro för forskning om alkohol och hälsa. Ett av de viktiga projekt som finansierats tidigare är Druid ([2]), som fått 19 miljoner euro. Sedan 2007 har man också genom EU:s hälsoprogram gett stöd på ytterligare 9 miljoner euro till alkoholrelaterade projekt. Inom ramen för EU:s jordbrukspolitik har dessutom ca 1,5 miljon euro avsatts varje år för att informera om ansvarsfulla konsumtionsmönster och verkningarna av farlig alkoholkonsumtion. Genom EU:s ungdomsstrategi främjas slutligen en sund livsstil för unga människor och förebyggande åtgärder, bl.a. när det gäller alkoholmissbruk. En av prioriteringarna inom programmet Aktiv ungdom (2007-2013) för 2012 är stöd till projekt som främjar sunda vanor.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0200:FIN:SV:PDF.
([2]) Driving Under the Influence of Drugs, Alcohol and Medicines.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001265/12
to the Commission
Anna Hedh (S&D)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Investment in alcohol policy

Following on from the December 2009 Council conclusions on alcohol and health, could the Commission share with Parliament the expected timeline for the definition of priorities for the next phase of the Commission's work on alcohol-related harm?

It is highly probable — if not certain — that current investments in effective alcohol policy will save lives in the future. Could the Commission therefore tell Parliament how much money it has invested in alcohol policy in the past, and how much it plans to invest in the future?

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

The Commission is working to reduce harmful alcohol use in the context of the prevention of non-communicable diseases and in particular through the EU strategy ([1]) to support Member States in reducing alcohol related harm adopted in 2006. Moreover, the Commission works with stakeholders to coordinate action across the EU on specific objectives such as raising awareness on harmful alcohol use, reducing exposure of youth to alcohol marketing and advertising, and implementing age limits.

As alcohol policy remains a prerogative of the Member States, the Commission's role is to support the development and exchange of knowledge and good practice. To fulfil this role, EU is using various funding instruments.

Since 2007, approximately EUR 49 million has been granted under the EU Research Framework Programme for research on alcohol and health; major projects funded earlier include DRUID ([2]) with EUR 19 million. Also since 2007, the EU Health Programme has supported alcohol related projects with worth an additional EUR 9 million. In addition, in the framework of EU agricultural policy, approximately EUR 1.5 million have been allocated yearly for information measures on responsible drinking and the effects of hazardous alcohol consumption. Finally, the EU Youth Strategy fosters healthy lifestyles for young people and preventive measures including in relation to alcohol abuse. One of the priorities of the Youth in Action Programme (2007-2013) for 2012 is to support projects promoting healthy behaviours.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0200:FIN:EN:PDF.
([2]) Driving Under the Influence of Drugs, Alcohol and Medicines.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001266/12
to the Commission
David Martin (S&D)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Mandatory installation of CCTV in EU abattoirs

Recent secret video footage released by the animal rights charity Animal Aid graphically shows the extreme mistreatment of animals in six out of seven UK abattoirs. The footage shows cows, pigs and sheep being kicked and beaten before they are slaughtered. It also raises concerns that animals are not being correctly stunned before slaughter.

Following this footage, momentum is growing to have all abattoirs fitted with CCTV cameras, in order to improve standards of animal welfare and to hold those guilty of malpractice to account.

Given that Article 13 TEU recognises that 'animals are sentient beings' and states that we should 'pay full regard to the welfare requirements of animals', does the Commission intend to come forward with any proposals for legislation for the mandatory installation of CCTV cameras in abattoirs throughout the EU?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-005026/2011 ([1]).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001268/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(10 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Afghanistan: uccisa dal marito per aver partorito solo figlie femmine

Estorai, una ragazza afghana di 22 anni, è stata trovata morta in casa da un vicino la scorsa settimana in un villaggio sperduto nella provincia settentrionale di Kunduz.

La donna è stata uccisa dal marito Sher Mohammad, di 30 anni, perché colpevole di aver partorito tre figlie femmine. Alla nascita della terza bambina, tre mesi fa, Sher ha cominciato seriamente a pensare a come liberarsi della moglie per la mancata venuta al mondo di un erede maschio. In questo terribile progetto è stato aiutato dalla madre.

In carcere, per ora, c'è solo la suocera della vittima, mentre il marito omicida è riuscito a fuggire ed è tuttora latitante.

Si chiede pertanto:

1. può il Vice-Presidente/Alto Rappresentante far sapere quali politiche intende avviare per assicurare la libertà e il rispetto della dignità umana in Afghanistan?

2. quali azioni hanno intrapreso il Vice-Presidente/Alto Rappresentante e la Commissione per evitare casi come quelli di Estorai in Afghanistan?

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

Il monitoraggio dei diritti umani assicurato sul posto in Afghanistan dalla delegazione dell'Unione europea, in consultazione con gli ambasciatori dell'UE, si estende anche agli esecrabili e ripetuti atti di violenza contro le donne. L'episodio cui l'onorevole parlamentare fa riferimento è uno dei tanti atti efferati che spesso non vengono neanche denunciati.

La tutela dei diritti umani e dei diritti delle donne va migliorando in Afghanistan, soprattutto dal 2001, e questi progressi vanno riconosciuti e consolidati. L'Unione tratta direttamente la questione con il governo afghano; la posizione dell'UE è stata chiaramente definita tramite dichiarazioni pubbliche (ad es. sui centri di accoglienza per le donne a febbraio del 2011) e ribadita dalle conclusioni del Consiglio (18/7, 14/11/11). L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha sollevato il problema con le autorità afghane alle conferenze di Kabul e Bonn e, più di recente, con il ministro degli Esteri afghano in una riunione tenutasi a dicembre 2011.

Il governo afghano si è impegnato fermamente a migliorare la situazione femminile alle conferenze internazionali di Londra e Kabul del 2010, alla conferenza di Bonn di dicembre 2011 e in una dichiarazione resa il 18 gennaio 2012.

La Commissione continua a incentrare i programmi di assistenza sulla governance e sulla riforma del sistema e delle istituzioni giudiziarie, fattore essenziale per una reale tutela dei diritti delle donne vittime di atti di violenza. I progetti dell'Unione mobilitano oltre 31 milioni di euro in aiuti diretti alle donne o, più in generale, ad azioni contro l'emarginazione femminile in campo sociale, culturale e economico, e dispensano assistenza psicologica, legale e di mediazione a quante osano sfidare le tradizioni; i progetti mirano inoltre a potenziare gli organismi attualmente preposti a dare protezione sociale e a tutelare i diritti di donne e ragazze afghane vittime di violenze domestiche o esposte a questo rischio.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001268/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Afghanistan: woman killed by her husband for only giving birth to daughters

Estorai, a 22-year-old Afghan woman, was found dead at her home by a neighbour last week in a remote village in the northern province of Kunduz.

The woman was killed by her husband, Sher Mohammad, 30, because she was guilty of having given birth to three daughters. Following the birth of the third daughter three months ago, Sher began seriously thinking about how to get rid of his wife due to her not having given birth to a male heir. He was helped in his terrible plan by his mother.

At the moment, only the victim's mother-in-law is in prison, while the murderous husband managed to escape and is still in hiding.

The Vice-President /High Representative is therefore asked to answer the following:

1. What policies does she intend to implement to ensure freedom and respect for human dignity in Afghanistan?

2. What measures have the Vice-President/High Representative and the Commission taken to avoid cases such as that of Estorai in Afghanistan?

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

The EU Delegation in Afghanistan monitors the human rights situation on the ground in consultation with EU Ambassadors, also with respect to the deplorable and continued violence against women. The incident referred to in question is terrible, only one of many and not all of these are reported.

It remains particularly important to safeguard and build upon the progress Afghanistan has made in protecting human rights and rights of women in particular since 2001. The EU brings up the issue directly with the Afghan Government regularly and makes its position clear through public statements (for example on women's shelters in February 2011) but has also reconfirmed its position in Council conclusions (18/7, 14/11/11). The High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) has discussed the matter with the Afghan authorities at both the Kabul and Bonn Conferences, and most recently in a meeting with the Afghan Foreign Minister in December 2011.

The Afghan Government has made firm commitments to improve the position of women in the context of the international conferences held in 2010 in London and Kabul, in December 2011 at the Bonn Conference and in a statement issued on 18 January 2012.

Assistance programmes of the Commission continue to focus on governance, including reform of the justice sector and its institutions, which is indispensable to uphold the rights of victims of violence against women. The EU has spent more than EUR 31 million on projects in direct support of women or addressing more broadly their social, cultural and economic marginalisation, including counselling, legal aid and mediation for women in conflict with traditions and strengthening existing bodies to exercise social protection and protect the rights of Afghan women and girls at risk or victims of domestic violence.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001270/12
alla Commissione
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(10 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Manta a rischio estinzione

L'ONG Shark Savers, nel rapporto dal titolo «Manta Ray of Hope: The Global Threat to Manta and Moluba Rays» denuncia il pericolo di estinzione delle mante, sterminate a causa dell'uso sempre più diffuso delle loro branchie nella medicina cinese.

Il mercato delle branchie di manta varrebbe già 11 milioni di dollari l'anno, spinto dalla convinzione che queste parti stimolino il sistema immunitario e possano guarire una serie di malattie, dai problemi di fertilità ad alcuni tipi di tumore. Nei mercati asiatici, la carne di manta è venduta a 500 dollari al chilo per le sue presunte capacità curative.

I bracconieri sono attratti anche dalla pelle, utilizzata per borsette e scarpe, e dalle cartilagini che vengono spacciate per quelle di squalo.

Inoltre, gli studiosi spiegano che la manta è uno degli animali più svantaggiati e meno equipaggiati nella lotta contro la pressione della pesca poiché impiega dieci anni a raggiungere la maturità sessuale e una femmina partorisce un solo piccolo ogni due o tre anni.

Pertanto, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza della situazione,

2. quali politiche intende avviare per salvaguardare la manta ed evitarne l'estinzione?

Risposta data da Maria Damanaki a nome della Commissione
(19 marzo 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza della situazione descritta dall'onorevole parlamentare riguardo alla forte vulnerabilità della manta gigante, al rischio di estinzione delle popolazioni in varie parti del mondo e alla necessità di proteggere questa specie su scala internazionale. Per questi motivi l'UE ha sostenuto attivamente una proposta presentata all'ultima conferenza delle parti della Convenzione sulle specie migratrici (Convention on Migratory Species — CMS) tenutasi in Norvegia nel novembre 2011, volta ad includere la manta gigante (*Manta birostris*) nelle appendici I e II della CMS. La proposta è stata approvata.

Ai fini dell'applicazione di questi elenchi a livello dell'UE, la Commissione sta ora lavorando su un progetto di proposta al Consiglio, nell'ambito della modifica del regolamento sulle possibilità di pesca, per vietare a tutti i pescherecci dell'UE di pescare, detenere a bordo, trasbordare o sbarcare mante giganti in tutte le acque. Lo stesso divieto si applicherebbe ai pescherecci di paesi terzi operanti nelle acque dell'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001270/12
to the Commission
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Manta rays at risk of extinction

In its report entitled 'Manta Ray of Hope: The Global Threat to Manta and Mobula Rays', the NGO Shark Savers reveals the threat of extinction faced by manta rays, which are being wiped out due to the ever more widespread use of their gills in Chinese medicine.

The market for manta ray gills is already estimated to be worth around USD 11 million a year, driven by the belief that they stimulate the immune system and can heal a variety of diseases, from fertility problems to certain types of cancer. In Asian markets, manta ray meat is sold for USD 500 per kilo, due to its supposed healing capacity.

Poachers are also attracted by the skin, used for handbags and shoes, and the cartilage, which is passed off as shark cartilage.

In addition, experts explain that the manta ray is one of the most disadvantaged and least well-equipped animals in the fight against fishing pressure since it takes 10 years to reach sexual maturity and females give birth to just one pup every two to three years.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. What policies does it intend to implement to safeguard manta rays and prevent their extinction?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(19 March 2012)

The Commission is aware of the situation described by the Honourable Member regarding the high vulnerability of giant manta ray, the risk of collapsing populations in several parts of the world and the need for international protection of this species. For these reasons the EU has actively supported a proposal presented at the last Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) held in Norway in November last year to list the giant manta ray (*Manta birostris*) in Appendixes I and II of the CMS. This proposal was adopted.

In order to implement at EU level such listings, the Commission is working on a draft proposal to the Council in the framework of the modification of the Fishing opportunities Regulations to establish a prohibition for EU vessels to fish for, or retain on board, to tranship or to land the giant manta ray in all waters. The same prohibition would apply to third-country vessels fishing in EU waters.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001271/12
aan de Commissie
Barry Madlener (NI) en Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(10 februari 2012)

Betreft: MOE-landers zonder werkvergunning tóch in Nederland aan het werk

MOE-landers mogen zonder werkvergunning wél legaal in Nederland aan de slag als zij gedetacheerd worden vanuit hun thuisland. Zij werken dan in Nederland maar zijn formeel in dienst van een bedrijf gevestigd in het land van herkomst, waar belastingen en premies vaak veel lager zijn. Zo maken zij gebruik van het Europese vrije verkeer van personen en diensten. Deze detacheringsconstructie is populair aan het worden, zo blijkt uit cijfers van uitkeringsinstantie UWV. In 2011 werden bijna 13 364 „vreemdelingen" bij het UWV aangemeld, tegen 9 756 in 2010. Ruim 60 % van de toename kwam voor rekening van Roemenen en Bulgaren.

In de champignonteelt in Nederland is de zogenaamde Polenconstructie populair. Die houdt het volgende in: een Nederlandse champignonteler verkoopt zijn nog niet geplukte champignons aan een onderneming in een MOE-land. Deze onderneming stuurt haar arbeiders vervolgens naar Nederland om de champignons te plukken. Omdat de champignons al verkocht zijn, voeren de betreffende arbeiders hun werkzaamheden in Nederland uit in dienst van de onderneming in het land van herkomst.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „De dienstverlenende Roemeen is in trek" ([1]) en „We eten gangsterchampignons" ([2])?

2. Is de Commissie met de PVV van mening dat, als MOE-landers géén werkvergunning voor Nederland krijgen maar via de detacheringsconstructie of de Polenconstructie wél legaal in Nederland mogen werken, er iets mis is met de betreffende Europese regelgeving én het vrije verkeer van personen en diensten die dit mogelijk maken? Zo neen, waarom niet?

3. Is de Commissie met de PVV van mening dat met de komst van MOE-landers de Nederlanders van de arbeidsmarkt verstoten worden, en vindt zij dat ongewenst? Zo neen, waarom niet?

4. Is de Commissie met de PVV van mening dat de MOE-landers in Nederland een aanzuigende werking zullen hebben, en vindt zij dat ongewenst? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Barnier namens de Commissie
(4 april 2012)

1. De Commissie heeft geen weet van de berichten die de geachte Parlementsleden noemen.

2. Hoewel Bulgaarse en Roemeense burgers wegens de uitgestelde toepassing van het in de toetredingsverdragen vastgelegde vrije verkeer van werknemers nog niet het recht hebben om vrij in Nederland te werken, kunnen Bulgaarse en Roemeense ondernemingen reeds ten volle van de vrijheid van dienstverrichting en de vrijheid van vestiging profiteren. Het verrichten van diensten kan de terbeschikkingstelling of detachering van werknemers vereisen. Terbeschikkingstelling is van nature echter slechts tijdelijk van aard, wat inhoudt dat ter beschikking gestelde werknemers geen deel gaan uitmaken van de Nederlandse arbeidsmarkt.

Wat de arbeidsomstandigheden betreft van werknemers die in de context van het verrichten van diensten ter beschikking worden gesteld, zij erop gewezen dat Richtlijn 96/71/EG ([3]) in een passend niveau van bescherming van dergelijke werknemers voorziet. Meer in het bijzonder dient de buitenlandse dienstverrichter zich te houden aan de Nederlandse voorschriften betreffende minimumlonen, arbeidstijd en gezondheid en veiligheid op het werk. Zoals in de „Single Market Act" was aangegeven, heeft de Commissie op 21 maart haar goedkeuring gehecht aan een voorstel voor een betere handhaving van de richtlijn betreffende de terbeschikkingstelling van werknemers met de bedoeling misbruiken tegen te gaan.

([1]) Financieel Dagblad, 30 januari 2012.
([2]) http://www.depers.nl/binnenland/626905/We-eten-gangsterchampignons.html
([3]) Richtlijn 96/71/EG van 16 december 1996 betreffende de terbeschikkingstelling van werknemers met het oog op het verrichten van diensten.

3-4. In een Commissieverslag ([4]) is tot de bevinding gekomen dat de arbeidsmobiliteit van burgers van Bulgarije en Roemenië in de ontvangende landen over het algemeen niet tot ernstige verstoringen van de arbeidsmarkt heeft geleid en evenmin een significant effect op de werkloosheid of de lonen van lokale werknemers heeft gehad. Zelfs in tijden van economische achteruitgang moeten lidstaten immers nog altijd mobiele werknemers aantrekken om te voldoen aan de vraag naar arbeidskrachten in bepaalde sectoren waar een tekort aan lokale werknemers bestaat.

De eengemaakte markt is een van de grootste successen van de Europese integratie. Uitbreidingen van de EU met nieuwe landen hebben alle EU-lidstaten voordelen opgeleverd, zowel vóór de volledige toepassing van het vrije verkeer van werknemers als daarna.

([4]) COM(2011) 729 definitief.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001271/12
to the Commission
Barry Madlener (NI) and Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Citizens of CEE countries working in the Netherlands without a work permit

Citizens of CEE countries can work legally in the Netherlands without a work permit if they are seconded from their home country. They are then working in the Netherlands but are officially employed by a company based in their country of origin, where taxes and social security contributions are often much lower. In this way they benefit from the free movement of persons and services between EU Member States. This form of secondment is becoming popular, according to figures from the UWV social benefits agency. In 2011 almost 13 364 'aliens' were registered with the UWV, compared with 9 756 in 2010. Over 60 % of the increase was accounted for by Romanians and Bulgarians.

The so-called Polish method is popular in the Dutch mushroom-growing sector. This is how it works: a Dutch mushroom grower sells its not yet harvested mushrooms to a company in a CEE country. That company then sends its labourers to the Netherlands to harvest the mushrooms. Since the mushrooms have already been sold, the labourers in question work in the Netherlands in the service of their company in the country of origin.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the report 'Romanians are popular in the service sector' ([1])?

2. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that if citizens of CEE countries do not obtain a work permit for the Netherlands but are still allowed to work legally in the Netherlands under the secondment or Polish scheme, there is something wrong with the relevant European legislation and the free movement of persons and services which make this possible? If not, why not?

3. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that with the arrival of citizens of CEE countries the Dutch are being squeezed out of the labour market and does it consider this an unwelcome development? If not, why not?

4. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that citizens of CEE countries will tend to attract others to the Netherlands, and does it consider this an unwelcome development? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2012)

1. The Commission is not aware of the report mentioned by the Honourable Members of Parliament.

2. While Bulgarian and Romanian citizens do not yet have the right to work freely in the Netherlands because of the deferred application of the right of free movement of workers in the Accession Treaties, Bulgarian and Romanian companies already fully enjoy the freedom to provide services and the freedom of establishment. Provision of services may require the posting of workers. However, posting is by nature only temporary, and in that sense posted workers do not become a part of the Dutch labour market.

With regard to the working conditions of posted workers in the context of the provision of services, Directive 96/71/EC ([2]) provides for an appropriate level of protection of these workers. In particular Dutch provisions with regard to minimum wages, working time as well as health and safety at work have to be complied with by the foreign service provider. As foreseen by the single market Act, the Commission adopted on 21 March a proposal to improve enforcement of the Posting of Worker's Directive to fight against abuses.

3 and 4. A Commission report ([3]) found that labour mobility from Bulgaria and Romania has generally not led to serious labour market disturbances and did not have a significant impact on unemployment and wages of local workers in receiving countries. Even in an economic downturn, Member States still need to attract mobile workers to meet labour demand that cannot be met by local workers in certain sectors.

([1]) *Financieel Dagblad*, 30 January 2012.
([2]) Directive 96/71/EC of 16 December 1996 concerning the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services.
([3]) COM(2011) 729 final.

The single market is one of the greatest achievements of European Integration. Enlargements of the EU to further countries brought benefits to all EU Member States, before full application of the right of free movement of workers as well as thereafter.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001273/12
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(10 februarie 2012)

Subiect: Incălcare a reglementărilor privind concurența

Administrația județului Mureş (România) a alocat recent suma de 250 000 EUR, fonduri publice, unei asociații de turism, finanțând astfel, indirect, compania aeriană Wizz Air. Scopul acestui sprijin financiar este determinarea companiei în cauză să utilizeze pentru zborurile sale aeroportul din Târgu Mureș.

Ca urmare a sprijinului, acest aeroport își permite să asigure un cost mediu pe pasager de 0,95 euro, în timp ce media europeană a costului pentru fiecare pasager este de 11 euro.

Comisia este rugată să precizeze dacă această practică 1) reprezintă ajutor de stat și 2) corespunde reglementărilor legale privind concurența.

Răspuns dat de dl Almunia în numele Comisiei
(23 martie 2012)

În octombrie 2011, Comisia a primit o reclamație cu privire la finanțarea aeroportului din Târgu Mureș și a anumitor companii aeriene care utilizau aeroportul. Comisia a transmis această reclamație României și a primit observații cu privire la aspectele evidențiate. Investigațiile preliminare legate de aceste finanțări sunt în desfășurare. Comisia va evalua, de asemenea, măsurile menționate în întrebarea distinsului membru al Parlamentului.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001273/12
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Violation of competition regulations

Mures County Administration (Romania) recently allocated the sum of EUR 250 000 of public funds to a tourist association, thus indirectly financing the airline Wizz Air. The aim of this financial assistance is to convince the relevant company to use the airport in Targu Mures for its flights.

As a result of the assistance, this airport can afford to ensure an average cost per passenger of EUR 0.95, while the European average cost per passenger is EUR 11.

Can the Commission clarify whether this practice: 1. represents state aid and 2. corresponds to the legal regulations on competition?

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

The Commission has received a complaint concerning the financing of Targu Mures airport and certain airlines using the airport in October 2011. The Commission has forwarded the complaint to Romania and has received comments on it. The preliminary investigations in relations to these financings are ongoing. The Commission will also assess the measures mentioned in the Honourable Member's question.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001276/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(10 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Etiopi arrestati in Arabia Saudita per avere organizzato incontro di preghiera

Il 30 gennaio 2012, Human Rights Watch ha denunciato il caso di 35 etiopi cristiani attualmente in attesa di essere espulsi dall'Arabia Saudita dopo essere stati arrestati dalla polizia durante un incontro di preghiera a Gedda. Gli etiopi sono stati accusati di «commistione illecita». Tra gli arrestati erano presenti 29 donne e alcune di loro sono state sottoposte a perquisizioni corporali arbitrarie. Il 15 dicembre 2011 la polizia ha fatto irruzione durante un incontro di preghiera e ha arrestato tre membri del gruppo. Gli arrestati sono stati portati alla prigione di Buramain, dove sono stati sottoposti a perquisizione interna per accertarsi che non fossero in possesso di sostanze illegali. I detenuti, sia maschi che femmine, hanno lamentato di avere ricevuto assistenza medica inadeguata e di essere stati tenuti in pessime condizioni igieniche: centinaia di detenuti non sauditi erano infatti costretti a condividere pochissimi servizi igienici. Una volta in tribunale, gli etiopi sono stati costretti ad apporre le loro impronte digitali su documenti, senza che fosse loro prima permesso di leggerli. Il gruppo è stato accusato di «commistione illecita» fra i sessi; alcuni degli arrestati non avevano un regolare permesso di soggiorno, altri invece sì, ma tutti rischiano l'espulsione.

Human Rights Watch afferma che il governo saudita aveva assicurato che non avrebbe più interferito con il culto esercitato in privato dai non musulmani. In un documento scritto inviato al governo degli Stati Uniti e intitolato «Conferma delle politiche», il Regno affermava che avrebbe «garantito e protetto il diritto a professare privatamente la propria fede religiosa per tutti, inclusi i non musulmani che si riuniscono nelle case per praticare la loro religione ». La Carta araba dei diritti umani, a cui l'Arabia Saudita ha aderito, garantisce «la libertà di manifestare la propria religione o il proprio credo o di praticare la religione, da solo o insieme ad altri », e proibisce gli «arresti arbitrari». Il Regno non dispone di una legge penale codificata o di altro tipo che definisca la «commistione illecita».

1. È il VP/HR a conoscenza delle difficoltà che i non musulmani, e in particolare i cristiani, affrontano nel praticare la propria religione in Arabia Saudita?

2. È il VP/HR disposto a chiedere alle autorità saudite informazioni circa il caso dei 35 etiopi e i tempi del loro rilascio?

3. È il VP/HR disposto a chiedere alle autorità saudite, e in particolare al principe ereditario Nayef bin Abdul Aziz, che è anche ministro degli interni del Regno, se saranno intraprese iniziative atte a garantire che le autorità si attengano ai principi della carta sui diritti umani del paese?

4. Ha il VP/HR effettuato in precedenza tentativi di sollevare la questione della libertà religiosa in Arabia Saudita? In caso affermativo, qual è stata la reazione del governo?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001818/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Barbara Matera (PPE), Magdi Cristiano Allam (EFD), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Mara Bizzotto (EFD), Vito Bonsignore (PPE), Mario Borghezio (EFD), Antonio Cancian (PPE), Lara Comi (PPE), Luigi Ciriaco De Mita (PPE), Mario Mauro (PPE), Claudio Morganti (EFD), Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE), Oreste Rossi (EFD), Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE) e Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(15 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Arresto arbitrario di 35 etiopi cristiani in Arabia Saudita

Dal 15 dicembre 2011, giorno del loro arresto, trentacinque cristiani etiopi sono in attesa di giudizio per l'accusa di «riunione illecita di persone non sposate di sesso opposto». In quello stesso giorno, infatti, la polizia aveva fatto irruzione in un'abitazione privata a Jeddah arrestando gli etiopi che erano lì radunati per pregare. Secondo quanto riportato da «Human Rights Watch» di questi 35 arrestati 29 erano donne, le quali sono state sottoposte a molestie e perquisizioni corporali arbitrarie. I detenuti sono stati poi sottoposti nella prigione di Buraiman a sevizie sessuali a carico delle donne e percosse per gli uomini.

Nonostante il re Abdullah abbia istituito un centro internazionale di dialogo interreligioso a Vienna, la sua polizia non cessa di calpestare i diritti dei credenti di altre fedi,

nonostante l'Arabia Saudita sia firmataria della Carta araba dei diritti umani, che garantisce la libertà di manifestare la propria religione o di compiere riti religiosi, sia da soli che in comunità con altri vietando «arresti arbitrari»,

nonostante i documenti di molti degli arrestati fossero in regola secondo Human Rights Watch,

nonostante l'impegno del governo saudita di rispettare il culto di altre fedi,

nonostante il codice penale saudita non preveda nessuna legge che definisce illecito il diritto di riunione, i maltrattamenti continuano e quello degli etiopi è solo l'ultimo caso di torture e di abusi.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente precisare:

1. quali azioni ha portato avanti rispetto a quanto accaduto e se ci sono gli estremi per presentare una protesta formale contro le autorità saudite onde ottenere il rilascio immediato dei trentacinque uomini e donne etiopi;

2. quali mezzi sono a sua disposizione per spingere le autorità saudite ad investigare sui presunti abusi fisici e sessuali perpetrati e, se necessario, risarcire le vittime e punire i funzionari ritenuti responsabili di tali atti;

3. quali azioni ha intrapreso per evitare che si ripetano casi come quello dei 35 etiopi arrestati?

Risposta congiunta data dall'alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(30 marzo 2012)

L'alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton è ben consapevole del caso, che la delegazione UE a Riyadh segue in stretta collaborazione con le ambasciate degli Stati membri sul territorio. La delegazione UE è stata diverse volte in contatto con le autorità saudite al fine di indagare sul caso riferito dall'onorevole parlamentare e continuerà a farlo anche prossimamente.

La libertà di religione e, più in generale, le libertà fondamentali vengono discusse con il governo saudita periodicamente e in occasione della riunioni ufficiali UE-Consiglio di cooperazione del golfo. Il comunicato congiunto rilasciato al termine dell'ultima riunione ministeriale UE-CCG, tenutasi ad Abu Dhabi il 20 aprile 2011, contiene una sezione sui diritti umani e sulle libertà fondamentali. Il capo della delegazione UE a Riyadh solleva regolarmente la questione dei diritti umani e delle libertà fondamentali nel corso dei contatti con i rappresentanti del governo saudita.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001276/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Ethiopians in Saudi Arabia arrested for holding prayer service

On 30 January 2012, Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported the case of 35 Christian Ethiopians who are now awaiting deportation from Saudi Arabia after police arrested them at a private prayer service in Jeddah. They were charged with 'illicit mingling'; 29 of them were women, and some were subjected to arbitrary body searches. On 15 December 2011, in the middle of a prayer service, police burst in and arrested three members of the group. They were sent to Buraiman prison, where they were searched internally for illegal substances. Both male and female detainees complained of inadequate medical conditions and poor sanitary conditions, with hundreds of non-Saudi inmates obliged to share only a handful of toilets. Once in court, the Ethiopians were forced to affix their fingerprints on documents that they were not allowed to read. The group was charged with 'illicit mingling' of the sexes; while some did not have valid residence papers, others did, yet all face deportation.

HRW states that the Saudi government had promised it would stop interfering with the private worship of non-Muslims. In a written document sent to the US government, entitled 'Confirmation of Policies', the Kingdom said it would 'guarantee and protect the right to private worship for all, including non-Muslims who gather in homes for religious practice'. The Arab Charter of Human Rights, to which Saudi Arabia is a state party, guarantees 'the freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs to perform religious observances, either alone or in community with others', and prohibits 'arbitrary arrest'. The Kingdom does not have a codified criminal law or other law that defines 'illicit mingling'.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the difficulties that non-Muslims, and in particular Christians, face in practising their religion in Saudi Arabia?

2. Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to ask the Saudi authorities for information on the case of the 35 Ethiopians and whether they will be released soon?

3. Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to ask the Saudi authorities, and in particular Crown Prince Nayef bin Abdul Aziz, who is also the Kingdom's interior minister, whether steps will be taken to ensure that the authorities abide by the tenets of the country's human rights charter?

4. Has the Vice-President/High Representative made any previous attempts to raise the issue of religious freedom in Saudi Arabia? If so, how did the government respond?

Question for written answer E-001818/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Barbara Matera (PPE), Magdi Cristiano Allam (EFD), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Mara Bizzotto (EFD), Vito Bonsignore (PPE), Mario Borghezio (EFD), Antonio Cancian (PPE), Lara Comi (PPE), Luigi Ciriaco De Mita (PPE), Mario Mauro (PPE), Claudio Morganti (EFD), Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE), Oreste Rossi (EFD), Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE) and Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Unlawful arrest of 35 Ethiopian Christians in Saudi Arabia

Since 15 December 2011, the day of their arrest, 35 Ethiopian Christians have been awaiting trial on a charge of 'unlawful meeting of unmarried persons of the opposite sex'. On that day, police raided a private dwelling in Jeddah and arrested the Ethiopians, who had gathered there to pray. According to the report by Human Rights Watch, 29 of the 35 persons arrested were women, who were subjected to harassment and illegal body searches. The prisoners were then transferred to Buraiman prison, where the female prisoners were sexually assaulted and the male prisoners were beaten.

King Abdullah has established an international centre for inter-religious dialogue in Vienna, but his police continue to ride roughshod over the rights of believers of other faiths.

Saudi Arabia is a signatory to the Arab Charter on Human Rights, which guarantees the freedom to practise one's religion or to observe religious rites, either alone or communally with others, and prohibits 'unlawful arrests'.

According to Human Rights Watch, the papers of many of the persons arrested were in order.

The Saudi Government is committed to respecting worship by those of other faiths.

Although the Saudi Penal Code does not make provision for any laws outlawing freedom of assembly, cases of ill-treatment are continuing to occur, the case of these Ethiopians being just the latest example of torture and abuse.

In view of the above:

1. What actions have been taken in response to these events? Are there sufficient grounds to lodge a formal protest against the Saudi authorities in order to secure the immediate release of the 35 Ethiopian men and women?

2. What means can the High Representative employ to make the Saudi authorities investigate the alleged cases of physical and sexual abuse and, if necessary, compensate the victims and punish the officials responsible for these acts?

3. What actions has she taken to prevent any repetition of cases such as the one involving the 35 arrested Ethiopians?

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(30 March 2012)

High Representative/Vice-President Ashton is well aware of this case, which the EU Delegation in Riyadh has been following in close cooperation with EU Member States embassies on the ground. The EU Delegation has been in contact with the Saudi authorities several times in order to inquire about the case mentioned by the Honourable Member and will continue to do so in the near future.

Religious freedom and, more generally, fundamental liberties, are regularly discussed with the Saudi government, including on the occasion of official EU-Gulf Cooperation Council meetings. The Joint Communiqué issued at the end of the latest EU-GCC ministerial meeting, held in Abu Dhabi on 20 April 2011, contains a section on human rights and fundamental freedoms. The EU Head of Delegation in Riyadh raises human rights and fundamental freedoms regularly in his contacts with Saudi officials.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001277/12
do Rady
Joanna Senyszyn (S&D)
(9 lutego 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Naruszanie praw człowieka

Jakie kroki zamierza poczynić Rada w związku z przypadkami naruszania praw człowieka zgłoszonymi przez UNOCHA, MKCK i izraelskie organizacje praw człowieka, aby zapewnić pełną ochronę tych praw na okupowanych terytoriach palestyńskich?

Odpowiedź
(8 maja 2012 r.)

Kwestię przestrzegania praw człowieka na okupowanych terytoriach palestyńskich Unia Europejska regularnie porusza w kontaktach dwustronnych i w gremiach wielostronnych. W dniu 19 marca 2012 r. UE wydała oświadczenie podczas debaty ogólnej na forum Rady Praw Człowieka w Genewie, wyrażając zaniepokojenie m.in. rosnącą liczbą zajść z udziałem osób cywilnych.

UE wyraża ubolewanie z powodu rozbiórek i eksmisji prowadzonych przez siły izraelskie oraz z powodu nasilających się ataków osadników izraelskich na Palestyńczyków, ich mienie i miejsca kultu religijnego. UE apeluje również o zaprzestanie wszelkich ataków rakietowych na Izrael i wszelkich innych form przemocy. Jest zdania, że brak postępów politycznych w rozwiązywaniu konfliktu zagraża ogólnemu bezpieczeństwu.

UE potępia zarówno przymusowe przesiedlenia ludności palestyńskiej i stosowanie aresztu administracyjnego przez Izrael, jak i samowolne zatrzymania stosowane przez stronę palestyńską. Wzywa też wszystkie strony do zadbania o to, by izraelscy i palestyńscy obrońcy praw człowieka nie napotykali niepotrzebnych ograniczeń w swojej pracy.

Co dodatkowo niepokoi UE, to pogarszanie się wewnętrznej sytuacji pod względem przestrzegania praw człowieka na całych okupowanych terytoriach palestyńskich (zwłaszcza w Strefie Gazy), a przede wszystkim orzekanie wyroków śmierci.

UE nakłania wszystkie strony, by w pełni współpracowały z wszelkimi strukturami ONZ – zwłaszcza ze specjalnym sprawozdawcą i z Biurem Wysokiego Komisarza ds. Praw Człowieka – w dziedzinie przestrzegania praw człowieka na okupowanych terytoriach palestyńskich.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001277/12
to the Council
Joanna Senyszyn (S&D)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: Human rights violations

In view of human rights violations reported by UNOCHA, ICRC and Israeli human rights organisations, what steps does the Council plan to take to ensure there is full human rights protection in the occupied Palestinian territory?

Reply
(8 May 2012)

The European Union regularly raises the issue of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territory on a bilateral basis and in multinational fora. On 19th March 2012, the EU delivered a statement in the general debate at the Human Rights Council in Geneva, and voiced its concern, *inter alia*, at the increasing number of incidents involving civilians.

The EU deplores house demolitions and evictions by Israeli forces, as well as the increasing attacks by Israeli settlers on Palestinians and on their property and places of worship. The EU also calls for an end to all rocket attacks on Israel and to all other forms of violence. The EU takes the view that the lack of political progress in the resolution of the conflict undermines the security of all.

Forced transfers of the Palestinian population and the use of administrative detention by Israel, as well as arbitrary detentions by the Palestinian side, are denounced by the EU. The EU also calls on all parties to ensure that Israeli and Palestinian human rights defenders do not face undue restrictions in their work.

The deterioration of the domestic human rights situation across the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip, and above all the imposition of death sentences, are additional matters of concern for the EU.

The EU invites the parties to cooperate fully with all UN mechanisms, in particular with the Special Rapporteur and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, on the human rights situation in the occupied Palestinian territories.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001278/12
do Komisji
Joanna Senyszyn (S&D)
(10 lutego 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Obecna skala przywozu towarów pochodzących z osiedli żydowskich do Unii Europejskiej

Czy Komisja mogłaby podać dokładną ilość towarów wytwarzanych w całości lub częściowo w osiedlach żydowskich i przywożonych do UE oraz określić, jaki procent stanowią one w stosunku do łącznej ilości towarów wywożonych z Izraela do UE?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Karela De Guchta w imieniu Komisji
(22 lutego 2012 r.)

Władze Izraela nie podają zdezagregowanych danych dotyczących ilości towarów produkowanych w osiedlach izraelskich i wywożonych do UE. Na podstawie informacji otrzymanych ustnie od izraelskich władz służby Komisji szacują, że wywóz z osiedli może wynosić około 0,87 % całkowitego izraelskiego wywozu do UE. Jako że całkowity wywóz z Izraela do UE w 2010 r. wyniósł 11,1 mld EUR, wywóz z osiedli mógł wynieść 96,57 mln EUR. Do informacji tych należy jednak podchodzić z ostrożnością.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001278/12
to the Commission
Joanna Senyszyn (S&D)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: The current scale of settlement goods imported into the European Union

Can the Commission indicate the exact current quantity of goods produced totally or partially in the settlements that are imported into the EU, and what percentage of total Israeli exports to the EU does this constitute?

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

The Israel authorities do not provide disaggregated data on the amount of goods produced and exported to the EU from the Israeli settlements. Based on the information obtained orally from the Israeli authorities, the Commission services estimate that exports from settlements could amount to roughly 0.87 % of total Israeli exports to the EU. Based on 2010 total exports from Israel to the EU of EUR 11.1 billion, settlement exports could reach EUR 96.57 million. However, this information should be treated with caution.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001279/12
do Komisji
Joanna Senyszyn (S&D)
(10 lutego 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Zniszczenie infrastruktury finansowanej przez UE

Zgodnie z informacjami przedstawiciela UE na Zachodnim Brzegu i w Gazie Izrael od 2001 r. niszczył infrastrukturę budowaną w ramach przedsięwzięć finansowanych ze środków UE na okupowanych terytoriach palestyńskich, co wywołało łączne straty w wysokości 29 mln euro.

W świetle art. 2 układu o stowarzyszeniu UE-Izrael:

1. Jakie środki Komisja planuje przedsięwziąć w odniesieniu do zniszczenia infrastruktury finansowanej ze środków UE?

2. Jakie środki zapobiegawcze Komisja zastosuje w celu dopilnowania, by infrastruktura finansowana ze środków UE nie była niszczona w przyszłości?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel i Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton
w imieniu Komisji
(14 czerwca 2012 r.)

UE jest największym darczyńcą pomocy dla Narodowej Władzy Palestyńskiej i oczekuje, że unijne inwestycje wspierające ludność palestyńską będą chronione przed szkodami i zniszczeniem.

Biuro UE we Wschodniej Jerozolimie kilkakrotnie zgłaszało izraelskiemu ministerstwu obrony swój protest w związku z przypadkami uszkodzenia lub zniszczenia obiektów finansowanych ze środków UE, w szczególności w odniesieniu do współfinansowanych przez UE projektów, które nie zostały jeszcze przekazane beneficjentom końcowym. Kwestia niszczenia infrastruktury finansowanej ze środków UE jest również podnoszona w ramach dialogu politycznego UE-Izrael.

Aby uniknąć ewentualnego zniszczenia lub uszkodzenia obiektów finansowanych ze środków UE realizowanych na okupowanych terytoriach palestyńskich, UE dopilnowuje, aby fakt jej zaangażowania w te projekty był powszechnie znany.

W celu zapewnienia ochrony unijnych inwestycji regularnie wykorzystuje się również kanały dyplomatyczne. Od 2009 r. nie było doniesień o zniszczeniu lub uszkodzeniu przez Izrael infrastruktury finansowanej ze środków UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001279/12
to the Commission
Joanna Senyszyn (S&D)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Demolition of EU-funded infrastructure

According to information from the EU Representative in the West Bank and Gaza, since 2001 Israel has destroyed EU-funded infrastructure projects in the occupied Palestinian territories, causing damage amounting to EUR 29 million.

In the light of the EU-Israel Association Agreement, Article 2:

1. What measures does the Commission plan to take in relation to the destruction of EU-funded infrastructure?

2. What preventive measures will the Commission take to ensure that EU-funded infrastructure is are not demolished in the future?

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

The EU is the largest donor to the Palestinian Authority. The EU expects its investments in support of the Palestinian people to be protected from damage and destruction.

The EU Office in East Jerusalem has in the past lodged protests with the Israeli Ministry of Defence following incidents which have damaged or destroyed EU funded projects, in particular regarding EU funded projects which have not yet been handed over to the end beneficiary. The question of damage and destruction of EU funded projects is also raised with Israel in the framework of the EU-Israel political dialogue.

To discourage the damage and destruction of EU funded projects in the occupied Palestinian territory, the EU ensures the high visibility of its involvement in these projects.

Diplomatic channels are also regularly used to ensure the protection of EU investments. No EU-funded projects have been reported as destroyed or damaged by Israel since 2009.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001281/12
à la Commission
Damien Abad (PPE)
(10 février 2012)

Objet: Conditions de circulation des véhicules sous couvert d'un certificat «garage»

Les véhicules ou ensembles de véhicules d'occasion, circulant entre le moment et le lieu de la vente vers le lieu de prise en main et d'enregistrement (convoyage) sont généralement couverts dans les États membres par un certificat spécifique, dit «garage», (immatriculé W en France), leur permettant de ne pas être conformes aux dispositions techniques du code de la route tant qu'ils n'ont pas encore été réceptionnés par le service en charge des réceptions d'un point de vente et/ou de réparation, ou par l'acquéreur du véhicule.

Au niveau national, ces activités sont soumises aux dispositions prévues par le législateur ou le régulateur. En France, en l'occurrence, il s'agit de l'arrêté du 9 février 2009 relatif aux modalités d'immatriculation des véhicules, entré en vigueur le 15 avril 2009.

Lorsqu'il s'agit de convoyage au sein de l'Union européenne, d'un État membre vers un autre État membre, il ne semble en revanche pas exister de réglementation commune encadrant ces activités au sein de l'Union.

Les véhicules d'occasion vendus dans un pays membre de l'Union et rapatriés vers le pays d'achat et de mise en circulation sont-ils soumis à des règles communes de sécurité, de prévention et de contrôle? Si oui, la Commission pourrait-elle les communiquer?

Dans le cas contraire, la Commission envisage-t-elle de proposer un cadre réglementaire harmonisé pour le convoyage de véhicules d'occasion en Europe?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(13 mars 2012)

La Commission tient à informer l'Honorable Parlementaire que la législation européenne ne réglemente pas encore le convoyage des véhicules d'occasion entre États membres. En outre, les plaques minéralogiques dites «plaques garage» ne sont pas encore soumises au droit dérivé de l'UE et relèvent donc de la législation nationale, qui doit cependant respecter les dispositions générales du traité, notamment celles qui ont trait à la libre circulation des marchandises.

La Commission est en train de voir si les questions relatives au convoyage des véhicules d'occasion pourraient être incluses dans sa prochaine initiative législative sur une procédure d'immatriculation simplifiée pour les véhicules précédemment immatriculés dans un autre État membre. La Commission a l'intention de présenter cette proposition au Parlement européen et au Conseil au cours du premier semestre de cette année.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001281/12
to the Commission
Damien Abad (PPE)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Rules governing the circulation of vehicles under a 'garage' registration certificate

Used vehicles or groups of used vehicles being moved from the place of sale to the place of delivery and registration in the Member States are generally covered by a specific 'garage' registration certificate ('W' registration in France), meaning they are not required to comply with the technical provisions of the highway code until the department responsible for taking deliveries in a sales and/or repair outlet, or the purchaser of the vehicle, has taken delivery of them.

At national level, these activities are subject to the provisions laid down by the legislator or the regulator. In France, the relevant legislation is the Order of 9 February 2009 on the Registration of Vehicles, which entered into force on 15 April 2009.

However, there seems to be no common EU regulatory framework governing the moving of used cars from one Member State to another.

Are used vehicles which are sold in an EU Member State and moved to the country in which the purchaser lives and in which they will be driven covered by common rules on safety, prevention and technical scrutiny? If they are, could the Commission tell us what these rules are?

If they are not, does the Commission plan to propose a harmonised regulatory framework to govern the moving of used vehicles from one country to another in Europe?

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

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that European legislation does not yet regulate the conveyance of second hand vehicles between Member States. Furthermore so-called 'garage-plates' are not yet subject to EU secondary law and therefore administered under national legislation, which however must respect the general Treaty provisions including those on the free movement of goods.

The Commission is examining if the issues of conveyance of second hand vehicles can be included in its forthcoming legislative initiative on a simplified registration procedure for motor vehicles previously registered in another Member State. The Commission intends to submit this proposal to the European Parliament and the Council during the first semester of this year.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001282/12
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(10 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Problematiche attinenti alla direttiva «servizi»

L'applicazione della direttiva 2006/123/CE sta creando non pochi problemi al turismo balneare italiano.

Tuttavia, le imprese operanti in questo settore presentano forti specificità in quanto svolgono compiti normalmente affidati alle autorità pubbliche, quali l'ordine, la tutela della privacy, la sicurezza in mare di tutti i clienti e bagnanti, e pertanto assimilabili ai «servizi privati di sicurezza», i quali sono stati esclusi dal campo di applicazione della direttiva «servizi» in forza all'articolo 2, comma 2, lettera k).

Inoltre, a differenza di una qualunque impresa, per le attività turistico-balneari perdere la concessione demaniale significa privarsi della propria azienda.

Infine, per il nostro paese la conservazione delle coste è importantissima per il turismo, pertanto assume particolare rilievo nel contesto economico attuale.

Vista la risoluzione del Parlamento europeo del 27 settembre 2011, con cui si chiede alla Commissione di valutare tali specificità, e sulla base dell'art. 134 del TFUE, che «lascia del tutto impregiudicato il regime di proprietà esistente negli Stati membri», considera la Commissione la possibilità di escludere le attività svolte dai balneari italiani dall'applicazione della direttiva «servizi»?

In caso contrario, quali provvedimenti intende attuare per attenuare le ripercussioni negative sulle imprese e garantire che le caratteristiche specifiche di questa categoria siano prese in considerazione?

Risposta data da Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(19 marzo 2012)

Come già indicato nelle risposte alle interrogazioni scritte E-5588/09, E-3090/10, E-3629/10 e E-4502/11 ([1]), l'articolo 12 della direttiva 2006/123/CE (la direttiva «servizi») ([2]) si applica ad autorizzazioni disponibili in numero limitato a causa della scarsità delle risorse naturali o delle capacità tecniche utilizzabili, come sembra essere il caso delle concessioni demaniali marittime in Italia. Gli Stati membri sono tenuti ad adottare una procedura di selezione che garantisca la trasparenza e la parità di trattamento per i candidati potenziali. Le autorizzazioni possono essere rilasciate per una durata limitata adeguata e non possono prevedere il rinnovo automatico. Nelle procedure di selezione gli Stati membri possono tenere conto, tra l'altro, di criteri giustificati da considerazioni relative, ad esempio, alla protezione dell'ambiente o alla salvaguardia del patrimonio culturale, a condizione che detti criteri siano applicati conformemente ai principi generali di non discriminazione, necessità e proporzionalità.

Fatti salvi i principi generali summenzionati, la direttiva «servizi» lascia agli Stati membri la libertà di regolamentare le concessioni nel modo che ritengono più opportuno, anche per quanto riguarda il regime di proprietà. In tale esercizio, gli Stati membri possono tenere conto delle specificità del settore menzionate dall'onorevole parlamentare.

Pertanto, la Commissione non ritiene necessario escludere le concessioni demaniali marittime dall'applicazione della direttiva «servizi». Una maggiore trasparenza dovrebbe produrre effetti positivi sull'occupazione, la crescita e la qualità dei servizi.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=IT.
([2]) Direttiva 2006/123/CE relativa ai servizi nel mercato interno.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001282/12
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Issues related to the Services Directive

The implementation of Directive 2006/123/EC is creating numerous problems for Italian seaside tourism.

Businesses operating in this sector have unique characteristics in that they carry out tasks normally performed by public authorities, such as those relating to orders, privacy protection, and water safety for all clients and bathers, and are consequently similar to 'private security services', which are excluded from the scope of the Services Directive pursuant to its Article 2(2)(k).

Furthermore, unlike what happens with any other form of enterprise, if seaside tourism activities lose state concessions, this means depriving a firm of its own business.

Finally, conserving the coast is of the utmost importance for tourism in Italy, and even more so in the current economic context.

In the light of Parliament's resolution of 27 September 2011, which calls on the Commission to take those factors into consideration, as well as Article 134 TFEU and the provision that there shall be no prejudice to the existing system of property ownership in the Member States, will the Commission consider excluding the activities carried out at Italian seaside resorts from the application of the Services Directive?

If this is not possible, what measures can the Commission take in order to soften the negative repercussions for businesses and guarantee that this sector's unique features are taken into consideration?

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

As it has been already pointed out in the answers to Written Questions E-5588/09, E-3090/10, E-3629/10 and E-4502/11 ([1]), Article 12 of Directive 2006/123/EC (the 'Services Directive') ([2]) applies to authorisations limited in their number because of the scarcity of available resources or technical capacity, as in the case of 'beach concessions' in Italy. Member States are required to apply a selection procedure that guarantees the transparency and the equal treatment of potential candidates. Authorisations may be granted for an appropriate limited period and may not be open to automatic renewal. In those procedures, Member States can take account, *inter alia*, of criteria justified by reasons such as the protection of the environment and the preservation of cultural heritage, provided that these criteria are applied in conformity with the general principles of non-discrimination, necessity and proportionality.

Subject to those principles, the Services Directive leaves Member States free to regulate beach concessions as they wish, including on the issue of property ownership. In doing so, they can take into consideration the factors mentioned by the Honourable Member.

There is therefore no need to exclude beach concessions from the application of the Services Directive. The introduction of more transparency is expected to be beneficial for jobs, growth and higher quality of services.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.
([2]) Directive 2006/123/EC on services in the internal market.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001283/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(10 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Όριο φτώχειας και αφορολόγητο στην Ελλάδα και την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση

Σύμφωνα με τα τελευταία οικονομικά στοιχεία της Ελλάδας, το όριο φτώχειας για το 2010, για μια τετραμελή οικογένεια (δύο ενήλικες και δύο εξαρτώμενα παιδιά ηλικίας κάτω των 14ετών), είναι 15 073 ευρώ το χρόνο. Παρ' όλα αυτά, η ελληνική κυβέρνηση, εφαρμόζοντας το Μνημόνιο Ελλάδας-ΔΝΤ-ΕΕ, μείωσε μέσω του πρόσφατου φορολογικού νόμου, το αφορολόγητο όριο από τα 15 000 ευρώ το χρόνο, σε 9 000 ευρώ το χρόνο, για μια τετραμελή οικογένεια με δύο παιδιά.

Με δεδομένη αυτή την οικονομική κατάσταση στην Ελλάδα, αλλά και την εντεινόμενη κρίση στη χώρα μου και σε όλη την ευρωζώνη, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Συνάδει η παραπάνω φορολογική πολιτική με την καταστατική δέσμευση της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης για την «καταπολέμηση του κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού», την «προώθηση της κοινωνικής δικαιοσύνης» και της «οικονομικής, κοινωνικής και εδαφικής συνοχής και αλληλεγγύης μεταξύ των κρατών μελών» (Συνθήκη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης άρθρο 3.3);

2. Μπορεί να μου παράσχει δεδομένα για τα αντίστοιχα επίπεδα του ορίου φτώχειας και του αφορολόγητου ορίου για 4μελείς οικογένειες στα υπόλοιπα κράτη μέλη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης;

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

Η Επιτροπή είναι συνεπής με τους στόχους της Ένωσης για την καταπολέμηση του κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού, την προώθηση της κοινωνικής δικαιοσύνης καθώς και της οικονομικής, κοινωνικής και εδαφικής συνοχής και της αλληλεγγύης μεταξύ των κρατών μελών. Οι στόχοι του προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής είναι να διασφαλισθεί η δημοσιονομική βιωσιμότητα, να αποκατασταθεί η ανταγωνιστικότητα και να διασφαλισθεί η χρηματοπιστωτική σταθερότητα, όροι απαραίτητοι για την ανάπτυξη και την απασχόληση.

Το πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής δίνει έμφαση στη βελτίωση της φορολογικής διαχείρισης στην Ελλάδα, γεγονός που θα οδηγήσει στην αύξηση των εισπραττόμενων φόρων και στην καταπολέμηση της φοροδιαφυγής, προκειμένου το φορολογικό σύστημα να καταστεί περισσότερο αποτελεσματικό και δίκαιο.

Όσον αφορά τα αφορολόγητα όρια, έως τη στιγμή της θέσπισης των μέτρων από την Ελλάδα το καλοκαίρι και το φθινόπωρο του 2011, τα αφορολόγητα όρια στην Ελλάδα ήταν συνήθως πάνω από το αφορολόγητο όριο αρκετών άλλων χωρών της ΕΕ και ήταν ιδίως σημαντικά υψηλότερα από τα αφορολόγητα όρια του Βελγίου, της Γερμανίας, της Γαλλίας και της Πορτογαλίας.

Στον παρακάτω πίνακα παρέχονται στοιχεία για τα εθνικά όρια της φτώχειας για μια οικογένεια με 2 ενήλικες και 2 παιδιά και για το πόσο μειώνεται η φτώχια από τα κοινωνικά επιδόματα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001283/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Poverty and tax-free thresholds in Greece and the European Union

According to Greece's latest economic data, in 2010 the poverty level for a family of four (two adults and two dependent children under 14 years) was EUR 15 073 per year. Nevertheless, in implementing the Greece-IMF-EU Memorandum under its recent tax law, the Greek Government reduced the tax-free threshold from EUR 15 000 to EUR 9 000 per year for a family of four with two children.

Given the current economic situation in Greece and the growing crisis in my country and throughout the euro area, I would like to ask the Commission:

1. Does the above fiscal policy comply with the European Union's statutory commitment to 'combat social exclusion', and 'promote social justice' and 'economic, social and territorial cohesion and solidarity among Member States' (Treaty on European Union, Article 3.3)?

2. Can it provide data on the corresponding poverty and tax-free thresholds for four-member families in other Member States of the European Union?

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

The Commission is consistent with the Union's objectives of combating social exclusion, to promote social justice and to promote economic, social and territorial cohesion and solidarity among Member States. The objectives of the economic adjustment programme are to ensure fiscal sustainability, restore competitiveness and guarantee financial stability which are indispensable for growth and jobs.

The adjustment programme has put emphasis on the improvement of the tax administration in Greece which should lead to the increase in the tax collection and the fight against tax evasion, in order to make the tax system more efficient and equitable.

Concerning the tax-free thresholds, until the measures adopted by Greece in the summer and autumn 2011, the tax-free thresholds in Greece used to be above the tax-free threshold in several other EU countries, and in particular substantially above the tax-free thresholds in Belgium, Germany, France and Portugal.

The table below provides data on national poverty lines for a family of two adults and two children, poverty reduction impact of social transfers.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001284/12
do Komisji
Tomasz Piotr Poręba (ECR)
(10 lutego 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Dyskryminacja przy rozdzielaniu koncesji na platformie cyfrowej w Polsce

W procesie przydzielania lokalizacji na multipleksie cyfrowej telewizji naziemnej MUX-1 polska Krajowa Rada Radiofonii i Telewizji przyznała wszystkie dostępne koncesje, nie czekając na dokończenie procedury odwoławczej ze strony fundacji Lux Veritatis, właściciela TV Trwam. Wniosek fundacji odrzucono już na pierwszym etapie weryfikacji finansowej, pomimo że część podmiotów, które otrzymały koncesję, była w o wiele gorszej sytuacji. Dodatkowo, rozdzielenie wszystkich dostępnych miejsc na platformie oraz jej uruchomienie przed rozpatrzeniem odwołania fundacji oznacza, że nawet gdyby zostało ono uznane, TV Trwam i tak nie będzie mogła nadawać cyfrowo w Polsce.

Przedstawione powyżej fakty skłaniają do konkluzji, że decyzje podjęte przez KRRiT mają charakter polityczny i mogą być postrzegane jako próba dyskryminacji ze względu na poglądy religijne.

W związku z tym chciałbym zwrócić się do Komisji z następującymi pytaniami:

1. Czy Komisja otrzymała informacje na ten temat?

2. Czy kwestia ta zostanie dokładniej zbadana przez Komisję? Jakie kroki Komisja zamierza podjąć w tej sprawie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Neelie Kroes w imieniu Komisji
(13 marca 2012 r.)

Komisja Europejska dowiedziała się o decyzji KRRiT dotyczącej TV Trwam z szeregu pism przesłanych przez obywateli polskich, jak również dzięki wcześniejszemu zapytaniu poselskiemu skierowanemu do komisarz Neelie Kroes (E-191/2). Stanowisko Komisji przedstawione w odpowiedzi na wspomniane zapytanie jest nadal aktualne.

Zgodnie z ramami regulacyjnymi w zakresie łączności elektronicznej ([1]) państwa członkowskie, uwzględniając odpowiednie wartości częstotliwości radiowych, muszą zapewnić skuteczne zarządzanie częstotliwościami radiowymi i przyznać prawa do korzystania z nich w oparciu o obiektywne, przejrzyste, niedyskryminujące i proporcjonalne kryteria oraz obiektywne, przejrzyste, niedyskryminujące, proporcjonalne i otwarte procedury.

Procedury krajowe mogą przewidywać szczególne kryteria oceny, w tym takie, które dotyczą sytuacji finansowej uczestników, pod warunkiem że przestrzegane są wyżej wymienione zasady. Z tego względu, biorąc pod uwagę koszty związane z obsługą multipleksu, stabilność finansowa każdego nadawcy dzielącego multipleks może mieć decydujące znaczenie dla funkcjonowania całego przedsięwzięcia i w związku z tym można ją uznać za uzasadnione kryterium oceny.

Ocena dotycząca prawidłowego stosowania tego kryterium przez władze polskie w tym konkretnym przypadku należy do sądów krajowych, do których strony mają prawo odwołać się w tej kwestii, zgodnie z unijnymi ramami regulacyjnymi w zakresie łączności elektronicznej.

([1]) Odesłania do odpowiednich dyrektyw.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001284/12
to the Commission
Tomasz Piotr Poręba (ECR)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Discrimination in granting digital broadcasting licences in Poland

In allocating broadcasting space on the MUX-1 digital terrestrial television multiplex, Poland's National Broadcasting Council (KRRiT) granted all the available licences without waiting for the outcome of the Lux Veritatis foundation's appeal. The Lux Veritatis foundation, which owns TV Trwam, had its application rejected at the initial financial verification stage, even though some of the operators that were granted licences were financially far worse off than TV Trwam. With all the available spots on the platform having been allocated and the platform itself having started broadcasting before the foundation's appeal was considered, even if the appeal is successful TV Trwam will not be able to broadcast digitally in Poland.

In the light of the above, one might conclude that KRRiT's decisions are political and could therefore be considered to constitute discrimination on religious grounds.

With this in mind:

1. Has the Commission received any information on this issue?

2. Will it be conducting a thorough investigation into the matter, and what action does it intend to take?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2012)

The European Commission has learnt about the decision of KRRiT regarding TV TRWAM from several letters of Polish citizens as well as from a previous parliamentary question addressed to Commissioner Kroes (E-191/2). The position of the Commission presented in the answer to that question remains valid.

According to the electronic communications regulatory framework ([1]), the Member States, in view of the relevant value of radio frequencies, have to ensure the effective management of radio frequencies and grant rights to use frequencies on the basis of objective, transparent, non-discriminatory and proportionate criteria and objective, transparent, non-discriminatory, proportionate and open procedures.

The national procedures can foresee specific assessment criteria, including the financial standing of the contestants, provided that the abovementioned principles are respected. In this regard, given the costs related to the operation of a multiplex, the financial reliability of each and every broadcaster sharing the multiplex may be crucial for the functioning of the whole enterprise and therefore it can be considered a legitimate assessment criterion.

The assessment concerning the correct application of this criterion by the Polish authorities in the specific case at stake belongs to the national courts to which the parties have a right to refer the question, in line with the EU electronic communications regulatory framework.

([1]) References of the relevant directives.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-001285/12
Komisi
Pavel Poc (S&D)
(10. února 2012)

Předmět: Zajištění splnění požadavků směrnice o přírodních stanovištích

Vláda Slovenské republiky v současnosti plánuje výstavbu úseku dálnice D1 Turany-Hubová (dálnice D1 je součástí transevropské dopravní sítě (TEN-T)). Výstavba tohoto úseku dálnice by mohla mít značné negativní dopady na několik oblastí sítě Natura 2000.

Slovenské orgány však neprovedly náležité posouzení, které by odpovídalo požadavkům ustanovení čl. 6 odst. 3 a čl. 6 odst. 4 směrnice Rady č. 92/43/EHS (směrnice o přírodních stanovištích).

Jaká opatření Komise učiní, aby zajistila, že slovenské orgány plní povinnosti, které pro ně vyplývají z článku 6 směrnice o přírodních stanovištích?

Odpověď pana Potočnika jménem Komise
(22. března 2012)

Komise zjistila nedostatky ve schvalovacím procesu úseku dálnice D1 Turany – Hubová již v roce 2009. Návrh předpokládá, že dálnice povede třemi oblastmi sítě Natura 2000 nebo po jejich hranici. Jmenovitě se jedná o Malou Fatru, Velkou Fatru a Řeku Váh. Právní předpisy EU mají zajistit, že při rozvoji infrastruktury budou plně zohledňovány otázky ochrany životního prostředí. V tomto případě je pozornost soustředěna především na nutnost řádného posouzení podle čl. 6 odst. 3 a čl. 6 odst. 4 směrnice o stanovištích 92/43/EHC ([1]). Tuto věc již rovněž zdůraznilo několik stěžovatelů a Komise zahájila v červenci roku 2011 šetření, aby toto posouzení objasnila.

Slovenské orgány se zavázaly provést nové řádné posouzení v rámci Natury 2000, zcela v souladu s právními předpisy EU. Najaly nezávislého odborníka a přijaly příslušný harmonogram. Závěry by měly být podrobeny veřejné konzultaci. Výsledky nového posouzení by měly být předány Komisi v červnu roku 2012.

Hlavní projekt ovšem Komisi k financování předložen ještě nebyl. Jakmile se tak stane, bude důkladně přezkoumán jeho soulad s dalšími politikami Společenství i jeho možný dopad na životní prostředí, jak stanoví článek 41 nařízení Rady 1083/2006 ([2]).

([1]) Úř. věst. L 206, 22.7.1992.
([2]) Úř. věst. L 210, 31.7.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001285/12
to the Commission
Pavel Poc (S&D)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Ensuring compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive

The Government of the Slovak Republic is in the process of planning the construction of the Turany-Hubová section of the D1 motorway (part of the TEN-T network). Construction of this section of the D1 motorway could have significant negative impacts on several Natura 2000 sites.

However, the Slovak authorities have failed to carry out an appropriate assessment that fulfils the requirements of Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive).

What steps is the Commission taking to ensure that the Slovak authorities comply with their obligations under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive?

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

The Commission identified deficiencies in the approval process of the D1 Turany — Hubová motorway section as early as 2009. The motorway design crosses or touches 3 Natura 2000 sites: Malá Fatra mountains, Veľká Fatra mountains and the Váh river. EU legislation is designed to ensure that infrastructure developments are carried out in a way that pays full attention to environmental concerns. Attention in this case has focused mainly on the need for an Appropriate Assessment under Article 6.3 and 6.4 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC ([1]). This has also been highlighted by several complainants and the Commission has sought clarification about this assessment through an investigation opened in July 2011.

The Slovak authorities have committed themselves to proceed with a new Natura 2000 Appropriate Assessment fully in compliance with the EU legislation. They have contracted an independent expert and adopted a timeline for the assessment. The conclusions should be subject to public consultation. The results of the new assessment should be made available to the Commission in June 2012.

In any case the major project in question has not yet been submitted to the Commission for financing. Once submitted, the project will be scrutinised as regards its consistency with other Community policies, including its potential impact on the environment, as stipulated by Article 41 of Council Regulation 1083/2006 ([2]).

([1]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([2]) OJ L 210, 31.7.2006.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001288/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(13 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Pregunta complementaria sobre la reintroducción de la foca monje Monachus monachus (Directiva 92/43/CEE) en el Parque Natural marítimo-terrestre del Cap de Creus

En su respuesta, la CE dice que «la Comisión anima al Estado español y el Estado francés a colaborar para el éxito de la reintroducción de la foca monje, puesto que el Parque Natural del Cabo de Creus se encuentra muy cercano a Francia».

Este punto puede resolverse en breve, gracias a que el Estado francés ha iniciado, por medio del *Observatoire Océanologique* de Banyuls, *Laboratoire Arago* (CNRS), el proyecto de unir y ampliar la *Réserve Naturelle Marine* de Cerbère-Banyuls con el Parque Natural Marítimo-Terrestre del Cap de Creus.

Para ello, dentro de los términos municipales siguientes: norte del término de la población de Port de la Selva, término de Llançà, término de Colera y término de Portbou debería iniciarse el establecimiento de una reserva marina, ya que este tramo de costa, una vez protegido, uniría la Reserva marina de Cerbère-Banyuls ampliada con el Parque Natural Marítimo del Cap de Creus, bajo una única figura de protección de reserva marina, en coordinación entre el Estado francés, por medio de las instituciones mencionadas, y el español, por medio del *Departament d'Agricultura, Ramaderia, Pesca, Alimentació i Medi Natural*, dependiente de la Generalitat de Catalunya. De este modo, las focas monje siempre se moverían en aguas de esta gran reserva marina transfronteriza, que velaría por el buen desarrollo de esta especie, controlando los factores que podrían dificultar su asentamiento, como el control de la posible mortalidad de adultos y juveniles por muerte intencionada o por interacción humana; el control y la eliminación de la mortalidad causada por aparejos de pesca sobre focas juveniles; y la falta de presas como resultado de la sobrepesca o de la reducción de la fecundación por depresión genética.

A la luz de lo anterior,

¿Piensa la Comisión que debería impulsar y facilitar las reuniones pertinentes necesarias entre el Estado francés, por medio del *Observatoire Océanologique* de Banyuls, *Laboratoire Arago* (CNRS), dependiente de la *Université Pierre et Marie Curie* (París) y el Estado español, por medio del *Departament d'Agricultura, Ramaderia, Pesca, Alimentació i Medi Natural*, para establecer una única gran reserva marina transfronteriza con la consiguiente creación de nuevas reservas marinas en el punto de costa intermedio entre los dos espacios protegidos mencionados, con la finalidad de unir las dos reservas marinas?

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

Como se indica en su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-10827/2011 ([1]), la Comisión desea fomentar la cooperación entre España y Francia para aumentar las posibilidades de éxito de cualquier medida de conservación relacionada con la reintroducción de la foca monje. La mejor manera de hacerlo incumbe principalmente a los países interesados.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-010827&language=ES.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001288/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Supplementary question on the re-introduction of the monk seal Monachus monachus (Directive 92/43/EEC) at the Cap de Creus maritime-terrestrial natural park

In its answer, the Commission states that 'given the fact that the re-introduction area is very close to France, the Commission would encourage cooperation between Spain and France to increase the success of any conservation action'.

This issue can be resolved shortly, because France, through the Observatoire Océanologique in Banyuls and the Laboratoire Arago (CNRS), has gone ahead with plans to expand the Cerbère-Banyuls marine nature reserve and to join it with the Cap de Creus natural park.

To this end, the establishment of a marine reserve should begin in the following municipal districts: north of the district of the Port de la Selva community, the district of Llançà, the district of Colera and the district of Portbrou, since this section of coast, once protected, would join the expanded Cerbère-Banyuls marine reserve with the Cap de Creus natural park. It would fall under a single marine reserve protection status, coordinated by France, through the institutions mentioned above, and Spain, through the Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, Food, and the Natural Environment of the Autonomous Government of Catalonia. Thus, the monk seals would at all times be in the waters of this large cross-border marine reserve, which would safeguard the proper develo pment of the species, monitoring any factors that could make its establishment difficult — for example, monitoring the possible mortality of adults and juveniles as a result of intentional killing or human interaction; monitoring and eliminating mortality among juvenile seals caused by fishing tackle, and the lack of prey caused by overfishing or reduced fertility because of declining genetic diversity.

Does the Commission think that it should foster and facilitate the relevant meetings between France, through the Observatoire Océanologique in Banyuls and the Laboratoire Arago (CNRS), which is part of the Université Pierre et Marie Curie in Paris, and Spain, through the Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, Food and the Natural Environment, in order to establish a single large cross-border marine reserve, resulting in the creation of new marine reserves along the coastline between the two protected areas mentioned above, for the purpose of joining the two marine reserves?

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

As stated in its answer to Written Question E-10827/2011 ([1]), the Commission would encourage cooperation between Spain and France to increase the success of any conservation action regarding the re-introduction of the monk seal. The best method of doing so is the primary responsibility of the countries concerned.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-010827&language=EN.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001289/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(10 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες πνιγμένοι στη Μεσόγειο το 2011

Περισσότεροι από 1 500 μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες πνίγηκαν ή εξαφανίστηκαν το 2011 προσπαθώντας να διασχίσουν τη Μεσόγειο. Η UNHCR που συγκεντρώνει στοιχεία από το 2006, κάνει λόγο για αριθμό ρεκόρ. Είναι φανερό ότι το αυξημένο ρεύμα μεταναστών το 2011 συνδέεται άμεσα με τον πόλεμο του ΝΑΤΟ στη Λιβύη, με σειρά επεμβάσεων στη Βόρεια Αφρική αλλά και με τους πολέμους σε Ιράκ και Αφγανιστάν. Είναι συνέπεια των πολιτικών των καπιταλιστών στις χώρες αυτές και των επιλογών της Ένωσης για τη Μεσόγειο και της Πολιτικής Γειτνίασης της ΕΕ γιατί όλες υπηρετούν το κέρδος ενώ οξύνουν τη φτώχεια και την εξαθλίωση των λαών.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή εάν επιβεβαιώνει τα στοιχεία της UNCHR για τη μετανάστευση στη Μεσόγειο και εάν αναγνωρίζει το δικαίωμα των λαών της Βόρειας Αφρικής να χαράξουν μια ανάπτυξη προς όφελός τους, αντίθετη με τις επιλογές του μεγάλου κεφαλαίου, ώστε να μη χρειάζεται να μεταναστεύουν με κίνδυνο ακόμα και τη ζωή τους.

Απάντηση της κας Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(20 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει τα άκρως ανησυχητικά στοιχεία που έχει εκδώσει η UNHCR.

Ως απάντηση στα ιστορικά γεγονότα που διαδραματίστηκαν στις γειτονικές χώρες της Βόρειας Αφρικής, η Επιτροπή και η Υπηρεσία Εξωτερικής Δράσης πρότειναν τη δημιουργία εταιρικής σχέσης για τη δημοκρατία και την κοινή ευημερία με όλους τους γείτονες στα νότια της ΕΕ που επιθυμούν να προχωρήσουν σε πιο γρήγορες και πιο φιλόδοξες πολιτικές και οικονομικές μεταρρυθμίσεις. Εκτός από την άμεση ανταπόκριση της ΕΕ όσον αφορά την ανθρωπιστική βοήθεια (30 εκατομμύρια ευρώ), αυτή η εταιρική σχέση αποσκοπεί, μεταξύ άλλων, στην προώθηση της δημοκρατίας και στη δημιουργία θεσμών, καθώς και στην οικονομική ανάπτυξη, τις επαφές μεταξύ των λαών και την κινητικότητα.

Συνεπώς, η προσέγγιση που ακολούθησε η ΕΕ έχει σκοπό να τοποθετήσει τους λαούς στο επίκεντρο των πολιτικών αυτών και να διασφαλίσει ότι οι δημοκρατικές επιδιώξεις της Βόρειας Αφρικής θα παγιωθούν μέσα από τη στενότερη συνεργασία της ΕΕ με τους γείτονές της στη Νότια Μεσόγειο.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001289/12
to the Commission
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Immigrants and refugees drowned in the Mediterranean in 2011

More than 1 500 immigrants and refugees drowned or disappeared in 2011 trying to cross the Mediterranean. According to the UNHCR, which has been gathering data since 2006, this is a record. It is obvious that the increased flow of immigrants in 2011 is directly linked to NATO's war in Libya, a series of operations in North Africa and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is a consequence of the capitalist policies of these countries, the choices made by the Union for the Mediterranean and the EU Neighbourhood Policy, all of them seeking profit while exacerbating everyday poverty and misery.

Can the Commission confirm the UNCHR's data regarding immigration in the Mediterranean and does it recognise the right of the people of North Africa to steer a development course serving their own interests rather than those of big business, so that they no longer need to risk their lives attempting to migrate?

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

The Commission is aware of the alarming and worrying figures published by the UNHCR.

In response to the historic events in North Africa neighbouring countries, the Commission and the External Action Service proposed a Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with all the EU Southern Neighbours willing to embark on faster and more ambitious political and economic reforms. Apart from the EU's immediate response in terms of humanitarian aid (EUR 30 million), this Partnership aims, among other objectives, at promoting democracy and institution building, inclusive economic development, people-to-people contacts and mobility.

The approach followed by the EU therefore aims at placing the people at the centre of these policies and at ensuring that the democratic aspirations of North African societies are further consolidated through a closer cooperation between the EU and its Southern Mediterranean neighbours.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001290/12
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(3 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Cascina Linterno come candidato all'etichetta del patrimonio europeo

Il Parlamento europeo ha recentemente creato l'etichetta del patrimonio europeo, una sorta di marchio del patrimonio culturale europeo che spetterà ai siti più meritevoli dell'Unione, al fine di rafforzare lo spirito comunitario tra i giovani e al contempo promuovere un turismo di qualità.

Sono in pochi a sapere che la città di Milano, nello specifico Cascina Linterno, ospita un complesso architettonico risalente alla prima metà dell'800 dove il sommo poeta Francesco Petrarca soggiornò tra il 1353 e il 1361, periodo in cui scrisse, proprio in quel luogo, alcuni dei suoi capolavori più conosciuti.

È necessario rammentare che tutta la vita del Petrarca si è svolta in ambito europeo e che egli rappresenta il padre dell'Umanesimo, ovvero le radici della cultura europea.

Inoltre l'edificio si conferma come una delle testimonianze dell'architettura rurale e, dunque, dell'avvento della civiltà industriale che ha costituito una delle principali risorse dello sviluppo economico europeo.

In vista del termine di presentazione delle candidature, potrebbe la Commissione far sapere quali saranno le tempistiche e i criteri su cui si baserà il processo di selezione dei siti?

Risposta data da Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(20 marzo 2012)

La Commissione desidera ringraziare l'onorevole deputato per l'interesse che manifesta per l'etichetta del patrimonio europeo. La procedura per la selezione dei siti che si fregeranno della nuova etichetta avverrà in due fasi. I siti saranno inizialmente preselezionati a livello nazionale sulla base dei criteri comuni stabiliti nella decisione 1194/2011/CE. Ciascuno Stato membro stabilirà le proprie procedure e le proprie scadenze conformemente al principio di sussidiarietà. La selezione finale avverrà a livello di Unione europea e sarà fatta con l'aiuto di un panel di esperti europei indipendenti.

Informazioni dettagliate sui criteri e sulle procedure che si applicano all'etichetta del patrimonio europeo sono disponibili sul pertinente sito web della Commissione ([1]). L'elenco dei referenti presso i Ministeri nazionali sarà pubblicato anch'esso sullo stesso sito prevedibilmente entro il giugno 2012.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/label/european-heritage-label_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001290/12
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Cascina Linterno as a potential recipient of the European heritage label

The European Parliament recently created the European heritage label, which is a type of European cultural heritage label that will be awarded to the most deserving sites within the European Union, as a means of strengthening Community spirit among young people and, at the same time, promoting quality tourism.

Few people know that the city of Milan, and more specifically Cascina Linterno, is home to an architectural complex, dating back to the first half of the nineteenth century, where the outstanding poet Francesco Petrarch lived between 1353 and 1361 — a period in which he wrote, in that very place, some of his best-known masterpieces.

It should be recalled that Petrarch spent his entire life in Europe and that he is considered the 'Father of Humanism' or, in other words, the roots of European culture.

The building has also been classified a prime example of rural architecture, and hence as an example of the rise of the industrial civilisation that constituted one of the main sources of European economic development.

In view of the deadline for submitting applications, could the Commission say what the time frame will be and on what criteria the site selection process will be based?

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

The Commission would like to thank the Honourable Member for his interest in the European Heritage Label. The procedure for the selection of sites for the new Label will be carried out in two stages. Sites will initially be pre-selected at national level on the basis of the common criteria laid down in Decision 1194/2011/EC. Each Member State will establish its own procedures and timetable in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity. The final selection will then take place at European Union level and will be carried out with the help of a panel of independent European experts.

Detailed information about the criteria and procedures for the European Heritage Label is available on the relevant Commission website ([1]). The list of contact persons in the national Ministries will also be published on the same website, with an expected timing of June 2012.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/label/european-heritage-label_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001291/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 février 2012)

Objet: Les pesticides au cœur d'un marché illégal florissant

Europol constate une progression du commerce de pesticides illégaux et contrefaits. Fabriqués en Europe de l'Est et en Asie, ces produits frauduleux rapporteraient des milliards d'euros par an au crime organisé. Le ratio exceptionnel «risque faible/profit élevé», combiné au manque d'harmonisation de la législation et de la mise en œuvre des contrôles, fait du commerce des engrais illégaux un secteur d'activité de plus en plus lucratif pour le crime organisé. Si l'Europe semble être touchée dans son ensemble, l'Europe du Nord-Est est particulièrement ciblée par les réseaux criminels.

Plus de 25 % des pesticides en circulation dans certains États membres de l'UE proviendraient ainsi de ce marché illégal! La responsabilité des agriculteurs est également engagée dans la mesure où certains préfèrent une substance à moindre coût mais à l'origine douteuse, renvoyant aux firmes phytosanitaires l'argument du prix trop élevé de leurs produits.

Europol souligne que ces substances représentent un risque potentiel majeur pour la santé des agriculteurs et des consommateurs ainsi qu'un risque avéré pour l'environnement, ajoutant qu'elles peuvent aussi, du fait d'un manque de traçabilité, être détournées à des fins terroristes. On en veut pour preuve qu'en mai 2011, deux cargaisons de plusieurs tonnes de pesticides illégaux, interceptées en Europe de l'Est, contenaient des substances interdites dans l'UE, identifiées comme étant des perturbateurs endocriniens.

L'Office européen de police précise que ces criminels ont développé un réseau mondial complexe de fourniture d'engrais illégaux et contrefaits et exploitent des compagnies légales pour camoufler leurs activités.

Europol et les experts nationaux ont donc élaboré une série de recommandations, concernant notamment les enquêtes transfrontalières et la réalisation d'une étude sur la traçabilité des matières dangereuses utilisées pour la fabrication illégale de pesticides.

Dans ces conditions, la Commission est invitée à répondre aux questions suivantes:

— Est-elle informée de l'ampleur de ce trafic et des conséquences qui en découlent?

— Ne faudrait-il pas, au plus vite, harmoniser la législation ainsi que sa mise en œuvre, organiser une coopération plus étroite entre les forces de l'ordre et les associations de défense de l'environnement, les autorités de régulation des pesticides, les agences gouvernementales et les entreprises privées afin de mieux répondre aux menaces de santé publique?

Réponse donnée par M. Dalli au nom de la Commission
(22 mars 2012)

La Commission invite l'auteur de la question à se référer à ses réponses aux questions écrites E-00554/2012, E-00655/2012 et E-01175/2012 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001291/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Booming illegal market in pesticides

Europol has identified a growing trade in illegal and counterfeit pesticides. Fake products manufactured in eastern Europe and Asia are believed to bring in billions of euros every year for criminal networks. Thanks to an exceptional 'low risk-high profit' ratio, combined with a lack of harmonisation in terms of legislation and monitoring, trade in illegal fertilisers is becoming an increasingly lucrative sector for criminal networks. While the whole of Europe appears to be affected, criminal networks are targeting north-eastern Europe in particular.

More than 25 % of the pesticides in circulation in some Member States are thought to originate from this illegal market. Farmers also bear some responsibility, insofar as some of them prefer to purchase cheaper substances of dubious origin on the grounds that plant health companies charge too much for their products.

Europol stresses that, as well as posing an obvious risk to the environment, such substances may seriously endanger the health of farmers and consumers; they may also be misused for terrorist purposes on account of their lack of traceability. For example, in May 2011 two multi-tonne shipments of illegal pesticides intercepted in eastern Europe contained substances banned in the EU for their endocrine-disruptive properties.

According to Europol, criminals have developed a complex global supply chain for illegal and counterfeit pesticides, exploiting legal companies in order to camouflage their activities.

Europol and national experts have therefore drawn up a series of recommendations, including cross-border investigations and a study on the traceability of hazardous materials used in the illegal production of pesticides.

In the light of the above, can the Commission answer the following questions:

— Is it aware of the scale and impact of such trafficking?

— Does it not agree that the relevant legislation — and its implementation — should be harmonised as soon as possible, and that there should be closer cooperation among law enforcement authorities, environmental protection associations, pesticide regulatory authorities, government agencies and private companies, in order to address the ensuing threats to public health as effectively as possible?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(22 March 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Questions E-00554/2012, E-00655/2012 and E-01175/2012 ([1]).

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

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-001292/12
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2012 m. vasario 10 d.)

Tema: Geležinkelių infrastruktūros valdytojų ir operatorių atskyrimas ir Baltijos valstybių geležinkelių sektoriaus specifika

Europos Komisija turėtų ne vėliau kaip 2012 m. pabaigoje pateikti teisėkūros pasiūlymą dėl geležinkelių infrastruktūros valdytojų ir operatorių atskyrimo, taip pat dėl rinkos atvėrimo.

Lietuvos ir visų Baltijos valstybių geležinkeliai iš esmės skiriasi nuo kitų Europos Sąjungos šalių geležinkelių. Baltijos valstybėse veikiantis 1520 mm vėžės geležinkelių tinklas technologiškai integruotas į NVS ir Baltijos šalių bendrą geležinkelių sistemą.

Europos Komisijos pasiūlymai dėl geležinkelių infrastruktūros valdytojų ir operatorių atskyrimo turi būti pagrįsti išsamia studija. Manau, jog turi būti atlikta ir išsami Baltijos valstybių geležinkelių transporto sektoriaus analizė.

Ar Komisija, rengdama siūlymus dėl geležinkelių infrastruktūros valdytojų ir vežėjų atskyrimo, yra numačiusi analizuoti Baltijos valstybių 1520 mm vėžės geležinkelių tinklo specifiką (kur dominuoja trečiųjų šalių krovinių vežimo veikla, krovinių ir keleivių tranzitas iš trečiųjų šalių ir į jas, glaudi technologinė sąsaja su NVS šalių geležinkeliais, aukštas krovinių vežimo efektyvumas, minimalios valstybės dotacijos geležinkeliams, didelė geležinkelių dalis krovinių vežimo rinkoje ir kt.) ir įvertinti siūlomų priemonių poveikį Baltijos valstybių geležinkelių transporto sektoriui ir jo keleivių ir krovinių vežimo veiklos efektyvumui?

S. Kallaso atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. kovo 13 d.)

Komisija pranešė, kad iki 2012 m. pabaigos ji pateiks pasiūlymus dėl teisės aktų, kuriais bus siekiama labiau atskirti infrastruktūrą ir geležinkelio įmones ir atverti keleivių vežimo vidaus rinką. Siekiant įvertinti tokių priemonių poveikį valstybių narių geležinkelių transporto sistemoms pradėtas poveikio vertinimas. Šis vertinimas, žinoma, bus susijęs ir su Baltijos valstybėmis.

Tačiau Komisija nemano, kad, palyginti su kitomis ES valstybėmis narėmis, Baltijos valstybėse yra esminių geležinkelių transporto sektoriaus organizacinės struktūros skirtumų. Visų pirma, tai, kad skiriasi Baltijos valstybių geležinkelių transporto sistemoje naudojamos vėžės plotis, nėra susiję su geležinkelio įmonių ir infrastruktūros valdytojų organizacine struktūra. Vėžės plotis yra techninis klausimas, o atskyrimo reikalavimų tikslas – užtikrinti nediskriminavimo principu grindžiamas prieigos sąlygas.

Kiti pateikiant klausimą nurodyti veiksniai bus vertinami tik jei bus susiję su atskyrimo klausimu. Tačiau pasakytina, kad geležinkelių transporto ekonominės sąlygos Baltijos šalyse labai skiriasi. Kitaip nei kitose Baltijos valstybėse, Lietuvos rinkoje praktiškai nėra jokios konkurencijos keleivių ir krovinių vežimo paslaugų srityje. Remiantis Eurostato duomenimis, pastaraisiais metais Lietuvoje geležinkeliais pervežama vis mažesnė keleivių ir krovinių dalis ([1]). 2011 m. kovo mėn. Baltojoje knygoje išdėstytoje Komisijos politikoje numatyta priemonių, skirtų skatinti geležinkelių transporto patrauklumą ir didinti vežimo geležinkeliais dalį. Pasiūlymuose, kurie bus pateikti 2012 m. pabaigoje, konkrečiomis priemonėmis bus siekiama spręsti šį geležinkelių transporto dalies sumažėjimo klausimą ir paskatinti klientus – keleivius ir krovinių vežėjus – naudotis geležinkelių transporto paslaugomis.

([1]) pagal transporto rūšių pasiskirstymą vežimas geležinkeliu sumažėjo nuo 2,5 proc. 2002 m. iki 1 proc. 2008 m.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001292/12
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: The unbundling of rail infrastructure owners and operators and the specific characteristics of the rail sector in the Baltic States

The European Commission should, by the end of 2012 at the latest, submit a legislative proposal on the unbundling of rail infrastructure owners and operators, as well as on the opening up of the market.

The railways of Lithuania and of all the Baltic States are fundamentally different from those of other European Union Member States. The 1 520 mm gauge network that exists in the Baltic States is technologically integrated into the common rail system of the countries of the CIS and the Baltic.

The European Commission's proposals on the unbundling of rail infrastructure owners and operators should be based on a detailed study. I believe that a detailed analysis of the rail transport sector in the Baltic States should also be carried out.

In drafting proposals on the unbundling of rail infrastructure managers and carriers, has the Commission provided for an analysis of the specific characteristics of the Baltic States' 1 520 mm gauge rail network (dominated by the freight operations of third countries, freight and passenger transit to and from third countries, close technological links with the railways of the CIS countries, highly efficient freight operations, minimum government grants to the railways, the large share of the railways in the freight market, etc) and an assessment of the impact of the proposed measures on the rail transport sector in the Baltic States and the efficiency of its passenger and freight operations?

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

The Commission has announced it will submit legislative proposals by the end of 2012 with a view to a further separation of infrastructure and railway undertakings and domestic passenger market opening. An impact assessment study has been launched in order to assess the impact of such measures on the railway systems in the Member States. This assessment will of course also concern the Baltic States.

However the Commission does not think that there are fundamental differences in the Baltic States in comparison to the rest of the EU as far as the issue of the organisational structure of the rail sector is concerned. In particular the fact that the Baltic states have a different gauge width in their network does not seem to have any relation with the organisational structure of railway undertaking and infrastructure managers. The gauge width is a technical issue, while the separation requirements have the objective to guarantee non-discriminatory access conditions.

The other factors mentioned in the question will be assessed, as far as they have any bearing on the issue of separation. However it is also true that the economic conditions of rail transport are very different between the Baltic countries. Unlike in other Baltic states, there is practically no competition in the Lithuanian market, neither in freight nor in passenger traffic. According to Eurostat, the share of rail in Lithuania has declined in both freight and passenger transport in recent years ([1]). The Commission's policy, as set out in its White Paper of March 2011, includes policies to increase the attractiveness of rail transport and increase its modal share. The specific measures to be presented in the proposals at the end of 2012 seek to redress this fall off in rail share and to attract customers, both passenger and freight, to rail.

([1]) The modal split fell from 2.5 % in 2002 to just 1 % in 2008.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001294/12
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(9 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Responsabilità civile dei magistrati

In Italia si sta discutendo dell'introduzione di modifiche alla legge n. 117 del 1988 riguardante il risarcimento dei danni cagionati nell'esercizio delle funzioni giudiziarie e la responsabilità civile dei magistrati. Proprio quest'ultimo punto è quello maggiormente dibattuto, in quanto ad oggi la responsabilità civile dei magistrati è sostanzialmente negata dall'ordinamento italiano: un cittadino ingiustamente danneggiato può infatti rivalersi esclusivamente nei confronti dello Stato, il quale a sua volta ha minimi poteri d'azione (che comunque non utilizza) nei confronti del magistrato che ha sbagliato.

La legge n. 117/1988 è stata inoltre già oggetto di una recente sentenza della Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea (24 novembre 2011, causa C-379/10), che ha condannato la Repubblica Italiana per essere venuta meno agli obblighi ad essa incombenti in forza del principio generale della responsabilità degli Stati membri per violazione del diritto dell'Unione da parte di uno dei loro organi giurisdizionali di ultimo grado.

Alla luce delle differenti problematiche connesse alla legislazione italiana in materia, può la Commissione indicare quale sia la sua posizione nei confronti della responsabilità civile dei magistrati e quale sia la situazione al riguardo negli altri Stati membri?

Risposta data da José Manuel Barroso a nome della Commissione
(23 marzo 2012)

Nelle sentenze Köbler ([1]) e Traghetti del Mediterraneo ([2]) la Corte di giustizia ha definito le condizioni a cui uno Stato membro può essere ritenuto responsabile per danni arrecati ai singoli a seguito di violazioni del diritto dell'Unione da parte di un organo giurisdizionale. La Commissione non ha finora avviato procedure d'infrazione nei confronti di altri Stati membri a tale riguardo.

([1]) Causa C-224/01, Racc. 2003, pag. I-10239.
([2]) Causa C-173/03, Racc. 2006, pag. I-5177.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001294/12
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: Civil liability of magistrates

The introduction of amendments to Law No 117 of 1988 regarding compensation for damage caused in the discharge of judicial duties and the civil liability of magistrates is currently under discussion in Italy. The latter point is the most debated, due to the fact that to the civil liability of magistrates has hitherto been substantially negated by Italian law: a person who has suffered unfair damage may in fact seek compensation only from the State, which in turn has minimum powers of action (which in any case it does not use) in relation to the magistrate who has made an error.

Law No 117/1988 was also the subject of a recent judgment by the Court of Justice of the European Union (24 November 2011, Case C-379/10), which condemned the Italian Republic for its failure to fulfil its obligations, as provided by the general principle of EU Member State liability for violation of EC law by one of its courts of last instance.

In light of the various problems raised by Italian legislation on the subject, can the Commission indicate its position with regard to the civil liability of magistrates and state what the situation is in this respect in the other Member States?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(23 March 2012)

The Court of Justice has defined in its *Köbler* ([1]) and *Traghetti del Mediterraneo* ([2]) judgments the conditions under which a Member State may be held liable for the damages caused to individuals as a result of breaches of Union law by the judiciary. So far, the Commission has not opened infringement proceedings concerning this matter against other Member States.

([1]) C-224/01 [2003] ECR I-10239.
([2]) C-173/03 [2006] Rec. p. I-5177.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001295/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Iranian Ministry for the Interior

Following the contested Iranian elections in 2009, for which there is clear evidence of fraud, demonstrations took place in which armed police killed at least 36 people.

Journalists were arrested and subjected to violence by police officers.

Elections and policing are the responsibility of the Iranian Ministry for the Interior.

Could the Vice-President/High Representative tell me how much funding the EU provided to the Iranian Ministry for the Interior over the 10-year period from 2001 to 2011?

Could she advise me of any other funding that has been given to Iranian Government agencies?

Could she also advise me of any such funding planned for 2012 and beyond?

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

EU cooperation activities in Iran are extremely limited, for obvious reasons. The current portfolio of EU cooperation with Iran amounts to EUR 2.5 million in funding for 10 projects. The sources of funding are thematic programmes in the fields of democracy and human rights (EIDHR) and non-state actors (DCI-NSA). Supported actions aim at promoting empowerment of vulnerable people and supporting community based development. Beneficiaries of grants are international and local NGOs.

The EU has provided no funding to the Ministry for the Interior in the period to which the Honourable Parliamentarian refers, nor is any such funding planned for 2012. The EU's serious concerns over Iran's nuclear programme and the extremely poor human rights situation have severely impaired prospects for EU cooperation with the Iranian government.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001296/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D) e Francesca Balzani (S&D)
(10 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Fondo di solidarietà per l'alluvione in Liguria e Toscana

A seguito della violentissima alluvione che ha colpito le provincie di La Spezia e Massa e Carrara nel mese di ottobre 2011 e considerando il drammatico impatto dell'alluvione sul territorio, gli ingentissimi danni alle infrastrutture, alle comunicazioni e ai centri abitati, nonché le profonde e durevoli ripercussioni sulle condizioni di vita e sulla stabilità economica della regione, le autorità italiane hanno presentato alla Commissione europea, entro il termine prestabilito di dieci settimane, la richiesta di attivazione del Fondo di solidarietà dell'Unione europea.

I danni stimati degli eventi alluvionali ammontano a oltre 700 milioni di euro, di cui 560 nella sola Liguria.

Considerando che l'alluvione ha colpito in Liguria anche siti di grandissimo interesse culturale, e in particolare i territori delle Cinque Terre;

considerando che la zona delle Cinque Terre è tra i siti dichiarati Patrimonio mondiale dell'umanità dall'Unesco e rappresenta uno straordinario esempio d'interazione tra società umana e natura, in grado di produrre un ambiente unico, costruito in centinaia e migliaia di anni di lavoro umano e che conserva un importante ruolo socio-economico nella vita delle comunità;

considerando che si tratta di uno dei pochi siti europei iscritti nell'elenco del Patrimonio mondiale dell'umanità dell'Unesco come «paesaggio culturale»;

considerando che i siti colpiti nelle Cinque Terre necessitano di ingentissime opere di recupero e di interventi significativi e particolarmente costosi per la piena restituzione al loro splendore originario;

considerando che i danni dell'alluvione causeranno una lunga e pesante sospensione del turismo nell'area in questione, con conseguenti gravi ripercussioni sull'economia locale, e in particolare sull'agricoltura basata su mezzi e procedimenti tradizionali;

ritiene la Commissione che il Fondo di solidarietà dell'Unione europea possa essere attivato a seguito della domanda presentata dalle autorità italiane?

Ritiene inoltre la Commissione che, per le ragioni succitate e dato il particolare valore e interesse culturale delle zone colpite, ci sia la possibilità di un aiuto superiore alla quota del 2,5 % per l'area della Liguria colpita dall'alluvione?

Risposta data da Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(21 marzo 2012)

La domanda italiana a seguito delle alluvioni in Liguria e Toscana è stata presentata alla Commissione il 22 dicembre 2011, ben prima della scadenza per la presentazione. La Commissione ha completato la propria valutazione della richiesta e ha deciso, il 15 marzo 2012, di proporre l'erogazione di un aiuto, a titolo del Fondo di solidarietà, pari a un importo di 16,9 milioni di euro.

La catastrofe ha in effetti provocato seri danni con conseguenze gravi per le aree colpite, come descritto dagli onorevoli deputati. Tuttavia, il danno diretto complessivo provocato dalla catastrofe, pari a 722 milioni di euro, è notevolmente inferiore rispetto alla soglia normale che si applica all'Italia, vale a dire 3,536 miliardi di euro, a partire dalla quale è possibile attivare il Fondo di solidarietà dell'UE. La Commissione propone pertanto di attivare il fondo sulla base dei criteri eccezionali che entrano in gioco in caso di «catastrofi regionali straordinarie». L'aiuto può essere versato una volta che il Parlamento europeo e il Consiglio abbiano approvato il corrispondente bilancio rettificativo e che sia stato concluso con l'Italia un accordo di attuazione.

Per quanto concerne il tasso dell'aiuto, la Commissione desidera informare gli onorevoli deputati che, per motivi di parità di trattamento e in considerazione della disponibilità di fondi, non è possibile scostarsi dal normale tasso di aiuto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001296/12
to the Commission
Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D) and Francesca Balzani (S&D)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Solidarity Fund and floods in Liguria and Tuscany (Italy)

Following the extremely heavy flooding that hit the Italian provinces of La Spezia and Massa-Carrara in October 2011, and given the dramatic impact of the floods throughout the region, the huge damage to infrastructure, communications and built-up areas, and the deep and lasting repercussions for living conditions and economic stability in the region, the Italian authorities have submitted to the Commission, within the regulation ten-week time-limit, a request to activate the EU Solidarity Fund.

The damage caused by these floods is estimated to be in excess of EUR 700 million (EUR 560 million in Liguria alone).

In Liguria, the floods also hit locations of great cultural interest, particularly the Cinque Terre area.

The Cinque Terre area has been declared a World Heritage Site by Unesco, and constitutes an extraordinary example of interaction between human society and nature, capable of producing a unique environment, built over hundreds and thousands of years of human work, which plays an important socioeconomic role in community life.

It is also one of the few European sites registered on the Unesco World Heritage Site list as a 'cultural landscape'.

The affected sites in Cinque Terre will require large-scale restoration and significant and costly intervention if they are to fully recover their original splendour.

The flood damage will lead to a long and difficult suspension of tourism in the area, with severe effects on the local economy, and, in particular, on an agriculture based on traditional methods and processes.

Given the above, does the Commission believe that the EU Solidarity Fund could be activated following the request put forward by the Italian authorities?

In addition, does the Commission consider, for the reasons mentioned above and given the particular value and cultural interest of the affected areas, that there is a possibility of providing more aid than the 2.5 % allocated to the part of Liguria affected by the flooding?

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

The Italian application regarding the flooding disaster in Liguria and Tuscany was submitted to the Commission on 22 December 2011, well ahead of the application deadline. The Commission has completed its assessment of the application and decided on 15 March 2012 to propose granting Solidarity Fund aid amounting to EUR 16.9 million.

The disaster has indeed caused severe damage with serious consequences on the affected area, as described by the Honourable Members. However, the overall direct damage caused by the disaster of EUR 722 million is considerably lower than the normal threshold for activating the EU Solidarity Fund applicable to Italy, i.e. EUR 3.536 billion. The Commission is therefore proposing to activate the Fund on the basis of the exceptional criteria for so-called 'extraordinary regional disasters'. The aid can be paid out once the European Parliament and the Council have approved the corresponding amending budget and an Implementation Agreement has been concluded with Italy.

Concerning the aid rate, the Commission would like to inform the Honourable Members that, for reasons of equal treatment and availability of funds, it is not possible to deviate from the normal aid rate.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-001298/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Ioannis Kasoulides (PPE)
(9 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Χώροι υγειονομικής ταφής αποβλήτων στην Κύπρο

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή απέστειλε στις 26 Ιανουαρίου 2012 αιτιολογημένη γνώμη στην Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία ζητώντας της να συμμορφωθεί με την κοινοτική νομοθεσία όσον αφορά στους χώρους υγειονομικής ταφής αποβλήτων. Όπως προκύπτει από τη σχετική ανακοίνωση της Επιτροπής, υπάρχουν έξι χωματερές στην Κύπρο που λειτουργούν κατά παράβαση της Οδηγίας 1999/31/ΕΚ και εξακολουθούν να απορροφούν το σύνολο των απορριμμάτων των Δήμων Λευκωσίας και Λεμεσού, δεδομένου ότι δεν έχουν ακόμα κατασκευαστεί επαρκείς υποδομές υποδοχής αποβλήτων σε αυτούς τους δύο Δήμους.

Δεδομένου ότι ο αρμόδιος Επίτροπος Janez Potočnik προειδοποίησε την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία για ενδεχόμενη παραπομπή της εν λόγω υπόθεσης στο Δικαστήριο της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης αν η πρώτη δεν συμμορφωθεί με την κοινοτική νομοθεσία εντός δύο μηνών, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Ποια η πρόοδος της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας τα τελευταία χρόνια όσον αφορά στη πλήρη συμμόρφωσή της με την κοινοτική νομοθεσία για την υγειονομική ταφή αποβλήτων; Ποιες εγκαταστάσεις βρίσκονται σε διαδικασία ανοικοδόμησης, και σε ποιες περιπτώσεις αυτό έχει ήδη επιτευχθεί; Ποιες οι δυνατότητες της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας να συμμορφωθεί εντός του χρονοδιαγράμματος των δύο μηνών που έθεσε η Επιτροπή σχετικά με τις έξι προαναφερθείσες χωματερές; Ποιες οι προθέσεις της Επιτροπής σχετικά με την περίπτωση δύο εκ των έξι χωματερών, σε Βατί και Κοτσιάτη, όπου σύμφωνα με πληροφορίες είναι πρακτικώς αδύνατον να βρεθεί υπαλλακτική λύση εντός της ορισθείσας δίμηνης προθεσμίας;

Απάντηση του κ. Potocnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή επιβεβαιώνει ότι κοινοποιήθηκε στην Κύπρο αιτιολογημένη γνώμη στις 27 Ιανουαρίου 2012 και ότι η Κύπρος εκλήθη να απαντήσει εντός δύο μηνών. Η διαδικασία επί παραβάσει δρομολογήθηκε το 2011 ([1]) με τα σκεπτικό ότι λειτουργούσαν εξήντα δύο χώροι υγειονομικής ταφής αντίθετα προς τις απαιτήσεις της οδηγίας 99/31/ΕΚ περί υγειονομικής ταφής των αποβλήτων ([2]). Σύμφωνα με τις τελευταίες πληροφορίες που έλαβε η Επιτροπή, από τους εξήντα δύο χώρους υγειονομικής ταφής δύο εξακολουθούν να λειτουργούν. Η Επιτροπή θα εξετάσει τα επόμενα κατάλληλα ληπτέα μέτρα για τους δύο αυτούς χώρους υγειονομικής ταφής μετά την λήψη και εξέταση της επίσημης απάντησης της Κύπρου.

([1]) Παράβαση 2011/2005.
([2]) ΕΕ L 182 της 16.7.1999.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001298/12
to the Commission
Ioannis Kasoulides (PPE)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: Landfills in Cyprus.

On 26 January 2012, the European Commission sent a reasoned opinion to Cyprus, calling on it to comply with EU legislation on landfills. As stated in the Commission's announcement, there are six landfills in Cyprus that operate in violation of Directive 1999/31/EC, continuing to absorb all the waste from the Municipalities of Nicosia and Limassol, despite the fact that no adequate waste reception facilities have yet been constructed in these two municipalities.

Given that the competent Commissioner Janez Potočnik has warned Cyprus regarding the possible referral of this case to the European Court of Justice if it fails to comply with EC law within two months, I would like to ask the Commission:

What progress has the Republic of Cyprus made in recent years towards full compliance with EU legislation on landfills? What facilities are in the process of reconstruction, and in what cases has this been achieved? To what extent is it possible for the Republic of Cyprus to comply with the two-month deadline set by the Commission for these six landfills? What are the Commission's intentions regarding the case of two of the six landfills, in Vati and Kotsiati, where reportedly it is practically impossible to find an alternative solution within the prescribed two-month deadline?

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

The Commission confirms that a Reasoned Opinion was notified to Cyprus on 27 January 2012 and Cyprus was asked to respond within two months. The infringement procedure was launched in 2011 ([1]) on the basis that sixty-two landfills were operating contrary to the requirements of Council Directive 99/31/EC on the landfill of waste ([2]). Of the sixty-two landfills, two are still functioning, according to the latest information received by the Commission. The Commission will consider the next appropriate steps to take for these two landfills once it has received and had an opportunity to examine the formal response of Cyprus.

([1]) Infringement 2011/2005.
([2]) OJ L 182, 16.7.1999.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001300/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(10 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Υπερπληθυσμός στις ελληνικές φυλακές

Πρόσφατα, οι διευθύνσεις των φυλακών Κορυδαλλού και Χαλκίδας στην Ελλάδα γνωστοποίησαν στο υπουργείο Δικαιοσύνης και στις εισαγγελικές αρχές της χώρας ότι δεν έχουν χώρο και αναγκάζονται να μην δέχονται άλλους κρατούμενους. Ο αριθμός των κρατουμένων σε όλες τις φυλακές της χώρας ανέρχεται σήμερα στους 12 703, που είναι ο μεγαλύτερος που έχει σημειωθεί στην ιστορία του ελληνικού κράτους, ενώ η χωρητικότητα όλων των καταστημάτων κράτησης είναι 9 300 άτομα. Ειδικά, στις φυλακές Κορυδαλλού ο αριθμός των κρατουμένων ανέρχεται στις 2 320, ενώ η χωρητικότητά τους είναι για 800 άτομα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Έχει αξιοποιήσει η Ελλάδα χρηματοδότηση από τα ευρωπαϊκά διαρθρωτικά ταμεία για την ανέγερση νέων σωφρονιστικών ιδρυμάτων ή επέκταση των υπαρχόντων μονάδων; Μπορεί να με ενημερώσει σε ποια έργα κατασκευής ή επέκτασης σωφρονιστικών μονάδων στην Ελλάδα συμμετέχει σήμερα μέσω συγχρηματοδότησης η ΕΕ;

— Καθώς οι ασφυκτικές καταστάσεις που επικρατούν στις ελληνικές φυλακές θέτουν σε κίνδυνο την αξιοπρεπή διαβίωση των κρατουμένων αλλά και απειλούν την ασφάλεια εντός των σωφρονιστικών ιδρυμάτων, μπορεί η Ελλάδα να αναζητήσει έκτακτη επιχορήγηση από την ΕΕ για το σκοπό αυτό, πέραν του πλαισίου των υπαρχόντων διαρθρωτικών ταμείων;

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Μαρτίου 2012)

Τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία δεν έχουν χρησιμοποιηθεί για την οικοδόμηση σωφρονιστικών εγκαστάσεων στην Ελλάδα.

Δεν υπάρχουν διαθέσιμες πηγές χρηματοδότησης που να μπορούσαν να χορηγήσουν επείγουσα χρηματοδότηση εκ μέρους της ΕΕ, έτσι ώστε να αντιμετωπιστεί το θέμα που εκθέτει στην ερώτησή του ο κ. βουλευτής.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001300/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Overcrowding in Greek jails

Recently, the administrations of the jails in Koridallos and Halkida in Greece informed the Ministry of Justice and the public prosecution service that they have no room for any more prisoners. The total number of prison inmates in Greece now stands at 12 703, a historic national record, compared with a total capacity of 9 300. In particular, the jails in Koridallos currently hold 2 320 prisoners, although their capacity is 800.

I would like to ask the Commission:

— Has Greece made use of EU structural funding to construct new penal institutions or extend existing units? Can the Commission inform me of any works cofunded by the EU for the construction or extension of penal units in Greece?

— Given that serious overcrowding in Greek jails is highly detrimental to the living conditions and safety of their inmates, can Greece request an emergency EU subsidy over and above the existing structural funds in order to address the problems?

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

Structural Funds have not been used to support the construction of penal institutions in Greece.

There is no funding source available that could provide an emergency EU subsidy to address this issue raised in the question.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001301/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(10 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Χρέος νοικοκυριών προς τις τράπεζες

Μία σημαντική επίπτωση της οικονομικής κρίσης είναι η αδυναμία των νοικοκυριών στην Ευρώπη να ανταποκριθούν στα ιδιωτικά τους χρέη προς τις τράπεζες. Σημειώνεται ότι αυτό το φαινόμενο είναι πολύ πιο έντονο στις χώρες που πλήττονται ιδιαίτερα από τη δημοσιονομική κρίση.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Διαθέτει πρόσφατα στοιχεία σχετικά με τον αριθμό έκθεσης των ευρωπαϊκών νοικοκυριών σε χρέη προς τις τράπεζες; Ποια είναι η περίπτωση της Ελλάδας σε σχέση με τους εταίρους της;

— Ποιες πρωτοβουλίες έχει αναλάβει η Επιτροπή σχετικά με την προστασία των υπερχρεωμένων νοικοκυριών στην ΕΕ; Προτίθεται η ίδια, στο πλαίσιο των αρμοδιοτήτων της, να συνδράμει στην προστασία της κύριας κατοικίας από νοικοκυριά που είναι εκτεθειμένα στον υπερδανεισμό;

Απάντηση του κ. Dalli εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(22 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή έχει επίγνωση των προβλημάτων που αντιμετωπίζουν τα υπερχρεωμένα νοικοκυριά στην ΕΕ.

Το 2008 η Επιτροπή δημοσίευσε τη μελέτη «Προς έναν κοινό λειτουργικό ευρωπαϊκό ορισμό της υπερχρέωσης» ([1]). Η μελέτη αυτή έδειξε μεταξύ άλλων ότι ένα από τα αποτελεσματικότερα εργαλεία για τη μέτρηση της υπερχρέωσης των νοικοκυριών είναι οι «EU-SILC», δηλαδή οι στατιστικές που προκύπτουν από την ετήσια έρευνα της Eurostat για το εισόδημα και τις συνθήκες διαβίωσης στην Ευρώπη. Μια ενότητα των EU-SILC ([2]) έδειξε ότι, το 2008, το μεγαλύτερο ποσοστό των ατόμων που αντιμετωπίζουν οικονομικές δυσκολίες, τα οποία οφείλουν δηλαδή ποσό μεγαλύτερο από το διαθέσιμο μηνιαίο εισόδημά τους, ήταν στο Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο, τη Γερμανία, την Κύπρο, την Αυστρία και την Ελλάδα.

Προκειμένου να επικαιροποιήσει τις γνώσεις που διαθέτει σχετικά με το θέμα αυτό και να εξετάσει κατά πόσο είναι αναγκαίο να προχωρήσει σε πιθανές μελλοντικές ενέργειες, η Επιτροπή πρόκειται να δρομολογήσει μια εκτενή μελέτη σχετικά με την υπερχρέωση των νοικοκυριών. Η μελέτη αυτή θα φωτογραφίσει τη σημερινή κατάσταση, θα αναλύσει τα αίτια πίσω από αυτήν, θα αξιολογήσει τις δημοσιονομικές επιπτώσεις που ανακύπτουν και θα καταγράψει τόσο τις ενέργειες που εκτελούνται επί του παρόντος για την άμβλυνση του αντικτύπου της υπέρμετρης χρέωσης στα νοικοκυριά όσο και τους οργανισμούς που δραστηριοποιούνται στον εν λόγω τομέα. Τα προκαταρκτικά αποτελέσματα της μελέτης αυτής αναμένεται να είναι διαθέσιμα έως το τέλος του 2012 και θα χρησιμοποιηθούν για τη δρομολόγηση μιας ευρείας διαβούλευσης με τους ενδιαφερόμενους παράγοντες.

Επιπλέον, η ομάδα χρηστών των χρηματοοικονομικών υπηρεσιών (FSUG) ([3]) ξεκίνησε πρόσφατα μελέτη με σκοπό να αναλυθούν το νομικό πλαίσιο και οι υφιστάμενες πρακτικές βοήθειας προς τα υπερχρεωμένα νοικοκυριά, που αποσκοπούν στον περιορισμό της οικονομικής ζημίας τους. Η μελέτη θα εξετάσει ιδίως την αποτελεσματικότητα των διαδικασιών με τις οποίες οι δανειολήπτες που αδυνατούν να εξοφλήσουν το ενυπόθηκο δάνειό τους μπορούν να απαλλαγούν από το χρέος τους παραχωρώντας το υποθηκευμένο ακίνητό τους στον δανειστή. Τα αποτελέσματα της εν λόγω μελέτης αναμένονται τον Οκτώβριο του 2012.

([1]) Η μελέτη είναι διαθέσιμη στο διαδίκτυο, στις εξής διευθύνσεις: http://ec.europa.eu/social/search.jsp?langId=en&menuType=basic; http://www.bris.ac.uk/geography/research/pfrc/themes/credit-debt/pfrc0804.pdf

([2]) Τα σχετικά στοιχεία είναι διαθέσιμα στο διαδίκτυο, στην εξής διεύθυνση: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php /Household_over-indebtedness_statistics

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finservices-retail/fsug/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001301/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Household bank debt

One significant impact of the economic crisis is the inability of households in Europe to pay off their bank debts, the problem being much more acute in the countries worst affected.

In view of this:

— Does the Commission have recent data regarding the number of European households in debt to banks? What is the situation in Greece compared with its partner countries?

— What action has the Commission taken with regard to the protection of heavily indebted households in the EU? Does it intend, as part of its responsibilities, to assist households which have borrowed excessively to protect their primary residences?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(22 March 2012)

The Commission is aware of the problems affecting over-indebted households in the EU.

In 2008 the Commission published the study 'Towards a common operational European definition of over-indebtedness' ([1]). This study showed, *inter alia*, that one of the best tools for measuring households' over-indebtedness is 'EU-SILC', the yearly survey on income and living conditions in Europe, carried out by Eurostat. A module of the EU-SILC ([2]) showed that, in 2008, the highest proportion of individuals in financial difficulty, in the sense of owing an amount larger than their monthly disposable income, was in the United Kingdom, Germany, Cyprus, Austria and Greece.

In order to update its knowledge-base on this issue and test the need for possible future actions, the Commission is about to launch an extensive study on households' over-indebtedness. This study will take a snapshot of the current situation, analyse its causes, assess the financial consequences and list both the actions that are currently being carried out to alleviate the impact of over-indebtedness on households and the organisations which are active in this field. The preliminary results of the study should be available by the end of 2012 and will be used for launching a broad stakeholders' consultation.

In addition, the Financial Services User Group (FSUG) ([3]) has recently launched a study aimed at analysing the legal framework and the existing practices for helping over-indebted households to limit their financial detriment. The study will look, in particular, into the efficiency of the procedures allowing borrowers, who cannot repay their mortgage loan, to be released from the underlying debt by handing their mortgaged property over to the lender. The results of the study are expected in October 2012.

([1]) Available at the websites: http://ec.europa.eu/social/search.jsp?langId=en&menuType=basic and http://www.bris.ac.uk/geography/research/pfrc/themes/credit-debt/pfrc0804.pdf
([2]) Available at the website http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Household_over-indebtedness_statistics
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finservices-retail/fsug/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001302/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(10 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Μεταναστευτική πολιτική στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με δημοσιεύματα στον ελληνικό Τύπο, η τρόικα στη πρόσφατη τακτική επίσκεψή της στην Αθήνα έθεσε ζήτημα για την ακολουθούμενη μεταναστευτική πολιτική της Ελλάδας.

Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει η Επιτροπή για το ακριβές περιεχόμενο των θεμάτων περί μεταναστευτικής πολιτικής που έθεσε η τρόικα;

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

Η Επιτροπή πληροφορεί το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου ότι δεν έχουν συζητηθεί ζητήματα μεταναστευτικής πολιτικής στις συναντήσεις μεταξύ της Ελλάδας και της Τρόικας, στο πλαίσιο του ελληνικού προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής.

Εν τούτοις, η ομάδα δράσης για την Ελλάδα (TFGR) στηρίζει δραστηριότητες τεχνικής βοήθειας (TB) στον τομέα της μετανάστευσης, του ασύλου και συνόρων. Οι εν λόγω δράσεις TB δεν εντάσσονται στο πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001302/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Immigration Policy in Greece

According to articles in the Greek press, in its recent regular visit to Athens, the Troika raised the issue of Greece's immigration policy.

Could the Commission inform me of the exact content of the issues relating to immigration policy raised by the Troika?

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

The Commission informs the Honourable Member that immigration policy issues have not been discussed in meetings between Greece and the Troika in the context of the Greek economic adjustment programme.

However, Taskforce Greece (TFGR) is supporting technical assistance (TA) in the area of migration, asylum and borders. These TA actions are not part of the economic adjustment programme.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001303/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(10 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πρωτοβουλίες της Επιτροπής για την κατάσταση των «αόρατων» παιδιών

Η Επιτροπή ήδη από το 2010 είχε δηλώσει την πρόθεση της να δρομολογήσει σειρά πρωτοβουλιών στο πλαίσιο της στρατηγικής της για τα δικαιώματα των παιδιών ώστε να έρθει στο φως η κατάσταση των «αόρατων παιδιών» και των κρατουμένων παιδιών ενόψει της καθιέρωσης βέλτιστων πρακτικών και της διατύπωσης συστάσεων στα κράτη μέλη για τα θέματα αυτά. Ως προς αυτό, δεσμεύτηκε να οργανώσει μια συνεδρίαση της ομάδας εμπειρογνωμόνων, οι οποίοι θα εξετάσουν τα πλέον κοινά προβλήματα σχετικά με την κράτηση των παραβατών-παιδιών και την κοινωνική αποκατάστασή τους.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Ποιες είναι οι πρωτοβουλίες της ώστε να διευκρινιστεί η κατάσταση των «αόρατων παιδιών» και των κρατουμένων παιδιών; Διατύπωσε συγκεκριμένες συστάσεις προς τα κράτη μέλη;

— Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει για τα αποτελέσματα και τα βασικότερα συμπεράσματα της ομάδας εμπειρογνωμόνων ώμων που εξέτασαν τα κυριότερα προβλήματα σχετικά με την κράτηση των παραβατών-παιδιών και την κοινωνική αποκατάστασή τους;

Απάντηση της κας Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(9 Μαρτίου 2012)

Στην ανακοίνωση της Επιτροπής «Το θεματολόγιο της ΕΕ για τα δικαιώματα του παιδιού» προβλέπεται σειρά δράσεων που αποβλέπουν στη ρύθμιση της κατάστασης των παιδιών ενώπιον των συστημάτων απονομής δικαιοσύνης. Οι δράσεις αυτές αποσκοπούν στην ενίσχυση των δικαιωμάτων παιδιών που είναι θύματα, ύποπτοι και κατηγορούμενοι με την ανάπτυξη τεκμηριωμένων πολιτικών καθώς και νομοθετικών και μη νομοθετικών μέτρων. Το θεματολόγιο της ΕΕ περιλαμβάνει επίσης πρωτοβουλίες για την ενίσχυση των δικαιωμάτων παιδιών που βρίσκονται σε ευάλωτη κατάσταση, για παράδειγμα παιδιά μετανάστες, παιδιά Ρομά, παιδιά με αναπηρία, κ.λπ. Η ανακοίνωση δεν προβλέπει καμία ιδιαίτερη δράση που να στοχεύει παιδιά φυλακισμένων ενηλίκων.

Ως τμήμα της διαδικασίας διαβούλευσης για την προετοιμασία του θεματολογίου της ΕΕ, η Επιτροπή διοργάνωσε συσκέψεις της ομάδας εμπειρογνωμόνων με θέμα την φιλική προς τα παιδιά δικαιοσύνη, τα αόρατα παιδιά και την βία σε βάρος παιδιών. Τα αποτελέσματα και τα συμπεράσματα αυτών των ομάδων εμπειρογνωμόνων ελήφθησαν υπόψη κατά τη σύνταξη του θεματολογίου της ΕΕ.

Σύμφωνα με το Πρόγραμμα της Στοκχόλμης, η Επιτροπή εξετάζει επίσης τρόπους για την ενίσχυση της αμοιβαίας εμπιστοσύνης και αμοιβαίας αναγνώρισης στον τομέα των κρατήσεων, στο πλαίσιο και εντός των ορίων της αρμοδιότητας της ΕΕ. Προς τον σκοπό αυτό, η Επιτροπή δημοσίευσε Πράσινη Βίβλο για την εφαρμογή της ενωσιακής ποινικής νομοθεσίας στον τομέα της κράτησης ([1]). Η Επιτροπή θα προβεί σε προσεκτική ανάλυση όλων των απαντήσεων που δόθηκαν στην Πράσινη Βίβλο πριν αποφασίσει κατά πόσον απαιτείται οποιαδήποτε δράση σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο.

([1]) COM(2011)327.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001303/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Commission initiatives on the status of 'invisible' children

Back in 2010, the Commission stated its intention to launch a series of initiatives in the framework of its strategy for children's rights in order to bring to light the situation of the 'invisible children' and child prisoners, with a view to establishing best practices and setting forth recommendations to Member States on these issues. In this regard, it has committed to organising a meeting of a group of experts, who will examine the most common problems regarding the detention of child offenders and their social rehabilitation.

I would like to ask the Commission:

— What are its initiatives to clarify the status of 'invisible children' and child prisoners? Has it made specific recommendations to Member States?

— Could it tell me the results and main conclusions of the expert group that examined the main problems regarding the detention of child offenders and their social rehabilitation?

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

The Commission's Communication on 'An EU Agenda for the Rights of the Child' envisages a series of actions that address the situation of children in contact with justice systems. These actions are aimed at strengthening the rights of children as victims, suspects and detainees through development of evidence-based policies, legislative and non-legislative measures. The EU Agenda also encompasses initiatives to strengthen the rights of children when they are vulnerable, for example migrant children, Roma children, children with disabilities, etc. The communication does not foresee any particular action targeted at children of adults in prisons.

As part of the consultation process in preparing the EU Agenda, the Commission organised expert group meetings on child-friendly justice, invisible children and violence against children. The results and conclusions of these expert groups have been considered in the drafting of the EU Agenda.

In line with the Stockholm Programme, the Commission is also reflecting on ways to strengthen mutual trust and mutual recognition in the area of detention, in accordance with and within the limits of EU competence. To that effect, the Commission has published a Green Paper on the application of EU criminal justice legislation in the field of detention ([1]). The Commission will carefully analyse all responses received to the Green Paper before deciding whether any action at European level is required.

([1]) COM(2011) 327.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001304/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(10 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Τρόποι καταπολέμησης των «στημένων» αγώνων

Στο πλαίσιο των αυξημένων κοινοτικών αρμοδιοτήτων στον τομέα του αθλητισμού, που απορρέουν από το άρθρο 165 της Συνθήκης, η Επιτροπή είχε σε παλαιότερες παρεμβάσεις της, τόσο από το βήμα της ολομέλειας του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου όσο και σε γραπτές απαντήσεις της, διαβεβαιώσει ότι σκοπεύει να στηρίξει τη συνεργασία μεταξύ ιδιωτικού και δημόσιου τομέα με σκοπό την εξεύρεση τρόπων καταπολέμησης των «στημένων» αγώνων.

Ως εκ τούτου ερωτάται:

— Τι αποτελέσματα έχουν φέρει αυτές οι προσπάθειες; Έχουν κάνει βήματα προόδου τα κράτη μέλη και ποια είναι η κατάσταση σήμερα;

Απάντηση της κας Βασιλείου εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή επιθυμεί να πληροφορήσει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου ότι οι εργασίες για την καταπολέμηση των στημένων αγώνων διεξάγονται σε επίπεδο ΕΕ στο πλαίσιο της ομάδας εμπειρογνωμόνων για τη χρηστή διακυβέρνηση, που έχει συσταθεί βάσει της απόφασης του Συμβουλίου για πανενωσιακό σχέδιο εργασίας στον αθλητισμό για την περίοδο 2011-2014 (2011/C 162/01).

Η ομάδα αυτή απαρτίζεται από εμπειρογνώμονες που διορίζουν τα κράτη μέλη, ενώ προβλέπεται και η συμμετοχή τρίτων υπό την ιδιότητα του εξωτερικού παρατηρητή. Στις εργασίες της ομάδας έχουν κληθεί να συμμετάσχουν εκπρόσωποι αθλητικών οργανώσεων, ενώσεις στοιχημάτων και αρχές επιβολής του νόμου, οι οποίοι ενημερώνουν τα μέλη τους σχετικά με θέματα που αφορούν την καταπολέμηση των στημένων αγώνων.

Η ομάδα αναμένεται να εκδώσει, περί τα μέσα του 2012, συστάσεις προς μελλοντική εξέταση σχετικά με την πάταξη των στημένων αγώνων. Εκθέσεις από τις συνεδριάσεις της ομάδας εμπειρογνωμόνων δημοσιεύονται τακτικά στον ιστότοπο της Επιτροπής ([1]).

Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή εξέτασε το θέμα της ακεραιότητας στον αθλητισμό, καθώς επίσης και της καταπολέμησης της απάτης, μεταξύ άλλων και την περίπτωση των στημένων αγώνων στη διαβούλευση για την Πράσινη Βίβλο για τα τυχερά παιγνίδια σε απευθείας σύνδεση ([2]). Στη διαδικασία που ακολούθησε την Πράσινη Βίβλο, συγκεκριμένα την ανακοίνωση για τα τυχερά παιγνίδια σε απευθείας σύνδεση στην εσωτερική αγορά που προβλέπεται να εκδοθεί το 2012, η Επιτροπή προτίθεται να εξαγγείλει ορισμένες δυνατότητες για τη χάραξη πολιτικής στον τομέα αυτό.

Εξάλλου, μετά την εγγραφή μιας νέας προπαρασκευαστικής δράσης για ευρωπαϊκές συμπράξεις στον αθλητισμό στον προϋπολογισμό της ΕΕ για το 2012, η Επιτροπή προετοιμάζει την εξέταση, εντός του 2012, των σχεδίων που αποβλέπουν στην ενίσχυση της συνεργασίας μεταξύ του ιδιωτικού και του δημόσιου τομέα, μεταξύ άλλων πιθανότατα και την καταπολέμηση των στημένων αγώνων.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/sport/news/20120113-eu-xg-gg-rpt_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/services/gambling_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001304/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Measures to prevent 'match fixing'

In the context of increased powers in the field of sports under Article 165 of the Treaty, the Commission has, in previous interventions, both in the plenary of the European Parliament and in its written answers, given assurances that it intends to support cooperation between the private and public sectors with a view to finding ways of preventing 'match fixing'.

Therefore, I would like to ask the Commission:

— What results have been achieved through these efforts? Have the Member States made progress and what is the situation today?

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

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that work on the prevention of match fixing is being carried out at EU level in the framework of the Expert Group 'Good Governance', established on the basis of the Resolution of the Council on an EU Work Plan for Sport for 2011-2014 (2011/C 162/01).

This Group gathers experts appointed by the EU Member States and allows for the attendance of external observers. Representatives of sporting organisations, betting companies and law enforcement authorities have been admitted to follow the work of the Group and inform its members on issues relating to the fight against match fixing.

The Group is expected to produce recommendations for future consideration concerning the fight against match fixing by mid-2012. Reports on the Expert Group's meeting are regularly published on the Commission's website ([1]).

In addition, the Commission addressed the issue of sports integrity as well as that of combating fraud, including match-fixing, in the Green Paper consultation on Online Gambling in the internal market ([2]). In the follow up process to the Green paper, namely the communication on Online Gambling in the internal market foreseen for adoption in 2012, the Commission intends to announce a number of policy options in this field.

Furthermore, following the inclusion in the 2012 EU budget of a new Preparatory Action on European Partnerships in Sport, the Commission is preparing the testing in 2012 of projects aimed at strengthening cooperation between the private and public sectors, including possibly the prevention of 'match fixing'.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/sport/news/20120113-eu-xg-gg-rpt_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/services/gambling_en.htm

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-001305/12
za Komisijo
Mojca Kleva (S&D)
(10. februar 2012)

Zadeva: Samostojnost programa Daphne

Program Daphne je največji enotni program za preprečevanja nasilja nad ženskami, otroki in mladimi na ravni Evropske unije. Predstavlja temelj za nevladne in prostovoljne organizacije ter financira več kot 500 nevladnih organizacij v Evropi.

Program Daphne združuje strokovno znanje nevladnih organizacij. Poleg tega po vsej Evropski uniji razširja ideje in programe nevladnih organizacij, tako da se lahko njihove ugotovitve izmenjujejo z enako mislečimi organizacijami v drugih državah članicah.

Zato je izjemno pomembno, da ostane program Daphne še naprej samostojen, in se ne prenese pod okrilje novega programa „Pravice in državljanstvo", kjer vidik spola skorajda ni omenjen.

Kako bo Komisija zagotovila, glede na vlogo in vpliv programa Daphne, da program ne bo izgubil svojih prednostnih nalog in finančnih sredstev zaradi prekrivanja z ostalimi programi Skupnosti?

Odgovor Viviane Reding v imenu Komisije
(23. marec 2012)

Komisija je v skladu s svojim sporočilom „Proračun za strategijo Evropa 2020" ([1]) predlagala program Pravice in državljanstvo, v katerem so združeni sedanji trije programi: program Temeljne pravice in državljanstvo, program Daphne III ter komponenti boja proti diskriminaciji in spodbujanja enakosti spolov iz programa Progress. Z združitvijo navedenih treh programov v enega se bo odpravilo prekrivanje med temi programi. Prav tako je v skladu s splošnimi namerami Komisije za večletni finančni okvir ta struktura namenjena poenostavitvi, uskladitvi in poenotenju pravil, s čimer se bo omogočilo boljše upravljanje financiranja, kar bo koristilo tudi upravičencem teh programov.

Glede na navedeno namerava Komisija nadaljnje financiranje dejavnosti, ki se trenutno podpirajo v okviru programa Daphne III, zagotavljati v širšem okviru prihodnjega programa Pravice in državljanstvo. Ta novi program bo omogočal nadaljevanje financiranja sedanjih upravičencev programa Daphne ter uporabo istih instrumentov financiranja (dotacije za ukrepe, dotacije za poslovanje).

Poslanko tudi obveščamo, da bodo dodatna sredstva za financiranje dejavnosti v zvezi z žrtvami nasilja na voljo v okviru programa Pravosodje.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SPLIT_COM:2011:0500(02):FIN:SL:PDF, str.80.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001305/12
to the Commission
Mojca Kleva (S&D)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Independence of the Daphne programme

The Daphne programme is the largest single programme for the prevention of violence against women, children and young people at European Union level. It forms the basis for non-governmental and voluntary organisations, and funds over 500 NGOs across Europe.

The Daphne programme encompasses the expertise of NGOs. Furthermore, their ideas and programmes are spread throughout the European Union so that their findings can be shared with like-minded organisations in other Member States.

It is therefore of the utmost importance that the Daphne programme should remain an independent programme and not be incorporated into the new Rights and Citizenship Programme, in which the gender aspect is hardly mentioned.

Given the role and impact of the Daphne programme, how will the Commission ensure that the programme does not lose its priorities and financial resources as a result of overlapping with other Community programmes?

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

In accordance with the Commission Communication 'A Budget for Europe 2020' ([1]), the Commission has proposed the Rights and Citizenship Programme, which merges three current Programmes: the Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Programme, the Daphne III Programme and the Anti-discrimination and Gender Equality strands of the Progress Programme. The integration of the three programmes into one aims to solve the problems of overlapping between these programmes. Also, in conformity with the overall Commission intentions for the Multiannual Financial Framework, this structure aims to achieve simplification, harmonisation and uniformity of rules, which will allow better management of funding and will also benefit the beneficiaries of the programmes.

In this context, the Commission aims to maintain funding for the activities currently supported by the Daphne III programme within the wider framework of the future Rights and Citizenship Programme. The new programme allows to continue funding the current beneficiaries of the Daphne Programme and to use the same financing tools (action grants, operating grants).

The Honourable Member should be also aware that additional funding for activities related to victims of violence will also be available through the Justice Programme.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/biblio/documents/fin_fwk1420/MFF_COM-2011-500_Part_II_en.pdf, p. 78.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001306/12
aan de Commissie
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE) en Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE)
(10 februari 2012)

Betreft: Kwaliteit en controleerbaarheid van vingerafdrukken

Volgens Verordening (EG) nr. 444/2009 van 28 mei 2009 betreffende biometrische gegevens in paspoorten moeten paspoorten en reisdocumenten een gezichtsopname en twee vingerafdrukken bevatten. Kinderen jonger dan 12 jaar en personen bij wie het nemen van vingerafdrukken fysiek onmogelijk is, worden van deze verplichting vrijgesteld.

Tijdens een hoorzitting over de Nederlandse paspoortwet in het Nederlandse parlement in april 2011 werd melding gemaakt van een test die door de gemeente Roermond was uitgevoerd. Uit deze test bleek dat de genomen vingerafdrukken bij 21 % van de 448 gevallen niet-controleerbaar en derhalve onbruikbaar waren (zie bijlage (in het Nederlands)).

1. Is de Commissie van mening dat Nederland voldoet aan de in Verordening (EG) nr. 2252/2004 van de Raad neergelegde kwaliteitseisen en gemeenschappelijke normen voor vingerafdrukken?

2. Zal de Commissie Nederland om nadere uitleg vragen over dit hoge percentage van niet-controleerbare vingerafdrukken en zijn onvermogen om aan de kwaliteitseisen en gemeenschappelijke normen voor vingerafdrukken te voldoen?

3. Is de Commissie bereid de kwaliteit en controleerbaarheid van vingerafdrukken in andere EU-lidstaten te onderzoeken? Zal de Commissie het Europees Parlement inlichten over de resultaten van dit onderzoek?

4. Waarin ziet de Commissie de meerwaarde van de opname van vingerafdrukken in paspoorten wanneer 21 % van de afdrukken niet-controleerbaar is? Overweegt de Commissie een herbeoordeling van de voorschriften aangezien deze kwaliteitsproblemen ook in andere EU-lidstaten lijken te bestaan?

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

Sinds het opnemen van vingerafdrukken in paspoorten in juni 2009 werden aan de Europese Commissie geen belangrijke problemen gemeld in verband met de kwaliteit van de vingerafdrukken. De Europese Commissie is zich bewust van enkele kwaliteitsproblemen en blijft daarom samenwerken met de lidstaten om de situatie te optimaliseren. In de eerste plaats heeft de Commissie een besluit ([1]) aangenomen op 4 augustus 2011 tot wijziging van de technische specificaties, waarin de kwaliteitsaspecten nader worden verduidelijkt en een kwaliteitsscore wordt ingevoerd voor vingerafdrukken die op de chip zijn opgeslagen. De aanwijzingen voor het afnemen van vingerafdrukken werden als bijlage bij dit besluit gevoegd.

De Commissie neemt geen standpunt in wat betreft het door het geachte Parlementslid genoemde gemeentelijk onderzoek, aangezien zij niet over gedetailleerde informatie beschikt over de juridische en technische omstandigheden waaronder het onderzoek is uitgevoerd. Problemen met het uitlezen van vingerafdrukken die in de chip zijn opgeslagen, kunnen allerlei oorzaken hebben, zoals slechte registratie, softwareproblemen tijdens het lezen van de kaart of andere technische problemen.

De Commissie controleert als hoedster van het Verdrag door middel van testen of de paspoorten van de lidstaten in overeenstemming zijn met Verordening (EG) nr. 2252/2004 en de desbetreffende technische specificaties. Hoewel de conformiteitstesten een standaardprocedure zijn en door nationale geaccrediteerde laboratoria worden uitgevoerd, heeft het Gemeenschappelijk Centrum voor onderzoek (JRC) van de Commissie aanvullende testen op de chips van elektronische paspoorten uitgevoerd en bekendgemaakt. Deze paspoorten worden aan de Commissie op vrijwillige basis verstrekt door enkele lidstaten. Verdere verslagen worden uitgebracht in mei 2012, alsook een verslag inzake de conformiteit van de ontvangen Nederlandse paspoortvoorbeelden. Mochten deze niet conform blijken te zijn, dan zal de Commissie passende maatregelen treffen.

([1]) C (2011) 5499.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001306/12
to the Commission
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE) and Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Quality and verifiability of fingerprints

Regulation (EC) No 444/2009 of 28 May 2009 on biometrics in passports prescribes that passports and travel documents shall include a facial image and two fingerprints. Children under the age of 12 and people in whose case fingerprinting is physically impossible are exempted from this obligation.

During a hearing in the Dutch Parliament in April 2011 on the Dutch law on passports, reference was made to a test by the local government of Roermond. This test revealed that in 21 % of 448 cases, the fingerprints taken were non-verifiable and therefore useless (see attachment (in Dutch)).

1. Does the Commission consider that the Netherlands is in compliance with the requirements for quality and common standards for fingerprints set out in Council Regulation (EC) No 2252/2004?

2. Will the Commission ask the Netherlands for an explanation of this high percentage of non-verifiable fingerprints, and of its inability to meet the requirements for quality and common standards for fingerprints?

3. Will the Commission consider investigating the quality and verifiability of fingerprints in other EU Member States? Will the Commission inform the European Parliament of the outcome of this investigation?

4. What added value does the Commission see for the inclusion of fingerprints in passports when 21 % of the prints are non-verifiable? Is the Commission considering re-evaluating the rules, given that these quality problems also appear to exist in other EU Member States?

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

Since the implementation of fingerprints in passports in June 2009 no major problems have been reported to the European Commission related to recording good quality fingerprints in most cases. However, being aware of some quality issues, the European Commission continues to work together with the Member States to improve the situation. As a first step, the Commission adopted on 4 August 2011 a decision ([1]) amending the technical specifications, further clarifying quality aspects and introducing a quality score for fingerprints stored in the chip. A fingerprint enrolment guide was annexed to the decision.

The Commission makes no comment on the local survey referred to by the Honourable Member, as it has no detailed information about the legal and technical conditions under which it was conducted. Failures in reading fingerprints stored in the passport chip can have various reasons, such as bad enrolment, software problems during reading or other technical issues.

The Commission, in its role as guardian of the Treaty, undertakes tests of Member States' passports on their conformity with Regulation (EC) No 2252/2004 and the relevant technical specifications. While compliance testing is a standard procedure and is currently carried out by national accredited laboratories, the Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) has performed and already reported on additional testing on the chips of electronic passports provided on a voluntary basis by some Member States to the Commission. Further reports will be issued in May 2012, including a report on the conformity of Dutch sample passports received. If non-conformity is found, the Commission will take the appropriate measures.

([1]) C (2011) 5499.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001307/12
aan de Commissie
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE)
(10 februari 2012)

Betreft: Toegang van derde landen tot biometrische gegevens van EU-burgers

Op 30 juni 2010 maakte Sagem Identification bekend een Europese aanbesteding van het Nederlandse Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties voor de productie en distributie van Nederlandse reisdocumenten (elektronische paspoorten en nationale identiteitskaarten) te hebben gewonnen. De biometrische gegevens van Nederlandse burgers voor deze reisdocumenten worden bij Morpho BV in Haarlem in een databank bewaard.

Sagem Identification is de dochteronderneming van Morpho en een onderdeel van de Safran-groep, wereldleider op het gebied van biometrische systemen. De Safran-groep heeft verscheidene kantoren en vestigingen in de Verenigde Staten van Amerika.

1. Is de Commissie van oordeel dat Morpho BV in Haarlem vanwege de aanwezigheid van de Safran-groep in de VS onder de Amerikaanse jurisdictie valt? Is de Commissie van oordeel dat de Amerikaanse jurisdictie zich uitstrekt tot het EU-grondgebied?

2. Zijn de door Morpho BV in Haarlem opgeslagen biometrische gegevens op grond van de Patriot Act toegankelijk voor wetshandhavings- en inlichtingendiensten van de VS? Zijn de door Morpho BV in Haarlem opgeslagen biometrische gegevens toegankelijk voor wetshandhavings- en inlichtingendiensten van andere derde landen?

3. Is het de Commissie bekend of andere EU-lidstaten een contract met Sagem Identification hebben gesloten voor de productie en distributie van hun reisdocumenten? Zo ja, welke lidstaten zijn dat dan?

4. Is de Commissie voornemens na te vragen of deze kantoren van Sagem Identification verzoeken van wetshandhavings- en inlichtingendiensten van de VS hebben ontvangen met betrekking tot in hun databanken opgeslagen biometrische gegevens? Is de Commissie voornemens na te vragen of deze kantoren van Sagem Identification verzoeken van wetshandhavings- en inlichtingendiensten van andere derde landen hebben ontvangen met betrekking tot in hun databanken opgeslagen biometrische gegevens?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(3 april 2012)

Wanneer de verwerking wordt uitgevoerd in het kader van de activiteiten van een vestiging van de voor de verwerking verantwoordelijke op het grondgebied van een lidstaat, dan is de nationale wetgeving tot tenuitvoerlegging van Richtlijn 95/46/EG van toepassing.

Onverminderd de bevoegdheden van de Commissie als hoedster van de Verdragen, vallen het toezicht op en de handhaving van de wetgeving inzake gegevensbescherming onder de bevoegdheid van de nationale autoriteiten, met name de toezichthoudende autoriteiten voor gegevensbescherming. De Europese Commissie kan deze onafhankelijke nationale autoriteiten niet instrueren. Wat de toegang voor autoriteiten van derde landen betreft, wordt het geachte Parlementslid verwezen naar het antwoord op de mondelinge vragen met debat in het Europees Parlement O-000315/2011, O-000318/2011 en O-000326/2011 ([1]).

([1]) Beschikbaar op: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=CRE&reference=20120215&secondRef=ITEM-019&language=EN.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001307/12
to the Commission
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Third-country access to biometric data of EU citizens

On 30 June 2010 Sagem Identification announced that it had won a European call for tenders from the Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations for the production and distribution of Dutch travel documents (electronic passports and national identity cards). The biometric data of Dutch citizens for these travel documents are stored in a database at Morpho BV in Haarlem.

Sagem Identification is Morpho's subsidiary and part of the Safran Group, the world leader in biometric systems. The Safran Group has several offices and headquarters in the United States of America.

1. Does the Commission consider that Morpho BV in Haarlem falls within US jurisdiction because of the presence of the Safran Group in the US? Does the Commission consider that US jurisdiction extends into the EU?

2. Are the biometric data stored by Morpho BV in Haarlem accessible by US law enforcement and intelligence agencies under the Patriot Act? Are the biometric data stored by Morpho BV in Haarlem accessible by law enforcement and intelligence agencies of other third countries?

3. Is the Commission aware of other EU Member States that contracted Sagem Identification for the production and distribution of their travel documents? If so, which Member States?

4. Will the Commission ask whether these offices of Sagem Identification have received requests by US law enforcement and intelligence agencies for biometric data stored in their databases? Will the Commission ask whether these offices of Sagem Identification have received requests by law enforcement and intelligence agencies of other third countries for biometric data stored in their databases?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

When the processing is carried out in the context of the activities of an establishment of the controller on the territory of the Member State, national legislation implementing Directive 95/46/EC is applicable.

Without prejudice to the powers of the Commission as guardian of the Treaties, the supervision and enforcement of data protection legislation falls under the competence of national authorities, in particular data protection supervisory authorities. The European Commission is not in a position to instruct these independent national authorities. As regards the access by authorities of third countries, the Honourable Member should refer to the answer given to the oral questions with debate at the European Parliament O-000315/2011, O-000318/2011 and O-000326/2011 ([1]).

([1]) Available at: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=CRE&reference=20120215&secondRef=ITEM-019&language=EN.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001308/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D)
(10 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Mancato rispetto dei diritti delle persone con disabilità in Italia

Considerando che l'Unione europea e l'Italia hanno ratificato la Convenzione sui diritti delle persone disabili, che riconosce la necessità per le persone con disabilità di vedere garantiti pienamente i propri diritti senza discriminazione alcuna e che la responsabilità del rispetto dei diritti esposti in tale convenzione spetta congiuntamente, nelle rispettive sfere di competenza, all'UE e agli Stati membri;

considerando i diritti riconosciuti nella Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea e considerando che il trattato sull'Unione europea e il trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea affermano che l'Unione europea mira a combattere le discriminazioni fondate sulla disabilità e può prendere provvedimenti in tal senso;

considerando che la direttiva 2000/78/CE che stabilisce un quadro generale per la parità di trattamento in materia di occupazione e di condizioni di lavoro e contiene alcune disposizioni in materia di discriminazione di persone con disabilità;

considerando che, nonostante la ratifica della convenzione ONU, le disposizioni europee e la legislazione nazionale, in Italia continuano a persistere situazioni di discriminazione verso le persone disabili per quanto concerne la continuità e la qualità di servizi e prestazioni, spesso associate a complessità burocratiche, la presenza consistente di barriere architettoniche e di barriere per l'accesso al trasporto pubblico, notevoli carenze in materia di orientamento, di formazione professionale e di inserimento nel mercato del lavoro e l'assenza dei necessari meccanismi d'ascolto delle problematiche;

considerando che inoltre i diritti degli studenti con disabilità vengono costantemente ignorati, dal momento che in Italia il numero degli insegnanti di sostegno sta decrescendo anno dopo anno e che non si sta investendo nella loro formazione e nella loro stabilizzazione, impedendo che si venga a creare un progetto educativo di continuità e di qualità, e dal momento che le strutture scolastiche non sono efficacemente attrezzate per assicurare il diritto all'istruzione delle persone con disabilità, in piena violazione dell'articolo 24 della sopracitata convenzione;

considerando inoltre che i tagli di bilancio agli enti locali hanno determinato una crescente difficoltà (e in alcuni casi un sostanziale abbandono) nelle politiche sociali verso le persone con disabilità, per esempio per quanto riguarda l'assistenza domiciliare, i centri diurni e residenziali, nonché nell'assistenza sanitaria;

può la Commissione far sapere se ritiene che l'Italia stia rispettando, in materia di diritti delle persone con disabilità, gli obblighi e le disposizioni stabilite dalle normative comunitarie e dalla convenzione ONU?

Può inoltre la Commissione riferire quali azioni ritiene di dover promuovere e nei confronti dell'Italia per garantire l'effettivo rispetto dei diritti dei disabili sanciti dalle succitate convenzioni internazionali e normative comunitarie?

Risposta data da Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(23 marzo 2012)

Il fatto che l'UE abbia ratificato la Convenzione ONU sui diritti delle persone con disabilità non implica l'estensione delle competenze dell'Unione in tale ambito ([1]). La Commissione può solamente valutare se la convenzione e i diritti fondamentali in essa sanciti siano rispettati nella legge con cui uno Stato membro applica il diritto dell'Unione.

La Commissione sostiene le politiche volte a migliorare la condizione delle persone con disabilità all'interno dell'UE ([2]), ma la competenza in tale ambito resta principalmente delle autorità nazionali e locali.

([1]) La Dichiarazione relativa alla competenza della Comunità europea contenuta nell'Allegato II della decisione del Consiglio 2010/48/CE del 26 novembre 2009 relativa alla conclusione della convenzione elenca gli strumenti di conferma o adesione formale che attestano le competenze dell'UE nell'ambito disciplinato dalla convenzione.

([2]) Nell'ambito della Strategia europea sulla disabilità 2010-2020, COM(2010) 636 def., la Commissione sostiene gli Stati membri fornendo statistiche, analisi, scambio di informazioni e orientamenti politici. La Commissione si impegna inoltre ad affrontare i problemi legati alla disabilità mediante la strategia «Europa 2020», le diverse iniziative faro e il rilancio del mercato unico. Si veda anche l'elenco delle iniziative per il 2010-2015 nell'allegato alla Strategia, SEC(2010)1324.

Ciò vale per la fornitura di servizi nei settori dell'occupazione, dell'istruzione, della sanità e dei servizi sociali, comprese le indennità di disabilità. In questi settori, la Commissione non è competente per valutare la compatibilità di una legge o di misure nazionali con la convenzione. Tale valutazione potrebbe eventualmente essere effettuata dal Comitato delle Nazioni Unite sui diritti delle persone con disabilità, a seguito della presentazione da parte dell'Italia di una relazione.

La direttiva 2000/78/CE che stabilisce un quadro generale per la parità di trattamento in materia di occupazione e di condizioni di lavoro svolge un ruolo importante ai fini dell'integrazione dei lavoratori con disabilità sul luogo di lavoro. In particolare, l'articolo 5 della direttiva impone ai datori di lavoro di adottare soluzioni ragionevoli che consentano ai disabili di «accedere ad un lavoro, di svolgerlo o di avere una promozione o perché possano ricevere una formazione».

La proposta della Commissione relativa a una direttiva orizzontale antidiscriminazione ([3]) prevede misure volte a consentire alle persone con disabilità di accedere effettivamente e senza discriminazioni alla protezione sociale, alle prestazioni sociali, all'assistenza sanitaria, all'istruzione e ai beni e servizi disponibili per i cittadini, inclusi gli alloggi e i trasporti. La proposta è ancora all'esame del Consiglio.

([3]) Proposta di direttiva del Consiglio COM(2008)426 def. recante applicazione del principio di parità di trattamento fra le persone indipendentemente dalla religione o le convinzioni personali, la disabilità, l'età o l'orientamento sessuale, per le questioni al di fuori dell'area dell'occupazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001308/12
to the Commission
Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Failure to respect the rights of people with disabilities in Italy

The European Union and Italy have ratified the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, which recognises the need for the rights of people with disabilities to be fully safeguarded with no discrimination. The responsibility for respecting the rights set out in that Convention is shared between the EU and the Member States, each acting within their jurisdiction.

Specific rights are recognised in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union; and the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union state that the European Union aims to fight against discrimination based on disability and can take measures to that end.

Directive 2000/78/EC establishes a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation and contains certain provisions concerning discrimination against people with disabilities.

Despite the ratification of the UN Convention, European provisions and national legislation, discrimination against people with disabilities still persists in Italy in the matter of continuity and quality of services and benefits, frequently combined with complex red tape, continual architectural barriers and obstacles in accessing public transport, a serious lack of guidance, vocational training, and integration into the labour market, and a failure to provide means enabling problems to be voiced.

The rights of students with disabilities are also constantly ignored, as the number of learning support teachers in Italy is decreasing year by year and there is no investment in their training or permanent employment, hampering any long-term high-quality education project; given, moreover, that schools are not properly equipped to enable people with disabilities to enjoy their right to education, this situation violates Article 24 of the abovementioned Convention.

Local authority cuts have led to growing difficulties in, and in some cases large-scale abandonment of, social policies for people with disabilities, for example with regard to home support, day-care and residential centres and healthcare.

In the light of the foregoing, does the Commission consider that Italy is complying with the obligations and provisions laid down in Community legislation and the UN Convention, with regard to the rights of people with disabilities?

What actions does it think should be encouraged and taken against Italy to make it respect the rights of people with disabilities laid down in the abovementioned international conventions and Community legislation?

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

The fact that the EU ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities does not extend its competences ([1]). The Commission can only assess whether a national law respects the Convention and the fundamental rights enshrined therein when a member state is implementing Union law.

The Commission supports policies to improve the situation of people with disabilities in the EU ([2]), but the competence in this domain remain mostly with national or local authorities.

This applies to the provision of services related to employment, education, healthcare and social protection, including disability-related allowances. In these areas the Commission has no competence to assess the compatibility of a national law or measures with the Convention. This would be done by the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities when Italy submits its report.

([1]) The Declaration of Competence in Annex II of Council Decision 2010/48/EC of 26 November 2009 concluding the Convention lists EU instruments which attest the competence of the EU in matters governed by the Convention.

([2]) Through the EU Disability Strategy 2010-2020, COM(2010) 636 final; the Commission supports Member States by providing statistics, analysis, information exchange and political guidance. It is also committed to address disability issues through the Europe 2020 strategy, its flagship initiatives and the relaunch of the single market: See also the list of actions for 2010-2015 detailed in the annex to the strategy; SEC(2010) 1324.

Directive 2000/78/EC laying down a general framework for combating discrimination in employment and occupation plays an important role in the integration of disabled workers at the workplace. Article 5 of the directive notably requires employers to provide disabled persons with reasonable accommodation in order to enable them 'to have access to, participate in, or advance in employment, or to undergo training'.

The Commission's proposal for a horizontal anti-discrimination directive ([3]) includes measures to enable persons with disabilities to have non-discriminatory access to social protection, social advantages, healthcare, education and access to, and supply of, goods and services which are available to the public, including housing and transport. The proposal is still under discussion in the Council.

([3]) Commission's proposal COM(2008) 426 final for a directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation in matters outside the area of employment.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001309/12
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(10 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: L'UE intervenga con controlli preventivi sul tema della cittadinanza di persone appartenenti a gruppi e/o movimenti e partiti dell'estremismo fondamentalista

Da fonti giornalistiche si apprende che quattro cittadini britannici di religione musulmana si sono dichiarati colpevoli di aver pianificato nel 2010 un attentato contro la Borsa di Londra. I quattro volevano far esplodere una bomba alla Borsa di Londra, ma si erano interessati anche ad altri obiettivi come il Big Ben, il London Eye, l'abbazia e il palazzo di Westminster. Il gruppo, che aveva discusso anche un'operazione terroristica multipla come a Mumbai, si ispirava al predicatore estremista Anwar al Awlaki, ucciso da un drone americano in Yemen lo scorso settembre.

A casa di uno dei mancati attentatori è stata inoltre trovata una lista scritta a mano con gli indirizzi del sindaco di Londra Boris Johnson, di due rabbini, della Borsa e dell'ambasciata americana.

1. Quali misure intende attuare la Commissione al fine di prevenire questi tipi di attentati?

2. La Commissione non ritiene opportuno emanare una direttiva in tema di cittadinanza che comporti, nel caso di immigrati provenienti dai paesi islamici, la necessità di controlli preventivi circa l'eventuale appartenenza degli stessi a gruppi e/o movimenti e partiti dell'estremismo fondamentalista?

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

1. L'Unione europea ha sviluppato un approccio organico e globale, costruito attorno ai quattro settori della strategia antiterrorismo dell'UE (prevenzione, protezione, perseguimento e risposta) ([1]). Sono state adottate una serie di politiche come disposto nella comunicazione della Commissione del 20 luglio 2010 ([2]). Tuttavia, la Commissione non è un'autorità di contrasto. Il suo principale ruolo consiste nell'assistere e sostenere le autorità degli Stati membri nei loro sforzi per contrastare il terrorismo, principalmente nell'ambito dei settori «prevenzione» e «protezione».

La prevenzione del terrorismo e il contrasto alla radicalizzazione e al reclutamento rappresentano uno degli obiettivi chiave della strategia di sicurezza interna. La Commissione aiuta gli Stati membri facilitando lo scambio di esperienze e conoscenze delle misure preventive e migliorando il coordinamento con altri settori politici di rilevanza, come illustrato nella risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-8264/11 ([3]). La Commissione avvia misure, piani d'azione e valutazioni del rischio e, ove necessario, presenta proposte legislative in vari settori, fra cui la lotta al finanziamento del terrorismo, il potenziamento della sicurezza nei trasporti, le norme sugli esplosivi e la protezione delle infrastrutture critiche.

2. Le leggi e le regolamentazioni per acquisire la cittadinanza di uno Stato sono di competenza nazionale. La Commissione incoraggia gli Stati membri a condividere le esperienze e le conoscenze sulle condizioni e sulle procedure per l'acquisizione o la perdita della cittadinanza, in un'ottica di convergenza e diffusione di buone prassi, senza ledere la competenza nazionale.

([1]) Strategia antiterrorismo dell'UE adottata dal Consiglio europeo nel dicembre 2005 (http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/it/05/st14/st14469-re04.it05.pdf).
([2]) COM(2010)386 del 20.7.2010: La politica antiterrorismo dell'UE: principali risultati e sfide future.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-008264&language=EN.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001309/12
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Call for theCall for the EU to introduce prior checks in connection with the citizenship of people belonging to extreme fundamentalist groups, movements or parties.

It has been reported in the press that four British Muslims have pleaded guilty to planning an attack on the London Stock Exchange in 2010. The four accused intended to detonate a bomb at the London Stock Exchange, but also had other targets in mind such as Big Ben, the London Eye, Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament. The group, who had also discussed coordinated terrorist attacks like those in Mumbai, were inspired by the extremist preacher Anwar al-Awlaki, who was killed by a US drone strike in Yemen last September.

A hand-written list containing the addresses of the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, two rabbis, the London Stock Exchange and the American Embassy was also found at the home of one of the would-be attackers.

1. What measures does the Commission intend to take to prevent these types of attacks?

2. Does the Commission agree that it should draw up a directive on citizenship which includes a requirement, in the case of immigrants from Islamic countries, for prior checks to be carried out to determine whether they are affiliated to extreme fundamentalist groups, movements or parties?

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

1. The EU has developed a comprehensive global approach, built around the four strands of the EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy ('prevent, protect, pursue and respond') ([1]). A number of policies have been put in place, as set out in the Commission's Communication of 20 July 2010 ([2]). However, the Commission is not a law enforcement authority. Its main role is to assist and support Member States' authorities in their efforts in countering terrorism, primarily within the 'prevent' and 'protect' strands.

Prevention of terrorism and addressing radicalisation and recruitment is one of the key objectives identified in the Internal Security Strategy. The Commission assists Member States by facilitating the exchange of knowledge and experience of preventive measures and by improving the coordination with other relevant policy areas, as set out in the reply to Written Question E-8264/11 ([3]). The Commission initiates measures, action plans and risk assessments and, where necessary, proposes legislation, including in the fields of countering terrorist financing, enhancing transport security and rules on explosives, as well as protection of critical infrastructure.

2. Laws and regulations to acquire a state's nationality are of national competence. The Commission encourages Member States to exchange experience and share knowledge on conditions and procedures for acquisition and loss of nationality, with a view to facilitating convergence and dissemination of good practice, without encroaching on national competence.

([1]) EU Counter Terrorism Strategy adopted by the European Council in December 2005 (http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/en/05/st14/st14469-re04.en05.pdf).
([2]) COM(2010)386 of 20.7.2010: The EU Counter-Terrorism Policy: main achievements and future challenges.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-008264&language=EN.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-001310/12
adresată Comisiei
Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu (S&D)
(9 februarie 2012)

Subiect: Bunăstarea porcinelor

Interzicerea boxelor de gestație este aplicabilă începând cu 1 ianuarie 2003 crescătoriilor construite recent sau reconstruite. Dispozițiile Directivei 2008/120/CE de stabilire a normelor minime de protecție a porcilor ([1]) se vor aplica pentru toate crescătoriile din UE începând cu 1 ianuarie 2013.

Până la ora actuală, boxele de gestație sunt interzise doar în Suedia și în Regatul Unit.

Îmbunătățirile anterioare aduse standardelor privind bunăstarea nu au fost implementate în mod adecvat, în ciuda perioadelor lungi de tranziție. Este cazul Directivei 1999/74/CE de stabilire a standardelor minime pentru protecția găinilor ouătoare ([2]), în legătură cu care au fost deja inițiate proceduri în constatarea neîndeplinirii obligațiilor împotriva câtorva state membre.

A adoptat UE măsuri pentru a evita un eșec în ceea ce privește punerea în aplicare a Directivei 2008/120/CE, asemenea celui constatat în cazul Directivei 1999/74/CE?

Având în vedere că crescătorii de porcine au avut la dispoziție un deceniu pentru a se adapta la cerințele Directivei 2008/120/CE, câte state membre (în afară de Suedia și de Regatul Unit) au adoptat până la ora actuală măsurile necesare pentru eliminarea boxelor de gestație și pentru prevenirea suferinței inutile a animalelor?

Răspuns dat de dl Dalli în numele Comisiei
(12 martie 2012)

Statele membre sunt principalele responsabile pentru punerea în aplicare a Directivei privind protecția porcilor ([3]).

Comisia monitorizează periodic stadiul punerii în aplicare a adăpostirii în grup a scroafelor în statele membre. Din datele primite până în prezent din partea a 25 de state membre, trei state membre (Luxemburg, Suedia și Regatul Unit) respectă deja cerințele, iar opt state membre (Bulgaria, Republica Cehă, Danemarca, Estonia, Germania, Irlanda, Lituania și Slovacia) au informat Comisia că vor respecta cerințele până la 1 ianuarie 2013.

Comisia utilizează toate instrumentele aflate la dispoziția sa pentru a impulsiona statele membre să respecte cerințele până la 1 ianuarie 2013.

([1]) JO L 47, 18.2.2008, p. 5.
([2]) JO L 203, 3.8.1999, p. 53.
([3]) Directiva 2008/120/CE a Consiliului de stabilire a normelor minime de protecție a porcilor, JO L 47, 18.2.2009, p.5 codifică Directiva 2001/88/CE.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001310/12
to the Commission
Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu (S&D)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: Welfare of pigs

The ban on gestation crates has been applicable to newly built or rebuilt holdings since 1 January 2003. The provisions of Directive 2008/120/EC laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs ([1]) will apply to all holdings in the EU from 1 January 2013.

So far, gestation crates are banned only in Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Previous improvements to welfare standards have not been implemented properly despite lengthy transitional periods; this is the case for Directive 1999/74/EC laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens ([2]), in connection with which infringement procedures have already been opened against several Member States.

Has the EU taken any steps to prevent failures in the implementation of Directive 2008/120/EC similar to those observed in the implementation of Directive 1999/74/EC?

Given that pig producers have had a decade to adapt to the requirements of Directive 2008/120/EC, how many Member States so far (apart from the UK and Sweden) have taken the necessary measures to phase out gestation crates and prevent unnecessary animal suffering?

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

Member States are primarily responsible for the implementation of the directive on the protection of pigs ([3]).

The Commission is monitoring regularly the state of implementation of group housing of sows in the Member States. From the data received so far from 25 Member States, three Member States (Luxembourg, Sweden and the UK) already comply and eight Member States (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, and Slovakia) have informed the Commission that they will comply by 1 January 2013.

The Commission is using all the tools at its disposal to push Member States to reach compliance by 1 January 2013.

([1]) OJ L 47, 18.2.2008, p. 5.
([2]) OJ L 203, 3.8.1999, p. 53.
([3]) Council Directive 2008/120/EC laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs, OJ L 47, 18.2.2009, p. 5 codifies Directive 2001/88/EC.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-001311/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 février 2012)

Objet: Publication par la Commission d'une étude sur les marchés de consommation dans l'Union européenne

La Commission vient de publier, sous le titre «Monitoring Consumer Market markets in the EU», une étude de 478 pages sur les «marchés de consommation» dans l'UE. Cette analyse très fouillée est une véritable étude de marché pour les produits et les services, financée par la DG SANCO. Elle permet aux lecteurs, en particulier les commerçants et les distributeurs, d'apprendre par exemple que «les performances des produits carnés sont médiocres par rapport aux marchés des véhicules d'occasion» ou que «7,5 % des consommateurs de produits carnés ont été confrontés à des problèmes en 2011 contre 7,4 % en 2010». Cette étude comporte des milliers d'autres données de la même veine ainsi que leur évolution d'une année sur l'autre en dixième de %, sans aucun intérêt pour le consommateur, ni pour son information, ni pour résoudre ses problèmes.

La Commission peut-elle indiquer:

1. Quel est le budget total dépensé par la DG SANCO pour cette étude, y compris les études de marché précédentes?

2. Cette étude est-elle différente des sept tableaux de bord des marchés de consommation («Consumer market scoreboard») déjà financés par la DG SANCO et quel est le budget de ces derniers?

3. Combien de temps la DG SANCO va-t-elle encore continuer cette gabegie, gaspiller en puisant dans un budget si réduit et procéder à des études sans aucun intérêt pour les consommateurs dans leur vie et leurs préoccupations quotidiennes, au détriment des organisations et des centres européens des consommateurs qui manquent cruellement de moyens pour résoudre les problèmes et les litiges des citoyens?

4. Pourquoi ces études de marché ne sont-elles pas, le cas échéant, financées sur les budgets du marché intérieur?

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

1. Le budget consacré à l'enquête de suivi des marchés de consommation s'est élevé à 1 900 000 euros. Une enquête similaire d'un coût comparable a été effectuée en 2010.

2. Le tableau de bord des marchés de consommation est fondé sur les principaux résultats de cette enquête et ne donne lieu à aucunes dépenses supplémentaires pour la collecte des données. Les deux documents ont été publiés conjointement, en octobre dernier.

3. La Commission s'est déjà expliquée sur l'utilité de l'élaboration d'une base de connaissances sur les consommateurs et les marchés de consommation pour les décideurs politiques dans les réponses données à des questions antérieures posées par l'Honorable Parlementaire, notamment dans les réponses aux questions E-008517/2011 et E-004423/2011 ([1]).

4. La mise en place d'une base de connaissances sur les consommateurs et les marchés de consommation s'inscrit dans le cadre de la politique des consommateurs et est par conséquent financée par le programme «Consommateurs».

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

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001311/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: The Commission's publication of a study of consumer markets in the European Union

The Commission has just published a 478-page study entitled 'Monitoring Consumer Markets in the EU'. This extremely detailed analysis is a real market study of products and services, financed by DG SANCO. Its readers, particularly retailers and distributors, may learn that, for instance, 'meat products performed poorly compared to the used car market' or that '7.5 % of meat product consumers experienced problems in 2011, up from 7.4 % in 2010'. This study includes thousands of other pieces of information in the same vein, including changes from one year to the next in tenths of a percentage which are of no interest to consumers, either in terms of providing information or in terms of helping them resolve problems.

Can the Commission indicate:

1. What is the total amount spent by DG SANCO on this study, including the previous market studies?

2. Is this study different from the seven 'Consumer Market Scoreboards' already financed by DG SANCO and what was the budget for these?

3. How long does DG SANCO intend to carry on with such frivolous expenditure, wasting money taken from an already depleted budget and carrying out studies of such little interest to consumers in their daily lives and concerns, at the expense of European consumer centres and organisations which are so desperately short of means for resolving citizens' problems and lawsuits?

4. Why are these market studies not financed, if necessary, under the single market budgets?

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

1. The budget for the Consumer Market Monitoring Survey was EUR 1.9 million. A similar survey with a comparable budget was carried out in 2010.

2. The Consumer Markets Scoreboard is based on the main findings of this Survey and has no separate budget for data collection. Both documents were published together last October.

3. The Commission provided answers on the utility of constructing a knowledge base on consumers and consumer markets for policy-makers in reply to previous questions from the Honourable Member, for example E-008517/2011 ([1]) and E-004423/2011[1].

4. Building a knowledge base on consumers and consumer markets is part of the consumer policy and, therefore, financed from the consumer programme.

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

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001312/12
adresată Comisiei
Cătălin Sorin Ivan (S&D)
(13 februarie 2012)

Subiect: Taxa de administrare a plății on-line cu cardul de credit

În pofida eforturilor pe care le-au depus Comisia și organizațiile de protecție a consumatorilor de a crește transparența privind biletele de avion, companiile aeriene (în special cele low-cost) continuă să inventeze noi forme de taxe ascunse.

Ultima practică o reprezintă taxa de administrare a plății on-line cu cardul de credit. Această taxă nu este amintită pe prima pagină și nici inclusă în prețul inițial. În plus, această taxă nu pare să respecte principiul proporționalității față de costurile pe care se presupune că ar trebui să le acopere (ele oscilând între 12 euro la RyanAir sau WizzAir și 30 de euro la unele companii). Totodată, pentru multe companii plata prin card de credit este singura opțiune, deci ar fi normal ca această taxă să fie inclusă în calculul biletului inițial.

— În opinia Comisiei, este această taxă proporțională cu costurile invocate de tratarea administrativă a plăților online?

— În opinia Comisiei, având în vedere că această taxă nu poate fi evitată în multe din cazuri, nu ar trebui să fie inclusă în calculul inițial al ofertei?

Răspuns dat de dl Dalli în numele Comisiei
(2 aprilie 2012)

Comisia este informată cu privire la faptul că anumite companii aeriene percep taxe semnificative pentru utilizarea cărților de credit și monitorizează această problemă îndeaproape. În cazul în care aceste practici ar fi considerate ca fiind incompatibile cu legislația UE, Comisia ar lua măsurile necesare.

Articolul 52 alineatul (3) din directiva privind serviciile de plată (DSP) ([1]) prevede că comercianții pot să solicite din partea plătitorilor un comision pentru acceptarea unui instrument de plată, pentru a-și recupera propriile costuri. Statele membre pot interzice sau limita acest drept, „luând în considerare nevoia de a încuraja concurența și de a promova utilizarea de instrumente de plată eficiente".

Deși DSP nu plafonează suma aferentă acestor comisioane, noua directivă privind drepturile consumatorilor ([2]) a stabilit că comercianții nu trebuie să recupereze de la clienții lor o sumă aferentă taxelor care depășește costurile lor reale. Această normă trebuie transpusă până în iunie 2014, însă statele membre pot face acest lucru mai devreme, astfel cum se prevede deja, de exemplu, în cazul Regatului Unit.

Regulamentul privind normele comune pentru operarea serviciilor aeriene ([3]) specifică faptul că prețul final trebuie să includă toate taxele și comisioanele și interzice companiilor aeriene să facă publicitate cu privire la prețuri care nu includ taxe, în timp ce comisioanele sunt adăugate doar în momentul plății.

Directiva privind practicile comerciale neloiale ([4]) interzice furnizarea de către comercianți a unor informații neclare, false și incomplete consumatorilor cu privire la prețurile lor, care ar putea determina consumatorii să ia decizii de cumpărare pe care nu le-ar fi luat altfel.

Comisia a deschis o consultare (ale cărei rezultate vor fi disponibile până în luna aprilie) cu privire la transparența taxelor prin intermediul Cărții verzi privind SEPA (zona unică de plăți în euro) pentru plățile efectuate cu cardul, pe internet și de pe telefonul mobil ([5]).

([1]) Directiva 2007/64/CE a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului din 13 noiembrie 2007 privind serviciile de plată în cadrul pieței interne, JO L 319/1, 5/12/2007.

([2]) Directiva 2011/83/UE a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului din 25 octombrie 2011 privind drepturile consumatorilor, JO L304/64, 22-11-2011.

([3]) Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1008/2008 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului din 24 septembrie 2008 privind normele comune pentru operarea serviciilor aeriene în Comunitate, JO L293/3, 31-10-2008.

([4]) Directiva 2005/29/CE a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului din 11 mai 2005 privind practicile comerciale neloiale ale întreprinderilor de pe piața internă față de consumatori, JO L 149/22, 11.6.2005.

([5]) Carte verde „Către o piață europeană integrată a plăților efectuate cu cardul, pe internet și de pe telefonul mobil", Bruxelles, 11.1.2012 — COM(2011) 941 final. Sfârșitul consultării: 11.4.2012.

Este util de subliniat faptul că Comisia a răspuns la diverse întrebări legate de această problemă. Pentru mai multe detalii, vă rugăm să consultați, de exemplu, E 008649/2010 sau E-000779/2011 ([6]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001312/12
to the Commission
Cătălin Sorin Ivan (S&D)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Administrative charges for online payments by credit card

Despite the efforts that the Commission and consumer protection organisations have put into seeking increasing transparency over air fares, airlines (especially low-cost airlines) continue to invent new forms of hidden charges.

The latest practice is an administrative charge for online payments by credit card. This charge is not mentioned on the relevant home page, nor is it included in the initial price. In addition, it does not appear to respect the principle of proportionality with regard to the costs it is supposed to cover (these vary from EUR 12 with Ryanair or WizzAir to EUR 30 with some companies). At the same time, with many companies payment by credit card is the only option, so it would be logical for this charge to be included in the initial ticket price.

— Does the Commission consider this charge to be proportional to the administrative costs of online payments?

— Does the Commission not consider, taking into consideration that this charge is unavoidable in many cases, that it not be included in the initial price of the offer?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2012)

The Commission is aware that some airline companies charge significant fees for the use of cards and is monitoring this closely. If these practices were deemed incompatible with EC law, the Commission would take the necessary actions.

Article 52(3) of the Payment Services Directive (PSD) ([1]) states that merchants may request from the payers a charge for the acceptance of a payment instrument, in order to recuperate their own costs. Member States may forbid or limit this right, 'taking into account the need to encourage competition and to promote the use of efficient payment instruments'.

While the PSD does not cap the amount of these charges, the new Consumer Rights Directive ([2]) has set that traders must not recuperate from their clients an amount of fees exceeding their real costs. This rule has to be transposed by June 2014 but Member States can anticipate, as already scheduled for example by the UK.

The regulation on common rules for air services ([3]) specifies that the final price must include all taxes, fees and charges and prevents airlines from advertising tax-free-prices where charges are added only at the time of payment.

The Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (UCP) ([4]) prohibits traders from providing unclear, untruthful and incomplete information on their prices, which could induce consumers to take purchase decisions they would not have taken otherwise.

The Commission has just opened a consultation (results by April) on fees transparency through the Green Paper on SEPA (Single Euro Payment Area) for cards, Internet and mobile payment ([5]) .

It is useful to stress that the Commission has replied to various questions on this matter. For more details, please refer, for example, to E-008649/2010 or E-000779/2011 ([6]).

([1]) Directive 2007/64/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 November 2007, on payment services in the internal market, OJ L 319/1, 5.12.2007.
([2]) Directive 2011/83/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011, on consumer rights, OJ L 304/64, 22.11.2011.
([3]) Regulation (EC) 1008/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 September 2008, on common rules for the operation of air services in the Community, OJ L 293/3, 31.10.2008.
([4]) Directive 2005/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2005, concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market, OJ L 149/22, 11.6.2005.
([5]) Green Paper 'Towards an integrated European market for card, Internet and mobile payments', Brussels, 11.1.2012 — COM(2011) 941 final. End of consultation:11.4.2012.
([6]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001313/12
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(13 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Retransmisiones radiofónicas del fútbol profesional en España

El Parlamento Europeo aprobó ayer el denominado informe Fisas sobre la dimensión europea en el deporte. Esta resolución responde a las nuevas competencias que las instituciones europeas han adquirido en la materia tras la aprobación del Tratado de Lisboa. El documento aborda por ello el fenómeno deportivo desde sus dimensiones social, económica y organizativa. Igualmente contiene orientaciones sobre la cooperación con terceros países y aborda la cuestión de la promoción de la identidad europea a través del deporte.

En el ámbito de la dimensión económica uno de los aspectos que se aborda es el de la comercialización de los derechos de las retransmisiones deportivas. El informe, muy acertadamente, distingue entre éstas y el derecho a la información de la ciudadanía sobre los eventos deportivos. Así, en sus párrafos 53 y 54, reconoce el derecho de los periodistas a acceder a los acontecimientos deportivos organizados de interés público y a informar sobre ellos con el fin de salvaguardar el derecho del público a obtener y recibir noticias e información independientes sobre los acontecimientos deportivos. Asimismo, pide a la Comisión y a los Estados miembros que protejan los derechos de propiedad intelectual sobre los contenidos deportivos dentro del respeto del derecho del público a ser informado.

En España se vive desde el comienzo de la temporada de futbol profesional un contencioso que enfrenta a los rectores de esta competición con las emisoras de radio, a las que han vetado el acceso a los estadios hasta que no se avengan a pagar un canon por efectuar sus retransmisiones. Estas, entendemos que están cubiertas por el derecho de la ciudadanía a la información. Por ello quisiéramos saber:

1. ¿Conoce la Comisión el conflicto existente en España esta temporada con las emisoras de radio?

2. ¿Coincide en que la actividad de estas emisoras está cubierta por el derecho a la información?

3. ¿Considera que el tratado de Lisboa ofrece a la Comisión alguna opción para intervenir en este problema?

Respuesta de la Sra. Kroes en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de marzo de 2012)

La Comisión está al corriente de la controversia relativa a las retransmisiones radiofónicas de partidos de fútbol profesional en España. Con vistas a garantizar el acceso público a la información sobre acontecimientos de gran interés, la Directiva de servicios de medios audiovisuales establece normas dirigidas a que los Estados miembros velen por que cualquier operador de televisión establecido en la Unión tenga acceso a extractos breves de los acontecimientos de gran interés para el público transmitidos en exclusiva. Sin embargo, no existen normas a escala europea sobre las emisiones de radio.

La libertad de expresión e información constituye uno de los pilares fundamentales de nuestras sociedades democráticas, consagrada en el artículo 11, apartado 1, de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea y en el artículo 10 del Convenio Europeo de Derechos Humanos. Con arreglo al artículo 51, apartado 1, de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales, las disposiciones de la misma están dirigidas a los Estados miembros únicamente cuando apliquen el Derecho de la Unión. Cuando los Estados miembros no actúan en el marco de la ejecución del Derecho de la Unión, les compete únicamente a ellos garantizar el cumplimiento de sus obligaciones en materia de derechos fundamentales derivadas de acuerdos internacionales y de su propio Derecho interno.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001313/12
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Radio broadcasts of professional football matches in Spain

Parliament recently adopted the Fisas report on the European dimension in sport. The resolution accompanying the report was adopted as a result of the new competences that European institutions have acquired in relation to sport following the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty. On this basis, the document looks at the social, economic and organisational dimensions of sport and also contains guidance on cooperation with third countries and addresses the issue of the promotion of European identity through sport.

With regard to the economic dimension, one of the aspects it addresses is the commercial exploitation of sport broadcasting rights. The report very correctly distinguishes between such rights and the right of the public to information about sporting events. In paragraphs 53 and 54, it acknowledges the right for journalists to access and report on organised sporting events of public interest in order to safeguard the right of the public to obtain and receive independent news and information on sporting events. In addition, it calls on the Commission and the Member States to protect intellectual property rights in respect of sports content, with due regard for the public's right to information.

In Spain, a dispute between football's governing bodies and radio broacasters has been going on since the beginning of the professional football season. The governing bodies have prohibited radio broadcasters from accessing stadiums until they agree to pay a fee for broadcasting matches. We understand such broadcasts to be covered by the public's right to information. Therefore, we would like to know:

1. Whether the Commission is aware of the dispute with the radio broadcasters that has been going on in Spain this season?

2. Does it agree that the activities of these broadcasters are covered by the right to information?

3. Does the Lisbon Treaty offer it any way of intervening in this matter?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(19 March 2012)

The Commission is aware of the dispute concerning radio broadcasts of professional football matches in Spain. The Audiovisual Media Services Directive, in view of granting the public access to information on events of high interest, lays down rules for Member States to ensure that any television broadcaster established in the Union has access to short extracts of events of high interest to the public which are transmitted on an exclusive basis. However, there are no such rules at European level concerning radio broadcasting.

Freedom of expression and information constitutes one of the essential foundations of our democratic societies, enshrined in Article 11(1) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights. According to Article 51(1) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, the provisions of the Charter are addressed to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law. When Member States do not act in the course of implementation of Union law, it is for them alone to ensure that their obligations regarding fundamental rights — as resulting from international agreements and from their internal legislation — are respected.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001314/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(6 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ιδιωτικοποίηση της ΤΡΑΙΝΟΣΕ

Η ΤΡΑΙΝΟΣΕ σύμφωνα με το Νόμο 3891/2010, όπως συμφωνήθηκε και με την ΤΡΟΙΚΑ, κοινοποίησε στην Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή Ανταγωνισμού (ΕΕΑ) το φάκελο για κρατικές ενισχύσεις στις 13.2.2011. Η ΕΕΑ άνοιξε το φάκελο στις 13.7.2011 ενώ παρασχέθηκαν επιπρόσθετα στοιχεία και διευκρινίσεις μέσω της Μόνιμης Αντιπροσωπείας της Ελλάδας (ΜΑΕ) στην ΕΕ. Τα τελευταία στοιχεία παραδοθήκαν στην ΕΕΑ στις 29.10.2011 και η ελληνική πλευρά ανέμενε να γίνει η τελική συζήτηση και να χορηγηθεί η θετική γνωμοδότηση της Επιτροπής σε συνάντηση, στις 26.1.2012, στο Υπουργείο Υποδομών, Μεταφορών και Δικτύων (ΥΠΟΜΕΔΙ) με την ΕΕΑ. Αντίθετα, σύμφωνα με δημοσιεύματα που δε διαψεύστηκαν, στη συνάντηση παρέστη εκπρόσωπος της ECFIN (Λέιλα Φερνάντεζ), που έθεσε ως προϋπόθεση για τη θετική γνωμοδότηση της Επιτροπής την άμεση ιδιωτικοποίηση της εταιρίας. Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Σύμφωνα με το Μεσοπρόθεσμο Πρόγραμμα, η ιδιωτικοποίηση της ΤΡΑΙΝΟΣΕ είναι θεμιτό να ξεκινήσει το 2011 ενώ ο προβλεπόμενος χρόνος ολοκλήρωσης της είναι το 4ο τρίμηνο του 2013. Εφόσον σε όλη τη διαδικασία της εξέτασης του φακέλου δεν τέθηκε ποτέ ως προϋπόθεση η ιδιωτικοποίηση της ΤΡΑΙΝΟΣΕ και η ένταξή της στο Ταμείο Αποκρατικοποιήσεων, τι άλλαξε από τις 21.12.2011 έως τις 26.1.2012 και τέθηκε η πρόσθετη αυτή απαίτηση; Με βάση ποια νομοθετική δικαιοδοσία απαιτείται από την Επιτροπή η άμεση ιδιωτικοποίηση της εταιρίας; Ποιος εξουσιοδότησε την κ. Φερνάντεζ να λάβει μέρος σε αυτή τη διαπραγμάτευση; Γιατί απαιτείται ιδιωτικοποίηση πριν την αδειοδότηση αφού δεν υπάρχει αντίστοιχο προηγούμενο στην ΕΕ;

2. Η ιδιωτικοποίηση της ΤΡΑΙΝΟΣΕ πριν της χορηγηθεί η άδεια μειώνει την αξία της και πρακτικά θα οδηγήσει σε εκχώρηση της εταιρείας έναντι ευτελούς τιμήματος. Κρίνει η Επιτροπή ότι αυτή η εξέλιξη θα ήταν συμβατή με ένα βιώσιμο μέλλον για τη ΤΡΑΙΝΟΣΕ και πώς θα αντιμετωπίσουμε κατηγορίες διαφθοράς και ενδεχόμενες ποινικές ευθύνες;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001324/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE) και Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(6 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Σοβαρός προβληματισμός για την αλλαγή της στάσης της Επιτροπής σχετικά με το μέλλον της ΤΡΑΙΝΟΣΕ

Εδώ και περίπου ένα χρόνο, δηλαδή το Φεβρουάριο του 2011, η ΤΡΑΙΝΟΣΕ, σε συνέχεια σχετικού ελληνικού νόμου του 2010, και κατόπιν συμφωνίας της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης με την τρόικα, υπέβαλε στην Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή Ανταγωνισμού (ΕΕΑ) φάκελο για κρατική ενίσχυση.

Έκτοτε η διαδικασία συνεχίστηκε και αναμενόταν ότι θα κλείσει με θετική γνωμοδότηση της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής Ανταγωνισμού.

Ενώ η Ελλάδα ανέμενε την εν λόγω θετική έκβαση της σοβαρής αυτής υπόθεσης, επαναλαμβανόμενα δημοσιεύματα στον ελληνικό τύπο επιμένουν στο ότι: Εκπρόσωπος της Γενικής Διεύθυνσης Οικονομικών και Νομισματικών Υποθέσεων (DG ECFIN) της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής, σε κλειστή σύσκεψη που έγινε πριν μερικές μέρες στην Αθήνα, έθεσε ως προαπαιτούμενο για την ολοκλήρωση της διαδικασίας την άμεση ιδιωτικοποίηση της ΤΡΑΙΝΟΣΕ και τη συμπερίληψή της στο Ταμείο Αξιοποίησης Ιδιωτικής Περιουσίας του Δημοσίου (ΤΑΙΠΕΔ).

Θα πρέπει επίσης να σημειωθεί ότι η ΤΡΑΙΝΟΣΕ για το μήνα Δεκέμβριο του 2011, μετά από αναδιάρθρωση, παρουσίασε κέρδη.

Κατόπιν αυτών ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Γνωρίζει τα συγκεκριμένα γεγονότα;

2. Η Εκπρόσωπος της Γενικής Διεύθυνσης Οικονομικών και Νομισματικών Υποθέσεων (DG ECFIN) εξέφραζε επίσημη θέση της Επιτροπής;

3. Εάν ναι, τι συνέβη και άλλαξε στάση η Επιτροπή θέτοντας νέους όρους όπως αυτόν της άμεσης αποκρατικοποίησης;

4. Έχει υπάρξει προηγούμενο να απαιτείται-επιβάλλεται σε κράτος μέλος ιδιωτικοποίηση κρατικών σιδηρόδρομων πριν την αδειοδότησή τους; Εάν όχι, γιατί αυτό γίνεται στη συγκεκριμένη περίπτωση και με ποια νομική βάση;

5. Γιατί, αφού ως χρονικό όριο για την ιδιωτικοποίηση έχει ορισθεί το τέλος του 2013, κάτι που θα βοηθούσε να αποκτήσει η ΤΡΑΙΝΟΣΕ μεγαλύτερη αξία, ξαφνικά απαιτείται άμεση ιδιωτικοποίησή της;

Κοινή απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής

(3 Απριλίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει ότι στον ελληνικό Τύπο (εφημερίδα «Το Βήμα», 27 Ιανουαρίου 2012) διατυπώθηκαν ισχυρισμοί σύμφωνα με τους οποίους οι υπάλληλοι της Επιτροπής απαίτησαν την άμεση ιδιωτικοποίηση της ΤΡΑΙΝΟΣΕ. Οι ισχυρισμοί αυτοί είναι αναληθείς: όπως θα γνωρίζουν οι αξιότιμοι βουλευτές, η εν λόγω εφημερίδα («Το Βήμα», 6 Φεβρουαρίου 2012) προέβη εν συνεχεία στις αναγκαίες διευκρινίσεις.

Η Επιτροπή δήλωσε στην απόφαση κίνησης της διαδικασίας που ελήφθη για την ΤΡΑΙΝΟΣΕ στις 13 Ιουλίου 2011 (υπόθεση κρατικής ενίσχυσης SA.32544 ([1])), ότι «σύμφωνα με τις διαθέσιμες πληροφορίες σχετικά με την αναδιάρθρωση, η προσέλκυση ιδιωτικών κεφαλαίων στην εταιρεία μέσω ιδιωτικοποιήσεων φαίνεται να είναι ο μόνος ρεαλιστικός τρόπος ώστε η ΤΡΑΙΝΟΣΕ να καταστεί ικανή να συνεισφέρει την ίδια συμμετοχή που απαιτείται βάσει του σημείου 44 των κατευθυντήριων γραμμών για τη διάσωση και την αναδιάρθρωση, εάν ληφθεί υπόψη η επικρατούσα δυσχερής οικονομική κατάσταση στην εταιρεία.»

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/cases/241369/241369_1260391_65_2.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001314/12
to the Commission
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(6 February 2012)

Subject: Privatisation of TRAINOSE

TRAINOSE, in accordance with Decree 3891/2010, as agreed with the Troika, submitted an application to the European Competition Commission (ECC) for state aid on 13.2.2011. The ECC opened the file on 13.7.2011 but further information and clarifications were provided through the Greek Permanent Representation to the EU. The last details were provided to the ECC on 29.10.2011 and the Greek side expected the final discussion to take place and the Commission's positive opinion to be delivered in a meeting with the ECC on 26.1.2012 at the Ministry of Infrastructure, Transport and Networks (YPODEMI). However, according to articles which are yet to be denied, during the meeting the representative of ECFIN (Leila Fernandez) called for the immediate privatisation of the company as a condition of the Commission's positive opinion. Will the Commission answer the following:

1. According to the Medium-Term Programme, the privatisation of TRAINOSE was set to begin in 2011, but the planned completion would take place in the 4th quarter of 2013. In so far as the privatisation of TRAINOSE and its accession to the Privatisation Fund was never set as a condition during the examination of the file, what changed between 21.12.2011 and 26.1.2012 for this request to be added? On what legal basis is the Commission demanding the immediate privatisation of the company? Who authorised Mrs Fernandez to take part in this negotiation? Why is privatisation being requested prior to authorisation if nothing similar has occurred before in the EU?

2. The privatisation of TRAINOSE before authorisation is granted reduces its value and in practical terms will lead to the purchase of the company at a low price. Does the Commission deem this development compatible with a sustainable future for TRAINOSE and how will it deal with accusations of corruption and the potential legal consequences?

Question for written answer E-001324/12
to the Commission
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE) and Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(6 February 2012)

Subject: Serious questions arising in connection with the Commission's change of position on the future of Trainose

Approximately one year ago, in other words in February 2011, Trainose, in accordance with the Greek law of 2010 and the agreement concluded by the Greek Government with the Troika, submitted an application for state aid to the European Competition Commission (ECC).

The proceeding went ahead and a favourable decision by the European Competition Commission was expected.

While Greece was anticipating a positive outcome to this serious case, the Greek press is now repeatedly reporting that: a representative of the Commission's Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs (DG ECFIN), during a private meeting held a few days ago in Athens, demanded the immediate privatisation of Trainose and its inclusion in the Hellenic Republic Assets Development Fund (HRADF) as a precondition for completion of proceedings.

It should also be noted that in December 2011, Trainose, after restructuring, recorded a profit.

In view of this:

1. Is the Commission aware of these events?

2. Was the representative of the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs (DG ECFIN) expressing the Commission's official position?

3. If so, what has happened for the Commission to change its position, setting out new terms, such as the condition of immediate privatisation?

4. Has it previously called for/imposed the privatisation of state railways in Member States prior to their authorisation? If not, why is it being done in this specific case and what is the legal basis for it?

5. Why, if the deadline for privatisation is set for the end of 2013, which would help Trainose acquire greater value, has immediate privatisation suddenly been called for?

Joint answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission

(3 April 2012)

The Commission is aware that the Greek press (*To Vima*, 27 January 2012) claimed that Commission officials required the immediate privatisation of TRAINOSE. These allegations are not correct: as the Honourable Members might be aware, the same newspaper (*To Vima*, 6 February 2012) promptly clarified the issue.

The Commission stated in the Opening Decision on TRAINOSE of 13 July 2011 (state aid case SA.32544 ([1])), 'according to the information available about the restructuring operation, bringing private funds into the company via privatisation appears to be the only realistic way for TRAINOSE to be able to bring in the own contribution required by Point 44 of the Rescue and Restructuring Guidelines, in light of the company's current difficult financial situation'.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/cases/241369/241369_1260391_65_2.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001315/12
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(13 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Mercados de valores derivados

La Comisión Europea anunció el día 1 de febrero su veto a la fusión de «Deutsche Börse» y «New York Stock Exchange» con el argumento de que podría originar un monopolio en el mercado de valores derivados.

Tal argumentación me suscita las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Por qué la preocupación por los mercados de valores derivados no se orienta a tratar de conseguir una mínima transparencia en estos mercados y una mínima protección de los inversores, que ahora está puesta en duda por su opacidad?

2. ¿Es consciente la Comisión de que la oscuridad en la negociación de los valores derivados es una de las causas de la crisis de los mercados de deuda europea?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de marzo de 2012)

La crisis económica ha suscitado una acción intensa y sostenida de los gobiernos nacionales de la UE, del Banco Central Europeo y de la Comisión. Todos han colaborado estrechamente para apoyar el crecimiento y el empleo, garantizar la estabilidad financiera y establecer un mejor sistema de gobernanza para el futuro.

En respuesta a la crisis financiera, la Comisión Europea ha presentado un paquete completo de nuevas normas para el sector financiero. En primer lugar, la Comisión tiene por objetivo reducir el riesgo sistémico y mejorar la transparencia de todas las operaciones con productos derivados ([1]). A tal fin, ha propuesto la compensación central obligatoria para todos los derivados OTC, así como la notificación obligatoria a los registros de operaciones. El Parlamento Europeo y el Consejo van a adoptar pronto estas normas oficialmente. En segundo lugar, la Comisión ha propuesto normas sobre la negociación de derivados en centros organizados en sus propuestas de revisión de la Directiva sobre los mercados de instrumentos financieros ([2]). Según estas propuestas, todas las operaciones con productos derivados que reúnan las condiciones para su compensación y que tengan la liquidez suficiente se trasladarán a centros organizados. Además, la Comisión propone aplicar requisitos armonizados de transparencia «pre-negociación» y «post-negociación» para esos instrumentos.

([1]) COM(2010) 484 de 15.9.2010.
([2]) COM(2011) 656 final y COM(2011) 652 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001315/12
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Derivative securities markets

On 1 February 2012, the Commission announced its veto of the merger between Deutsche Börse and the New York Stock Exchange, arguing that it could create a monopoly in the derivative securities market.

In my mind, this argument raises the following questions:

1. Why is the concern about derivative securities markets not directed at attempting to achieve a minimum degree of transparency in these markets and a minimum level of protection for investors, something that the markets' lack of transparency makes uncertain at present?

2. Is the Commission aware that one of the causes of the European debt market crisis is the obscurity surrounding trading in derivative securities?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2012)

The economic crisis has prompted intense and sustained action by the EU's national governments, the European Central Bank and the Commission. All have been working closely together to support growth and employment, ensure financial stability, and put in place a better governance system for the future.

In response to the financial crisis, the European Commission has presented a comprehensive package of new rules for the financial sector. First, the Commission aims at reducing systemic risk and improving transparency on all derivatives transactions ([1]). To this end, mandatory central clearing for all OTC derivatives and mandatory reporting to trade repositories have been proposed. These rules should be very soon formally adopted by the European Parliament and Council. Second, the Commission has proposed rules for the trading of derivatives on organised platforms in the proposals reviewing the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive ([2]). According to these proposals, all trading of derivatives which are eligible for clearing and which are sufficiently liquid will move to organised venues. In addition, the Commission is proposing to apply harmonised pre-and post-trade transparency requirements for these instruments.

([1]) COM(2010) 484, 15.9.2010.
([2]) COM(2011) 656 final, and COM(2011) 652 final, 20.10.2011.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001316/12
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(13 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Veto a la fusión de «Deutsche Börse» y «New York Stock Exchange»

La Comisión europea anunció el día uno de febrero su veto a la fusión de «Deutsche Börse» y «New York Stock Exchange».

Tal decisión me suscita muchas preguntas:

1. ¿Por qué la Comisión impide la creación de un mayor mercado de valores que contribuiría a una formación de precios más transparente? ¿Por qué perjudica los intereses de los inversores, ya sean grandes o pequeños, al mantener mercados fragmentados, en los que se generan distintos precios de los valores negociados, que originan más costes a los inversores, que suponen obstáculos a la liquidez y financiación, ahora tan necesaria en esta época de crisis?

2. ¿Por qué la Comisión imposibilita la generación de una gran plataforma bursátil entre varias bolsas europeas y americanas, en la que tendrían un peso muy relevante las empresas europeas?

3. ¿Por qué dificulta que se avance en la armonización de la supervisión financiera y de las reglas del mercado de valores europeas y americanas, que está generando tantos problemas prácticos? ¿No contradice este veto las propuestas de regulación financiera que está estudiando la misma Comisión?

4. ¿Por qué impide la fusión de dos mercados cuando la fragmentación de los mismos es una de las causas de la alta volatilidad financiera que estamos padeciendo?

5. ¿Por qué argumenta con criterios de competencia, cuando la competencia debe existir dentro del mercado, con distintas sociedades y servicios de inversión, distintos operadores, pero no entre mercados porque ello sólo genera mayores desigualdades entre los inversores, mayores costes, precios de los valores negociables distintos en cada mercado, etc.?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(2 de abril de 2012)

1. La Comisión analizó la concentración sobre la base de los datos recogidos en una investigación exhaustiva en la que se incluían a todos los participantes en el mercado (usuarios, mercados bursátiles, reguladores, etc.) ([1]). En los mercados de derivados en cuestión, la operación de concentración habría dado lugar a un cuasi monopolio que habría perjudicado a los clientes. En ausencia de las medidas correctoras adecuadas, la Comisión tenía la obligación de prohibir la fusión en cumplimiento del Reglamento de Concentraciones ([2]). No se hallaron pruebas de que la creación de una gran plataforma bursátil contribuiría a una formación de precios más transparente o a mejorar la liquidez y la financiación.

2. La Comisión no está en contra de la creación de grandes plataformas de negociación a través de concentraciones si ello no da lugar a efectos anticompetitivos. Sin embargo, los monopolios indiscutibles son perjudiciales para la economía de la UE. Estos mercados están en el núcleo del sistema financiero de la UE, por lo que es fundamental que sigan siendo competitivos.

3. La Comisión analizó la concentración teniendo en cuenta el actual marco regulador incluidos los probables cambios resultantes de compromisos del G-20. Las propuestas de la Comisión encaminadas a reforzar la armonización de las normas de supervisión financiera son independientes de cualquier análisis sobre las concentraciones. La integración, la competitividad y la eficiencia de los mercados financieros, constituyen objetivos del presente programa regulador. La decisión de prohibir la contratación no supone un obstáculo para dicho programa y es plenamente coherente con el mismo.

([1]) Comunicado de prensa IP/12/94.

([2]) Reglamento (CE) nº 139/2004 del Consejo, de 20 de enero de 2004, sobre el control de las concentraciones entre empresas («Reglamento comunitario de concentraciones») (DO L 24 de 29.1.2004, p. 1.)

4. La Comisión no tiene conocimiento de que haya pruebas sobre este efecto, y ninguna prueba fue presentada.

5. La Comisión aplicó el Reglamento de Concentraciones para proteger la competencia en los mercados y garantizar que los usuarios sigan beneficiándose de precios competitivos y de niveles de servicio e innovación elevados. Llegó a la conclusión de que tales ventajas son fruto de la competencia entre las Partes y de que quedarían eliminados por la concentración.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001316/12
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Veto of the merger between Deutsche Boerse and the New York Stock Exchange

On 1 February, the Commission announced its veto of the merger between Deutsche Boerse and the New York Stock Exchange.

This decision raises many questions:

1. Why is the Commission preventing the creation of a larger securities exchange, which would contribute to more transparent price formation? Why is it harming the interests of investors, both large and small, by maintaining fragmented markets, where different prices are generated for the securities traded, and which create more costs for investors and hinder liquidity and financing, which is so necessary at the current time of crisis?

2. Why is the Commission preventing the creation of a large trading platform that would include several European and American exchanges, in which European companies would have a very significant weight?

3. Why is the Commission hindering progress in the area of harmonising financial supervision and European and American rules regarding the securities market, which is giving rise to so many practical problems? Does this veto not contradict the proposals on financial regulation that the Commission itself is studying?

4. Why is the Commission preventing the merger of two markets when the fragmentation of markets is one of the causes of the severe financial volatility that we are experiencing?

5. Why does the Commission cite competition criteria, when competition should exist within the market, with various investment services and companies and various operators, but not among markets, because this only gives rise to greater inequality among investors, higher costs, different prices for the securities on each market, etc.?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2012)

1. The Commission analysed the merger on the basis of evidence collected in an extensive investigation including all market participants (users, exchanges, regulators, etc.) ([1]). In the derivatives markets concerned, the merger would have led to a quasi-monopoly which would have harmed customers. Absent appropriate remedies, the Commission had an obligation to prohibit the merger pursuant to the Merger Regulation ([2]). No evidence was found that the creation of a larger exchange would contribute to more transparent price formation or better liquidity and financing.

2. The Commission is not against the creation of large trading platforms through mergers if this does not lead to anti-competitive effects. However, unchallenged monopolies are detrimental to the EU economy. These markets are at the heart of the EU financial system: it is crucial that they remain competitive.

3. The Commission analysed the merger in the current regulatory framework including likely changes resulting from G20 commitments. The Commission's proposals aiming to enhance the harmonisation of financial supervision rules are independent of any merger analysis. The integration, competitiveness, and efficiency of financial markets are objectives of this regulatory agenda. The decision to prohibit the merger does not hamper this agenda and is fully consistent with it.

([1]) Press Release IP/12/94.
([2]) Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 of 20 January 2004 on the control of concentrations between undertakings (the EC Merger Regulation), OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1.

4. The Commission is not aware of evidence to this effect, nor was any such evidence submitted.

5. The Commission applied the Merger Regulation to protect competition within markets and to ensure that users continue to benefit from competitive prices, high levels of service and innovation. It concluded that such benefits were provided as a result of competition between the parties would be eliminated by the merger.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001317/12
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(13 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Fondos Europeos estructurales y empleo

El Presidente del Consejo Europeo, Herman Van Rompuy, a vuelto a informar a través de la red social Twitter sobre la posible utilización de fondos europeos estructurales para el fomento del empleo juvenil y ayuda a las pequeñas y medianas empresas.

Informes económicos de distintas instituciones han resaltado en las últimas semanas la elevada cuantía de esos fondos estructurales de la que todavía no se ha dispuesto. Según algunas publicaciones supera los 83 000 millones de euros.

Ante estas noticias me gustaría saber la opinión de la Comisión sobre los siguientes aspectos:

1. ¿Por qué seguir manteniendo el criterio de asignación de estos fondos fragmentando los mismos por país miembro, cuando hay algunos Estados que no han utilizado estos recursos económicos y en otros se padecen ahora situaciones de cierta urgencia económica? La Comisión debe de tener datos exactos sobre la elevada cuantía de los fondos no utilizados por Luxemburgo y las necesidades existentes ahora, por ejemplo, en Portugal y en España. ¿No sería más coherente con el espíritu que debería inspirar la construcción de la Unión Europea que las asignaciones no tuvieran como criterio preferente la distribución por país, sino la preocupación por atender el interés social del conjunto de la Unión Europea?

2. ¿Por qué, incluso, no utilizar algunas de las conocidas técnicas financieras para adelantar cantidades a los países más necesitados con cargo a las contribuciones del próximo ejercicio?

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

1. Los recursos de los Fondos Estructurales y de Cohesión se asignan a los Estados miembros atendiendo a criterios consensuados y a la legislación de la UE. Todos los Estados miembros disponen de una planificación financiera para utilizar los recursos asignados durante el marco financiero plurianual y, por tanto, tienen ocasión de incurrir en gastos subvencionables hasta que finalice 2015.

Según las estimaciones de la Comisión, el 70 % de las asignaciones del FSE y cerca del 80 % de las del FEDER y el Fondo de Cohesión están actualmente comprometidas para proyectos concretos. Estos índices de asignación, en la fase actual del período de programación, demuestran que la política de cohesión está efectivamente teniendo resultados sobre el terreno.

2. En el contexto del marco financiero plurianual, el presupuesto de la UE se moviliza sobre la base de compromisos anuales. No obstante, cabe señalar que en el marco de los programas de la política de cohesión se han pagado anticipos significativos a todos los Estados miembros en los primeros años del período de programación para permitirles planificar las intervenciones conforme a sus marcos estratégicos nacionales de referencia acordados con la Comisión.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001317/12
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: EU Structural Funds and employment

The President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, has again referred on the social network Twitter to the possible use of the EU Structural Funds to promote youth employment and help small and medium-sized enterprises.

Economic reports from various institutions in recent weeks have underscored the fact that large sums under the Structural Funds remain unused. According to some of these publications, this amount exceeds EUR 83 billion.

Given these developments, can the Commission reply to the following questions?

1. Why continue to maintain the allocation criteria for these funds that divide them up among Member States, when some Member States have not used these financial resources and others are currently experiencing economic situations of considerable urgency? The Commission should have exact data concerning the large amount under these funds that has not been used by Luxembourg, and the needs that currently exist, for example, in Portugal and Spain. Would it not be more consistent with the spirit that the construction of the European Union should inspire, for the primary allocation criterion to be concern for addressing the interests of society in the EU as a whole, rather than distributing the funds by country?

2. Why not even use some of the existing known financial techniques to advance sums to the Member States most in need from the following fiscal year's contributions?

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

1. Structural and Cohesion Funds resources are allocated to the Member States in line with the agreed EU legislation and criteria. All Member States have a financial planning to use the allocated resources for the duration of the multi annual financial framework and therefore, they have until end 2015 to incur relevant eligible expenditure.

Based on the Commission's estimates, 70 % of the ESF and close to 80 % of the ERDF and CF allocations are currently committed to concrete projects. These allocation rates, at this stage of the programming period, demonstrate that cohesion policy is indeed being delivered on the ground.

2. In the context of the multiannual financial framework, the EU budget is mobilised on the basis of annual commitments. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that under cohesion policy programmes significant advance payments have been made to all Member States in the early years of the programming period to allow them planning interventions based on their national strategic reference frameworks agreed with the Commission.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001318/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(6 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Διασφάλιση των ασφαλιστικών δικαιωμάτων των εργαζομένων στη Δημόσια Επιχείρηση Ηλεκτρισμού (ΔΕΗ) Ελλάδος

Από το 1966 (ν. 4491/1966), η ΔΕΗ ανέλαβε την υποχρεωτική κοινωνική ασφάλιση του προσωπικού της, στο πλαίσιο της οποίας εισέπραττε τις ασφαλιστικές εισφορές των εργαζομένων της χωρίς να καταβάλει τις -προβλεπόμενες για όλες τις επιχειρήσεις στην Ελλάδα- ασφαλιστικές εργοδοτικές εισφορές. Έναντι αυτών, ανέλαβε την υποχρέωση της κάλυψης του συνόλου των δαπανών ασφάλισης του προσωπικού της. Με τη μετατροπή της ΔΕΗ σε Ανώνυμη Εταιρεία, προκειμένου, αφενός να εισαχθεί στο Χρηματιστήριο Αξιών και, αφετέρου να δημιουργηθούν οι προϋποθέσεις απελευθέρωσης της αγοράς Ηλεκτρισμού -σύμφωνα και με τις αποφάσεις της ΕΕ- η ασφάλιση του προσωπικού ανατέθηκε σε ιδιαίτερο Νομικό Πρόσωπο Δημοσίου Δικαίου (Οργανισμός Ασφάλισης Προσωπικού ΔΕΗ) ενώ οι ασφαλιστικές υποχρεώσεις ανελήφθησαν από το Κράτος -ακόμα και οι έκτακτες ανάγκες (ΣΤΕ 718/2009, 146/2008, 1041 & 531/2007)- ως αντιπαροχή (ν. 2773/99), καθώς η ασφαλιστική περιουσία παρέμεινε στη ΔΕΗ ΑΕ και με αυτόν τον τρόπο το Ελληνικό Δημόσιο αύξανε την περιουσία του ως ιδιοκτήτης της. Η κάλυψη προβλεπόταν με την ετήσια καταβολή από το Κράτος ενός ποσού ίσου με τη διαφορά εσόδων-δαπανών του Ασφαλιστικού Φορέα (εισφορές εργοδότη-εργαζόμενου, μείον δαπάνες σύνταξης και πρόνοιας), το οποίο αφαιρείται από την ασφαλιστική περιουσία. Το ποσό αυτό είναι πάγιος πόρος του Ασφαλιστικού Φορέα και εγγράφεται σε ιδιαίτερο κεφάλαιο και κωδικό στον κρατικό προϋπολογισμό. Η εγκυρότητα της ανωτέρω συνθήκης χρηματοδοτικής κάλυψης έχει ομολογηθεί και με σχετική απόφαση της Ολομέλειας του Αρείου Πάγου (Απ. 13/2010). Η ελληνική κυβέρνηση, όμως, από το 2010 -επικαλούμενη τις απορρέουσες δεσμεύσεις από τις δανειακές συμβάσεις- καταβάλλει μειωμένο, κατά 30 % και πλέον τον πάγιο πόρο στον Ασφαλιστικό Οργανισμό με αποτέλεσμα την αδυναμία κάλυψης των υποχρεώσεών του, όταν μάλιστα υπάρχει ρητή δέσμευση για καταβολή του εν λόγω πόρου στο ακέραιο. Με δεδομένη την ύπαρξη σχετικής νομολογίας του ΕΔΑΔ (απόφαση της 16ης/9/1996, υπόθεση Gaygusuz κατά Αυστρίας) για τις κοινωνικοασφαλιστικές παροχές όπως αυτές εντάσσονται και στο δεσμευτικό πλαίσιο του άρθρου 1 ΠΠ της ΕΣΔΑ, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Σύμφωνα με το ευρωπαϊκό κεκτημένο, συμπεριλαμβανομένων και των προβλέψεων περί προστασίας της περιουσίας, αλλά και τις δεσμεύσεις της ευρωπαϊκής έννομης τάξης για την προστασία των Θεμελιωδών Ανθρωπίνων Δικαιωμάτων, εντοπίζει παραβίαση από τη μονομερή μη εφαρμογή της συμφωνίας από το ελληνικό κράτος που υπονομεύει ευθέως τη βιωσιμότητα και τις παροχές του Ασφαλιστικού Φορέα;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001319/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(14 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Διασφάλιση βιωσιμότητας και κοινωνικής επάρκειας του Οργανισμού Ασφάλισης Προσωπικού Δημόσιας Επιχείρησης Ηλεκτρισμού (ΔΕΗ) Ελλάδος

Στην από 3.2.2012 ερώτησή μας με θέμα: «Διασφάλιση ασφαλιστικών δικαιωμάτων εργαζομένων στη Δημόσια Επιχείρηση Ηλεκτρισμού (ΔΕΗ) Ελλάδος») είχαμε αναφερθεί στο ιστορικό της ασφαλιστικής κάλυψης του προσωπικού της ΔΕΗ. Με το ασφαλιστικό καθεστώς από το 1966 έως και το 1999, η ΔΕΗ εκμεταλλευόταν τα κονδύλια των ασφαλιστικών εισφορών χρηματοδοτώντας τις αναπτυξιακές της ανάγκες χωρίς να καταφεύγει σε έντοκο δανεισμό ή επιβαρύνσεις στην τιμή της ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας. Η Γενική Διεύθυνση Ανταγωνισμού της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής, με επιστολή της υπογραφόμενη από τον κ. Mario Monti, αναφέρει ρητά ότι το όφελος που αποκόμμισε η ΔΕΗ μόνο σε ό,τι αφορά τον κλάδο παραγωγής της -λόγω του ότι επί μια ορισμένη περίοδο δεν υποχρεωνόταν να συνεισφέρει στο συνταξιοδοτικό ταμείο των υπαλλήλων της- ανέρχεται σε 4 415 εκατ. ευρώ {C(2002) 3729fin}. Έναντι αυτών, η ΔΕΗ είχε αναλάβει την υποχρέωση να καλύπτει το σύνολο των δαπανών για την ασφάλιση του προσωπικού της. Το ανωτέρω σύστημα ασφάλισης είναι ένα κλασικό κεφαλοποιητικό σύστημα, ανάλογο με το Ασφαλιστικό Σύστημα που ακολουθήθηκε στην EDF. Ταυτόχρονα, το Δικαστήριο Ευρωπαϊκών Κοινοτήτων έχει κρίνει ότι το ασφαλιστικό καθεστώς των συνταξιούχων στη ΔΕΗ ΑΕ συνιστά επαγγελματικό συνταξιοδοτικό σύστημα με αποφασιστικό κριτήριο καθορισμού του ως «επαγγελματικού» την ύπαρξη εργασιακής σχέσης, συνθήκη η οποία δεν έχει μεταβληθεί (Απόφαση 17.4.1997 C 147/95 & Πρόταση Γενικού Εισαγγελέα F.G. Jakobs 16.1.1997). Μετά τη μετατροπή της ΔΕΗ σε ΑΕ, με σχετική νομοθετική ρύθμιση (άρθρο 34 — ν.2773/99), το Ελληνικό Δημόσιο ανέλαβε τη χρηματοδότηση του Οργανισμού Ασφάλισης Προσωπικού ΔΕΗ ως αντιπαροχή για την παραμονή της ασφαλιστικής περιουσίας στη ΔΕΗ ΑΕ που βρίσκεται υπό τον έλεγχό του. Από το 2010, όμως, ο προβλεπόμενος πόρος για τη χρηματοδότηση του Ασφαλιστικού Οργανισμού καταβάλλεται από την ελληνική κυβέρνηση μειωμένος κατά 30 % και πλέον κατά παράβαση της σχετικής εθνικής νομοθεσίας. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς αξιολογεί τη συγκεκριμένη πρακτική της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης; Είναι συμβατή με την ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία, και, αν όχι, προτίθεται να απευθύνει συστάσεις συμμόρφωσης στην Ελλάδα;

2. Υπάρχουν αντίστοιχες περιπτώσεις σε άλλα κράτη μέλη και πώς επιλύθηκαν;

Κοινή απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(2 Απριλίου 2012)

Κατ' αρχήν, οι αρμοδιότητες της Επιτροπής όσον αφορά πράξεις και παραλείψεις των κρατών μελών περιορίζονται στην επίβλεψη της εφαρμογής και της τήρησης του δικαίου της Ένωσης υπό τον έλεγχο του Δικαστηρίου (πβ. άρθρο 17 παράγραφος 1 ΣΕΕ). Στην προκειμένη περίπτωση, δεν φαίνεται ότι το οικείο κράτος μέλος ενήργησε στο πλαίσιο της εφαρμογής του δικαίου της Ένωσης. Οι χρηματοοικονομικές διευθετήσεις μεταξύ της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης και του ασφαλιστικού φορέα όσον αφορά τις πληρωμές που πρέπει να καταβληθούν από το κράτος για τις παροχές κοινωνικής πρόνοιας στους υπαλλήλους της Δημόσιας Επιχείρησης Ηλεκτρισμού (ΔΕΗ) αποτελεί θεμελιωδώς ζήτημα εθνικής αρμοδιότητας. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει αρμοδιότητα να παρέμβει στην οργάνωση και στη χρηματοδότηση των συστημάτων κοινωνικής προστασίας στα κράτη μέλη.

Όσον αφορά πιθανή παραβίαση του άρθρου 1 του Πρόσθετου Πρωτοκόλλου στην Ευρωπαϊκή Σύμβαση για την Προάσπιση των Δικαιωμάτων του Ανθρώπου και των Θεμελιωδών Ελευθεριών, η Επιτροπή δεν είναι σε θέση να κρίνει κατά πόσον συμβιβάζονται με την εν λόγω Σύμβαση ενέργειες οι οποίες εμπίπτουν στην εθνική αρμοδιότητα.

Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει υπόψη της παραβιάσεις της νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ, ως απόρροια των νέων χρηματοοικονομικών διευθετήσεων μεταξύ της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης και του ασφαλιστικού φορέα, ούτε παρόμοιες παραβιάσεις σε άλλα κράτη μέλη.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001318/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(6 February 2012)

Subject: Protection of the social insurance rights of employees of DEI, the Greek public power corporation

Since 1966 (Law 4491/1966), the DEI has covered the mandatory social insurance of its staff and collected its employees' insurance contributions without paying the employer's contributions that every enterprise in Greece is obliged to pay. In return for this it undertook to cover its staff's entire insurance expenditure. With the reorganisation of DEI as a limited company, (a) to be listed on the stock market and (b) to establish the conditions, in accordance with EU decisions, for deregulation of the electricity market, its staff's social insurance was assigned to a private company governed by public law (the DEI staff insurance organisation) with the insurance obligations — including the emergency requirements — continuing, in compensation (Law 2773/99), to be met by the State (Council of State 718/2009, 146/2008, 1041 & 531/2007). Meanwhile the insurance assets remained in the hands of DEI A.E., with the result that the Greek State, as owner of DEI, increased its assets. The coverage was provided for through the annual payment by the Greek State of an amount equal to the difference between the insurance institution's income and expenditure (employers' and employees' contributions minus expenditure on pension and welfare), which is deducted from the insurance assets. This amount is a fixed asset of the insurance institution and is recorded under a special heading and code in the national budget. The validity of this budget entry has also been ratified by a relevant decision of the Areios Pagos (Supreme Court) plenary session (Decision 13/2010). But the Greek Government, invoking the obligations of loan agreements, has since 2010 reduced by 30 % and more the fixed amount being paid into the insurance fund, so that it has become impossible for it to fulfil its obligations, despite its explicit commitment to meeting the payment concerned in full. Given the existence of relevant ECHR case law (the *Gaygusuz* v *Austria* decision of 16 September 1996) on social security benefits such as those included in the binding framework of Article 1 of Protocol 1 to the ECHR, will the Commission answer the following:

In accordance with the European acquis, including the specifications on protection of assets, as well as the commitments in the European legal system to protect fundamental human rights, does the Commission consider this unilateral non-application of the agreement by the Greek State, to be an infringement directly undermining the viability, and the benefits, of the insurance institution?

Question for written answer E-001319/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Safeguarding the sustainability and adequacy of Greek Public Power Corporation (DEI) social security provisions

In our written question of 3 February 2012 on 'Safeguarding the social security entitlements of employees at the Greek Public Power Corporation (DEI)' we described the background to DEI social security arrangements. From 1966 to 1999, the DEI was able to meet its needs through social security contributions without the need for interest-bearing loans or electricity surcharges. The European Commission's Directorate-General for Competition, in a letter signed by Mr Mario Monti, explicitly states that the DEI's production profits alone amounted to EUR 4.415 million since, for a certain period, it was not obliged to pay contributions to the pension fund of its employees {C(2002) 3729fin}. Instead, the DEI undertook to cover all social security expenditure for them. This is a classic capital-funded system, similar to the EDF's social security arrangements. At the same time, the Court of Justice of the European Communities ruled that the DEI SA pension scheme is an occupational pension scheme, the decisive criterion for its classification as 'occupational' being the existence of an employment relationship, a condition which has not changed (Judgment 17.4.1997 C 147/95 and Opinion of Advocate General F.G. Jakobs 16.1.1997). After the DEI was made a Public Limited Company (SA) under the appropriate legislation (Article 34 — Law 277./99), the Greek Government agreed to fund its social insurance scheme in return for retaining control of its assets. Since 2010, however, the amount earmarked for the scheme by the Greek Government has been reduced by over 30 %, thereby infringing the relevant national legislation. In the light of this:

1. What view does the Commission take of this action by the Greek Government? Is it compatible with European legislation and, if not, does it intend to call on Greece to comply with it?

2. Have any similar cases arisen in other Member States and how were they resolved?

Joint answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission

(2 April 2012)

As a matter of principle, the Commission's powers regarding acts and omissions by Member States are limited to overseeing the application and respect of Union law, under the control of the Court of Justice (cf. Article 17(1) TEU). It does not appear that, in this case, the Member State concerned did act in the course of implementation of Union law. The financial arrangements between the Greek Government and the insurance provider regarding the payments to be made by the government for the welfare benefits of Public Power Corporation DEI employees are fundamentally a matter of national competence. The Commission has no powers to intervene in the organisation and financing of social protection systems in the Member States.

As regards a possible breach of Article 1 of the First Protocol to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Commission is not in a position to assess whether actions falling within national competence comply with this convention.

The Commission is not aware of any infringements of EU legislation arising from these new financial arrangements between the Greek Government and the insurance provider, nor of similar cases in other Member States.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001320/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(14 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Διόγκωση της εισφοροδιαφυγής στην Ελλάδα

Η εισφοροδιαφυγή, ολική ή μερική αποφυγή καταβολής ασφαλιστικών εισφορών, αποτελεί μια από τις βασικότερες αιτίες για την παθογένεια του ελληνικού Ασφαλιστικού Συστήματος, υπονομεύοντας άμεσα τόσο την κοινωνική του επάρκεια όσο και την προοπτική της βιωσιμότητάς του. Ταυτόχρονα, επεκτείνεται σε κάθε πεδίο των δημοσίων οικονομικών είτε με την επακόλουθη φοροδιαφυγή είτε μέσω του αποπροσανατολισμού των κοινωνικών δαπανών επιφέροντας σημαντικά πλήγματα σε κάθε προσπάθεια για την επίτευξη της δημοσιονομικής ισορροπίας.

Σε πρόσφατα στοιχεία που δημοσιοποίησε η Ειδική Υπηρεσία Ελέγχων Ασφάλισης (ΕΥΠΕΑ) του ΙΚΑ-ΕΤΑΜ -μέσω της διενέργειας ειδικών δειγματοληπτικών ελέγχων σε επιχειρήσεις- το ύψος της εισφοροδιαφυγής στην Ελλάδα για το 2011 εκτιμήθηκε στο 30 % αυξημένο κατά 5 % σε σχέση με το 2010. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει στατιστικά στοιχεία για το ποσοστό της εισφοροδιαφυγής και τη διακύμανσή του την τελευταία διετία στα κράτη μέλη;

2. Σύμφωνα με τα στοιχεία της ΕΥΠΕΑ του ΙΚΑ-ΕΤΑΜ, το 40 % των ανασφάλιστων απασχολούμενων είναι αλλοδαποί. Υπάρχει κάποια μελέτη ή εκτίμηση σχετικά με τη διάρθρωση (ημεδαποί-αλλοδαποί) της εισφοροδιαφυγής, τόσο σε εθνικό όσο και σε συνολικότερο ενωσιακό επίπεδο;

3. Με δεδομένη τη δυσχερή δημοσιονομική κατάσταση πολλών κρατών μελών προτίθεται να προωθήσει την ανταλλαγή βέλτιστων πρακτικών, ώστε να αναδειχθούν οι πιο ενδεδειγμένες λύσεις για την καταπολέμηση του εν λόγω φαινομένου;

4. Σκοπεύει να αναλάβει περαιτέρω δράσεις για την ευαισθητοποίηση και την ενδυνάμωση της ασφαλιστικής κουλτούρας του κόσμου της εργασίας;

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

Η Επιτροπή έχει επίγνωση της σημασίας της εισφοροδιαφυγής για το έλλειμμα των ταμείων κοινωνικής ασφάλισης στην Ελλάδα και σε άλλα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ. Ωστόσο δεν διαθέτει πλήρη και αναλυτικά στοιχεία σχετικά με το επίπεδο της εισφοροδιαφυγής και τις τάσεις στα επιμέρους κράτη μέλη ούτε μελέτες με θέμα την κατανομή της εισφοροδιαφυγής μεταξύ ημεδαπών και αλλοδαπών εργαζομένων.

Το ΙΚΑ-ΕΤΑΜ, το οποίο είναι το μεγαλύτερο ταμείο κοινωνικής ασφάλισης στην Ελλάδα, ζήτησε πρόσφατα από την Ειδική Ομάδα (Task Force) για την Ελλάδα τεχνική βοήθεια για το θέμα της συλλογής των εισφορών ιδίως όσον αφορά την καθιέρωση ενιαίου μηχανισμού για την είσπραξη των εισφορών κοινωνικής ασφάλισης και τη συλλογή των φόρων. Μετά την αναλυτική αξιολόγηση των αναγκών του ΙΚΑ-ΕΤΑΜ θα αναληφθούν περαιτέρω δράσεις στον εν λόγω τομέα. Ως πρώτο βήμα, οι υπάλληλοι του ΙΚΑ-ΕΤΑΜ που είναι επιφορτισμένοι με τη συλλογή των εισφορών κοινωνικής ασφάλισης έλαβαν μέρος σε επιμορφωτικό σεμινάριο στην Αθήνα σχετικά με τις πιθανές μεθόδους ταχείας βελτίωσης της είσπραξης φορολογικών οφειλών, που διοργανώθηκε από την Task Force στην Αθήνα για την ελληνική φορολογική διοίκηση (Γενική Γραμματεία Φορολογικών και Τελωνειακών Υποθέσεων) με συμμετοχή εμπειρογνώμονα από την ολλανδική φορολογική διοίκηση.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001320/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Increasing evasion of social security contributions in Greece

Evasion, that is to say the full or partial non-payment of social security contributions, is one of the principal factors weakening the Greek Social Security System, directly undermining both the adequacy and sustainability of the service provided. Every area of public finance is being affected by either non-payment of contributions or wrongful payment of benefits, effectively sabotaging any efforts to balance the books.

According to the recent findings of sample checks by the IKA-ETAM Inspectorate (EYPEA), evasion of social security contributions in Greece was around 30 % in 2011, 5 % higher than in 2010.

In view of this:

1. Does the Commission have statistical data regarding the level of evasion and trends in the Member States over the last two years?

2. According to information from the IKA-ETAM Inspectorate (EYPEA), 40 % of uninsured employees are foreigners. Have any studies or estimates been made regarding the breakdown (between domestic and foreign workers) of contribution evasion at national and EU level?

3. Given the parlous financial situation of many Member States does it intend to promote the exchange of best practices in order to find the appropriate ways of combating the problem?

4. Does it intend to take further action to heighten awareness and underpin social insurance at the workplace?

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

The Commission is aware of the importance of social security contribution evasion in the deficit of the Social Funds encountered in Greece and in other European Member States. However it does not have complete and exhaustive data on the level of evasion and trends in the Member States or studies breaking down the social security contribution evasion between national and foreign workers.

IKA-ETAM, which is the biggest Social Security Fund in Greece, recently asked the Task Force for Greece for technical assistance on the issue of contributions collection and in particular regarding the possible unification of the mechanism for collecting social insurance contributions with the collection of taxes. Further actions will follow on in this area once the needs of IKA-ETAM have been precisely assessed. As a first step, collection officials from IKA-ETAM took part in a workshop in Athens on possible quick wins for tax debt collection, organised by the Task Force in Athens for the Greek tax administration (General Secretariat for Tax and Customs) with an expert from the Dutch tax administration.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001321/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(14 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Συγχρηματοδοτούμενα έργα στην Ελλάδα

Όπως είναι γνωστό, η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή διαχρονικά έχει συγχρηματοδοτήσει μέσω των Κοινοτικών Πλαισίων Στήριξης (ΚΠΣ) και έως σήμερα συγχρηματοδοτεί μέσω του Εθνικού Στρατηγικού Πλαισίου Αναφοράς (ΕΣΠΑ 2007-2013), σημαντικότατες επενδύσεις στην Ελλάδα, στο πλαίσιο της πολιτικής συνοχής και της περιφερειακής πολιτικής της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης.

Κατά την τελευταία διετία, αποφασίστηκε η εντατικότερη αξιοποίηση της ιδιωτικής περιουσίας του ελληνικού δημοσίου στο πλαίσιο του Προγράμματος Οικονομικής Στήριξης, το οποίο αξιολογείται επίσης από την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, Γενική Διεύθυνση Οικονομικών και Χρηματοδοτικών Υποθέσεων.

Η αξιοποίηση όμως ενδέχεται να περιλάβει έργα φορέων, οργανισμών και επιχειρήσεων του Ελληνικού δημοσίου, τα οποία συγχρηματοδοτούνται από την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, έπεται όμως η, σε μεγαλύτερο ή μικρότερο βαθμό, αποκρατικοποίηση ορισμένων τέτοιων φορέων. Ως εκ τούτου, τίθεται ένα ζήτημα μελλοντικής κυριότητας ανάλογων έργων, για παράδειγμα ιδίως έργα υποδομών φυσικού αερίου και ηλεκτρισμού, έργα υποδομών μεταφορών κ.ο.κ. καθώς επισημαίνεται το γεγονός ότι η Κοινοτική νομοθεσία και ιδίως το άρθρο 57 του Κανονισμού (ΕΚ)1083/2006, απαιτεί τη διατήρηση, για 5 χρόνια από την ολοκλήρωσή τους, της κυριότητας των υποδομών δημοσίου χαρακτήρα που συγχρηματοδοτούνται από την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση μέσω του ΕΣΠΑ.

Με βάση τα ανωτέρω, ερωτάται ο αρμόδιος Επίτροπος Περιφερειακής Πολιτικής:

1. Με δεδομένο ότι συγχρηματοδοτούνται σήμερα από το ΕΣΠΑ κρίσιμα έργα για τη χώρα, ποια είναι η θέση της Γενικής Διεύθυνσης Περιφερειακής Πολιτικής της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής σχετικά με το ζήτημα αυτό;

2. Έχει ζητηθεί η άποψή της από τη Γενική Διεύθυνση Οικονομικών και Χρηματοδοτικών Υποθέσεων;

3. Οι επενδύσεις που συγχρηματοδοτούνται θα πρέπει όντως να εξαιρεθούν, έως την πενταετία των Κανονισμών ως εύλογο σημείο απόσβεσης, από κάποια άμεση αποκρατικοποίηση;

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

1. Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 57 του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1083/2006 ([1]), ένα έργο διατηρεί τη συνεισφορά των ταμείων μόνον εάν, εντός πέντε ετών από την ολοκλήρωση του έργου ή εντός τριών ετών από την ολοκλήρωση του έργου στα κράτη μέλη που έχουν επιλέξει να μειώσουν αυτό το χρονικό όριο, το εν λόγω έργο δεν υποστεί σημαντική τροποποίηση. Σημαντική τροποποίηση είναι εκείνη η οποία:

— επηρεάζει τη φύση ή τους όρους υλοποίησης του έργου ή παρέχει αδικαιολόγητο πλεονέκτημα σε επιχείρηση ή δημόσιο φορέα, και

— απορρέει είτε από αλλαγή στη φύση της κυριότητας στοιχείου υποδομής είτε από την παύση παραγωγικής δραστηριότητας.

Εάν συντρέχουν οι ανωτέρω συνθήκες τα αχρεωστήτως καταβληθέντα ποσά ανακτώνται. Η εφαρμογή της διαδικασίας ιδιωτικοποιήσεων στην Ελλάδα θα πρέπει να είναι σύμφωνη με τη σχετική ισχύουσα ενωσιακή και εθνική νομοθεσία.

2. Όλες οι αρμόδιες υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής συμμετέχουν στην εφαρμογή της πολιτικής για τη συνοχή και ζητείται η γνώμη τους για τις αποφάσεις που λαμβάνει η Επιτροπή.

3. Στόχος του άρθρου 57 δεν είναι να εξαιρέσει από την ιδιωτικοποίηση για πέντε χρόνια τα έργα που συγχρηματοδοτούνται από την ΕΕ. Η εν λόγω διάταξη έχει ως στόχο να διασφαλίσει ότι οι επενδύσεις σε επιχειρήσεις που υποστηρίζονται από την ΕΕ είναι μεγάλης διάρκειας· διευκρινίζει έτσι τις πιθανές συνέπειες για τη χρηματοδοτική στήριξη της ΕΕ που έχει ήδη χορηγηθεί, αν μια αλλαγή στη φύση της κυριότητας επέλθει πριν από τη λήξη της πενταετούς περιόδου η οποία αρχίζει από την ημερομηνία ολοκλήρωσης του έργου.

([1]) ΕΕ L 210 της 31.7.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001321/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Co-financed projects in Greece

As is well known, the Commission has, over the years, co-financed very significant investments in Greece as part of the European Union's Cohesion and Regional policies, through the Community support frameworks (CSF) and it continues to do so through the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF 2007-2013).

In the last two years, the increased use of Greek Government assets as part of the Financial Support Programme has been decided, which is also assessed by the Commission Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs.

This may however include the work of entities, organisations and businesses of the Greek Government which are co-funded by the Commission, following however, to a greater or lesser extent, the privatisation of such entities. For this reason, this raises the issue of the future ownership of such projects, for example infrastructure projects relating to natural gas and electricity, transport projects etc., as Community legislation, specifically Article 57 of Regulation (EC) 1083/2006, requires the ownership of public infrastructure co-financed by the European Union through NSRF to be retained for five years following completion.

On this basis, will the Commissioner responsible for Regional Policy clarify:

1. Given that projects crucial for the country are today being co-financed by NSRF, what is the position of the Commission Directorate-General for Regional Policy on this issue?

2. Has the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs been asked for its opinion?

3. Should investments which are co-financed definitely be exempt, for the five-year period stipulated by the regulation, from any immediate privatisation?

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

1. Pursuant to Article 57 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 ([1]), a project retains the contribution from the Funds unless a substantial modification is undergone within five years from the completion of the project, or three years when a Member State has exercised its option to reduce this time limit. A substantial modification is one which:

— affects the nature or the implementation conditions of the project or gives an undue advantage to a firm or to a public body, and

— results either from a change in the nature of ownership of an item of infrastructure or the cessation of a productive activity.

If the above conditions are met, then any amounts unduly paid shall be recovered. The implementation of the privatisation process in Greece will have to be compliant with the relevant applicable EU and national rules.

2. All relevant Commission services are involved in the implementation of cohesion policy and are consulted for any Commission decisions taken.

3. The aim of Article 57 is not to exempt EU co-financed projects from privatisation for five years. This provision is aimed to ensure that the investments in businesses supported by the EU are long-lasting; it thus sets out the possible consequences for EU financial support already granted if a change in the nature of ownership occurs before the expiry of the five-year period, which commences from the date of the completion of the project.

([1]) OJ L 210, 31.7.2006.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001322/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(13 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Διαπολιτισμικά σχολεία για παιδιά νόμιμων μεταναστών στην Ελλάδα

Τα παιδιά των οικονομικών μεταναστών που διανέμουν νόμιμα στη Ελλάδα μεταξύ άλλων αντιμετωπίζουν ιδιαίτερα σοβαρές δυσκολίες προσαρμογής και εκμάθησης του ελληνικού εκπαιδευτικού συστήματος στα Δημόσια Σχολεία γεγονός που προκαλεί, παράλληλα, προβλήματα και στους υπόλοιπους μαθητές. Συχνά φαινόμενα είναι η εγγραφή τους σε σχολικές τάξεις δυσανάλογες με την ηλικία ή το μορφωτικό επίπεδό τους, η πρόωρη εγκατάλειψη του σχολείου, αλλά και το μεγάλο ποσοστό αποτυχίας σε εξετάσεις πρόσβασης σε ανώτερα εκπαιδευτικά επίπεδα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Προβλέπεται η δυνατότητα τα κράτη μέλη να αξιοποιήσουν πόρους από τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία για την ενίσχυση αυτού του θεσμού; Υπάρχουν εμπειρικά παραδείγματα από κράτη μέλη που έρχονται αντιμέτωπα με μεγάλους αριθμούς παράνομων μεταναστευτικών ροών;

2. Έχει η Ελλάδα μέχρι σήμερα αξιοποιήσει πόρους από τα διαθρωτικά ταμεία για το σκοπό αυτό και ποιό το ύψος των χρημάτων αυτών;

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

1. Είναι δυνατόν για τα κράτη μέλη να χρησιμοποιούν το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο για τη λήψη ειδικών μέτρων με σκοπό τη βελτίωση της συμμετοχής των μεταναστών (21.3.2012) στην εκπαίδευση. Διάφορες χώρες έχουν επικεντρώσει την προσοχή τους στους νέους μετανάστες, αλλά αυτές δεν απορροφούν απαραίτητα μεγάλα ποσοστά μεταναστών ([1]).

2. Ένας βασικός στόχος του επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος «Εκπαίδευση και Διά Βίου Μάθηση» για την Ελλάδα, το οποίο συγχρηματοδοτείται από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο, είναι η ενίσχυση της πρόσβασης όλων και η συμμετοχή τους στο εκπαιδευτικό σύστημα, και η καταπολέμηση της πρόωρης εγκατάλειψης του σχολείου, με έμφαση στα άτομα με ειδικές ανάγκες και στις ευάλωτες κοινωνικές ομάδες.

Το εν λόγω πρόγραμμα υποστηρίζει μια ενέργεια με στόχο την παροχή μεγαλύτερης εκπαιδευτικής υποστήριξης σε μαθητές μειονεκτικής προέλευσης (συμπεριλαμβανομένων των μεταναστών). Ο προϋπολογισμός που διατίθεται για την ενέργεια αυτή ανέρχεται σε περίπου 42 εκατ. ευρώ, εκ των οποίων περίπου τα 5 εκατομμύρια ευρώ είχαν δαπανηθεί μέχρι το τέλος του 2011.

([1]) Βλ. σχέδια στο διαδικτυακό τόπο του ΕΚΤ: http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=467&langId=en.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001322/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Intercultural schools for children of legal migrants in Greece

The children of economic migrants residing legally in Greece face a number of problems, including particularly serious adjustment and learning difficulties in the Greek public education system, a fact which also causes problems for other students. Frequent problems include pupils being registered in classes which do not correspond to their age or their level of education, pupils leaving school early and a high failure rate in higher education entrance examinations.

In view of this:

1. Will it be possible for Member States to use structural fund resources to remedy the problem? Are there any examples from Member States having to deal with large illegal migrant intakes?

2. Has Greece used any structural fund resources for this purpose to date and how much?

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

1. It is possible for Member States to use the European Social Fund for specific measures to improve migrant participation in education. Several countries have targeted young migrants but these are not necessarily linked to large migrant intakes ([1]).

2. A key objective of the operational programme 'Education and Lifelong Learning' for Greece, which is co-funded by the European Social Fund, is to strengthen access to and participation in the educational system by all, and to combat early school leaving, with an emphasis on the disabled and vulnerable social groups.

This programme supports an operation aimed at the provision of increased educational support to pupils with a disadvantaged background (including migrants). The budget allocated to this operation amounts to approximately EUR 42 million out of which around EUR 5 million had been spent by the end of 2011.

([1]) See projects on ESF website: http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=467&langId=en.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001323/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(13 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ομάδα δράσης στην Ελλάδα για την καταπολέμηση της νεανικής ανεργίας

Κατά τη διάρκεια της συνάντησης μεταξύ του Προέδρου της Επιτροπής και του Έλληνα Πρωθυπουργού στο πλαίσιο του πρόσφατου Ευρωπαϊκού Συμβουλίου συμφωνήθηκε σύσταση «ομάδων δράσης», πέραν της υπαρχούσης taskforce, ειδικά, για την αντιμετώπιση της ανεργίας των νέων και την τόνωση της ανάπτυξης.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει για το πρόγραμμα και τις πρωτοβουλίες των συγκεκριμένων ομάδων δράσης;

2. Εκτιμά η Επιτροπή ότι υπάρχει περιορισμένη αξιοποίηση των κοινοτικών κονδυλίων που έχουν δεσμευθεί μέσα από το ΕΣΠΑ για την ενίσχυση της απασχόλησης, την εκπαίδευση και τη διά βίου μάθηση στο βαθμό που απαιτείται τεχνική συνδρομή από νέα ομάδα δράσης για αυτό το ζήτημα;

Απάντηση του κ. Barroso εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(22 Μαρτίου 2012)

Ύστερα από πρωτοβουλία του προέδρου της Επιτροπής στο άτυπο Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο της 30ής Ιανουαρίου 2012, η Επιτροπή στέλνει ομάδες δράσεις σε οκτώ κράτη μέλη με υψηλό ποσοστό άνεργων νέων. Το καθήκον τους είναι να προσδιορίσουν τα απαραίτητα στοιχεία ενός προγράμματος για την απασχόληση των νέων, καθώς και η ανάπτυξη καθεστώτων στήριξης των ΜΜΕ τα οποία χρήζουν επιτάχυνσης ή μεταβίβασης από τα ενωτικά κονδύλια που έχουν ήδη διατεθεί με στόχο να αυξηθούν ο ευκαιρίες απασχόλησης των νέων.

Τα εν λόγω προγράμματα πρέπει, για παράδειγμα, να καθορίσουν συγκεκριμένα μέτρα πολιτικής και δημοσιονομικά μέτρα για τη στήριξη της δημιουργίας απασχόλησης και εκπαίδευσης των νέων, που αντιμετωπίζουν τις αναντιστοιχίες δεξιοτήτων και την πρόωρη εγκατάλειψη της σχολικής εκπαίδευσης. Τα προγράμματα αυτά θα πρέπει να βασίζονται στην πρωτοβουλία της Επιτροπής «Ευκαιρίες για τους νέους».

Μόνο το ένα πέμπτο περίπου από τον διαθέσιμο προϋπολογισμό του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Ταμείου για σχετικά προγράμματα μένει ακόμα να διατεθεί επιτόπια. Τα σχετικά προγράμματα του ΕΤΠΑ και του Ταμείου Συνοχής έχουν διαθέσει ελαφρώς περισσότερα κονδύλια από τον διαθέσιμο προϋπολογισμό. Διάφορα προγράμματα στην Ελλάδα έχουν ήδη συγχρηματοδοτηθεί από τα προγράμματα του διαρθρωτικού ταμείου με στόχο την προώθηση της απασχόλησης των νέων· μεταξύ αυτών εκπαιδευτικά προγράμματα για την απόκτηση δεξιοτήτων, την υποστήριξη του επιχειρηματικού πνεύματος των νέων, τη βοήθεια των άνεργων νέων στην εύρεση εργασίας, καθώς και επιδοτήσεις και καθεστώτα απασχόλησης.

Η Επιτροπή έχει συγκροτήσει μια Ομάδα δράσης για την Ελλάδα εντολή της οποίας είναι να συνεργαστεί στενά με τις ελληνικές αρχές με στόχο να βοηθήσει στην εφαρμογή του προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής και στην επιτάχυνση της απορρόφησης κεφαλαίων της ΕΕ για τη στήριξη της ανάπτυξης, της απασχόλησης και της ανταγωνιστικότητας. Η ομάδα δράσης για την απασχόληση των νέων θα βασιστεί στις εργασίες της ομάδας δράσης για την Ελλάδα καθώς και άλλων συναφών υπηρεσιών της Επιτροπής, περιλαμβάνει σχετικά μέλη του προσωπικού τους και θα εντατικοποιήσει τις προσπάθειες για την εξασφάλιση απασχόλησης σε περισσότερους νέους.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001323/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Task force in Greece for combating youth unemployment

During the meeting between the President of the Commission and the Greek Prime Minister at the recent European Council, it was agreed that, in addition to the existing task force, a task force specifically aimed at combating youth unemployment and boosting growth would be set up.

In view of this:

1. Is the Commission in a position to provide information on the specific task forces' programme and initiatives?

2. Does the Commission consider that the take-up of EU funding earmarked under the NSRF for increasing employment, training and lifelong learning is so limited as to necessitate technical assistance from a new task force in this area?

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

Following the President of the Commission initiative at the Informal European Council on 30 January 2012, the Commission sends action teams to eight Member States with high rate of unemployed young people. Their task is to identify the necessary elements of a youth employment plan and support schemes to SMEs which should be accelerated or have funds transferred into them from existing EU funds in order to boost youth employment opportunities.

These plans should for example set out specific policy and budgetary measures to support job creation and training for young people tackling skills mismatches and early school leaving. The plans should build on the recent Commission Youth Opportunities Initiative.

Only around one fifth of the budget available under the ESF for relevant projects is still to be allocated to projects on the ground. The relevant ERDF and Cohesion Fund programmes have allocated even slightly more than the available budget. Various schemes have already been co-financed under the Structural Fund programmes in Greece in order to promote youth employment, including training programmes for skills acquisition, support for youth entrepreneurship, job search assistance to unemployed youth, employment subsidies and schemes.

The Commission has set up a Task Force for Greece (TFGR), with a mandate to work in close collaboration with the Greek authorities to help implementing the Economic Adjustment Programme and to accelerate the take-up of EU funds in order to support growth, employment and competitiveness. The action team for youth employment will build on the work of the TFGR and relevant Commission services, includes relevant members of their staff and will accentuate efforts to bringing more young people in employment.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001326/12
to the Council
David Campbell Bannerman (ECR)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Public meetings

Can the European Council say if and when it plans to meet in public, and whether, in relation to Council meetings, it will waive the secrecy of agendas, minutes and discussions?

Reply
(19 March 2012)

It is not for the Council to answer questions concerning the European Council, since the European Council is a separate institution. However, the Council would point out that the provisional agenda, the annotated draft agenda, and the conclusions of the European Council are not 'secret', as they are all published. Furthermore, the President of the European Council reports to the European Parliament on that Council's deliberations after each of its meetings.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001327/12
to the Council
David Campbell Bannerman (ECR)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Common market standards for the EU and the USA — meetings between Council and US Government officials

How often does the Council meet with US Government officials to discuss common market standards for the EU and the USA?

Reply
(26 March 2012)

The Council does not meet with US Government officials to discuss common market standards.

The standards regulations are discussed in the framework of the EC-US High-Level Regulatory Cooperation Forum, which reports to the Transatlantic Economic Council (TEC); the latter in turn reports to the Summit.

The High-Level Regulatory Cooperation Forum meets twice a year, and the last meeting took place on 28 November 2011 in Washington.

Since common market standards fall within the sphere of competence of the Commission, the Honourable Member may wish to refer to the Commission for additional information on his query.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001328/12
to the Commission
David Campbell Bannerman (ECR)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Common market standards between the EU and USA — meetings between Commission and US Government officials

How often does the Commission meet US Government officials to discuss common market standards between the EU and the US? Can the Commission provide a list of such meetings for the last three years?

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

The Commission and the US government regularly meet to discuss standards in the context of the High Level Regulatory Cooperation Forum, established in 2005. The last meeting took place on 28 November 2011 in Washington. The work of the Forum contributes to achieving the objectives of high-level political bodies, in particular the Transatlantic Economic Council and the Energy Council.

The Forum provides a regular platform for Commission and US senior government officials to address cross-cutting regulatory issues of common interest. Discussions have shown that the ways regulators the European Union and the United States define and use standards are different. Efforts to reconcile these differences have resulted in the adoption in November 2011 of the joint document 'Building bridges between the US and EU standards systems'.

In order to avoid that divergent approaches to standards create barriers to trade, the Transatlantic Economic Council and the Forum seek to promote the development of coherent standards in emerging sectors such as for example electric vehicles and smart grids or bio-based products, key enabling technologies such as nanotechnology, and other cross-cutting areas, such as energy efficiency.

At the last EU-US Summit in November 2011, leaders decided to establish a High-Level Working Group on Jobs and Growth, with a view to identifying policies and measures to increase EU-US trade and investment to support mutually beneficial job creation, economic growth, and international competitiveness. This Group will meet regularly to examine options in areas such as conventional barriers to market access and regulatory issues affecting trade in goods; standards-related issues will also be addressed in this context.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001329/12
to the Commission
David Campbell Bannerman (ECR)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: European Arrest Warrant and ACTA

I would like to ask the Commission if the European Arrest Warrant can be invoked if an EU citizen violates the Anti-Counterfeit Trade Agreement (ACTA).

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

ACTA is an enforcement agreement setting civil, administrative, customs and penal measures to address infringements of intellectual property rights, therefore it cannot be directly infringed by citizens. However, if a citizen performs a piracy or counterfeiting act wilfully and on a commercial scale — as defined in Section 4 of ACTA — and is consequently either accused of a crime or condemned to a prison term according to the national law of a Member State, then the European Arrest Warrant (EAW) can be invoked pursuant to the conditions set therein. These conditions, as set out in Article 2 of the Council Framework Decision on the EAW ([1]), are that a judicial authority of a Member State may issue an EAW 'for acts punishable by the law of the issuing Member State by a custodial sentence or a detention order for a maximum period of at least 12 months or, where a sentence has been passed or a detention order has been made, for sentences of at least four months'.

([1]) Council Framework Decision 2002/584/JHA of 13 June 2002 on the European arrest warrant and the surrender procedures between Member States, OJ L 190, 18.7.2002.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001330/12
to the Commission
David Campbell Bannerman (ECR)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Conflict in the Strait of Hormuz

Has the Commission made a statement and/or does it have a strategy to handle conflict in the Strait of Hormuz?

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

The Commission has not made any statement regarding the Strait of Hormuz.

It is clear that in the regional context, Iran's acceleration of enrichment activities has contributed to increasing tensions. The EU is determined to find a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. The imposition of new sanctions at the end of January 2012 has been followed by a letter from Iran's nuclear negotiator, Mr Jalili, which offers grounds for cautious optimism that talks may occur soon.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001331/12
to the Commission
David Campbell Bannerman (ECR)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Non-Governmental Organisation — definition

What is the Commission's definition of a 'Non-Governmental Organisation' (NGO)?

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

A common definition of the term 'non-governmental organisation' cannot be based on a legal definition given the wide variations in laws relating to NGO activities, according to which an NGO may have, for instance, the legal status of a charity, non-profit association or a foundation. The term 'NGO' can nevertheless be used as shorthand to refer to a range of organisations that normally share the following characteristics:

— NGOs are not created to generate personal profit. Although they may have paid employees and engage in revenue-generating activities they do not distribute profits or surpluses to members or management;

— NGOs are voluntary. This means that they are formed voluntarily and that there is usually an element of voluntary participation in the organisation;

— NGOs are distinguished from informal or ad hoc groups by having some degree of formal or institutional existence. Usually, NGOs have formal statutes or other governing document setting out their mission, objectives and scope. They are accountable to their members and donors;

— NGOs are independent, in particular of government and other public authorities and of political parties or commercial organisations;

— NGOs are not self-serving in aims and related values. Their aim is to act in the public arena at large, on concerns and issues related to the well being of people, specific groups of people or society as a whole. They are not pursuing the commercial or professional interests of their members.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001335/12
to the Commission
David Campbell Bannerman (ECR)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Free trade agreements — social and economic impact studies

Does the Commission believe that proposed free trade agreements with developing countries should be delayed by 'social and economic' impact studies?

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

The Commission is fully committed to a trade policy that pursues economic growth, while promoting social equity and preserving environmental resources. Impact assessments that assess the potential economic, social and environmental consequences an initiative may have, are an essential tool to that effect. Since 2002, the Commission has been conducting trade sustainability impact assessments (trade SIAs) during all major trade negotiations. More recently, the Commission has also begun to undertake impact assessments in advance of a proposal to launch a trade negotiation.

Common to both these types of study is a balanced, integrated, transparent and evidence-based assessment of the expected economic, social, and environmental impacts of a proposed trade agreement. Both studies are scheduled in such a way as to provide evidence — on the consequential social or environmental impacts of a proposed Free Trade Agreement — well in advance of the conclusion of a trade agreement.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001337/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(14 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Ryanair e tutela del diritto alla libera circolazione dei cittadini europei

La compagnia aerea Ryanair, per salvaguardare la propria politica di contenimento dei costi e quindi mantenere basso il prezzo del servizio, inserisce nel contratto di trasporto una clausola in base alla quale i propri clienti possono recarsi all'imbarco muniti esclusivamente di carta d'identità o passaporto.

La compagnia aerea definisce dunque una politica di circolazione diversa rispetto a quella dello Stato in cui opera che non coincide in tutto, ma solo in parte con essa. Numerosi e frequenti sono i casi di cronaca riguardanti passeggeri che vengono lasciati a terra dalla compagnia perché essa, arbitrariamente, attraverso i suoi operatori locali, spesso nemmeno adeguatamente formati per interfacciarsi con le diverse casistiche possibili, decide di opporre la propria politica restrittiva alle decisioni dello Stato membro.

Posto che il diritto alla libera circolazione rappresenta uno dei pilastri del mercato interno europeo, è la Commissione al corrente di questo fenomeno?

Perché davanti a una pronuncia dello Sato membro che identifica i documenti che permettono l'espatrio deve prevalere la logica commerciale della compagnia aerea?

Ritiene opportuno e urgente intervenire per evitare abusi occulti e conseguenze?

Ritiene necessaria una valutazione comparata della normativa dei diversi Stati membri dell'Unione europea in materia di documenti d'identificazione dei passeggeri di voli nazionali, al fine di promuovere la maggiore omogeneità possibile?

Risposta data da Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(12 aprile 2012)

La direttiva 2004/38/CE specifica alcune condizioni del diritto di libera circolazione sancito dall'articolo 21 del TFUE.

Ai sensi dell'articolo 4 della direttiva 2004/38/CE, ogni cittadino dell'Unione munito di una carta d'identità o di un passaporto in corso di validità ha il diritto di lasciare il territorio di uno Stato membro per recarsi in un altro Stato membro. L'articolo 5 della direttiva impone agli Stati membri di ammettere nel loro territorio il cittadino dell'Unione munito di una carta d'identità o di un passaporto. Conformemente alla giurisprudenza della Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea nella causa C-459/99, MRAX, l'articolo 5, paragrafo 4, della direttiva obbliga gli Stati membri a concedere al cittadino dell'UE e ai suoi familiari la possibilità di dimostrare anche con altri mezzi la qualifica di titolare del diritto di libera circolazione.

Il diritto dell'UE non impone alla Ryanair di imbarcare solo i passeggeri in possesso di una carta d'identità o di un passaporto.

Una compagnia aerea può tuttavia specificare nei termini di trasporto l'obbligo per i passeggeri di essere muniti di un'identificazione specifica (come un passaporto o una carta d'identità in corso di validità), come condizione all'imbarco. Un passeggero a cui venisse negato l'imbarco seppure in possesso di un biglietto valido e dell'identificazione richiesta avrebbe diritto a una compensazione pecuniaria ai sensi dell'articolo 4 del regolamento 261/2004/CE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001337/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Ryanair and the protection of the right of European citizens to move freely

In order to maintain its cost-containment policy and thus keep the price of its service low, the airline Ryanair has included a clause in its transport contract, according to which its customers may only board with an identity card or passport.

The airline is therefore applying a travel policy that is different from that of the State in which it operates, coinciding with it only in certain parts. Numerous and frequent cases have been reported where passengers are left on the ground by the airline because it has decided, arbitrarily, through its local operators, who are often not even adequately trained to deal with the different types of cases that may arise, to impose its own restrictions rather than the decisions of the Member State.

Given that the right of free movement represents one of the pillars of the European internal market, is the Commission aware of this phenomenon?

How can the commercial logic of the airline be allowed to prevail over a decision of the Member State regarding the documents that allow people to leave the country?

Does it agree that steps should be taken as a matter of urgency to avoid covert abuse and the consequences thereof?

Does it consider that a comparative assessment should be made of the regulations of the different Member States of the European Union governing the identification documents of passengers on national flights in order to promote the greatest possible uniformity?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2012)

Directive 2004/38/EC specifies certain conditions of the right of free movement granted by Article 21 TFEU.

According to Article 4 of Directive 2004/38/EC, all Union citizens with a valid identity card or passport shall have the right to leave the territory of a Member State to travel to another Member State. Article 5 of the directive obliges Member States to grant Union citizens holding an identity card or a passport leave to enter their territory. In accordance with the jurisprudence of the Court of Justice of the European Union in Case C-459/99, MRAX, Article 5 paragraph 4 of the directive obliges Member States to give EU citizens and their family members the opportunity to also prove their right of free movement by other means.

EC law does not require Ryanair to board only persons in possession of an identity card or a passport.

However, an air carrier may make it a condition of its terms of carriage to require a passenger to provide specific identification (such as a valid passport or an identity card) as a condition of boarding. A passenger who was denied boarding whilst holding a valid ticket and the required identification would be entitled to compensation under Article 4 of Regulation 261/2004/EC.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-001338/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta / Alta Representante)
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(9 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Reasentamiento en la UE de refugiados del campo de Ashraf

Habida cuenta de que entre 800 y 900 refugiados del campo de Ashraf, en Iraq, que habían residido anteriormente en Europa, recibieron el estatuto de refugiado de las Naciones Unidas en la década de 1980 y no tienen que someterse a todo el proceso de reasentamiento del ACNUR, ¿qué medidas prácticas han adoptado el Consejo y la Comisión para ayudarles a volver, en vista de los planes de Iraq de cerrar su campamento en los próximos meses? Si la UE no tiene un acceso regular al campo de Ashraf, ¿por qué no realiza entrevistas mediante videoconferencia a estos residentes a fin de comprobar sus identidades y emitir nuevos documentos de viaje para que vengan a la UE, dado que la validez de sus documentos originales ha caducado durante su larga estancia en el campo de Ashraf?

¿Por qué se está presionando a la gente para que vaya a otro campamento en el que las condiciones de vida son mucho peores y los riesgos para la seguridad son más elevados, cuando las entrevistas podrían haber comenzado en el campo de Ashraf hace cuatro meses? ¿Qué medidas prácticas ha adoptado la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante para alcanzar este objetivo?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante /Vicepresidenta Sra. Asthon en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de abril de 2012)

La UE sigue muy de cerca el asunto de los residentes en el campo de Nuevo Irak (anteriormente conocido como campo de Ashraf). Su futuro sigue siendo una fuente de preocupación. Al tratarse de una cuestión humanitaria, es preciso que la UE y la comunidad internacional hagan cuanto puedan para ayudar al Gobierno iraquí a darle una solución pacífica y ordenada.

Por esta razón, la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta de la Comisión, la señora Ashton, ha expresado repetidamente su total apoyo al proceso en curso, que cuenta con la ayuda de las Naciones Unidas, y al Representante especial del Secretario General, el señor Martin Kobler. La Oficina del Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados se está ocupando, tal y como estaba previsto, de comprobar y «determinar el estatuto de refugiado» de los primeros residentes que han llegado al campo temporal de tránsito de Hurriya a la espera de que se les reasiente.

Los problemas surgidos durante y después de los primeros traslados de residentes desde el campo de Nuevo Irak al de Hurriya solo sirven para recalcar la importancia de apoyar esta labor. Los residentes y el Gobierno iraquí deben procurar solucionar sus diferencias por la vía del diálogo. El señor Kobler y su equipo han hecho todo lo que han podido para ayudarles a resolver los problemas de manera constructiva. Todos debemos hacer cuanto esté en nuestra mano para promover e impulsar un actitud cooperativa de todas las partes.

Todas las personas y grupos que puedan influir de una u otra manera en este asunto tienen la obligación de dar la máxima prioridad a la seguridad y protección de los residentes.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001338/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Resettlement of Camp Ashraf refugees in the EU

Given that some 800 to 900 refugees at Camp Ashraf in Iraq, who had previously lived in Europe, were granted UN refugee status back in the 1980s and do not need to go through the full UNHCR resettlement process, what practical steps have the Council and the Commission taken to help them return, in view of Iraq's plans to shut down their camp in the coming months? If the EU does not have regular access to Camp Ashraf, why can't it conduct video-link interviews with these residents in order to verify their identities and issue them with new travel documents to come out to the EU, given that their original papers have expired during their long stay at Camp Ashraf?

Why are people being pressured to go to a new camp with much worse living conditions and heightened security risks, when interviews could have started at Camp Ashraf four months ago? What practical steps has the Vice-President/High Representative taken to achieve this objective?

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

The EU follows the issue of the residents of Camp New Iraq (formerly known as Camp Ashraf) very closely. Their future continues to be a cause for concern. As a humanitarian issue, it requires the EU and the international community to do all they can to help the government of Iraq to pursue a peaceful and orderly solution.

This is why the High Representative/Vice-President Ashton has repeatedly stressed her full support to the ongoing process facilitated by the UN and to the Special Representative of the Secretary General Martin Kobler. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees is proceeding as foreseen with the verification and 'refugee status determination' of the first residents who have arrived at the temporary transit location Camp Hurriya pending resettlement.

The challenges arising during and after the first moves of residents from Camp New Iraq to Camp Hurriya serve only to underline the importance of supporting these efforts. The residents and the government of Iraq must seek to bridge any differences through dialogue. Mr Kobler and his staff have been doing all they can to facilitate this, and to help the parties resolve problems in a constructive manner. We must all do our utmost to promote and encourage a cooperative approach from all sides.

Every individual and group who can bring any influence to bear on this matter has a responsibility to place the security and safety of the residents as their utmost priority.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001341/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(13. februar 2012)

Om: CE-mærkning af byggevarer

Det er kommet til spørgerens kendskab, at en række produkter, mere specifikt byggevarer, er omfattet af en harmoniseret standard, hvorefter de skal CE-mærkes, før de må markedsføres, anvendes og sælges i EU.

Spørgeren er blevet forelagt følgende bekymringer i forbindelse med CE-mærkningen af byggevarer:

1. CE-mærkningen opfattes som en tillidsaftale melle*m myndigheder og erhvervsliv i EU*. I praksis har det dog vist sig, at CE-mærkning ikke er tilstrækkelig dokumentation for, at et specifikt produkt/bygningsmateriale kan anvendes, hvilket ikke er i overensstemmelse med CE-mærkningens formål og derfor ikke effektivt.

2. CE-mærknings formål er, at produkterne/byggevarerne frit kan omsættes i medlemslandene. Bekymringen opstår ikke i omsætningen af produktet, men i anvendelsen af produkterne i medlemslandene. CE-mærkningens-kravet er ikke klart nok, da der er usikkerhed omkring reglerne for omsætning kontra anvendelse i medlemslandene.

3. Selvom CE-mærkningen burde være tilstrækkelig godkendelse for markedsføring, anvendelse og salg i EU, har det vist sig at dette ikke et tilfælde. I praksis er CE-mærkningen kun blevet en ekstra omkostning for virksomheder, der ønsker handel over grænserne.

Dette er et problem, som ikke letter samhandlen mellem de europæiske lande, specielt for de små og mellemstore virksomheder, der ikke har resourcer til at ansætte informationspersonale, der kan forklare virksomhederne de gældende regler inden for erhvervet.

Desuden er det problematisk, at CE-mærkningen ikke er tilstrækkelig som kontrol/godkendelse, men at andre foranstaltninger er nødvendige. Dette er derfor en ulempe for virksomhederne og ikke en fordel.

Da der utvivlsomt er tale om et generelt problem i EU, hvad agter Kommissionen da at foretage sig for at forenkle reglerne og effektivisere CE-mærkningen?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Antonio Tajani
(19. marts 2012)

Kommissionen ønsker at præcisere, at betydningen af CE-mærkning for byggevaresektoren er anderledes end i henhold til direktiverne under den nye metode (f.eks. direktiverne om legetøj eller maskiner).

CE-mærkning for byggevaresektoren betyder, at produktets ydeevne er blevet vurderet og anmeldt som fastsat i de harmoniserede tekniske specifikationer. Desuden giver CE-mærkningen på en byggevare ikke uden videre adgang til fri anvendelse af produktet i hele EU.

Dette skyldes, at medlemsstaterne fortsat har kompetence til at bestemme niveauet af sikkerhed for anlægsarbejder på deres område, og dette kan resultere i, at et produkt, der er godkendt til brug i en medlemsstat, ikke er det i en anden, fordi det krævede ydeevneniveau ikke er nået.

Kommissionen er bekendt med eksistensen af alvorlige misforståelser på dette område. Dette er en af de vigtigste grunde til, at den i maj 2008 fremsatte et forslag til en forordning, der afløser det eksisterende byggevaredirektiv 89/106/EØF, især med henblik på at tydeliggøre betydningen af CE-mærkning og styrke dens troværdighed i denne produktsektor. Dette forslag blev vedtaget af Europa-Parlamentet og Rådet den 9. marts 2011 og blev offentliggjort som forordning (EU) 305/2011 den 4. april 2011. Den skal anvendes fuldt ud fra den 1. juli 2013.

Det skal understreges, at forordningen indeholder særlige bestemmelser for at lette gennemførelsen for mikro-virksomheder.

Kommissionen har allerede indledt en omfattende informationskampagne, og en stor konference vil blive afholdt den 25. juni 2012 i Bruxelles for at underrette de berørte parter om det nye regelsæt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001341/12
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: CE marking of construction products

It has come to the author's attention that a number of products, specifically construction products, are regulated by a harmonised standard which stipulates they must be given a CE mark before they can be marketed, used, and sold in the EU.

The author has been made aware of the following concerns in connection with the CE marking of construction products:

1. CE marking is considered to be a contract of confidence between authorities and businesses in the EU. In practice, however, CE marking has proved to be an inadequate documentation for the use of a specific product/building material. This defeats the purpose of the CE marking and is therefore ineffective.

2. The purpose of CE marking is to indicate that products/building materials can be traded freely in the Member States, but it is the use of the products rather than the trading of the products in the Member States which is causing concern. The CE marking requirement is not clear enough as there is uncertainty concerning the regulations for trading as opposed to usage in the Member States.

3. Although CE marking should constitute adequate authorisation for marketing, use, and sale in the EU, this has been shown not to be the case. In practice, CE marking is merely an extra cost for enterprises wishing to trade internationally.

This is a problem which does not facilitate trade between European countries, in particular for small and medium-sized enterprises that do not have the resources to employ staff able to clarify the regulations applicable to a particular industry.

Furthermore, the fact that CE marking is not an adequate control/authorisation mechanism and that other actions are required also causes problems. Therefore it becomes an inconvenience for enterprises rather than a benefit.

Since this is without a doubt a general problem across the EU, what does the Commission intend to do to simplify the regulations and make CE marking more effective?

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

The Commission would like to clarify that the meaning of CE marking in the construction products sector is different to that under the New Approach Directives (e.g. the directives on Toys or on Machinery).

CE marking in the construction products sector means that the performance of the product has been assessed and declared as foreseen in the harmonised technical specifications. Furthermore, the CE marking on a construction product is not a passport for the free use of the product throughout the EU.

This is due to the fact that the Member States remain competent to determine the level of safety of construction works in their territory and this may result in a product being accepted for use in one Member State but not in another because the required level of performance is not achieved.

The Commission is aware of the existence of serious misunderstandings in this area. This is one of the main reasons why it submitted in May 2008 a proposal for a regulation to replace the existing Construction Products Directive 89/106/EEC, aiming notably at clarifying the meaning of CE marking and strengthening its credibility in this product sector. This proposal was adopted by the Parliament and the Council on 9 March 2011 and was published as Regulation (EU) 305/2011 on 4 April 2011. It will be fully applied from 1 July 2013.

It should be stressed that the regulation includes specific provisions to facilitate implementation by micro-enterprises.

The Commission has already started an extensive information campaign and a major conference will be held on 25 June 2012 in Brussels to inform stakeholders on the new regulatory framework.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001342/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(14. februar 2012)

Om: Methanol og Brændstofdirektivet

Fremstillingen af methanol er miljøvenligt, og methanol-raffinaderierne behøver ingen skorstene, da forarbejdningen sker gennem vindmølleenergi. Endvidere kan fremstillingen af methanol være næsten fuldstændig CO2-neutral ved at bruge den skandinaviske teknologi, der indebærer, at der ved fremstillingen benyttes naturlige resurser som findes i vand, vind samt genanvendelse af spildvarer f.eks. i form af produktionsrester fra fabrikker.

Dette kan føre til en produktion på 150 000 tons genanvendeligt metanol om året.

Vil Kommissionen redegøre for, hvorfor der i Brændstofdirektivet findes en grænse på 3 % methanol i brændstof.

Kommissionen bedes endvidere oplyse, om den overvejer en sidestilling med ethanol, samt en forhøjelse af grænsen på 3 % metanol i brændstoffer.

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Connie Hedegaard
(28. marts 2012)

Indholdet af methanol i brændstof er sat til 3 % i direktivet om kvaliteten af benzin og dieselolie (98/70/EF). Dets anvendelse blev diskuteret i den konsekvensanalyse, der blev udarbejdet i forbindelse med revisionen af direktivet i 2009 ([1]).

Såfremt der tilsættes en større procentdel, kan methanol skade køretøjers motor. Det ville således også have en negativ indvirkning på køretøjsgarantier, køreegenskaber og holdbarhed, og desuden have betydning for sådanne køretøjers emission. Derudover øges benzinens damptryk, når der tilsættes methanol, hvilket kan medføre luftkvalitetsproblemer. Endelig udgør energiindholdet i methanol omkring halvdelen af energiindholdet i benzin, hvilket gør det mindre effektivt som tilsætningsmiddel end ethanol, der har omkring to tredjedele af energiindholdet i benzin.

Kommissionen påtænker derfor ikke at forhøje denne grænse.

([1]) Tilgængelig på http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/transport/fuel/documentation_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001342/12
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Methanol and the Fuel Directive

The production of methanol is environmentally-friendly and methanol refineries do not need chimneys because processing is done using wind energy. Furthermore, Scandinavian technology is used in which production is based on natural resources such as water and wind. With the recycling of waste products, e.g. from factories, the production of methanol can be almost 100 % carbon-neutral.

This can lead to production of 150 000 tonnes of reusable methanol per year.

Will the Commission explain why there is a limit of 3 % for methanol in fuels in the Fuel Directive?

Can the Commission also say if it is considering giving it the same treatment as ethanol and raising the 3 % limit for methanol in fuels?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2012)

The methanol content of fuel is set at 3 % by the Fuel Quality Directive 98/70/EC. Its use was addressed in the impact assessment associated with the 2009 revision of the directive ([1]).

If added in a higher percentage, methanol could have damaging effects on vehicles engines. It would also therefore have a negative effect on vehicle warranties, drivability and durability, and have implications for the emissions of such vehicles. Furthermore, adding methanol to petrol raises its vapour pressure which could give rise to air quality problems. Finally, the energy content of methanol is about half that of petrol making it a less efficient fuel additive than ethanol which has about two-thirds the energy content of petrol.

The Commission is therefore not considering revising this limit.

([1]) Available at http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/transport/fuel/documentation_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001343/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(13. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Wildwuchs gentechnisch veränderter Pflanzen

In der Schweiz wurde bisher schon an mehreren Stellen ein Wildwuchs von gentechnisch veränderten Pflanzen nachgewiesen. Vor allem in der Umgebung von Universitäten und Bahnhöfen wurde eine Vielzahl solcher Pflanzen gefunden.

Die Schweizer Freisetzungsverordnung sieht unter anderem den Aufbau eines Monitoringsystems für Gentechnikpflanzen vor, dieses wird zurzeit aufgebaut. Im Rahmen dieses Monitoringsystems wurden die wild wachsenden Genpflanzen jetzt entdeckt, berichtete das Bundesamt für Umwelt in einer Mitteilung. Die Schweizer Freisetzungsverordnung sieht laut dem Bundesamt für Umwelt unter anderem vor, dass sich „gentechnisch veränderte Organismen in der Umwelt nicht unkontrolliert verbreiten und vermehren" dürfen.

1. Gibt es innerhalb der Europäischen Union ein Monitoringsystem für gentechnisch veränderte Pflanzen?

2. Wenn nein, warum nicht?

3. Gibt es in der Europäischen Union bereits Feststellungen über wildwachsende gentechnisch veränderte Pflanzen?

4. Wenn ja, um wie viele Funde handelt es sich?

Antwort von Herrn Dalli im Namen der Kommission
(22. März 2012)

Mit der Richtlinie 2001/18/EG ([1]) wird die Verpflichtung zur Überwachung von in die Umwelt freigesetzten fortpflanzungsfähigen GVO festgelegt, d. h. von angebauten genetisch veränderten Pflanzen oder genetisch veränderten Samenkörnern, die zur Verwendung als Lebensmittel oder Futtermittel eingeführt wurden. Die Unterlagen zur Beantragung der Zulassung von GVO müssen eine Beschreibung des Überwachungsplans umfassen, der von der EFSA bewertet und von den Mitgliedstaaten im Zulassungsverfahren geprüft wird.

Nach Zulassung des GVO muss der Antragsteller die gesammelten Informationen zusammenstellen sowie jährliche Überwachungsberichte an die Kommission und die Mitgliedstaaten übermitteln, die diese Berichte dann auf den regelmäßigen Sitzungen im Zusammenhang mit der Durchführung der Richtlinie erörtern und erforderlichenfalls Verwaltungsmaßnahmen treffen. Die Überwachungsberichte für die zum Anbau in der EU zugelassenen genetisch veränderten Pflanzen werden auch der EFSA zur Bewertung übermittelt; diese kann Änderungen oder Anpassungen empfehlen.

Die Mitgliedstaaten können außerdem eine zusätzliche und unabhängige Überwachung vornehmen, wie in den Leitlinien zu Anhang VII der Richtlinie vorgeschlagen. Die Kommission ist der Auffassung, dass diese Art unabhängiger Überwachung verstärkt werden sollte, und arbeitet derzeit Leitprinzipien zur Unterstützung der Mitgliedstaaten aus, die auf einer öffentlichen Konferenz am 29. März 2012 erörtert werden sollen.

In keinem der Überwachungsberichte, die die Antragsteller bislang übermittelt haben, werden ein unkontrolliertes Wachstum genetisch veränderter Pflanzen oder sonstige schädliche Auswirkungen erwähnt. Die EFSA hat in den Überwachungsplänen für die beiden GVO, die bislang angebaut werden (MON-810-Mais und Amflora-Kartoffel), nichts gefunden, was diese Ergebnisse widerlegen würde.

([1]) ABl. L 106 vom 17.4.2001.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001343/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Uncontrolled growth of genetically modified plants

Evidence of the uncontrolled growth of genetically modified plants has been found at a number of locations in Switzerland. A great many such plants have been found, mainly in the environs of universities and railway stations.

Among other things, the Swiss Release Ordinance provides for the establishment of a monitoring system for genetically modified plants and this is currently being set up. According to a report from the Swiss Environmental Protection Agency, the uncontrolled growth of genetically modified plants was discovered as part of the activities under this monitoring system. According to the Swiss Environmental Protection Agency, the Swiss Release Ordinance includes a provision stating that 'genetically modified organisms should not be allowed to spread and increase in the environment in an uncontrolled way'.

1. Is there a monitoring system for genetically modified plants within the European Union?

2. If not, why not?

3. Are findings already available in the European Union in relation to the uncontrolled growth of genetically modified plants?

4. If so, how many cases have been found?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(22 March 2012)

Directive 2001/18/EC ([1]) sets an obligation of monitoring of GMOs released into the environment that are able to reproduce, i.e. cultivated GM plants or GM grains imported for food or feed use. Application files for GMO authorisation must include a description of the monitoring plan, which is evaluated by EFSA and considered by the Member States in the authorisation process.

After authorisation of the GMO, the notifier must compile the collected information and send annual monitoring reports to the Commission and the Member States, who discuss them in the regular meetings related to the implementation of the directive, and agree on management measures if needed. Monitoring reports of GM plants authorised for cultivation in the EU are also sent to EFSA for evaluation, who can recommend modifications or adjustments.

Member States may also carry out additional and independent monitoring, as suggested by the guidance note supplementing Annex VII of the directive. The Commission considers that this type of independent monitoring should be reinforced, and is working on guiding principles to assist Member States in this respect, to be discussed at a public conference on 29 March 2012.

None of the monitoring reports sent to date by applicants mentioned an uncontrolled growth of GM plants or other adverse effects. EFSA did not note, in the monitoring plans of the two GMOs cultivated to date (maize MON 810 and Amflora potato), elements which would invalidate these results.

([1]) OJ L 106, 17.4.2001.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001344/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(13. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Ankerkinder

Immer öfter werden in Österreich ausländische Kinder aufgenommen. So genannte „Ankerkinder" werden alleine vorgeschickt, damit die Familie nachkommen kann. Die Kinder kommen nach Österreich und werden ins System hineingenommen. Damit haben sie ein Anrecht darauf, dass ihre Eltern, also die Kernfamilie nachkommen. Das bedeutet, Eltern und Geschwister dürfen nachkommen, allerdings nur, wenn das Asylverfahren des Kindes positiv abgeschlossen ist.

Die sogenannten „Ankerkinder" sind ein Phänomen, das vor allem in den letzten Monaten vermehrt aufgetreten ist. Während im Jahr 2010 insgesamt 687 unbegleitete Jugendliche einen Asylantrag stellten waren es 2011 bereits 1 136. In diesem Zusammenhang wurden 573 Anträge unter dem Titel der „Familienzusammenführung" gestellt.

1. Ist das Phänomen „Ankerkinder" auch in anderen EU-Staaten zu erkennen?

2. Wenn ja, wo vermehrt?

3. Welche Staatsbürgerschaft hatten diese Kinder?

4. Sind vonseiten der EU Maßnahmen betreffend dieses Phänomen bekannt?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(19. März 2012)

Konsolidierte Daten zu unbegleiteten Minderjährigen, die 2011 Asyl beantragt haben oder als Flüchtlinge anerkannt wurden, liegen Eurostat noch nicht vor.

Die Richtlinie 2004/83/EG ([1]) harmonisiert die Vorschriften der Mitgliedstaaten zur Gewährung internationalen Schutzes an Drittstaatsangehörige einschließlich Minderjährigen, die aus Gründen der Rasse, Religion, Staatsangehörigkeit, politischen Einstellung oder Zugehörigkeit zu einer bestimmten sozialen Gruppe in ihrem Herkunftsland Verfolgung oder schwerwiegende Konsequenzen befürchten müssen. In erster Linie obliegt es den zuständigen nationalen Behörden, diesen Personen nach einer detaillierten Prüfung aller sachdienlichen Fakten und Umstände des Antrags internationalen Schutz zu gewähren.

Gemäß der Richtlinie 2003/86/EG ([2]), die nicht auf Asylbewerber und Personen mit Anspruch auf subsidiären Schutz ausgelegt ist, können einzig anerkannte Flüchtlinge die Familienzusammenführung beantragen. Dieses Recht gilt vorbehaltlich der Bedingungen dieser Richtlinie. Vor allem, wenn der Antrag nicht binnen drei Monaten nach der Anerkennung der Flüchtlingseigenschaft gestellt wird, können die Mitgliedstaaten den Nachweis verlangen, dass der Zusammenführende die Kriterien in Bezug auf angemessenen Wohnraum, Krankenversicherung und feste, regelmäßige Einkünfte erfüllt.

([1]) Richtlinie 2004/83/EG des Rates vom 29. April 2004 über Mindestnormen für die Anerkennung und den Status von Drittstaatsangehörigen oder Staatenlosen als Flüchtlinge oder als Personen, die anderweitig internationalen Schutz benötigen, und über den Inhalt des zu gewährenden Schutzes.

([2]) Richtlinie 2003/86/EG des Rates vom 22. September 2003 betreffend das Recht auf Familienzusammenführung.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001344/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: 'Anchor children'

Foreign children are being admitted into Austria with increasing frequency. So-called 'anchor children' are sent ahead alone so that the family may follow. The children enter Austria and are absorbed into the system. This gives them the right to be followed by their parents, in other words: the core family. This means that parents and siblings can follow, but only once the child's asylum application has reached a positive conclusion.

These so-called 'anchor children' have been a growing phenomenon, particularly in recent months. A total of 687 unaccompanied minors applied for asylum in 2010, compared with 1 136 in 2011. In this context, 573 applications were made under the heading 'family reunification'.

1. Is the phenomenon of 'anchor children' also evident in other EU States?

2. If so, where are they concentrated?

3. What was the nationality of these children?

4. Is the EU aware of any measures in relation to this phenomenon?

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

Consolidated data concerning unaccompanied minors who applied for asylum or were granted refugee status in 2011 is not yet available on Eurostat.

Directive 2004/83/EC ([1]) harmonises Member States' legislation on granting international protection to third-country nationals, including minors, facing persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group, or forms of serious harm in their countries of origin. It is the primary responsibility of competent national authorities to grant international protection to such persons following an individual assessment of all the relevant facts and circumstances of the application.

Only recognised refugees can apply for family reunification under Directive 2003/86/EC ([2]) which does not concern asylum-seekers and persons under subsidiary protection. This right is subject to the conditions set out in the directive. In particular, unless the application is submitted within three months after the granting of refugee status, Member States may require evidence that the sponsor fulfils the criteria with respect to an adequate accommodation, sickness insurance, stable and regular resources.

([1]) Council Directive 2004/83/EC of 29 April 2004 on minimum standards for the qualification and status of third-country nationals or stateless persons as refugees or as persons who otherwise need international protection and the content of the protection granted.

([2]) Council Directive 2003/86/EC of 22 September 2003 on the right to family reunification.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001345/12
an den Rat
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(13. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: EU-weite Strafe für Börsenbetrug

Während in einigen EU-Staaten das Nutzen von Insiderinformationen für den Wertpapierhandel rigoros bestraft wird, steht dies in anderen EU-Mitgliedsländern nur teilweise oder gar nicht unter Strafe. Kriminelle sind über die Grenzen hinweg aktiv und nutzen diese Schlupflöcher. Die EU-Justizminister sollen sich Ende Januar 2012 auf ein gemeinsames Strafmaß für Insiderhandel und Manipulation von Börsenkursen geeinigt haben.

1. Welches EU-weite Strafmaß wurde für Insiderhandel und Manipulation von Börsenkursen ausgehandelt?

2. Sind nach Ansicht des Rates damit alle Schlupflöcher geschlossen oder sind noch weitere, begleitende Maßnahmen vorgesehen?

Antwort
(26. März 2012)

Am 21. Oktober 2011 hat die Kommission einen Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates über strafrechtliche Sanktionen für Insider-Geschäfte und Marktmanipulation (Marktmissbrauchsrichtlinie) ([1]) als Teil eines umfassenderen Maßnahmenpakets unterbreitet, zu dem auch die Vorschläge für eine Richtlinie über Märkte für Finanzinstrumente ([2]), für eine Verordnung über Märkte für Finanzinstrumente und OTC ([3]) und für eine Verordnung über Insider-Geschäfte und Marktmanipulation ([4]) gehören.

Der neue Vorschlag für eine Marktmissbrauchsrichtlinie sieht vor, dass die Mitgliedstaaten die erforderlichen Maßnahmen treffen, um sicherzustellen, dass Insider-Geschäfte und Marktmanipulation strafrechtlich geahndet werden und dass die strafrechtlichen Sanktionen wirksam, angemessen und abschreckend sind. Aus der dem Vorschlag beigefügten Folgenabschätzung ([5]) geht hervor, dass erhebliche Unterschiede in der nationalen Gesetzgebung der Mitgliedstaaten hinsichtlich strafrechtlicher Sanktionen für Marktmissbrauch bestehen.

Der Vorschlag ist Teil des im Oktober 2011 von der Kommission vorgelegten umfassenderen Maßnahmenpakets und sollte insbesondere im Lichte des Inhalts dieses Pakets gesehen werden, wobei sämtliche Maßnahmen zur Zeit von den Vorbereitungsgremien des Rates im Einzelnen geprüft werden.

([1]) 16000/11.
([2]) 15939/11.
([3]) 15938/11.
([4]) 16010/11.
([5]) 16000/11 ADD1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001345/12
to the Council
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: EU-wide penalties for stock market fraud

While the use of insider information is rigorously penalised in some EU countries, such activity is only partially punished in other EU Member States, if at all. Criminals are actively exploiting these loopholes on a cross-border basis. The EU Justice Ministers are to agree a common penalty for insider trading and the manipulation of stock market prices by the end of January 2012.

1. What EU-wide penalty has been negotiated for insider trading and the manipulation of stock market prices?

2. In the view of the Council, will this close all the loopholes or are there plans for further accompanying action?

Reply
(26 March 2012)

On 21 October 2011 the Commission presented a proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on criminal sanctions for insider dealing and market manipulation ('MAD') ([1]) as part of a broader package of measures, including proposals for a directive on markets in financial instruments —"MiFID" ([2]); for a regulation on markets in financial instruments and OTC —"MiFIR" ([3]); and for a regulation on insider dealing and market manipulation —"MAR" ([4])).

The new proposal for MAD requires Member States to take the necessary measures to ensure that the criminal offences of insider dealing and market manipulation are subject to criminal sanctions and that these sanctions are effective, proportionate and dissuasive. The Impact Assessment accompanying the proposal ([5]) shows that there are significant differences in the national laws of Member States in regard to criminal sanctions for market abuse crimes.

The proposal should be seen in the light of a wider set of measures and in particular the content of the entire package of measures presented in October 2011 by the Commission, all of which are currently being examined within the Council's preparatory bodies.

([1]) 16000/11.
([2]) 15939/11.
([3]) 15938/11.
([4]) 16010/11.
([5]) 16000/11 ADD1.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001346/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(13. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Fehlkalkulation der Privatisierungserlöse in Griechenland

Die griechische Regierung sicherte den europäischen Geldgebern zu, mit dem Verkauf von Staatsbesitz elf Milliarden Euro bis 2012 bzw. bis 2015 insgesamt 50 Milliarden Euro einzunehmen. Die griechische Finanzplanung bis 2015 stützt sich maßgeblich auf die aus der Privatisierung erwarteten Erlöse.

Anstatt der versprochenen elf sind nun offenbar im laufenden Jahr nur ca. 4,7 Milliarden Euro an Privatisierungserlösen zu erwarten, weil die den Geldgebern vorgelegten Zahlen auf gut Glück festgelegt wurden.

1. Wie steht die Kommission zu dieser Fehlkalkulation?

2. In welchem Ausmaß lagen die der Planung zugrundeliegenden Zahlen für die Privatisierung der EU bzw. der Troika vor?

3. Wurden diese Zahlen auf EU-Ebene kontrolliert?

4. Falls ja, zu welchem Schluss kam man auf EU-Ebene?

5. Falls nein, warum nicht?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(2. April 2012)

2011 nahm Griechenland 1,6 Mrd. EUR aus Privatisierungsmaßnahmen ein, womit das ursprüngliche Ziel von 5 Mrd. EUR deutlich unterschritten wurde. Bereits im Oktober 2011 (siehe das aktualisierte Memorandum vom 31. Oktober 2011 ([1])) waren die für Ende 2011 geplanten Erlöse auf 1,7 Mrd. EUR herunterkorrigiert worden. Grund dafür waren die Marktentwicklung und das damit verbundene Absinken der Aktien- und Immobilienpreise in Griechenland sowie langwierige administrative und behördliche Vorbereitungen.

Obschon das Ziel von 50 Mrd. EUR Einnahmen aus Privatisierung mittelfristig weiterhin bestehen bleibt, wird es nicht bis 2015 erreicht werden können.

Die Kommission und die Euro-Gruppe haben im Verwaltungsrat des griechischen Privatisierungsfonds zwei Beobachter benannt und sind auf diese Weise genauestens über die Entwicklungen in diesem Bereich unterrichtet.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2011/op87_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001346/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Miscalculation of revenue from privatisation in Greece

The Greek Government offered European donors an assurance that the sale of state assets would raise EUR 11 billion by 2012 and a total of EUR 50 billion by 2015. The Greek finance plan up to 2015 is largely based on the revenue expected from privatisation.

Instead of the promised EUR 11 billion, it is now obvious that only about EUR 4.7 billion can be expected from privatisation revenue in the current year because the figures supplied to the donors were extremely optimistic.

1. What is the position of the Commission with regard to this miscalculation?

2. To what extent did the EU and the Troika have access to the figures relating to the privatisation upon which the plan was based?

3. Were these figures examined at EU level?

4. If so, what conclusions were reached at EU level?

5. If not, why not?

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

In 2011, Greece collected EUR 1.6 billion from privatisation, well below the initial plan of collecting EUR 5 billion. Already in October 2011 (as reflected in the updated Memorandum of Understanding of 31 October 2011 ([1])), planned proceeds until end-2011 had been revised downwards to EUR 1.7 billion, given market developments, with a reduction in asset prices in Greece, as well as lengthy administrative and regulatory preparations.

Although the objective of privatising assets worth EUR 50 billion remains viable from the medium-term perspective, such an objective will not be reached by 2015.

The Commission and the Eurogroup have appointed two observers in the Board of Directors of the Greek Privatisation Fund and therefore closely follow developments in this area.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2011/op87_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001347/12
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(6 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Άμεση απελευθέρωση των φυλακισμένων Κουβανών στις ΗΠΑ

Όπως είναι γνωστό οι 5 Κουβανοί πολίτες Gerardo Hernandez, Rene Gonzales, Antonio Guerrero, Ramon Labanino και Fernando Gonzales, βρίσκονται εδώ και 13 χρόνια έγκλειστοι σε διαφορετικές φυλακές των ΗΠΑ επειδή είχαν ξεσκεπάσει τα επιθετικά σχέδια εγκληματικών ομάδων του Μαϊάμι κατά της Κούβας και του λαού της.

Ο ένας εξ αυτών, ο Rene Gonzales, έχει πρόσφατα αποφυλακιστεί αλλά είναι αναγκασμένος να παραμείνει στις ΗΠΑ για τρία ακόμα χρόνια υπό το καθεστώς της «εποπτευόμενης απελευθέρωσης».

Οι άλλοι 4 εξακολουθούν να εκτίουν άδικες και εξοντωτικές ποινές φυλάκισης.

Η παράνομη δικαστική διαδικασία, οι άθλιες συνθήκες κράτησης και η απαγόρευση στους συγγενείς να επισκεφτούν τους κρατούμενους προκάλεσε επανειλημμένα μαζικές διαμαρτυρίες μεγάλων εθνικών και διεθνών εργατικών συνδικαλιστικών οργανώσεων, ανθρώπων των Γραμμάτων και των Τεχνών, κάτοχων του βραβείου Νόμπελ, νομικών, βουλευτών και ευρωβουλευτών και χιλιάδων πολιτών απ' όλο τον κόσμο. Είναι γενική η απαίτηση να μπει τέρμα σε αυτή την απαράδεκτη κατάσταση, να αφεθούν ελεύθεροι και να επιστρέψουν άμεσα στη Κούβα.

Ερωτάται η VP/HR: Ποιά είναι η θέση της όσον αφορά την άμεση αποφυλάκιση και την επιστροφή των παραπάνω Κουβανών αγωνιστών στη χώρα τους;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Μαΐου 2012)

Η ΕΥΕΔ έθεσε, για ανθρωπιστικούς λόγους, το ζήτημα της υπόθεσης των «πέντε Κουβανών» στις πολιτικές τις επαφές με τις αρχές των ΗΠΑ. Η ΥΕ/ΑΠ βλέπει με ικανοποίηση το γεγονός ότι, πρόσφατα, επιτράπηκε στον R.Gonzalez να επισκεφθεί άρρωστο συγγενικό του πρόσωπο στην Κούβα. Εν τω μεταξύ επέστρεψε στις ΗΠΑ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001347/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(6 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Immediate release of Cuban prisoners in the USA

As is well known, the 5 Cuban nationals Gerardo Hernandez, Rene Gonzales, Antonio Guerrero, Ramon Labanino and Fernando Gonzales have been imprisoned, for 13 years, in various US prisons for exposing the aggressive plans of criminal organisations in Miami against Cuba and its people.

One of these prisoners, Rene Gonzales, has recently been released but is required to remain in the US for three more years under the condition of 'supervised release'.

The other four continue to serve unfair and crushing prison sentences.

The illegal judicial proceedings, the wretched prison conditions and the prohibition of visits from relatives has sparked frequent mass protests by large national and international workers unions, cultural figures, Nobel prize winners, Members of Parliament and the European Parliament and thousands of people all over the world. The appeal for an end to this unfair situation, for them to be released and to return immediately to Cuba, is universal.

What is the position of the VP/HR regarding the immediate release and return of the above Cuban fighters to their country?

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

The case of the 'Cuban five' has been raised by the EEAS in political contacts with the US authorities, on humanitarian grounds. The HR/VP welcomes the fact that recently R. Gonzalez has been allowed to visit a sick relative in Cuba. In the meantime he has returned to the US.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001348/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(14 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Νεοάστεγοι

Σοκαριστικά στοιχεία για τις εκρηκτικές διαστάσεις που προσλαμβάνει το φαινόμενο των «νεοαστέγων» στην Αθήνα κατέθεσαν στην Επιτροπή Κοινωνικών Υποθέσεων ο υφυπουργός Υγείας Μάρκος Μπόλαρης, ο δήμος Αθηναίων, καθώς και εκπρόσωποι της Ιεράς Αρχιεπισκοπής Αθηνών και της Εθνικής Επιτροπής για τα Δικαιώματα του Ανθρώπου (ΕΕΔΑ).

Από τις εκθέσεις αποκαλύπτεται πλέον ότι εξαιτίας της οικονομικής κρίσης βγήκαν στο δρόμο άνθρωποι που ζούσαν εύπορα πριν το ξέσπασμά της. Στους «νεοάστεγους» πια περιλαμβάνονται και ολόκληρες οικογένειες, ενώ ο αριθμός των ανθρώπων που καταλύουν με χαρτόνια και κουβέρτες στο Ζάππειο, την Κουμουνδούρου, τη Σανταρόζα, το Γκάζι, στα παγκάκια, κάτω από γέφυρες, έξω από κλειστά καταστήματα, είναι αδιευκρίνιστος.

Οι περισσότεροι από εκείνους που ξεσπιτώθηκαν και πλέον βρίσκουν προσωρινή «στέγη» σε 52 σημεία της Αθήνας είναι οφειλέτες της εφορίας.

Άλλοι χρωστούν στα ασφαλιστικά ταμεία με αποτέλεσμα να μην μπορούν να βγάλουν βιβλιάριο απορίας, να αποκλείονται έτσι από την ιατροφαρμακευτική περίθαλψη και ως εκ τούτου να ζουν σε καθεστώς εξαθλίωσης.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Μπορεί να εκπονηθεί με συνδρομή του Κοινωνικού Ταμείου ειδικό πρόγραμμα για την επανένταξη των νεόπτωχων Ευρωπαίων στην οικονομική ζωή;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(2 Απριλίου 2012)

Οι δράσεις για την οικονομική επανένταξη των νεόπτωχων Ευρωπαίων μπορούν να χρηματοδοτηθούν, κατά την περίοδο προγραμματισμού 2007-2013, από τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία της ΕΕ, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της συνδρομής του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Ταμείου στα κράτη μέλη. Επομένως, οι ελληνικές αρχές έχουν τη δυνατότητα να καταρτίσουν ένα νέο σχέδιο στο κατάλληλο επιχειρησιακό πρόγραμμα στο πλαίσιο του ελληνικού εθνικού στρατηγικού πλαισίου αναφοράς. Αυτό μπορεί να βοηθήσει τις ελληνικές αρχές να επιλύσουν τα προβλήματα των φτωχών στην Ελλάδα καθώς και εκείνο της επανένταξής τους στην κοινωνία και την αγορά εργασίας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001348/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: The new homeless

The Deputy Minister for Health, Marcos Bolaris, the municipality of Athens and representatives of the Athens Archdiocese and the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) have presented shocking data to the Social Affairs Committee regarding the rapidly growing phenomenon of the new homeless in Athens.

These reports make it clear that the economic crisis is driving onto the streets people who were living comfortably before the crash. There are even whole families now belonging to this new category of homeless people, with unknown numbers sleeping rough in cardboard boxes and under blankets in the Zappeio gardens, Koumoundourou Square, Santa Rosa Square, in the Gazi district, on benches, under bridges and outside closed shops.

Most of those who have been evicted and who are now finding temporary shelter in 52 locations in Athens are in debt to the tax authorities.

Others are in debt to social security funds, which means that they cannot obtain a benefits book, are thus excluded from receiving medical care condemning them to a life of sordid poverty.

In view of this:

Can the Commission draw up a new programme, subsidised by the Social Fund, for the economic reintegration of newly poor Europeans?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2012)

Actions for the economic reintegration of newly poor Europeans can be financed under the 2007-2013 EU Structural Funds including European Social Fund assistance to Member States, therefore the Greek authorities have the possibility to draw up a new project within the appropriate operational programme under the Greek National Strategic Reference Framework. This can help the Greek authorities to address the problems of the poor in Greece and of their reintegration in society and the labour market.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001350/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(6 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Δηλώσεις Ντάουνερ για Κυπριακή Προεδρία

Τον ειδικό σύμβουλο του γγ του ΟΗΕ Αλεξάντερ Ντάουνερ καταγγέλλει ο πρόεδρος της Κυπριακής Βουλής Γιαννάκης Ομήρου για τον χαρακτηρισμό της Κυπριακής Προεδρίας του Συμβουλίου της ΕΕ ως «Προεδρία των Ελληνοκυπρίων».

Ο κ. Ομήρου τονίζει ότι το θέμα που προκύπτει από τον χαρακτηρισμό αυτό είναι μείζον και επισημαίνει πως «πρόκειται για απαράδεκτη συμπεριφορά που συνιστά βάναυση παραβίαση όλων των ψηφισμάτων του Συμβουλίου Ασφαλείας περί Κύπρου, του Καταστατικού Χάρτη του ΟΗΕ, των κανόνων διεθνούς νομιμότητας και των αρχών και θεσμών της ΕΕ».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή ποιά είναι η επίσημη θέση της για τις δηλώσεις του κ. Ντάουνερ;

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

Η Επιτροπή δεν σχολιάζει δηλώσεις εκπροσώπων διεθνών οργανισμών.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001350/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(6 February 2012)

Subject: Statements by Alexander Downer on the Cyprus Presidency

Alexander Downer, Special Advisor to the UN Secretary General, has been accused by the president of the Cypriot Parliament, Giannakis Omirou, of calling the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the EU the 'Greek-Cypriot Presidency.'

Mr Omirou stressed that the issue arising from this characterisation is a major one and pointed out that 'this is unacceptable behaviour which constitutes a crude violation of all Security Council Resolutions concerning Cyprus, the UN Charter, the rules of international law and the principles and laws of the EU'.

What is the Commission's official position on Mr Downer's statements?

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

The Commission does not comment on statements by representatives of international organisations.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001351/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(6 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ομαδικοί τάφοι Κούρδων στη Τουρκία

Τα οστά 23 ατόμων σε ομαδικό τάφο που βρισκόταν κοντά σε ένα πρώην κτίριο της στρατιωτικής αστυνομίας στο Ντιγιάρμπακιρ της νοτιοανατολικής Τουρκίας, ανακάλυψαν οι τουρκικές αρχές, όπως μετέδωσε σήμερα το πρακτορείο ειδήσεων Ανατολή. Τα πρώτα οστά είχαν βρεθεί νωρίτερα τον Ιανουάριο κατά τη διάρκεια αρχαιολογικών ερευνών που γίνονται στο Ιτς Καλέ, στο κέντρο του Ντιγιάρμπακιρ, κοντά στα ερείπια παλατιού του 13ου αιώνα.

Σύμφωνα με ενώσεις υπεράσπισης των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων, τα οστά αυτά ανήκουν σε Κούρδους πολίτες, οι οποίοι σκοτώθηκαν από τις τουρκικές δυνάμεις ασφαλείας κατά τη διάρκεια της δεκαετίας του 1990.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή: ποια είναι η επίσημη θέση της για αυτούς τους ομαδικούς τάφους;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(10 Απριλίου 2012)

Η πρόσφατη ανεύρεση ομαδικών τάφων στην Τουρκία είναι γνωστή στην Επιτροπή. Για να δικαιωθούν τα θύματα και οι οικογένειές τους, ενθαρρύνει την Τουρκία να συνεχίσει τις προσπάθειές της να ρίξει φως στα τραγικά αυτά γεγονότα.

Η Επιτροπή πιστεύει ότι το δημοκρατικό άνοιγμα που ξεκίνησε η τουρκική κυβέρνηση το 2009, και το οποίο αποβλέπει ιδίως στην αντιμετώπιση του κουρδικού ζητήματος, είναι αναγκαίο να αποκτήσει νέα δυναμική και να οδηγήσει σε συγκεκριμένα μέτρα, δεδομένου ότι τούτο αποτελεί τη μοναδική πρόσφορη βάση για τη συμφιλίωση. Το νοτιοανατολικό τμήμα της Τουρκίας έχει ανάγκη από ειρήνη, δημοκρατία και σταθερότητα, καθώς και από κοινωνική, οικονομική και πολιτιστική ανάπτυξη. Τούτο μπορεί να επιτευχθεί μόνο με συναίνεση για τη λήψη συγκεκριμένων μέτρων τα οποία ενισχύουν τα κοινωνικά, οικονομικά και πολιτιστικά δικαιώματα των λαών που ζουν στην περιοχή.

Η Επιτροπή θα συνεχίσει να παρακολουθεί στενά τις εξελίξεις στη νοτιοανατολική Τουρκία.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001351/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(6 February 2012)

Subject: Kurdish mass graves in Turkey

The Anatolia news agency has today reported that the bones of 23 people have been discovered by the Turkish authorities in a mass grave close to a former building of the military police in Diyarbakir in south-east Turkey. The first bones were found earlier in January during archaeological excavations in Iç-Kale in central Diyarbakir near the remains of a 13th century palace.

According to human rights organisations, these bones belong to Kurdish citizens who were killed by Turkish security forces during the 1990s.

What is the Commission's official position on these mass graves?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2012)

The Commission is aware of the recent discoveries of mass graves in Turkey. To do justice to the victims and their families, it encourages Turkey to continue its efforts to shed light upon these tragic events.

The Commission is of the opinion that the democratic opening, launched by the Turkish Government in 2009 and aimed in particular at addressing the Kurdish issue, needs to gain new momentum and result in concrete measures — as it provides the only sound basis for reconciliation. The south-east of Turkey needs peace, democracy and stability as well as social, economic and cultural development. This can only be reached via consensus over concrete measures expanding the social, economic and cultural rights of the people living in the region.

The Commission will continue to monitor developments in the south-east of Turkey closely.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001352/12
to the Commission
Fiona Hall (ALDE)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: EU office in Myanmar

I understand that the Commission has opened a new EU office in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Can the Commission confirm whether this is indeed the case and clarify the remit of the new office, in particular with reference to wider EU-Myanmar relations?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President will shortly adopt the decision to open an EU Office in Yangon, Republic of the Union of Myanmar (Burma) in agreement with the Council and the Commission. The official opening of the EU took place on 29 April 2012.

The aim is to further develop relations between the EU and Myanmar through the establishment of a permanent EU presence in the country. *Inter alia*, the office will liaise with the Myanmar authorities and oversee the implementation of EU programmes in that country The Office will be dependant of the EU Delegation to Thailand and its Head of Delegation, who is already accredited to Myanmar. The High Representative/Vice-President, in agreement with Council and Commission, may decide in the future to open a fully fledged EU Delegation in Myanmar, subject to developments in the country and in the bi-lateral relationship.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001353/12
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Biofuel-to-electricity project funding

Can the Commission indicate whether the company Spider SA, of Ioannina. Greece, received EU funding for a biofuel-to-electricity generation project during 2010?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(14 March 2012)

The Commission cannot identify the company Spider S.A. as beneficiary of any biofuel-related project supported in the context of its 7th Framework Programme for research and technological development (FP7, 2007-2013).

However, the funding referred to might be from other EU programmes/instruments.

Should this be the case, the Commission would ask the Honourable Member to provide further details in order to further investigate the matter.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001354/12
adresată Comisiei
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(14 februarie 2012)

Subiect: Daunele provocate mediului de fibrele din material plastic

Există o documentație solidă cu privire la chestiunea așa-numitei „supe de plastic" — acumularea de deșeuri din plastic în oceane. Cu toate acestea, cercetările recente indică apariția problemelor de mediu din cauza deșeurilor din plastic de dimensiuni mult mai mici. La fiecare spălare automată a confecțiilor din fibre sintetice (de exemplu, îmbrăcămintea din poliester) sunt eliberate mii de fibre minuscule de plastic în râuri și canale. Aceste fibre de dimensiuni microscopice sunt transportate în râuri și în mări acumulându-se în prezent în cantități tot mai mari pe plaje. Fibrele sunt, de asemenea, ingerate de către pești ajungând, astfel, în lanțul trofic.

1. Consideră Comisia ingerarea acestor fibre microscopice de plastic de către pești ca fiind potențial dăunătoare sănătății umane?

2. Ar trebui introduse măsuri suplimentare pentru asigurarea protecției împotriva prezenței acestor fibre de plastic în mediu și în lanțul trofic?

Răspuns dat de dl Potočnik în numele Comisiei
(23 martie 2012)

Comisia cunoaște rezultatele studiului recent privind microfibrele și este preocupată de acest aspect, conform poziției exprimate în răspunsul la întrebările scrise E-10065/2011, E-12385/2011 și E-576/2012 ([1]). Într-adevăr, nu se poate exclude posibilitatea ca aceste microfibre din material plastic să ajungă în lanțul alimentar, dar sunt necesare cercetări suplimentare în acest sens. Înainte de elaborarea unor posibile noi măsuri, Comisia va urmări îndeaproape cererea pentru propuneri „Oceanele de mâine" din cadrul celui de-al șaptelea Program-cadru de cercetare (PC7) 2012, în special în ceea ce privește tematica legată de fibrele din material plastic –„Gestionarea și impactul potențial al deșeurilor din mediul marin și litoral" — care abordează eventualele efecte fizice și chimice ale fibrelor microplastice asupra organismelor marine.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001354/12
to the Commission
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Environmental damage from plastic fibres

The problem of so-called 'plastic soup' — the build up of plastic waste in the oceans — is well documented. However, recent research indicates environmental problems arising from much smaller plastic waste. Thousands of tiny plastic fibres are being released into rivers and waterways each time synthetic garments (such as polyester clothing) are machine-washed. These microscopic fibres are transported into rivers and the sea and can now be found building up in large quantities on beaches. The fibres are also being ingested by fish and thus end up in the food chain.

1. Does the Commission regard the presence of such microscopic plastic fibres in fish as being potentially harmful to human health?

2. Should additional measures be put in place to protect against the presence of these plastic fibres in the environment and the food chain?

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

The Commission is aware of the recent study on microfibers and is concerned, as expressed in the answer to Written Questions E-10065/2011, E-12385/2011 and E-576/2012 ([1]). Indeed, it can not be excluded that those plastic micro-fibres end up in the food chain. Further research is needed; the Commission will follow carefully the Seventh Research Framework Programme (FP7) 2012 call 'The Ocean for Tomorrow', notably the topic related to plastic fibres 'Management and Potential Impacts of Litter in the Marine and Coastal Environment' which addresses the possible physical and chemical impacts of micro-plastics on marine organism prior to developing possible new measures.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001355/12
to the Commission
Catherine Bearder (ALDE)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Tuberculosis in the EU

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) should be congratulated on the initiatives that have been introduced in recent years in order to monitor TB and educate those whose role it is to diagnose and cure it. Importantly, the constant surveillance and consequent targeting of areas that have an increased diagnosis rate, in order to prevent and cure the disease, is encouraging. It is reassuring that the success rate of curing newly diagnosed patients across the EU has risen to 79.5 % in the last five years.

However, the success rate target that was set by the WHO is 85 % and within the EU efforts to reach this goal are apparently a constant struggle. In light of this, can the Commission indicate if there are any plans to improve this figure, for example by providing funding for the Tuberculosis Vaccine Initiative (TBVI) or similar organisations, whose aim it is to find a cure for the disease so that it can be prevented for future generations, not just in the EU but across the globe?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(16 March 2012)

Ensuring prompt diagnosis, treatment and quality care for all tuberculosis (TB) patients in Europe is one of the key objectives of the Commission's efforts for the prevention and control of TB. This is also one of the strategic principles of the framework Action Plan to fight TB in the EU ([1]). This action plan developed by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), following the request from the Commission, identifies the essential elements to be addressed by the Member States to control TB efficiently.

To further tackle the threats related to infectious diseases like TB, the Commission has launched over the last years several initiatives. Under the Sixth and Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development ((FP6 (2002-2006) and FP7 (2007-2013)), more than EUR 130 million have been allocated to collaborative research to develop new vaccines, therapies and diagnostics for TB.

The European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) ([2]) is also contributing to the fight against TB by supporting clinical trials on new TB drugs, vaccines and diagnostics.

The Tuberculosis Vaccine Initiative (TBVI) was established in 2008 as a public-private-partnership with the support of the FP7 project 'Establishment, strategy and initial activities of the tuberculosis vaccine initiative: coordination of European efforts with global research initiatives'. One aim was to develop a model to mobilise additional resources for the development of new TB vaccines, particularly from the Member States and private sector. TBVI also coordinates the EUR 12 million project NEWTBVAC ([3]) for 'Identification and preclinical testing of new vaccine candidates for tuberculosis' with funding from FP7.

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/0803 SPR TB Action plan.pdf
([2]) http://www.edctp.org/.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/infectious-diseases/poverty-diseases/projects/205_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001356/12
to the Commission
Catherine Bearder (ALDE)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: European Social Fund (ESF) and Romania

Romania is one of the Member States that benefit substantially from the ESF. The Romanian Foundation for Children, Community and Family (FRCCF), a charity based in Cluj-Napoca, has in recent years been granted some of this funding by the Romanian Government in order to help improve the lives of vulnerable children and families in Romania.

Unfortunately, it has recently come to my attention that the Romanian Government has altered the terms of contract for this important charity and delayed the payment of funds that were due to be paid out under the contract. As a result of this the FRCCF has had to spend its reserves and reduce its staff salaries to minimum wage levels, and now faces closure.

— The ESF clearly states that its funding is made available via the Member States and that it does not fund projects directly from Brussels. Can the Commission state whether, and how, it monitors the spending of ESF funding by Member States once it has been granted?

— Furthermore, can the Commission say whether it is aware of the situation and whether it will be able to use its powers to resolve this issue?

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

Member States are responsible for the management and control of operational programmes of the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund ([1]). The Commission monitors their implementation by way of the instruments foreseen in the regulations: Monitoring Committees, periodical reports, frequent meetings with the national authorities, system and operations audit missions, de-commitment of the funds, financial corrections.

The Commission is aware of the difficulties and of the delays in processing the reimbursement requests from the beneficiaries. The Romanian Government adopted a Priority Action Plan including measures to address the delays and the obstacles in the implementation. The Commission is advising the Romanian authorities on ways to improve the situation.

With reference to the particular case of the Romanian Foundation for Children, Community and Family and in line with the regulatory framework, the beneficiary should submit its complaint to the relevant Managing Authority:

Managing Authority of the Human Resources Development Sectoral Operational Programme:
17-19, Scărlătescu St. district 1, zip code 011158, Bucharest
Tel.: (+40 21) 315 02 14; (+40 21) 315 02 30,
Fax: (+40 21) 315 02 06; (+40 21) 315 02 05
E-mail: posdru@fseromania.ro
Website: www.fseromania.ro

([1]) As laid down in Article 70 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 laying down general provisions on these funds.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001357/12
to the Commission
Catherine Bearder (ALDE)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Regulation of hydraulic fracturing in the EU

Hydraulic fracturing is the process in which hydrocarbons are extracted from shale rock. It is currently utilised heavily in the US, and is becoming increasingly popular in the UK and across the EU. In the UK and the US there is conflicting information relating to the dangers of this method of extraction. For many scientists and academics, there is no significant danger of water contamination, whereas for others the risks are considerable.

A recent study by Parliament's Directorate-General for Internal Policies, entitled 'Impacts of shale gas and shale oil extraction on the environment and on human health', has highlighted the lack of regulation of such mining activity and the need for an analysis of its effects on the environment and human health.

— In the light of the increasing use of this method in the UK and across Europe, as well as the above recent study, can the Commission confirm if it plans to initiate a regulation process for hydraulic fracturing? If so, when does it expect to act?

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

The Commission has conducted a legal assessment of the EU environmental *acquis* applicable to exploration and extraction projects involving the combined use of high volume hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling. Based on the available technical information, the Commission considers that such practices are covered by the existing EU legislation from planning until cessation.

However, more information is needed to assess whether the level of environment and human protection provided by the existing EU environmental legislation is appropriate. As part of this process, Directorate-General Environment has launched a study to support the identification of potential risks to environment and human health of such practices in Europe as well as to highlight possible knowledge gaps. Results should be available by summer 2012.

Given the limited experience in the EU and the evolving knowledge base, it is not possible to conclude, for the time being, whether specific measures at EU level, beyond the existing legislative framework and standards, may become necessary in the future.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001358/12
to the Commission
Catherine Bearder (ALDE)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Pre-menstrual dysphoric disorder

It is estimated that in the UK, 800 000 women suffer from pre-menstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD). This is a condition that causes chronic mood swings and affects women's mental health on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. Women who suffer from this condition often struggle to retain stable relationships and employment, and as the condition is not recognised in the WHO's International Classification of Diseases, it is often wrongfully diagnosed as bipolar disorder or the like. Women in the UK are often left without treatment, as the treatments prescribed by mental health professionals and gynaecologists for illnesses such as bipolar disorder do not work.

— If 800 000 women suffer from this condition in the UK, one can only imagine the millions of women suffering from it EU-wide. In the light of this, can the Commission highlight any work it is carrying out with regard to this condition at EU level?

— Can the Commission also clarify whether it supports or would support a call for the recognition of PMDD in the WHO's International Classification of Diseases?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2012)

The question whether the pre-menstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD) constitutes a clinical illness is currently a subject of scientific controversy between experts. In the context of the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP 7), no research project was specifically dedicated to PMDD.

The decision whether PMDD should be included into the WHO's International Classification of Diseases falls under the competence of the WHO itself.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001359/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta / Alta Representante)
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(14 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Torturas en Misrata y abuso de ayuda

El pasado 26 de enero, Médicos Sin Fronteras (MSF) anunció en su página web ([1]) su retirada de las cárceles de Misrata debido a las torturas a las que son sometidos los detenidos en ellas.

Como explican en la citada noticia: «Los equipos de MSF empezaron a trabajar en los centros de detención de Misrata en agosto de 2011 para atender a detenidos heridos de guerra». Desde entonces, MSF cuenta que sus equipos médicos han realizado 2 600 consultas, 311 de las cuales, por casos de traumatismos violentos. Y en total, MSF ha tratado a 115 personas con heridas asociadas a torturas, reportando todos los casos a las autoridades pertinentes en Misrata.

El Director General de MSF en Bruselas, Christopher Stokes, se ha mostrado molesto con algunos funcionarios de prisiones a quienes acusa de haber intentado abusar del trabajo médico de MSF, y denuncia: «Nos traían a los pacientes a mitad de los interrogatorios para que les diéramos atención médica y se recuperaran para poder seguir interrogándoles».

MSF envió una carta oficial el 9 de enero al Consejo Militar de Misrata, al Comité de Seguridad de Misrata, al Servicio de Seguridad del Ejército Nacional y al Consejo Civil local de Misrata, exigiendo el cese inmediato de cualquier forma de maltrato a los detenidos. Después de comprobar que no ha habido cambios en las prácticas carcelarias en Misrata, MSF decidió retirarse de ellas.

A la luz de lo anterior,

1. ¿Tiene la Vicepresidenta de la Comisión constancia de estos hechos?

2. ¿Qué acciones piensa tomar la Vicepresidenta de la Comisión de confirmarse estos hechos?

3. ¿Piensa la Vicepresidenta de la Comisión pedir a las autoridades libias que actúen para evitar que la tortura se siga aplicando sobre los detenidos en las cárceles de Misrata u otras ciudades del país?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de abril de 2012)

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton viene siguiendo de cerca la evolución de esta cuestión y, como consecuencia de las inquietudes expresadas por los defensores de los derechos humanos, el 31 de enero hizo la siguiente declaración:

«La Unión Europea está profundamente preocupada por las denuncias de tortura y maltrato de los detenidos en Misrata. Es esencial que se respeten plenamente los derechos de todos los detenidos en Libia, de conformidad con las normas internacionales, que las autoridades aceleren la puesta bajo su control de todos los centros de detención y que haya una investigación exhaustiva, imparcial y efectiva de las denuncias de violación de los derechos de los detenidos. Cuando se hayan producido abusos, los responsables de los mismos deberán ser enjuiciados.

Por lo tanto, acojo con gran satisfacción el anuncio hecho hoy por las autoridades libias sobre las medidas adoptadas para abordar muchas de estas cuestiones. Confío en que el Gobierno aplicará rápidamente medidas para garantizar la protección de estos grupos enormemente vulnerables. La UE está dispuesta a prestar todo tipo de ayuda a las autoridades en sus esfuerzos por garantizar el respeto de los derechos humanos, los principios democráticos y el Estado de Derecho.».

El Gobierno libio ha reaccionado positivamente a este llamamiento y ha declarado que está aplicando medidas destinadas a trasladar el control de los centros de detención a las autoridades. El SEAE continuará siguiendo de cerca este tema.

([1]) http://www.msf.es/noticia/2012/libia-presos-torturados-privados-atencion-medica-en-centros-detencion-misrata.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001359/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Torture in Misrata and abuse of aid

This past 26 January, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) announced on its website ([1]) its withdrawal from the jails in Misrata because the detainees held there are being tortured.

As explained in the aforementioned news item: 'MSF teams began working in Misrata's detention centres in August 2011, to treat war-wounded detainees'. Since that time, MSF reports its medical teams have carried out 2 600 consultations, including 311 for cases of violent trauma. In total, MSF has treated 115 people who had torture-related wounds and has reported all the cases to the relevant authorities in Misrata.

MSF's General Director in Brussels, Christopher Stokes, has indicated that he is upset with some jail officials, whom he accuses of attempting to exploit MSF's medical work. He reported, 'Patients were brought to us in the middle of interrogation for medical care, in order to make them fit for further interrogation'.

MSF sent an official letter on 9 January to the Misrata Military Council, the Misrata Security Committee, the National Army Security Service and the Misrata Local Civil Council, demanding an immediate stop to any form of ill treatment of detainees. After confirming that there have been no changes in the jailhouse practices in Misrata, MSF decided to withdraw from the jails.

In light of the foregoing,

1. is the Vice-President of the Commission aware of these facts?

2. what actions does the Vice-President of the Commission plan to take if these facts are confirmed?

3. does the Vice-President of the Commission plan to ask the Libyan authorities to act to prevent the continued use of torture against detainees at the jails in Misrata or other cities around the country?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President Ashton has been following these developments closely and, as result of concerns expressed by human rights defenders, on 31 January she issued the following statement:

'The EU is deeply concerned at the reports of torture and ill treatment of detainees in Misurata. It is essential that the rights of all detainees throughout Libya are fully respected in accordance with international standards, that the authorities accelerate the process of bringing all places of detention under their control and that there is a thorough, impartial and effective investigation of allegations of violations of detainees' rights. Where abuses have occurred, those responsible for them should be brought to justice.

I therefore welcome the announcement made today by the Libyan authorities of steps to address many of these issues. I trust that the government will promptly implement the measures so as to guarantee the protection of these most vulnerable groups. The EU is ready to provide every assistance to the authorities in their efforts to ensure respect for human rights, democratic values and the rule of law.'

The Libyan government has reacted positively to these calls and has stated that it is in the process of implementing measures aiming at transferring the control of detention facilities to the authorities. The EEAS will continue to follow this issue closely.

([1]) http://www.msf.es/noticia/2012/libia-presos-torturados-privados-atencion-medica-en-centros-detencion-misrata.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001360/12
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente / Haute Représentante)
Nathalie Griesbeck (ALDE)
(14 février 2012)

Objet: VP/HR — Violations des Droits de l'homme et immolations au Tibet

Depuis mars 2011, douze jeunes Tibétains se sont immolés par le feu pour contester la répression des autorités chinoises au Tibet. Le Tibet est le théâtre d'un contrôle accru des autorités chinoises sur la vie et les pratiques religieuses, à l'aide notamment de campagnes «d'éducation patriotique» dans les monastères, d'une présence permanente des autorités chinoises dans ces lieux, d'une surveillance intensive et accrue, de détentions arbitraires, de disparitions de Tibétains, d'emprisonnements des familles et amis de Tibétains s'étant auto-immolés et de heurts meurtriers avec les forces policières chinoises au cours de manifestations.

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante pourrait-elle répondre, de manière complète, aux questions suivantes:

1. L'Union européenne a imposé des sanctions pour violation des Droits de l'homme en Birmanie, au Zimbabwe, etc., mais elle n'en a pris aucune pour condamner la répression chinoise au Tibet. Pourquoi une telle asymétrie dans les sanctions?

2. La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante envisage-t-elle, par une déclaration publique ou une démarche, d'inviter les autorités chinoises à cesser la répression dans les zones de Ngaba, Kardze et Chamdo, à retirer les troupes militaires des zones en question et des monastères, à autoriser tous les moines à retourner dans leurs monastères respectifs sans conditions, à relâcher ceux qui ont été détenus en relation avec ces immolations et à autoriser les diplomates étrangers et les médias étrangers indépendants à accéder sans entraves à toutes les régions du Tibet?

3. Le dialogue étant le moyen jusqu'à présent privilégié par l'Union dans ses relations avec la Chine, dans quelle mesure la question des Droits de l'homme est-elle évoquée lors des dialogues politiques réguliers sur les questions de politique étrangère entre la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante et le conseiller d'État chinois chargé des affaires étrangères? La deuxième session du dialogue UE-Chine n'ayant pas eu lieu en 2011, est-ce qu'un calendrier a été fixé pour l'année 2012? Par ailleurs, y a-t-il eu des tentatives pour l'élaboration de projets au titre de l'Initiative européenne pour la démocratie et les Droits de l'homme (IEDDH) au Tibet?

4. L'Union a la possibilité d'offrir des tarifs à l'importation avantageux afin d'encourager les pays qui respectent les normes de base minimales et les normes relatives aux conditions de travail qui ont été fixées par l'Organisation internationale du travail. Pourquoi des tarifs à l'importation désavantageux ne sont-ils pas envisagés pour des pays qui, comme la Chine, violent les droits fondamentaux de ses citoyens et de la minorité tibétaine?

Réponse donnée par la Vice présidente/Haute Représentante Mme Ashton au nom de la Commission
(31 mai 2012)

La Haute Représentante/Vice présidente est très préoccupée par les événements épouvantables qui se sont déroulés dans les régions tibétaines. La délégation de l'Union européenne en Chine a entrepris deux démarches auprès du ministère des affaires étrangères afin d'exprimer ses vives inquiétudes face à cette série d'immolations par le feu. L'UE a incité les autorités chinoises à s'abstenir de tout recours à la force, à permettre aux populations tibétaines d'exercer leurs droits religieux, linguistiques et culturels et à s'attaquer aux causes premières de ces immolations, en particulier, au manque de participation véritable de la population tibétaine à la politique de développement de la région.

L'UE a soulevé ces questions lors du sommet Union européenne-Chine, le 14 février 2012, ainsi que lors d'une réunion du Conseil des Droits de l'homme des Nations unies, le 6 mars 2012. Elle a demandé à se rendre, sans restrictions, dans les régions tibétaines, mais cette demande a été rejetée. L'UE continuera à inciter les autorités chinoises à faire progresser la situation en matière de Droits de l'homme au Tibet et à reprendre leur dialogue avec les envoyés du dalaï-lama.

Les ONG travaillant au Tibet peuvent introduire des demandes de soutien financier au titre de l'instrument européen pour la démocratie et les Droits de l'homme (IEDDH). Le service européen d'action extérieure (SEAE) ayant assuré à tous les candidats que leurs demandes seraient traitées dans la confidentialité la plus stricte, il ne peut, en conséquence, fournir aucune information concernant les projets IEDDH. La Commission propose d'allouer un nouveau budget pour soutenir des projets relatifs aux Droits de l'homme au titre des programmes de soutien nationaux de l'IEDDH pour 2013.

Une augmentation des droits de douane constitue une restriction commerciale et doit être appliquée conformément aux règles de l'OMC, notamment en matière de non-discrimination et de proportionnalité. Lorsque l'on envisage des mesures commerciales pour répondre à des violations des Droits de l'homme, il convient de se poser la question de savoir si, dans la pratique, ces mesures sont susceptibles de faire progresser la situation en matière de Droits de l'homme. La Commission privilégie une politique d'engagement avec la Chine sur la question des Droits de l'homme plutôt que l'imposition de mesures restrictives.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001360/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nathalie Griesbeck (ALDE)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Human rights violations and self-immolations in Tibet

Since March 2011, 12 young Tibetans have set fire to themselves in protest against repression by the Chinese authorities in Tibet. The Chinese authorities have tightened their control over religious life and practices in Tibet, particularly through 'patriotic education' campaigns and the permanent presence of Chinese authorities in monasteries, intensive and heightened surveillance, arbitrary arrests, the disappearance of Tibetans, the imprisonment of families and friends of Tibetans who have set fire to themselves, and deadly clashes with Chinese police forces during demonstrations.

Can the Vice-President/High Representative respond fully to the following questions:

1. The European Union has imposed sanctions for human rights violations in countries like Myanmar and Zimbabwe, but has not taken any steps to condemn the Chinese repression in Tibet. Why such an imbalance in sanctions?

2. Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to issue a public statement or take steps to call on the Chinese authorities to put an end to repression in the areas of Ngaba, Kardze and Chamdo; withdraw military troops from these areas and the monasteries; authorise all monks to return to their respective monasteries without any conditions attached; release those who have been arrested in relation to these self-immolations; and authorise foreign diplomats and independent foreign media to gain unhindered access to all regions of Tibet?

3. As dialogue has until now been the European Union's favoured approach in its relationship with China, to what extent is the human rights issue raised during the regular political dialogues on foreign policy matters between the Vice-President/High Representative and the Chinese State Councillor responsible for foreign affairs? As the second session of the EU-China dialogue did not take place in 2011, has a schedule been set for 2012? Also, have attempts been made to develop projects under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) in Tibet?

4. The European Union can offer reduced import tariffs in order to encourage countries that respect minimal basic standards and norms regarding working conditions set by the International Labour Organisation. Why have unfavourable import tariffs not been considered for countries, like China, which violate the basic rights of its citizens and the Tibetan minority?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President is deeply concerned at the distressing events in the Tibetan areas. The EU Delegation to China has made two demarches to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressing its profound concern at the series of self-immolations. The EU has urged the Chinese authorities to refrain from the use of force, to allow the Tibetan people to exercise their religious, linguistic and cultural rights and to address the root causes of the self-immolations, in particular the lack of genuine participation by the Tibetan population in the development policy of the region.

The EU raised these concerns at the EU-China Summit on 14 February 2012 and at the UN Human Rights Council on 6 March 2012. It has asked to visit the Tibetan regions in an unrestricted way but this request has been refused. The EU will continue to urge the Chinese authorities to improve the human rights situation in Tibet and to resume their dialogue with the Envoys of the Dalai Lama.

NGOs working in Tibet may submit applications for support from the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights. The European External Action Service (EEAS) has assured all applicants that their applications will be handled in confidence, so cannot provide any information on EIDHR projects. The Commission proposes to allocate a new budget to support human rights projects under the EIDHR Country Based Support Schemes from 2013.

Raising import tariffs is a trade restriction and must be done in compliance with WTO rules, including non-discrimination and proportionality. When considering trade measures to address human rights violations, the question of whether the measures are likely to improve the human rights situation in practice is relevant. The Commission favours a policy of engagement with China on human rights issues over the imposition of restrictive measures.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001361/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 février 2012)

Objet: Mesures urgentes à prendre pour limiter la consommation de sucre

Une étude récente de scientifiques américains publiée par la revue «Nature» a mis en évidence la menace que la consommation excessive de sucre, en particulier de fructose, constitue pour la santé publique. Les mêmes scientifiques établissent un lien entre consommation de sucre et augmentation des maladies non transmissibles.

La Commission peut-elle faire savoir:

— si elle estime que la réglementation européenne rendant obligatoire un étiquetage mentionnant la valeur énergétique ainsi que la quantité de sucre est suffisante pour détourner les consommateurs de leur consommation excessive et

— si elle entend encourager les États membres à prendre des mesures dissuasives de nature fiscale, à savoir un impôt sur les aliments sucrés, comme celles que le Danemark a adoptées en janvier 2012?

Réponse donnée par M. Dalli au nom de la Commission
(22 mars 2012)

Les États membres ont un rôle essentiel à jouer dans d'information sur l'alimentation et la santé. La Commission estime que l'introduction, par le règlement (UE) n° 1169/2011 concernant l'information des consommateurs sur les denrées alimentaires ([1]), de l'affichage obligatoire d'informations nutritionnelles sur la majorité des denrées transformées, y compris de la valeur énergétique et de la quantité de sucres, permettra aux consommateurs de choisir leur alimentation de manière avertie, en tenant compte des conseils diététiques qu'ils reçoivent.

Pour ce qui est de la taxation de certaines denrées, les États membres peuvent introduire des taxes nationales non harmonisées, mais ils doivent alors veiller à respecter les dispositions applicables du droit de l'Union européenne. Toute taxe existante ou prévue en la matière qui est notifiée à la Commission fait l'objet d'un examen séparé. Pour le moment, il ne semble pas nécessaire que l'Union légifère dans ce domaine.

Le groupe de haut niveau sur la nutrition et l'activité physique a procédé à un échange d'informations sur les mesures fiscales qui ont été récemment instaurées par certains États membres dans le domaine des denrées alimentaires. Le débat a prouvé à quel point il était difficile de démontrer l'incidence de telles mesures sur l'obésité et un mode d'alimentation sain. Les futurs échanges porteront avant tout sur l'introduction d'éventuels outils de suivi et sur les résultats de ces mesures dans les États membres dans lesquels elles ont été instaurées.

([1]) JO L 304 du 22.11.2011, p. 18.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001361/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Urgent measures to be taken to limit sugar consumption

A recent study conducted by American scientists which was published in *Nature* magazine highlighted the threat which the excessive consumption of sugar, and fructose in particular, poses for public health. The same scientists establish a link between sugar consumption and the increase in non-communicable diseases.

Can the Commission indicate:

— if it considers that the European regulation making it obligatory for labels to indicate the energy value as well as the sugar content is sufficient to deter consumers from excessive sugar consumption; and

— if it intends to encourage Member States to adopt dissuasive measures of a fiscal nature, namely a tax on sugary foods, similar to those adopted by Denmark in January 2012?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(22 March 2012)

Member States have a key role in providing education on diet and health. The Commission believes that the introduction through Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers ([1]) of the requirement to provide mandatory nutrition information on the majority of processed foods, including energy value and the amount of sugars, will enable consumers to make informed dietary choices whilst taking into account the dietary advice they receive.

With respect to taxes on certain foods, Member States may introduce non-harmonised national taxes but in doing so they must ensure they respect the relevant provisions of EC law. Any existing or planned tax on certain foods that is notified to the Commission is investigated individually. So far, there does not appear to be any need for EU legislation in the area.

The High Level Group on Nutrition and Physical Activity has had an exchange of information on fiscal measures on foods that have recently been introduced by certain Member States. The debate revealed the complexity of demonstrating the impact of such measures on obesity and healthy eating trends. The main focus for future exchanges will be on possible monitoring tools and the outcomes of these measures in the Member States in which they have been introduced.

([1]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001362/12
à la Commission
Alain Cadec (PPE)
(13 février 2012)

Objet: Pêche et élevages marins — Mise en place de plans de gestion des cormorans

Les problèmes causés par le développement des populations européennes de grands cormorans sur de nombreuses activités — pisciculture, pêche professionnelle et de loisir — sont connus et croissants (par exemple, menace à l'encontre des élevages marins, menace à l'encontre des espèces de poisson en voie de disparition, manque à gagner des pisciculteurs).

Depuis la résolution du Parlement européen du 4 décembre 2008 sur l'établissement d'un plan européen de gestion des cormorans (rapport Kindermann; P6_TA(2008)0583), la Commission a été questionnée à plusieurs reprises sur la non-mise en place de cette gestion européenne du grand cormoran. Pourquoi la Commission juge-t-elle qu'un plan de gestion à l'échelle de l'Union serait «inapproprié» pour répondre en partie à cette problématique — et ce, au-delà des possibilités de régulation de l'espèce offertes à chaque État membre en vertu de l'article 9 de la Directive «Oiseaux»?

De plus, la Commission annonce depuis 2010 qu'elle prépare des orientations concernant ces dispositions dérogatoires. Qu'en est-il à ce jour? En France, toutes les possibilités d'utilisation des dérogations et des protections vis-à-vis des prédations ont été testées en pisciculture. Rien n'y fait, les impacts sur l'activité, sur sa rentabilité, mais aussi sur la gestion de milieux remarquables comme les étangs piscicoles sont considérables.

La directive 2006/88/CE du Conseil du 24 octobre 2006, impose la mise en place complexe de mesures de prévention et de lutte contre certaines maladies chez les animaux aquatiques. L'accroissement et le développement des populations de cormorans entraînent des risques supplémentaires de propagation de ces maladies, voire la diffusion de maladies vers des zones indemnes. Comment la Commission envisage-t-elle une mise en place cohérente de cette directive sanitaire face à l'absence d'un plan européen de gestion du grand cormoran?

Enfin, la Commission souhaite solliciter les États membres pour élaborer des plans pluriannuels stratégiques pour favoriser le de développement de l'aquaculture pour 2014. Comment conçoit-elle des possibilités de développement, notamment pour la pisciculture d'étangs, quand celle-ci est mise à mal par les populations de cormorans?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(28 mars 2012)

La Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à se référer aux réponses qu'elle a apportées aux questions écrites E-3661/2010, E-4146/2010, E-4285/2010, E-9165/2010, E-9271/2010 et E-010579/2010 ([1]) portant sur le même sujet.

En ce qui concerne le statut du document d'orientation concernant le recours, pour le cormoran, aux dérogations prévues à l'article 9 de la directive «Oiseaux» ([2]), la Commission travaille à sa préparation en consultation avec les États membres, les acteurs directement concernés et le grand public, et espère être en mesure de le finaliser en 2012.

La directive 2006/88/CE ([3]) impose aux États membres de veiller à ce que les bonnes pratiques en matière d'hygiène soient mises en œuvre dans les exploitations aquacoles de manière à prévenir l'introduction d'agents pathogènes. Lorsque cela est nécessaire et réalisable, les aquaculteurs devraient mettre en place des mesures de protection physique permettant de protéger les poissons des prédateurs tels que les cormorans, qui peuvent faciliter la propagation d'agents pathogènes.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.
([2]) Directive 2009/147/CE (version codifiée remplaçant la directive 79/409/CEE), JO L 20 du 26.1.2010.
([3]) Directive 2006/88/CE du 24 octobre 2006, JO L 315 du 19.11.2002.

La Commission est consciente du rôle essentiel que joue l'aquaculture en étangs, non seulement pour la production aquacole, mais aussi pour les paysages, la gestion de l'eau, la biodiversité, ou encore la préservation des traditions et de la culture. Il convient dès lors que, dans les régions concernées, les États membres recourent dans toute la mesure du possible au système de dérogations susmentionné.

L'actuel Fonds européen pour la pêche autorise l'octroi d'une assistance financière pour protéger les exploitations aquacoles des dommages causés par les prédateurs sauvages. La proposition de la Commission relative au Fonds européen pour les affaires maritimes et la pêche prévoit le maintien du soutien en faveur des mesures de ce type.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001362/12
to the Commission
Alain Cadec (PPE)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Fishing and aquaculture — Introduction of cormorant management plans

The problems caused by the growth of European cormorant populations affecting numerous business activities — fish farming, as well as professional and leisure fishing — have already been recognised and are on the increase (for example, the threat posed to marine farms, the threat posed to fish species facing extinction, and loss of earnings for fish farmers).

Since the resolution of the European Parliament of 4 December 2008 on establishing a European Cormorant Management Plan (Kindermann report; P6_TA(2008)0583), the Commission has been questioned on several occasions about the non-introduction of the European Cormorant Management Plan. Why does the Commission consider that an EU-wide management plan would be inappropriate as a partial response to this issue, since it extends beyond the possibilities for species regulation offered to each Member State based on Article 9 of the 'Birds' Directive?

Moreover, in 2010 the Commission announced that it was preparing guidelines concerning these derogations. Where does this currently stand? In France, all possibilities for using these derogations and protections against predation have undergone testing in fish farming. But to no avail, despite the fact that the effects on business and profitability, but also on the management of remarkable environments such as fish ponds, are considerable.

Council Directive 2006/88/EC of 24 October 2006, requires the complex implementation of measures for preventing and combating certain illnesses among aquatic animals. The growth and expansion of cormorant populations cause additional risks in terms of the propagation of illnesses, including the spread of illness towards free zones. How does the Commission envisage the coherent introduction of this health directive faced with the absence of a European Cormorant Management Plan?

Lastly, the Commission wishes to ask Member States to prepare multiannual strategic plans to encourage the development of aquaculture for 2014. What view does it take of the possibilities for development, particularly for pond fish farming, when this is being disrupted by cormorant populations?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to Written Questions E-3661/2010, E-4146/2010, E-4285/2010, E-9165/2010, E-9271/2010 and E-010579/2010 [1] on the same issue.

In relation to the status of the Guidance Document on the use of derogations for Cormorants under Article 9 of the Birds Directive [2], the Commission is working on its preparation in consultation with the Member States, stakeholders, and the general public, and expects to be in a position to finalise it during 2012.

Directive 2006/88/EC [3] requires Member States to ensure that good hygiene practices are implemented in fish farms to prevent the introduction of disease agents. When necessary and feasible, the fish farmers should introduce physical protection of the fish from predators such as the cormorants that might facilitate the spread of disease agents.

The Commission is aware of the important role of the pond aquaculture not only for the fish production but also for its functions in the landscape, the water management, biodiversity or its traditional and cultural significance. In view of this, Member States should maximise the use of the abovementioned system of derogations in those areas.

The current European Fisheries Fund allows financial support to prevent aquaculture facilities from damage caused by wild predators. Under the Commission's proposal for European Maritime and Fisheries Fund assistance for the same type of measures is continued

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[1] http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/
[2] Directive 2009/147/EC (codified version replacing Directive 79/409/EEC), OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.
[3] Directive 2006/88/EC of 24 October 2006, OJ L 315, 19.11.2002.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001363/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: La tassazione delle autovetture nell'UE e il bollo auto italiano

I proprietari di automezzi, privati o commerciali, costituiscono da sempre un'importante risorsa per il bilancio pubblico degli Stati membri che si avvalgono di diversi e molteplici strumenti fiscali per raccogliere risorse. La creazione di un mercato unico automobilistico sostenibile, privo di distorsioni, inefficienze ed ostacoli fiscali, rappresenta uno degli obiettivi dell'Unione europea, laddove le disparità tra i regimi fiscali nei diversi Stati membri generano un impatto fortemente negativo sulla capacità dell'industria automobilistica e dei consumatori europei di beneficiare di economie di scala o di produrre lo stesso veicolo, con uguali specifiche applicando lo stesso prezzo.

Considerato che l'Europa pone al centro della sua attività la tutela del consumatore non solo dalle possibili implicazioni negative del nuovo mercato a 27, ma anche da un comportamento degli Stati membri lesivo delle quattro libertà fondamentali;

preso atto che nella comunicazione SEC(2002)858 la Commissione europea, un decennio fa, ha illustrato l'incidenza di tre tasse applicate alle autovetture: la tassa di immatricolazione (TI), la tassa annuale di circolazione (TAC) e le tasse sui carburanti (TC);

poiché in Italia i cittadini sono soggetti destinatari di un ulteriore aggravio fiscale, il bollo auto, una tassa che non rientra in nessuna di queste categorie, ma in quella delle tasse di possesso da pagarsi annualmente e indipendentemente dall'utilizzo del mezzo, intende la Commissione avviare uno studio per fotografare l'attuale situazione della tassazione delle autovetture e del mercato automobilistico europeo negli Stati membri?

Non intende la Commissione verificare la compatibilità di questo onere, tutto italiano, con il mercato automobilistico europeo?

Non intende la Commissione intervenire per rimuovere questo ulteriore aggravio che pesa sui cittadini del mio paese?

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

Attualmente la legislazione e l'armonizzazione a livello UE in materia di tassazione delle autovetture sono piuttosto limitate. Di conseguenza, fatto salvo il rispetto dei principi generali del diritto dell'Unione, i regimi fiscali nazionali in questo settore sono a discrezione degli Stati membri. In particolare, gli Stati membri possono decidere se integrare considerazioni di tipo ambientale nella struttura delle aliquote applicate.

L'imposta nazionale cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare non è oggetto di armonizzazione nell'ambito del diritto dell'UE ed è quindi di competenza delle autorità nazionali. Alla Commissione non risulta che in Italia tale imposta venga applicata in maniera contraria al diritto UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001363/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Car taxation in the EU and Italian car tax

Owners of both private and commercial motor vehicles have always been an important resource for the government budget of Member States which use varied and multiple taxation instruments to raise revenue. Creating a single, sustainable automotive market, free from tax distortions, inefficiencies and obstacles, is one of the EU's objectives where disparities between tax systems in different Member States are having a hugely negative impact on the ability of the automotive industry and European consumers to benefit from economies of scale and to produce the same vehicles with the same specifications at the same price.

Amongst other things, Europe focuses on protecting consumers not only from the potential negative implications of the new 27-member EU market, but also from any Member State behaviour which might infringe the four fundamental rights.

In its communication SEC(2002)858, the Commission, 10 years ago, described the impact of three taxes applied to motor vehicles: registration tax, annual road tax and fuel taxes.

Since Italian citizens are subject to an additional car tax, the '*bollo auto*', a tax which does not fall into any of these categories, but is an ownership tax to be paid annually regardless of whether or not the vehicle is actually used, will the Commission carry out a study to review the current motor vehicle taxation situation and the European car market in the Member States?

Could the Commission check whether this purely Italian tax is compatible with the European car market?

Will the Commission not take action to remove this additional tax burden weighing down on Italian citizens?

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

At present there is little EU legislation or harmonisation at EU level in the field of passenger car taxation. As a consequence, Member States are free to design their national tax systems in this area, subject to respecting the general principles of EC law. Member States may in particular decide whether to integrate environmental considerations into the structure of the rates applied.

The national tax referred to by the Honourable Member is not subject to harmonisation under EC law. The tax thus falls within the competence of the national authorities. The Commission has no information that the national tax referred to is applied in a manner contrary to EC law.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001364/12
alla Commissione
Barbara Matera (PPE), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Lara Comi (PPE), Lorenzo Fontana (EFD), Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Conseguenze dell'embargo imposto all'Iran e nuove fonti di approvvigionamento energetico

I presunti programmi nucleari della Repubblica islamica dell'Iran rappresentano un rischio elevato sia per il già fragile equilibrio politico del Medio Oriente sia per il continente europeo. La percezione del pericolo sta tutta nell'unanimità con cui i ministri degli Esteri dell'Unione europea hanno scelto nei giorni scorsi di adottare un blocco delle importazioni del petrolio iraniano, nell'ambito di un embargo sulle transazioni economiche tra Europa e Iran che entrerà in atto il primo luglio 2012.

Di fronte a una diminuzione dell'offerta si è avuta immediatamente una perturbazione al rialzo del prezzo del petrolio che si somma al rischio di rappresaglia annunciato dai pasdaran. L'Iran ha, infatti, minacciato a gran voce di chiudere lo stretto di Hormuz, da cui ogni anno transita il 20 % circa del petrolio trasportato via mare, ossia 15,5 milioni di barili. Una tale azione avrebbe degli sviluppi negativi dirompenti sull'economia mondiale, che fatica a uscire da una delle più acute crisi della storia.

Gli effetti negativi di un tale sviluppo interessano l'Europa, e in particolare l'Italia che figura quale quarto importatore del greggio iraniano, ma rendono evidente ancora una volta la necessità europea di dare nuovo impulso alle fonti di energia alternative.

Alla luce di tali considerazioni, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. L'embargo a carico della Repubblica iraniana non avrebbe più efficacia qualora l'Europa desse nuovo impulso alle fonti di energia rinnovabile che permettono in primo luogo di ridurre la dipendenza dal petrolio e allo stesso tempo di minimizzare gli effetti che la minaccia iraniana di chiudere lo stretto di Hormuz comporterebbe?

2. Quali progetti per l'approvvigionamento da fonti energetiche alternative risultano prioritari per la Commissione, vista la necessaria disciplina di bilancio imposta dal contenimento della spesa previsto per il bilancio 2013? Quali sono le priorità a tal proposito nel quadro finanziario 2014-2020?

3. Dato l'elevato potenziale delle tecnologie delle celle a combustibile e idrogeno ed il rilevante impegno dell'Unione europea in questo settore — ne è un esempio l'impresa comune «Celle a combustibile e idrogeno» (FCH-JU) —, non ritiene la Commissione che tale strumento debba essere potenziato e maggiormente supportato? Non ritiene che, incrementando gli investimenti su queste tecnologie, l'Unione europea possa fornire un forte segnale politico, da un lato, ed imprenditoriale, dall'altro, contribuendo così alla ripresa economica con importanti ricadute occupazionali sul territorio europeo?

Risposta data da Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2012)

1. Le fonti energetiche locali, comprese quelle rinnovabili, garantiscono agli Stati membri dell'UE una maggiore sicurezza energetica. Nel 2008, il pacchetto in materia di energia e clima ha dato un impulso alle energie rinnovabili fissando obiettivi nazionali vincolanti. La Commissione segue attivamente i progressi degli Stati membri nel conseguimento di tali obiettivi.

2. L'efficienza energetica e le fonti energetiche sostenibili innovative sono tra le priorità del bilancio 2013 nonché del nuovo quadro finanziario 2014-2020. Il contenimento della spesa non dovrebbe riguardare settori chiave per il raggiungimento degli obiettivi dell'Unione per il 2020 e, più in generale, della strategia Europa 2020 per la crescita e l'occupazione. Il miglioramento dell'efficienza energetica dovrebbe rappresentare una delle soluzioni più efficaci per realizzare risparmi significativi in campo energetico, ancor di più in un contesto caratterizzato dall'aumento dei prezzi dell'energia a livello mondiale.

3. La Commissione concorda con l'onorevole parlamentare nel ritenere che le fonti energetiche e i sistemi di trasmissione alternativi debbano essere supportati, data la loro importanza nella definizione di metodi per ovviare alla forte dipendenza dal petrolio e il loro potenziale per la creazione di nuove imprese e posti di lavoro. Tuttavia, l'attenzione non dovrebbe essere posta soltanto sulle celle a combustibile e idrogeno. I veicoli elettrici e ricaricabili, nonché i motori a combustione convenzionali migliorati, svolgono in tal senso un ruolo fondamentale. Allo stadio attuale, l'importante non è identificare tecnologie energetiche specifiche, ma piuttosto fornire orientamenti sulle tecnologie future, lasciando così che le migliori si affermino a livello di mercato.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001364/12
to the Commission
Barbara Matera (PPE), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Lara Comi (PPE), Lorenzo Fontana (EFD), Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Consequences of the embargo imposed on Iran and new energy sources

The nuclear programmes allegedly being pursued by the Islamic Republic of Iran pose a serious risk both to the already fragile political equilibrium in the Middle East and to the whole of Europe. The perception of the danger is such that the EU Foreign Ministers unanimously decided a few days ago to ban imports of Iranian oil, as part of an embargo on financial transactions between Europe and Iran which will enter into force on 1 July 2012.

Given the possible reduction in supply, the immediate response has been upward pressure on the oil price, creating a further risk factor, over and above the retaliation announced by the Pasdaran. Iran has threatened in no uncertain terms to close the Strait of Hormuz, the route for about 20 % of the oil transported by sea, in other words 15.5 million barrels. Such action would have a devastating effect on the world economy, which is struggling to emerge from one of the most severe crises in history.

The resulting adverse impact would make itself felt in Europe and in Italy in particular, the fourth largest importer of Iranian crude oil, and also highlights once again the need for Europe to give fresh impetus to alternative energy sources.

In light of these points:

1. Would the embargo on Iran not be more effective if Europe were to give fresh impetus to renewable energy sources, enabling it firstly to reduce its dependence on oil while also minimising the effects entailed in the Iranian threat to close the Strait of Hormuz?

2. Which alternative energy projects does the Commission consider to have priority, given the need for budget discipline in view of the spending restrictions likely to be imposed by the 2013 budget? What priorities have been laid down in the 2014-2020 financial framework?

3. Given the great potential of fuel cells and hydrogen and the major EU commitment in this sector — one example being the Fuel Cells and Hydrogen Joint Undertaking (FCH-JU) — does the Commission not consider that they should be developed and receive more support? Does it not consider that by increasing investment in these technologies, the European Union could send out a strong political signal on the one hand, and an entrepreneurial one on the other, thus contributing to the economic recovery and producing a substantial impact on employment in all parts of Europe?

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

1. Indigenous energy sources including renewable ones reinforce the energy security of EU Member States. The energy and climate package in 2008 gave a boost to renewable energy through fixing binding national targets. The Commission is monitoring very actively Member States' progress in achieving those targets.

2. Energy efficiency and sustainable innovative energy sources have been mentioned as priorities both for the 2013 budget and the new financial framework 2014-2020. Spending restrictions should not affect key areas for achieving our targets for 2020 and, more generally, our Europe 2020 strategy on growth and jobs. Especially in a situation of rising global energy prices efficiency gains should be one of the best ways to achieve self-financing reductions in energy use.

3. The Commission agrees that alternative fuels and powertrains need support given their importance for finding ways to replace the singular reliance on oil and their potential in terms of new businesses and job creation. However, the focus should not be on Fuel Cells and Hydrogen only. Electric vehicles and Plug-in electric vehicles as well as improved conventional combustion car engines all will have an important role to play. It is important at this stage not to pick certain energy technologies but to provide pathways for future technologies which then allow for the best technologies to prove themselves in the marketplace.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001366/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(14 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Crisi occupazionale

La ripresa senza occupazione ha tenuto compagnia all'Europa per un biennio (2° semestre 2009-1° trimestre 2011). Il consuntivo 2011 calcolato dalla CGIL parla di 500 mila lavoratori in cassa a zero ore, costretti a rinunciare a ottomila euro in busta paga, pari a un taglio complessivo di 3,6 miliardi, ma soprattutto di una disoccupazione ufficiale risalita a dicembre all'8,9 %, al livello di 11 anni fa, prima della riforma Biagi. Quella reale, sommando gli inattivi che non cercano più, avrebbe addirittura sfondato la barriera dell'11 %. È un dato verosimile. Dopo l'estate, infatti, molte casse stanno diventando mobilità e licenziamenti, colpendo impieghi stabili in imprese tradizionali, età elevata e scolarità bassa, i profili più a rischio concorrenza asiatica su prezzo e prodotti.

Il risultato è che la spesa reale rischia di restare in rosso fino a metà 2013, per una riduzione complessiva del 4,5 %. Siamo davanti ad una disoccupazione di lungo periodo, sconosciuta, che colpisce territori ricchi che hanno avuto piena occupazione per trent'anni. Tra il 2008 e il 2013 avranno perso l'occupazione circa 650 mila persone, mentre il numero dei posti di lavoro si sarà ridotto di quasi 800 mila unità, di cui 700 mila nel settore industriale.

A farne le spese un'altra volta sono i giovani. Già oggi la disoccupazione ufficiale «under 24» è arrivata al 31 %, in aumento di 3 punti sul 2010, ma quella reale vale molto di più. In Campania tocca il 51,1 %, in Basilicata il 48,3 %, nel Lazio il 42,5 %, in Sicilia 41,2 % seguite a ruota, un po' a sorpresa, dalle ricche Lombardia (40,3 %), Piemonte (37,3 %) e Veneto (37,2).

Ciò premesso, si chiede alla Commissione se:

— Ritiene utile individuare un piano specifico sull'occupazione giovanile, da includere successivamente in ciascun programma nazionale di riforma, definendo misure mirate a livello di politiche e di bilancio, come per esempio trasferendo fondi dall'attuale assegnazione di risorse UE (finanziamenti che potrebbero arrivare da fondi non assegnati della dotazione nazionale a titolo del Fondo sociale europeo), proprio per favorire il lavoro dei giovani?

Risposta data da László Andor a nome della Commissione
(20 marzo 2012)

La Commissione è consapevole della difficile situazione occupazionale, in particolare per quanto concerne i giovani. La sua comunicazione sull'iniziativa «Opportunità per i giovani» ([1]) del 20 dicembre 2011 ha affrontato esplicitamente la questione proponendo diverse misure da adottarsi.

Il Presidente della Commissione, in seguito a una dichiarazione dei membri del Consiglio europeo ([2]) del 30 gennaio 2012, ha inviato di recente una lettera ai capi di Governo degli Stati membri maggiormente colpiti dal fenomeno della disoccupazione giovanile, compresa l'Italia, per rafforzare la cooperazione finalizzata a migliorare le prospettive occupazionali dei giovani.

In ciascuno di questi paesi ([3]) un «gruppo d'azione» svilupperà, nell'ambito di ciascun programma di riforma nazionale, un piano per l'occupazione giovanile e valuterà come usare al meglio le risorse non ancora stanziate dei Fondi strutturali, comprese quelle del Fondo sociale europeo (FSE).

Il Consiglio europeo di primavera del 2012 ha sollecitato la preparazione di «Piani nazionali per l'occupazione» da parte degli Stati membri. In quanto parte integrante del Programma nazionale di riforma dei singoli Stati membri, il «Piano nazionale per l'occupazione» dovrebbe contenere le misure concrete previste per affrontare il problema della disoccupazione, compresa quella giovanile, e altri punti deboli del mercato del lavoro. L'attuazione di questi piani sarà oggetto di un monitoraggio molto attento nel contesto del semestre europeo.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=950&newsId=1143&furtherNews=yes.
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/127599.pdf
([3]) ES, PT, GR, IT, IE, SK, LT, LV.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001366/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Employment crisis

Rising unemployment has afflicted Europe for two years (from the second half of 2009 to the first quarter of 2011). The final figures for 2011 calculated by the Italian General Confederation of Labour indicate that there were 500 000 workers receiving 100 % redundancy pay (no hours worked), who had been forced to take a pay cut of EUR 8 000, equivalent to EUR 3.6 billion in all, but more importantly they show that official unemployment rose to 8.9 % in December, reaching the level of 11 years ago, before the Biagi reform. Real unemployment, including those who were no longer looking for work, was possibly, not to say probably, higher than 11 %. Since summer, short-time work schemes have in many cases been converted into mobility and redundancy benefits, affecting stable jobs in traditional businesses and those who are older or less educated, that is to say, the groups most at risk from Asian competition in terms of price and products.

The result is that real expenditure risks remaining in the red until mid-2013, giving an overall reduction of 4.5 %. Long-term unemployment is in danger of continuing indefinitely, affecting wealthy areas where there has been full employment for thirty years. Between 2008 and 2013 approximately 650 000 people will have lost their jobs, and the number of positions stands to fall by almost 800 000, 700 000 of that number being accounted for by industry.

And again it is the young who are bearing the brunt. Today official unemployment amongst the under-24s has reached 31 %, up 3 points from 2010, but the real figure is much higher. In Campania it stands at 51.1 %, in Basilicata 48.3 %, in Lazio 42.5 %, and in Sicily 41.2 %, closely followed — a little surprisingly — by wealthy Lombardy (40.3 %), Piedmont (37.3 %) and Veneto (37.2 %).

Does the Commission believe that it should draw up a specific youth employment plan, to be included in each national reform programme, setting out targeted policy and budget measures such as transfers from existing EU funding allocations (possibly using those portions of national allocations under the European Social Fund that have not been earmarked), in order to support youth employment?

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

The Commission is aware of the difficult employment situation, in particular for young people. Its communication 'Youth Opportunities Initiative' ([1]) of 20 December 2011 explicitly addressed that issue and included a number of steps to be taken.

The President of the Commission, following the statement of the members of the European Council ([2]) of 30 January 2012, has recently sent a letter to the Heads of Governments of the Member States most affected by youth unemployment, including Italy, to strengthen cooperation to improve employment prospects for young people.

In each of these countries ([3]), an 'action team' will help develop in each national reform program a plan for youth employment and assess how best to use the resources not yet allocated of the structural funds, including the European Social Fund (ESF).

The 2012 Spring European Council called for the preparation of 'National Job Plans' by Member States. As an integral part of Member State's National Reform Programme, the 'National Job Plan' should provide the concrete measures addressing unemployment, including youth unemployment, and other labour market weaknesses. The implementation of these plans will be subject to enhanced monitoring in the framework of the European semester.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=950&newsId=1143&furtherNews=yes.
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/127599.pdf
([3]) ES, PT, GR, IT, IE, SK, LT, LV.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001367/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Rinuncia a fondi europei per una multinazionale elvetica

Una nota multinazionale farmaceutica con sede in Svizzera è una delle grandi aziende che nei mesi scorsi avevano attivato i 29 contratti di programma approvati dalla regione Puglia tramite il titolo VI del Programma operativo del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale FESR 2007/2013. Le aziende avevano pianificato investimenti totali per 444 milioni di euro, di cui 138 milioni di fondi europei.

L'investimento della multinazionale elvetica in questione corrispondeva a un totale di 16 milioni di euro, per l'ampliamento della base produttiva attuale dello stabilimento di Modugno, nell'area di Bari. In particolare, la multinazionale avrebbe costruito nuovi capannoni e acquistato nuovi macchinari per l'introduzione di una nuova tecnologia per la produzione di Clodribina (una pillola indicata per il trattamento della sclerosi multipla).

Ora però l'azienda ha comunicato agli uffici della regione incaricati di gestire i contratti di programma l'intenzione di non avviare l'investimento. Il risultato è la perdita di fondi europei e della possibilità di nuovi investimenti nella regione.

Tutto ciò premesso, si chiede alla Commissione:

— se è a conoscenza del caso di rinuncia illustrato, e se per le altre aziende coinvolte nel progetto e firmatarie dei 29 contratti sono già stati stipulati i relativi accordi per portare a termine i programmi, come descritto nel prospetto per il ricevimento della quota FESR.

Risposta data da Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(21 marzo 2012)

La politica di coesione è gestita nel quadro del principio della gestione condivisa e della responsabilità della sua attuazione spettante agli Stati membri. Le autorità nazionali sono responsabili della fissazione degli obiettivi del programma, dei criteri di selezione e delle procedure necessarie per la selezione dei progetti. Tutti questi aspetti sono stati definiti e descritti nei programmi adottati a seguito di una decisione della Commissione.

Qualora un progetto fosse ritirato da un promotore, i fondi inizialmente assegnati al progetto in questione non sono perduti per la Regione, ma possono essere utilizzati per finanziare altri progetti.

Ove l'onorevole parlamentare desideri essere informato più approfonditamente circa questo caso particolare, la Commissione lo invita a contattare direttamente l'autorità di gestione del programma Puglia:

Autorità di Gestione POR Puglia: Viale Japigia, n. 145 70126 BARI, adgfesr@regione.puglia.it.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001367/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Withdrawal by a Swiss multinational of an application for European funding

A well-known pharmaceutical multinational headquartered in Switzerland is one of the big companies that in recent months negotiated the 29 programme contracts approved by the Apulia region under Priority 6 of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Operational Programme 2007-13. The companies had planned a total investment of EUR 444 million, of which EUR 138 million was European funds.

The investment by the Swiss multinational in question corresponded to a total of EUR 16 million for the expansion of the current manufacturing base at the facility in Modugno in the Bari area. In particular, the multinational planned to construct new buildings and buy new machinery for the introduction of new technology for the production of Cladribine (a pill indicated in the treatment of multiple sclerosis).

Now however, the company has informed the regional department charged with managing the contracts of the programme of its intention to not make the investment. The result is the loss of European funding and the possibility of new investment in the region.

The Commission is therefore asked the following:

— if it is aware of the case of the withdrawal described and if, for the other companies involved in the project and signatories of the 29 contracts, the respective agreements have already been concluded to carry out the programmes, as described in the prospectus for the receipt of the ERDF quota.

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

Cohesion policy is administered under the shared management principle and the responsibility for implementation lies with the Member States. The national authorities are responsible for setting programme objectives, selection criteria and the necessary procedures for the selection of projects. All these have been defined and are described in the programmes which have been adopted by a Commission decision.

If a project is withdrawn by the promoter, the funds originally allocated to it are not lost for the region, but can be used to fund other projects.

If the Honourable Member wishes to be informed in more detail about this particular case, the Commission would suggest that he contact directly the managing authority of the Puglia programme:

Autorità di Gestione POR Puglia Viale Japigia, n. 145, 70126 Bari, adgfesr@regione.puglia.it

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001368/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Emissioni di carico inquinante a Taranto

Un noto stabilimento siderurgico di Taranto è da anni al centro delle manifestazioni di protesta dei cittadini e di molte aziende limitrofe a causa delle sue emissioni nocive nell'ambiente. Lo stabilimento da solo immette infatti nell'atmosfera un quantitativo di diossina pari all'8,8 % del totale europeo, ma non esiste in città alcun sistema di monitoraggio dell'inquinamento da diossina.

Rispetto al totale delle emissioni nocive europee, lo stabilimento di Taranto incide per il 6,2 % per quanto riguarda gli IPA (idrocarburi policiclici aromatici), notoriamente cancerogeni. I morti per neoplasie a Taranto sono più che raddoppiati dal 1971 al 1996, e secondo i dati del Dipartimento di prevenzione della ASL di Taranto relativi al quadriennio 1998-2001, nella provincia ionica si registrano circa 1 200 decessi annui, dati che collocano Taranto fra le aree del Sud Italia a maggiore incidenza per le neoplasie tutte e ben oltre la media nazionale per le neoplasie polmonari.

Oltre alle proteste dei cittadini, anche le associazioni ambientaliste locali hanno voluto far sentire la propria voce e si sono dunque confrontate con esperti in campo ambientale, portando più volte l'azienda di Taranto in tribunale. I risultati di diverse indagini e il parere dei periti confermano quanto sostenuto dalle associazioni ambientaliste in tutte le sedi, e cioè che sono necessarie misure decisamente più rigorose per contenere il massiccio carico inquinante provocato dallo stabilimento in questione.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Come valuta la Commissione il caso in questione alla luce della normativa europea sui parametri di emissione di diossine (comunicazione della Commissione al Consiglio, al Parlamento europeo e al Comitato economico e sociale — Strategia comunitaria sulle diossine, i furani e i bifenili policlorurati (COM(2001)0593))?

2. La Commissione è già intervenuta in passato per valutare se i valori di emissioni nocive dell'azienda summenzionata rispettano i criteri di emissione massima di diossina nell'atmosfera?

Risposta data da Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(2 aprile 2012)

La Commissione segue da alcuni anni la situazione del polo siderurgico ILVA di Taranto. Visto che questo e altri stabilimenti erano in funzione nonostante l'assenza di un'autorizzazione di cui all'articolo 5, paragrafo 1, della direttiva 2008/1/CE sulla prevenzione e la riduzione integrate dell'inquinamento (la direttiva IPPC) ([1]), nel 2008 la Commissione ha avviato una procedura di infrazione nei confronti dell'Italia. Nel marzo 2011 la Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea ([2]) ha decretato che l'Italia è venuta meno agli obblighi previsti dall'articolo 5, paragrafo 1, della direttiva IPPC.

La Commissione adotterà tutte le misure necessarie per garantire che l'Italia rispetti la sentenza della Corte di giustizia.

In merito allo stabilimento ILVA di Taranto la Commissione inviterà le autorità competenti a fornire informazioni sulle licenze ottenute e sul livello attuale di emissioni di agenti inquinanti. Conformemente al documento di riferimento per la produzione di ferro e acciaio adottato dalla Commissione ([3]), i valori limite di emissione per stabilimenti di produzione di ferro e acciaio devono basarsi sulle migliori tecniche disponibili (le cosiddette BAT — «*best available techniques*»).

([1]) GU L 24 del 29.1.2008.
([2]) Causa C-50/10.
([3]) http://eippcb.jrc.es/reference/BREF/isp_bref_1201.pdf

Il 28 febbraio 2012 la Commissione ha adottato una decisione di esecuzione relativa alle conclusioni sulle migliori tecniche disponibili per la produzione di ferro e acciaio ai sensi della direttiva 2010/75/UE relativa alle emissioni industriali ([4]), in cui si definiscono i livelli di emissione associati alle BAT per diversi agenti inquinanti, incluse le diossine. Entro quattro anni dalla data di pubblicazione della decisione in oggetto, gli Stati membri saranno tenuti a riesaminare le autorizzazioni concesse agli stabilimenti di produzione di ferro e acciaio che rientrano nella direttiva 2010/75/UE al fine di allinearli alle succitate nuove conclusioni in materia di BAT.

([4]) GU L 334 del 17.12.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001368/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Polluting emissions in Taranto

A well-known iron and steel works in Taranto has for years been at the centre of protests from citizens and numerous neighbouring businesses because of the noxious emissions it pumps into the environment. This establishment alone emits into the atmosphere 8.8 % of the total amount of dioxins produced in Europe, but there is no system in the city for monitoring dioxin pollution.

Of all the noxious emissions in Europe, the Taranto plant accounts for 6.2 % of PAHs (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons), which are known to be carcinogenic. Deaths from cancer in Taranto more than doubled from 1971 to 1996 and, according to data from the Taranto local health authority's Department of Prevention regarding the four years from 1998-2001, there were around 1 200 deaths per year in the province of Taranto. This means that Taranto is one of the areas of Southern Italy with the highest incidence of all types of cancer and is well above the national average for lung cancer.

As well as the protests of citizens, local environmental associations also wanted to make their voices heard and therefore discussed the matter with environmental experts, taking the Taranto company to court on more than one occasion. The results of various investigations and the opinion of the experts confirm the view the environmental associations have always upheld, namely that far more stringent measures are required in order to contain the massive pollution load caused by the plant in question.

In light of the above, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What is the Commission's view of the case in question in light of the European regulations on dioxin emission parameters (Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee — Community strategy for dioxins, furans and polychlorinated biphenyls (COM(2001)0593))?

2. Has the Commission already acted in the past to assess whether the levels of noxious emissions from the aforementioned company comply with the criteria on maximum dioxin emissions into the air?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2012)

The Commission has been following the situation concerning the ILVA integrated steelworks in Taranto, Italy, for several years. Given that this and other installations were operated without a permit issued in accordance with Article 5(1) of Directive 2008/1/EC concerning integrated pollution prevention and control (the IPPC Directive) ([1]), the Commission launched an infringement procedure against Italy in 2008. In March 2011, the European Court of Justice ([2]) declared that Italy had failed to fulfil its obligations under Article 5(1) of the IPPC Directive.

The Commission will take the necessary steps to secure Italy's compliance with the ruling of the European Court of Justice.

Concerning the ILVA Taranto plant, the Commission will ask the competent authorities for information on the permit conditions set for this installation and the current levels of emission of pollutants. Emission limit values for iron and steel producing installations need to be based on the best available techniques (BAT) as described in the BAT reference document for Iron and Steel production adopted by the Commission ([3]).

([1]) OJ L 24, 29.1.2008.
([2]) C-50/10.
([3]) http://eippcb.jrc.es/reference/BREF/isp_bref_1201.pdf

On 28 February 2012, the Commission adopted an Implementing Decision establishing BAT conclusions for the production of iron and steel under Directive 2010/75/EU on industrial emissions (IED) ([4]). This decision defines emission levels associated with BAT for many pollutants, including dioxins. Within four years of the publication of this decision, Member States will have to reconsider all permits of iron and steel producing installations covered by the IED to bring them in line with these new BAT conclusions.

([4]) OJ L 334, 17.12.2010.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001369/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Possibili fondi per Gravina in Puglia

Nell'ultimo anno nel centro storico di Gravina in Puglia si sono registrati numerosi crolli ai danni di edifici antichi. Distese di macerie, nessuna messa in sicurezza e, soprattutto, il rischio di ulteriori e imminenti crolli. È questa la situazione nel centro cittadino, ormai allo sbando anche dal punto di vista amministrativo. Caduto il sindaco, la città è retta dal Commissario prefettizio.

Molti cittadini si sono indignati per la situazione e hanno creato un laboratorio partecipato per arrivare a una gestione condivisa della città. L'obiettivo è la pianificazione e la riattivazione di un ciclo coerente tra ascolto e progetto per migliorare la città. Tra le prime azioni intraprese c'è la pressione sulle istituzioni proprio per mettere in sicurezza il centro storico di Gravina in Puglia.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza dei ripetuti crolli che si sono verificati nell'arco dell'ultimo anno nel centro storico di Gravina in Puglia;

2. se ci sono fondi europei per i quali la città di Gravina in Puglia ha fatto richiesta;

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

Risposta data da Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(29 marzo 2012)

1. La Commissione non era stata messa in precedenza al corrente dei fatti segnalati dall'onorevole deputato.

2. In linea col principio di gestione comune utilizzato per l'amministrazione della politica di coesione, gli Stati membri sono responsabili dell'attuazione dei programmi sul terreno. In ciò rientrano la selezione e l'attuazione dei progetti. Stando alle informazioni fornite dall'autorità di gestione del programma Puglia, il comune di Gravina non ha ricevuto nessun finanziamento del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR) per il risanamento delle aree urbane.

3. Il programma Puglia, che è cofinanziato dal FESR, prevede uno stanziamento di 260 milioni di euro per progetti integrati per la rigenerazione urbana e rurale. Progetti come quelli menzionati dall'onorevole deputato potrebbero essere in effetti ammissibili a un cofinanziamento nell'ambito di tale misura.

Per ulteriori informazioni la Commissione suggerisce all'onorevole deputato di mettersi direttamente in contatto con l'autorità di gestione del programma Puglia:

Autorità di Gestione POR Puglia: Viale Japigia 145, 70126 BARI, adgfesr@regione.puglia.it

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001369/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Potential funding for Gravina in Apulia

In the last year, several of the old buildings in the historic centre of Gravina in Apulia have suffered damage after sections of those buildings collapsed. There are heaps of rubble, no safety measures have been taken and, above all, more buildings are on the point of collapse. The town centre is now also disintegrating administratively. With the mayor having stepped down, the town is currently being run by a commissioner appointed by the prefect.

Many townspeople are angry about this state of affairs and have set up an open workshop to devise a plan for shared management of the town. The aim is to reinstill cohesion through a process of listening and planning in order to improve the town. One of the first steps taken was to put pressure on the institutions themselves to make the historic centre of Gravina, Apulia, safe.

In light of the above, can the Commission state:

1.whether it is aware of the repeated building collapses that have occurred during the last year in the historic centre of Gravina in Apulia;

2. whether the town of Gravina in Apulia has applied for any funding from the EU;

3.if so, which projects were granted EU funding, and what were the end results of these projects?

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

1. The Commission has not been previously informed of the facts reported by the Honourable Member.

2. In line with the shared management principle used for the administration of cohesion policy, the Member States are responsible for implementing the programmes on the ground. This includes project selection and implementation. According to information provided by the managing authority of the Puglia programme, the Municipality of Gravina has not received any European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funding related to urban regeneration.

3. The programme for Puglia, which is co-financed by the ERDF, provides for an allocation of EUR 260 million for ‘integrated projects for urban and rural regeneration’. Projects such as the ones mentioned by the Honourable Member might indeed be eligible for co-financing under this measure.

For more information, the Commission suggests that the Honourable Member contacts directly the managing authority of the Puglia programme:

Autorità di Gestione POR Puglia: Viale Japigia, n. 145 , 70126 Bari, adgfesr@regione.puglia.it

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001371/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(14 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Disoccupazione record in Italia

Secondo gli ultimi dati Istat risalenti al dicembre 2011, in Italia il numero dei disoccupati è pari a 2 243 000 persone, in aumento dello 0,9 % rispetto al mese di novembre. In soli 30 giorni circa 20 000 persone hanno perso il posto di lavoro. Su base annua, invece, si sono bruciati ben 221 000 posti di lavoro, ovvero in 365 giorni la disoccupazione è salita del 10,9 %.

In termini assoluti la disoccupazione maschile è pari all'8,4 %, quella femminile al 9,6 %. Ma è il dato della disoccupazione giovanile quello più allarmante: il tasso infatti è pari al 31 %, più 3 % rispetto al 2010. La maglia nera spetta alla Campania, dove il 44,2 % dei giovani cerca lavoro.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. Può tracciare un quadro europeo sulla disoccupazione, elencando i dati riferiti agli Stati membri su tasso di disoccupazione, tasso di disoccupazione femminile e tasso di disoccupazione giovanile?

2. Quali provvedimenti intende assumere a livello europeo per contrastare la disoccupazione giovanile e per favorire l'inserimento nel mondo del lavoro degli stessi giovani?

Risposta data da László Andor a nome della Commissione
(22 marzo 2012)

1. La Commissione gradirebbe invitare l'onorevole parlamentare a consultare l'ultima scheda informativa ([1]) pubblicata dalla Direzione generale Occupazione, affari sociali e inclusione e l'ultima relazione sui tassi mensili di disoccupazione di Eurostat ([2]): entrambe le relazioni forniscono una rassegna esaustiva della situazione del mercato del lavoro nell'UE.

2. L'UE mira ad accelerare il suo sostegno strategico e finanziario agli Stati membri mediante l'iniziativa «Opportunità per i giovani» ([3]) di recente adozione e in linea con la recente dichiarazione del Consiglio europeo informale del 30 gennaio 2012. La Commissione opera direttamente con gli Stati membri che fanno registrare i massimi tassi di disoccupazione giovanile tramite visite di gruppi di intervento ([4]) e riunioni bilaterali ([5]), in particolare per utilizzare maggiormente i finanziamenti UE disponibili, anche grazie alla riprogrammazione e all'accelerazione dell'attuazione. Prima della fine del 2012 la Commissione presenterà inoltre un quadro di qualità per i tirocini e rafforzerà le sue misure per migliorare la mobilità dei giovani, ad esempio il programma «Il tuo primo posto di lavoro EURES». Nello stesso periodo, essa avvierà anche un'azione preparatoria «Garanzie per i giovani» con uno stanziamento di 4 milioni di euro. La Commissione presenterà una prima valutazione dell'attuazione dell'iniziativa «Opportunità per i giovani» al Consiglio informale dei ministri dell'occupazione e degli affari sociali nell'aprile 2012. La Commissione farà inoltre particolare attenzione all'occupazione dei giovani e alle riforme strutturali del mercato del lavoro a favore dei giovani in occasione della presentazione del progetto di raccomandazioni specifiche per paese 2012 come parte del Semestre europeo.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=113&newsId=1182&furtherNews=yes .
([2]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-31012012-AP/EN/3-31012012-AP-EN.PDF .
([3]) COM(2011)933 del 20.12.2011.
([4]) ES, PT, GR, IT, IE, SK, LT, LV.
([5]) BG, FR, HU, PL, RO, SE e CY.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001371/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Record unemployment in Italy

According to the latest (December 2011) figures from the Italian National Institute of Statistics, total unemployment in Italy stood at 2 243 000, an increase of 0.9 % compared with November. In just 30 days, some 20 000 people lost their jobs. In annual terms as many as 221 000 jobs were lost, that is to say, unemployment rose by 10.9 % in 365 days.

In absolute terms, male unemployment is equal to 8.4 % and female unemployment is at 9.6 %. However, it is the statistics for youth unemployment that are the most alarming: the total is equal to 31 %, a rise of 3 % compared with 2010. The figures are highest in Campania, where 44.2 % of young people are looking for work.

In light of these facts:

1. Can the Commission provide a Europe-wide picture of unemployment, with statistics for each Member State specifying the unemployment rate, the female unemployment rate and the youth unemployment rate?

2. What European-level measures will it take to overcome youth unemployment and help young people into work?

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

1. The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the latest EU Labour Market Fact Sheet ([1]) issued by Directorate-General Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion and to the latest report on monthly unemployment rates by Eurostat ([2]): both reports provide a comprehensive overview of the labour market situation across the EU.

2. The EU aims at fast-tracking its strategic and financial support to Member States through the recently adopted Youth Opportunities Initiative ([3]) and in line with the recent statement of the informal European Council of 30 January 2012. The Commission directly works with the Member States with the highest youth unemployment rates through visits of action teams ([4]) and bilateral meetings ([5]), in particular with a view to making greater use of available EU funding including through re-programming and accelerating implementation. Before the end of 2012 the Commission will moreover present a quality framework for traineeships, and will strengthen its measures to improve youth mobility, such as the 'Your first EURES job'. Over the same period, it will also launch a preparatory action on 'Youth Guarantees' with a budget of EUR 4 million. The Commission will present a first assessment of the implementation of the Youth Opportunities Initiative to the informal Employment and Social Affairs Ministers' Council in April 2012. The Commission will moreover pay a particular attention to youth employment and structural labour market reforms benefiting young people when presenting the draft 2012 Country Specific Recommendations as part of the European Semester.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=113&newsId=1182&furtherNews=yes .
([2]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-31012012-AP/EN/3-31012012-AP-EN.PDF .
([3]) COM(2011) 933 of 20.12.2011.
([4]) ES, PT, GR, IT, IE, SK, LT, LV.
([5]) BG, FR, HU, PL, RO, SE, CY.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001372/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Aggregazioni produttive

Si tratta di una rete capillare di aziende, enti, sindacati, associazioni di categoria, distribuite sull'intero territorio regionale e legate tra loro per comparti produttivi o per filiere. A quattro anni dalla loro istituzione in Puglia, sono 3 347 le aziende pugliesi che si sono riconosciute in uno dei 18 distretti produttivi. Di queste, 15 sono già operative e 3 di recente costituzione.

L'aggregazione di imprese rappresenta una necessità forte per il sistema produttivo pugliese per rimediare agli effetti negativi della crisi. I benefici consistono in una più efficiente condivisione di conoscenze, rischio d'impresa, modelli di business, anche andando al di là del proprio tessuto territoriale, che non sempre può possedere tutte le risorse e le capacità necessarie a un'impresa che voglia competere sul mercato internazionale.

Fra questi distretti, quello lapideo lamenta l'eccessiva burocrazia che rischia di bloccare tutti gli sforzi e gli investimenti sostenuti dalle aziende per portare avanti i progetti e raggiungere gli obiettivi prefissati.

Tutto ciò premesso, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. È a conoscenza dell'istituzione dei distretti produttivi della Regione Puglia?

2. Negli altri Stati membri esistono e in quali quantità organizzazioni simili a queste aggregazioni produttive?

Risposta data da Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(26 marzo 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza dell'esistenza di associazioni produttive in tutte le regioni europee, associazioni che assumono forme diverse e sono in relazione con la struttura industriale ed economica locale.

La Commissione ha avviato l'Osservatorio europeo dei cluster (European Cluster Observatory — ECO) ([1]) che fa una mappatura statistica della concentrazione geografica di diverse industrie e degli indicatori di rendimento economico. Alcuni cluster sono sostenuti da associazioni di cluster, diverse delle quali figurano sul Repertorio europeo dei cluster (European Cluster Organisation Directory): sono circa 1 300, di cui 2 riguardano la Puglia. Negli ultimi anni però sono state costituite molte nuove «associazioni di cluster».

Per tale motivo la Commissione ha avviato uno studio che analizzerà tutti i tipi di reti di aziende e valuterà la loro relazione con i cluster e le organizzazioni di cluster. Essa esaminerà come esse aiutino le imprese, in particolare le PMI, a migliorare i contatti con le istituzioni di ricerca, gli investitori e i mercati internazionali e a diventare più innovative e competitive. La Commissione analizzerà, su tale base, in che modo le reti di aziende possano essere rafforzate in modo da incrementare la capacità innovativa delle PMI e agevolarne l'internazionalizzazione. Attività di tal genere sono state avviate di recente in relazione ai cluster nel contesto del CIP per sostenere lo sviluppo di strategie internazionali congiunte in tema di cluster a tutto vantaggio delle PMI ([2]).

([1]) www.clusterobservatory.eu.
([2]) www.clustercollaboration.eu/international-projects.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001372/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Industrial associations

These refer to networks of businesses, organisations, trade unions and trade associations located within a regional territory and linked together by production sector or branch of activity. Four years after their establishment in Apulia, 3 347 Apulian companies say they belong to one of the region's 18 business clusters. Of these, 15 are already operational and three were formed recently.

This form of business association is highly important to industry in Apulia if it is to remedy the negative effects of the crisis. Benefits include a more efficient sharing of knowledge, business risk and business models, going beyond the territorial fabric, which may not always have the resources and capabilities required by companies who want to compete in the international market.

One of these business clusters, the stone sector cluster, has complained about the excessive bureaucracy that threatens to put a stop to all the efforts and investments made by companies in order to push projects forward and achieve the objectives set.

1. Is the Commission aware of the establishment of industry associations in the region of Apulia?

2. Do similar industry associations exist in other Member States and, if so, how many?

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

The Commission is aware of the existence of business associations in all European regions, under different forms, and in relation with the local industrial and economic structure.

The Commission launched the European Cluster Observatory (ECO) ([1]), which maps statistically the geographic concentration of various industries and indicators of economic performance. Some clusters are supported by cluster associations, of which a certain number are listed in the European Cluster Organisation Directory — around 1 300, among which 2 for Apulia. Yet, many new 'cluster associations' have been established in recent years.

The Commission has therefore launched a study which will analyse all types of business networks and assess their relation with clusters and cluster organisations. It will examine how they help companies, especially SMEs, to be better connected to research institutions, investors and international markets and to become more innovative and competitive. The Commission will on this basis analyse how those business networks could be potentially strengthened so as to strengthen SMEs innovation capacity and facilitate SME internationalisation. Such activities have been recently launched in the area of clusters under CIP to support the development of joint cluster international strategies for the benefit of SMEs ([2]).

([1]) www.clusterobservatory.eu.
([2]) www.clustercollaboration.eu/international-projects.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-001373/12
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2012 m. vasario 13 d.)

Tema: Kontaktiniai asmenys, Komisijoje atsakingi už Baltijos jūros strategijos įgyvendinimo priežiūrą

Gerbiamasis Komisijos nary, dėkoju Jums už atsakymą į mano klausimą dėl geresnio Baltijos jūros strategijos įgyvendinimo koordinavimo paskiriant atsakingą koordinatorių. Jūs pripažįstate, kad „ilgalaikiam tvarumui užtikrinti būtinas institucinis stabilumas ir pakankami žmogiškieji ištekliai (regionų, nacionaliniu ir Europos lygmeniu)“, ir paminėjote, kad Komisijoje sudaryta darbo grupė Baltijos jūros strategijos klausimams spręsti.

Noriu Jūsų paklausti, kokie atsakingi asmenys yra paskirti ir kokie jų įgaliojimai kuruojant konkrečias BJS numatytas sritis?

J. Hahno atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. kovo 28 d.)

Tarpžinybinė darbo grupė (angl. *Interservice Working Group*), vadovaujama už regioninę politiką atsakingo generalinio direktoriaus, buvo įsteigta 2009 m., kad palengvintų ES Baltijos jūros regiono strategijos (ES BJRS) koordinavimo ir įgyvendinimo darbą Komisijoje. Grupę sudaro visų su projektu susijusių Komisijos tarnybų atstovai. Daugiau informacijos apie grupę galima rasti ES BJRS interneto svetainėje http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/baltic/contact_en.cfm (anglų kalba) skiltyje „Various contact groups. ISWG“. Ši grupė yra konsultacinė ir susitinka reguliariai.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001373/12
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Contact persons within the Commission responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Baltic Sea Strategy

Dear Member of the Commission, thank you for your reply to my question about improving the coordination of the implementation of the Baltic Sea Strategy through the appointment of a coordinator. You acknowledge that 'long-term sustainability requires institutional stability and sufficient human resources (at regional, national and European level)', and you mentioned that a working group has been set up in the Commission to address Baltic Sea Strategy issues.

I wish to ask you who has been made responsible and what powers they have to deal with the specific areas set out in the Baltic Sea Strategy?

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

An Interservice Working Group, chaired by the Director-General for Regional Policy, was set up in 2009 to better coordinate preparation and implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) at Commission level. The group involves representatives of all relevant services of the Commission. The details of the group are published on the EUSBSR website http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/baltic/contact_en.cfm under 'various contact groups — ISWG'. The group has consultative status and meets regularly.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-001374/12
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2012 m. vasario 13 d.)

Tema: ES ir Maroko Karalystės žvejybos partnerystės susitarimas

2011 m. gruodžio 14 d. Europos Parlamentas nepritarė, kad būtų pratęstas ES ir Maroko protokolo, kuriuo nustatomos Europos Bendrijos ir Maroko žuvininkystės sektoriaus partnerystės susitarime numatytos žvejybos galimybės ir finansinis įnašas, galiojimo terminas. Europos Parlamentas taip pat ragino Komisiją persvarstyti minimą protokolą ir užtikrinti jo nuostatų tvarumą ekonominiu, ekologiniu ir socialiniu požiūriu.

Nepatvirtinus protokolo galiojimo termino pratęsimo, ES laivai turėjo palikti Maroko zoną ir negali vykdyti žvejybos pagal komercines licencijas, ir tai gali sužlugdyti žvejybinę veiklą tam tikrose valstybėse narėse ir užkirsti kelią tų šalių ekonominiam atsigavimui.

— Norėčiau paklausti, kokia Komisijos padaryta pažanga derybose dėl naujo protokolo sudarymo su Maroko Karalyste?

— Ar Komisija yra numačiusi kompensacinį mechanizmą žvejams už jų patirtus nuostolius?

— Ar Komisija planuoja pateikti sprendimą dėl leidimo ES šalims vykdyti žvejybą Maroko zonoje pagal komercines licencijas, kol bus susitarta dėl naujojo protokolo?

M. Damanaki atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. kovo 15 d.)

Vasario 14 d., remdamasi Komisijos rekomendacija, Taryba suteikė jai įgaliojimus pradėti derybas dėl naujojo ES ir Maroko protokolo sudarymo. Komisija Maroko kolegas pakvietė kuo greičiau pradėti šias derybas.

Tai, kad naujausias protokolas nebuvo sudarytas, turėjo tiesioginį poveikį žvejybos įmonėms, kurios prarado žvejybos galimybių. Kad būtų suteikta pagalba toms įmonėms, Komisija yra pasirengusi padėti valstybėms narėms pasinaudoti galimybėmis, kurias joms suteikia Europos žuvininkystės fondas (EŽF). Visų pirma, naudojant šias paramos lėšas pagalba galėtų būti suteikta žvejybos laivų savininkams ir įgulos nariams, nukentėjusiems dėl laikino žvejybos veiklos nutraukimo.

Pagal Sąjungos ir Maroko žuvininkystės sektoriaus partnerystės susitarimą, kuris lieka galioti, su vienos iš ES valstybių narių vėliava Maroko vandenyse plaukiojantiems laivams draudžiama naudoti privačias licencijas (netaikant protokolo reikalavimų). Komisija neturi įgaliojimų priimti sprendimus dėl šio draudimo išimčių.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001374/12
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Kingdom of Morocco

On 14 December 2011, the European Parliament rejected the extension of the period of force of the Protocol between the European Union and Morocco setting out the fishing opportunities and financial compensation provided for in the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and Morocco. The European Parliament also called on the Commission to review the abovementioned Protocol and ensure the sustainability of its provisions from an economic, environmental and social point of view.

Since the rejection of the extension of the term of validity of the Protocol, EU boats have had to leave the Moroccan zone and are unable to fish under commercial licences and this may disrupt fishing activities in certain Member States and prevent the economic recovery of those countries.

— I would like to ask what progress the Commission has made in negotiations concerning the concluding of the new Protocol with the Kingdom of Morocco?

— Has the Commission provided for a compensatory mechanism to make good to fishermen the losses they have incurred?

— Does the Commission plan to propose a decision regarding permission for EU Member States to fish in the Moroccan zone under commercial licences until the new Protocol has been agreed?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(15 March 2012)

On the basis of a recommendation from the Commission, on 14 February the Council adopted an authorisation to open negotiations on a new Protocol between the EU and Morocco. The Commission has invited its Moroccan counterparts to enter into such negotiations as soon as possible.

In order to help those fishing enterprises which are directly affected by the loss of fishing opportunities resulting from the latest Protocol's non-conclusion, the Commission is prepared to support Member States in using the opportunities they have under the European Fisheries Fund (EFF). In particular, assistance could be granted from these funds to the owners and crew members of affected fishing vessels for temporary cessation of fishing activities.

Under the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the Union and Morocco itself, which remains in force, the utilisation of private licences (outside the framework of a protocol) by vessels flagged to one of the EU Member States in Moroccan waters is prohibited. It is not within the Commission's powers to decide derogations to this prohibition.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001375/12
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(13 februarie 2012)

Subiect: Utilizarea fondurilor europene ca garanții bancare

Având în vedere concluziile Consiliului European de săptămâna aceasta, care este metodologia propusă pentru accesarea fondurilor europene destinate constituirii de garanții bancare pentru tinerii care doresc să își întemeieze un IMM?

Răspuns dat de dl Hahn în numele Comisiei
(15 martie 2012)

Comisia abordează lipsa finanțării pentru IMM-uri, în cadrul programului-cadru pentru competitivitate şi inovare ([1]). Instrumente de datorie şi de capitaluri proprii sunt în curs de punere în aplicare în numele Comisiei de către Fondul european de investiții. Până la sfârşitul lunii septembrie 2011, mai mult de 5 miliarde de euro în garanții au fost mobilizate. Instrumentul european de microfinanțare Progress urmăreşte, de asemenea, facilitarea accesului la servicii de microfinanțare pentru oamenii care întâmpină dificultăți în ceea ce priveşte pătrunderea pe piața forței de muncă şi care doresc să înființeze o întreprindere prin oferirea de garanții disponibile şi de instrumente finanțate furnizorilor de microcredite.

În plus, politica de coeziune a UE facilitează accesul IMM-urilor la finanțare, inclusiv pentru IMM-urile înființate de tineri la nivel național şi regional, de exemplu, prin inițiativa JEREMIE ([2]). În perioada 2007-2013, aproximativ 3,2 miliarde de euro au fost deja investite în întreprinderi doar prin instrumente financiare.

Sprijinul politicii de coeziune pentru întreprinderi vizează înființarea de noi întreprinderi, dezvoltarea şi extinderea afacerilor. În cazul unor perturbări grave în economia unui stat membru, în care există o lipsă de lichidități furnizate de sectorul financiar, politica de coeziune poate, de asemenea, să susțină activitățile generale de afaceri care sunt potențial viabile din punct de vedere economic, incluzând consolidarea, dezvoltarea şi extinderea activităților de afaceri existente. Persoanele, inclusiv tinerii, care urmează să pună bazele unei întreprinderi mici sunt eligibile să obțină finanțare prin instrumente financiare, incluzând fonduri de garantare întocmite la nivel național sau regional.

([1]) Programul-cadru pentru competitivitate și inovare 2007-2013: http://ec.europa.eu/cip/index_ro.htm
([2]) Resurse europene comune pentru microîntreprinderi și întreprinderi mici și mijlocii: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/instruments/jeremie_ro.cfm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001375/12
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: The use of European funds as a bank guarantee

Taking into consideration the conclusions of the European Council this week, what is the proposed methodology for accessing European funds intended for the constitution of bank guarantees for young people who wish to set up an SME?

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

Under the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme ([1]), the Commission is addressing the lack of SME finance. Debt and equity instruments are being implemented on behalf of the Commission by the European Investment Fund. By the end of September 2011, more than EUR 5 billion of guarantees had been mobilised. The European Progress Microfinance Facility also aims at facilitating access to microfinance for people who have difficulties entering the labour market and who want to start a business by making available guarantees and funded instruments to microcredit providers.

Moreover, EU cohesion policy facilitates access to finance for SMEs including SMEs set up by young people at national and regional level, for example through the JEREMIE Initiative ([2]). In the 2007-2013 period, some EUR 3.2 billion have already been invested in enterprises through financial instruments alone.

Cohesion policy support to enterprises targets new business creation, business development and expansion. In case of serious disturbances in the economy of a Member State, where there is a lack of liquidity provided by the financial sector, cohesion policy can also support general business activities which are potentially economically viable, including strengthening, development and expansion of existing business activity. Individuals, including young people, who are going to establish a small enterprise are eligible to obtain financing through financial instruments including guarantee funds set up at national or regional level.

([1]) Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme, 2007-2013: http://ec.europa.eu/cip.
([2]) Joint European Resources for Micro to Medium Enterprises: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/instruments/jeremie_en.cfm.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001376/12
to the Commission
Marta Andreasen (EFD)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: Follow-up question on Structural Fund assistance to Liverpool City Council

I refer to the answer to my Question P-008791/2011 of 23 September 2011, on Structural Fund assistance for the City of Liverpool Cruise Terminal.

The reply, dated 7 November 2011, states the following:

'Following the complaints received, the Commission approached the United Kingdom authorities which committed themselves to consult the Commission before proceeding with any possible relaxation of the conditions of the use of the terminal. This will be done when the United Kingdom authorities have completed their analysis of the answers to the recent United Kingdom public consultation in respect of the future of the terminal and considered what decision might be made. In this context, the Commission will ensure that the state aid rules are fully respected. The latter are equally applicable to the national and EU funding.

The project was co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) under condition that the terminal be used only as a port-of-call. If the change of use to the Liverpool cruise terminal were to represent a substantial modification in accordance with Article 30 paragraph 4 of Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999(1), a financial correction could not be ruled out'.

Liverpool City Council has announced that it is in negotiations with the UK Department of Transport to relax the grant conditions, in return for a staged repayment of some or all of the UK Government contribution. The relaxation is expected to take place in three months' time, according to a statement by the Leader of the Council. No mention has been made of repayment of EU funding.

1. Is the Commission aware of these negotiations, and is it a party to them?

2. Can the Commission confirm that it will examine carefully the question of repayment of ERDF funds which were granted as part of an overall package, with UK Government money as match funding?

3. Will the Commission look into the question of whether a staged repayment of grant (rather than a full and immediate repayment) would of itself constitute unfair state aid?

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

The Commission closely follows the ongoing debate in the United Kingdom concerning the possible change of the conditions of use of the publicly financed City of Liverpool Cruise terminal (the change which would enable the terminal to develop the turnaround facilities and enter into competition with commercially funded terminals not only — as already the case — for port of call visits, but also for turnaround services).

According to the public announcement made on 26 January 2012 by the UK Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Mike Penning) [1] independent advice will be sought as to the amount of the previously granted subsidies to be reimbursed, should the City of Liverpool Cruise Terminal get the permission to be used for turnaround services. Based on the same statement, the Commission notes that the UK authorities have re-iterated their commitment to seek state aid clearance before taking a final decision.

The Commission is in contact with the UK authorities and has reminded them of their obligation to comply with the EU state aid rules, including with respect to EU funding received for regional development.

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(1) http://www.dft.gov.uk/news/statements/penning-20120126a/.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001377/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(6 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Δημιουργία ορυχείων εξόρυξης λιγνίτη στις περιοχές Φαλάνθη και Χωματερό του Νομού Μεσσηνίας

Έντονη ανησυχία και αντιδράσεις από κατοίκους και φορείς στις περιοχές Φαλάνθη και Χωματερό της Δημοτικής Ενότητας Κορώνης του δήμου Πύλου-Νέστορος, του Νομού Μεσσηνίας έχει προκαλέσει η σχεδιαζόμενη δημιουργία δυο ανοιχτών ορυχείων εξόρυξης λιγνίτη στις περιοχές Φαλάνθη και Χωματερό. Έχοντας υπόψη ότι η Ρυθμιστική Αρχή Ενέργειας (ΡΑΕ), η οποία σύμφωνα με την Οδηγία 2003/54/ΕΚ, άρθρο 23 παρ. 2, είναι υπεύθυνη για τον καθορισμό ή την έγκριση μονάδων ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας, έχει γνωμοδοτήσει από τις 11.10.2005 αρνητικά για χορήγηση άδειας για την παραγωγή ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας στην περιοχή τονίζοντας μεταξύ άλλων ότι:

«η εγκατάσταση σταθμών ηλεκτροπαραγωγής με στερεά καύσιμα, αποτελεί βιομηχανική δραστηριότητα υψηλής όχλησης», «η περιοχή στην οποία προτείνεται να κατασκευασθεί η μονάδα ηλεκτροπαραγωγής έχει ενταχθεί υπό στοιχείο GR 255003 … έτσι αποτελεί υπό ένταξη στο Ευρωπαϊκό Οικολογικό Δίκτυο Ειδικών Ζωνών NATURA 2000», «διαπιστώνονται ασάφειες ως προς την μεθοδολογία και τον τρόπο υπολογισμού των αποθεμάτων λιγνίτη», «δεν τεκμηριώνεται ο τρόπος μεταφοράς των λιγνιτικών αποθεμάτων», «διαπιστώνεται η απόλυτη αντίθεση στην υλοποίηση του εν λόγω έργου σημαντικών τοπικών φορέων», «προκύπτει ουσιώδης κίνδυνος για το φυσικό περιβάλλον», «δεν τεκμηριώνεται το ύψος των απολήψιμων αποθεμάτων» κ.λπ.

Με δεδομένο ότι εντός του Δήμου υφίσταται περιοχή που έχει ενταχθεί στο δίκτυο NATURA 2000 (GR 2550003) η οποία και γειτνιάζει με τις εκτάσεις δημιουργίας των εν λόγω λιγνιτωρυχείων, οι κάτοικοι καταγγέλλουν ότι θα πληγεί ανεπανόρθωτα η τουριστική φυσιογνωμία της περιοχής, θα έχει καταστροφικά αποτελέσματα στις αγροτικές καλλιέργειες, θα πληγεί η σημαντικότητα και επισκεψιμότητα των μνημείων της περιοχής, θα υποβαθμίσει ποιοτικά και ποσοτικά την υδροφορία της περιοχής, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Τι πρωτοβουλίες προτίθεται να αναλάβει η Επιτροπή ώστε να γίνουν σεβαστές τόσο η αρνητική γνωμοδότηση της ΡΑΕ όσο και οι ανησυχίες των κατοίκων και φορέων της περιοχής;

Απάντηση του κ. Potocnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Μαρτίου 2012)

Τα κράτη μέλη δεν υποχρεούνται να διαβιβάζουν πληροφορίες σχετικά με ζητήματα σχεδιασμού και ανάπτυξης των δημοσίων και ιδιωτικών έργων στην Επιτροπή, εκτός αν πρόκειται για συγχρηματοδοτούμενα μεγάλα έργα, όπως προβλέπεται από τον κανονισμό 1083/2006 ([1]) (άρθρα 39-41). Το έργο υπόκειται σε διαδικασία εκτίμησης των περιβαλλοντικών επιπτώσεων, σύμφωνα με τις απαιτήσεις της οδηγίας 2011/92/ΕΕ ([2]). Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, η συμμόρφωση του σχεδιαζόμενου έργου με τις απαιτήσεις του άρθρου 6 παράγραφος 3 της οδηγίας 92/43/ΕΟΚ ([3]) (ανάγκη για κατάλληλη αξιολόγηση των επιπτώσεων του έργου σε κάθε τόπο Natura 2000 που επηρεάζεται από αυτό) πρέπει να επαληθεύεται. Σύμφωνα με τις διαθέσιμες πληροφορίες, η φάση της διαβούλευσης πρόκειται να αρχίσει. Κατά τη διάρκεια της φάσης αυτής, οι αρμόδιες αρχές (σε εθνικό, περιφερειακό και τοπικό επίπεδο, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των περιβαλλοντικών ζητημάτων) και το κοινό θα έχουν την ευκαιρία να εκφράσουν τις παρατηρήσεις και τις απόψεις τους.

([1]) ΕΕ L 49 της 31.7.2007.
([2]) ΕΕ L 26 της 28.1.2012.
([3]) ΕΕ L 206 της 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001377/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(6 February 2012)

Subject: Construction of lignite mines in the Falanthi and Chomatero areas in the prefecture of Messinia

The planned construction of two open lignite mines in Falanthi and Chomatero has provoked great concern and protests from residents and organisations in the Falanthi and Chomatero areas of the Koroni municipal unit in the municipality of Pylou-Nestoros, prefecture of Messinia. Considering that the Regulatory Authority for Energy (RAE), which, according to Directive 2003/54/EC, Article 23 paragraph 2, is responsible for establishing and approving electricity supply units, delivered a negative opinion on 11.10.2005 on the granting of a licence for generating electrical power in the area, stressing in particular that:

'the installation of solid fuel power stations is a highly-polluting industrial activity'; 'the area proposed for the construction of the electrical supply unit has been designated as GR 25500, it is therefore included in the Natura 2000 European Ecological Network of Special Areas of Conservation'; 'the methodology and calculation of the lignite reserves are unclear'; 'the means of transporting the lignite reserves are not substantiated'; 'important local organisations are completely opposed to this project,' 'it poses a significant danger to the natural environment'; 'the extent of the exploitable resources is not substantiated' etc.

Given that the municipality contains an area included in the Natura 2000 network (GR 2550003) which is adjacent to the area of construction of these lignite mines, residents claim that the area's tourism will be irreparably damaged, it will have devastating effects on agriculture, the importance of and access to the area's monuments will suffer and the area's qualitative and quantitative water-bearing capacity will be reduced, will the Commission say:

1. What initiatives does it intend to take so that the negative opinion of the RAE as well as the concerns of local residents and organisations are respected?

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

Member States are not obliged to send information concerning planning and development issues of public and private projects to the Commission, unless these are co-funded Major Projects as foreseen under Council Regulation 1083/2006 ([1]) (Articles 39-41). The project is subject to an environmental impact assessment, in accordance with the requirements of Directive 2011/92/EU ([2]). In this context, the compliance of the planned project with the requirements of Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43/EEC ([3]) (need for an appropriate assessment of the implications of the project on any Natura 2000 site affected by it) will be verified. According to the information available, the consultation phase is about to be launched. During this phase, the competent authorities (at national, regional and local levels, including the environmental ones) and the public will have the opportunity to express their comments and opinions.

([1]) OJ L 49, 31.7.2007.
([2]) OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.
([3]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001378/12
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Youth policy

Can the Commission indicate in its proposals how it plans to promote active citizenship within its youth policies, with regard to the poor turnout at the European Parliament election?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2012)

Participation of all young people is an overall objective of the EU Youth Strategy (2010-18). The Commission is now preparing the EU Youth Report, which will reflect the implementation of the strategy in Member States and set the priorities for 2013-15.

The EU's structured dialogue with youth organisations focuses on the thematic priority, 'youth participation in democratic society'. The Commission is currently revamping the European Youth Portal with a view to promoting youth participation and further developing the European Knowledge Centre on Youth Policy. The Commission has also launched a study on 'Youth Participation in Democratic Life'. Last year, the European Youth Week saw the organisation of some 750 events and activities for young people across Europe, demonstrating the potential of the Youth Week to mobilise young people.

Furthermore, promoting the active citizenship of young people is one of the objectives of the Youth in Action Programme, which runs from 2007 to 2013. A survey of programme participants revealed that 60 % of them voted in the 2009 European Parliament elections (compared with 29 % of young Europeans in general). The Commission's proposal for the new 'Erasmus for All' Programme also includes provisions for similar actions promoting active citizenship and participation of youth in democratic life.

In addition, the Europe for Citizens programme currently provides opportunities for young people to participate in European projects: many town-twinning events involve young people through sport, cultural activities or school exchanges; civil society projects contribute to increasing young people's knowledge of how the EU works and to encouraging their participation in public life at different levels.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001379/12
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Sustainable water use

Can the Commission indicate in its proposals how it plans to promote sustainable water use across the European Union, and can the Commission outline whether it has any plans to introduce mandatory minimum water charges to promote sustainable water use in the European Union?

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

The aim of Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy ([1]) is to contribute to sustainable, balanced and equitable water use, and Article 9 requires that water-pricing policies provide adequate incentives for the sustainable use of water and that there is an adequate contribution from the different water uses to the recovery of the costs of water services- including environmental and resource costs.

The Commission is currently analysing the river basin management plans to see to which extent Member States have included these and other requirements in their plans.

The result of the assessment will be published at the end of 2012 in the third implementation report, as part of the Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources package, which will come forward at the end of 2012. The Blueprint will also cover possibilities for water efficiency in the Member States and will provide first indications for water efficiency targets for the entire EU as well as recommendations on how member states can improve the implementation of Article 9 of the water Framework Directive.

([1]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001381/12
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Health policy

Can the Commission indicate in its policies how it will deal with health issues in terms of addiction when referring to drug, alcohol and tobacco use across the European Union, especially in inner-city areas suffering from urban decay?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2012)

The Commission's main role in addressing addiction-related health issues consists in fostering coordination, exchange and the development of good practices in the framework of EU legislation on drugs ([1]), tobacco ([2]) and the EU strategy to support Member States in reducing alcohol-related harm ([3]).

The report on the independent external evaluation of the EU Drugs Strategy 2005-2012 and its implementing action plans was presented by the Commission to the Member States represented at the Horizontal Drug Group on 5 March 2012. This evaluation also identified what has been done on drug demand reduction at national and EU level. The Commission is preparing two initiatives related to drugs, one on criminal penalties in the field of drug trafficking and another on information exchange on new psychoactive substances. Both initiatives are scheduled for adoption in September.

A range of urban development projects have been co-financed by the European Regional Development Funds, many of which contribute to enhancing social cohesion and social inclusion and thereby also to addiction prevention.

In addition, the European Commission is currently promoting the EU-wide smoking cessation campaign 'Ex-smokers are unstoppable', aimed at smokers between 25 and 34 years old, which represent nearly 28 million people in the EU. The campaign runs through, among others, advertising ([4]) and social media ([5]). It is tailored to national audiences and pays particular attention to specific groups such as women and lower socioeconomic groups, including those living in inner-city areas suffering from urban decay.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/drugs/policy/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/policy/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/alcohol/policy/index_en.htm
([4]) Print, online and TV.
([5]) Website (www.exsmokers.eu) in all EU languages and 27 national Facebook pages.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001383/12
to the Commission
Fiona Hall (ALDE)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: State aid to the Irish greyhound industry

I refer the Commission to answer E-006482/2011, which states that tax exemptions on income arising to stallion and stud greyhound owners in Ireland was terminated in July 2008. The Commission referred Ireland to the European Court of Justice in November 2010 over Ireland's application of a 4.8 % reduced VAT rate for supplies of horses and greyhounds that is not in line with the provisions of the VAT Directive (2006/112/EC) and distorts the market. Can the Commission give me an update on the progress of any infringement proceedings in this case?

The Commissioner also refers to Ireland's 'approved or block exempted state aid schemes for animal breeding, in particular for equines' and writes that 'there is also the possibility of granting support in line with *de minimis* rules for breeders or for operators in the horse and greyhound racing industries'. What is the nature of Ireland's state aid schemes, and what other support could a Member State grant to breeders or operators in the horse and greyhound industry?

Furthermore, with regard to the investigation into the funding of prize money to greyhound owners and trainers, grants to greyhound racetrack owners and funding of greyhound stadia, when will this investigation be complete and will the Commission publish details of the outcome?

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

The Commission has initiated an infringement procedure against Ireland concerning the application of a reduced rate of VAT on supplies of race horses and greyhounds. The case has been referred to the Court of Justice on 2 March 2011 (C-108/11).

As regards the nature of Ireland's approved or block exempted state aid schemes for animal breeding, public information on all schemes — including the legal basis, budget, aid intensity and duration — is available on the official Internet site for state aid in DG Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Commission ([1]). Any other support granted to horse and greyhound breeders by a Member State should comply with the applicable agricultural state aid rules ([2]).

With regard to the investigation into the funding of prize money, grants to greyhound racetrack owners and funding of greyhound stadiums, the Commission is analysing the information recently submitted by the Irish authorities. The decisions taken by the Commission at the end of the preliminary examination are published in the Official Journal and on its website.

([1]) Approved schemes: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/stateaid/decisions/index_en.htm
Block exempted schemes: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/stateaid/exemption/info_en.htm

([2]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 1857/2006 of 15 December 2006 on the application of Articles 87 and 88 of the Treaty to state aid to small and medium-sized enterprises active in the production of agricultural products and amending Regulation (EC) No 70/2001 in OJ L 358, 16.12.2006, p. 3 and Community Guidelines for State Aid in the agriculture and forestry sector 2007 to 2013 (2006/C 319/01), in OJ C 319, 27.12.2006.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-001384/12
an die Kommission
Holger Krahmer (ALDE)
(10. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Luftverkehr im Emissionshandelssystem der Europäischen Union (ETS)

In Anbetracht meiner Anfrage P-005387/2011 vom 5. Mai 2011 an Kommissarin Hedegaard zur Wettbewerbsneutralität bei den Verhandlungen über äquivalente Maßnahmen, der Standardantwort von Frau Hedegaard mit Berufung auf den Gleichbehandlungsgrundsatz sowie der ICAO-Resolution vom 2. November 2011, vor dem Hintergrund des Briefes von US-Außenministerin Hillary Clinton an die Kommissarin vom 16. Dezember 2011 sowie Medienberichten über die Entscheidung Chinas, den Fluggesellschaften des Landes die Teilnahme am EU-Handelssystem für Emissionszertifikate zu verbieten, werden folgende Fragen an Kommissarin Hedegaard gerichtet:

1. Mit welchen Drittstaaten, namentlich, verhandelt die Kommission über die Einführung von „äquivalenten Maßnahmen“, die in der Richtlinie über die Einbeziehung des Flugverkehrs in den Emissionshandel genannt werden?

2. Wie definiert die Kommission die „äquivalenten Maßnahmen“?

3. Hält die Kommission am Ziel fest, diese „äquivalenten Maßnahmen“ wettbewerbsneutral zu gestalten und falls ja, welche Kriterien werden angelegt: äquivalent im Sinne einer Einsparung von CO_2 oder im Sinne finanzieller Auswirkungen?

4. Hat die Kommission mit China über eine Einbeziehung chinesischer Fluggesellschaften in das ETS, bzw. über die Einführung „äquivalenter Maßnahmen“ verhandelt, und, falls ja, wie ist der Verhandlungsstand?

5. Rechnet die Kommission mit einer Einigung mit China bei der Einbeziehung chinesischer Fluggesellschaften in das ETS bzw. über die Einführung von „äquivalenten Maßnahmen“ in China und, falls ja, bis wann?

6. Wie kommentiert die Kommission in diesem Kontext die Entscheidung Chinas, chinesischen Fluggesellschaften die Teilnahme am EU-Handelssystem für Emissionszertifikate zu verbieten?

7. Welche Strategie verfolgt die EU-Kommission gegenüber China, falls eine Einigung weder bei der Einbeziehung chinesischer Fluggesellschaften in das ETS noch bei der Einführung von „äquivalenten Maßnahmen“ erreicht wird? Welche Szenarien legt die Kommission ihrer Strategie zugrunde ?

8. Ist die Kommission der Auffassung, dass die Berufung auf das einschlägige Urteil des EuGH zur Legitimation der Einbeziehung von Fluggesellschaften aus Drittstaaten ausreicht, und gab es bislang eine Änderung einer Position eines Drittstaats oder Teilnehmers in den Verhandlungen mit Bezug auf das Urteil?

Antwort von Frau Hedegaard im Namen der Kommission
(12. März 2012)

Die Richtlinie über das Emissionshandelssystem (EHS) der EU ist eine nichtdiskriminierende Rechtsvorschrift, die allen Fluggesellschaften Gleichbehandlung gewährleistet. Die Einbeziehung des Luftverkehrs in das EHS ist in allen Punkten mit dem internationalen Recht und insbesondere mit dem Abkommen von Chicago aus dem Jahr 1944 vereinbar. Maßnahmen, auf deren Grundlage ankommende Flüge von den Auflagen der Richtlinie freigestellt werden können, sind gemäß den Erwägungsgründen der betreffenden Änderungsvorschrift (Richtlinie 2008/101/EU ([1])) „Maßnahmen, die mindestens die gleichen Umweltvorteile wie diese Richtlinie erreichen“.

Die Kommission hat mit vielen Ländern einen aktiven Dialog geführt und Aufklärungs- und Informationsarbeit geleistet. Wir werden diesen Dialog mit Staaten wie China fortsetzen und weiterhin bereit sein, die Möglichkeit der Freistellung von Flügen zu erörtern.

Die Kommission strebt auch eine Einigung über globale Maßnahmen zur Reduzierung der Treibhausgasemissionen aus dem Luftverkehr an. Sie ist bereit, die EU-Vorschriften zu überprüfen und gegebenenfalls eine Änderung dieser Vorschriften vorzuschlagen, falls und wenn im Rahmen der Internationalen Zivilluftfahrt-Organisation eine Einigung über marktbasierte Maßnahmen zustande kommt.

([1]) ABl. L 8 vom 13.1.2009.

Der Europäische Gerichtshof (EuGH) ist der oberste Gerichtshof in der europäischen Rechtsordnung, und die Kommission respektiert seine Urteile. Wir appellieren an Drittländer, die rechtsstaatlichen Grundsätze zu achten.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001384/12
to the Commission
Holger Krahmer (ALDE)
(10 February 2012)

Subject: Air travel and the European Union Emissions Trading System (ETS)

With reference to my Question P-005387/2011 of 5 May 2011 to Commissioner Hedegaard on competitive neutrality in the negotiations on equivalent measures, to the standard reply from Ms Hedegaard invoking the principle of equal treatment and to the ICAO resolution of 2 November 2011, and in the light of the letter from US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to the Commissioner dated 16 December 2011 and of press reports about China's decision to prohibit its airlines from participating in the EU's emission certificate trading system, I have the following questions for Commissioner Hedegaard:

1. With which specific third countries is the Commission negotiating the introduction of 'equivalent measures' mentioned in the directive on the inclusion of air travel in emissions trading?

2. How does the Commission define 'equivalent measures'?

3. Is the Commission sticking to its target of making these 'equivalent measures' neutral as regards competition and, if so, what criteria has it applied: equivalence in the sense of CO_2 savings or in the sense of financial impact?

4. Has the Commission negotiated with China on the inclusion of Chinese airlines in the ETS or the introduction of 'equivalent measures' in China and, if so, what progress have these negotiations made?

5. Does the Commission expect to reach agreement with China on the inclusion of Chinese airlines in the ETS or the introduction of 'equivalent measures' with China and, if so, what is the expected timeframe?

6. In this context, how would the Commission comment on China's decision to prohibit Chinese airlines from participating in the EU's emission certificate trading system?

7. What strategy will the EU Commission pursue with China if it is not possible to reach agreement on the inclusion of Chinese airlines in the ETS or the introduction of 'equivalent measures'? On what scenarios is the Commission basing its strategy?

8. Does the Commission consider that invoking the relevant judgment of the European Court of Justice is sufficient to legitimise the inclusion of airlines from third countries and has any third country or participant in the negotiations changed its position in the light of the judgment?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2012)

The EU Emission Trading Scheme (ETS) Directive is a non-discriminatory law and all airlines are treated equally under it. The inclusion of aviation in the ETS is fully consistent with international law and in particular with the 1944 Chicago Convention. The measures which can form a basis for exempting incoming flights are referred to the recitals of the relevant amending legislation, Directive 2008/101/EU ([1]) as 'measures, which have an environmental effect at least equivalent to that of this directive'.

The Commission has been engaged in active discussions and outreach with a large number of countries. We are continuing dialogue with States including China and remain open to discuss the potential exemption of incoming flights.

([1]) OJ L 8, 13.1.2009.

The Commission is also seeking an agreement on global measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from aviation. It is ready to review and possibly propose an amendment to the EU legislation as appropriate if and when an agreement on market-based measures is found in International Civil Aviation Organisation.

The European Court of Justice (ECJ) is the highest court in the EU legal order and the Commission respects the ECJ's judgments. We encourage third countries to respect the rule of law.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-001385/12
lill-Kummissjoni
Louis Grech (S&D)
(14 ta' Frar 2012)

Suġġett: Reġistru Ewropew dwar ir-Rilaxx u t-Trasferiment ta' Inkwinanti

Ir-Reġistru Ewropew dwar ir-Rilaxx u t-Trasferiment ta' Inkwinanti (E-PRTR) (li qabel kien magħruf bħala r-Reġistru Ewropew ta' Emissjoni ta' Tniġġis), stabbilit b'deċiżjoni tal-Kummissjoni tal-2000 u ġestit mill-Aġenzija Ewropea għall-Ambjent, huwa reġistru mifrux mal-Ewropa kollha li jipprovdi aċċess faċli għal dejta ambjentali ewlenija minn faċilitajiet industrijali fl-Istati Membri tal-UE, il-pajjiżi tal-EFTA u l-pajjiżi kandidati. Għal kull faċilità, ir-reġistru jipprovdi informazzjoni dwar l-ammonti ta' rilaxx ta' inkwinanti fl-arja, l-ilma u l-art kif ukoll ta' trasferimenti barra mis-sit ta' skart u inkwinanti fid-drenaġġ. L-għan ta' dan ir-reġistru hu li jinkoraġġixxi aktar trasparenza u l-parteċipazzjoni tal-pubbliku fit-teħid ta' deċiżjonijiet ambjentali.

Onlajn, ir-reġistru juri d-dejta kompluta għall-2007, 2008 u 2009 biss.

— Tista' l-Kummissjoni tikkjarifika jekk ir-reġistru għadux qed jiġi aġġornat u, jekk dan huwa l-każ, għaliex mhijiex qed tintwera d-dejta kompluta għall-2010 u 2011?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Potočnik f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(22 ta' Marzu 2012)

Ir-Regolament Nru 166/2006 ([1]) jistabbilixxi Reġistru Ewropew dwar ir-Rilaxx u t-Trasferiment ta' Inkwinanti (E-PRTR) li jipprovdi dejta ambjentali essenzjali faċilment aċċessibbli minn faċilitajiet industrijali fl-Istati Membri tal-Unjoni Ewropea u l-Islanda, il-Liechtenstein u n-Norveġja. Skont l-Artikolu 7, l-Istati Membri għandhom jipprovdu d-dejta kollha fi żmien 15-il xahar mill-aħħar tas-sena tar-rapportar. Il-Kummissjoni, megħjuna mill-Aġenzija Ewropea għall-Ambjent, għandha tinkorpora l-informazzjoni rrapportata mill-Istati Membri fil-PRTR Ewropew fi żmien 16-il xahar mill-aħħar tas-sena tar-rapportar.

Skont id-dispożizzjonijiet ta' hawn fuq, l-Istati Membri se jipprovdu dejta għas-sena 2010 sal-31 ta' Marzu 2012 u l-Kummissjoni se tippubblika din id-dejta sat-30 ta' April 2012. Bl-istess mod, id-dejta għas-sena 2011 se tiġi pprovduta mill-Istati Membri f'Marzu 2013 u l-Kummissjoni se tippubblika din id-dejta sa April 2013.

([1]) ĠU L 33, 4.2.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001385/12
to the Commission
Louis Grech (S&D)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: European Pollutant Release and Transfer Register

The European Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (E-PRTR) (previously known as the European Pollutant Emission Register), established by a Commission decision of 2000 and managed by the European Environment Agency, is a Europe-wide register providing easily accessible key environmental data from industrial facilities in EU Member States, EFTA countries and candidate countries. For each facility, the register provides information concerning the amounts of pollutant releases to air, water and land as well as off-site transfers of waste and of pollutants in waste water. The purpose of the register is to encourage greater transparency and public participation in environmental decision-making.

Online, the register is showing complete data only for 2007, 2008 and 2009.

— Can the Commission clarify whether the register is still being updated and, if so, why complete data is not being displayed for 2010 and 2011?

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

Regulation No 166/2006 ([1]) establishes the European Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (E-PRTR) that provides easily accessible key environmental data from industrial facilities in European Union Member States and in Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway. According to Article 7, Member States shall provide all the data within 15 months of the end of the reporting year. The Commission, assisted by the European Environment Agency, shall incorporate the information reported by the Member States into the European PRTR within 16 months of the end of the reporting year.

According to the above provisions, Member States will provide data for the year 2010 by 31 March 2012 and the Commission will publish them by 30 April 2012. Likewise, data for the year 2011 will be provided by Member States in March 2013 and the Commission will publish them by April 2013.

([1]) OJ L 33, 4.2.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001386/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
David Campbell Bannerman (ECR)
(7 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Falkland Islands — Meeting with the President of Argentina

Has the Vice-President/High Representative met President Kirchner of Argentina and, if so, has she discussed the Falkland Islands with her?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President has not met with President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner of Argentina.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001387/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(13 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Σύλληψη εμπειρογνώμονα της KESK

Εφιστώ την προσοχή σας: (α) στη σύλληψη του Ismet Arslan, νομικού εμπειρογνώμονα ο οποίος απασχολείτο στην τουρκική Συνομοσπονδία Συνδικαλιστικών Οργανώσεων Δημοσίων Υπαλλήλων (KESK), (β) στην έφοδο της αστυνομίας στο γραφείο του στην έδρα της KESK στην Άγκυρα και (γ) στην κατάσχεση του υπολογιστή του. Ο Ismet Arslan κρατείται από τις 13 Ιανουαρίου 2012, μαζί με τον Murat Oruc, δάσκαλο και μέλος του διοικητικού συμβουλίου στον συνδικαλιστικό κλάδο εκπαιδευτικών της περιοχής Sanhurfa, ο οποίος αποτελεί τμήμα της συνδικαλιστικής οργάνωσης εκπαιδευτικών Egitim-sen. Η αστυνομία προσπάθησε να διεξαγάγει έρευνα και στο υπόλοιπο κτίριο, όμως τα μέλη της KESK κατάφεραν να την εμποδίσουν. Η έφοδος της αστυνομίας οργανώθηκε από το ειδικά εξουσιοδοτημένο 10ο Ανώτατο Ποινικό Δικαστήριο της Κωνσταντινούπολης (10th Istanbul Special Authorised High Criminal Court) και αποτελούσε μέρος μιας σειράς εφόδων με στόχο τα πολικά κόμματα και οργανώσεις. Ουσιαστικά, η KESK προετοίμαζε μια εκστρατεία για την αναθεώρηση του δικαίου των συνδικαλιστικών οργανώσεων που συζητείται επί του παρόντος στην Τουρκία — θεμιτή δραστηριότητα για μια συνδικαλιστική οργάνωση.

Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Γιατί δέχεται η ΕΕ την εν λόγω αυθαίρετη συμπεριφορά των τουρκικών αρχών καθώς και την παραβίαση των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων των συνδικαλιστών (δεδομένου ότι ο εμπειρογνώμονας της KESK και ο συνδικαλιστής συνελήφθησαν χωρίς ένταλμα);

2. Στο πλαίσιο της τρέχουσας υποψηφιότητας της Τουρκίας για προσχώρηση στην ΕΕ, γιατί συμπεριφέρεται η ΕΕ με τέτοιο αξιολύπητο τρόπο και αδυνατεί να επιβάλει κυρώσεις στην Τουρκία δεδομένων των σοβαρών παραβιάσεών της –και της αδυναμίας εφαρμογής– στον τομέα της Ευρωπαϊκής και διεθνούς νομοθεσίας και των Συνθηκών, τις οποίες η Τουρκία έχει υπογράψει;

3. Ποια άμεση, πρακτική και αποτελεσματική δράση σκοπεύει να αναλάβει η ΕΕ για να θέσει τέρμα στην παρενόχληση των συνδικαλιστών και στην κράτηση των ατόμων για παρατεταμένο χρονικό διάστημα χωρίς το δικαίωμα για αξιοπρεπή δίκη, καθώς και για να πείσει την Τουρκία να σεβαστεί και να εφαρμόσει, μεταξύ άλλων, την Οικουμενική Διακήρυξη των Ανθρωπίνων Δικαιωμάτων, την Ευρωπαϊκή Σύμβαση για τα Ανθρώπινα Δικαιώματα και τη σύμβαση 87 της Διεθνούς Οργάνωσης Εργασίας (ΔΟΕ);

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

Η Επιτροπή βλέπει με ανησυχία τις πολυάριθμες συλλήψεις δημοσιογράφων, διανοουμένων, τοπικών πολιτικών και μελών συνδικαλιστικών οργανώσεων, στις οποίες έχουν προχωρήσει οι τουρκικές αρχές τους τελευταίους μήνες. Η Επιτροπή έχει εκφράσει πολλές φορές στους τούρκους ομολόγους της, τις ανησυχίες της σχετικά με τον τρόπο διαχείρισης των θεμελιωδών δικαιωμάτων, του δικαιώματος στην ελευθερία και την ασφάλεια και του δικαιώματος αμερόληπτου δικαστηρίου. Η πρόσφατη δικαστική μεταρρύθμιση θεωρείται ένα βήμα προς τη σωστή κατεύθυνση, αλλά δεν αντιμετωπίζει τα πραγματικά βασικά προβλήματα που υπονομεύουν τα δικαιώματα αυτά.

Η Επιτροπή παροτρύνει όλους τους ενδιαφερομένους να εργαστούν μαζί για την αναθεώρηση της σχετικής νομοθεσίας, με σκοπό να συμβάλουν, στην περαιτέρω ενίσχυση των δικαιωμάτων υπεράσπισης σε όλα τα επίπεδα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001387/12
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Arrest of KESK expert

I bring to your attention: (a) the arrest of Ismet Arslan, a legal expert employed by the Turkish Confederation of Public Workers' Unions (KESK); (b) the police raid on his office at the KESK headquarters in Ankara; and (c) the confiscation of his computer. Ismet Arslan has been detained since 13 January 2012, along with Murat Oruc, a teacher who is also a member of the board of the Sanhurfa Branch of the Egitim-sen teachers' union. The police sought to search the rest of the building, but were successfully opposed by KESK members. The police raid was launched by the 10th Istanbul Special Authorised High Criminal Court as part of a series of raids targeting political parties and organisations. In fact, the KESK was preparing a campaign on the trade union law reform currently under discussion in Turkey — a legitimate activity for a trade union organisation.

In this connection, can the Commission say:

1. Why the EU accepts such arbitrary behaviour by the Turkish authorities and the violation of trade unionists' human rights (given that the KESK expert and the trade unionist were arrested without a warrant)?

2. Why, in the context of Turkey's current candidacy for EU accession, the EU is acting so pathetically and failing to impose sanctions against Turkey on account of its serious violations of — and failure to implement — European and international legislation and the Treaties, to which Turkey is a signatory?

3. What immediate practical and effective action the EU intends to take in order to put an end to the harassment of trade unionists, to stop people being detained for prolonged periods without being given a decent trial, and to convince Turkey to respect and implement, *inter alia*, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights and International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 87?

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

The Commission is concerned about the numerous arrests of journalists, intellectuals, local politicians and trade union members carried out by Turkish authorities in recent months. The Commission has regularly voiced its concerns about the handling of fundamental rights, of the right to liberty and security and of the right to a fair trial to its Turkish counterparts. The recent judicial reform is considered as a step in the right direction but does not address the actual core problems that undermine these rights.

The Commission encourages all stakeholders to work jointly on a revision of the relevant legislation — to help further strengthen the rights of the defendant in general.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001388/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(14 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Criterios que sustentan la aplicación de la jerarquía de residuos y la priorización del reciclaje frente a la valorización energética

La Directiva 2008/98/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo sobre los residuos, reitera en multitud de artículos el fomento de la aplicación de la jerarquía de residuos e insiste en la paulatina transformación de la UE en una «sociedad del reciclado». Según la citada directiva, esta política debe contar con el apoyo de los Estados miembros para el uso de reciclados, siempre con el objetivo de minimizar los efectos sobre la salud humana y la protección del medioambiente. Por otra parte, en diversas comunicaciones de la Comisión (COM(2005)0666, COM(2011)0571) se insiste en el fomento del reciclado de calidad ([1]). Sus ventajas son tanto económicas como laborales, y su objetivo es aumentar la eficiencia en la utilización de los recursos que consiga que «los flujos de residuos se encaminen preferentemente hacia el reciclado y la reutilización». Se fijan objetivos para la futura gestión de los residuos que dan a la reutilización y reciclado prioridad de acción e incluso se propone textualmente que «la recuperación de energía se limitara a los materiales no reciclables». Sin embargo, en la misma Directiva 2008/98/CE se cita la siguiente consideración textual: «La jerarquía de los residuos establece en general un orden de prioridad de lo que constituye la mejor opción global para el medioambiente en la legislación y la política en materia de residuos, aunque puede resultar necesario apartarse de dicha jerarquía para determinados flujos de residuos cuando esté justificado por motivos de factibilidad técnica, viabilidad económica y protección del medioambiente, entre otros».

¿Cree la Comisión que es admisible que pueda darse el caso de priorizar la valorización energética, por ser la opción económica menos gravosa, frente a otras alternativas de reciclado cuyos costes operativos son mayores aunque económica, técnica y medioambientalmente sean viables?

¿Podría contestar la Comisión por qué se están priorizando políticas favorecedoras de la valorización energética tales como la declaración de los neumáticos fuera de uso como parcialmente biomasa?

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

Con arreglo a la jerarquía de residuos, los Estados miembros tienen que estimular las opciones que arrojen mejores resultados medioambientales. Sin embargo, al aplicar la jerarquía, el artículo 4, apartado 2, de la Directiva marco sobre residuos ([2]) (DMR) deja a los Estados miembros cierto margen de flexibilidad. Esto puede suponer que abandonen el orden de prioridad de la jerarquía de residuos para flujos de residuos concretos, siempre que ello esté justificado desde el punto de vista de la evaluación del ciclo de vida.

La incineración con valorización energética puede ser una opción de gestión respetuosa con el medio ambiente para el tratamiento de desechos residuales procedentes de otros procesos de gestión de residuos y de residuos no reciclables. Esta opción de gestión se sitúa en la jerarquía de los residuos por encima de otras opciones de eliminación como el depósito en vertederos y la incineración sin valorización energética. De hecho, la denominada «fórmula R1» ([3]) de la DMR representa un incentivo para la incineración de los residuos municipales como contribución al abastecimiento energético.

El caucho de los neumáticos usados no tiene normalmente propiedades peligrosas. En principio, en los casos en que la recuperación de materiales de neumáticos y caucho es técnicamente viable, por ejemplo, para la producción de materiales de construcción como revestimientos especiales, asfaltos, etc., esa recuperación debería ser la opción de gestión de residuos preferida. No obstante, en los casos en que no resulte técnicamente factible recuperar los materiales, la utilización de neumáticos como sustitutos de los combustibles fósiles (por ejemplo, el carbón) puede ser una opción aceptable, ya que tienen un poder calorífico comparable y con menor incidencia en el medio ambiente ([4]). Las utilizaciones finales deben evaluarse caso por caso.

([1]) (http://www.blackandgreen.es/).
([2]) Directiva 2008/98/CE (DO L 312 de 22.11.2008).
([3]) Anexo II, nota a pie de página (*), de la Directiva 2008/98/CE.
([4]) Véase el reciente estudio de Aliapur R&D, junio de 2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001388/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Criteria militating in favour of the waste hierarchy and prioritising recycling over energy recovery

Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on waste, in many of its articles, calls for application of the waste hierarchy and for the gradual transformation of the EU into a 'recycling society'. According to the directive, that policy requires Member States to support the use of recyclates, always with the aim of minimising effects on human health and environmental protection. In addition, several Commission communications (COM(2005)0666, COM(2011)0571) insist on support for high-quality recycling ([1]), which offers environmental as well as labour benefits, its objective being to increase resource efficiency, which will 'pull waste flows towards recycling and re-use'. Targets are set for future waste management to make re-use and recycling priorities for action, and it is even suggested, verbatim, that 'Energy recovery is limited to non-recyclable materials'. However, the text of Directive 2008/98/EC states that: 'The waste hierarchy generally lays down a priority order of what constitutes the best overall environmental option in waste legislation and policy, while departing from such hierarchy may be necessary for specific waste streams when justified for reasons of, *inter alia*, technical feasibility, economic viability and environmental protection'.

Does the Commission think it acceptable that in some cases it is possible to prioritise energy recovery, because it is the least burdensome option in economic terms, as opposed to other recycling options that have higher operating costs but are economically, technically and environmentally feasible?

Could it explain why priority is being given to policies that favour energy recovery, such as the declaration that disused tyres are partially biomass?

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

Member States under the waste hierarchy are required to encourage those options that deliver the best environmental outcome. However, when applying the hierarchy, Article 4(2) of the Waste Framework Directive ([2]) (WFD) gives Member States a degree of flexibility. This may entail departing from the priority order of the waste hierarchy for specific waste streams, provided this is justified in terms of 'life-cycle-assessment'.

Incinerators with energy recovery can be an environmentally sound management option to treat residual waste coming from other waste management processes and non-recyclable waste. This management option is ranked in the waste hierarchy above disposal options such as landfilling and incineration of waste without energy recovery. In fact, the so-called 'R1 — Formula' ([3]) in the WFD represents an incentive for municipal waste incinerators to contribute to the energy supply.

Rubber in waste tyres usually does not have hazardous properties. In principle, in cases where material recovery of tyres and rubber are technically feasible, e.g. production of building materials as special floorings, asphalts, etc., such recovery should be a preferred waste management option. Notwithstanding, in cases where material recovery is not technically feasible, using tyres as a substitute to fossil fuels (e.g. coal) can be an acceptable option as they have comparable calorific values with less environmental impacts ([4]). End use applications must be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

([1]) (http://www.blackandgreen.es/).
([2]) Directive 2008/98/EC, OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.
([3]) Annex II, footnote (*) of Directive 2008/98/EC.
([4]) See recent study from Aliapur R & D, June 2010.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001389/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(7 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Tecnología existente para el reciclaje integral de los neumáticos fuera de uso

La tecnología de termólisis es una tecnología patentada para conseguir el reciclaje de los neumáticos fuera de uso y opera desde el año 2009 con rendimientos en el reciclado próximos al 100 %. Obtiene como productos finales de su proceso operativo: 1) Gas proceso, de características y composición similares al gas natural (7 % sobre neumático tratado); 2) hidrocarburos líquidos, catalogados por la Dirección General de Aduanas e Impuestos Especiales como gasóleo (40 % sobre neumático tratado); 3) negro de carbono de características comerciales (53 % sobre neumático tratado).

Las características principales del proceso son: 1) eliminación ecológica y sostenible de neumáticos fuera de uso; 2) no genera nuevos problemas medioambientales y no se generan nuevos residuos pues existe un aprovechamiento integral del neumático; 3) se obtienen tres productos demandados en el mercado, lo que favorece las políticas de aprovechamiento eficiente de los recursos; 4) el proceso tiene una total autonomía energética pues emplea como combustible el gas obtenido en el proceso de reciclaje, fomenta pues la eficiencia energética; 5) al utilizar dicho gas como combustible de la planta se favorecen las políticas de reducción de emisiones de gases con efecto invernadero; 6) se contribuye al ahorro de combustibles fósiles pues tanto el gas, gasóleo como el Negro de Carbono se obtienen tradicionalmente del petróleo; 7) fomenta el desarrollo continuo de la I+D, basado en una tecnología limpia y sostenible.

¿Conocía la Comisión la existencia de tecnologías actualmente operativas, como la detallada anteriormente, para el reciclaje de neumáticos fuera de uso?

En el contexto económico actual, ¿existen instrumentos concretos de apoyo (financieros, fiscales, etc.) a tecnologías como esta, cuya aplicación pone en práctica de forma segura y sostenible las políticas marcadas por la Comisión en cuanto a gestión de los residuos, reciclaje, eficiencia energética, reducción de emisiones de gases con efecto invernadero, ahorro de combustibles fósiles y empleo eficaz de los recursos?

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

La Comisión está al corriente de los nuevos tratamientos de los neumáticos usados, tales como la pirólisis y la termólisis. Sin embargo, según el informe más reciente de la Asociación Europea de Fabricantes de Neumáticos y Caucho (*European Tyre and Rubber Manufacture Association*, ETRMA), no se ha demostrado aún la viabilidad económica de estos métodos en las actuales condiciones de mercado.

Se podría apoyar una mayor actividad de investigación e innovación en este ámbito en el marco de los temas de medio ambiente o transporte del Séptimo Programa Marco de investigación y desarrollo tecnológico ([1]) (7° PM, 2007-2013), que abarca estos aspectos. Para soluciones más cercanas al mercado se podrían considerar también otros programas financiados por la UE, tales como el programa LIFE ([2]) o el Programa Marco para la Innovación y la Competitividad (PIC), así como los proyectos de aplicación comercial de la innovación ecológica ([3]), siguiendo los procedimientos habituales de solicitud de cada convocatoria y programa.

([1]) https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/home.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/ecoinnovation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001389/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(7 February 2012)

Subject: Existing technology for complete recycling of disused tyres

Thermolysis technology is a patented method for the recycling of disused tyres. It has operated since 2009 with a recycling output close to 100 %. The end products of its operating process are: (1) process gas, with properties and a composition similar to natural gas (7 % of the treated tyre); (2) liquid hydrocarbons, classified by the Customs and Excise Directorate as diesel (40 % of the treated tyre); and (3) carbon black with commercial features (53 % of the treated tyre).

The primary characteristics of the process are as follows: (1) the process makes for eco-friendly, sustainable elimination of disused tyres; (2) it does not create new environmental problems or generate new waste, since the whole tyre is used; (3) it produces three products for which there is market demand, and is thus consistent with resource-efficient policies; (4) it is completely self-contained in energy terms, since the fuel used is the gas obtained in the recycling process, and thus promotes energy efficiency; (5) the use of that gas as plant fuel is in keeping with greenhouse gas emission reduction policies; (6) the process contributes to fossil fuel savings, since gas, diesel and carbon black are all traditionally obtained from petroleum; and (7) it encourages ongoing R+D, based on a clean, sustainable technology.

Was the Commission aware that technologies currently in operation, like the one described above, are being to recycle disused tyres?

In the current economic context, are there specific support instruments (financial, fiscal, etc.) for technologies like this one, the use of which gives effect, in a safe and sustainable manner, to the policies outlined by the Commission in regard to waste management, recycling, energy efficiency, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, fossil fuel savings and resource efficiency?

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

The Commission is aware of emerging treatment for waste tyres such as pyrolisis and thermolisis. However, according to the European Tyre and Rubber Manufacture Association's (ETRMA) latest report, under current market conditions the economic viability of these options has yet to be proved.

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 ([1]) (FP7, 2007-2013), which covers these issues. For closer-to-the-market solutions, other EU funded programmes like the LIFE programme ([2]) or Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) eco-innovation market replication projects ([3]) could also be considered, following the usual application procedures, specific to a given programme and call.

([1]) https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/home.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/ecoinnovation.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001390/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(14 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Criterios para la cuantificación y destino de los costes de gestión de residuos

La Directiva 2008/98/CE reitera en multitud de artículos el fomento de la aplicación de la jerarquía de residuos, insiste en la paulatina transformación de la UE en una «sociedad del reciclado». También requiere el debido apoyo de los Estados miembros para el uso de reciclados con arreglo a dicha jerarquía, con el objetivo de minimizar los efectos sobre la salud humana y la protección del medioambiente. Dicha Directiva insiste en el principio de que «quien contamina paga», indicando que «es conveniente que los costes se asignen de tal manera que reflejen el coste real que suponen para el medioambiente la generación y la gestión de los residuos». En España, el Real Decreto 1619/2005 que desarrolla las obligaciones marcadas por las distintas Directivas Europeas en cuanto a los neumáticos fuera de uso, dice en su artículo 4.3: «Los productores de neumáticos deberán cumplir las obligaciones establecidas en este artículo, bien realizando directamente la gestión de los neumáticos fuera de uso derivados de los neumáticos que hayan puesto en el mercado nacional de reposición, o entregándolos a gestores autorizados de neumáticos fuera de uso, bien participando en un sistema integrado de gestión, según el artículo 8, bien contribuyendo económicamente a los sistemas públicos de gestión de neumáticos fuera de uso, en medida tal que cubran los costos atribuibles a la gestión de los mismos»; asimismo en su artículo 8.1 dice: «Los sistemas integrados de gestión garantizarán la recogida de los neumáticos fuera de uso y su correcta gestión…»; por último, en el artículo 9.2 dice: «La entidad gestora del sistema integrado de gestión se financiará en cuantía suficiente para garantizar la correcta gestión de los neumáticos fuera de uso, con las contribuciones de los productores de neumáticos que participen en ella».

¿Qué entiende la Comisión por «correcta gestión de los neumáticos fuera de uso»?

¿Deben prevalecer los criterios de minimización de los costes de gestión antes que los resultados de dicha gestión?

¿Se deben favorecer gestiones de valorización energética frente a gestiones de reciclado eficaz por el mero hecho de tener un coste de gestión inferior?

¿Debe incluirse en esos costes de gestión el coste del reciclado o tiene que soportar el reciclador sus costes operativos y de gestión?

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

Según las últimas estadísticas, el 96 % de todos los neumáticos usados de la UE se recuperó en 2010, sea mediante valorización energética (aproximadamente el 38 %), sea mediante recuperación de materiales (más del 55 %, incluida la reutilización). Ambos tratamientos pueden considerarse ajustados a una gestión de residuos respetuosa con el medio ambiente siempre que, de acuerdo con la jerarquía de residuos, arrojen los mejores resultados medioambientales globales. Como se indica en la respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-1388/2012 ([1]), según un estudio hecho público por Aliapur R&D (junio de 2010) ([2]), la evaluación ambiental de los métodos de reciclado de materiales no es sistemáticamente mejor que la de la valorización energética. Las utilizaciones finales deben evaluarse caso por caso. Al hacerlo, minimizar los costes de gestión no debe ser el único aspecto que hay que tener en cuenta, sino también los aspectos medioambientales, sociales y técnicos.

En lo que respecta al coste del reciclado, se aplican actualmente en la EU tres sistemas de gestión de los neumáticos usados: un sistema basado en la responsabilidad de los productores; un sistema basado en la responsabilidad de la administración, financiada mediante impuestos, y un sistema de mercado libre, cuando la legislación establece el objetivo que hay que cumplir, pero no designa a los responsables de hacerlo. España aplica el sistema de responsabilidad de los productores, por el que una empresa sin ánimo de lucro (Signus) financiada por los productores de neumáticos recoge y recupera los neumáticos usados recurriendo a las soluciones más económicas. El proceso se financia mediante una tasa medioambiental aplicada generalmente al precio del producto y pagada por el consumidor final.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/.
([2]) http://www.aliapur.fr/media/files/RetD_new/LCA-reference-document-June-2010.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001390/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Criteria for the quantification and assignment of waste management costs

Directive 2008/98/EC provides support, in numerous articles, for implementation of the waste hierarchy, and stresses there should be a gradual transformation of the EU into a 'recycling society'. It also requires that Member States properly support the use of recyclates, in line with that hierarchy, with the aim of minimising effects on human health and of environmental protection. The directive stresses the 'polluter pays' principle, stating 'It is appropriate that costs be allocated in such a way as to reflect the real costs to the environment of the generation and management of waste'. Spanish Royal Decree 1619/2005, which implements the obligations outlined by various European Directives with regard to used tyres, states in Article 4(3): Tyre manufacturers shall fulfil the obligations established in this article, whether by directly managing the used tyres deriving from tyres they have placed on the national spare-parts market, by turning those used tyres over to authorised used tyre managers, or by contributing financially to public systems for managing used tyres, to an extent that covers the costs attributable to the management of those used tyres. In addition, Article 8(1) states: The entity that manages the integrated management system shall be given sufficient financial resources to ensure the proper management of disused tyres, with contributions being made by the tyre manufacturers participating in that system].

What does the Commission understand by the 'proper management of used tyres'?

Should the criteria of minimising management costs take precedence over the results of that management?

Should energy recovery management be favoured over effective recycling management, for the sole reason that it has a lower management cost?

Should the cost of recycling be included in those management costs, or should the recycler have to bear the operating and management costs?

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

According to the latest statistics, in 2010 96 % of all waste tyres arising in the EU have been recovered either through energy recovery (approximately 38 %) or material recovery (over 55 %, including re-use). Either treatment can be regarded as environmentally sound management of waste provided that, in compliance with the waste hierarchy, it yields the best overall environmental outcome. As set out in the answer to Written Question E-1388/2012 ([1]), according to a study released by Aliapur R & D (June 2010) ([2]) the environmental assessment of material recycling methods is not systematically better than that of energy recovery. End use applications must be assessed on a case-by-case basis. In so doing, minimising management cost should not be the only aspect to be considered, but also environmental, social and technical aspects should be taken into account.

Regarding the cost of recycling, currently three waste tyre management systems are being applied in the EU: producer responsibility; government responsibility financed through a tax; and a free market system where the legislation sets the objective to be met but does not designate those responsible. Spain operates under the producer responsibility system whereby a non-profit company (Signus) financed by tyre producers collects and recovers the waste tyres through the most economical solutions. The process is financed through an environmental fee generally applied to the product price and borne by the product's end user.

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

([2]) http://www.aliapur.fr/media/files/RetD_new/LCA-reference-document-June-2010.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001391/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(7 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Criterios para la elaboración de las estadísticas de gestión de los neumáticos fuera de uso

La Directiva 2008/98/CE indica textualmente en su considerando (47): «Conviene, en particular, conferir competencia a la comisión para que establezca criterios relativos a una serie de cuestiones… así como el establecimiento de normas detalladas sobre la aplicación y los métodos de cálculo para verificar el cumplimiento de los objetivos de reciclaje establecidos en la presente Directiva». Por otra parte, en la Comunicación de la Comisión COM(2011)0571, apartado 3.2, se insiste que «la Comisión, revisará los objetivos vigentes en materia de prevención, reutilización y reciclado… a fin de iniciar la senda hacia una economía basada en la reutilización y el reciclado, con unos desechos residuales próximos a 0». Hoy en día, la gestión mayoritaria con respecto a los neumáticos fuera de uso consiste en su trituración; sin embargo, la mayor parte de estos neumáticos triturados tienen como destino la valorización energética.

¿Cree la Comisión que el tratamiento estadístico de estos neumáticos triturados cuyo destino final es la valorización energética, entra dentro de los objetivos de valorización material por el hecho de estar previamente triturados o por el contrario formarían parte de los objetivos de valorización energética?

¿En caso de considerarse como parte de los objetivos marcados para valorización energética, qué mecanismos de control establece la Comisión para verificar el destino efectivo de dichos neumáticos triturados?

¿Considera la Comisión que podría darse el caso de que todos los neumáticos fuera de uso de un Estado miembro fueran destinados a su empleo como combustible en plantas de valorización energética pero que, a causa de su empleo en forma de triturado, ese Estado miembro fijara en sus estadísticas que el 100 % de sus neumáticos fuera de uso han sufrido una valorización material? ¿Sería correcta esa declaración estadística?

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

La Directiva marco sobre residuos ([1]) (DMR) no establece objetivos de valorización energética. La Decisión 2001/753/UE de la Comisión, recientemente adoptada, establece los métodos de cálculo para la verificación del cumplimiento de los objetivos de reciclado fijados en el artículo 11, apartado 2, de la DMR. En cualquier caso, los neumáticos triturados, si se incineran, no pueden considerarse reciclados a efectos estadísticos, porque el artículo 3, apartado 17, de la DMR excluye expresamente la valorización energética de la definición de reciclado.

([1]) Directiva 2008/98/CE (DO L 312 de 22.11.2008).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001391/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(7 February 2012)

Subject: Criteria for the compilation of statistics on the management of end-of-life tyres

Recital 47 of Directive 2008/98/EC states that: 'In particular, the Commission should be empowered to establish criteria regarding a number of issues […] as well as to establish detailed rules on the application and calculation methods for verifying compliance with the recycling targets set out in this directive'. Furthermore, Section 3.2 of Commission communication COM(2011) 0571 stresses that 'the Commission will […] review existing prevention, re-use, recycling […] targets to move towards an economy based on re-use and recycling, with residual waste close to zero'. At present, most end-of-life tyres are shredded; however, most of these shredded tyres are used for energy recovery purposes.

Does the Commission consider that, for statistical purposes, shredded tyres used for energy recovery come under the material recovery targets because of the fact that the tyres have been previously shredded, or do they instead come under the energy recovery targets?

If they are considered to come under the energy recovery targets, what control mechanisms is the Commission establishing to verify the actual use to which the shredded tyres are put?

Does the Commission think that it would be possible for all of a Member State's end-of-life tyres to be used as fuel in energy recovery plants and for that Member State then to indicate in its statistics that 100 % of its end-of-life tyres had undergone material recovery, owing to the fact that they had been used in shredded form? Would such a statistical report be correct?

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

The Waste Framework Directive [1] (WFD) does not set out energy recovery targets. The recently adopted Commission Decision 2011/753/EU establishes the calculation methods for verifying compliance with the recycling targets set in Article 11 (2) of WFD. In any case, shredded tyres, if incinerated, cannot qualify for statistical purposes as recycled as Article 3(17) of WFD expressly excludes energy recovery from the recycling definition.

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(1) Directive 2008/98/EC, OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001392/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(14 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Regulación de los cosméticos

En la actualidad no existe en la Unión Europea una legislación que garantice el carácter natural o ecológico de los cosméticos. Ante el auge en la demanda de este tipo de productos, gracias a una sociedad cada vez más concienciada con el medio ambiente y el desarrollo sostenible y teniendo en cuenta las dificultades de los consumidores para distinguir los productos auténticos de los que no lo son, conocer las diferencias entre denominaciones (natural, ecológico, orgánico…) y obtener mayor información en lo referente a la formulación, etiquetado;

¿Tiene previsto la Comisión emprender una regulación en torno a la cosmética natural y ecológica que detalle los requisitos a cumplir referentes a las sustancias permitidas y prohibidas, la proporción de ingredientes de origen natural y orgánico, las normas de etiquetado, etc.?

Respuesta del Sr. Dalli en nombre de la Comisión
(20 de marzo de 2012)

La definición de «producto cosmético» de la Directiva del Consejo 76/768/CEE ([1]) no distingue entre productos cosméticos ecológicos o de otro tipo. En su artículo 6, apartado 3, obliga a los Estados miembros a tomar todas las disposiciones pertinentes para que, en las etiquetas, en la presentación a la venta y en la publicidad referente a los productos cosméticos no se utilicen textos, denominaciones, marcas, imágenes o cualquier otro símbolo figurativo o no con el fin de atribuir a estos productos características de las que carecen.

Actualmente no existe legislación europea ni norma armonizada en la que se establezcan criterios para los ingredientes utilizados en cosméticos ecológicos. En el Reglamento n° 1223/2009 ([2]) sobre los productos cosméticos (Reglamento sobre cosméticos) se exige que la Comisión establezca, en cooperación con los Estados miembros, un plan de acción para las declaraciones de propiedades utilizadas en relación con los cosméticos y fije prioridades para determinar criterios comunes que justifiquen la utilización de dichas declaraciones.

En 2010 se creó un grupo de trabajo para determinar algunas categorías de declaraciones de propiedades en las que se deberían utilizar determinados criterios comunes. El primer objetivo del grupo era desarrollar unos criterios generales comunes aplicables a todos los tipos de declaraciones de propiedades en los cosméticos, incluidas las relativas a las características ecológicas de los productos. Una vez que se hayan establecido los criterios generales, el grupo estudiará si son necesarios criterios más específicos para las declaraciones de propiedades naturales y ecológicas.

En este contexto, se observó que, en la actualidad, está en curso la elaboración de una norma para cosméticos naturales y ecológicos en la Organización Internacional de Normalización (ISO). Con el fin de evitar que la UE y la ISO lleven a cabo el mismo trabajo, el grupo tendrá en cuenta el avance de los trabajos de la futura norma ISO y examinará si conviene o no elaborar criterios específicos de la UE para las declaraciones de propiedades naturales y ecológicas.

([1]) DO L 262 de 27.9.1976.
([2]) DO L 342 de 22.12.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001392/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Regulation of cosmetics

At the present time, no legislation exists in the European Union that guarantees the natural or eco-friendly properties of cosmetics. The demand for products of this kind is rising, thanks to society becoming increasingly aware of the environment and sustainable development, but consumers have difficulty in distinguishing between products that are authentic and those that are not, knowing the differences between designations (natural, eco-friendly, organic, etc.), and obtaining more information about product formulation and labelling.

Does the Commission plan to enact a regulation on natural and eco-friendly cosmetics, detailing the requirements to be met in terms of permitted and prohibited substances, the proportion of ingredients of natural and organic origin, labelling rules, etc.?

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

The definition of a cosmetic product in the Council Directive 76/768/EEC ([1]) does not distinguish between organic or other types of cosmetic products. Its Article 6(3) requires Member States to take all measures necessary to ensure that, in the labelling, putting up for sale and advertising of cosmetic products, text, names, trade marks, pictures and figurative or other signs are not used to imply that these products have characteristics which they do not have.

There is currently no European legislation or harmonised standard which sets criteria for ingredients used in organic cosmetics. Regulation 1223/2009 on cosmetic products ([2]) (Cosmetics Regulation) requires the Commission to establish, in cooperation with Member States, an action plan regarding claims used in relation to cosmetics and to fix priorities for determining common criteria justifying the use of such claims.

In 2010 a working group was established to identify some claim categories for which the use of specific common criteria should apply. The first objective of the group was to develop common general criteria for all types of cosmetic claims, including organic claims. Once general criteria are established, the group will consider whether more specific criteria are necessary for natural and organic claims.

In this context, it was noted that an International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) standard for natural and organic cosmetics is currently being developed. In order to avoid duplication of the work at the EU and ISO level, the group will take into account the progress on the future ISO standard and will consider whether or not to develop EU specific criteria for natural and organic claims.

([1]) OJ L 262, 27.9.1976.
([2]) OJ L 342, 22.12.2009.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001393/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(14 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Privatização da Rede Elétrica Nacional

Pouco mais de um mês após o anúncio da venda da participação do Estado português na EDP, foi anunciada a venda da quase totalidade da participação na Rede Elétrica Nacional (REN). Desta vez, entregou-se 25 % do capital da REN à empresa chinesa State Grid e 15 % à empresa omanense Oman Oil, ficando assim, a partir deste momento, reduzida a participação estatal nesta empresa estratégica nacional para 11,1 %. Estamos, assim, perante um inaceitável processo de alienação, por parte do Estado, da quase totalidade das suas participações no setor elétrico nacional, a coberto do programa FMI-UE. Isto, depois de terem sido efetuados investimentos avultados na rede elétrica nacional (só em 2010 esse investimento atingiu quase os 500 milhões de euros) e depois de, no período entre 2004 e 2010, a REN ter tido lucros líquidos de 1 156 milhões de euros e, nos primeiros nove meses de 2011, de cerca de 96 milhões de euros. Trata-se, com efeito, de uma empresa estratégica nacional altamente rentável, que atua clara e inequivocamente no quadro de um monopólio natural.

Constituindo um profundo golpe na soberania nacional e nas possibilidades de desenvolvimento do país, esta privatização significará a perda de dividendos e impostos por parte do Estado português, o aumento da saída de dividendos para o estrangeiro, o aumento das tarifas da eletricidade e a insegurança e perda de direitos para os mais de 700 trabalhadores da empresa.

Em face do exposto, perguntamos à Comissão:

1. Como pode justificar que se imponha a privatização da REN, nos moldes acima mencionados e com todos os prejuízos que daí decorrem para o país, para a sua população e para os trabalhadores?

2. Qual é a situação, em termos de propriedade social das empresas com as características da REN, operando no quadro de um monopólio natural, em cada um dos restantes 26 Estados-Membros?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(4 de abril de 2012)

Portugal recebe neste momento uma substancial assistência financeira da UE, que se tornou necessária por os mercados terem perdido confiança na sustentabilidade das finanças públicas portuguesas. Para recuperar essa confiança, Portugal tem de reduzir consideravelmente o défice e a dívida públicos e de tomar medidas de grande alcance que melhorem a competitividade da sua economia.

Muitas das empresas estatais portuguesas têm sido persistentemente deficitárias ao longo dos anos, constituindo desse modo um peso significativo para as finanças públicas. Importa, pois, que essas empresas sejam reestruturadas e, se possível, preparadas para a privatização. Se forem rentáveis, a sua privatização contribuirá para a melhoria das finanças públicas que se impõe a curto prazo.

No caso específico da REN, a venda em curso de participações do Estado Português à State Grid e à Oman Oil pode ser considerada um êxito em termos financeiros, porquanto as ofertas excederam as expectativas e culminaram em acordos sobre financiamento adicional para futuros investimentos. No conjunto da UE, há exemplos de propriedade privada e pública de redes elétricas. Conforme é do conhecimento dos Senhores Deputados, o terceiro «pacote da energia» contém diversas opções para a dissociação entre a rede de transporte e a produção, sendo a dissociação da propriedade uma das opções.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001393/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Privatisation of the National Electricity Grid

Barely a month after the announcement that the Portuguese Government is selling its stake in EDP comes the news that it is to sell almost all of its shares in the National Electricity Grid (REN). This time, it is selling 25 % of REN's capital to the Chinese company State Grid and 15 % to the Omani company Oman Oil, thus reducing Portugal's stake in this strategic national industry to 11.1 %. The State is thus, quite unacceptably, unloading almost all of its shares in the national electricity sector, under the umbrella of the IMF-EU programme. This is happening even after substantial investment in the national electricity grid (nearly EUR 500 million in 2010 alone) and in spite of the fact that between 2004 and 2010, REN had liquid assets of EUR 1 156 million and in the first nine months of 2011, of approximately EUR 96 million. REN is in effect a highly profitable strategic national enterprise which clearly and unequivocally operates as a natural monopoly.

This privatisation is a serious blow to national sovereignty and to prospects for national development; it means the Portuguese State will lose dividends and tax revenue, more dividends will flow abroad, electricity prices will rise and the company workforce of more than 700 will face job insecurity and loss of rights.

1. How can the Commission justify the enforced privatisation of REN, in the way described above and with all the damage that it will inflict on Portugal, its citizens and its workers?

2. What is the situation as regards public ownership of enterprises like REN, which operate as natural monopolies, in the other 26 Member States?

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

Portugal is currently receiving substantial financial assistance from the EU. Such assistance has become necessary because markets have lost confidence in the sustainability of Portuguese public finances. To regain this confidence, Portugal needs to reduce substantially its government deficit and debt and implement wide-ranging measures that improve the competitiveness of its economy.

Many of the state-owned enterprises in Portugal have been persistent loss-makers in the past and thus exerted a significant drag on public finances. It is therefore important that efforts are made to re-structure such companies and, if feasible, make them ready for privatisation. To the extent that these enterprises are profitable, their privatisation will contribute to the needed short-term improvement in the public finances.

In the specific case of REN, the ongoing sale of public stakes to State Grid and Oman Oil can be considered a success in financial terms as the bids have exceeded expectations and were topped up by agreements on additional financing for future investment. Across the EU, there are examples of both private and public ownership of electricity networks. As the Honourable Members are aware of, the Third Energy Package provides for several options of unbundling the transmission network from generation, with ownership unbundling being one of the options.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001394/12
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente / Alta Representante)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(14 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: VP/HR — Repressão exercida sobre o movimento «Occupy» nos EUA

Nos EUA, a polícia californiana respondeu com violência a uma iniciativa pacífica, realizada sábado, dia 28 de janeiro, pelo grupo «Occupy Oakland». Os participantes, cerca de duas mil pessoas, pretendiam ocupar um centro de convenções abandonado para nele instalar a sede do movimento, alojar famílias desalojadas das suas casas pelos bancos e trabalhadores que o desemprego e os salários de miséria empurraram para a rua. Estima-se que a execução de hipotecas pelas entidades de crédito tenha deixado 2,2 milhões de pessoas sem teto desde 2007.

As duas tentativas de ocupação do edifício público, bem como de outros igualmente votados ao abandono no centro da cidade, foram rechaçadas pela polícia com recurso a granadas de gás lacrimogéneo e balas de borracha. Cerca de 400 pessoas acabaram detidas.

Desde que foi desencadeado o chamado movimento «Occupy Wall Street», mais de seis mil norte-americanos já foram detidos nas ações de protesto (pacíficas) em mais de uma centena de cidades em todo o território.

Assim, perguntamos à Alta Representante:

1. Tem conhecimento destes acontecimentos?

2. Que avaliação faz da repressão que as autoridades dos EUA vêm exercendo contra organizações e cidadãos que, em muitos estados deste país, contestam de forma pacífica políticas que têm conduzido a uma ainda maior concentração da riqueza e ao retrocesso social?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(27 de março de 2012)

De acordo com a informação disponível, os acontecimentos a que os Senhores Deputados se referem não foram apenas uma manifestação pacífica, mas também a destruição da vedação e de equipamento de construção no Centro de Convenções Henry Kaiser, atualmente desafetado. O relatório indica também que foi forçada a entrada na Câmara Municipal (City Hall) e as instalações vandalizadas.

A polícia local afirma que teve de intervir para proteger essas instalações e que alguns manifestantes foram presos por não terem dispersado e por vandalismo. A legalidade das referidas detenções só pode ser determinada através de processo judicial.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001394/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Repression of the 'Occupy' movement in the United States

On Saturday 28 January, the Californian police responded violently to a peaceful event organised by 'Occupy Oakland' in the United States. About 2 000 people were attempting to occupy an abandoned convention centre in order to establish a base for the movement. They also intended to house families evicted from their homes by the banks and workers who have been forced onto the streets by unemployment and meagre salaries. It is estimated that 2.2 million people have made homeless since 2007 due to credit institutions foreclosing on mortgages.

The police countered the two attempts to occupy the public building, and others similarly abandoned in the city centre, with tear gas grenades and rubber bullets. About 400 people were arrested.

Since the 'Occupy Wall Street' movement began, more than 6 000 Americans have been arrested at (peaceful) protests in more than 100 cities across the country.

1. Is the High Representative aware of these events?

2. How does she view the repression that the US authorities are bringing to bear on the organisations and citizens in many states who are peacefully challenging the policies which have driven wealth concentration to new extremes and caused social regression?

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

According to available reporting, the events to which the Honourable Members refer involved not just a peaceful demonstration, but also the tearing down of perimeter fencing and the destruction of construction equipment at the City's unused H. Kaiser Convention Center. They are also reported to have involved forced entry into the City Hall and vandalizing of the premises.

The local police has stated that it intervened in order to protect these premises, and that some protesters were arrested on charges of failure to disperse and vandalism. The legality of those arrests can only be determined by due judicial process.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001396/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(7 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Bombardamenti in Siria

Questa mattina, 6 febbraio 2012, le forze siriane hanno nuovamente bombardato i quartieri di Homs, bastione della rivolta contro il regime di Bashar al-Assad nel centro della Siria, provocando diverse vittime. In particolare, sono stati colpiti i quartieri di Baba Amro e Inshaat. Gli attivisti dei Comitati hanno detto che vi è un grande numero di vittime tra morti e feriti.

Nella notte tra venerdì e sabato, oltre 230 civili sono stati uccisi a Homs dall'esercito di Assad, secondo l'opposizione siriana che ha parlato di massacro.

Considerata la risoluzione sulla situazione in Egitto e Siria, in particolare per quanto riguarda le comunità cristiane (P7_TA(2011)0471) ([1]), votata il 27 ottobre 2011 dal Parlamento europeo, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante far sapere se sono state avviate delle politiche per porre fine alla continua repressione in Siria?

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

L'UE ha condannato a più riprese i ripetuti e violenti attacchi e le sistematiche violazioni dei diritti umani commessi dal regime siriano, che potrebbero costituire crimini contro l'umanità. L'Unione ha chiesto al regime di porre fine immediatamente alle violenze e di astenersi da qualsiasi atto volto ad istigare conflitti tra etnie e religioni diverse.

Per aumentare la pressione sul regime siriano affinché si conformi a tali richieste, l'UE ha introdotto, nel maggio 2011, delle misure restrittive mirate, che sono state prorogate per 14 volte, e continuerà a imporre misure aggiuntive fino a quando non terminerà la repressione. L'UE incoraggia la comunità internazionale ad unirsi ai suoi sforzi nell'applicare e far osservare sanzioni nei confronti del regime siriano e dei suoi sostenitori.

L'UE sostiene a pieno Kofi Annan, inviato speciale dell'ONU e della Lega araba, al fine di trovare una soluzione alla crisi siriana e accoglie favorevolmente la dichiarazione del presidente del Consiglio di sicurezza delle Nazioni Unite, del 20 marzo 2012, a sostegno del piano in sei punti e della missione di Kofi Annan. L'accettazione del piano da parte del regime siriano è un primo e promettente passo verso la fine dello spargimento di sangue nel paese. L'UE chiede al regime di mantenere le promesse fatte mettendo in atto il piano in maniera completa.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P7-TA-2011-0471&language=IT.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001396/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(7 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Bombings in Syria

This morning, 6 February 2012, Syrian forces again bombed the districts of Homs, a bastion of the revolt against the Bashar al-Assad regime in the centre of Syria, leaving several casualties. Specifically, the districts of Baba Amro and Inshaat were hit. Activists from local committees have said that there is a large number of victims, both killed and wounded.

During Friday night, over 230 civilians were killed in Homs by Assad's army, according to the Syrian opposition, which dubbed it a massacre.

In the light of Parliament's resolution of 27 October 2011 on the situation in Egypt and Syria, in particular of Christian communities (P7_TA(2011)0471) ([1]), can the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative state whether policy decisions have been adopted with a view to putting an end to the continued repression in Syria?

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

The EU has consistently condemned the continued brutal attacks and systematic human rights violations by the Syrian regime, which may amount to crimes against humanity. It has called on the Syrian regime to immediately cease the violence and refrain from all acts aimed at inciting interethnic and inter-confessional conflict.

To increase pressure on the regime to comply with these requests, the EU introduced targeted restrictive measures against the Syrian regime in May 2011, which have been extended 14 times. It will continue to impose additional measures as long as repression continues. The EU encourages the international community to join its efforts to apply and enforce sanctions on the Syrian regime and its supporters.

The EU fully supports the Joint UN-Arab League Envoy Kofi Annan to seek a settlement to the Syrian crisis. It welcomes the UN Security Council's Presidential Statement of 20 March 2012, backing his mission and six point plan. The acceptance of the plan by the Syrian regime is a first and promising step towards ending the bloodshed in Syria. The EU calls on the regime to follow up on its promises by thoroughly implementing the plan.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P7-TA-2011-0471&language=EN.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001397/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(14 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Nigeria, attacco a un oleodotto

Dopo una tregua durata poco più di quattro mesi, sabato sera (4.2.2012) i militanti del MEND (Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta, il gruppo più importante che opera nelle zone petrolifere del sud della Nigeria), hanno attaccato e distrutto un oleodotto dell'Agip a Brass, nello stato di Bayelsa in Nigeria. L'attentato è stato rivendicato con un comunicato inviato ai giornali da un dirigente dell'organizzazione che usa il nome di battaglia di Jomo Gbomo.

Secondo i militanti del MEND il presidente della Nigeria, Goodluck Jonathan, piuttosto che affrontare i gravi problemi che affliggono il paese, sperpera fondi pubblici per delatori, spie e teppisti.

Il comunicato stampa del MEND si conclude con il seguente annuncio di nuovi attentati: «Consigliamo di prendere molto sul serio i nostri prossimi avvisi di nuovi attacchi. Noi avvisiamo sempre per minimizzare le vittime civili e forniamo tempo sufficiente per l'evacuazione». Il primo ottobre scorso (anniversario dell'indipendenza) il MEND annunciò un attentato ad Abuja, capitale della Nigeria. Nessuno diede retta all'avviso e le bombe provocarono 12 morti.

Ciò premesso, può il Vice-Presidente/Alto Rappresentante rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. è al corrente di questa vicenda?

2. Quali azioni intende intraprendere per risolvere le violenze che si stanno verificando nel paese?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(2 luglio 2012)

L'onorevole parlamentare fa giustamente notare che sussistono seri problemi di sicurezza nel delta del Niger.

L'UE è perfettamente a conoscenza della situazione nella regione ed è impegnata in un dialogo regolare con le autorità nigeriane, come avvenuto in occasione dell'ultima riunione ministeriale Nigeria-UE tenutasi l'8 febbraio ad Abuja, in cui il ministro degli Affari esteri danese, Villy Soevndal, ha fatto le veci dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton, mentre la Nigeria è stata rappresentata dal ministro degli Affari esteri, l'Ambasciatore Olugbenga Ashiru. In seguito alla riunione è stato rilasciato un comunicato congiunto in cui si afferma quanto segue: «Le parti sono concordi nel proseguire il dialogo e la cooperazione al fine di consolidare la pace e la stabilità nella regione del delta del Niger e hanno sottolineato la necessità di continuare ad impegnarsi per realizzare a pieno il programma di amnistia avviato dalle autorità nigeriane. Le parti sono inoltre concordi sulla necessità di intensificare gli sforzi per affrontare la povertà e il degrado ambientale che affliggono la regione tenendo in debita considerazione la responsabilità sociale delle imprese operanti sul territorio».

L'UE ha recentemente approvato un importante programma di sviluppo per il delta del Niger, nell'ambito del quale sono stati impegnati 200 milioni di EUR per risolvere i problemi fondamentali dell'area, concentrandosi particolarmente sulla creazione di occupazione, sui servizi sociali di base e sulla riconciliazione.

I ministri hanno inoltre concordato, in una prospettiva più generale, di adottare e applicare una politica comune di lotta alla violenza, specialmente nei confronti dell'organizzazione Boko Haram.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001397/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Attack on an oil pipeline in Nigeria

After a truce which had lasted just over four months, on the evening of Saturday, 4 February 2012 militants from the MEND (Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta, the most important group operating in the oil-producing areas in southern Nigeria) attacked and destroyed an Agip pipeline in Brass, in the state of Bayelsa, Nigeria. Responsibility was claimed for the attack in a press release sent to newspapers by a leader of the organisation going by the *nom de guerre* of Jomo Gbomo.

According to the MEND militants, rather than dealing with the country's serious problems, Nigeria's President, Jonathan Goodluck, is squandering public funds on informers, spies and thugs.

The MEND press release concludes with the following announcement of forthcoming attacks: 'we recommend that you take our next warnings of further attacks very seriously. We always give notice, in order to minimise civilian casualties and provide sufficient time for evacuation'. On 1 October 2011 (the anniversary of independence), MEND announced an attack in Abuja, Nigeria's capital. No one heeded the warning and the bombs caused 12 deaths.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of these events?

2. What action does she intend to take to put a stop to the violence in Nigeria?

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

The Honourable Member is correct to point out that there are serious security problems in the Niger Delta.

The EU is very aware of the situation in the Niger Delta. It is regularly discussed with the Nigerian authorities, and most recently in the context of the Nigeria-EU Ministerial meeting, which took place in Abuja on 8 February. High Representative Ashton was represented by the Foreign Minister of Denmark, Mr Villy Soevndal, while Nigeria was represented by Foreign Minister Ambassador Olugbenga Ashiru. The Joint Communique issued following the Ministerial meeting Nigeria and the EU stated: 'The Parties agreed to maintain their dialogue and cooperation with a view to consolidating peace and stability in the Niger Delta region. They underlined the need to continue efforts to fully implement the amnesty programme initiated by the Nigerian authorities. They agreed on the need to increase efforts to tackle poverty and environmental degradation the region currently faces, with due regard to the corporate social responsibility of the operating companies'.

The EU has recently approved a major development programme for the Niger Delta. More than EUR 200 M are being mobilised to address the root problems Niger Delta with a focus on job creation, basic social services and reconciliation.

More generally, the Ministers also agreed to devise and pursue a common approach to violence and notably to Boko Haram.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001398/12
alla Commissione
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(7 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Senegal: muore un uomo durante le proteste contro il presidente

Un uomo è morto negli scontri a Dakar, in Senegal, dove i manifestanti dell'opposizione stanno protestando contro la decisione della Corte costituzionale di permettere all'attuale presidente Abdoulaye Wade di candidarsi per un terzo mandato. Secondo il sito *al-Arab online* i manifestanti uccisi dalla polizia sarebbero tre.

L'uomo, riferisce la stazione radio Rfm, è stato investito da un blindato della polizia che cercava di farsi strada tra i dimostranti. Gli agenti hanno inoltre sparato gas lacrimogeni contro i manifestanti che gridavano «Palazzo! Palazzo!», indicando l'intenzione di marciare verso il palazzo presidenziale. Il capo della polizia ha confermato la morte del manifestante ma ha negato che sia stato ucciso dagli agenti.

Fino a oggi (1.2.2012) quattro persone sono morte nelle proteste, tra cui un poliziotto, lapidato dai dimostranti.

Pertanto si chiede alla Commissione:

1. è al corrente della situazione e delle violenze che si stanno verificando in Senegal?

2. quali politiche intende avviare per garantire la democrazia nel paese?

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

L'Unione europea è partner di lunga data del Senegal e nutre sentimenti di amicizia per lo Stato e il popolo senegalese; inoltre, le sta a cuore la pace, la stabilità e la democrazia in questo paese.

L'UE segue attentamente il processo elettorale in Senegal. A sostegno della trasparenza di tale processo, l'UE ha deciso di inviare una missione di osservazione elettorale (MOE), guidata dall'osservatore capo on. Thijs Berman. La MOE dell'UE invierà oltre 90 osservatori provenienti dalla maggioranza degli Stati membri e beneficerà del sostegno di una delegazione di sette parlamentari. Il suo compito principale consiste nel monitorare l'intero processo, analizzarlo e riferire in merito. L'UE esaminerà con attenzione le raccomandazioni della relazione, che costituirà una base per il dialogo politico con il Senegal.

La delegazione dell'UE in Senegal sta sostenendo due progetti di osservazione elettorale interna, finanziati nell'ambito del programma tematico per gli interlocutori non statali.

L'UE ha rilasciato due dichiarazioni sul processo elettorale: una dichiarazione dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente il 1º gennaio 2012, all'inizio della MOE dell'UE, e una dichiarazione locale della delegazione dell'UE il 2 gennaio 2012, dopo la convalida della lista dei candidati da parte del Consiglio costituzionale. L'UE ha esortato tutte le parti ad astenersi da qualsiasi atto di violenza, a fare ricorso al dialogo e a contribuire allo svolgimento di elezioni pacifiche. L'UE ha sottolineato che l'esito delle elezioni deve rispecchiare pienamente la volontà del popolo senegalese. Nei contatti periodici con le autorità senegalesi, il capo delegazione ha posto l'accento sull'esigenza di rispettare le libertà fondamentali, tra cui il diritto di manifestare pacificamente, e ha espresso preoccupazione per le morti verificatesi durante le dimostrazioni. Le autorità si sono impegnate pubblicamente a svolgere un'indagine completa.

L'UE continuerà a seguire attentamente le vicende.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001398/12
to the Commission
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(7 February 2012)

Subject: Senegal: death of a man during protests against the President

A man died during clashes in Dakar, Senegal, where opposition demonstrators were protesting against the decision by the constitutional court to allow the current president, Abdoulaye Wade, to stand for a third term. According to the site *al-Arab online*, three protestors were killed by police.

The radio station Rfm reported that the man was hit by an armoured police vehicle that was trying to make its way through the crowd of demonstrators. Officers also fired tear gas at the protestors, who were shouting 'Palace! Palace!', indicating their intent to march towards the presidential palace. The chief of police, confirmed that a protestor had died but denied that he had been killed by police officers.

To date (1 February 2012), four people have been killed during the protests, including a policeman who was stoned to death by demonstrators.

Can the Commission therefore state:

1. Whether it is aware of this situation and of the violence occurring in Senegal?

2. What policies it intends to implement in order to safeguard democracy in that country?

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

The EU is a long-standing partner and friend of Senegal and its people, and it is deeply attached to a peaceful, stable and democratic Senegal.

The EU follows carefully the electoral process in Senegal. To support the transparency of this process, the EU has deployed an Electoral Observation Mission (EOM), Chief Observer Member of Parliament Thijs Berman. The EU EOM will send more than 90 observers coming from most of the EU Member States, and will benefit from the support of a delegation of seven Members of Parliament. The main task of the EU EOM is to monitor the entire process, analyse it and report. The EU will consider the recommendations of the report with attention, and will use it as a basis for political dialogue with Senegal.

The EU Delegation in Senegal is providing support for two projects on domestic electoral observation, funded under the thematic programme for Non State Actors.

The EU has issued two statements on the electoral process: High Representative/Vice-President Statement on 1st January 2012, at the start of the EU EOM, and local Statement by the EU Delegation on 2 January 2012, after the validation of the list of candidates by the Constitutional Council. The EU has called on all parties to abstain from any act of violence, resort to dialogue, and contribute to peaceful elections. The EU has underlined that the result of the elections should reflect fully the will of the Senegalese people. In regular contacts with the Senegalese Authorities, the Head of Delegation has emphasised the need to respect fundamental freedoms including the right to peaceful demonstration and expressed concern regarding the deaths occurred during demonstrations. The authorities have publicly committed to make a full enquiry.

The EU will continue to follow closely the events.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001400/12
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(14 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Politiche e finanziamenti a favore degli anziani e delle strutture di assistenza nell'Anno europeo dell'invecchiamento attivo e della solidarietà tra le generazioni

La popolazione mondiale di età maggiore a 60 anni è attualmente di 650 milioni, ma, secondo i dati disponibili, entro il 2050 gli anziani nel mondo saranno 2 milioni.

Nello specifico, in Europa, dove dal 1960 l'aspettativa di vita è aumentata di ben 8 anni e si prevede aumenterà di altri cinque, il numero delle persone oltre i 65 anni d'età crescerà del 70 % e quello degli ultraottantenni del 170 %.

Secondo l'Ufficio statistico europeo, nel 2060 ci saranno solo due lavoratori (persone tra 15 e 64 anni) per ogni persona di età maggiore ai 65 anni, rispetto all'attuale rapporto di 4:1.

L'apice della situazione si avrà tra il 2015 e il 2035 quando i *baby boomer* andranno in pensione.

Con una popolazione che invecchia, bassi tassi di natalità e una forza lavoro proporzionalmente in diminuzione, l'Unione dovrà confrontarsi con una maggiore domanda di assistenza, adattando i sistemi sanitari alle esigenze della popolazione anziana e attuando politiche di integrazione, accompagnamento e supporto durante questo periodo della vita, fatte salve le responsabilità di mantenere sostenibili i costi del welfare sociale per le giovani generazioni.

Considerando che il 2012 è l'Anno europeo dell'invecchiamento attivo e della solidarietà tra le generazioni e che la salute rientra tra le priorità della nuova Presidenza del Consiglio dell'Unione europea, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. quali sono le iniziative europee a sostegno delle popolazioni anziane;

2. quali sono gli strumenti e le politiche a sostegno delle associazioni e delle strutture che forniscono assistenza e cura per gli anziani;

3. quali azioni intende intraprendere per far fronte e sostenere l'invecchiamento della popolazione europea;

4. qual è il quadro generale.

Risposta data da Laszlo Andor a nome della Commissione
(2 aprile 2012)

L'invecchiamento della popolazione presenta grandi sfide per le società in Europa e per i sistemi previdenziali ed è una problematica critica per l'Unione nel suo insieme.

L'elaborazione di misure specifiche rientra nelle competenze degli Stati membri, ma il livello europeo è chiamato a svolgere un ruolo che va dalla sensibilizzazione alla concezione di un quadro generale — per il tramite del metodo di coordinamento aperto — fino all'erogazione di un sostegno finanziario attraverso il Fondo sociale europeo e alla formulazione di raccomandazioni specifiche all'indirizzo degli Stati membri durante il semestre europeo nel contesto della strategia Europa 2020.

La Commissione ha adottato un Libro bianco relativo a pensioni adeguate, sicure e sostenibili ([1]). Esso evoca la necessità di esaminare l'adeguatezza e la sostenibilità dei nostri sistemi pensionistici in un'ottica d'interesse comune, ribadendo nel contempo che tale sfera rientra comunque nella responsabilità precipua degli Stati membri.

L'Anno europeo dell'invecchiamento attivo e della solidarietà tra le generazioni si prefigge di dare rilievo alle sfide poste dall'invecchiamento demografico e di incoraggiare nuove iniziative atte a promuovere l'invecchiamento attivo a tutti i livelli di governance come anche nelle imprese ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=752&newsId=1194&furtherNews=yes.
([2]) http://europa.eu/ey2012/ey2012main.jsp?catId=972&langId=en.

La Commissione ha avviato un'iniziativa pilota denominata Partenariato europeo per l'innovazione a favore dell'invecchiamento attivo e sano. Il partenariato identifica un numero limitato di azioni da avviarsi già nel 2012 al fine di migliorare lo stato di salute e la qualità della vita dei cittadini europei, con un'attenzione particolare per gli anziani ([3]).

La Commissione appoggia gli sforzi degli Stati membri con numerose iniziative (ad esempio il programma Grundtvig ([4]), un progetto di scambio di volontari anziani).

Due imminenti relazioni, una del comitato di Politica economica e una del comitato per la Protezione sociale esamineranno l'impatto dell'invecchiamento sulla sostenibilità delle finanze pubbliche.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/index_en.cfm?section=active-healthy-ageing.

([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/grundtvig/doc986_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001400/12
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Policies and funding benefiting the elderly and care facilities in the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations

The global population of people over 60 years of age is currently 650 million, but according to available data, by 2050 the elderly will number 2 billion.

Specifically in Europe, where life expectancy has risen by some 8 years since 1960 and is predicted to rise by another 5, the number of people over 65 years of age will increase by 70 % and of those over 80 by 170 %.

According to the European Statistical Office, in 2060 there will only be two workers (people aged between 15 and 64) for each person over 65, compared with the current ratio of 4:1.

The situation will peak between 2015 and 2035 as the 'baby boomers' retire.

With an ageing population, low birth rates and a work force that is getting smaller proportionally, the Union will have to deal with an increasing demand for care, adapting healthcare systems to the challenges of the elderly population and carrying out policies of integration, care and support during this stage of life, without prejudice to the responsibility of keeping social welfare costs sustainable for the younger generation.

Considering that 2012 is the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations and that health falls within the priorities of the new Presidency of the Council of the European Union,

1. What European initiatives exist to support the elderly population?

2. What instruments and policies exist to support the associations and facilities that provide care and assistance for the elderly?

3. What action does the Commission intend to take to deal with and support the ageing population in Europe?

4 Would the Commission provide a general overview of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2012)

Population ageing poses great challenges to European societies and social welfare systems and it is a critical issue for the Union as a whole.

The design of specific measures falls in the competence of Member States but the European level has its role to play, starting from awareness raising and designing a general framework — through the open method of coordination — up to providing financial support through the European Social Fund and making specific recommendations to Member States during the European Semester in the context of the Europe 2020 strategy.

The Commission adopted a White Paper on adequate, safe and sustainable pensions ([1]). It reflects the need to consider the adequacy and sustainability of our pension systems as a matter of common concern, while underlining that this remains primarily a responsibility of the Member States.

The European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations seeks to highlight the challenges posed by population ageing and to foster new initiatives to promote active ageing at all levels of governance as well as in companies ([2]).

The Commission has launched the pilot European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing. The Partnership identifies a limited number of actions that will start as early as 2012, which aim to improve the health status and quality of life of European citizens, with a particular focus on older people ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=752&newsId=1194&furtherNews=yes.
([2]) http://europa.eu/ey2012/ey2012main.jsp?catId=972&langId=en.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/index_en.cfm?section=active-healthy-ageing.

The Commission supports efforts in Member States with various initiatives (e.g. the Grundtvig programme [4], a senior volunteering exchange project).

Two forthcoming reports, one by the Economic Policy Committee and one by the Social Protection Committee, will look at the impact of ageing on the sustainability of public finances.

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(4) http://ec.europa.eu/education/grundtvig/doc986_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001402/12
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin / Hohe Vertreterin)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Übersicht über das Umweltpolitikprogramm EU-China

Das am 30. November 2009 vereinbarte Umweltpolitikprogramm EU-China („EU-China Environmental Governance Programme", EGP) ([1]) wird vom Europäischen Auswärtigen Dienst mit 15 Mio. EUR zu 80 Prozent finanziert ([2]). Es wird von der Forschungsstelle für Umwelt- und Wirtschaftspolitik des chinesischen Ministeriums für Umweltschutz implementiert.

1. Kann die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin einen Überblick über die aktuellen und derzeit geplanten Aktivitäten sowie eventuell veröffentlichte Publikationen des EGP geben?

2. Wie viele Mitarbeiter hat das EGP derzeit und wie viele Mitarbeiter sind vorgesehen?

3. Aus welchen Gründen wird das größtenteils von der EU finanzierte Programm von der Forschungsstelle eines chinesischen Ministeriums implementiert?

4. Werden alle für das EGP in Auftrag gegebenen oder vom EGP finanzierten Studien und Analysen veröffentlicht?

Antwort von Frau Catherine Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(10. Mai 2012)

Für das EU-China-Programm für verantwortungsvolles Umweltmanagement (EGP) werden EU-Mittel aus dem Finanzierungsinstrument für die Entwicklungszusammenarbeit bereitgestellt. In der Anfangsphase wurden Beratungen über Programmthemen, Befragungen von NRO, Konsultationen mit dem Ministerium für Umweltschutz über verantwortungsvolles Umweltmanagement und eine Studie über die Umweltvorschriften in China organisiert.

Für 2012 sind Politikdialog-Seminare, vergleichende Studien über Umweltüberwachung und öffentliche Berichterstattung, Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfungen unter Beteiligung der Öffentlichkeit, strategische Umweltbewertungen und Planung, die Einführung neuer Methoden zur Bewertung von Umweltschäden, freiwillige Umweltschutzmaßnahmen der Unternehmen und anschließende Schulungen zu den Ergebnissen, eine nationale Konferenz zur Darlegung der Ergebnisse, eine regionale Konferenz zur Koordinierung der Projekte sowie ein Seminar für Journalisten über Umweltberichterstattung geplant.

Das Personal des EGP umfasst einen Projektdirektor, einen stellvertretenden Projektdirektor, einen Teamleiter für Technische Hilfe (Vollzeit), eine Fachkraft für verantwortungsvolles Umweltmanagement (Teilzeit), eine Fachkraft für Kommunikation und Sichtbarkeit (Teilzeit) sowie fünf bis sechs Hilfskräfte. Kurzzeitexperten sind ebenfalls vorgesehen.

Das Forschungszentrum als solches erhält keine Mittel der EU. Das Vorhaben wird von einer Projekt-Taskforce durchgeführt, die dem chinesischen Ministerium für Umweltschutz untersteht und von einem von der EU finanzierten Team für Technische Hilfe unterstützt wird. Die EU-Mittel für dieses Programm werden den Partnerschaftsprojekten EU-China zur Demonstration vorbildlicher Verfahren im Bereich des Umweltmanagements zugewiesen.

Um die Beteiligung der Öffentlichkeit am Entscheidungsprozess in China zu fördern, werden alle EGP-Studien und sonstige Materialien auf der EGP-Website veröffentlicht, die zurzeit eingerichtet wird.

([1]) Gemeinsame Erklärung des 12. Gipfeltreffens EU-China: http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjdt/2649/t630507.htm
([2]) Europäischer Auswärtiger Dienst: http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/china/projects/list_of_projects/19804_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001402/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Overview of the EU-China environmental policy programme

The EU-China environmental policy programme agreed on 30 November 2009 ('EU-China Environmental Governance Programme', EGP) ([1]) is 80 % funded by the European External Action Service with EUR 15 million ([2]). It is being implemented by the Research Centre for Environmental and Economic Policy of the Chinese Ministry for Environmental Protection.

1. Can the Vice-President/High Representative offer an overview of current and planned activities and any publications issued by the EGP?

2. How many people are currently employed by the EGP and what staffing levels are planned?

3. Why is this mainly EU-funded plan being implemented by a research centre operated by a Chinese Ministry?

4. Will all the studies and analyses commissioned from the EGP or financed by the EGP be published?

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

The EU-China Environmental Governance Programme (EGP) receives EU funding under the Development and Cooperation Instrument. During the inception phase: consultations on programme themes, consultation of NGOs, consultations with the Ministry of Environmental Protection on Environmental Governance, a China Environmental Legislation Study were organised.

For 2012: policy dialogue seminars, comparative studies on environmental monitoring and public reporting, public participation in environmental impact assessments, strategic environmental assessments and planning, environmental damage assessment methodologies, voluntary corporate environmental behaviour, followed by trainings on findings; a national conference presenting outputs, a regional conference for coordination of projects and a seminar for journalists on environmental reporting are planned.

Employed by the EGP are a Project Director, Project Deputy Director, a Technical Assistance Team Leader (full time), an Environmental Governance expert (part-time), a communication and Visibility expert (part-time) and 5-6 support staff. Short term experts are also foreseen.

The research centre as such does not receive EU funding. The project is implemented by a Project Task Force under the Chinese Ministry of Environmental Protection supported by a Technical Assistance Team, funded by the EU. EU funds for this programme are allocated to EU-China partnership projects for the demonstration of good practice in environmental governance.

In order to promote public participation in decision-making in China, all EGP studies and material will be made available on the EGP website, currently under construction.

([1]) Joint Declaration from the 12th EU-China Summit: http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjdt/2649/t630507.htm
([2]) European Action Service: http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/china/projects/list_of_projects/19804_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001403/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Unterstützung für China in den Bereichen Energie und Klimawandel

1. Kann die Kommission einen Überblick darüber geben, welche finanzielle Unterstützung die Volksrepublik China in den letzten fünf Jahren in den Bereichen Energie und Klimawandel durch die EU oder eine ihrer Unterorganisationen erhalten hat?

2. Kann die Kommission einen Überblick darüber geben, welche technologische Unterstützung die Volksrepublik China in den letzten fünf Jahren in den Bereichen Energie und Klimawandel durch die EU oder eine ihrer Unterorganisationen erhalten hat?

Antwort von Herrn Piebalgs im Namen der Kommission
(10. April 2012)

Die Kommission unterstützt die Politik der Volksrepublik China in den Bereichen Energie (Energieeffizienz, saubere Energie, erneuerbare Energie) und Klimawandel seit 2007 mit Geldern aus dem EU-Haushalt. Hierfür wurden bisher schätzungsweise 30 Mio. EUR bereitgestellt.

Zu den wichtigsten geförderten Initiativen gehören: 1) die Einrichtung des europäisch-chinesischen Zentrums für saubere Energie im Jahr 2009, 2) das europäisch-chinesische Institut für saubere und erneuerbare Energie, 3) Maßnahmen zum Kapazitätsaufbau für den chinesischen Emissionshandel sowie das europäisch-chinesische Projekt zur Förderung der Umsetzung des „Mechanismus für umweltverträgliche Entwicklung" in China.

Darüber hinaus wird auch die Organisation von Workshops und bilateralen Treffen unterstützt, um zu einem besseren gegenseitigen Verständnis der Politik und der Strategien für eine umweltverträgliche und nachhaltige Entwicklung beizutragen.

Außerdem wurden im Hinblick auf die etwaige Errichtung einer weitgehend emissionsfreien kohlebefeuerten Demonstrationsanlage in China EU-Forschungsmittel für gemeinsame Forschungs- und Entwicklungsmaßnahmen gewährt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001403/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Support for China in the areas of energy and climate change

1. Can the Commission offer an overview of the financial support the People's Republic of China has received from the EU or one of its organisations in the areas of energy and climate change in the last five years?

2. Can the Commission offer an overview of the technological support the People's Republic of China has received from the EU or one of its organisations in the areas of energy and climate change in the last five years?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2012)

The Commission has provided support from the EU budget for the People's Republic of China's (PRC) policies in the domains of energy (energy efficiency, clean energy, renewable energies) and climate change since 2007. This support is estimated at around EUR 30 million.

Some of the main initiatives being supported are: (1) the setting up in 2009 of the China-EU Clean Energy Centre; (2) the EU-China Institute for Clean and Renewable Energy; (3) Capacity building for the development of China's emission trading; and the EU-China Clean Development Mechanism Facilitation Project.

Moreover, support is also provided to organise workshops and bilateral meetings to improve mutual understanding of respective clean development policies and sustainable development strategies.

Finally, funds from the EU budget for research have also been invested in joint research and development activities for a possible future Near Zero Emissions Coal-fired demonstration plant in the PRC.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001404/12
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin / Hohe Vertreterin)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Aktivitäten des EU-China-Instituts für saubere und erneuerbare Energieträger

Das vom Europäischen Auswärtigen Dienst mit 10 Mio. EUR zu 70,52 Prozent finanzierte EU-China-Institut für saubere und erneuerbare Energieträger („EU-China Institute for Clean and Renewable Energy", ICARE) soll jährlich ca. 150 Studenten im Bereich erneuerbare Energieträger ausbilden.

1. Kann die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin einen Überblick über die a) abgeschlossenen, b) aktuellen und c) derzeit geplanten Aktivitäten geben?

2. Wie viele Mitarbeiter hat das ICARE derzeit?

3. Wie weit ist die Einrichtung des Unterrichtsortes fortgeschritten?

4. Wie viele Studenten werden derzeit am ICARE unterrichtet bzw. wann werden die ersten Studenten ihr Studium beginnen?

Antwort von Frau Catherine Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(10. Mai 2012)

1. Die Aktivitäten des EU-China-Instituts für saubere und erneuerbare Energien (Institute for Clean And Renewable Energy, ICARE) umfassen drei Komponenten: 1) den Masterstudiengang, 2) die Berufsausbildung und 3) die Forschungsplattform. Die Umsetzung dieser drei Komponenten ist ein fortlaufender Prozess, der sich über die ganze Projektdauer erstreckt und sich über die Laufzeit des Projekts hinaus institutionalisieren soll. Deshalb können die Aktivitäten nicht als abgeschlossen, aktuell oder geplant eingestuft werden. Jede Komponente gliedert sich in zahlreiche Unteraktivitäten. Die Umsetzung der Komponenten 2) und 3) verzögert sich aufgrund des laufenden Verfahrens zur Genehmigung von ICARE durch das chinesische Bildungsministerium.

2. ICARE hat zwölf Mitarbeiter, die voll- oder teilzeitbeschäftigt sind. Für den Masterstudiengang haben bereits mehr als 30 europäische Gastprofessoren von verschiedenen Mitgliedern des Konsortiums der europäischen Partneruniversitäten Vorlesungen gehalten.

3. Die Analyse des Bedarfs der lokalen und internationalen Unternehmen wird derzeit durchgeführt. Die Marktanalyse wurde bereits durchgeführt und das erste Programm soll noch im Jahr 2012 vorliegen.

4. Derzeit nehmen 139 Studierende (42 M2 und 97 M1) am Masterstudiengang teil. Die Berufsausbildung, die sich an Fachleute richtet, beginnt erst nach der offiziellen Genehmigung von ICARE durch das chinesische Bildungsministerium.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001404/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — The activities of the EU-China Institute for Clean and Renewable Energy

The EU-China Institute for Clean and Renewable Energy (ICARE), which receives EUR 10 million, or 70.52 %, of its funding from the European External Action Service, is to train around 150 students in the area of renewable energy per year.

1. Can the Vice- President/High Representative offer an overview of (a) the activities completed so far, (b) ongoing activities, and (c) planned future activities?

2. How many people are currently employed by ICARE?

3. How much progress has been made in setting up the training centre?

4. How many students are currently receiving training from ICARE, or rather, when are the first students due to start their studies?

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

1. ICARE (Institute for Clean And Renewable Energy) has three components of activities: 1) master programme, 2) vocational training and 3) research platform. The implementation of the three components is an ongoing process throughout the project duration and is expected to institutionalize beyond the project's lifetime. Therefore the activities cannot be defined as completed, ongoing or future. Under each component, there are many sub activities. The implementation of components 2) and 3) has faced some delays, due to the ongoing approval process of ICARE by the Chinese Ministry of Education (MoE).

2. Twelve people are employed, full and/or part time. For the Master programme more than 30 European visiting professors already came for lectures from different consortium members of European partner universities.

3. Analysis of the needs of local and international companies is ongoing. Market analysis has been realised and the first programme is expected to be delivered in 2012.

4. Currently master courses have 139 graduate students (42 M2 and 97 M1).The vocational training component focusing to practitioners will only to start after the official approval of ICARE by the MoE.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001405/12
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin / Hohe Vertreterin)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Diskussion über mögliche Zwangsmaßnahmen gegen Fluggesellschaften

Der Direktor der chinesischen Luftfahrtbehörde CAAC, Li Jiaxiang, hat angekündigt, Zwangsabgaben gegen europäische Fluggesellschaften zu verhängen, falls chinesische Fluggesellschaften dazu gezwungen werden, Emissionszertifikate zu kaufen, beziehungsweise wenn sie sanktioniert werden, weil sie keine Zertifikate kaufen.

1. Befindet sich die Hohe Vertreterin in Gesprächen mit chinesischen Vertretern der Volksrepublik China, um eine solche Zwangsabgabe zu verhindern?

2. Werden Zwangsabgaben im Allgemeinen und diese angedrohten Zwangsmaßnahmen gegen Fluggesellschaften im Speziellen in den derzeitigen Verhandlungen über ein neues Partnerschafts- und Kooperationsabkommen zwischen der EU und China thematisiert? Wenn ja, in welcher Weise?

Antwort von Frau Hedegaard im Namen der Kommission
(25. April 2012)

1. Die Kommission hat im vergangenen Jahr einen Dialog mit China eingeleitet und misst der Fortsetzung konstruktiver Diskussionen große Bedeutung bei. Einzelheiten kann der Herr Abgeordnete der Antwort der Kommission auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-001681/2012 ([1]) entnehmen.

2. Das Partnerschafts- und Kooperationsabkommen, über das die EU und China derzeit verhandeln, soll einen allgemeinen Rahmen für die Zusammenarbeit zwischen den Parteien, u. a. im Bereich Umweltschutz und Klimawandel, schaffen.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001405/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Discussion of possible coercive measures against airlines

The Director of the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC), Li Jiaxiang, has announced plans to impose mandatory levies on European airlines if Chinese airlines are forced to purchase emissions certificates, or if sanctions are imposed on them for failing to purchase certificates.

1. Is the High Representative engaged in talks with representatives of the People's Republic of China aimed at preventing such mandatory levies?

2. Is the question of mandatory levies in general, and these threatened mandatory levies against airlines in particular, to be raised in the current negotiations on a new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and China? If so, in what way?

Answer given by Mrs Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

1. The Commission started a dialogue with the Chinese authorities last year and believes it is important to continue with constructive discussions. For further details, it would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-001681/2012 ([1]).

2. The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement under negotiation between the EU and China aims at establishing a general framework for the cooperation between the parties including in the area of environment and climate change.

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

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001406/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Forschungsförderung durch Publikationen

Eine der Zielsetzungen der EU ist, die Forschung und Forscher innerhalb der EU zu fördern. Es ist für die einzelnen Institutionen oder Forscher allerdings noch immer teuer und schwierig, ihre Forschungsergebnisse zu veröffentlichen, da wissenschaftliche Zeitschriften hohe Preise verlangen und komplizierte Bedingungen stellen.

1. Welche Maßnahmen unternimmt die Kommission derzeit, um die Veröffentlichung von Forschungsergebnissen zu erleichtern?

2. Sieht die Kommission eine Möglichkeit, eigene — digitale oder gedruckte — wissenschaftliche Publikationen herauszugeben oder existierende Publikationen zu unterstützen, um die Kosten für die Veröffentlichung von Forschung zu reduzieren und den Aufwand für die Wissenschaftler zu verringern?

3. Wenn ja, plant die Kommission entsprechende Maßnahmen oder überlegt sie, eine entsprechende Initiative auf den Weg zu bringen? Welche Pläne existieren dafür bisher?

Antwort von Frau Geoghegan-Quinn im Namen der Kommission
(20. März 2012)

Die Europäische Kommission unterstützt die Verbreitung von Forschungsergebnissen durch eine Finanzierung innerhalb der Projekte, die dazu dient, die Ergebnisse aktiv zu verbreiten (etwa durch Konferenzen, Workshops, Webseiten/Applikationen etc.). Daneben organisiert die Kommission selbst Veranstaltungen, um die Forschungsergebnisse bekannt zu machen, veröffentlicht „Erfolgsgeschichten“, Wirkungsstudien, Strategiepapiere sowie Berichte zur Überprüfung der Strategien und ermöglicht einen Online-Zugang zu den Projekt-Ergebnissen über die Webseite der Kommission ([1]).

Die Kommission schätzt das Fachwissen wissenschaftlicher Verlage (insbesondere im Zusammenhang mit den Peer-Review-Verfahren), verlegt aber selbst solche Publikationen nicht. Gleichwohl unterstützt die Kommission das Open-Access-Konzept (OA), das heißt den offenen Zugang zu Forschungsergebnissen im Internet. 2008 hat die Kommission ein Pilotprojekt zur Einstellung von Artikeln in OA-Verzeichnisse gestartet, um den offenen Zugang zu Erkenntnissen aus ausgewählten Forschungsbereichen des Siebten Rahmenprogramms für Forschung und technologische Entwicklung (RP7, 2007-2013) zu ermöglichen. Die von der EU finanzierte OpenAIRE-Infrastruktur ([2]) bietet offenen Zugang zu Artikeln, die von Experten (Peer Review) überprüft wurden und unterhält außerdem ein Netzwerk von Open-Access-Helpdesks in allen Mitgliedstaaten. Außerdem sind die Kosten, die durch eine Veröffentlichung von entsprechenden Artikeln in Open-Access-Zeitschriften („Gold Open Access“) entstehen, innerhalb des Siebten Rahmenprogramms für Forschung und technologische Entwicklung (RP7) erstattungsfähig.

Bezüglich weiterer Schritte wird die Kommission:

— darauf hinarbeiten, den offen Zugang zu Publikationen zu einem allgemeinen Prinzip für alle EU-finanzierten Projekte von „Horizont 2020“ zu machen;

— die Bestimmungen und Bedingungen für OA zu Forschungsdaten festlegen;

— 2012 dem Rat eine Mitteilung und Empfehlung zum offenem Zugang (OA) zu wissenschaftlichen Informationen und deren Erhaltung vorlegen;

— weiter daran arbeiten, OA in das Rahmenprogramm des Europäischen Forschungsraums (EFR) zu integrieren.

([1]) http://cordis.europa.eu/results/home_de.html (veröffentlichbare zusammenfassende Berichte, die volle Verfügbarkeit der bestehenden RP6- und RP7-Berichte wird für Ende 2012 erwartet) http://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/ (das „Joint Research Centre's Publications Repository“).

([2]) http://www.openaire.eu/en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001406/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Promoting research through publications

One of the objectives of the EU is to encourage research and researchers within the EU. However, it is still expensive and difficult for individual institutions or researchers to publish the results of their research because academic journals demand high prices and impose complicated conditions.

1. What steps are currently being taken by the Commission to make it easier to publish research results?

2. Does the Commission see any way in which it could publish its own academic publications — in either digital or printed form — or support existing publications in order to cut the costs involved in publishing research and to reduce the effort required from academics?

3. If so, is the Commission planning to implement such measures, or is it considering establishing such an initiative? What plans exist to date in this direction?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2012)

The Commission supports the dissemination of research results by providing funding within the projects to actively disseminate the results (e.g. via conferences, workshops, websites/applications, etc.). Moreover the Commission itself organises events to promote the results, publishes success stories, impact studies, policy briefs and policy reviews and provides online access to the projects' results via the Commission website ([1]).

The Commission recognises the expertise of scientific publishers (in particular in the peer-review process) but is not active as a publisher of such publications. Nevertheless, the Commission supports open access (OA) i.e. the free online access to research results. In 2008, the Commission launched a pilot for the deposition of articles in OA repositories thus providing free online access to knowledge produced by selected research areas in the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013). The OpenAIRE ([2]) infrastructure, funded by the EU, provides free access to peer-reviewed articles and also supports a network of open access helpdesks in all Member States. Additionally, costs for publishing peer reviewed articles in open access journals ('gold open access'), are eligible for reimbursement in the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7).

Regarding further steps, the Commission:

— aims to make open access to publications the general principle for all EU funded projects in Horizon 2020;

— will define terms and conditions for OA to research data;

— will present in 2012 a communication and Recommendation to the Council on OA to and preservation of scientific information;

— is working on integrating OA in the European Research Area (ERA) framework.

([1]) http://cordis.europa.eu/results/home_en.html (publishable summary reports, full availability of existing FP6 and FP7 reports expected by the end of 2012), http://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/ (the Joint Research Centre's Publications Repository).
([2]) http://www.openaire.eu/en.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001407/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Überwachungsmaßnahmen für Fischbestände

In ihrer Antwort auf die Anfrage E-011404/2011 von Hans-Peter Martin schreibt Kommissarin Damanaki im Namen der Kommission: „Die [Fisch]bestände sollten deshalb überwacht werden, um Veränderungen zu erkennen, die sich auf die Fischsterblichkeit auswirken und darum Anpassungen der Bewirtschaftungspläne erforderlich machen könnten“.

1. Gibt es derzeit solche Überwachungsmaßnahmen auf EU-Ebene? Wenn nicht, wird die Kommission eine solche Überwachungsmaßnahme vorschlagen?

2. Welche Überwachungsmaßnahmen auf nationalstaatlicher Ebene oder im privatwirtschaftlichen Bereich innerhalb der EU sind der Kommission bekannt?

3. Welche internationalen Überwachungsmaßnahmen gibt es für Fischbestände und in welcher Form ist die Kommission daran beteiligt?

Antwort von Frau Damanaki im Namen der Kommission
(15. März 2012)

Die Fischbestände in EU-Gewässern überwachen Wissenschaftler der Mitgliedstaaten, die im Internationalen Rat für Meeresforschung (ICES) und im Allgemeinen Rat für die Fischerei im Mittelmeer (GFCM) zusammenarbeiten. Die meisten Fischbestände werden im Jahresturnus überwacht. Erforderlichenfalls tritt der Wissenschafts-, Technik- und Wirtschaftsausschuss für die Fischerei (STECF) beratend hinzu und stellt sicher, dass sich die einschlägigen Tätigkeiten von ICES, GFCM und STECF nicht überschneiden.

Die Überwachung stützt sich auf die nationalen Fangberichte der Mitgliedstaaten, biologische Stichproben bei Anlandungen und Rückwürfen und umfassende Erhebungen über die marinen Ressourcen durch Forschungsschiffe, die die üblichen Fanggeräte oder hydroakustische oder sonstige besondere Verfahren anwenden.

Die Kommission unterstützt die internationale Überwachung, indem sie die Erhebung der biologischen Stichproben im Rahmen der Datenerhebungsregelung zu 50 % kofinanziert, Mittel für die ICES-Programme für wissenschaftliche Beratung und die Tätigkeiten des STECF bereitstellt sowie zur Mittelausstattung des GFCM beiträgt.

Die Ergebnisse der Überwachung sind auf folgenden Internetseiten einzusehen: www.ices.dk, www.gfcm.org, https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001407/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Monitoring of fish stocks

In her reply to Question E-011404/2011 from Hans-Peter Martin, Commissioner Damanaki writes on behalf of the Commission: '[Fish] stocks should be monitored to identify changes that have an impact on fish mortality and may therefore require adaptations to management plan.'

1. Is such monitoring currently taking place at EU level? If not, does the Commission intend to propose such monitoring?

2. What monitoring at national level or in the private commercial sphere within the EU is the Commission aware of?

3. What international monitoring takes place for fish stocks and in what way is the Commission involved in this?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(15 March 2012)

Fish stocks in EU waters are monitored by scientists of Member States collaborating and working through the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) and the General Fisheries Council for the Mediterranean (GFCM). Most fish stocks are monitored annually. As necessary, additional advice is provided by the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF), whilst ensuring in this context that no overlap takes place between the activities of ICES and GFCM and STECF.

This monitoring depends on national catch reports of Member States, biological sampling of landings and discards, and extensive surveying of marine resources by research vessels using standardised fishing gear, hydroacoustic surveys or other specialised methods.

The Commission supports international monitoring by co-financing the collection of biological sampling data at a rate of 50 % under the data collection framework, by funding the scientific advisory programmes of ICES, the activities of STECF, and contributes to the funding of GFCM.

The results of this monitoring are posted at www.ices.dk, www.gfcm.org and https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001409/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Fördermittel für Erforschung der Endlagerung von Atommüll

In seiner Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-012367/2011 von Hans-Peter Martin zur Suche nach einem Endlager für radioaktiven Atommüll schreibt Kommissionsmitglied Oettinger, dass im Euratom-Forschungsrahmenprogramm Fördermittel „für Vorhaben von gemeinsamem Interesse auf dem Gebiet der Erforschung der Endlagerung“ vorgesehen sind.

1. In welcher Höhe sind Fördermittel im Euratom-Forschungsrahmenprogramm für Vorhaben von gemeinsamem Interesse auf dem Gebiet der Erforschung der Endlagerung vorgesehen?

2. In welcher Höhe wurden Fördermittel für diese Zwecke von den Mitgliedstaaten abgerufen?

3. Welche konkreten Vorhaben auf dem Gebiet der Erforschung der Endlagerung wurden mit Fördergeldern aus dem Euratom-Forschungsrahmenprogramm gefördert?

Antwort von Frau Geoghegan-Quinn im Namen der Kommission
(22. März 2012)

1. Für die Umsetzung der indirekten Maßnahmen innerhalb des Siebten Rahmenprogramms (RP) der Europäischen Atomgemeinschaft im Bereich der nuklearen Forschung und Ausbildung (2007-2011) und seiner „Verlängerung“ (2012-2013) im Bereich Fusionsenergie und Kernspaltung, kerntechnische Sicherheit und Strahlenschutz ist ein Höchstbetrag von 405,245 Mio. EUR einschließlich Verwaltungskosten vorgesehen. Die Forschungstätigkeiten umfassen die folgenden vier Hauptbereiche: Entsorgung radioaktiver Endabfälle, Reaktorsysteme, Strahlenschutz, Infrastruktur und Humanressourcen. Das RP enthält keine Aufschlüsselung der Mittel auf diese Bereiche. Rund 8,5 Prozent der Euratom-Forschungsmittel wurden jedoch für Projekte im Bereich der Lagerungstechnologien vergeben.

2. Die Euratom-Aktivitäten werden gemeinsam mit den Mitgliedstaaten finanziert. Bisher wurden zu diesem Zweck zusätzlich zu den 34,65 Mio. EUR an Euratom-Mitteln rund 30 Mio. EUR durch nationale Forschungseinrichtungen bereitgestellt.

3. Im Forschungsbereich „Entsorgung radioaktiver Abfälle — Endlagerung in geologischen Formationen und damit verbundene Humanressourcen und Ausbildung“ sind auf die Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen (2007-2011) hin siebzehn Projekte gefördert worden. Dazu gehören: LUCOEX, PEBS, INSOTEC, MODERN, REDUPP, CROCK, SKIN, CATCLAY, PETRUS II, FORGE, RECOSY, SITEX, BELBAR, FIRST-NUCLIDES, IPPA, SEC- IGD and EBSSYN ([1]).

([1]) Die Beschreibung des Projektes ist abrufbar unter: http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/projects_de.html, Thema: FP7-Euratom-FISSION.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001409/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Funding for research into the final storage of nuclear waste

In his reply to Written Question E-012367/2011 from Hans-Peter Martin on the search for a permanent storage site for radioactive nuclear waste, Commissioner Oettinger writes that the Euratom Research Framework Programme provides for funding 'for projects of common interest on research into final storage'.

1. What is the amount of funding provided for in the Euratom Research Framework Programme for projects of common interest in the area of research into final storage?

2. How much funding has been released for this purpose by Member States?

3. What specific projects in the area of research into final storage have been supported with funding from the Euratom Research Framework Programme?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(22 March 2012)

1. The maximum amount for implementation of the indirect actions under the Seventh Framework Programme (FP) of the European Atomic Energy Community for nuclear research and training activities (2007-2011) with its 'extension' (2012-2013) for nuclear fission, safety and radiation protection is EUR 405.245 million, including administrative costs. The research activities cover four main areas: management of ultimate radioactive waste, reactor systems, radiation protection, infrastructures and human resources. The FP does not provide for a breakdown between the respective areas. However, up to now 8.5 % of the Euratom research funds have been allocated to projects dealing with storage technologies.

2. The Euratom activities are cost-shared with Member States. Up to now, about EUR 30 million have been funded by national research entities in addition to the EUR 34.65 million of Euratom contribution on this subject.

3. Seventeen projects have been funded following the yearly call for proposals (2007-2011) in the research area of 'Management of radioactive waste — Geological disposal and related human resources and training'. These are: LUCOEX, PEBS, INSOTEC, MODERN, REDUPP, CROCK, SKIN, CATCLAY, PETRUS II, FORGE, RECOSY, SITEX, BELBAR, FIRST-NUCLIDES, IPPA, SEC-IGD and EBSSYN ([1]).

([1]) Description of these projects can be found at http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/projects_en.html, theme: FP7-Euratom-FISSION.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001412/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(7 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Συμμετοχή της ΠΓΔΜ στην Biennale ως «Μακεδονία»

Σύμφωνα με δημοσιεύματα εφημερίδων, στη χρονική περίοδο 3 έως 12 Σεπτεμβρίου 2009 πραγματοποιήθηκε στα Σκόπια ο θεσμός της Biennale Νέων Καλλιτεχνών BJCEM (Association Internationale Biennale Jeunes Créateurs Europe Méditerranée). Σκοπός του θεσμού αυτού, ο οποίος άρχισε το 1985 και πραγματοποιείται κάθε έτος σε διαφορετική πρωτεύουσα της Ευρώπης, είναι η σύσφιξη των σχέσεων μεταξύ των νέων καλλιτεχνών καθώς και η προβολή τους σε τομείς όπως η λογοτεχνία, το θέατρο, η ζωγραφική και οι εφαρμοσμένες τέχνες.

Στον παραπάνω θεσμό η FYROM έλαβε μέρος με το όνομα «Μακεδονία» κατά παράβαση της αποφάσεως 817/1993 του Συμβουλίου Ασφαλείας του ΟΗΕ. Ο όρος «Δημοκρατία της Μακεδονίας» («Republic of Macedonia») υπάρχει επίσης και στην επίσημη ιστοσελίδα της Biennale.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Έχει ενημερωθεί για το συγκεκριμένο γεγονός, και τί μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει έτσι ώστε να αποφευχθούν στο μέλλον παρόμοιες ενέργειες της εν λόγω χώρας;

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

Μολονότι η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει τις αναφερθείσες δραστηριότητες του δικτύου της BJCEM (Διεθνής Ένωση της Μπιενάλε Νέων Καλλιτεχνών της Ευρώπης και της Μεσογείου — Association Internationale Biennale Jeunes Créateurs Europe Méditerranée), δεν συμμετείχε στη διοργάνωση της εκδήλωσης που έλαβε χώρα στην πόλη των Σκοπίων από τις 3 έως τις 12 Δεκεμβρίου 2009 και, συνεπώς, δεν είναι σε θέση να την σχολιάσει.

Γενικότερα, η Επιτροπή υπενθυμίζει συνεχώς σε όλες τις υποψήφιες για προσχώρηση στην ΕΕ χώρες τη σημασία των σχέσεων καλής γειτονίας και διατήρησης εποικοδομητικού διαλόγου με τα γειτονικά κράτη.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001412/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(7 February 2012)

Subject: Participation of FYROM in the Biennale as 'Macedonia'

According to newspaper reports, the Biennale of Young Artists BJCEM (Association Internationale Biennale Jeunes Créateurs Europe Méditerranée) took place in Skopje from 3 to 12 September 2009. The aim of this event, which was inaugurated in 1985 and is hosted every year by a different European capital, is to strengthen relations between young artists and to promote their work in the fields of literature, theatre, fine art and the applied arts.

At the above event, FYROM took part under the name 'Macedonia', in breach of UN Security Council Resolution 817/1993. The term 'Republic of Macedonia' also appears on the Biennale's official website.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Is it aware of this fact and what measures does it intend to take in order to prevent similar actions in future by the country in question?

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

While the Commission supports the selected activities of the BJCEM network (International Association of the Biennial of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean — Association Internationale Biennale Jeunes Créateurs Europe Méditerranée) it was not a partner for the event taking place in the city of Skopje from 3-12 December 2009 and is therefore in no position to comment on its organisation.

On a general note, the Commission continuously reminds all EU candidate countries of the importance of good neighbourly relations and of maintaining a constructive dialogue with neighbouring states.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001413/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(14 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Θάνατοι κυρίως αστέγων ανθρώπων σε χώρες της ΕΕ από το κύμα ψύχους

Μέχρι τις 3 Φεβρουαρίου σημειώθηκαν σε χώρες της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης (Ρουμανία, Βουλγαρία, Τσεχία, Σλοβακία, Ιταλία) 127 θάνατοι από το ψύχος.

Οι άνθρωποι που έχασαν τη ζωή τους είναι ως επί το πλείστον άστεγοι. Το πλέον ανησυχητικό είναι ότι ο αριθμός των αστέγων αυξάνεται στην Ευρώπη λόγω της οικονομικής κρίσης και προβλέπεται ότι στο μέλλον τα θύματα θα είναι όλο και περισσότερα λόγω των τραγικών γεγονότων.

Θεωρώ ότι το γεγονός δεν μπορεί παρά να δημιουργεί τουλάχιστον ανησυχία σε όλους τους Ευρωπαίους πολιτικούς για το μέγεθος της επιτυχίας της κοινωνικής αλληλεγγύης. Νομίζω ότι η στιγμή της αναθεώρησης των ευρωπαϊκών πολιτικών, ώστε το πρόσωπο της Ευρώπης να γίνει πιο ανθρώπινο, έχει φτάσει.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει υπάρξει κάποια συνεννόηση με τα κράτη μέλη και με τις μεγάλες δημοτικές αρχές (τουλάχιστον) για να μπορέσουν οι άστεγοι σε μελλοντικές περιπτώσεις χαμηλών θερμοκρασιών να βρίσκουν καταφύγιο;

2. Έχει λάβει σχετικά μέτρα για την προστασία των αστέγων και προσανατολίζεται σε κάποιες ανάλογες κινήσεις στο μέλλον;

3. Επεξεργάζεται σχέδιο ώστε να δοθεί δεύτερη ευκαιρία στους ανθρώπους που έχουν βρεθεί άστεγοι σε όλη την Ευρώπη για να μην αναγκάζονται να χρήζουν διαρκούς διακονίας;

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

Την πρωταρχική ευθύνη για παρεμβάσεις και πολιτικές, προκειμένου να βοηθηθούν οι άστεγοι και να μειωθεί η έλλειψη στέγης, φέρουν τα κράτη μέλη, οι περιφερειακές και οι τοπικές αρχές. Δεν υπάρχει καμία πρόβλεψη στον προϋπολογισμό της ΕΕ που να επιτρέπει στην Επιτροπή να παρεμβαίνει απευθείας για να βοηθήσει ή για να προστατεύσει τους άστεγους σε ένα κράτος μέλος, όταν κάνει κρύο. Η δράση που αναλαμβάνεται σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο μπορεί να συμπληρώσει και να κατευθύνει τη δράση των κρατών μελών. Η ευρωπαϊκή χρηματοδότηση μπορεί να υποστηρίξει τη βελτίωση της κατανόησης, την αξιολόγηση καινοτόμων προσεγγίσεων, αλλά και να συμβάλει στην παροχή στήριξης προς το δίκτυο ΜΚΟ της ΕΕ για καταλύματα αστέγων. Η Επιτροπή εξετάζει την παρούσα στιγμή τρόπους ώστε οι προσπάθειες που καταβάλλονται σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο να συμβάλουν στη δημιουργία μεγαλύτερης προστιθέμενης αξίας και να προωθήσουν τις προσπάθειες των κρατών μελών. Κατά τη δράση της αυτή αποδίδει μεγάλη προσοχή στις απόψεις των ενδιαφερόμενων μερών, ιδίως του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου, όπως αναφέρεται στο ψήφισμά του, της 14ης Σεπτεμβρίου, για το φαινόμενο των αστέγων.

Γενικότερα, στήριξη παρέχεται από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο (ΕΚΤ) για δραστηριότητες προώθησης της κοινωνικής και εργασιακής ένταξης των αστέγων και από το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης (ΕΤΠΑ) για την πραγματοποίηση επενδύσεων σε εργατικές κατοικίες. Τα κράτη μέλη οφείλουν να καθορίζουν προτεραιότητες και να χορηγούν τη σχετική χρηματοδότηση στο πλαίσιο των επιχειρησιακών προγραμμάτων. Στο μέλλον, στο πλαίσιο του πολυετούς δημοσιονομικού πλαισίου για τα έτη 2014-20, η Επιτροπή προβλέπει ότι τουλάχιστον το 20 % της συνολικής χρηματοδότησης του ΕΚΤ σε κάθε κράτος μέλος θα διατίθεται για την κοινωνική ένταξη και την καταπολέμηση της φτώχειας. Κάθε κράτος μέλος θα διαθέσει επίσης τουλάχιστον το 5 % του συνόλου των πόρων του ΕΤΠΑ σε δράσεις για την αειφόρο ανάπτυξη των πόλεων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001413/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Deaths caused by the cold spell in EU Member States, mainly among the homeless

As of 3 February, 127 deaths have been recorded from the cold spell in European Union Member States (Romania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Italy).

Most of the deaths were among the homeless. The most worrying aspect is that the number of homeless people is rising in Europe due to the economic crisis and it is likely that in future the number of deaths under such tragic circumstances will increase.

This cannot fail to worry all European politicians and call into question the degree of success of social solidarity in the EU. I believe that the time has come to review European policy and to make the face of Europe more human.

I would like to ask the Commission:

1. Has there been any consultation with the Member States and the major public authorities (at least) to enable the homeless to find shelter during future cold spells?

2. Has it taken measures to protect the homeless and does it intend to take similar measures in the future?

3. Is a plan being drawn up to give a second chance to those who find themselves homeless throughout Europe so as to prevent them being reduced to lasting begging?

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

The primary responsibility for interventions and policies to help homeless people and to reduce homelessness lies with Member States, regional and local authorities. There is no provision in the EU budget enabling the Commission to intervene directly to assist or protect homeless individuals in a Member State during cold weather. Action at European level can complement and inform that in Member States. European funding is able to support improved understanding, evaluation of innovatory approaches, and also helps to support the EU NGO network for homeless shelters. The Commission is presently considering ways in which the effort at European level can help to add more value and impetus to Member States' efforts. In doing this it is paying close attention to the views of stakeholders, not least the European Parliament, as expressed in its Resolution of 14 September on homelessness.

More generally support is provided by the European Social Fund (ESF) for activities to promote the social and labour market integration of homeless people and by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for investments in social housing. Member States must set priorities and allocate funding under their Operational Programmes. In future, under the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2014-20, the Commission expects at least 20 % of total ESF financing in each Member State to be allocated to social inclusion and fight against poverty. Each Member State will also allocate at least 5 % of total ERDF resources to actions for Sustainable Urban Development.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001414/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(7 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ανάγκη ενίσχυσης των νοτιοευρωπαϊκών κρατών για να ανταπεξέλθουν στις υποχρεώσεις διάσωσης

Μέσα στο 2011, περισσότεροι από 1 500 άνθρωποι πνίγηκαν ή εξαφανίστηκαν προσπαθώντας να διασχίσουν τη Μεσόγειο, όπως ανακοίνωσε η Ύπατη Αρμοστεία του ΟΗΕ για τους Πρόσφυγες (UNHCR), μιλώντας για την φονικότερη χρονιά από τότε που κρατά στοιχεία. Η κατάρρευση των καθεστώτων της Τυνησίας και κυρίως της Λιβύης πύκνωσε τη ροή των προσφύγων που αναγκάστηκαν να εγκαταλείψουν τις εστίες τους λόγω της εμφύλιας βίας. Επιπλέον η έκρυθμη πολιτικά κατάσταση στο Κέρας της Αφρικής και ο λιμός που το πλήττει ήταν και αυτοί παράγοντες που μεγάλωσαν το προσφυγικό κύμα.

Ο αριθμός των θανάτων είναι απαράδεκτα υψηλός και θεωρώ ότι η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση πρέπει να κάνει πολλά ακόμα για να αντιμετωπίσει το μέγεθος της τραγωδίας που εκτυλίσσεται στη Μεσόγειο.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Θεωρεί ότι υπάρχει συνεργασία σε ικανοποιητικό βαθμό από τα κράτη της Μεσογείου;

2. Εφόσον κρίνει ότι τα κράτη της νότιας Ευρώπης δε δύνανται, λόγω των περικοπών που πρέπει να κάνουν για την αντιμετώπιση της οικονομικής κρίσης, να ανταποκριθούν δεόντως, στις υποχρεώσεις για διάσωση των μεταναστών, υπάρχουν σκέψεις για την περαιτέρω ενίσχυσή τους μέχρι να σταθεροποιηθεί η βόρεια Αφρική και να περιοριστεί το μεταναστευτικό κύμα;

Απάντηση της κας Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(19 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει τα ανησυχητικά στοιχεία που έχει εκδώσει η Ύπατη Αρμοστεία των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για τους Πρόσφυγες (UNHCR).

1. Η Επιτροπή κατανοεί πως το Αξιότιμο Μέλος αναφέρεται στη συνεργασία των κρατών της Βορείου Αφρικής. Στο πλαίσιο της συνολικής αντιμετώπισης της Αραβικής Άνοιξης από την ΕΕ, η Επιτροπή οργάνωσε, τον Μάιο του 2011, «Διάλογο» με τις χώρες της νότιας Μεσογείου «σχετικά με τη μετανάστευση, την κινητικότητα και την ασφάλεια», με στόχο να στηριχθούν και να ενισχυθούν οι μεταρρυθμίσεις για τη βελτίωση της ασφάλειας και να δοθεί στους πολίτες η προοπτική μεγαλύτερης κινητικότητας προς τα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ, και παράλληλα να εξεταστούν οι βαθύτερες αιτίες των μεταναστευτικών ρευμάτων. Αυτός ο «Διάλογος», ο οποίος, μέχρι στιγμής, έχει ξεκινήσει με την Τυνησία και το Μαρόκο, θα βελτιώσει την συνεργασία της ΕΕ με τα κράτη της Βορείου Αφρικής, με στόχο την καταπολέμηση της παράνομης μετανάστευσης.

2. Η Ένωση στηρίζει ήδη τα συστήματα ασύλου των νότιων κρατών μελών. Για παράδειγμα, η Ελλάδα λαμβάνει έκτακτες επιδοτήσεις από το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο για τους Πρόσφυγες και από ομάδες υποστήριξης για το άσυλο, τις οποίες συντονίζει η Ευρωπαϊκή Υπηρεσία Υποστήριξης για θέματα Ασύλου (EASO). Στη Μάλτα, εκτός από την έκτακτη επιχορήγηση, εφαρμόζεται επίσης πιλοτικό πρόγραμμα της ΕΕ για τη μετεγκατάσταση των προσφύγων σε άλλα κράτη μέλη. Αν τα κράτη μέλη χρειάζονται επιπλέον υποστήριξη, μπορούν να υποβάλουν αίτηση για πρόσθετα μέτρα, όπως, για παράδειγμα, συμπληρωματική χρηματοδότηση και βοήθεια από την EASO.

Σε πρόσφατη ανακοίνωση της Επιτροπής εξετάστηκε η περαιτέρω ανάπτυξη των μέτρων αλληλεγγύης σε κράτη μέλη των οποίων τα συστήματα χορήγησης ασύλου βρίσκονται κάτω από ιδιαίτερη πίεση ([1]).

([1]) COM(2011)835 τελ. — Ανακοίνωση της Επιτροπής προς το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο, το Συμβούλιο, την Ευρωπαϊκή Οικονομική και Κοινωνική Επιτροπή και την Επιτροπή των Περιφερειών για την ενίσχυση της αλληλεγγύης εντός της ΕΕ στον τομέα του ασύλου — Ένα θεματολόγιο της ΕΕ για τη βελτίωση της κατανομής των ευθυνών και την αύξηση της αμοιβαίας εμπιστοσύνης.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001414/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(7 February 2012)

Subject: Need to help southern European States meet their rescue obligations

According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in 2011, the most 'lethal' year for which it has data, over 1 500 people drowned or went missing while trying to cross the Mediterranean. The collapse of the regimes in Tunisia and, above all, in Libya, has increased the flow of refugees forced to flee their homes because of violent civil conflict. The unsettled political situation in the Horn of Africa and the famine sweeping over that area have also been factors increasing the wave of refugees.

Given the unacceptably high number of deaths, the European Union must do much more to address the major tragedy unfolding in the Mediterranean.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it consider that there is sufficient cooperation by Mediterranean States?

2. In so far as it judges that the States of southern Europe are unable, due to the cuts being forced on them by the economic crisis, properly to meet their obligation to rescue refugees, are any plans afoot to provide these States with further support until the situation in north Africa becomes stabilised and the wave of migrants is reduced?

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

The Commission is aware of the alarming figures published by the UNHCR.

1. The Commission understands that the Honourable Member is referring to the cooperation of Northern African states. As part of the EU's global response to the Arab spring, the Commission launched in May 2011 a Dialogue on migration, mobility and security with Southern Mediterranean countries, with the aim of supporting and encouraging reforms to improve security and giving their citizens a prospect of enhanced mobility towards the EU Member States, while also addressing the root causes of migratory flows. This Dialogue, which has so far been launched with Tunisia and Morocco, will improve cooperation between the EU and Northern African states in combating irregular migration.

2. The Union already supports southern Member States' asylum systems. For example, Greece benefits from emergency funding from the European Refugee Fund and from Asylum Support Teams coordinated by the European Asylum Support Office (EASO); Malta benefits from both emergency funding and from an EU pilot project on the relocation of refugees to other Member States. If Member States require further support, they may request additional measures, such as supplementary funding and EASO assistance.

The further development of solidarity measures for Member States whose asylum systems are under particular pressure is addressed in a recent Commission communication ([1]).

([1]) COM(2011) 835 final — Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on enhanced intra-EU solidarity in the field of asylum — An EU agenda for better responsibility-sharing and more mutual trust.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001415/12
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(14 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Κίνδυνος νέας σύρραξης μεταξύ Σουδάν και Νοτίου Σουδάν

Βάσει της σύμβασης για το Δίκαιο της Θάλασσας, η χώρα διαμετακόμισης υποχρεούται να εξασφαλίζει την ελεύθερη πρόσβαση στο κράτος της ενδοχώρας στις διεθνείς θαλάσσιες διόδους εμπορίου.

Η συμφωνία που εξασφάλισε την ειρηνική συμβίωση μεταξύ Σουδάν και Νοτίου Σουδάν είναι κατάφωρα πιεστική για το Νότιο Σουδάν, το οποίο αναγκάζεται να μοιράζεται με το Σουδάν τα κέρδη από την εξόρυξη πετρελαίου. Το δε Σουδάν διατηρεί μια, κατά κοινή ομολογία, εκβιαστική στάση κατά του Νότιου Σουδάν για τη διατήρηση της ειρήνης, που μειώνει τον βαθμό της ανεξαρτησίας του και αμφισβητεί το ότι πλέον πρόκειται για ένα κυρίαρχο κράτος.

Η κίνηση του Νότιου Σουδάν να σταματήσει της παραγωγή πετρελαίου, την οποία μοιράζεται με το Σουδάν, επίσης δεν βοηθάει στην ειρηνική διευθέτηση της αντιπαλότητας.

Ο φόβος να υπάρχει νέα ανάφλεξη ενυπάρχει στη περιοχή.

Ερωτάται η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος:

1. Στηρίζει μια πράξη ειρήνευσης μεταξύ των δυο κρατών, η οποία θα βασίζεται στον σεβασμό των δικαιωμάτων του περίκλειστου κράτους, όπως αυτά περιγράφονται στο Διεθνές Δίκαιο της Θάλασσας;

2. Σε ποιό βαθμό υπάρχει παρέμβαση της ΕΕ για την κατ' αρχάς διασφάλιση της ειρήνης στην περιοχή;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(15 Μαΐου 2012)

Η ΕΕ στηρίζει την εκτελεστική ομάδα υψηλού επιπέδου της Αφρικανικής Ένωσης σχετικά με το Σουδάν και χαιρετίζει τις πρόσφατες συμφωνίες σχετικά με την «εθνικότητα» και την «οριοθέτηση συνόρων» μεταξύ του Σουδάν και του Νότιου Σουδάν. Ήδη τον Φεβρουάριο του 2012 τα δύο μέρη υπέγραψαν μνημόνιο συνεννόησης για μη επίθεση και συνεργασία. Αυτό το μνημόνιο ενέχει την δέσμευση για σεβασμό της κυριαρχίας και της εδαφικής ακεραιότητας, τη δέσμευση για μη επέμβαση στις εσωτερικές υποθέσεις και την απόρριψη της χρήσης βίας, όπως επίσης και τη δέσμευση για ειρηνική συνύπαρξη.

Η ΕΕ, στην περίπτωση του Σουδάν και του Νότιου Σουδάν, συνεχίζει να ακολουθεί την «ολοκληρωμένη προσέγγιση» της που υιοθετήθηκε από το Συμβούλιο Εξωτερικών Υποθέσεων (ΣΕΥ) το 2011 και που έχει ως στόχο την εγκαθίδρυση ειρηνικών σχέσεων καλής γειτονίας μεταξύ των δύο χωρών. Στην παραμεθόρια περιοχή, η ΕΕ εφαρμόζει μια παρέμβαση που χρηματοδοτείται από το μέσο σταθερότητας, η οποία εστιάζεται στην ανάλυση και πρόληψη συγκρούσεων. Επίσης, το έργο του ειδικού εκπροσώπου της ΕΕ στο Σουδάν και το Νότιο Σουδάν και στο Κέρας της Αφρικής, αποτελεί σημαντική συμβολή της ΕΕ για την ειρήνη στην περιοχή. Η ΕΕ εφαρμόζει επίσης την Πρωτοβουλία της για το Κέρας της Αφρικής με έργα υποδομής που συνδέουν την περιοχή.

Το δικαίωμα των περίκλειστων κρατών στην πρόσβαση προς και από τη θάλασσα, για το σκοπό της άσκησης του δικαιώματος της μεταφοράς αγαθών μέσω του εδάφους ενός ή περισσότερων κρατών διέλευσης, προστατεύεται από τη Σύμβαση των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για το Δίκαιο της Θάλασσας (UNCLOS). Παρότι, προς το παρόν, μόνο το Σουδάν είναι συμβαλλόμενο μέρος της Σύμβασης των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για το δίκαιο της Θάλασσας, τα δικαιώματα των περίκλειστων κρατών αναγνωρίζονται γενικώς ως εθιμικό δίκαιο. Η ΕΕ στηρίζει την εφαρμογή αυτής της σύμβασης και από το Νότιο Σουδάν. Οποιαδήποτε μη συμμόρφωση σ' αυτό το ζήτημα μπορεί να καταγγελθεί μόνον από το κράτος που θίγεται άμεσα, στη συγκεκριμένη περίπτωση, το Νότιο Σουδάν.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001415/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Danger of renewed conflict between Sudan and South Sudan

Under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea a transit country is required to ensure that a hinterland country has free access to international maritime trade routes.

The agreement to guarantee peaceful co-existence between Sudan and South Sudan is heavily weighted against South Sudan, which is obliged to share with Sudan the profits from oil extraction. The maintenance of peaceful relations is, by common admission, being used by Sudan as a means of pressurising South Sudan, thereby undermining its independence and its recognition as a sovereign state.

The move by South Sudan to halt the production of oil shared with Sudan is also doing little to promote a peaceful settlement.

There is fear in the region that a new conflict will be sparked off.

In view of this:

1. Does the High Representative support a peace process between the two countries, to be based on respect for the rights of landlocked countries as set out in the international Law of the Sea?

2. To what extent is the EU intervening pre-emptively to safeguard peace in the region?

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

The EU supports the African Union High Level Implementation Panel on Sudan and welcomes the recent agreements on 'nationality' and 'border demarcation' agreed upon by Sudan and South Sudan. Already in February 2012, both parties signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on non-aggression and cooperation. This MoU includes the commitment to respect each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, a commitment to non-interference in internal affairs and the rejection of the use of force, as well as a commitment to peaceful coexistence.

The EU continues to follow its 'Comprehensive Approach' to Sudan and South Sudan adopted by the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) in 2011 aiming at the establishment of peaceful and good neighbourly relations between the two countries. In the border region, the EU is implementing an Instrument for Stability-funded intervention focusing on conflict analysis and prevention. The work of the EU Special Representative for Sudan and South Sudan and the Horn of Africa is also an important EU contribution to peace in this region. The EU is also implementing its Horn of Africa Initiative with infrastructure projects linking the region.

Land-locked states' right of access to and from the sea, for the purpose of exercising the right of transport of goods across the territory of one or more transit states, is enshrined within the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos). Though only Sudan is currently a contracting party in Unclos, the rights of land-locked states are generally recognised as customary law. The EU would be in favour of the application of this to South Sudan. Any non-compliance on this matter can only be contested by the state directly affected, in this case South Sudan.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001416/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Kyriakos Mavronikolas (S&D)
(14 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ανέγερση Σκοπευτικού Κέντρου στο Δίκωμο

Με στόχο την προβολή του ψευδοκράτους στο εξωτερικό μέσω του αθλητισμού, οι κατοχικές αρχές ανεγείρουν στα νότια του χωριού Κάτω Δίκωμο της Κερύνειας «Διεθνές Σκοπευτικό Κέντρο». Σύμφωνα με το πλάνο των κατοχικών αρχών, το κέντρο θα καλύπτει μια τεράστια έκταση γης, η οποία ανήκει σε ελληνοκύπριους πρόσφυγες. Να σημειωθεί ότι για την κατασκευή του έργου έχει ήδη προκληθεί τεράστια και ίσως ανεπανόρθωτη περιβαλλοντική ζημιά.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Γνωρίζει η Επιτροπή για το εν λόγω έργο;

— Σε τι ενέργειες προτίθεται να προβεί η Επιτροπή για να σταματήσει η κατασκευή του Κέντρου;

— Προτίθεται να αναλάβει πρωτοβουλία με στόχο την προστασία του περιβάλλοντος στα κατεχόμενα;

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

Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει πληροφορίες σχετικά με κανένα έργο ανέγερσης διεθνούς σκοπευτηρίου στην Κερύνεια. Εάν αναληφθεί τέτοιο έργο, η Επιτροπή θα θέσει το θέμα στην τουρκοκυπριακή κοινότητα για να διασφαλίσει την προστασία του περιβάλλοντος.

Στο πλαίσιο του χρηματοδοτούμενου από την ΕΕ έργου «Στήριξη της τουρκοκυπριακής κοινότητας όσον αφορά τη διαχείριση και την προστασία δυνητικών περιοχών Natura 2000 στο βόρειο τμήμα της Κύπρου», παρασχέθηκε στην τουρκοκυπριακή κοινότητα τεχνική βοήθεια για τον προσδιορισμό επτά περιοχών (και την κατάρτιση σχεδίων διαχείρισης), οι οποίες είναι πολύ πιθανό να οριστούν ως δυνητικές περιοχές Natura 2000, μετά από διευθέτηση και την άρση της αναστολής του κεκτημένου. Πράγματι, σύμφωνα με το πρωτόκολλο 10 της πράξης προσχώρησης, το κεκτημένο αναστέλλεται στο βόρειο μέρος της Κύπρου. Έως ότου εφαρμοστεί πλήρως το κεκτημένο, αποκλειστικά αρμόδιες για τη λήψη των αναγκαίων μέτρων διατήρησης σε αυτές τις περιοχές είναι οι σχετικοί τουρκοκυπριακοί φορείς.

Η Επιτροπή υπενθυμίζει για άλλη μια φορά την επείγουσα ανάγκη για επίτευξη συνολικής διευθέτησης του κυπριακού προβλήματος. Η Επιτροπή κάλεσε επανειλημμένα τους ηγέτες των δύο κυπριακών κοινοτήτων να επωφεληθούν από την ευκαιρία των συνεχιζόμενων συνομιλιών για τον διακανονισμό και να επιτύχουν μία αμοιβαία αποδεκτή και βιώσιμη λύση.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001416/12
to the Commission
Kyriakos Mavronikolas (S&D)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Construction of a shooting range in Dikomo

In order to promote the self-styled state of northern Cyprus to the outside world through sporting activities, the occupying authorities are constructing an 'international shooting range' to the south of Kato Dikomo in Kyrenia. The occupying authorities' plans are for the range to cover a huge expanse of land belonging to Greek-Cypriot refugees. It should be noted that work on the project has already caused huge, irreparable damage to the environment.

In view of this:

— Is the Commission aware of the project in question?

— What action does it intend to take to halt the construction of the range?

— Will it take action to protect the environment in the occupied territories?

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

The Commission is not aware of any project to construct an international shooting range in Kyrenia. Should such a project be undertaken, the Commission will raise the issue with the Turkish Cypriot community to ensure that the environment is protected.

Under the EU funded project 'Support to the Turkish Cypriot community as regards management and protection of potential Natura 2000 sites in the northern part of Cyprus', technical assistance has been provided to the Turkish Cypriot community in identifying seven areas (and preparing draft management plans) which are likely to be designated as potential Natura 2000 areas following a settlement and the lifting of the suspension of the *acquis*. Indeed, in accordance with the Protocol 10 of the Act of Accession, the *acquis* is suspended in the northern part of Cyprus. Until the *acquis* is fully applied, it is the exclusive responsibility of the Turkish Cypriot relevant bodies to take the necessary conservation measures in those areas.

The Commission recalls once again the urgent need to reach a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem. The Commission has repeatedly called on the leaders of both communities in Cyprus to grasp the opportunity of the ongoing settlement talks to reach a mutually acceptable and sustainable solution.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001418/12
alla Commissione
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(14 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Sicurezza aerea interna in Russia

Il 7 dicembre 2011, il *Wall Street Journal* ha riportato che, secondo quanto affermato dagli esperti in materia di sicurezza, la Russia è attualmente uno dei paesi del mondo in cui salire su un aeromobile risulta maggiormente pericoloso. Le indagini relative a nove incidenti aerei verificatisi nel 2011 su aerei commerciali hanno rilevato gravi violazioni quali, ad esempio: stato di ubriachezza dei membri dell'equipaggio o assunzione di sedativi da parte degli stessi, documenti di sicurezza contraffatti e piloti in preda al panico nella gestione dell'aeromobile. In un caso, il navigatore aveva utilizzato il sistema di guida sbagliato e ha diretto l'aereo di linea che stava guidando verso un albero situato lontano dalla pista. Il numero degli incidenti mortali avvenuti in Russia, in base ai volumi di traffico aereo, risulta maggiore rispetto al numero di incidenti che si verificano in paesi con annosi problemi di sicurezza, come il Congo e l'Indonesia. I problemi della Russia sono il risultato di una regolamentazione inefficace, della gestione non adeguata delle piccole compagnie aeree e della scarsa formazione dei piloti.

A livello globale, il numero di incidenti aerei gravi ha subito un calo, grazie alla maggiore intransigenza delle compagnie aeree in materia di sicurezza nei confronti sia dei propri vettori che di quelli stranieri. Quando si tratta di aviazione interna, tuttavia, si tende spesso a non considerare i possibili rischi. In Russia, molti piloti e meccanici tendono a trascurare le regole di base in materia di sicurezza. Le linee guida che regolano il loro operato sono molto meno severe rispetto a quelle vigenti a livello globale. Inoltre, è diffuso l'utilizzo di parti di aeromobile contraffatte. Ciò ha causato diversi incidenti aerei gravi: nel giugno 2011 un aereo RusAir si è schiantato durante la fase di atterraggio nell'aeroporto di Petrozavodsk, causando 47 vittime; nel luglio 2011 si è sviluppato un incendio all'interno del motore di un An-24 durante un volo della compagnia Angara Air e l'aereo si è schiantato mentre stava effettuando un atterraggio di emergenza sul fiume Ob, in Siberia, causando 7 vittime; nel settembre 2011 uno Yak-42 che trasportava una squadra professionale di hockey russa si è schiantato a causa della scarsa formazione dei piloti, che hanno inavvertitamente attivato i freni durante il decollo dall'aeroporto di Yaroslav, causando 44 vittime.

Un esperto di aviazione russo osserva che tali problemi si verificano in regioni isolate, dove il controllo di Mosca e le influenze straniere sono facilmente elusi: «Non è soltanto riluttanza, è una forma di trascuratezza, di noncuranza.» Di conseguenza, molte compagnie straniere hanno proibito ai dipendenti di utilizzare aeromobili costruiti in Russia. Molte società richiedono ora di utilizzare vettori stranieri per le trasferte verso le principali città russe, anche a costo di tortuose deviazioni per tutta l'Europa. Il *Wall Street Journal* riferisce, inoltre, che l'UE sta offrendo assistenza alla Russia, ma gli specialisti riconoscono la propria scarsa influenza sulle compagnie aeree che non volano fuori dalla Russia.

1. Vista la lunga serie di incidenti mortali verificatisi su aerei civili nel 2011, può dire la Commissione quali iniziative ha intrapreso per collaborare con le autorità russe in merito all'offerta di assistenza per i servizi interni del paese?

2. Hanno le autorità russe incoraggiato l'introduzione dell'assistenza da parte dell'UE al fine di migliorare lo stato dei propri aeromobili e la gestione degli aeroporti?

3. Dispone la Commissione di informazioni destinate ai cittadini dell'UE circa la sicurezza dei viaggi in territorio russo?

4. Esiste una «lista nera» dei vettori interni che i cittadini UE possono consultare?

5. Come può l'UE esercitare pressioni sulle autorità russe perché queste adottino misure atte a migliorare gli standard della propria aviazione interna?

Risposta data dal sig. Kallas a nome della Commissione

(8 marzo 2012)

Sul fronte della sicurezza aerea, la Commissione è in costante contatto con le autorità della Federazione russa sia nel quadro dell'attuazione del regolamento sull'elenco di sicurezza, il regolamento (CE) n. 2111/2005 ([1]), sia a livello bilaterale. Le carenze in termini di sicurezza dei vettori aerei russi finora sono state arginate dall'intervento dell'agenzia del trasporto aereo della Federazione russa (Russian Federal Air Transport Agency — FATA), che ha disposto fermi operativi per aeromobili non conformi alle disposizioni vigenti, sospeso voli da e per l'UE, revocato licenze, ecc. Per ulteriori informazioni sulle indagini condotte in relazione al cosiddetto elenco di sicurezza rimandiamo ai regolamenti di esecuzione della Commissione (UE) n. 1197/2011 ([2]) e n. 390/2011 ([3]).

Il campo di applicazione dell'elenco di sicurezza dell'UE non si limita ai soli vettori impiegati nei voli da e per l'Europa. L'elenco è infatti uno strumento di comprovata efficacia per la tutela dei cittadini dell'UE che consente inoltre all'Unione di chiedere alle autorità russe di ottimizzare la vigilanza e di imporre provvedimenti esecutivi.

Nel 2011, in occasione del vertice UE-Russia sull'aviazione, è stato manifestato un interesse volto a rafforzare la collaborazione in materia di sicurezza. Nel quadro di contatti bilaterali intercorsi nel mese di gennaio 2011, la Commissione ha indicato possibili ambiti di collaborazione, tra cui formazioni finalizzate alla trasmissione di competenze e alla fornitura di assistenza tecnica nonché la convergenza di norme e procedure inerenti alle ispezioni a terra. Le autorità russe hanno avviato gradualmente le ispezioni a terra degli aeromobili nazionali e stranieri presso gli aeroporti russi, improntandole in buona parte sul modello di sicurezza europeo.

([1]) GU L 344 del 27.12.2005, pag. 15.
([2]) GU L 303 del 22.11.2011, pag. 14.
([3]) GU L 104 del 20.4.2011, pag. 10.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001418/12
to the Commission
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Domestic air safety in Russia

On 7 December 2011 the *Wall Street Journal* reported that Russia is now, according to safety experts, one of the most dangerous countries in the world in which to board an aircraft. Investigations into nine commercial plane crashes in 2011 found gross violations including: drunk or sedated crews, forged safety documents and pilots panicking to handle aircrafts. In one case, the navigator used the wrong guidance equipment and aimed his jetliner at a tree far from the runway. Adjusted for air traffic volumes, Russian fatalities exceeded those in countries with longstanding safety problems, such as Congo and Indonesia. The problems inside Russia are the result of ineffective regulation, inefficiently run small airlines and poorly trained pilots.

Globally, the number of serious aviation incidents has dropped as a result of companies cutting their tolerance for safety lapses on the part of both their own and foreign carriers. When it comes to domestic aviation, however, people often overlook risks. Inside Russia, many pilots and mechanics show little concern for basic safety rules. The guidelines under which they operate are much weaker than global rules. In addition, the use of counterfeit aircraft parts is widespread. A number of serious incidents have occurred as a result: in June 2011 a RusAir flight crashed on approach to Petrozavodsk airport, killing 47; in July 2011 Angara Air An-24 suffered an engine fire in flight and crashed during an emergency landing on the Ob River in Siberia, killing seven; in September 2011 a Yak-42 carrying a Russian professional hockey team crashed as poorly-trained pilots inadvertently applied the brakes during a takeoff from Yaroslav airport, killing 44.

One Russian aviation expert notes that problems occur in isolated regions, where Moscow's control and foreign influences remain muted: 'It's not just resistance, it's a kind of sloppiness, carelessness.' As a result, many foreign companies have forbidden employees from using Russian-built aircraft. Many now require them to use foreign carriers to major Russian cities, taking detours within Europe. The *Wall Street Journal* reports that the EU is offering Russia assistance, but specialists acknowledge that they lack influence over airlines that don't leave Russia.

1. Following the string of fatal civil aviation incidents in 2011, what steps has the Commission taken to engage with the Russian authorities in offering assistance for domestic services within Russia?

2. Have the Russian authorities encouraged the EU to provide assistance with a view to improving the state of their domestic aircraft and airport management?

3. Does the Commission have information for EU citizens about travelling safely inside Russia?

4. Is there a blacklist of domestic carriers that EU citizens can consult?

5. How can the EU exert pressure on the Russian authorities to take measures to improve their domestic aviation standards?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission

(8 March 2012)

On safety matters the Commission is in a permanent contact with the competent authorities of the Russian Federation in the context of implementation of the 'safety list' Regulation (EC) No 2111/2005 [1], as well as bilaterally. Identified safety deficiencies in Russian air carriers have been so far contained by the Russian Federal Air Transport Agency (FATA) through decisions such as grounding of non-compliant aircraft, suspension of flights to and from the EU, revocation of certificates, etc. Further information concerning the investigations carried out in the context of the 'safety list' is available under Commission Implementing Regulations (EU) No 1197/2011 [2] and No 390/2011 [3].

The scope of the EU 'safety list' is not limited to air carriers flying to and from Europe. The list has proven to be an effective tool to protect EU citizens. Also, it allows the EU to effectively request the Russian authorities to improve their oversight and impose enforcement measures.

A mutual interest to intensify the cooperation on safety matters was expressed in 2011 at the EU-Russia Aviation Summit. In bilateral contacts in January 2012 the Commission highlighted potential area of cooperation covering a provision of expertise and technical assistance in training, approximation of standards and procedures for ramp inspections. The Russian authorities have started gradually to perform ramp checks of their own and foreign carriers at Russian airports following to a great extent the European safety model.

(1) OJ L 344, 27.12.2005, p. 15.
(2) OJ L 303, 22.11.2011, p. 14.
(3) OJ L 104, 20.4.2011, p. 10.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001419/12
do Komisji
Andrzej Grzyb (PPE) oraz Bogdan Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz (PPE)
(14 lutego 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Przestrzeganie mechanizmu wczesnego ostrzegania pomiędzy UE a Rosją w odniesieniu do rozporządzenia dotyczącego bezpieczeństwa dostaw gazu

3 lutego zostały zmniejszone dostawy gazu do różnych krajów UE: Polski, Słowacji, Austrii, na Węgry, do Bułgarii, Rumunii, Grecji i Włoch. Z danych Komisji Europejskiej wynika, iż do Austrii dociera aż o 30 proc. mniej gazu, o 24 proc. mniej do Włoch i o 8 proc. do Polski.

1. Czy w dniach poprzedzających ograniczenie dostaw gazu Komisja Europejska została powiadomiona o potencjalnym ryzyku wstrzymania dostaw gazu do UE w ramach mechanizmu wczesnego ostrzegania?

2. Jak, w świetle dotychczasowej współpracy z Rosją, Komisja ocenia wykonanie rozwiązań wprowadzonych przez rozporządzenie dotyczące środków zapewniających bezpieczeństwo dostaw gazu ziemnego COM(2009) 0363?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Günthera Oettingera w imieniu Komisji
(23 marca 2012 r.)

Podczas fali mrozów w styczniu i lutym 2012 r. ani strona rosyjska ani UE nie uruchomiły mechanizmu wczesnego ostrzegania.

Podmioty rynkowe bardzo dobrze poradziły sobie z wyjątkowo wysokim popytem na gaz w styczniu i lutym 2012 r. Ponadto nie ulega wątpliwości, że nowe rozporządzenie pomogło wszystkim zainteresowanym stronom zareagować na sytuację w sposób zorganizowany i skoordynowany. Swoją przydatność w omawianym okresie wykazały nowe infrastruktury funkcjonujące od niedawna dzięki Europejskiemu programowi energetycznemu na rzecz naprawy gospodarczej.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001419/12
to the Commission
Andrzej Grzyb (PPE) and Bogdan Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz (PPE)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Compliance with the early warning mechanism between the EU and Russia in relation to the regulation on Gas Supply Security

On 3 February 2012, gas supplies to several EU countries were reduced, namely Poland, Slovakia, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Greece and Italy. European Commission data show that up to 30% less gas is reaching Austria, 24% less reaching Italy and 8% less reaching Poland.

1. In the days preceding the reduction in gas supplies, did the Commission receive notification through the early warning mechanism of a potential risk that EU gas supplies would be suspended?

2. In light of existing cooperation with Russia, how does the Commission evaluate the implementation of strategies introduced by Regulation COM(2009)0363 concerning measures to safeguard security of gas supply ?

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

The Early Warning Mechanism was not triggered during the cold spell period in January-February 2012 by either the Russian or the EU side.

The exceptionally high demand for gas in January-February 2012 has been successfully managed by the market players and it was also evident that the new Regulation had helped all concerned parties to react in an organised and coordinated way. New infrastructures recently made operational thanks to the European Energy Programme for Recovery have proven their usefulness in that period.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001420/12
do Komisji
Joanna Senyszyn (S&D)
(14 lutego 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Szanse dla młodzieży

Jedną z konsekwencji kryzysu są małe szanse dla młodzieży szkolnej na zatrudnienie w czasie wakacji. Młodzież, która jeszcze wcześniej nie miała najmniejszego problemu ze znalezieniem staży lub praktyk w okresie letnim, obecnie ma coraz mniejsze możliwości zdobycia jakiegokolwiek doświadczenia.

W nawiązaniu do nowej inicjatywy Komisji „Szanse dla młodzieży" z grudnia 2011 r., jakie możliwości Komisja widzi w zakresie wsparcia młodych ludzi (poprzez ew. programy unijne, zachęty dla pracodawców) w poszukiwaniu zatrudnienia podczas zbliżającego się okresu wakacyjnego?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(21 marca 2012 r.)

Komisja nie prowadzi polityki ani działań poświęconych konkretnie wspieraniu pracy wakacyjnej jako takiej, jednak niektóre elementy w ramach inicjatywy „Szanse dla młodzieży" mogą być wykorzystane także w przypadku uczniów i studentów pragnących zdobyć doświadczenie zawodowe podczas wakacji. Należą do nich np.:

— zwiększenie oferty staży: wiadomo, że znaczna część staży odbywa się w czasie letnich wakacji (w 2012 r. w ramach programów Erasmus i Leonardo da Vinci Komisja przeznaczy ze swej strony środki na 130 000 zagranicznych staży);

— przeznaczenie większej ilości środków z budżetu na wolontariat europejski w celu stworzenia przynajmniej 10 000 miejsc dla wolontariuszy w 2012 r.

Ponadto w dyskusjach między Komisją a państwami członkowskimi na temat bardziej efektywnego wykorzystania środków europejskich dla młodych ludzi może być podnoszona, w poszczególnych przypadkach, kwestia dodatkowego wsparcia dla programów pracy wakacyjnej.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001420/12
to the Commission
Joanna Senyszyn (S&D)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Opportunities for young people

One of the consequences of the crisis is that there are not many opportunities for youngsters in school to find employment during the holidays. Young people, who previously had no problem finding internships or apprenticeships during the summer, now have ever fewer possibilities of gaining any sort of experience.

With reference to the Commission's new 'Youth Opportunities Initiative', which was launched in December 2011, what possibilities does the Commission see for supporting young people (through EU programmes, incentives for employers) in their search for employment during the upcoming holiday period?

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

Although the Commission has no specific policies or actions to support summer work as such, there are several elements within the Youth Opportunities Initiative that are also relevant for students looking for a work experiences during the holidays. These include for example:

— the increase in the offer of traineeships; it is well known that a considerable part of these traineeships take place during the summer holidays (the Commission itself will provide funding for 130 000 transnational placements in 2012 under ERASMUS and Leonardo da Vinci);

— the reinforcement of the budget allocation for the European Voluntary Service in order to provide at least 10 000 volunteering opportunities in 2012.

Furthermore, discussions between the Commission and Member States about a more efficient use of European funds for young people can include on a case by case basis additional support to programmes promoting summer work.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001421/12
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(14 lutego 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Syryjski aktywista Georges Moubayed

Dnia 10 stycznia 2012 r. został uprowadzony proreformatorski aktywista Georges Moubayed, który jest aktualnie przetrzymywany w nieznanej lokalizacji. Grożą mu tortury. Porywacze zażądali za jego uwolnienie okupu w wysokości 30 milionów funtów syryjskich (około $ 600.000). Brał on udział w proreformatorskich demonstracjach, które promował przez portal społecznościowy. Dodatkowo ofiarował pomoc oraz wspomagał finansowo rodziny aktywistów, którzy zmarli w wyniku protestów i zamieszek.

Od początku protestów w marcu zeszłego roku tysiące proreformatorskich aktywistów zostało zatrzymanych przez służby bezpieczeństwa oraz członków prorządowych gangów – shabiha. Tortury oraz inne metody okrutnego traktowania są szeroko rozpowszechnione, a w aresztach zmarło co najmniej 235 osób.

W związku z powyższym zwracam się z zapytaniem:

— Jakie kroki Komisja zamierza podjąć, aby przeciwdziałać prześladowaniom opozycjonistów w Syrii?

— Czy Komisja zamierza zareagować w sprawie syryjskiego aktywisty Georgesa Moubayeda?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel i Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton
w imieniu Komisji
(24 maja 2012 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca wielokrotnie potępiała, ostatnio w swoim oświadczeniu z 22 lutego 2012 r., arbitralne i niezgodne z prawem zatrzymania i uprowadzenia aktywistów politycznych i obrońców praw człowieka oraz stosowanie wobec nich tortur. Podkreślała, że reżim syryjski musi przestrzegać wolności słowa zgodnie ze swoimi międzynarodowymi zobowiązaniami.

Delegatura UE w Damaszku śledzi z uwagą przypadki uprowadzeń i arbitralnych zatrzymań. Kilkakrotnie zwracała się z prośbą o informacje na temat miejsca pobytu arbitralnie zatrzymanych aktywistów oraz – zgodnie z oświadczeniami wydawanymi przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą – wzywała do ich natychmiastowego zwolnienia.

Uprowadzenia aktywistów politycznych oraz stosowanie wobec nich tortur stanowią kolejne przykłady powszechnego łamania praw człowieka przez reżim syryjski, co może oznaczać dopuszczenie się zbrodni przeciwko ludzkości. UE potwierdziła, że nie ma mowy o bezkarności sprawców oraz tych, którzy są uwikłani w popełnienie domniemanych przestępstw.

Pozytywnym akcentem było zwolnienie przez porywaczy Georgesa Moubayeda pod koniec stycznia 2012 r.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001421/12
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Syrian activist Georges Moubayed

On 10 January 2012, pro-reform activist Georges Moubayed was abducted. He is currently being detained at an unknown location, where he is being threatened with torture. His kidnappers have demanded a ransom of SYP 30 million (about USD 600 000) for his release. He had taken part in pro-reform demonstrations, which he promoted on a social networking website, and he had offered assistance and financial support to families of activists who had died as a result of the protests and riots.

Since protests began in March 2011, thousands of pro-reform activists have been detained by the security services or by the *shabiha*, members of pro-government gangs. Torture and other forms of cruel treatment are widespread, and more than 235 people have died in custody.

— What steps does the Commission intend to take to prevent the persecution of opposition figures in Syria?

— Does the Commission intend to respond to the case of the Georges Moubayed?

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

The HR/VP has repeatedly, and most recently in her statement of 22 February 2012, condemned the arbitrary and illegal detention, abduction and torture of political and human rights activists. She has stressed the need for the Syrian regime to respect the freedom of expression in line with its international obligations.

The EU Delegation in Damascus closely monitors cases of abduction and arbitrary arrests. It has on several occasions requested information on the whereabouts of arbitrarily detained activists and — in line with statements from the HR/VP — called for their immediate release.

Abduction and torture of political activists are further examples of the widespread human rights violations by the Syrian regime, which might amount to crimes against humanity. The EU has reiterated that there can be no impunity for the perpetrators and those associated with such alleged crimes.

On a positive note, Mr Georges Moubayed was released by his abductors at the end of January 2012.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001422/12
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(14 februari 2012)

Betreft: Typegoedkeuringsvereisten voor controleapparatuur in het verkeer

Voor de installatie en controleprocedure van meettoestellen bedoeld voor snelheidscontroles en de verkeersveiligheid bestaat er momenteel geen Europees rechtskader. Elke lidstaat heeft verschillende typegoedkeuringsvereisten waardoor fabrikanten verschillende keren dezelfde testen moeten uitvoeren en waardoor de invoering van nieuwe meettoestellen vaak onnodig vertraagd wordt.

In de Resolutie van het Europees Parlement van 15 december 2011 over het stappenplan voor een interne Europese Vervoersruimte — werken aan een concurrerend en zuinig vervoerssysteem, onderstreept het Parlement de noodzaak tot verbetering en standaardisering van controleapparaten zoals flitspalen en boordapparatuur, alsook van communicatiesystemen en informatiedragers, en dringt erop aan dat tegen 2013 een voorstel wordt ingediend betreffende de wederzijdse erkenning en interoperabiliteit van dergelijke apparaten.

— Kan de Commissie meedelen of ze de mening van het Europees Parlement deelt en op welke termijn ze een initiatief terzake overweegt?

— Heeft de Commissie deze kwestie reeds aangekaart bij de lidstaten? Zo ja, hoe staan zij tegenover een dergelijk voorstel?

Antwoord van de heer Tajani namens de Commissie
(19 april 2012)

Er bestaat momenteel geen Europees rechtskader voor de harmonisatie van de installatie en controleprocedure voor meettoestellen bedoeld voor snelheidscontroles en de verkeersveiligheid.

Om te beoordelen of harmonisatie noodzakelijk is, en in welke mate, moet met name worden gekeken naar het bestaan van handelsbelemmeringen. Bewijs dat de handel wordt belemmerd, kan nu heel objectief worden geleverd door fabrikanten die hebben ondervonden dat hun producten niet wederzijds erkend worden.

Het beginsel van wederzijdse erkenning geldt voor producten waarop geen communautaire harmonisatiewetgeving van toepassing is, en voor aspecten van producten die buiten het toepassingsgebied van dergelijke wetgeving vallen.

Volgens dit beginsel kunnen producten die rechtmatig in een lidstaat zijn vervaardigd en in de handel gebracht, ook in een andere lidstaat in de handel worden gebracht, ondanks een nationale technische regel in de lidstaat van bestemming, tenzij die lidstaat kan bewijzen dat het opleggen van zijn eigen technische regel op het desbetreffende product noodzakelijk is om een van de redenen van artikel 36 VWEU (bescherming van de openbare zedelijkheid, de openbare veiligheid, de gezondheid en het leven van personen, dieren of planten, enz.), of vanwege de in de rechtspraak van het Hof ontwikkelde dwingende eisen, behoudens het evenredigheidsbeginsel.

Bij gebrek aan meldingen betreffende meettoestellen bedoeld voor snelheidscontroles en de verkeersveiligheid is de Commissie zich niet bewust van verschillen tussen nationale regels, noch dat nationale regels onredelijke eisen zouden opleggen aan fabrikanten, of zouden leiden tot vertragingen in het op de markt brengen van dergelijke producten.

De in het advies van het Europees Parlement bedoelde kwestie zal onder de aandacht van de lidstaten worden gebracht.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001422/12
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Type approval requirements for traffic monitoring devices

There is currently no European legal framework regulating the installation and testing of measuring devices for speed checks and traffic safety. Each Member State has its own type approval requirements, which means that manufacturers have to carry out the same tests many times and the introduction of new measuring devices is often unnecessarily delayed.

The European Parliament resolution of 15 December 2011 on the Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area — Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system stresses the need to improve and standardise control devices such as speed cameras, on-board units and communications systems and media, and calls for the submission of a proposal concerning the mutual recognition and interoperability of such devices by 2013.

— Can the Commission state whether it shares the European Parliament's opinion and within which period it proposes to consider an initiative on this matter?

— Has the Commission already raised this matter with the Member States? If so, what is their position with regard to such a proposal?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(19 April 2012)

At present, there is no European legal framework harmonising the installation and testing of measuring devices for speed checks and traffic safety.

In order to assess the need for harmonisation it is particularly important to be aware of the existence of barriers to trade. Evidence of trade barriers can now be given quite objectively by manufacturers who have experienced their products not being mutually recognised.

The principle of mutual recognition applies to products which are not subject to EU harmonisation legislation or to aspects of products falling outside the scope of such legislation.

Under this principle, products lawfully produced and/or marketed in one Member State, can also be marketed in another Member State, notwithstanding the existence of a national technical rule in that Member State, unless the Member State of destination can prove that it is essential to impose its own technical rule on the product concerned based on the reasons outlined in Article 36 TFEU (protection of public morality or public security, protection of the health and life of humans, animals or plants, etc.) or in the mandatory requirements developed in the Court's jurisprudence, subject to the principle of proportionality.

In the absence of notifications concerning measuring devices for speed checks and traffic safety, the Commission has no evidence that national rules are at variance with each other, or are imposing undue burdens on manufacturers or are delaying the bringing to market of such products.

The issue covered by the European Parliament's opinion will be raised with Member States.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001423/12
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(14 februari 2012)

Betreft: Subsidie aan BBC en Europese media in het algemeen

Deze week werd bekend ([1]) dat de BBC miljoenen euro's aan Europese subsidiegelden en leningen van de EIB heeft ontvangen. In dat kader de volgende vragen:

1. Vanuit welke begrotingspost(en) is deze subsidie aan de BBC verleend?

2. Onder welke voorwaarden is deze subsidie verleend?

3. Wat was/is het doel van deze subsidies?

4. Welke overige staatsomroepen en media hebben recent subsidie van de EU ontvangen? Vallen hieronder ook Nederlandse media? Zo ja, welke?

5. Is de Commissie met de PVV van mening dat hiermee de onafhankelijkheid van de nieuwsgaring in het geding is? Zo nee, waarom niet?

6. Is de Commissie met de PVV van mening dat onafhankelijke media überhaupt niet gesubsidieerd zouden moeten worden? Zo nee, waarom niet?

7. Kan de Commissie aangeven welke mediaprojecten momenteel lopen en hoeveel deze kosten, gespecificeerd per lidstaat en media?

8. Kan de Commissie aangeven welke projecten voor 2013 op het programma staan en wat de geschatte kosten hiervan zijn?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(28 maart 2012)

1-3. De Europese Investeringsbank, waarvan de diensten onafhankelijk en anders dan die van de Commissie zijn, heeft de BBC de volgende leningen verstrekt: 40 miljoen EUR respectievelijk 74,8 miljoen EUR in 2002 respectievelijk 2006 ter ondersteuning van audiovisuele producties, en 96,5 miljoen EUR in 2003 voor de bouw van het centrum voor digitale omroep in Londen. De prijsstelling daarvan bestrijkt de financieringskosten alsmede de administratieve kosten en de kredietrisicokosten. De financieringsvoorwaarden zijn aangepast aan het soort investering. Aflossing geschiedt normaliter halfjaarlijks of jaarlijks. Geen van de leningen heeft subsidie-elementen.

4. De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar databank „Financial Transparency System" ([2]), die een overzicht geeft van de ontvangers van door de Commissie sinds 2007 toegekende subsidies.

5. De Commissie respecteert volledig de onafhankelijkheid van de media. Voor elke gegunde opdracht of elke toegekende subsidie moeten de media voldoen aan de criteria voor aanbestedingen, maar zij genieten volledige redactionele vrijheid.

6. De lidstaten kunnen steunmaatregelen ten behoeve van de media nemen, die zij dikwijls rechtvaardigen door pluralisme in de media aan te voeren. Met betrekking tot openbare omroepen erkennen de EU-Verdragen ([3]) de vrijheid van de lidstaten om de publieke opdracht te bepalen en om de openbare omroep en de financiering daarvan te organiseren. Voor overheidsfinanciering gelden evenwel EU-staatssteunregels ([4]).

([1]) http://euobserver.com/1016/115123.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index_en.htm
([3]) Protocol (Nr. 29) betreffende het openbare-omroepstelsel in de lidstaten: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri= OJ:C:2010:083:0201:0328:NL:PDF
([4]) Mededeling betreffende de toepassing van de regels inzake staatssteun op de publieke omroep: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ /LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:257:0001:0014:NL:PDF

7. In het kader van het werkprogramma 2012 op het gebied van communicatie ([5]) steunt de Commissie drie onafhankelijke EU-wijde medianetwerken ter bevordering van de pan-Europese berichtgeving over beleid en gebeurtenissen in de EU: de tv-nieuwszender Euronews, het Europees radionetwerk (Euranet) en de nieuwswebsite PressEurop. In 2012 is aan deze netwerken respectievelijk 18,6 miljoen EUR, 6,5 miljoen EUR en 3,2 miljoen EUR toegekend.

8. De Commissie is bezig met het opstellen van haar ontwerpbegroting 2013, die tijdig aan de begrotingsautoriteit zal worden voorgelegd.

([5]) C(2011) 9461 definitief; http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/communication/pdf/progr2012_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001423/12
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Grants to BBC and European media in general

It emerged this week ([1]) that the BBC has received millions of euros in European grants and loans from the EIB. Please answer the following questions in this connection:

1. From which budget item(s) was this subsidy granted to the BBC?

2. Under which conditions was this subsidy granted?

3. What was/is the purpose of this subsidy?

4. Which other state broadcasters and media organisations have recently received EU subsidies? Are any Dutch media organisations among them? If so, which?

5. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that this affects the independence of news gathering? If not, why not?

6. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that independent media should not be subsidised in any case? If not, why not?

7. Can the Commission indicate which media projects are currently running and what their cost is, by Member State and media category?

8. Can the Commission specify which projects are included in the programme for 2013 and what their estimated cost is?

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

1-3. The European Investment Bank, whose services are independent and different from the Commission ones, has provided the following loans to the BBC: EUR 40 million and 74.8 million in support of audiovisual productions in 2002 and 2006 respectively; in 2003, EUR 96.5 million for the construction of the digital broadcasting centre in London. Their pricing covers funding costs as well as administrative and credit risk costs. The conditions of financing are adapted to the investment type. Repayment is normally on a semi-annual or annual basis. None of the loans have any subsidy element.

4. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its database 'Financial Transparency System' ([2]) comprising the beneficiaries of grants awarded by the Commission since 2007.

5. The Commission fully respects the independence of the media. Whenever media organisations are awarded a contract or grant, they have to comply with the tendering criteria, but they benefit from full editorial freedom.

6. Member States may take support measures in favour of the media, they often justify in terms of media pluralism. As regards public broadcasters, the EU Treaties recognise ([3]) the Member States' freedom to define the public service remit, to organise public service broadcasting and its funding. Public funding is however submitted to EU State aid rules ([4]).

([1]) http://euobserver.com/1016/115123
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index_en.htm
([3]) Protocol (29) on the system of public broadcasting in the Member States: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:083:0201:0328:EN:PDF
([4]) Communication on the application of state aid rules to public service broadcasting: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:257:0001:0014:EN:PDF

7. Following the 2012 work programme in the field of communication ([5]), the Commission supports three independent EU-wide media networks to promote pan-European coverage of policy and events in the EU: the TV news channel Euronews, the European Radio Network (Euranet), and the news website PressEurop. EUR 18.6 million, 6.5 million, and 3.2 million respectively, have been allocated for these networks in 2012.

8. The Commission is preparing its 2013 draft budget which will be transmitted to the budget authority in due time.

([5]) C(2011)9461 final, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/communication/pdf/progr2012_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001424/12
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(7 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Omicidio in Afghanistan di una madre a causa del parto della terza figlia

Nel villaggio di Mahfalay, nel distretto di Khanabad, una giovane donna è stata uccisa dal marito e dalla suocera in quanto ritenuta «colpevole» di aver dato alla luce la terza figlia femmina. Mentre in Afghanistan la nascita di un maschio è occasione di grandi festeggiamenti, la nascita di una bambina è considerata evento non degno di celebrazioni per la famiglia.

— Considerando che l'episodio è solo un esempio tra i molti atti di violenza di cui le donne afghane sono frequentemente vittime;

— considerando che le leggi afghane non favoriscono la partecipazione attiva della donna alla società civile;

— viste le ingenti somme investite dall'Unione europea in Afghanistan e i diversi programmi attivi nel Paese, come delineati dal «Country Strategy Paper for Afghanistan 2007-2013»;

— viste le dichiarazioni rilasciate dall'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton, a seguito della Conferenza internazionale di Bonn del 2011, sulla volontà di sostenere la stabilità e il rafforzamento delle istituzioni democratiche nel paese;

si interroga la Commissione per appurare:

— se sia al corrente dell'episodio predetto;

— se siano in previsione o in fase di svolgimento programmi mirati al superamento di situazioni di degrado nelle aree periferiche ed extraurbane;

— a quanto ammontano gli stanziamenti erogati all'Afghanistan a titolo di aiuti per il biennio 2010-2011;

— quale sia il grado di collaborazione riscontrato negli attori locali.

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

In stretta collaborazione con i capi missione dell'UE, il rappresentante speciale dell'Unione europea/capo delegazione in Afghanistan segue attentamente sul campo la situazione in materia di diritti umani, in particolare le riprovevoli e ricorrenti violenze perpetrate nei confronti delle donne. L'episodio cui l'onorevole parlamentare fa riferimento è purtroppo solo uno dei tanti atti efferati che spesso non vengono neanche denunciati.

L'assistenza fornita dall'UE nel quadro del bilancio dell'Unione continua a incentrarsi sulla governance, l'agricoltura e la sanità, a sostegno dei programmi nazionali afghani e in stretta collaborazione con il governo afghano. I programmi come quello per la solidarietà nazionale, sostenuti dall'UE attraverso il Fondo fiduciario per la ricostruzione dell'Afghanistan, si sono dimostrati validi nel rispondere alle necessità delle popolazioni in aree remote e non urbane.

L'UE sostiene inoltre l'erogazione di servizi sociali alle fasce più vulnerabili, compresi i servizi di assistenza psicologica, legale e di mediazione per le donne che si trovano a dover affrontare situazioni familiari difficili. Altri programmi si pongono invece obiettivi a lungo termine, come il rafforzamento degli organi esistenti per la protezione sociale e la tutela dei diritti delle donne e ragazze afghane vittime o a rischio di violenza domestica.

Da parte sua, il governo afghano si è impegnato fermamente a migliorare la situazione femminile alle conferenze internazionali di Londra e Kabul del 2010, alla conferenza di Bonn di dicembre 2011 e in una dichiarazione resa il 18 gennaio 2012.

L'UE ha stanziato 440,50 milioni di euro per il 2010 e 2011, da destinare allo sviluppo e all'assistenza umanitaria.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001424/12
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(7 February 2012)

Subject: Murder of a mother in Afghanistan because of the birth of a third daughter

In the village of Mahfalay, in the district of Khanabad, a young woman has been killed by her husband and her mother-in-law for being 'guilty' of having given birth to a third daughter. While in Afghanistan the birth of a boy is an occasion for great rejoicing, the birth of a girl is considered an event not worthy of celebration by the family.

In view of:

— the fact that this murder is but one example of the many acts of violence of which Afghan women are frequently victims;

— the fact that Afghan laws do not encourage active participation by women in civil society;

— the huge sums of money invested by the European Union in Afghanistan and the various programmes in progress in the country, as set out in the Country Strategy Paper for Afghanistan 2007-2013;

— the statements made by Catherine Ashton, Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative, following the international conference in Bonn in 2011, regarding the desire to support the stability and strengthening of the country's democratic institutions;

the Commission is asked to answer the following questions:

— Is it aware of the above event?

— Are programmes targeted at reversing decline in remote and non-urban areas being planned or implemented?

— How much aid was granted to Afghanistan for the two-year period 2010-2011?

— How much cooperation has been shown by local stakeholders?

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

The European Union Special Representative/Head of Delegation Afghanistan monitors the human rights situation on the ground in Afghanistan, in close consultation with EU Heads of Mission, notably also with respect to the deplorable and continued violence against women. The incident referred to in question is, regrettably, only one of many and not all of these are reported.

EU assistance under the EU budget continues to focus on governance, agriculture and health, in support of Afghan National Programmes, and in close cooperation with the Afghan Government. Programmes like the National Solidarity Programme, supported by the EU through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, have proven effective in addressing the needs of populations in remote and non-urban areas.

Furthermore, the EU supports social services to the most vulnerable including counselling, legal aid and mediation for women faced with difficult family circumstances. Additional programmes address long-term objectives, such as strengthening existing bodies to exercise social protection and protect the rights of Afghan women and girls at risk or victims of domestic violence.

The Afghan Government, for its part, has made firm commitments to improve the position of women in the context of the international conferences held in 2010 in London and Kabul, in December 2011 at the Bonn Conference and in a statement issued on 18 January 2012.

The EU has committed EUR 440.50 million in 2010 and 2011, for both development and humanitarian assistance.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001425/12
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(14 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Tutela della libertà religiosa in Bosnia-Erzegovina

In Bosnia persiste l'intolleranza verso i cattolici.

Nella «Republika Srpska» (la parte della Bosnia-Erzegovina a maggioranza o totalmente serba) i cattolici sono impossibilitati a rientrare e chi non è serbo è escluso.

In compenso, nella federazione bosniaco-croata le autorità che hanno il potere reale, e sono mussulmane, consentono l'insediamento di una forte comunità estremista islamica.

La Commissione, anche sulla base della comunicazione presentata il 12 ottobre 2011 dal titolo «Strategia di allargamento e sfide principali per il periodo 2011-2012» (COM(2011)0666), in cui si cita chiaramente «Occorre prendere ulteriori provvedimenti per migliorare l'applicazione della legge sulle minoranze nazionali e garantire i diritti delle minoranze», quali misure intende intraprendere affinché questa situazione di discriminazione religiosa/etnica abbia termine?

Risposta data da Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(26 marzo 2012)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alla propria risposta alla precedente interrogazione E-010581/2011 ([1]). La Commissione continua inoltre a sollevare presso le sedi competenti le questioni relative ai casi di discriminazione su base etnica o religiosa denunciati in Bosnia-Erzegovina e sostiene il rientro dei rifugiati, in linea con tutti gli accordi internazionali riguardanti la regione, contribuendo, tra l'altro, al processo di Sarajevo. Lo strumento di assistenza preadesione (IPA) sosterrà l'applicazione a livello nazionale della strategia riveduta per l'attuazione di tale processo e dell'allegato VII dell'accordo di Dayton sui rifugiati e gli sfollati. In tale contesto l'IPA collaborerà con le autorità per la predisposizione di misure socioeconomiche volte ad assicurare la sostenibilità dei rientri.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001425/12
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Protection of religious freedom in Bosnia and Herzegovina

In Bosnia, intolerance for Catholics is an ongoing issue.

Catholics are prevented from returning to the 'Republika Srpska' (the part of Bosnia and Herzegovina which is mostly or totally Serb) and non-Serbs are kept out.

Meanwhile, in the Bosniak-Croat Federation, the Muslim authorities — which have the real power — are permitting the establishment of a strong Islamic extremist community.

On the basis also of its communication of 12 October 2011, entitled 'Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2011-2012' (COM(2011)0666), which clearly states that 'further steps are needed in order to improve implementation of the Law on national minorities and to guarantee minority rights', what measures does the Commission intend to take to put an end to this religious/ethnic discrimination?

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

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the answer already given to his previous Question E-010581/2011 [1]. Moreover, the Commission continues to raise issues of reported religious or ethnic discrimination with Bosnia and Herzegovina in the appropriate fora. It supports refugee return in line with all international agreements in the region amongst others as contributor to the Sarajevo process. The Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) will support the implementation, at the national level, of the revised strategy implementing this process and the Annex VII of the Dayton Agreement on Refugees and Displaced Persons. In this context, IPA will work with the authorities on socioeconomic measures to ensure sustainability of returns.

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001426/12
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(14 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per il progetto «Che strada prendo?»

Secondo i dati Eurostat di dicembre 2011, i disoccupati nell'Unione europea sono oltre 23 milioni e il tasso di disoccupazione giovanile è del 22,1 %, il che significa che 5,4 milioni di giovani sotto i 25 anni non hanno un lavoro, mentre il fenomeno dei cosiddetti NEET, giovani completamente fuori dal circuito formativo e lavorativo, riguarda il 12,8 % della popolazione tra i 15 e i 24 anni. In questo contesto, le attività di formazione e di orientamento dei giovani assumono un'importanza cruciale per il loro avviamento professionale e per contrastare la disoccupazione giovanile.

Il progetto «Che strada prendo?» è proposto dall'Agenzia giornalistica 9Colonne, una cooperativa di giornalisti nata nel 1996 che attualmente occupa 12 professionisti con Ccnl giornalistico, uno staff grafico e circa 40 collaboratori. Il progetto proposto consiste nel realizzare una libreria in continuo aggiornamento con video di circa tre minuti che possano informare e spronare i giovani verso le carriere possibili, raccontando la storia di arti, mestieri e professioni a loro sconosciuti o parzialmente conosciuti. L'obiettivo è quello di presentare ai giovani con immagini e un linguaggio usuale informazioni sulle carriere possibili, la formazione necessaria per accedervi e le possibilità di apprendistato e di avviamento al lavoro.

Tali informazioni saranno poi rese note nei luoghi maggiormente frequentati dai giovani e attraverso i mezzi di comunicazione più utilizzati — ad esempio internet, televisione, cinema, agenzie per l'impiego — per permettere loro di avere una conoscenza di base su cui costruire progetti per la loro vita personale e lavorativa.

La creazione della libreria avverrà attraverso passaggi successivi da realizzare nell'arco di tre anni, quali:

— la redazione di schede di appoggio ai film con indicate: dalle informazioni base sulla professione alle scuole, i corsi professionali, i percorsi formativi; dalle attuali disponibilità lavorative al range di guadagno possibile, le malattie professionali, le condizioni di pensionamento, altri possibili mestieri collegati;

— la produzione video; la stipulazione di accordi con TV per la distribuzione gratuita nel circuito televisivo;

— la creazione del sito di base e collegamenti con altri siti;

— l'impostazione del lavoro per l'eventuale distribuzione dei video nelle scuole; l'ufficio stampa per il sostegno e la diffusione.

Ciò premesso, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. Esistono finanziamenti per la realizzazione di progetti con finalità simili a quello su esposto?

2. Qual è il quadro generale?

Risposta data da Laszlo Andor a nome della Commissione
(20 marzo 2012)

Le attività di orientamento e di formazione sono interventi tipici del Fondo sociale europeo ([1]) (FSE), tra i cui obiettivi rientra il miglioramento delle prospettive occupazionali, obiettivo che coincide con quello indicato dall'onorevole deputata nella descrizione del progetto.

L'FSE sostiene tali interventi per il tramite di programmi operativi (PO). In base al principio di gestione condivisa, i PO dell'FSE sono gestiti a livello nazionale o regionale. Un'autorità di gestione è responsabile dell'attuazione di ciascun PO e deve garantire che gli interventi previsti contribuiscano al raggiungimento degli obiettivi del programma.

Gli estremi per contattare le singole autorità di gestione sono disponibili sul sito web dell'FSE nella sezione «L'FSE negli Stati membri»: http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=45&langId=it.

([1]) Per ulteriori informazioni si rinvia al sito: http://ec.europa.eu/esf/home.jsp?langId=it.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001426/12
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Possible funding for the project 'Which road shall I take?'

According to Eurostat data from December 2011, there are more than 23 million unemployed in the European Union and the youth unemployment rate is 22.1 %, meaning that 5.4 million young people under the age of 25 do not have a job, while the so-called NEET, young people not in education, employment or training, represent 12.8 % of the population between 15 and 24 years of age. In this context, training and orientation activities for young people assume a crucial importance for their introduction into the world of work and as a means of tackling youth unemployment.

The 'Which road shall I take?' project was proposed by the *9Colonne* news agency, a cooperative of journalists founded in 1996 which currently employs 12 professionals covered by the National Collective Labour Agreement for journalists, a graphics department and a staff of around 40. The proposed project consists of creating a continuously updated library of videos of around three minutes long designed to inform youngsters and motivate them to consider possible careers by focusing on arts, trades and professions which they know nothing or little about. The aim is to provide young people with information, using images and everyday language, about possible careers, the training required to access them and the opportunities for apprenticeships and introductions to work.

This information will then be publicised in places often frequented by young people and through the most commonly used means of communication — for example on the Internet, on television, at the cinema, in job centres — to allow them to acquire a foundation of knowledge on the basis of which they can make plans for their personal and professional lives.

The creation of the library will be carried out via successive stages over three years, including:

— drawing up information sheets to accompany the films and provide basic information on the profession, covering: schools, vocational courses and training programmes; current job availability and the possible earnings range; occupational illnesses, retirement conditions and other possible linked careers;

— video production; concluding agreements with TV for free distribution on television networks;

— creating a basic website and links to other sites;

— making arrangements for the eventual distribution of the videos in schools; a press office to provide support and publicity.

Bearing this in mind, we ask the Commission:

1. Does the funding exist to carry out projects with similar aims to that outlined above?

2. What is the general situation?

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

Guidance and training activities are typical interventions of the European Social Fund ([1]) (ESF), which pursues aims such as improving employment prospects, the aim indicated by the Honourable Member in the project description.

ESF supports such interventions through operational programmes (OPs). According to the principle of shared management, ESF OPs are managed at national or regional level. A managing authority is responsible for the implementation of each OP and for safeguarding that the planned interventions contribute to the objectives of the programme.

Contact details for each managing authority are available on the ESF website in the dedicated section 'ESF in Member States': http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=45&langId=en

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([1]) More information on http://ec.europa.eu/esf/home.jsp?langId=en.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001427/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Possibili fondi in favore dell'Associazione Opera

L'Associazione culturale Opera, con sede a Molfetta, non ha scopo di lucro e persegue l'obiettivo — come si legge nello statuto — «di far crescere la comunità locale pugliese non in termini economici e individuali, ma in termini culturali e di qualità della vita». In particolare, la strategia è quella di far crescere la cultura d'impresa e la sua capacità di interagire con il territorio per una crescita comune.

Gli strumenti cui l'Associazione culturale Opera ricorre per raggiungere tali obiettivi sono i più diversi: convegni, attività editoriale, partecipazione collettiva a fiere, spettacoli, mostre d'arte, promozione turistica per evidenziare le peculiarità e i maggiori eventi e far riconoscere il territorio come «terra dell'accoglienza». Tra i progetti più rilevanti dell'Associazione vi è la promozione della «Settimana Santa in Puglia», ovvero la promozione in tutta Europa dei riti pasquali che caratterizzano il periodo pasquale nei comuni pugliesi.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. Considerando gli obiettivi di promozione e marketing delle comunità territoriali senza scopo di lucro, l'Associazione Opera può usufruire di fondi europei per le proprie attività?

2. Ritiene che il modello di questa Associazione possa essere replicato in altri Paesi europei nell'ambito di futuri progetti pilota?

Risposta data da Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(16 marzo 2012)

Le attività culturali e turistiche possono in effetti essere ammissibili a un cofinanziamento a patto che siano in linea con gli obiettivi del programma interessato e soddisfino le regole UE e nazionali di ammissibilità. In base al principio di gestione condivisa usato per gestire la politica di coesione lo Stato membro è responsabile della selezione dei progetti, ragion per cui la Commissione suggerisce che l'onorevole deputato si metta direttamente in contatto con l'autorità di gestione del programma Puglia:

Autorità di Gestione POR Puglia: Viale Japigia, n. 145, 70126 BARI, adgfesr@regione.puglia.it

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001427/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(7 February 2012)

Subject: Possible funding for the Opera cultural association

The Opera cultural association, based in Molfetta, is a not-for-profit organisation that pursues the objective, as set out in its articles of association, 'of growing the local community in Apulia, focusing not on the economy and the individual, but on culture and quality of life'. Its strategy consists in particular in developing an enterprise culture and interaction with the local area in order to achieve shared growth.

The association uses a very wide range of means to achieve these objectives, including meetings, publications, collective participation in fairs, shows, art exhibitions, and tourism campaigns to highlight local features and important events and promote the area as a 'land of welcome'. One of the association's flagship projects is 'Holy Week in Apulia', which seeks to promote throughout Europe the religious traditions that mark the Easter period in Apulia.

In the light of the above, would the Commission answer the following questions:

1. In view of the fact that it seeks to promote and market local communities on a not-for-profit basis, can the Opera Association obtain EU funding for its activities?

2. Does it think that similar associations could be set up in other Member States under future pilot projects?

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

Cultural and tourist related activities could indeed be eligible for co-financing, provided that they are in line with the objectives of the programme concerned and comply with the EU and national eligibility rules. Under the shared management principle used in administering cohesion policy, the Member State is responsible for the selection of projects, and therefore the Commission suggests that the Honourable Member contact directly the managing authority of the Puglia programme:

Autorità di Gestione POR Puglia: Viale Japigia, n. 145, 70126 Bari, adgfesr@regione.puglia.it