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 110 E/01)

Treść **Strona**

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002065/12
adresată Comisiei
Corina Crețu (S&D)
(22 februarie 2012)

Subiect: Pentru stoparea uciderii copiilor în Siria

Peste 400 de copii au fost uciși în Siria de la debutul revoltei împotriva regimului președintelui Bashar al Assad în urmă cu aproape un an. Conform UNICEF, un număr similar de copii au fost deținuți în această perioadă și există informații privind arestările arbitrare, tortura și abuzurile sexuale în timpul detenției. Din păcate, UNICEF nu are acces în zonele cele mai afectate de conflict, în special în orașul Homs.

— Ce intenționează Comisia să întreprindă împotriva acestor acte de barbarie, pentru a determina eliberarea copiilor arestați abuziv în Siria, pentru a se permite accesul reprezentanților UNICEF în vederea ajutorării minorilor și pentru a stopa uciderea lor în masă?

Răspuns dat de dna Ashton în numele Comisiei
(4 iunie 2012)

UE a condamnat cu fermitate încălcările la scară largă ale drepturilor omului pe care regimul sirian le-a comis împotriva propriei populații, inclusiv împotriva copiilor. UE a solicitat autorităților siriene să elibereze toate persoanele reținute în mod ilegal și să nu comită acte de barbarism și nici acte de tortură sau abuzuri sexuale. UE a cerut efectuarea unei investigații complete a constatărilor Comisiei internaționale independente de anchetă, care a evidențiat comiterea unor crime împotriva umanității și a afirmat că autorii acestor presupuse crime trebuie aduși în fața justiției.

UE a mobilizat, prin intermediul Comitetului Internațional al Crucii Roșii (CICR), 1 milion EUR pentru îngrijiri medicale în situații de urgență umanitară și pentru asistență destinată deținuților. La 5 aprilie 2012, CICR a anunțat că s-a ajuns la o înțelegere cu guvernul privind procedurile referitoare la vizitarea locurilor de detenție și privind intensificarea prezenței internaționale în această țară. UE este dispusă să sporească asistența acordată, în cazul în care accesul la centrele de detenție este asigurat în continuare și în cazul apariției unor noi nevoi umanitare nesatisfăcute.

Pentru a spori presiunea asupra regimului sirian, astfel încât acesta să pună capăt violenței și să acorde organizațiilor umanitare accesul pe teritoriul său, UE și-a extins măsurile restrictive de 14 ori, din mai 2011 până în prezent. În vederea unei rezolvări pașnice a crizei, UE îl sprijină pe deplin pe trimisul special al ONU și al Ligii Statelor Arabe, Kofi Annan, și planul său în șase puncte, salutând totodată desfășurarea unei misiuni de observare a ONU în Siria, al cărei scop este raportarea cu privire la implementarea planului.

În general, UE acordă o mare prioritate ajutării copiilor care se confruntă cu conflicte armate. Orientările UE privind copiii afectați de conflictele armate cuprind angajamentul EU de a aborda această problemă într-o manieră globală. Șefii misiunilor UE monitorizează și raportează aspectele legate de copiii afectați de conflictele armate.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002065/12
to the Commission
Corina Crețu (S&D)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Stopping the murder of children in Syria

Over 400 children have been killed in Syria since the beginning of the revolt against President Bashar al-Assad's regime almost a year ago. According to Unicef, a similar number of children were detained during this period and there is information about arbitrary arrests, torture and sexual abuse during detention. Unfortunately, Unicef does not have access to the areas most affected by the conflict, in particular the city of Homs.

— What does the Commission intend to do against these acts of barbarism, and what does the Commission intend to do to free the children that were arrested abusively in Syria and allow the access of Unicef representatives to help minors and prevent their mass murder?

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

The EU has strongly condemned the widespread human rights violations inflicted by the Syrian regime on its population, including children. It has called on the Syrian authorities to release all those illegally detained and to refrain from all acts of barbarism, including torture and sexual abuse. It called for a full investigation of the findings of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry, which pointed to crimes against humanity, and affirmed that the perpetrators of such alleged crimes must be brought to justice.

The EU has mobilised EUR 1 million for humanitarian emergency medical care and assistance to detainees through the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). ICRC has announced on 5 April 2012 that they reached agreement with the government on the procedures for visits to places of detention and to scale up their international presence in the country. The EU stands ready to increase its assistance should access to detainee centres be maintained and new humanitarian unmet needs arise.

To increase pressure on the Syrian regime to end the violence and grant access to humanitarian organisations, the EU has extended its restrictive measures 14 times since May 2011. In view of a peaceful settlement to the crisis, it fully supports UN-Arab League Envoy Kofi Annan and his six point plan and welcomes the deployment of an UN observer mission to Syria reporting on the plan's implementation.

In general, the EU accords a high priority to helping children facing armed conflicts. The EU Guidelines on Children Affected by Armed Conflicts commit the EU to addressing this issue in a comprehensive manner. The EU Heads of Missions monitor and report on children affected by armed conflicts.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002066/12
adresată Comisiei
Corina Crețu (S&D)
(22 februarie 2012)

Subiect: Măsuri în vederea diminuării cifrei refugiaților morți în Marea Mediterană

Mediterana a fost cea mai necruțătoare dintre mările lumii în 2011 pentru refugiați. Peste 1500 de persoane s-au înecat sau au dispărut încercând să traverseze Marea Mediterană anul trecut, conform Înaltului Comisariat ONU pentru Refugiați. De altfel, 2011 a fost un an-record pentru numărul de persoane care au traversat Mediterana spre Europa — peste 58 000 — în special din cauza prăbușirilor regimurilor din Tunisia și Libia și a conflictului din această din urmă țară.

— Ce măsuri intenționează Comisia să adopte în vederea diminuării cifrei foarte mari a refugiaților morți în încercarea de a traversa Marea Mediterană spre țările Uniunii Europene?

Răspuns dat de dna Malmström în numele Comisiei
(19 aprilie 2012)

Comisia Europeană este foarte îngrijorată în legătură cu numărul mare de migranți care mor sau care își riscă viețile în încercarea de a traversa Marea Mediterană la bordul unor nave nesigure.

Reducerea numărului acestor decese depinde în primul rând pe acțiunile întreprinse de autoritățile din țările mediteraneene, inclusiv statele membre ale UE, care sunt responsabile de operațiunile de căutare și salvare pe mare. Comisia depune în continuare toate eforturile pentru ca astfel de tragedii să fie evitate. Unul dintre obiectivele principale ale propunerii privind crearea EUROSUR este acela de a reduce pierderile de vieți omenești prin îmbunătățirea detectării, identificării și urmăririi ambarcațiunilor mici, ceea ce va facilita operațiunile de căutare și salvare.

Prin adoptarea noului regulament FRONTEX, care consolidează și mai mult aspectul legat de drepturile omului în cadrul gestionării frontierelor, se va asigura totodată că polițiștii de frontieră ai Uniunii dispun de cunoștințele și expertiza necesare pentru a garanta respectarea deplină a drepturilor omului și a obligațiilor internaționale la frontierele noastre externe.

Este important, de asemenea, să fie analizate cauzele profunde care îi determină pe migranți și pe refugiați să traverseze Marea Mediterană și să fie combătute activitățile traficanților de ființe umane care îi exploatează pe migranți și refugiați. Comisia își propune să facă acest lucru în special angajându-se cu țările din sudul și sud-estul Mediteranei într-un dialog privind migrația, mobilitatea și securitatea, cu scopul de a promova canale legale mai accesibile de migrație și mobilitate, consolidând totodată capacitățile și promovând cooperarea în domeniul combaterii migrației neregulamentare.

În plus, Comisia finanțează proiectele puse în aplicare de ICNUR și OIM în mai multe țări din Africa de Nord, care au ca obiectiv îmbunătățirea tratamentului persoanelor care au nevoie de protecție internațională și furnizarea de asistență pentru migranții aflați în pericol.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002066/12
to the Commission
Corina Crețu (S&D)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Measures to reduce the number of refugee deaths in the Mediterranean Sea

More refugees died in the Mediterranean Sea than in any other sea in the world in 2011. Over 1 500 people drowned or disappeared trying to cross it last year, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Moreover, 2011 was a record year for the number of people crossing the Mediterranean Sea to Europe — over 58 000 — owing mainly to the collapse of the regimes in Tunisia and Libya and the conflict in the latter.

— What measures does the Commission intend to adopt to reduce the very high numbers of refugees who die trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea to reach EU countries?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(19 April 2012)

The European Commission is very concerned about the high number of migrants who die or risk their lives trying to cross the Mediterranean in unseaworthy vessels.

Reducing the number of such deaths depend in the first instance on action taken by the authorities of the Mediterranean countries — including EU Member States — who are in charge of search and rescue operations at sea. The Commission continues to do its utmost to avoid such tragedies. One of the main objectives of the proposal on the establishment of Eurosur is to reduce the loss of human life by improving detection, identification and tracking of small boats, thereby facilitating Search and Rescue operations.

The adoption of the new Frontex Regulation, which further strengthens the Human Rights dimension of border management, will also ensure that the Union's border guards are further equipped with the necessary knowledge and expertise to ensure full respect of Human rights and international obligations at our external borders.

It is also important to address the root causes pushing migrants and refugees to cross the Mediterranean and to combat the activities of the traffickers in human beings who exploit them. The Commission aims to do so in particular by engaging the Southern and South-Eastern Mediterranean countries in a Dialogue on migration, mobility and security, with the aim of promoting more accessible legal channels of migration and mobility, while building capacity and promoting cooperation in combating irregular migration.

In addition, the Commission is funding projects implemented by UNHCR and IOM in several countries of North Africa, which aim to improve the treatment of persons in need of international protection and to provide assistance to migrants in distress.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002067/12
adresată Comisiei
Corina Crețu (S&D)
(22 februarie 2012)

Subiect: Protejarea copiilor din Somalia

În Somalia, țară afectată de două decenii de război civil și de ani de secetă și foamete devastatoare, copiii sunt cei mai afectați de conflict și criza alimentară. Conform *Human Rights Watch*, rebelii islamiști Al-Chabaab sunt responsabili de răpiri în masă, de minori înrolați împotriva voinței lor, violați sau obligați la căsătorii forțate. Mai ales din 2010, odată cu intensificarea conflictului intern, tot mai mulți copii au fost recrutați forțat, instruiți sumar și trimiși pe front drept carne de tun, pentru protejarea combatanților adulți. Unii au fost obligați să comită atentate sinucigașe. În aceste condiții, interzicerea în ianuarie 2012 a accesului Crucii Roșii în zonele controlate de rebelii islamiști agravează situația umanitară critică, mai ales după îndepărtarea din zonă, în noiembrie 2011, a 16 ONG-uri și a agențiilor umanitare ale ONU.

Din păcate, există informații conform cărora și forțele guvernamentale recurg la înrolări de minori, încălcându-și angajamentele asumate în această privință.

— Ce intenționează Comisia să facă pentru ca protejarea copiilor să devină efectiv o prioritate în Somalia?

— Consideră Comisia că e posibilă constrângerea beligeranților să respecte drepturile elementare ale copiilor din această țară, astfel încât tânăra generație să fie ferită de ororile războiului și foametei?

Răspuns dat de dna Ashton în numele Comisiei
(4 iunie 2012)

Este adevărat că organizația Al-Shebaab este responsabilă de încălcarea drepturile omului. Înaltul Reprezentant/Vicepreședintele Ashton condamnă astfel de abuzuri, însă capacitatea UE de a influența acest comportament este limitată. UE sprijină Uniunea Africană care, prin intermediul AMISOM, continuă să restrângă zona aflată sub controlul Al-Shebaab, extinzând astfel zona în care guvernul trebuie să își asume responsabilitatea. Guvernul a afirmat că se opune recrutării copiilor și, în contactele avute cu membrii guvernului, i-am încurajat să acționeze în acest sens. În plus, ca parte a abordării globale a UE cu privire la Somalia, pe lângă sprijinul acordat AMISOM, UE ia măsuri de combatere a insecurității și a abuzurilor privind drepturile omului prin sprijinirea capacităților de securitate ale Somaliei și a statului de drept. Misiunea de formare a UE (EUTM) în Uganda instruiește forțele naționale de securitate somaleze pentru a contribui la dezvoltarea capacităților de securitate ale Somaliei. Prin intermediul programului privind statul de drept și securitatea (SDS) din cadrul PNUD, UE urmărește sprijinirea Somaliei în dobândirea capacității sale de a restabili statul de drept, inter alia, prin formarea judecătorilor și a ofițerilor de poliție, ca un pas către combaterea impunității și a încălcărilor.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002067/12
to the Commission
Corina Crețu (S&D)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: The protection of children in Somalia

In Somalia, a country plagued by two decades of civil war and years of devastating drought and famine, children are affected most by the conflict and the food crisis. According to Human Rights Watch, the Islamic rebels al-Shabaab are responsible for the mass kidnapping of minors who are enlisted against their will, raped or obligated into forced marriages. Especially in 2010, as the internal conflict intensified, more and more children were forcibly recruited, briefly trained and sent to the front as cannon fodder in order to protect the adult combatants. Some were forced to commit suicide attacks. Under these circumstances, the prohibition in January 2012 of Red Cross access to areas controlled by the Islamist rebels aggravates the critical humanitarian situation, especially after the removal of 16 NGOs and the UN humanitarian agencies from the area in November 2011.

Unfortunately, there is information that government forces are also enlisting minors, violating the commitments made in this regard.

— What does the Commission intend to do so that the protection of children will become a priority in Somalia?

— Does the Commission consider that it is possible to compel the combatants to respect the basic rights of children in this country, in such a way that the younger generation can be kept from the horrors of war and starvation?

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

Al-Shebaab does indeed violate human rights. The HR/VP speaks out against such abuses, but the EU's ability to influence this behaviour is limited. The EU supports the African Union which through Amisom is reducing the area under Al-Shebaab control, and thus extending the area for which the government must take responsibility. The government has asserted that they are opposed to the recruitment of children and in contacts with them, we have encouraged them to act on this. Furthermore, as part of the EU's comprehensive approach to Somalia, in addition to support to Amisom, the EU takes measures to address insecurity and human rights abuses through support to Somalia's security capabilities and through support for the rule of law. The EU training mission (EUTM) in Uganda trains the Somali National Security Forces (NSF) to help develop Somalia's security capabilities. Through the UNDP's Rule of Law and Security (ROLS) Programme, the EU aims to provide Somalia with the ability to re-establish the rule of law by *inter alia* training judges and police officers as a step towards addressing impunity and violations.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002068/12
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Funding for small cultural groups

Can the Commission indicate if there is any possible funding available for small and amateur cultural groups and organisations, outside of funding provided under the Culture Programme and accessible through the Cultural Contact Point (CCP)?

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

Cultural contact points (CCPs) have been established in the countries taking part in the Culture Programme. They are the main relay for conveying information and promoting the Programme at national level and for assisting potential applicants.

Although there are no funds set aside for funding activities outside the framework of the Culture Programme, CCPs may be able to advise cultural stakeholders about other funding opportunities at national, regional or European level. To facilitate this process the Commission has created an interactive overview of potential funding from other EU-programmes for cultural organisations at: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm. Smaller cultural organisations engaged in educational activities should also consider the Lifelong Learning programme for possible funding. More information is available here: http://ec.europa.eu/education/index_en.htm

It is worth recalling that the interim evaluation of the Culture Programme found that some 55 % of beneficiaries had fewer than 11 employees. It is also important to note that the advocacy networks category within the Programme currently provides grants with no lower limit.

In some cases, EU delegations launch their own calls for proposals for cultural activities of potential interest to cultural organisations. The Commission Representation in the UK, for instance, is offering project co-funding for cultural activities to promote awareness of key communication themes set by the Commission, with a deadline of 16 March 2012: http://ec.europa.eu/unitedkingdom/work_with_eu/call_2012_02/document_a.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002069/12
to the Commission
Linda McAvan (S&D)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: VAT on fuel used by air ambulance charities

Further to the Commission's comments on non-profit organisations in its White Paper on the future of VAT, could the Commission give guidance on the VAT regime applicable to the supply of fuel used by air ambulance charities?

Would it be possible for Member States to exempt fuel supplied to these charities from VAT?

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

Generally, there is no special VAT regime applicable to the supply of fuel used by air ambulance charities. If that supply does not qualify as 'supply of goods for the fuelling and provisioning of aircraft used by airlines operating for reward chiefly on international routes' which would be tax exempt pursuant to Article 148(e) of the VAT Directive ([1]), the supply of fuel used by air ambulances would generally be liable to the standard VAT rate irrespective of whether the recipient is a charity or not.

Taxable persons performing the air ambulance services would be entitled to deduct input VAT unless the air ambulance service would qualify as tax exempt activity pursuant to Article 132(1)(p) of the VAT Directive which concerns the supply of transport services for sick or injured persons in vehicles specially designed for the purpose, by duly authorised bodies. As far as charities carrying out those services would not qualify as taxable persons — for instance if they do not receive any consideration closely linked to their services — they would have no right to deduct input VAT in any case.

Due to the general absence of any tax exemption within the VAT Directive for the supply of fuel used by air ambulances, Member States would have no right to implement a tax exemption within national VAT law. However, Member States are free to address the problem of unrecoverable VAT by the introduction of so called compensation schemes. The Commission has referred to this kind of measure in its recent Communication on the future of VAT ([2]). It must be stressed that such measures would be taken at national level and outside the VAT system.

([1]) Council Directive 2006/112 EC of 28.11.2006 on the common system of value added tax (OJ L 347).
([2]) COM(2011) 851, bullet point 5.2.1.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002070/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Tratamiento de residuos peligrosos: 100 toneladas de amianto en Sabadell. Cumplimiento de la Directiva 91/689/CEE relativa a este tipo de residuos y su gestión

Tras detectar la presencia de toneladas de sustancias peligrosas, sobre todo amianto, en varias naves industriales en el término municipal, las autoridades de Sabadell, tras la denuncia, insistencia y presión ejercidas por varias asociaciones vecinales y por los partidos políticos de la oposición, inició los trámites para darle tratamiento a estos residuos contaminados con amianto y derrumbar estas naves industriales.

Además de la posible violación de la normativa española sobre la prevención de riesgos laborales por las irregularidades cometidas debido a la ausencia de las oportunas medidas de seguridad e higiene para proteger la salud de los trabajadores encargados del tratamiento de estos residuos, y que ya ha sido denunciada ante las autoridades españolas competentes, existen serios indicios que apuntan a que la retirada de las más de 100 toneladas de amianto, así como la demolición de estos inmuebles se están haciendo sin tener en cuenta lo recogido por el acervo comunitario respecto a la gestión de los residuos peligrosos, y más concretamente, lo que establece la Directiva 91/689/CEE.

Esta directiva clasifica en su anexo II tanto el polvo como las fibras de amianto como residuos peligrosos, ya que está demostrado que el contacto con este tipo de sustancias puede conllevar enfermedades como asbestosis, mesotelioma y cáncer de pulmón.

1. ¿Dispone la Comisión de información más detallada sobre el caso presentado y/o la ha solicitado o piensa solicitarla a las autoridades españolas competentes?

2 ¿Piensa la Comisión iniciar una investigación sobre el posible incumplimiento de lo establecido por la normativa de la Unión relativa a la gestión de residuos peligrosos en el caso descrito?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de abril de 2012)

1. La Comisión no tiene conocimiento del caso al que alude Su Señoría, pero se propone solicitar información a las autoridades españolas.

2. La Comisión evaluará la información que habrá de presentarse. En el supuesto de que descubra que se ha infringido la legislación de la UE, tomará las medidas legales oportunas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002070/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Treatment of hazardous waste: 100 tonnes of asbestos in Sabadell. Compliance with Directive 91/689/EEC applying to hazardous waste management

Several tonnes of hazardous materials, particularly asbestos, were found in industrial buildings within the municipal area of Sabadell. Following complaints, insistence and pressure from various neighbourhood associations and opposition political parties, the local authority took action to treat this asbestos-contaminated waste and to tear down the industrial buildings.

There were possible violations of Spanish regulations on prevention of risks at work, due to irregularities in terms of a lack of adequate health and safety measures to safeguard the wellbeing of the workers engaged to treat this waste, which have already been notified to the Spanish authorities. There are also serious indications that the removal of the asbestos, more than 100 tonnes of it, and the demolition of the buildings are being carried out in breach of the Community *acquis*, and, more specifically, of Directive 91/689/EEC.

In Annex II to that directive, both asbestos dust and asbestos fibres are classified as hazardous waste, since it has been established that contact with this type of substance can lead to diseases such as asbestosis, mesothelioma and lung cancer.

1. Does the Commission have any more detailed information on this case and/or has it requested, or does it intend to request, such information from the Spanish authorities?

2. Is the Commission intending to open an investigation into the possible failure to comply with the requirements of European Union law on the management of hazardous waste in the case described?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2012)

1. The Commission is not aware of the case mentioned by the Honourable Member. The Commission intends to request further information from the Spanish authorities.

2. The Commission will assess the information to be provided. Should a breach of EC law be detected, the Commission will take the necessary legal measures.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002072/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(22 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ευρωπαϊκό πλάνο για τις υψηλές επιδόσεις των υπολογιστών και των νέων τεχνολογιών

Στις 15 Φεβρουαρίου 2012, η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή με ανακοίνωση της έθεσε ένα ευρωπαϊκό πλαίσιο για τη στήριξη των υψηλών επιδόσεων των υπολογιστών και των νέων τεχνολογιών (High Performance Computing). Μάλιστα, έθεσε ως στόχο η ΕΕ να διπλασιάσει τις επενδύσεις της (από 630 εκ. ευρώ σε 1,2 δις ευρώ) στον τομέα αυτό, καθώς, πράγματι, η μείωση του κόστους της συγκεκριμένης υψηλής τεχνολογίας αποφέρει σημαντικά οφέλη στην οικονομία και στην παραγωγή.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει για το πώς θα κατανεμηθούν οι επιπλέον επενδύσεις των 600 περίπου εκ. ευρώ στον τομέα αυτό;

— Καθώς μέρος αυτών των πόρων θα κατευθυνθεί στην ενθάρρυνση των κρατών μελών προκειμένου να αναπτύξουν από κοινού τις νέες αυτές δυνατότητες, είναι σε θέση η Επιτροπή να με ενημερώσει πώς θα ενισχυθούν ιδίως κράτη που έχουν ανταγωνιστικό έλλειμμα και στα οποία η τεχνολογική πρόοδος θα δημιουργούσε εναλλακτικές ευκαιρίες ανάπτυξης;

— Πώς σκοπεύει η Επιτροπή να αντιμετωπίσει την απειλή να μείνουν πίσω σε αυτή την προσπάθεια ορισμένα κράτη μέλη που αντιμετωπίζουν σοβαρά δημοσιονομικά προβλήματα και πιθανόν αδυνατούν να καταβάλουν την εθνική τους συμμετοχή;

Απάντηση της κας Kroes εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Μαρτίου 2012)

Οι συμπληρωματικές επενδύσεις ύψους 600 εκατ. ευρώ αφορούν την αγορά νέων συστημάτων υπολογιστών υψηλών επιδόσεων (HPC), την ανάπτυξη λογισμικού και την κατάρτιση ανθρώπινου δυναμικού. Μέρος των κεφαλαίων θα προέλθουν από την Επιτροπή και τα υπόλοιπα από τα κράτη μέλη και τη βιομηχανία. Η Επιτροπή θα αρχίσει συζητήσεις με τα κράτη μέλη για την περαιτέρω προώθηση των επενδύσεων. Η Επιτροπή δεν είναι, στην παρούσα φάση, σε θέση να αναλάβει οποιεσδήποτε δεσμεύσεις για το μέλλον, δεδομένου ότι ο προϋπολογισμός για το 2014-2020 βρίσκεται υπό εξέταση στο Κοινοβούλιο και το Συμβούλιο, πάντως η δική της χρηματοδότηση των HPC τα τελευταία χρόνια ανήλθε στα 50 εκατ. ευρώ ετησίως.

Επί του παρόντος χάρις στην συνεργασία για πληροφορικά συστήματα υψηλών επιδόσεων στην Ευρώπη (PRACE) διατίθενται πόροι HPC υπό ίσους όρους σε όλες τις χώρες της ΕΕ, και μάλιστα χωρίς να χρειασθεί πληρώνονται οι ερευνητές, αλλά με μόνο κριτήριο πρόσβασης την επιστημονική αριστεία. Αυτή η προσέγγιση παρέχει ισχυρά πλεονεκτήματα σε ερευνητές που βρίσκονται κυρίως σε χώρες που δεν διαθέτουν υπερσύγχρονες εγκαταστάσεις HPC. Η Επιτροπή αναμένει τα στατιστικά δεδομένα που σύντομα θα παράσχει η PRACE σχετικά με το πώς οι διάφορες χώρες έχουν χρησιμοποιήσει τις υπηρεσίες της.

Όσον αφορά τα κράτη μέλη που αντιμετωπίζουν οικονομικά προβλήματα, οι ισχύοντες κανόνες για τις επιχορηγήσεις οργανισμών βάσει του 7ου προγράμματος-πλαισίου είναι οι ίδιοι για όλες τις χώρες της ΕΕ. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει προτείνει αλλαγή της προσέγγισης αυτής στο μέλλον στο πλαίσιο του Ορίζοντα 2020. Ωστόσο, τα κράτη μέλη που επιθυμούν να αναπτύξουν εθνική υποδομή HPC θα έχουν τη δυνατότητα να αντλήσουν πόρους από τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία. Τέλος, οι προεμπορικές δημόσιες συμβάσεις συχνά καλύπτουν σημαντικό μέρος των δαπανών Ε&Α των επιλεγέντων αναδόχων και κάθε τέτοια προμήθεια, συγχρηματοδοτούμενη από την Επιτροπή, θα είναι ανοιχτή σε όλες τις επιχειρήσεις της ΕΕ.

Περαιτέρω πληροφορίες για την PRACE περιέχονται στην ηλε-διεύθυνση http://www.prace-ri.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002072/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: European plan for high performance computing and new technologies

On 15 February 2012, the European Union announced it was setting up a European framework to support high performance computing and new technologies. The EU's aim is to double investment in this sector (from EUR 630 million to EUR 1.2 billion) and in fact the cost reduction for current advanced technology will create a significant benefit for the economy and for manufacturing.

In view of this:

— Can the Commission indicate how the additional investments of around EUR 600 million are to be distributed in this sector?

— Given that part of these resources will be used to encourage Member States to develop these new powers jointly, can the Commission indicate what assistance will be given to those Member States which are unable to compete and where technological advances could create alternative prospects for growth?

— How does the Commission intend to address the danger that certain Member States with serious financial problems may be unable to participate and hence run the risk of being left behind?

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

The additional investments of EUR 600 million concern acquisitions of new High Performance Computing (HPC) systems, development of software and training human resources. Part of the funds would come from the Commission and others from Member States and industry. The Commission will engage in discussions with Member States to promote increased investments. The Commission is not in the position of making any commitments for the future at this moment since the budget for 2014-2020 is being discussed in Parliament and Council, but its own funding of HPC has been in recent years in the order of EUR 50 million per year.

Currently, the Partnership for advanced computing in Europe (PRACE) makes HPC resources available on equal access terms and without need for payment to researchers in all EU countries, with scientific excellence as the only criterion for access. This approach gives strong benefits to researchers located in particular in countries that do not have state-of-the-art HPC facilities. The Commission expects statistics to be provided soon by PRACE on how the various countries have used its services.

Regarding Member States with financial problems, the current rules for providing grants to organisations under the 7th Framework Programme are the same for all EU countries and the Commission has not proposed to change this approach in the future under Horizon 2020. However, Member States that may wish to develop a national HPC infrastructure could potentially benefit from structural funds financing. Finally, pre-commercial procurement often covers a substantial part of R & D costs of successful bidders and any such procurement co-financed by the Commission would be open to all EU companies.

Further information on PRACE can be found at http://www.prace-ri.eu

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002073/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(22 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ενίσχυση της φύλαξης ιστορικών χώρων και μνημείων

Η ληστεία που έγινε στο Μουσείο Ιστορίας των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων στην Ολυμπία, η κλοπή σημαντικών έργων τέχνης από την Εθνική Πινακοθήκη λίγο καιρό πριν, σε συνδυασμό με παρόμοιες ενέργειες που διαδραματίζονται το τελευταίο διάστημα και σε άλλες ευρωπαϊκές χώρες, έχουν προκαλέσει έντονους προβληματισμούς. Τέτοιου είδους περιστατικά προκαλούν οικονομικές απώλειες αλλά κυρίως χτυπήματα στην ευρωπαϊκή πολιτιστική κληρονομιά.

Ως εκ τούτου, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Προβλέπεται η δυνατότητα τα κράτη μέλη να αξιοποιήσουν πόρους από τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία για την ενίσχυση της φύλαξης ιστορικών χώρων και μουσείων, προκειμένου να διασφαλίζεται η πολιτιστική κληρονομιά της κάθε χώρας;

2. Έχει η Ελλάδα μέχρι σήμερα αξιοποιήσει πόρους από τα διαθρωτικά ταμεία για το σκοπό αυτό και ποιο το ύψος των ποσών αυτών;

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(2 Απριλίου 2012)

Η περιφερειακή πολιτική της ΕΕ δεν μπορεί να υποστηρίξει τη φύλαξη ιστορικών χώρων και μουσείων και, επομένως, δεν μπορεί να θεωρηθεί ως επιλέξιμη δαπάνη βάσει των Διαρθρωτικών Ταμείων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002073/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Support for guarding historic places and monuments

The robbery at the Olympic Games History Museum in Olympia and the theft of important works of art from the National Gallery a short time ago, together with similar acts in recent times in other European countries, have created intense speculation. These incidents cause economic losses but mainly cause damage to European cultural heritage.

Therefore, I would like to ask the Commission:

1. Will Member States be able to use resources from the Structural Funds to fund the guarding of historic places and museums in order to protect what is the cultural heritage of every country?

2. Has Greece used resources from the Structural Funds for this purpose and, if so, what are the amounts that are involved?

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

EU regional policy cannot support the guarding of historic places and museums and therefore this cannot be considered as eligible expenditure under the Structural Funds.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002074/12
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: EUR 30 billion of uncommitted funding in the European Social Fund

Could the Commission outline what action it will take to help Member States make use of the EUR 30 billion in funding uncommitted to projects in the European Social Fund, which will now be drawn down by Member States to address youth unemployment under the Youth Opportunities Initiative announced in December 2011?

Could the Commission also state whether its officials have met Irish Government representatives to discuss how Ireland can make best use of the Youth Opportunities Initiative in order to address the high levels of youth unemployment?

Question for written answer E-002076/12
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Using Structural Funds for youth unemployment in Ireland

This week (20 February 2012) it was reported that Commission officials would be travelling to Ireland to see how excess Structural Funds could be used to alleviate youth unemployment in Ireland.

— Can the Commission provide information on how beneficial its trip to Ireland was?

— Does it have any plans on how to use Structural Funds to alleviate youth unemployment?

— What does the Commission see for the future of this particular initiative?

Joint answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

Following the publication of the Youth Opportunity Initiative, the Commission proposed to set up action teams for eight Member States ([1]) to put together a youth unemployment plan for inclusion into their National Reform Programmes including the use that can be made of EU structural funds. The first meetings of the action teams were held in February 2012.

For seven other Member States ([2]), the Commission organised bilateral meetings on the situation of youth, which were also held in February 2012. Discussions included the possibility for shifting EU structural funds within the programmes to target activities that will help reduce youth unemployment and/or to complement other EU education and training programmes. The Commission will also help speed up the implementation of projects that target young people.

The mission to Ireland on 21 February 2012 was beneficial as it provided the opportunity to take stock of current activities co-funded by Structural Funds for young people in Ireland and to discuss which activities could be further explored. Given the high current absorption and commitment levels of both European Social Fund (ESF) and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) operations in Ireland, the room for additional activities is very limited. However, it could be agreed that EUR 25 million under the ESF would be allocated additionally to Youthreach, thus guaranteeing 3 700 training places for young people until the end of 2013. At the same meeting, and under ERDF, the Ireland authorities focused on the extent of County/City Enterprise Board investment activity already impacting on youth employment levels

Future negotiations on the new Structural Funds programmes for 2014-2020 will provide a further occasion to discuss and agree on which particular initiatives should be co-funded by Structural Funds for that period.

([1]) Spain, Portugal, Latvia, Lithuania, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Slovakia.
([2]) Bulgaria, France, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Sweden, Cyprus.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002078/12
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Payments to health personnel to prescribe certain medical devices

Legal proceedings in the US ([1]) and in the UK have disclosed that, up to 2006, substantial payments amounting to millions of euros were made to medical personnel in Greece in return for prescribing certain medical devices, including hip and knee replacements.

During the period of these payments, certain orthopaedic devices were twice as expensive in Greece as compared to the average price across the other Member States.

These payments were likely to constitute a barrier to the free movement of goods in the single market and may have affected competition in a substantial part of the single market.

In view of the above:

1. What action, if any, has the Commission taken, or will it take, in the light of these disclosures?

2. How do price levels of orthopaedic medical devices in Greece currently compare with the overall EU average?

3. Are there any EU legal provisions prohibiting the provision of gifts, pecuniary advantages or benefits in kind to prescribers of medical devices, equivalent to the prohibition in Article 94 of Directive 2001/83/EC on medical products?

4. Does the Commission intend to include such a prohibition in the proposed regulations on medical devices and the repeal of Directives 90/385/EEC, 93/42/EEC and 98/79/EC?

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

1. The Commission is aware of the legal proceedings in the US and in the UK the Honourable Member refers to concerning payments to medical personnel in Greece in return for prescribing certain medical devices. The companies in question were sanctioned under the criminal law in the US and in the UK. In general, such behavior could possibly also give rise to competition concerns, depending on the facts of each individual case. However, as this practice has already been addressed under a different legal instrument, the Commission does not intend to address it also under the competition rules.

2. The Commission does not have information about price levels for orthopedic medical devices in Greece in comparison to the EU average.

3. Currently, no provision exists in the EU directives applicable to medical devices which is equivalent to Article 94 of Directive 2001/83/EC.

4. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question P-001438/2012 ([2]). The issue of inducement of healthcare professionals is addressed in pieces of self-regulation, e.g. by a Code of ethical business practice with guidelines on interactions with healthcare professionals adopted by the European association for medical technology manufacturers Eucomed ([3]).

([1]) US Department of Justice (http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/2011/April/11-crm-446.html).
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.
([3]) http://www.eucomed.org/uploads/Modules/Publications/110504_eucomedcebp_broch_210x297mm_v20_pbp.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002079/12
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Kerdiffstown landfill

On 8 December 2010 Commissioner Potočnik (E-9500/10) informed me that 'the Commission has addressed a letter to the competent authorities in order to investigate further the operation of 15 landfills', one of which was Kerdiffstown landfill in Co. Kildare.

Can the Commission inform me of where their investigations stand with regard to Kerdiffstown landfill?

Does it currently have an open file on Kerdiffstown?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

The Commission understands from the Irish authorities that the Kerdiffstown site is closed and under remediation. The Irish authorities have kept the Commission informed on actions taken in this regard as part of a wider exchange on waste issues. The landfill was closed on 4 June 2010, following enforcement action by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA is in the process of ensuring that any likely environmental problems linked to the former landfill will be addressed.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002080/12
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Less favoured farming areas

I am greatly concerned about Ireland's request to the Commission for a doubling of stock levels in disadvantaged areas/ less favoured areas (LFAs) from 0.15 LU/ha to 0.30 LU/ha, to be held for six months rather than three months as was previously the case.

These increases are having a major impact on LFAs deemed disadvantaged due to agricultural handicaps and originally designated for mountain sheep grazing because of their fragile soils and extensive mountain blanket bogs. High stock levels have led in the past to a host of environmental problems, including erosion, eutrophication, soil degradation, and increased carbon emissions. Sheep, which exert greater mechanical pressure and are social by nature, are having a particularly high impact, further intensifying the damage.

This was confirmed by the European Court of Justice in its judgment of 2002 [Case C-117/00] condemning overgrazing because of its impact on birds.

Will the Commission be sure to take such considerations into account during current deliberations?

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

The Commission services have not received from the Irish authorities any official proposal to amend the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 for Ireland as concerns the conditions for payments to farmers in areas with handicaps, other than mountain areas (Less Favoured Areas Compensatory Allowances Scheme).

If/when such proposal is officially submitted, the Commission services will analyse it carefully and assess whether it is duly justified and whether it complies with the Ireland Rural Development National Strategy Plan 2007-2013 and with the relevant provisions of Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development ([1]) and Commission Regulation (EC) No 1974/2006 laying down detailed rules for the application of Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 ([2]). The Commission services will also take into consideration any potential environmental impact of such proposal.

([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. 1-40.

([2]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 1974/2006 of 15 December 2006 laying down detailed rules for the application of Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), OJ L 368, 23.12.2006, p. 15-73.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002082/12
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Impact of the 'sustainable intensification' of agriculture

Does the Commission have any information at hand, available to Members, regarding the impact of the 'sustainable intensification' of agriculture in terms of addressing the increased waste disposal — particularly grazing setbacks from sensitive waters and slurry spreading limits?

I would be particularly interested in information regarding the Irish context.

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2012)

The setback areas from water courses are addressed under both the codes of good agricultural practice and the action programmes established under the nitrates directive.

For these areas, normally referred to as buffer zones, Member States establish the conditions for the land application of fertiliser (both inorganic and organic) near water courses.

The Irish nitrates action programme includes several provisions regarding buffer zones. These are established in Ireland under the European Communities (Good agricultural practice for the protection of waters) Regulation (Statutory Instrument No 610 of 2010 Part 4 point 17). They reflect the Irish situation and are broadly comparable to those of other Member States which have established action programmes under the directive. The precise details of restrictions in other Member States can be found on the websites of their Ministries of Agriculture and/or Environment.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002083/12
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Exporting drugs for use in lethal injections

Loopholes continue to exist in current European Union laws concerning the export of torture and death penalty equipment, which allow EU companies to export the drugs used to execute people by lethal injection.

The European Commission has the power to change this situation immediately, by improving and implementing EU rules controlling such transfers.

The UK has already unilaterally banned the export of lethal injection drugs after evidence emerged in Autumn 2010 that a UK company had supplied sodium thiopental, pancuronium bromide and potassium chloride to US prisons for use in executions.

Subsequently, Danish company Lundbeck, which manufactures pentobarbital (used to execute a number of Americans, including Troy Davis, this year), has demanded that US distributors sign an agreement stating that they will not make pentobarbital available to prisons using it for lethal injections.

These unilateral measures are welcome developments, but in the absence of comprehensive EU-wide regulations to prohibit the export of execution drugs, it will remain perfectly legal for any EU manufacturer, distributor or wholesaler to supply these drugs for executions.

— Will the Commission review this issue to ensure that loopholes are closed forever, and that Europe stops exporting drugs used in executions?

— Does the Commission have any plans to take action to this effect?

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

The Commission has, following consultation of the Committee on common rules for export of products, decided to amend the Annexes II and III to Council Regulation (EC) No 1236/2005 ([1]) on 20 December 2011 ([2]). As a result, export controls are now applied to certain products which could be used for the execution of human beings by means of lethal injection.

A review of the entire Regulation is scheduled for 2012. It may entail proposals to amend the regulation rather than the annexes.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1236/2005 of 27 June 2005 concerning trade in certain goods which could be used for capital punishment, torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, OJ L 200, 30.7.2005.

([2]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1352/2011 of 20 December 2011 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1236/2005 concerning trade in certain goods which could be used for capital punishment, torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, OJ L 338, 21.12.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002084/12
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: EU Grants for emerging artists

Are there any EU grants which exist for emerging artists, or grants which would facilitate collaboration with other European artists?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

The EU Culture Programme provides support for emerging artists and cultural professionals through grants for projects. This has proved to be a much more cost-effective way to achieve results and a lasting impact than providing individual grants. A recent impact assessment found that the programme helps an estimated 20 000 artists and cultural professionals each year to develop international careers by improving their skills and knowhow through informal peer learning. It has also enabled operators to co-produce, network and discover new professional opportunities, and to make their work and outlook more international. Further information is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/culture-programme-(2007-2013)_en.htm

The Culture Programme also seeks to showcase current successes in the cultural sector that otherwise may not be easily noticed across Europe, by the granting of prizes for contemporary architecture, cultural heritage, literature and pop music. These prizes reward emerging and established artists for excellence in these fields, seeking to promote best practice and the circulation of European works beyond national borders. More information can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/prizes/prizes_en.htm

Support for emerging artists will continue with the future Creative Europe Programme proposed by the Commission last November. It will support an estimated 8 000 cultural organisations and 300 000 artists, cultural professionals and their works in 2014-2020. More information is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/creative-europe/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002085/12
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Data Protection Directive and health

It is important that the pending revision of the Data Protection Directive does not damage important public health research. The revision should aim for the Nordic level of harmonisation for security of personal data in public health research.

— Is the Commission considering an exemption from the requirement for individual consent if the health research is considered important to the general public? The existing directive has such an exemption (Art 8(3)).

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(4 May 2012)

The Commission is aware of the importance of data protection rules in the context of public health research, particularly given the fact that in Directive 95/46/EC ([1]) data concerning health is included in a special category of personal data for which processing is prohibited unless specific safeguards are in place (Article 8).

The Commission's proposal for a reform of EU data protection rules submitted in January 2012 includes in Article 9(h) and (i) of the draft Data Protection Regulation ([2]) a derogation to the general prohibition of processing data concerning health, for processing necessary 'for health purposes and subject to the conditions and safeguards of Article 81', and when 'processing is necessary for historical, statistical or scientific research purposes, subject to the conditions and safeguards referred to in Article 83'.

The public interest is further specified in Recital 42 to include the notion of public health: 'Derogating from the prohibition on processing sensitive categories of data should also be allowed if done by a law, and subject to suitable safeguards, so as to protect personal data and other fundamental rights, where grounds of public interest so justify and in particular for health purposes, including public health and social protection and the management of healthcare services'.

([1]) Directive 95/46/EC protects the fundamental rights and freedoms of natural persons with respect to the protection of their personal data, OJ L 281, 23.11.1995.

([2]) COM(2012) 11 — Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002087/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(22 februari 2012)

Betreft: Pensioenstelsel in Hongarije

In januari 2012 startte de Europese Commissie juridische acties tegen Hongarije met betrekking tot de nieuwe wetgeving die aan het begin van het jaar krachtens de nieuwe grondwet van het land in werking is getreden. Volgens de Commissie is de Hongaarse wetgeving in strijd met de EU-wetgeving door het ter discussie stellen van de onafhankelijkheid van de centrale bank en de instanties voor gegevensbescherming van het land en door de maatregelen die de rechterlijke macht treffen. De inbreukzaak met betrekking tot de rechterlijke macht focust op de nieuwe pensioenleeftijd voor rechters en aanklagers en houdt verband met de Hongaarse beslissing om de wettelijke pensioenleeftijd voor rechters, aanklagers en notarissen te verlagen van 70 jaar tot de algemene pensioenleeftijd (62 jaar).

1. Op welke wettelijke basis intervenieert de Commissie bij de regeling van de pensioenstelsels van lidstaten?

2. Kan de Commissie haar tussenkomst in de regeling van het pensioenstelsel van Hongarije toelichten in het kader van artikel 4 VEU, dat stelt dat bevoegdheden die in de Verdragen niet aan de Unie zijn toegedeeld, aan de lidstaten toebehoren?

3. Heeft de Commissie plannen om ook in de toekomst tussen te komen in de wetgeving van lidstaten inzake pensioenstelsels, in het bijzonder voor pensioenleeftijd?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(4 april 2012)

De inbreukprocedure inzake de pensioengerechtigde leeftijd van rechters, openbare aanklagers en notarissen in Hongarije is gebaseerd op Richtlijn 2000/78/EG ([1]). Deze richtlijn verbiedt onder meer discriminatie op grond van leeftijd met betrekking tot werkgelegenheid en arbeidsvoorwaarden. De richtlijn vindt haar rechtsgrondslag in artikel 19 van het Verdrag betreffende de werking van de Europese Unie (VWEU).

Overeenkomstig de EU-Verdragen is het de taak van de Commissie ervoor te zorgen, onder meer via de inbreukprocedure van artikel 258 van het VWEU, dat de wetgeving van de lidstaten in overeenstemming is met de EU-wetgeving.

([1]) Richtlijn 2000/78/EG van de Raad van 27 november 2000 tot instelling van een algemeen kader voor gelijke behandeling in arbeid en beroep, PB L 303 van 2.12.2000, blz. 16.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002087/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Pension system in Hungary

In January 2012 the European Commission started a legal action against Hungary over new legislation that came into force at the beginning of the year under Hungary's new constitution. For the Commission, the Hungarian legislation conflicts with EC law by putting into question the independence of the country's central bank and data protection authorities and by the measures affecting its judiciary. The infringement case affecting the judiciary focuses on the new retirement age for judges and prosecutors and relates to Hungary's decision to lower the mandatory retirement age for judges, prosecutors and public notaries from 70 years to the general pensionable age (62 years).

1. On what legal base does the Commission interfere with the regulation of pension systems of Member States?

2. Could the Commission explain its intervention into the regulation of the pension system in Hungary in the light of Article 4 TEU, which states that competences not conferred upon the Union in the Treaties remain with the Member States?

3. Is the Commission planning to further interfere with the legislation of Member States concerning pension systems, especially retirement age?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2012)

The infringement case regarding the retirement age of judges, prosecutors and public notaries in Hungary is based on Directive 2000/78/EC ([1]). This directive prohibits, *inter alia*, age discrimination in employment and working conditions. The directive has its legal basis in Article 19 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

In line with the EU Treaties, it is the Commission's task to ensure, including through the infringement procedure provided for by Article 258 TFEU, that Member States' legislation is in line with EC law.

([1]) Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, OJ L 303, 2.12.2000, p. 16.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002089/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(22 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Progresso nei processi di adesione dei paesi dei Balcani

Il 12 ottobre 2011 la Commissione europea ha presentato i rapporti annuali sui progressi compiuti dai paesi che aspirano a entrare nell'UE. È scontato il giudizio positivo sulla Croazia, che tra un anno sarà il 28° Stato membro dell'Unione. Vi sono aperture verso il Montenegro e la Serbia e ancora grandi impasse per quanto concerne gli altri paesi dei Balcani. La pagella, in termini generali, è desolante. Più che di un «progress report», dovremmo parlare di uno «stagnation report», soprattutto per la Bosnia-Erzegovina e il Kosovo.

Tutto ciò premesso, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante spiegare:

1. qual è la situazione del Montenegro e della Serbia in termini di capitoli attualmente aperti per il raggiungimento degli standard europei necessari all'adesione dei due paesi?

2. Quali sono le problematiche più importanti che il Kosovo e la Bosnia-Erzegovina stanno affrontando e che impediscono che, nel loro caso, si possa parlare di adesione imminente all'UE?

Risposta data da Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(18 aprile 2012)

Dopo l'adozione del pacchetto 2011 sull'allargamento, i paesi interessati dal processo hanno registrato progressi costanti. Non sono stati avviati negoziati di adesione con il Montenegro o la Serbia, il che spiega perché nessun capitolo sia attualmente aperto. A entrambi i paesi, tuttavia, è stato riconosciuto lo status di candidato grazie ai notevoli progressi compiuti nel percorso verso l'UE, specialmente per quanto riguarda lo Stato di diritto. La Serbia, inoltre, ha migliorato ulteriormente le relazioni con il Kosovo ([1]). Per quanto riguarda il Montenegro, nel giugno 2012 il Consiglio potrebbe decidere di intavolare i negoziati di adesione in funzione dei progressi del paese in termini di attuazione delle riforme, segnatamente quelle relative ai diritti fondamentali e allo Stato di diritto.

Anche il Kosovo e la Bosnia-Erzegovina hanno fatto progressi. Nel caso del Kosovo, questo ha permesso alla Commissione di avviare uno studio di fattibilità relativo a un accordo di stabilizzazione e di associazione tra l'Unione europea e il Kosovo. La Bosnia-Erzegovina deve adoperarsi in modo credibile per allineare la sua costituzione con la Convenzione europea dei diritti dell'uomo, in quanto questo è un requisito fondamentale dell'accordo interinale e dell'accordo di stabilizzazione e di associazione.

Tutti i paesi che aspirano ad aderire all'UE devono assolutamente registrare progressi costanti relativamente allo Stato di diritto e ai diritti fondamentali, portare avanti il processo di allineamento con l'*acquis* comunitario e adoperarsi per garantire la corretta attuazione e applicazione della legislazione.

([1]) «Tale designazione non pregiudica le posizioni riguardo allo status ed è in linea con la risoluzione 1244/99 del Consiglio di sicurezza delle Nazioni Unite e con il parere della CIG sulla dichiarazione di indipendenza del Kosovo».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002089/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Progress in the accession process for the Balkan countries

On 12 October 2011, the Commission presented its annual reports on the progress made by the countries seeking to join the EU. As expected, the verdict on Croatia was positive and this will become the 28th Member State of the European Union in a year's time. Matters are opening up for Montenegro and Serbia but there is still significant deadlock in regard to the other Balkan countries. In general, the situation is disappointing: maybe the term used should be 'stagnation report', rather than 'progress report', especially in regard to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo.

In view of this, could the Vice-President/High Representative explain:

1.Concerning the chapters currently open, what is the situation of Montenegro and Serbia as regards their achieving the EU standards required for their accession?

2. What are the most significant issues that Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina are facing and which are blocking any possibility of their joining the EU in the near future?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2012)

Continued progress has been made in enlargement countries since the adoption of the 2011 enlargement package. Accession negotiations have not been opened with Montenegro or Serbia and therefore no chapters are currently open. However, both countries have made steady progress on their way to the EU, which has resulted in both countries achieving candidate status, mainly due to their progress in the area of rule of law. As regards Serbia moreover, it specifically also further improved its relations with Kosovo ([1]) . As regards Montenegro, the Council may in June 2012 decide to open accession negotiations depending on its progress in the implementation of reforms, in particular in the areas of fundamental rights and the rule of law.

Also Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina have achieved progress. For Kosovo this allowed the Commission to launch a feasibility study for a Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Union and Kosovo. For Bosnia and Herzegovina, a credible effort in bringing its Constitution into compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights is needed since the compliance with the Convention is an essential requirement of the Interim Agreement and the Stabilisation and Association Agreement.

For all countries concerned, continued progress in the areas of rule of law and fundamental rights is central to their efforts to join the EU, as is the need for a continued alignment process with the *acquis communautaire* and efforts to ensure the proper implementation and enforcement of legislation.

([1]) 'This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence'.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002090/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(22 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Sport e finanziamento europeo al settore

Lo sport non solo è importante per il benessere fisico e mentale, ma è anche un elemento di coesione sociale. Circa il 60 % degli europei pratica regolarmente un'attività sportiva e nell'UE si contano quasi 700 000 club sportivi. Lo sport è inoltre un settore economico vasto e in rapido sviluppo, che contribuisce in misura significativa alla crescita e all'occupazione.

L'UE finanzia progetti sportivi transnazionali per individuare e valutare le reti e le buone pratiche più adatte nel settore dello sport. Tali progetti riguardano, a titolo di esempio: la promozione dell'attività fisica a vantaggio della salute; l'istruzione e la formazione; lo sport per i disabili; la parità uomo-donna; la lotta al doping; l'inclusione sociale nello sport e attraverso lo sport.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione chiarire i seguenti punti:

1. essendo lo sport un settore di attività relativamente nuovo per l'UE, attivato nel 2009 con il trattato di Lisbona, quali sono le politiche esistenti nell'UE nel settore dello sport?

2. Di quali finanziamenti gli istituti di ricerca in ambito sportivo possono fare uso nell'ambito del loro lavoro di analisi?

Risposta data da Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(14 maggio 2012)

La Commissione europea ha adottato il 18 gennaio 2011 una comunicazione intitolata «Sviluppare la dimensione europea dello sport». Questa, che costituisce il primo documento politico emanato dalla Commissione nel campo dello sport dopo l'entrata in vigore del trattato di Lisbona, delinea le idee della Commissione in merito a un'azione a livello di UE nel campo dello sport. Essa propone azioni concrete da condursi ad opera della Commissione e/o degli Stati membri ripartite in tre grandi capitoli: il ruolo sociale dello sport, la dimensione economica dello sport e l'organizzazione dello sport.

La Commissione ha fornito informazioni dettagliate sul finanziamento del settore sportivo nella sua risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-002090/2012 dell'onorevole Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris, e sul finanziamento dei progetti di ricerca in ambito sportivo nella sua risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-001946/2011 degli onorevoli Morten Løkkegaard e Hannu Takkula.

Inoltre, gli istituti di ricerca nel campo dello sport possono candidarsi a un finanziamento europeo per il tramite delle azioni Marie Curie. Le azioni Marie Curie finanziano tutti gli ambiti della ricerca coperti dal TFUE. Di recente un progetto nell'ambito della ricerca sportiva (SPORT-BOUND) è stato finanziato dal programma IRSES-azione Marie Curie. Il progetto intende creare una piattaforma per lo scambio e il dialogo tra l'Europa e l'Asia, promuovere le buone pratiche e lo sviluppo di reti internazionali e interdisciplinari che consentano la diffusione delle conoscenze sulla normativa e le prassi dell'UE nel settore sportivo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002090/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Sport and EU funding for the sector

Sport is not only important for physical and mental well-being, it also plays a part in social cohesion. Approximately 60 % of Europeans practice sport regularly and there are almost 700 000 sports clubs in the EU. Moreover, sport is a huge and rapidly growing economic sector which makes a valuable contribution to growth and employment.

The EU finances transnational sports projects to identify and test the most suitable networks and good practices in the sports sector. By way of example, these projects cover: the promotion of physical activity for its health benefits; instruction and training; sport for people with disabilities; gender equality; the fight against doping; and social inclusion in sport and through sport.

In view of this, could the Commission clarify the following points:

1. As sport is a relatively new sector of activity for the EU, launched in 2009 with the Treaty of Lisbon, what EU policies currently exist in the sports sector?

2. Which funds can sports research institutes apply for in their work?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2012)

The European Commission adopted a communication entitled 'Developing the European Dimension in Sport' on 18 January 2011. The first policy document issued by the Commission in the field of sport after the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, it sets out the Commission's ideas for EU-level action in the field of sport. It proposes concrete actions for the Commission and/or Member States within three broad chapters: the societal role of sport, the economic dimension of sport and the organisation of sport.

The Commission provided detailed information on funding for the sport sector in its reply to Written Question E-002090/2012 by Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris, and on funding for sport research projects in its reply to Written Question E-001946/2011 by Morten Løkkegaard and Hannu Takkula.

Furthermore, sport research institutes can also apply for European funds via the Marie Curie actions. Indeed, the Marie Curie actions finance all fields of research covered by the TFEU. Recently a project on sport research (SPORT-BOUND) was financed by the IRSES Marie Curie action. This project aims to provide a platform for exchange and dialogue between Europe and Asia, promoting good practice and the development of interdisciplinary, international networks leading to the dissemination of knowledge about EC law and practice in the sport sector.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002091/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(22 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Torture, maltrattamenti e pena di morte

Nel 2009, in 111 paesi del mondo si sono verificati casi di tortura o altri maltrattamenti, i cui responsabili, in quasi la metà di essi (61 paesi), sono rimasti impuniti. I processi iniqui sono poi una realtà in 55 paesi e, ancora oggi, nonostante leggi e convenzioni internazionali, 56 Stati continuano a emettere sentenze di condanna a morte, 18 dei quali le hanno rese esecutive. La libertà di espressione resta peraltro un «diritto non per tutti», visto che è sottoposta a restrizioni in almeno 96 stati. Si parla di pesante «vuoto di giustizia» nell'annuale relazione di una nota associazione internazionale che da anni sottopone a monitoraggio la situazione di torture e pene ingiuste nel mondo.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione spiegare:

1. In che modo l'Unione europea si sta dotando nelle sue relazioni esterne di strumenti operativi per la lotta contro la tortura e le altre pene o trattamenti crudeli, disumani o degradanti?

2. Quali sono le misure politiche, nell'ambito della cooperazione bilaterale e multilaterale, e le iniziative pubbliche di cui l'UE si avvale nella lotta contro la tortura, a fianco della società civile locale?

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

Prevenire ed estirpare tutte le forme di torture e maltrattamenti è uno degli obiettivi principali della politica estera in materia di diritti umani dell'UE. In conformità degli orientamenti dell'Unione europea sulla tortura, l'UE affronta il problema della tortura nel dialogo politico e attraverso iniziative diplomatiche. Tali contatti — riservati o pubblici, a seconda dei casi — riguardano sia questioni connesse alla tortura e casi individuali pertinenti a specifici paesi, che questioni più ampie.

L'UE rilascia regolarmente dichiarazioni sulla tortura, anche in sedi multilaterali come le Nazioni Unite (ONU) e l'Organizzazione per la sicurezza e la cooperazione in Europa (OSCE). Per esempio, nel corso della 66a sessione dell'Assemblea generale delle Nazioni Unite, gli Stati membri dell'UE si sono fatti promotori di una risoluzione che condanna tutte le forme di tortura ed altre pene e trattamenti crudeli, disumani o degradanti, compresa l'intimidazione. Nel marzo del 2011 gli Stati membri hanno anche patrocinato congiuntamente una risoluzione sulla tortura e altre pene e trattamenti crudeli, disumani o degradanti: il mandato del relatore speciale presso il Consiglio delle Nazioni Unite per i diritti dell'uomo.

Il rilievo che l'UE dà alle azioni volte a combattere la tortura trova espressione in consistenti finanziamenti di progetti proposti dai rappresentanti della società civile in tutto il mondo. Lo strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani ha finanziato iniziative della società civile nell'ambito della prevenzione della tortura e della riabilitazione delle vittime di torture. Per esempio, sovvenziona, nello Sri Lanka e in Nepal, un progetto specifico per sviluppare le capacità dei funzionari statali di prevenire e combattere le torture e i maltrattamenti all'interno della polizia e in ambito militare. Lo strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani finanzia inoltre un progetto destinato a sostenere le vittime di atti di tortura e le vittime di sparizioni forzate nella Libia post-Gheddafi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002091/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Torture, ill-treatment and capital punishment

In 2009, cases of torture or other ill-treatment were recorded in 111 countries across the world — in approximately half of these (61 countries), the perpetrators went unpunished. Unfair trials are a reality in 55 countries and, even today, in spite of international laws and conventions, 56 states still issue death sentences — 18 of which have made them enforceable. Moreover, freedom of speech remains a right for some but not all, given that restrictions apply in at least 96 countries. The annual report of a well-known international association, which has monitored the global situation of torture and unfair punishment for many years, speaks of a serious 'justice shortfall'.

In view of this, could the Commission explain:

1. In its external relations, how is the European Union equipping itself with operational tools to fight torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishments?

2. What political measures, in terms of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, and public sector initiatives is the EU employing in the fight against torture, to support local civil society?

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

The prevention and the eradication of all forms of torture and ill-treatment is one of the main objectives of the external human rights policy of the EU. In line with the EU Guidelines on Torture, the EU actively raises its concerns on torture through political dialogue and démarches. Such contacts — confidential or public, depending on the respective case — address torture issues and individual cases as well as wider issues.

The EU regularly makes statements related to torture, including within multilateral forums such as the United Nations (UN) and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). As a way of example, during the 66th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA), the Member States co-sponsored a resolution that condemns all forms of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, including through intimidation. The Member States also co-sponsored a resolution on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment: mandate of the Special Rapporteur at the UN Human Rights Council in March 2011.

The EU's emphasis on action to fight against torture is reflected in its substantial funding of projects by civil society actors worldwide. The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) supported civil society actions in the field of torture prevention as well as rehabilitation of torture victims. In Sri Lanka and Nepal for example, a specific project develops capacities of state officials to prevent and address torture and ill treatment within the police and military. The EIDHR is also supporting a project which aims at support to torture victims and victims of enforced disappearances in post-Gaddafi Libya.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002092/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(22 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Statistiche FEG e revisione del regolamento

Con una dotazione ben di 500 milioni di euro all'anno, il Fondo Europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione aiuta i lavoratori a trovare un nuovo impiego e a riqualificarsi quando perdono il lavoro a seguito di mutamenti strutturali del commercio mondiale (ad esempio in caso di chiusura di un'impresa o delocalizzazione di uno stabilimento in un paese extra UE) oppure a seguito della crisi economica e finanziaria mondiale.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. A proposito di quest'ultimo caso, e cioè del sostegno alla crisi economica finanziaria mondiale, qual è la quantità di aiuto erogata dal 1° maggio 2009 al 30 dicembre 2011, periodo previsto dal regolamento della Commissione del 2006 a seguito dell'urgente crisi planetaria, e quali sono i paesi che ne hanno tratto maggiore beneficio?

2. Qual è ad oggi la situazione aggiornata a risultato della proroga che la Commissione ha messo in atto a partire dal 31 dicembre 2013 (data della revisione dell'intero regolamento del FEG)?

Risposta data da László Andor a nome della Commissione
(3 aprile 2012)

La Commissione desidera innanzitutto rammentare all'onorevole deputato che a seguito del mancato accoglimento, da parte del Consiglio, di una proposta della Commissione volta a prolungare la cosiddetta «deroga relativa alla crisi» quest'ultima è scaduta di fatto alla fine del 2011 e la proposta della Commissione di prolungarla è ancora pendente.

Nel periodo durante il quale si è applicata la deroga relativa alla crisi, la Commissione ha ricevuto 81 domande di contributo dal Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione (FEG) da 16 Stati membri. Tali domande sollecitavano aiuti per un valore di 325,5 milioni di EUR a più di 67 000 lavoratori licenziati. 67 di tali domande (pari a 276,5 milioni di EUR) riguardavano licenziamenti causati dalla crisi finanziaria ed economica mondiale, mentre le 14 domande rimanenti (per un valore di 48,9 milioni di EUR) erano basate sul criterio della globalizzazione del commercio previsto dal FEG. L'Irlanda e la Danimarca — con importi cumulativi rispettivamente di 60,6 milioni di EUR e 50 milioni di EUR — sono gli Stati membri che hanno chiesto la quota maggiore rispetto al totale.

Per dati più dettagliati e aggiornati in relazioni al FEG la Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputato al proprio sito web dedicato a detto Fondo ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/egf.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002092/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: European Globalisation Adjustment Fund statistics and review of the regulation

With up to EUR 500 million available each year, the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) helps workers back to work and to develop new skills when they have lost their jobs as a result of changing global trade patterns (for example, when a large company shuts down or a factory is relocated outside the EU) or of the global financial and economic crisis.

1. With regard to the latter case, in other words support to counteract the global economic and financial crisis, how much aid was granted between 1 May 2009 and 30 December 2011, the period laid down by the Commission in the 2006 regulation in response to the severe global crisis, and which countries have benefited most?

2. What is the latest position resulting from the Commission's proposed extension of the above period until 31 December 2013 (when the entire EGF Regulation is due to be reviewed)?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

The Commission would first recall the Honourable Member that following the failure of the Council to agree on a Commission proposal to prolong the so-called 'crisis derogation', the latter expired de facto at the end of 2011, while the Commission proposal to extend it is pending.

Over the period during which the crisis derogation applied, the Commission received 81 applications for a contribution from the European Globalisation adjustment Fund (EGF) from 16 Member States. These applications aimed at providing support worth EUR 325.5 million to more than 67 000 redundant workers. 67 of these applications (EUR 276.5 million) related to redundancies caused by the global financial and economic crisis while the 14 remaining applications (EUR 48.9 million) were based on the trade-related globalisation criterion of the EGF. Ireland and Denmark — with cumulated amounts of respectively EUR 60.6 million and EUR 50 million — are the Member States which requested the highest shares of this total.

For more detailed and updated figures related to the EGF, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its website dedicated to this Fund ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/egf.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002093/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(22 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: 2012 Anno europeo dell'invecchiamento attivo e della solidarietà tra le generazioni

L'Unione europea ha proclamato il 2012 «Anno europeo dell'invecchiamento attivo e della solidarietà tra le generazioni», un'occasione per riflettere su come gli europei oggi vivano e restino in salute più a lungo nonché per cogliere tutte le opportunità che ne derivano.

Con la crescita dell'aspettativa di vita e la riduzione dei tassi di natalità, la rivoluzione demografica ha portato numerosi paesi a doversi confrontare sul tema dell'invecchiamento della popolazione. Secondo i dati dell'Istat, in Italia un cittadino su cinque è ultrasessantacinquenne, mentre quelli sopra gli ottanta rappresentano il 6 % della popolazione.

L'UE attraverso l'invecchiamento attivo intende valorizzare il contributo che gli anziani di domani potranno offrire attraverso una condivisione delle esperienze di lavoro e la partecipazione attiva nella società, vivendo nel modo più gratificante e sano possibile.

Tutto ciò premesso, s'interroga la Commissione per chiedere:

1. quali iniziative ed eventi d'informazione pubblica sono e saranno messi in atto nel corso dell'anno corrente in merito all'invecchiamento attivo e alla solidarietà tra le generazioni?

2. quali sono le principali politiche europee che tutelano il sempre crescente numero di anziani europei?

Risposta data da László Andor a nome della Commissione
(26 aprile 2012)

La fase di lancio dell'Anno europeo dell'invecchiamento attivo e della solidarietà tra le generazioni è ancora in pieno svolgimento. Già 19 Stati membri hanno tenuto le conferenze inaugurali e nel corso dell'anno sono previste molte manifestazioni e iniziative a livello europeo, nazionale, regionale e locale. Per ulteriori informazioni, la Commissione annuncia e documenta tutte le manifestazioni e le iniziative sul sito ufficiale dell'Anno europeo ([1]).

La decisione sull'Anno europeo 2012 ([2]) invita gli Stati membri a presentare alla Commissione un programma di lavoro contenente le attività da realizzare. Oltre 20 Stati membri hanno risposto a questo invito e hanno inviato i loro programmi di lavoro, tutti disponibili sul sito web dell'Anno europeo.

La Commissione si adopera per proteggere gli anziani dell'Unione europea in vari settori, compresi quelli dell'occupazione, della protezione sociale, dell'inclusione sociale, della salute, delle tecnologie dell'informazione e della comunicazione, dell'istruzione e dei trasporti. Inoltre, la Commissione ha adottato di recente un Libro bianco su un'agenda per pensioni adeguate, sicure e sostenibili ([3]) e una comunicazione sul partenariato per l'innovazione europea sull'invecchiamento attivo e in buona salute ([4]). Inoltre, nel maggio 2012 la Commissione intende pubblicare un opuscolo sul modo in cui l'Unione europea sostiene l'invecchiamento attivo in una serie di settori.

([1]) Cfr. http://europa.eu/ey2012/ey2012.jsp?langId=it.
([2]) Decisione n. 940/2011/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 14 settembre 2011, sull'Anno europeo dell'invecchiamento attivo e della solidarietà tra le generazioni (2012), GU L 246 del 23.9.2011.
([3]) (COM(2012)55 definitivo del 16 febbraio 2012), disponibile al seguente indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1194&furtherNews=yes.
([4]) (COM(2012)83 definitivo del 29 Febbraio 2012), disponibile al seguente indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/index_en.cfm?section=active-healthy-ageing&pg=about.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002093/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: The European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations 2012

The European Union has declared 2012 'the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations', a chance to reflect on how Europeans are living for longer and staying healthier for longer as well as to seize the opportunities that this represents.

With increasing life expectancy and a lower birth rate, a demographic revolution has caused numerous countries to have to address the issue of an ageing population. According to data from the National Institute of Statistics (Istat), one citizen in 5 is over 65 years old in Italy, whilst the over-80s make up 6 % of the population.

Through active ageing, the EU intends to improve the contribution that the next generation of older people can offer, such as sharing their work experience and by playing an active role in society, living lives that are as healthy and fulfilling as possible.

In light of this, could the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What initiatives and public information events are being and will be put into place over the coming year regarding active ageing and solidarity between generations?

2. What are the main EU policies that protect the ever growing number of elderly Europeans?

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

The launch phase of the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations is still in full swing. Already, 19 Member States have held their opening conferences and, during the course of the Year, many events and initiatives are planned to take place at European, national, regional or local level. For further information, the Commission announces and documents all events and initiatives on the European Year's official website ([1]).

The decision on the 2012 European Year ([2]) invites the Member States to present to the Commission a work programme outlining the activities planned. More than 20 Member States have responded to this invitation and sent their work programmes, all of which are available on the European Year's website.

There are several policy areas through which the Commission tries to protect the elderly in the EU, including employment, social protection, social inclusion health, ICT, education and transport. Furthermore, the Commission recently adopted a White Paper on an agenda for Adequate, Safe and Sustainable Pensions ([3]) and a communication on the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing ([4]). Lastly, in May 2012 the Commission will publish a brochure on how the European Union supports active ageing in a range of policy areas.

([1]) See http://europa.eu/ey2012/.
([2]) Decision No 940/2011/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 September 2011 on the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (2012), OJ L 246, 23.9.2011.
([3]) (COM(2012) 55 final of 16 February 2012), available at: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1194&furtherNews=yes.
([4]) (COM(2012) 83 final of 29 February 2012), available at: http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/index_en.cfm?section=active-healthy-ageing&pg=about.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002095/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(22 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Balanço do Euro — lucros e salários

Segundo dados da Comissão Europeia (AMECO, Assuntos Económicos e Financeiros), entre 2001 e 2010, em termos médios anuais, na Zona Euro, os lucros líquidos cresceram 7 vezes mais que os salários reais. Os custos unitários do trabalho reais, em termos médios anuais, tiveram uma redução de 0,1 % na Zona Euro. Isto tendo já em conta a recessão mundial de 2009, onde a Zona Euro teve um recuo no produto de 4,1 %, afetando por isso a produtividade do trabalho (produto por pessoa empregada).

Mas é talvez mais significativo ter em conta os valores acumulados da década do Euro. Entre 2001 e 2010, os lucros na Zona Euro aumentaram, em termos médios, 35,8 %, enquanto os custos unitários do trabalho reais tiveram uma redução de 1,1 %.

Estes números deixam bem patente o papel do Euro na redução dos custos unitários do trabalho, na redistribuição da riqueza produzida em favor do capital e em desfavor do trabalho.

Em face do exposto, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que avaliação faz destes números?

2. Como pode justificar, neste contexto, a imposição de medidas, ao nível da UE, que irão acentuar o processo acima descrito? Não considera antes justo e necessário atuar em sentido contrário, recuperando a parte da riqueza/produto social perdida pelos salários, em favor dos lucros, ao longo da última década?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(17 de abril de 2012)

1. Na análise de questões de redistribuição à escala macroeconómica, nomeadamente a divisão do rendimento nacional entre os lucros das empresas e os rendimentos do trabalho, é instrutivo pôr a tónica no ajustamento da parte correspondente aos salários no total da economia ([1]). Como percentagem do PIB atual, esta manteve-se relativamente estável na zona euro, flutuando dentro de uma margem relativamente estreita em torno de uma média de 57 % entre 2000 e 2011. Durante a recessão profunda de 2009, a parte correspondente aos salários, na realidade, subiu até ao nível máximo de 58 %, enquanto os lucros das empresas baixaram mais acentuadamente do que as remunerações dos empregados.

De um modo geral, este facto sugere que há poucas provas diretas de redistribuição dos lucros das empresas em proveito dos rendimentos do trabalho à escala da zona euro. É de referir ainda que a parte correspondente aos salários relativamente estável da zona euro contrasta com a experiência de muitas outras economias avançadas, como, por exemplo, a do grupo de países da OCDE, em que a parte correspondente aos salários, durante o mesmo período, baixou de 61 % para 58 % do PIB.

2. A Comissão não tem uma política à escala da UE em matéria de evolução salarial. Em vez disso, os salários devem ser analisados nas circunstâncias específicas de cada país e na perspetiva das posições nacionais em matéria de competitividade. O euro por si só não determina exaustivamente a evolução dos custos do trabalho, embora a adesão à zona euro agudize os desafios relacionados com a acumulação de desequilíbrios macroeconómicos. A Comissão defende um reequilíbrio da competitividade nos Estados-Membros que têm tido uma evolução salarial desproporcionada em relação à produtividade nos anos anteriores à crise e que contribuíram para os aumentos acentuados dos custos unitários do trabalho nessas economias.

([1]) AMECO série ALCD0 (peso ajustado dos salários no total da economia, expresso em percentagem do PIB a preços de mercado).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002095/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Assessment of the euro — profits and wages

Data from the Commission (AMECO, Economic and Financial Affairs DG) show that, taking the yearly averages between 2001 and 2010, net profits in the euro area grew seven times faster than real wages. Real unit labour costs in the euro area, expressed as a yearly average, fell by 0.1 %. These findings have allowed for the 2009 world recession, in which output in the euro area fell by 4.1 %, thereby affecting labour productivity (output per person employed).

What is perhaps more significant, however, is the totals which have accumulated over the first 10 years of the euro. Between 2001 and 2010, profits in the euro area rose on average by 35.8 %, whereas real unit labour costs fell by 1.1 %.

These figures clearly reveal the role played by the euro in the fall of unit labour costs and in the redistribution whereby wealth has shifted towards big business and away from labour.

1. What is the Commission's assessment of these figures?

2. In this context, how can the Commission justify the imposition of EU-wide measures that will accentuate the process described above? Does it not instead consider it right and necessary to move in the opposite direction by recovering the portion of social output/wealth that wages have lost to profits over the last 10 years?

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

1. When examining redistributive issues at the macroeconomic level, notably the division of national income between corporate profits and labour income, it is instructive to focus on the adjusted wage share in the total economy ([1]). As a percent of current GDP, this has remained fairly stable in the euro area, fluctuating within a relatively narrow band around an average of 57 % between 2000 and 2011. During the deep recession of 2009 the wage share in fact peaked at 58 %, as corporate profits fell more sharply than compensation of employees.

Overall, this suggests that there is little direct evidence of redistribution from corporate profits to labour income at the euro area level. It is further worth noting that the relatively stable wage share in the euro area contrasts with the experience in many other advanced economies, as e.g. for the group of OECD countries the wage share over the same period fell from 61 % to 58 % of GDP.

2. The Commission does not have an EU-wide policy on wage developments. Instead, wages should be considered in their country-specific circumstances and in light of national competitiveness positions. The euro per se does not exhaustively determine labour cost developments, although membership of the euro area makes the challenges linked to accumulated macroeconomic imbalances more acute. The Commission advocates a rebalancing of competitiveness in those Member States that have seen wage developments out of line with productivity in pre-crisis years, and which have underpinned these economies' marked rises in unit labour costs.

([1]) AMECO series ALCD0 (adjusted wage share; total economy; as percentage of GDP at current market prices).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002096/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(22 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Situação do regadio em Portugal e investimentos necessários

Em Portugal, a superfície irrigável atualmente explorada é de 541 mil hectares, segundo o Recenseamento Agrícola de 2009. O potencial de área regável do País situa-se, todavia, bem acima deste valor, na ordem dos 2,8 milhões de hectares, de acordo com o Plano Nacional da Água e com um estudo de 1998, da autoria de dois académicos, da Universidade de Évora (Santos Júnior) e do Instituto Superior de Agronomia (Leão de Sousa). De acordo com este estudo, Portugal poderia chegar, a curto/médio prazo, a um milhão e 220 mil hectares e, a médio prazo, a um milhão e 343 mil hectares. Estes números ilustram bem o insuficiente desenvolvimento do regadio face à Superfície Agrícola Utilizada (SAU).

Ademais, o desaproveitamento das áreas equipadas e suscetíveis de rega é uma realidade. Segundo dados do Recenseamento Agrícola de 2009, em vinte anos (1989/2009), a superfície irrigável reduziu-se em 38 por cento (menos 337 mil ha) e a superfície regada sofreu uma redução de 26 por cento (menos 162 mil ha).

Vale de Vilariça, Baixo Vouga Lagunar, Baixo Mondego, Cova da Beira e Alqueva são casos paradigmáticos de obras que se arrastam indefinidamente, sem conclusão, depois de nelas terem sido investidas verbas vultuosas. Por outro lado, o balanço feito em 2009 pela Direção-Geral da Agricultura e Desenvolvimento Rural/Autoridade Nacional do Regadio refere que dois terços da área equipada pelo Estado ultrapassara já o limite de vida útil; avaliando a urgência de intervenção em 50 regadios, afirma-se no mesmo documento que 20 deles carecem de uma prioridade de intervenção muito alta e 15 de uma prioridade alta e média.

Em face do exposto, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que programas e verbas comunitárias (do atual QFP) poderão ser ainda mobilizados para concretizar os investimentos acima mencionados, incluindo os novos regadios e as intervenções necessárias nos já existentes? Quais as respetivas taxas de cofinanciamento comunitário?

2. De que forma serão as potencialidades do regadio contempladas na futura PAC? Está disposta a Comissão a reconsiderar as suas propostas iniciais neste domínio, de forma a eliminar mais discriminações e desigualdades entre os países do Norte e do Centro e os países do Sul, como Portugal?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(3 de abril de 2012)

1. A política de desenvolvimento rural — artigo 20.°, alínea b), ponto v), do Regulamento (CE) n.° 1698/2005 ([1]) — prevê uma medida destinada a melhorar e desenvolver infraestruturas relacionadas com a evolução e a adaptação da agricultura e da silvicultura.

O Proder (Programa de Desenvolvimento Rural do Continente) para o período 2007/2013 prevê a possibilidade de apoio a projetos de desenvolvimento e modernização do regadio.

O financiamento público total programado para esta medida é de cerca de 660 milhões de euros, dos quais 497 milhões cofinanciados pelo Feader (a taxa de cofinanciamento do Feader para a medida em causa é de 75,3 %).

2. Quanto ao futuro: é manifesto que a política agrícola comum (PAC) deve contribuir para os objetivos da Estratégia Europa 2020 — um dos quais consiste em assegurar que o crescimento económico conseguido seja «sustentável».

Dados os condicionalismos ambientais que a UE enfrenta, a gestão eficaz da água é um dos aspetos essenciais de uma gestão sustentável dos recursos naturais em geral — razão pela qual, no âmbito da PAC, a política de desenvolvimento rural procurará, entre outros objetivos, ajudar a melhorar a gestão da água e a aumentar a eficiência na utilização dos recursos hídricos pela agricultura (estes dois objetivos são explicitamente incluídos nas propostas legislativas da Comissão como temas centrais no âmbito das «prioridades» formais desta política).

([1]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 1698/2005 do Conselho, de 20 de setembro de 2005, relativo ao apoio ao desenvolvimento rural pelo Fundo Europeu Agrícola de Desenvolvimento Rural (Feader), JO L 277 de 21.10.2005.

As regras mais circunstanciadas propostas pela Comissão no respeitante a apoio para investimentos no regadio refletem esta orientação essencial no sentido de tornar os sistemas de regadio mais eficazes, de modo a que a PAC possa verdadeiramente contribuir para um crescimento sustentável — dando resposta às exigências quer dos agricultores quer do ambiente natural.

As propostas iniciais da Comissão estão, obviamente, sujeitas a um debate formal no Conselho e no Parlamento Europeu e é primordialmente no âmbito deste processo formal que a Comissão exprime a sua posição em qualquer momento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002096/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: The situation of irrigation in Portugal and the investment needed

In Portugal, the irrigable area currently being used amounts to 541 000 ha, according to the 2009 Agricultural Census. The potentially irrigable area in the country, however, is much larger: some 2.8 million ha, according to the National Water Plan and a study carried out in 1998 by two academics from the University of Évora (Santos Júnior) and the Higher Institute of Agronomy (Leão de Sousa). This study suggests that 1 220 000 ha could be used in the short to medium term in Portugal, and 1 343 000 ha in the medium term. These figures clearly show how inadequately developed the irrigated area is, compared with the utilised agricultural area (UAA).

Furthermore, it is a fact that areas equipped and ready for irrigation are not being used. According to the 2009 Agricultural Census data, in 20 years (1989-2009) the irrigable area shrank by 38% (337 000 ha smaller) and the irrigated area by 26% (162 000 ha smaller).

Vale de Vilariça, Baixo Vouga Lagunar, Baixo Mondego, Cova da Beira and Alqueva are typical cases of public works that have been dragging on indefinitely without being finished, after considerable sums have already been invested in them. In addition, the 2009 assessment by the Portuguese Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development/National Irrigation Authority reported that two-thirds of the area equipped by the state was already beyond the end of its useful life; when assessing how urgently intervention was needed in 50 irrigated areas, the same document stated that intervention was a very high priority in 20 of them and a medium or high priority in 15.

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission say what EU programmes and funds (within the current multi-annual financial framework) can still be mobilised in order to realise the abovementioned investment both for new irrigated areas and for the intervention required in existing ones? What are the corresponding EU co-financing rates?

2. How will the potential of irrigated areas be addressed in the future Common Agricultural Policy? Is the Commission willing to reconsider its initial proposals in this field, so as to remove further discrimination and inequality between northern and central European countries, on the one hand, and southern European countries, such as Portugal, on the other?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

1. The rural development policy, Article 20(b)(v) of Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 ([1]), provides for a measure aiming at improving and developing infrastructure related to the development and adaptation of agriculture and forestry.

The Rural Development Programme of Mainland Portugal (Proder) for the period 2007-2013 currently foresees a possibility to support irrigation development and modernisation projects.

The total public financing programmed for this measure is of around EUR 660 million, of which EUR 497 million co-financed by the EAFRD (the EAFRD co-financing rate for this measure is 75.3 %).

2. With regard to the future: it is very clear that the common agricultural policy (CAP) must contribute to the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy — one of which is to ensure that economic growth achieved is 'sustainable'.

Given the environmental stresses facing the EU, effective management of water is an essential aspect of sustainable management of natural resources overall. This is why, within the CAP, rural development policy will aim *inter alia* to help improve water management and to help increase efficiency in water use by agriculture (these two aims are stated explicitly within the areas of focus set out under the policy's formal 'priorities' in the Commission's legal proposals).

([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.

The more detailed rules proposed by the Commission with regard to support for investments in irrigation reflect this essential focus on making irrigation systems more efficient so that the CAP can truly help deliver sustainable growth — responding to the needs of both farmers and the natural environment.

The Commission's initial proposals are of course subject to formal discussion in the Council and the European Parliament and it is primarily within this formal process that the Commission expresses its position at any given moment.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002097/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(22 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Possibilidade de introdução do uso de polifosfatos em peixe salgado

A possibilidade de introdução do uso de polifosfatos em peixe salgado constitui uma séria ameaça à viabilidade da indústria portuguesa de transformação do bacalhau. Os industriais portugueses do bacalhau, nomeadamente através da AIB — Associação dos Industriais do Bacalhau, têm vindo a denunciar o que consideram ser a concorrência desleal por parte de transformadores da Noruega (assunto que motivou já uma pergunta anterior — E-009284/2011).

Para garantir a qualidade do bacalhau transformado em Portugal, a indústria está obrigada por lei a garantir que a percentagem de água no produto é igual ou inferior a 47 %, uma obrigação que não se estende aos transformadores noruegueses que exportam, para Portugal, bacalhau com mais de 50 % de água. A eventual introdução de polifosfatos na transformação do bacalhau vai aumentar ainda mais esta desigualdade, já que os polifosfatos dificultam a extração de humidade, impondo uma fatura energética ainda mais pesada aos transformadores portugueses. Ora, Portugal tem já hoje das tarifas energéticas mais elevadas do espaço europeu, pelo que o aumento do período de secagem (determinado pelo uso de polifosfatos) aumentaria de tal forma os custos de produção que poria em causa a sobrevivência de várias empresas do setor.

Acrescem a tudo isto as dúvidas relativamente ao efeito dos polifosfatos no produto final e, por conseguinte, nos consumidores. Ainda segundo os industriais do bacalhau, a introdução dos polifosfatos não traz nenhuma vantagem, qualitativa ou nutricional, ao produto.

Em face do exposto, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. De que informações dispõe sobre o efeito da adição de polifosfatos aos produtos da pesca, no produto final e nos consumidores? Que estudos as suportam?

2. Na sequência da resposta dada à pergunta anterior (E-009284/2011), que outras medidas poderão ser implementadas para evitar a forte concorrência, por vezes desleal, do setor da transformação norueguês, designadamente no plano legislativo e da fiscalização, impondo o cumprimento de regras aos produtos originários deste país que entram no mercado comunitário?

Resposta dada por John Dalli em nome da Comissão
(17 de abril de 2012)

A Comissão recebeu vários pedidos para a utilização de difosfatos (E 450), trifosfatos (E 451) e polifosfatos (E 452) no peixe salgado por salga húmida. Esses pedidos têm fundamento técnico, uma vez que o longo processo de conservação deste peixe resulta numa deterioração por oxidação que substitui a cor branca original por uma cor amarela e que pode também influenciar o seu sabor. Foi provado que os fosfatos são muito eficazes na proteção do peixe salgado contra essa oxidação.

Dado que a maioria dos fosfatos é removida durante a demolha do peixe, a exposição dos consumidores aos fosfatos será mínima. Por conseguinte, poderia ser adequado permitir a utilização de difosfatos (E 450), trifosfatos (E 451) e polifosfatos (E 452) para a preservação de peixe salgado por salga húmida.

As informações relacionadas com as alterações do teor de água e de fosfatos no produto final foram disponibilizados pelo requerente e encontram-se igualmente publicadas na literatura científica ([1]).

Os produtores serão livres de decidir se utilizarão, ou não, fosfatos no peixe salgado por salga húmida. Esta utilização terá de respeitar as regras da UE, incluindo os requisitos de rotulagem.

A Comissão não prevê quaisquer medidas adicionais às referidas na resposta à pergunta E-009284/2011 ([2]).

([1]) Ute Schröder (2010), Changes in phosphate and water content during processing of salted pacific cod, Journal of aquatic food product technology 19:16-25 (UTE Schröder (2010), Alterações do teor de fosfatos e de água durante a transformação de bacalhau salgado do Pacífico, «Journal of aquatic food product technology», Volume 19, págs. 16-25.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002097/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Possible introduction of polyphosphate use in salted fish

The possible introduction of polyphosphate usage in salted fish is a serious threat to the viability of the Portuguese cod processing industry. Portuguese cod producers, and in particular their trade association, the AIB, have been reporting what they regard as unfair competition from Norwegian processors (a topic that gave rise to an earlier question — E-009284/2011).

To guarantee the quality of cod processed in Portugal, the industry is required by law to ensure that the product contains no more than 47 % water, whereas this requirement is not extended to Norwegian processors, who export cod containing over 50 % water to Portugal. The possible introduction of polyphosphates in cod processing will further increase this inequality, since polyphosphates make it difficult to extract moisture, thus imposing an even higher energy demand on Portuguese processors. Portugal already has some of the highest energy prices in Europe, and therefore the increase in drying time (due to polyphosphate use) would raise production costs so much that several companies in this industry would find it difficult to survive.

Added to all this is the question mark over the effect of polyphosphates on the end product and, hence, on consumers. The cod producers also claim that introducing polyphosphates will not improve the quality or nutritional value of the product in any way.

In view of this:

1. What information does the Commission have regarding the effect on the end product and on consumers of adding polyphosphates to fisheries products? What studies underpin this information?

2. Following the answer given to the earlier question (E-009284/2011), what other measures can be implemented to prevent the strong and sometimes unfair competition from the Norwegian processing industry, particularly in terms of legislation and surveillance, so as to ensure that products entering the EU market from that country abide by certain rules?

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

The Commission received several requests for the use of diphosphates (E 450), triphosphates (E 451) and polyphosphates (E 452) in wet salted fish. These requests were technologically justified as during the long preservation of this fish oxidative spoilage occurs which changes the original white colour to yellow and which may also influence its flavour. Phosphates have been proven to be most effective to protect the salted fish against such oxidation.

As most of the phosphates are removed during the soaking of the fish with water, the exposure of the consumer to the phosphates will be minimal. It might therefore be appropriate to allow the use of diphosphates (E 450), triphosphates (E 451) and polyphosphates (E 452) for the preservation of wet salted fish.

Information related to changes of the water and phosphate content in the final product have been made available by the applicant and is also published in scientific literature ([1]).

The producers will be free to choose whether or not they will use phosphates in wet salted fish. This use will have to comply with the EU rules, including labelling requirements.

The Commission does not foresee any additional measures than those referred to in the reply to the Question E-009284/2011 ([2]).

([1]) Ute Schröder (2010), Changes in phosphate and water content during processing of salted pacific cod, *Journal of Aquatic Food Product Technology* 19:16-25.

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

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002098/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(22 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Despedimentos na NEC e possível impacto nos países da UE

O grupo japonês NEC, da área da eletrónica, anunciou recentemente que pretende despedir dez mil trabalhadores em todo o mundo. De acordo com a administração, a decisão surge depois da quebra nos lucros verificada no último trimestre de 2011. Cerca de sete mil postos de trabalho serão destruídos no território nipónico, e outros três mil extintos em alguns dos países onde a NEC está implantada, informou a administração da NEC sem, no entanto, detalhar em quais.

Em face do exposto, pergunta-se à Comissão:

— Dispõe de informações relativamente a qual poderá ser o impacto desta decisão em países da UE? Procedeu já a alguma avaliação nesse sentido? Que medidas foram, até à data, tomadas para o evitar?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(17 de abril de 2012)

A Comissão não dispõe de informações específicas sobre a operação de reestruturação a nível mundial anunciada pelo grupo NEC.

No caso de uma empresa na Europa ponderar operações de reestruturação, podem ser aplicáveis várias diretivas da UE em matéria de informação e consulta dos trabalhadores, a saber, a Diretiva 2002/14/CE que estabelece um quadro geral relativo à informação e à consulta dos trabalhadores ([1]), a Diretiva 98/59/CE relativa aos despedimentos coletivos ([2]) e a Diretiva 2001/23/CE relativa à transferência de empresas ([3]). No entanto, essas consultas circunscrever-se-iam ao nível nacional. Não foi criado um conselho de empresa europeu no âmbito do grupo NEC em aplicação da Diretiva 2009/38/CE ([4]).

A Comissão defende que é conveniente propiciar uma aplicação mais eficiente das boas práticas relacionadas com a antecipação, preparação e gestão da reestruturação empresarial em toda a UE. Neste contexto, a Comissão lançou uma consulta pública sobre antecipação da mudança e da reestruturação ([5]), com o propósito de identificar práticas e políticas bem-sucedidas neste campo, bem como contribuir para melhorar as sinergias entre todos os intervenientes relevantes.

([1]) JO L 80 de 23.3.2002.
([2]) JO L 225 de 12.8.1998.
([3]) JO L 82 de 22.3.2001.
([4]) JO L 122 de 16.5.2009.
([5]) (http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1166&furtherNews=yes).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002098/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Redundancies from NEC and possible impact on EU countries

The Japanese electronics group NEC has recently announced its plans to pay off 10 000 workers across the globe. The management has announced that the decision was made when the company recorded a drop in profits during the last quarter of 2011. According to NEC management, almost 7 000 jobs will be lost across Japan, and a further 3 000 across some of the countries in which NEC has offices, but no specific details have been given as to which ones will be affected.

— Does the Commission have any information on the potential impact this decision could have on EU countries? Has it already carried out an assessment of this? What measures have been taken so far to prevent this from happening?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

The Commission has no specific information on the restructuring operation announced by NEC worldwide.

In cases restructuring operations are envisaged by a company in Europe, several EU directives providing for information and consultation of employees could be applicable, in particular Directive 2002/14/EC establishing a general framework for informing and consulting employees ([1]), Directive 98/59/EC on collective redundancies ([2]) and Directive 2001/23/EC on transfer of undertakings ([3]). Such consultations would however remain at the national level. No European Works Council has been installed in the NEC Corporation in application of Directive 2009/38/EC ([4]).

The Commission is of the view that it is necessary to bring about a more efficient implementation of good practices related to the anticipation, preparation and management of enterprise restructuring across the EU. In this light, it launched a public consultation on anticipation of change and restructuring ([5]) aimed at identifying successful practices and policies in this field as well as to contribute to improve synergies between all relevant actors.

([1]) OJ L 80, 23.3.2002.
([2]) OJ L 225, 12.8.1998.
([3]) OJ L 82, 22.3.2001.
([4]) OJ L 122, 16.5.2009.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1166&furtherNews=yes.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002099/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(22 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Balanço do mecanismo de vigilância da subsidiariedade

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o balanço que faz do mecanismo de vigilância da subsidiariedade previsto no Tratado de Lisboa.

Concretamente:

1. Quais os parlamentos nacionais que se têm pronunciado regularmente, no âmbito deste mecanismo?

2. Quais os parlamentos que, até à data, entenderam estar a ser violado o princípio da subsidiariedade? Quantas vezes e em que situações concretas tal sucedeu?

3. Qual o seguimento das queixas apresentadas?

Resposta dada pelo Presidente José Manuel Barroso em nome da Comissão
(30 de março de 2012)

Em 2010/2011, a Comissão recebeu um total de 1 110 pareceres dos parlamentos nacionais no contexto do «diálogo político», 623 dos quais em 2011. Durante o mesmo período, a Comissão recebeu 117 pareceres fundamentados, 63 dos quais em 2011.

Até agora, os parlamentos nacionais que adotaram o maior número de pareceres fundamentados são os seguintes: Parlamento sueco, Parlamento neerlandês (ambas as câmaras), Parlamento luxemburguês, Parlamento polaco (ambas as câmaras).

As propostas da Comissão que mereceram maior atenção por parte dos Parlamentos nacionais são as seguintes:

— Diretiva relativa a uma matéria coletável comum consolidada do imposto sobre as sociedades (Mcccis) ([1]), com nove pareceres fundamentados;

— Regulamento para estabelecer regras comuns sobre a reintrodução temporária do controlo nas fronteiras internas em circunstâncias excecionais ([2]), com seis pareceres fundamentados;

— Diretiva relativa às condições de entrada e de residência de nacionais de países terceiros para efeitos de trabalho sazonal ([3]), com cinco pareceres fundamentados;

— Regulamento relativo a um direito europeu comum da compra e venda ([4]), com cinco pareceres fundamentados.

Embora os limiares mencionados no Protocolo n.° 2 do Tratado nunca tenham, até agora, sido atingidos, a Comissão tem em conta todos os pareceres fundamentados no contexto do seu «diálogo político» com os parlamentos nacionais e responde individualmente a cada um dos pareceres. A Comissão publica estas respostas, bem como os pareceres, no seguinte sítio da Internet:
(http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/relations/relations_other/npo/index_pt.htm).

Os pareceres dos parlamentos nacionais e as respostas da Comissão são também formalmente enviados ao Parlamento.

([1]) COM(2011)121 final.
([2]) COM(2011)560 final.
([3]) COM(2010)379 final.
([4]) COM(2011)635 final.

Uma panorâmica estatística pormenorizada da situação, fornecendo mais elementos de resposta, figura nos dois relatórios anuais sobre as relações entre a Comissão e os parlamentos nacionais e sobre a aplicação dos princípios da subsidiariedade e da proporcionalidade, que deverão ser adotados no segundo trimestre deste ano e enviados ao Parlamento Europeu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002099/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Assessment of the mechanism for monitoring subsidiarity

What is the Commission's assessment of the mechanism for monitoring subsidiarity provided for in the Treaty of Lisbon.

In particular:

1. Which national parliaments have made regular pronouncements in the context of this mechanism?

2. Which national parliaments have, to date, taken the view that the principle of subsidiarity was being breached? How many times and in what specific situations has this happened?

3. How has the Commission followed up the complaints submitted?

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

In the course of 2010/2011, the Commission has received a total of 1110 opinions from national Parliaments in the context of the 'political dialogue', 623 of which in 2011. During the same period, the Commission has received 117 reasoned opinions, 63 of which in 2011.

The following national Parliaments have so far adopted the largest number of reasoned opinions: Swedish Parliament, Dutch Parliament (both Chambers), Luxembourg Parliament, Polish Parliament (both Chambers).

The following Commission proposals were the most concerned:

— Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base (CCCTB) ([1]), nine reasoned opinions;

— Temporary reintroduction of border control at internal borders in exceptional circumstances ([2]) , six reasoned opinions;

— Seasonal workers Directive ([3]), five reasoned opinions;

— Common European Sale Law ([4]), five reasoned opinions.

Although the thresholds mentioned in Protocol 2 of the Treaty have so far never been met, the Commission takes all reasoned opinions into account in the context of its 'political dialogue' with national Parliaments and replies to each of the opinions individually. The Commission publishes these replies, as well as the opinions, on the following website: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/relations/relations_other/npo/index_en.htm

Opinions from national Parliaments and Commission replies are formally sent also to the Parliament.

A detailed statistical overview of the situation, providing further replies to the question is contained in the two Annual Reports on the relations between the Commission and national Parliaments and on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, which are due to be adopted in the second quarter of this year and will be sent to the European Parliament.

([1]) COM(2011) 121 final.
([2]) COM(2011) 560 final.
([3]) COM(2010) 379 final.
([4]) COM(2011) 635 final.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002100/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(22 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Aumento e desregulação dos horários de trabalho

Entre as medidas que, em Portugal, vêm sendo impostas no domínio laboral a coberto do programa FMI-UE, conta-se o aumento e a desregulação do horário de trabalho, com a imposição de «bancos de horas» que poderão levar a jornadas de trabalho até às 12 horas por dia, 60 horas por semana. Numa altura em que, fruto da evolução científica e técnica, se produz mais em menos tempo, a União Europeia, em lugar de promover a redução da jornada de trabalho (com isso combatendo também o desemprego), aumenta a jornada de trabalho.

Neste contexto, assume particular interesse um estudo recentemente publicado pela revista «PLoS ONE», dando conta de que os empregados que trabalham pelo menos 11 horas por dia se arriscam duas vezes mais a sofrer de depressão grave do que os que trabalham sete horas diárias. A investigação foi realizada no Reino Unido e abrangeu um universo de dois mil trabalhadores britânicos, homens e mulheres entre os 35 e os 55 anos, gozando de boa saúde mental, que foram acompanhados durante seis anos. Refira-se que a ligação entre o risco de depressão e a jornada de trabalho diário não foi afetada por outros fatores relacionados com o estilo de vida. É mesmo o excesso de tempo de trabalho que deprime.

Em face do exposto, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento do estudo referido? Que avaliação faz das suas conclusões?

2. Que implicações daqui retira para a necessária alteração das orientações que têm inspirado a ação da UE neste domínio, orientações bem patentes seja nos programas FMI-UE, seja no chamado Pacto para o Euro Mais, entre outros exemplos?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(17 de abril de 2012)

A Comissão tem conhecimento do estudo referido pelo Senhor Deputado sobre as implicações das diferentes modalidades de organização do tempo de trabalho, nomeadamente jornadas de trabalho prolongadas, na saúde e segurança dos trabalhadores. Na sua segunda fase de consulta ([1]) dos parceiros sociais ao nível europeu sobre a revisão da diretiva relativa ao tempo de trabalho ([2]), é publicada uma análise global do mencionado estudo, onde se afirma que «há indícios suficientes e fidedignos que demonstram que ritmos de trabalho excessivamente longos, períodos mínimos de descanso não respeitados e horários de trabalho atípicos podem ter efeitos nefastos para a saúde e a segurança tanto dos trabalhadores em questão como do público em geral» ([3]).

As regras da UE sobre a organização do tempo de trabalho não foram alteradas, continuando a ser regidas pela diretiva em apreço, cuja revisão está atualmente a ser negociada pelos parceiros sociais da UE.

A Comissão gostaria de chamar a atenção do Senhor Deputado para o facto de os «bancos de horas» em Portugal terem sido introduzidos pela revisão de 2009 do código de trabalho português e não pelo programa de ajustamento económico (PAE) aprovado pela Comissão, pelo Banco Central Europeu, pelo Fundo Monetário Internacional e por Portugal. O projeto de lei que integra o compromisso PAE no novo código de trabalho cria uma conta de 150 horas por ano, que pode ser ativada por acordo individual, ao passo que a legislação atualmente em vigor prevê uma conta de 200 horas que apenas pode ser ativada por acordo coletivo. Pretende-se, assim, que as empresas passem a gerir melhor as flutuações de emprego ao longo de todo o ciclo e adequem as diferentes modalidades de organização do tempo de trabalho aos vários setores e empresas.

A Comissão irá acompanhar de perto a aplicação da nova legislação, logo que esta seja adotada, a fim de garantir a sua conformidade com o direito da UE.

([1]) Revisão da Diretiva Tempo de Trabalho (COM(2010)801 final, de 21 de dezembro de 2010).
([2]) Diretiva 2003/88/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho relativa a determinados aspetos da organização do tempo de trabalho, JO L 299 de 18.11.2003, p. 9.
([3]) Ver a nota de rodapé 4 no que diz respeito às referências ao estudo e a secção 4 no que toca à citação.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002100/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Increase and deregulation of working time

Among the work-related measures imposed on Portugal as part of the IMF-EU programme is the increase and deregulation of working time, with the imposition of 'working hours banks' which could see the working day increased to 12 hours per day, 60 hours per week. At a time when, thanks to scientific and technical progress, more is being produced in less time, instead of moving to reduce working hours, while at the same time combating unemployment, the European Union is increasing working time.

In this context, a recently-published study in the magazine *Plos ONE* is of particular interest, in that employees who worked for 11 hours or more a day were twice as likely to suffer from serious depression as those who worked seven hours a day. The research was carried out in the United Kingdom on a sample of two thousand workers, men and women, between the ages of 35 and 55 in good mental health, who were studied over a six-year period. They noted that the link between risk of depression and working hours was not affected by other factors related to life-style. It was the excessive hours worked that led to depression.

1. Is the Commission aware of this study? What is its assessment of the findings?

2. What are the implications for the need to change the European Union's guidelines in this area, which have clearly been influenced by those in IMF-EU programmes and in the so-called Euro Plus Pact, among others?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

The Commission is indeed aware of the research referred to by the Honourable Member on the implications for workers' health and safety of different working-time patterns, including long working hours. In its second-phase consultation ([1]) of the social partners at European level on reviewing the Working Time Directive ([2]), it published a comprehensive review of such research, noting that 'There is ample and robust evidence showing that long working hours, missed minimum rests and atypical working hours have a detrimental effect on health and safety' ([3]).

The EU rules on the organisation of working time have not been changed and continue to be governed by that directive, a revision of which is currently being negotiated by the EU social partners.

The Commission would draw the Honourable Member's attention to the fact that Portugal's 'working hours banks' were introduced by the 2009 revision of the Portuguese Labour Code, not by the Economic Adjustment Programme (EAP) agreed by the Commission, the European Central Bank, the International Monetary Fund and Portugal. The draft law incorporating the EAP commitment into the new Labour Code creates a 150-hour bank account per year that can be activated by individual agreement, whereas the existing legislation provides for a 200-hour account that can only be activated by collective agreement. This should allow firms to contain employment fluctuations over the cycle better and accommodate differences in work patterns across sectors and firms.

The Commission will monitor the new legislation closely, once it is adopted, to ensure that it is in conformity with EC law.

([1]) Reviewing the Working Time Directive (COM(2010) 801 final of 21 December 2010).
([2]) Directive 2003/88/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time, OJ L 299, 18.11.2003, p. 9.
([3]) See footnote 4 for references to research and Section 4 for quote.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002101/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(22 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Ataque aos transportes públicos em Portugal

Em Portugal, a coberto do programa FMI-UE, tem vindo a ser desenvolvido um inaudito ataque ao serviço público de transportes.

Encerram-se linhas de caminhos-de-ferro, suprimem-se carreiras, reduz-se a frequência de comboios, barcos, metros e autocarros. Milhares de trabalhadores estão ameaçados de despedimento. À óbvia e significativa degradação da qualidade do serviço prestado, soma-se um brutal aumento do preço dos transportes públicos, que, nalguns casos, ultrapassa os 20 %.

Este ataque levará, de acordo com as estimativas do próprio Governo, a uma substancial redução da utilização dos transportes públicos por parte dos utentes. Um dos resultados desta redução poderá ser o maior recurso ao transporte individual, com o consequente aumento do consumo de combustíveis, a redução do rendimento disponível das famílias, o maior endividamento externo do país, o aumento das emissões de gases de efeito de estufa.

Por todo o país, trabalhadores, populações e utentes têm vindo a organizar lutas e protestos diversos contra este ataque aos transportes públicos e contra os que o promovem.

Em face do exposto, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Como pode justificar este ataque aos transportes públicos?

2. Não considera esta atitude profundamente contraditória com um discurso público de aposta nas infra-estruturas de transportes, na redução do recurso ao transporte individual e na redução das emissões de gases de efeito de estufa?

3. Dispõe de informações recentes sobre o grau de utilização dos diferentes modos de transportes públicos de passageiros em cada um dos 27 Estados-Membros?

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(23 de abril de 2012)

1) A crise económica atual e a concomitante pressão nos orçamentos públicos originaram a necessidade de sujeitar a despesa pública a um escrutínio rigoroso. A Comissão reafirma o seu entendimento de que transportes públicos de alta qualidade são um importante pilar de qualquer sistema de transportes sustentável e acessível, ao mesmo tempo que reconhece a importância de se assegurar o funcionamento economicamente eficiente dos serviços de transportes públicos. As medidas tomadas em resposta às atuais restrições orçamentais devem visar o reforço — não a diminuição — das perspetivas de consecução de um grau mais elevado de sustentabilidade económica, social e ambiental.

2) No seu Livro Branco sobre os Transportes, de 2011 ([1]), a Comissão indicou que uma utilização mais ampla de formas de transporte partilhado (comboio, autocarro e outros meios de transporte público urbano e interurbano) é um passo necessário para reduzir a dependência do petróleo, o congestionamento e as emissões. Uma taxa acrescida de utilização dos transportes coletivos permitiria aumentar a densidade e a frequência dos serviços, gerando desse modo um círculo virtuoso para os modos de transporte público e uma melhor utilização do erário público. Para isso, é necessário combinar diversos fatores: tarifação adequada de todas as formas de transporte, a fim de refletir os verdadeiros custos para a sociedade, investimento em infraestruturas modernas, frequências atrativas, conforto, acesso fácil, fiabilidade dos serviços e integração intermodal. As medidas de longo prazo relativas aos transportes, tomadas nos Estados-Membros, deveriam ser alinhadas por estes objetivos de política estratégica, mas a Comissão reconhece que o imperativo da consolidação do orçamento público poderá forçar as autoridades a concentrarem os seus esforços num menor número de iniciativas, mais comportáveis no mais curto prazo.

([1]) (http://ec.europa.eu/transport/strategies/2011_white_paper_en.htm).

3) A Comissão não dispõe de informações sobre o grau de utilização dos diferentes modos de transporte público em cada um dos 27 Estados-Membros. Os dados sobre transportes públicos são compilados pela UITP (Associação Internacional de Transportes Públicos) ([2]), que os pode disponibilizar a pedido.

([2]) (http://www.uitp.org/).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002101/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Attack on public transport in Portugal

An unprecedented attack on public transport services has been launched in Portugal beneath the cover of the IMF-EU programme.

Railway lines have been closed, routes have been shut down, and the frequency of trains, boats, metro trains and buses has been reduced. Thousands of workers are threatened with redundancy. In addition to this obvious and significant decline in the quality of service provided, there has also been a steep increase in fares on public transport, reaching 20 % in some cases.

According to the Government's own predictions, this attack will lead to a substantial reduction in the use of public transport. One of the consequences of this reduction may be greater use of individual transport, with a resultant increase in fuel consumption, reduction in families' available income, higher foreign debt and increase in greenhouse gas emissions.

Throughout the country, workers, citizens and users are organising fight backs and protests against these attacks on public transport and those promoting them.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. How can this attack on public transport be justified?

2. Does it not consider this stance to be in stark contradiction to a public discourse of support for transport infrastructure, reduction in the use of individual transport and reduction in greenhouse gas emissions?

3. Does it have up-to-date information on the level of usage of different means of public passenger transport in each of the 27 Member States?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2012)

1. The current economic crisis and the concomitant strain on public budgets have given rise to a need to expose public expenditures to close scrutiny. The Commission reaffirms its view that high-quality public transport is an important pillar of any sustainable and accessible transport system, while recognising the importance of ensuring the economically efficient operation of public transport services. Measures taken in response to today's budgetary constraints must be targeted so as to strengthen and not diminish the perspectives for achieving a higher degree of economic, social and environmental sustainability.

2. In its 2011 Transport White Paper ([1]), the Commission has indicated that greater use of shared forms of transport (railways, coaches, urban public transport, etc.) is a necessary development to reduce oil dependency, congestion and emissions. A higher share of travel by collective transport would allow increasing the density and frequency of service thereby generating a virtuous circle for public transport modes and better use of public money. This needs to be achieved by combining several factors: adequate pricing of all forms of transport to reflect true costs to society, investment in modern infrastructure, attractive frequencies, comfort, easy access, reliability of services, and intermodal integration. Long-term actions on transport, taken in the Member States, should be aligned with these strategic policy objectives, but the Commission recognises that the imperative of public budget consolidation may force public authorities to concentrate their efforts on fewer, more affordable initiatives in the shorter term.

3. The Commission has no data on the level of usage of the different means of public transport in the 27 Member States. Data on public transport is compiled by UITP ([2]) and available from them upon request.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/strategies/2011_white_paper_en.htm
([2]) http://www.uitp.org/.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002102/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(22 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Liberdade sindical do pessoal da Polícia Marítima

Mais de cinco mil cidadãos subscreveram recentemente uma petição, entregue no parlamento português, pugnando pelo reconhecimento de liberdade sindical do pessoal da Polícia Marítima.

A Polícia Marítima garante e fiscaliza o cumprimento das leis e regulamentos na área de jurisdição marítima nacional, designadamente em espaços integrantes do domínio público marítimo, em águas interiores e em águas sob soberania e jurisdição nacional. Compete-lhe, ainda, em colaboração com as demais forças policiais e de segurança, garantir a segurança e os direitos dos cidadãos.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

— Dispõe de informação relativamente ao estatuto — civil ou militar — dos profissionais da Polícia Marítima em cada um dos Estados-Membros da UE onde exista uma força com características e competências idênticas, e ainda relativamente à liberdade sindical destes profissionais?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(11 de maio de 2012)

Sob reserva do respeito do princípio da eficácia quanto ao controlo do cumprimento da legislação da UE, a organização das estruturas administrativas dos Estados-Membros que desempenham funções de polícia marítima é de competência nacional. Não existe nenhum inventário oficial do estatuto — civil ou militar — ou do tipo de organização da polícia marítima nos Estados-Membros da UE, pelo que a Comissão não pode fornecer ao Senhor Deputado as informações solicitadas.

Todos os Estados-Membros ratificaram a Convenção 87 da OIT, relativa à liberdade de associação. Contudo, o direito de constituir sindicatos e de aderir aos mesmos é, na sua essência, um domínio de competência nacional, no qual a Comissão não pode interferir.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002102/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Freedom of association of maritime police officers

More than 5 000 citizens recently signed a petition to the Portuguese Parliament calling for maritime police officers to be granted freedom of association.

The Maritime Police enforces and monitors compliance with national maritime laws and regulations, specifically in areas forming part of the public maritime domain, in inland waters and in waters under national sovereignty and jurisdiction. Furthermore, in collaboration with other police and security forces, it is responsible for guaranteeing the safety and rights of citizens.

— Does the Commission have information on the status — civilian or military — of maritime police officers in Member States which have a similar force carrying out duties of this kind, and on the freedom of association enjoyed by those officers?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(11 May 2012)

Subject to the respect of the principle of effectiveness as far as the enforcement of EC law is concerned, the organisation of the administrative structures of the Member States carrying out maritime police functions is a matter of national competence. There is not an official inventory of the status (civilian or military) or the organisation of maritime police in EU Member States and the Commission is therefore not able to provide the Honourable Member with the information requested.

All Member States have ratified ILO Convention 87 on freedom of association. However, the organisation of the right to form and to join trade unions is essentially a matter of national competence, in which the Commission cannot interfere.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-002103/12
a la Comisión
Esther Herranz García (PPE)
(22 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Heladas en la agricultura

Las fuertes heladas acaecidas en España en este mes de febrero, combinadas con la sequía persistente, han provocado grandes pérdidas económicas en las cosechas agrícolas de numerosas regiones españolas, afectando muy particularmente a las producciones hortofrutícolas.

— ¿Qué instrumentos de ayuda a nivel europeo podrían servir para compensar a los productores por dichas pérdidas?

— ¿Podría ser activado el fondo de solidaridad en apoyo a los agricultores afectados?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de marzo de 2012)

El Reglamento de ejecución (CE) n° 543/2011 de la Comisión, de 7 de junio de 2011 ([1]), establece en sus artículos 88 y 89 las normas específicas sobre el seguro de cosechas de los productores de frutas y hortalizas a que puede recurrirse en este caso. El objetivo de las medidas relativas al seguro de cosechas es contribuir a salvaguardar los ingresos de los productores y a cubrir las pérdidas de mercado provocadas por catástrofes naturales, fenómenos climáticos y, cuando proceda, enfermedades o infestaciones parasitarias. Para poder acogerse a la medida de seguro de cosechas, los productores tienen que pertenecer a una organización de productores reconocida y el programa operativo debe incluir esta medida.

Además, los programas de desarrollo rural contemplan la posibilidad de apoyar la recuperación del potencial de producción agrícola dañado por catástrofes naturales. La aplicación de esta medida compete a la autoridad de gestión de cada programa de desarrollo rural.

El Fondo de Solidaridad de la Unión Europea no puede intervenir para cubrir daños de particulares.

([1]) DO L 157 de 15.6.2011, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002103/12
to the Commission
Esther Herranz García (PPE)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Frosts affecting agriculture

The heavy frosts in Spain in February 2012, combined with the persistent drought, have resulted in serious economic losses for agricultural crops in many Spanish regions, hitting fruit and vegetable production in particular.

— What European aid could be used to compensate the producers for these losses?

— Could the Solidarity Fund be mobilised to support the farmers affected?

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

Commission Implementing Regulation (EC) No 543/2011 of 7 June 2011 ([1]) lays down in Articles 88 and 89 the specific rules on harvest insurance for fruit and vegetable producers, which may be of use in this case. The aim of the harvest insurance measures is to contribute to safeguarding producers' income and covering market losses caused by natural disasters, climatic events and, where appropriate, diseases or pest infestations. To benefit from the harvest insurance measure, the producers need to belong to a recognised producer organisation and the operational programme has to include this measure.

In addition, the Rural Development Programmes foresee the possibility to support the restoring of the agricultural production potential damaged by natural disasters. The implementation of that measure is the responsibility of the Managing Authority of each Rural Development Programme.

The European Union Solidarity Fund may not intervene to cover private damage.

([1]) OJ L 157, 15.6.2011, p. 1.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002104/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(22. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Finanzkrise — Lehren für die Wissenschaft

Zunehmend wird in Fachkreisen darüber diskutiert, inwieweit die wissenschaftliche Fachwelt (Volkswirtschaft) eine Mitverantwortung für die Finanzkrise trägt, weil sie möglicherweise seit Jahren an den Universitäten falsch ausbilde und somit die Möglichkeit einer globalen Finanzkrise viel zu spät erkannt wurde.

Die Vorwürfe: Es habe ein „Marktfundamentalismus“ und der Irrglaube an effiziente und zum Gleichgewicht tendierende Märkte sowie das falsche Bild rational handelnder Menschen vorgeherrscht. Während bisher Makromodelle von der Güterseite her aufgebaut wurden, müssten sie viel stärker als bisher die Finanzierungsseite berücksichtigen. Sollten diese Diskussionspunkte fundiert sein, wäre es im Sinne einer künftigen frühzeitigen Krisenprävention dringend angeraten, europaweit über eine Revision der Studieninhalte nachzudenken.

1. Welche Mittel und Wege hat die Kommission, um diese Diskussion qualifiziert auf europäischer Ebene einzubringen?

2. Hat die Kommission diesbezüglich bereits Aktivitäten initiiert? Wenn ja, welche?

3. Wenn nein, gedenkt die Kommission, hier tätig zu werden?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(25. April 2012)

Die Kommission trägt auf viele Arten zur Forschung in diesem Bereich bei, u. a. indem sie eigene Simulationsmodelle entwickelt und regelmäßig wissenschaftliche Debatten organisiert bzw. an solchen teilnimmt. Auf diese Weise unterstützt die Kommission die fundierte Diskussion dieses Themas auf EU-Ebene.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002104/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: The financial crisis — lessons for science

There is increasing discussion among professionals on what extent academic economists share responsibility for the financial crisis, since they may have been offering the wrong kind of training at universities for years, with the result that the global financial crisis was recognised far too late.

They are accused of 'market fundamentalism', a mistaken belief in efficient, self-balancing markets and a false expectation that people will act in a rational way. Whereas macroeconomic models have thus far been based on the primacy of manufacturing industry, they should now take much greater account of the financial sector. If these ideas prove to be correct, urgent consideration should be given to revising course content throughout Europe to ensure that any future crises are prevented at an early stage.

1. How can the Commission ensure that an informed discussion of this issue is held at European level?

2. Has the Commission already initiated steps in this direction? If so, which?

3. If not, does the Commission intend to take action on this subject?

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

The Commission is in many ways contributing to research in the area, including by developing its own simulation models and by regularly organising or participating in debates with the research community. The Commission thereby contributes to an informed discussion of this issue at European level.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002105/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(22. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Visabefreiungen bei der Einreise in die Türkei

Während Österreicher für die Einreise in die Türkei ein kostenpflichtiges Visum benötigen, ist die Mehrzahl der europäischen Staaten, wie beispielsweise Deutschland, von Gebühren befreit. Zudem dürfen deutsche und schweizerische Staatsbürger auch mit einem abgelaufenen Reisepass in die Türkei einreisen, österreichische Pässe müssen hingegen noch mindestens 90 Tage gültig sein.

1. Welche EU-Mitgliedstaaten sind bei einer Einreise in die Türkei noch von einem Visum befreit?

2. Wieso gibt es mit der Türkei diesbezüglich kein einheitliches Abkommen?

3. Sind Verhandlungen mit der Türkei diesbezüglich geplant?

4. Steht die EU diesbezüglich in Verhandlungen mit der Türkei, um auf eine Vereinheitlichung hinzuwirken?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(25. April 2012)

Nach den der Kommission vorliegenden Informationen sind die Bürger aus 15 EU-Mitgliedstaaten — Bulgarien, Dänemark, Deutschland, Estland, Finnland, Frankreich, Griechenland, Italien, Lettland, Litauen, Luxemburg, Rumänien, Schweden, Slowenien, der Tschechischen Republik — sowie aus Kroatien gegenwärtig bei einem kurzfristigen Aufenthalt von bis zu 90 Tagen bei der Einreise in die Türkei von der Visapflicht befreit. Für die Bürger aus den übrigen zwölf EU-Mitgliedstaaten (einschließlich Österreich) besteht bei einem normalen Reisepass in der Tat Visapflicht. Mit Ausnahme Maltas, dessen Bürger das Visum kostenlos erhalten, müssen diese Bürger eine Visumsgebühr von 15 EUR bezahlen.

Aufgrund ihres Hoheitsrechts kann die Türkei über die Bedingungen entscheiden, unter denen ausländische Staatsbürger — einschließlich EU-Bürger — in ihr Hoheitsgebiet einreisen dürfen. Es ist richtig, dass die Türkei keine einheitliche Regelung im Hinblick auf die Visapflichten aller EU-Bürger anwendet. Entsprechend der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 539/2001 des Rates (ABl. L 81 vom 21.3.2001) müssen türkische Staatsangehörige bei der Einreise in das Hoheitsgebiet der Schengen-Mitgliedstaaten im Besitz eines Visums sein. Somit ist das Gegenseitigkeitsprinzip gemäß Verordnung (EG) Nr. 539/2001 nicht anzuwenden, da es nur für Fälle gilt, in denen ein nicht visumspflichtiges Drittland eine Visapflicht für Bürger eines oder mehrerer Mitgliedstaaten einführt. Ziel dieser Regelung ist die Wiederherstellung des gegenseitigen nicht visumspflichtigen Reiseverkehrs.

Am 15. März 2012 wurde mit der Türkei ein Dialog über Migration und Sicherheit aufgenommen. Ein derartiger Dialog bietet den Rahmen für die Behandlung der vom Herrn Abgeordneten aufgeworfenen Frage.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002105/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Removal of visa requirements for travel to Turkey

Austrians must pay for a visa to enter Turkey; however, there is no charge for citizens of most European states, for example Germany. In addition, German and Swiss citizens are also allowed to enter Turkey on expired passports, while Austrian passports must be valid for at least a further 90 days.

1. Which EU Member States are free from visa requirements for entry to Turkey?

2. Why is there no uniform agreement with Turkey on this issue?

3. Are there plans for negotiations with Turkey on this matter?

4. Is the EU negotiating with Turkey with a view to harmonising this situation?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

According to the information at the Commission's disposal, currently, citizens of 15 EU Member States — Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden — as well as of Croatia are exempted from the visa obligation for a short stay of up to 90 days to enter Turkey. Citizens of the other 12 EU Member States (including Austria), — in possession of an ordinary passport — are indeed required to hold a visa; they pay a visa fee of EUR 15, with the exception of Malta whose citizens can get the visa free of charge.

Turkey holds the sovereign right to decide the conditions under which foreign nationals — including EU citizens — may enter its territory and it is true that they do not apply a uniform policy towards all EU citizens as regards the visa obligation. According to Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 (OJ L 81, 21.3.2001), Turkish nationals are required to be in possession of a visa when entering to the territory of the Schengen Member States. Therefore, the reciprocity mechanism provided by Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 does not apply, as it only covers cases in which a visa free third country introduces a visa requirement for citizens of one or more Member States; its aim being to restore reciprocal visa free travel.

On 15 March 2012 a Dialogue on migration and security has been launched with the Turkish authorities. Such a dialogue provides a framework to also address the issue that the Honourable Member has raised.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002106/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(22. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Sehbehinderte Menschen in der EU

Laut Studien gibt es aufgrund der Überalterung der Bevölkerung zunehmend mehr sehbehinderte Menschen. Allerdings gibt es nur in einigen wenigen EU-Mitgliedstaaten Erhebungen darüber, wie viele Menschen tatsächlich unter einer Sehbehinderung leiden. Die Forderungen von Blindenverbänden für barrierefreie Zugänge werden EU-weit immer lauter.

1. Gibt es Schätzungen, wie viele Menschen EU-weit tatsächlich von einer Sehbehinderung betroffen sind?

2. Wenn ja, von wie vielen Personen gehen diese Schätzungen aus?

3. Wenn nein, ist eine Erhebung geplant?

4. Sollen die EU-Länder in Zukunft angehalten werden, blinde Bürger zu erfassen?

5. Wenn ja, ab wann?

6. Wenn nein, wieso nicht?

7. Gibt es Studien, die beweisen, dass die Überalterung der Bevölkerung in direktem Zusammenhang mit Sehschwächen steht?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(26. April 2012)

Fragen 1 und 2: Nach den in der Datenbank der Kommission (Eurostat) verfügbaren Daten (Ad-hoc-Modul zur Beschäftigung behinderter Personen der Arbeitskräfteerhebung 2002 — LFS AHM) haben in der EU 16,2 % der Menschen im erwerbsfähigen Alter (also der Personen zwischen 16 und 64) ein lang andauerndes Gesundheitsproblem oder eine Behinderung und 4,5 % eine Sehschwäche ([1]).

Frage 3: 2011 wurde eine neue LFS-AHM-Erhebung zur Beschäftigung behinderter Personen durchgeführt, deren Ergebnisse Ende 2012 oder Anfang 2013 vorliegen dürften.

Eine weitere künftige Datenquelle zu diversen Beeinträchtigungen wie Problemen mit der Sehkraft ist die Europäische Erhebung zu Gesundheit und sozialer Integration (EHSIS), die die Kommission (Eurostat) 2012/2013 in den EU-Ländern durchführen wird. Erste verbreitungsfähige Ergebnisse sollen Anfang 2014 vorliegen.

Fragen 4, 5 und 6: In der Regel werden Sehbeeinträchtigungen erfasst, um einen Behindertenstatus und die entsprechenden Leistungen zuzuerkennen. Diese Angelegenheit fällt in die Zuständigkeit der nationalen, regionalen oder örtlichen Behörden in den einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten. Die Kommission fördert in dieser Hinsicht keine speziellen Verfahren oder Maßnahmen.

Frage 7: Die Korrelation zwischen der Alterung der Bevölkerung und Behinderungen, einschließlich Sehschwächen, ist gut dokumentiert. Beispielsweise ist den erwähnten LFS-AHM-Daten zu entnehmen, dass Sehschwächen in den höheren Altersgruppen häufiger anzutreffen sind.

([1]) http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=hlth_db_emtyag&lang=de.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002106/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Persons suffering from visual impairment in the EU

According to studies, the growing proportion of elderly people in society is leading to an increase in the prevalence of visual impairment. However, very few EU Member States have conducted surveys to determine how many people actually suffer from visual impairment. Associations representing blind and partially sighted people throughout the EU are becoming increasingly vociferous in calling for barrier-free access to buildings and amenities.

1. Is the Commission aware of any estimates of the number of people throughout the EU who actually suffer from visual impairment?

2. If so, what are the numbers involved?

3. If not, are there any plans to carry out a survey?

4. Should EU Member States be required to keep statistics of the number of blind andpartially sighted people on their territory?

5. If so, starting when?

6. If not, why not?

7. Are there any studies which prove that there is a direct link between an increasingly ageing population and visual impairment?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

1 and 2. According to the data available in the Commission (Eurostat) database (provided by the 2002 Labour Force Survey ad hoc module (LFS AHM) on employment of disabled people), 16.2% of the working-age population (i.e. those aged 16-64) of the EU have a long-standing health problem or disability and 4.5% have difficulties in seeing ([1]).

3. In 2011, a new LFS AHM on employment of disabled people was conducted. The results are expected to become available at the end of 2012/beginning of 2013.

Another future data source on different impairments, including vision problems, is the European Health and Social Integration Survey (EHSIS) that will be conducted by the Commission (Eurostat) in the EU countries in 2012/2013. First results available for dissemination are expected at the beginning of 2014.

4, 5 and 6. Recognition of visual impairments is typically done in order to grant a disability status and relevant benefits. This is a matter of competence of national, regional or local authorities in the individual Member States. The Commission does not promote any specific procedures or actions in this regard.

7. The correlation between ageing and disabilities, including problems in seeing, is well documented. For example, the mentioned LFS AHM data show that in higher age groups the incidence of visual impairments is higher.

([1]) http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=hlth_db_emtyag&lang=en.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002107/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(22. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Energiestrategien für Großstädte und Ballungszentren

Großstädte und Ballungszentren haben zumeist geringere Ressourcen (Wasser, Biomasse sowie zur Erzeugung von Wind- und Sonnenenergie nutzbare Fläche), gleichzeitig jedoch einen erhöhten Energiebedarf.

1. Erhalten in diesem Zusammenhang Forschungsprojekte etc. EU-Subventionen?

2. Gibt es auf EU-Ebene hinsichtlich Energiestrategien bzw. Energieeffizienz für Großstädte und Ballungszentren Best-Practice-Vergleiche?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(18. April 2012)

1. In den Forschungrahmenprogrammen der Europäischen Kommission ist Energieeffizienz bereits seit über zehn Jahren ein Thema und wird auch im Rahmen der für 2013 geplanten Initiative „Intelligente Städte und Gemeinden" weiter verfolgt werden. Neben Forschungsmaßnahmen hat die Kommission Projekte mitfinanziert, die zum Ziel haben, die Anwendung von Lösungen unter realen Bedingungen zu testen und demonstrieren. Im Bereich Energie betrifft dies 22 Projekte in 23 Ländern, die im Rahmen der CONCERTO-Initiative gestartet wurden (www.concerto.eu).

2. Initiativen der Kommission wie die „Green Digital Charter", CIVITAS und die geplante europäische Innovationspartnerschaft für Wasser haben alle zum Ziel, in den Bereichen Informatik- und Kommunikationstechnologie (IKT), Mobilität und Wasser bewährte Verfahren für die effiziente Ressourcennutzung in EU-Städten zu entwickeln. Die Initiative „Intelligente Städte und Gemeinden", welche derzeit in Planung ist, wird in Hinblick auf die Entwicklung nachhaltiger Lösungen für Städte die Abstimmung der Energie-, Transport- und IKT-Sektoren angehen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002107/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Energy strategies for large cities and metropolitan areas

In most cases, large cities and centres of population have fewer resources (water, biomass and areas that can be used to generate wind and solar energy), combined with increased energy requirements.

1. In this context, is the Commission aware of research projects, etc. receiving EU subsidies?

2. Do comparative studies on best practice exist at the EU level in relation to energy strategies and energy efficiency for large cities and metropolitan areas?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2012)

1. Under the Commission's research framework programmes, energy efficiency in cities has been a topic for over a decade and will continue under the forthcoming Smart Cities and Communities Initiative from 2013. In addition to research, the Commission has co-financed projects that seek to test and demonstrate the real-life implementation of solutions. In the area of energy, this concerns 22 projects operating in 23 countries founded under the Concerto initiative (www.concerto.eu).

2. Commission initiatives including the Green Digital Charter, CIVITAS and the proposed European Innovation Partnership on Water all seek to develop best practices for resource efficiency in EU cities in the areas of ICT, mobility and water. The Smart Cities and Communities Initiative which is currently under preparation will address the convergence between the energy, transport and ICT sectors with regrad to the development of sustainable urban solutions.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002108/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(22. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Abkommen zur Förderung von Seltenerdmetallen

China liefert derzeit 95 Prozent der sogenannten Seltenerdmetalle, die zur Herstellung von Hochtechnologiegeräten unbedingt benötigt werden, hat die Ausfuhr von Seltenerdmetallen aber stark eingeschränkt. Deutschland hat mit Kasachstan ein Abkommen über die strategische Zusammenarbeit geschlossen, wonach deutsche Unternehmer in absehbarer Zeit in der mittelasiatischen Republik nach den äußerst begehrten Seltenerdmetallen suchen und diese gegebenenfalls auch abbauen und ausführen dürfen.

1. Ist der Kommission dieses Abkommen zwischen Deutschland und Kasachstan bekannt?

2. Werden in diesem Zusammenhang auf EU-Ebene auch Abkommen geschlossen, um den EU-Staaten den Zugang zu Seltenerdmetallen zu sichern?

Antwort von Karel De Gucht im Namen der Kommission
(23. März 2012)

1. Der Kommission ist bekannt, dass Deutschland und Kasachstan ein Abkommen über Partnerschaft im Rohstoff-, Industrie- und Technologiebereich geschlossen haben. In diesem Zusammenhang sei darauf hingewiesen, dass ungewiss ist, ob und in welchen Mengen in Kasachstan Seltenerderze vorkommen.

2. Die Sicherung einer fairen und dauerhaften Versorgung auf den Weltmärkten mit Rohstoffen, unter die auch die Seltenen Erden fallen, hat vorrangige Bedeutung für die Kommission. Im Rahmen ihrer Handelspolitik strebt die Kommission rechtlich bindende Verpflichtungen über den Zugang zu Rohstoffen oder über Investitionsregelungen an, die allen EU-Mitgliedstaaten zugutekommen würden. Hierbei sind verschiedene Konstellationen möglich, so dass diese Bestrebungen im Rahmen der WTO, aber auch im Rahmen bilateraler Verhandlungen verfolgt werden können.

So wurden beispielsweise in das Freihandelsabkommen zwischen der EU und Südafrika, einem Land mit großen Vorkommen an Seltenen Erden, Regelungen zu Ausfuhrbeschränkungen aufgenommen. Ferner aktualisiert die EU zurzeit eine Reihe von Partnerschafts- und Kooperationsabkommen, unter anderem auch das Abkommen mit Kasachstan. Die Kommission beabsichtigt so die Versorgung mit Rohstoffen durch Verpflichtungen (sogenannte Disziplinen nach GATT1994) im Bereich Ausfuhren, aber auch in den Bereichen Niederlassung und Transit sicherzustellen.

Wenn Staaten wie Kasachstan der WTO beitreten, bemüht sich die EU bei Seltenen Erden und anderen wichtigen Rohstoffen eine Bindung der Ausfuhrzölle sicherzustellen.

Was Lieferungen aus China betrifft, so verpflichtete sich China im Protokoll über seinen Beitritt zur WTO keine Ausfuhrzölle zu erheben; Ausnahmen gelten nur für die in Anhang 6 zu diesem Protokoll genannten Waren. In einem vor kurzen abgeschlossenen Streitbeilegungsverfahren, bei dem es um 9 Rohstoffe, jedoch nicht um Seltene Erden, ging, bestätigte das WTO-Berufungsgremium, dass China keine Ausfuhrzölle auf diese Rohstoffe erheben darf und dass die anderen Ausfuhrbeschränkungen Chinas, wie die Ausfuhrkontingente, nicht WTO-konform sind. Vor dem Hintergrund dieser Entscheidung verfolgt die Kommission aufmerksam, wie China seine Ausfuhrbeschränkungen für Seltene Erden und andere Rohstoffe handhabt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002108/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Agreement on the mining of rare earths

At present, China supplies 95 % of the so-called rare earths required to produce high-tech equipment, but has imposed severe restrictions on their export. Germany has concluded a strategic cooperation agreement with Kazakhstan under which German firms will start prospecting for these highly sought rare earths in the Central Asian republic in the foreseeable future and, if successful, will be allowed to extract and export them.

1. Is the Commission aware of this agreement between Germany and Kazakhstan?

2. In this context, will EU-level agreements be concluded in order to secure access to rare earths for the EU Member States?

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

1. The Commission is aware of the agreement between Germany and Kazakhstan on partnership in the general areas of raw materials, industry and technology. It must be noted in this context that the significance of rare earths deposits in Kazakhstan is uncertain.

2. Ensuring fair and sustainable supply of raw materials, including of rare earths, from global markets is a priority for the Commission. In conducting trade policy, the Commission is seeking to obtain, legally binding commitments on access to inputs or investment rules, which would benefit all EU Member States. This can take place in various settings, including the WTO framework or through bilateral negotiations.

As an example, the Free Trade Agreement between the EU and South Africa (a rare earths-rich country) sets rules on exports restrictions. The EU is also currently updating a number of Partnership and Cooperation Agreements, including with Kazakhstan. The objective is to guarantee the supply of raw materials through disciplines on exports but also on establishment and transit.

As to countries acceding to the WTO, like Kazakhstan, the EU aims at making sure that export duties on rare earths and other important raw materials are bound.

Concerning supplies from China, in its WTO Accession Protocol China undertook not to impose export duties unless specifically provided for in Annex A to this Protocol. In a recent WTO dispute settlement proceeding relating to 9 raw materials (not including rare earths), the Appellate Body confirmed that China cannot impose export duties on those raw materials and that China's other export restrictions, such as export quotas, are WTO-inconsistent. In the light of that case, the Commission is closely monitoring Chinese export restrictions on rare earths and other raw materials.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002109/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D), Debora Serracchiani (S&D) e Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(22 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Delocalizzazione dello stabilimento Ditec S.p.A. di Quarto d'Altino (VE)

La Ditec S.p.A, azienda che produce automazioni per porte e cancelli automatici residenziali e industriali, nel 2009 acquisita dalla multinazionale svedese Assa Abloy, e che conta tre siti produttivi in Italia, impiega attualmente circa 130 lavoratori presso lo stabilimento di Quarto d'Altino (VE); l'azienda multinazionale ha comunicato il 6 dicembre scorso la decisione di delocalizzare, entro il 2013, l'attuale produzione di tale stabilimento per una parte in Repubblica Ceca e per l'altra in Cina ed ha preannunciato il licenziamento di 90 dei 130 dipendenti dello stabilimento.

Si consideri che la delocalizzazione all'estero dell'attività di produzione e distribuzione della sede di Quarto d'Altino, considerato centro di eccellenza — tanto che ivi sarebbe mantenuto il centro Ricerca e Sviluppo dell'azienda — e da cui dipende la maggior parte del fatturato dell'intero gruppo Ditec, significherebbe una gravissima ed ingiustificata perdita di posti di lavoro e di professionalità che, nel corso di un'esperienza trentennale, hanno permesso all'azienda di raggiungere importanti risultati sotto il profilo produttivo ed economico.

Occorre rilevare che la Ditec di Quarto d'Altino ad oggi non ha mai dato alcun segnale di crisi, avendo addirittura aumentato negli ultimi anni gli ordini e non avendo mai fatto ricorso allo strumento della cassa integrazione, e che i profitti dell'azienda sono cresciuti nell'ultimo anno e che la multinazionale è in continua espansione, mediante le acquisizioni di nuovi stabilimenti e nuovi marchi.

Infine, vanno tenute presenti le gravi conseguenze occupazionali e sociali che la delocalizzazione della produzione comporterebbe, tenendo anche conto dei numerosi lavoratori impiegati nell'indotto.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Ritiene che il comportamento dell'azienda sia stato conforme alle misure previste nella direttiva 98/59/CE del 20 luglio 1998 concernente il ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri in materia di licenziamenti collettivi e nella direttiva 2002/14/CE dell'11 marzo 2002 che istituisce un quadro generale relativo all'informazione e alla consultazione dei lavoratori?

2. Quali azioni intende adottare per impedire l'impoverimento del sistema produttivo europeo, con conseguenze gravi dal punto di vista economico, occupazionale e dell'inclusione sociale, a causa di sempre più frequenti processi di delocalizzazione, tra l'altro molto spesso neppure collegati a situazioni di crisi delle aziende coinvolte?

Risposta data da László Andor a nome della Commissione
(17 aprile 2012)

Nel presente caso spetta alle autorità nazionali competenti, compresi i tribunali, assicurare che la legislazione nazionale a recepimento delle direttive UE cui fanno riferimento gli onorevoli deputati sia applicata in modo corretto ed efficace dal datore di lavoro in questione, tenuto conto delle circostanze specifiche di ciascun caso.

La Commissione ribadisce la necessità di gestire in modo proattivo e di preparare con il massimo anticipo possibile le operazioni di ristrutturazione. La Commissione ritiene necessario che si assicuri una più efficace attuazione delle buone pratiche legate all'anticipazione, alla preparazione e alla gestione delle ristrutturazioni di imprese nell'UE. In tale ottica essa ha avviato una consultazione pubblica su una strategia proattiva al cambiamento e alla ristrutturazione ([1]) volta a identificare le pratiche e le politiche più efficaci in tale ambito atte a promuovere l'occupazione, la crescita e la competitività nonché a contribuire a migliorare le sinergie tra tutti gli attori pertinenti.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1166&furtherNews=yes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002109/12
to the Commission
Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D), Debora Serracchiani (S&D) and Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Relocation of the Ditec S.p.A plant in Quarto d'Altino (Veneto)

Ditec S.p.A, a company that manufactures automated systems for doors and residential and industrial gates, was taken over in 2009 by the Swedish multinational Assa Abloy; it has three factories in Italy and currently employs about 130 workers at its factory in Quarto d'Altino (Veneto). On 6 December 2011, the multinational announced that the production now carried out at Quarto d'Altino would be transferred to the Czech Republic and China by 2013 and that 90 out of the factory's 130 employees would be made redundant.

The transfer abroad of the manufacturing and distribution operations of the Quarto d'Altino plant, which is considered to be a centre of excellence (as it houses the company's Research and Development Centre) and accounts for most of the turnover of the Ditec Group as a whole, should be viewed as a serious and unjust loss of jobs and expertise which, over the past 30 years, have enabled the company to achieve significant results from a production and economic point of view.

The Quarto d'Altino Ditec factory has to date never shown the slightest sign of crisis; on the contrary, it has increased its orders in recent years and has never had to lay workers off. Ditec's profits have risen over the past year, and Assa Abloy is continuing to expand by acquiring new plants and new markets.

Finally, the transfer of the manufacturing operations would have serious consequences in employment and social terms, especially given the large numbers of workers employed in related industries.

1. Does the Commission consider the company's behaviour to be in compliance with the measures set out in Directive 98/95/EC of 20 July 1998 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to collective redundancies and in Directive 2002/14/EC of 11 March 2002 establishing a general framework for informing and consulting employees?

2. What action will it take to prevent the impoverishment of the European manufacturing sector, and the serious consequences for the economy, employment and social inclusion, caused by the increasingly more frequent instances of relocation, which in a great many cases are occurring even when there is no crisis in the companies involved?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

In this case it is for the competent national authorities, including the courts, to ensure that the national legislation transposing the EU Directives referred to by the Honourable Member is correctly and effectively applied by the employer concerned, having regard to the specific circumstances of each case.

The Commission reaffirms the need to anticipate and prepare as far in advance as possible any restructuring operation. The Commission believes it is necessary to bring about a more efficient implementation of good practices related to the anticipation, preparation and management of enterprise restructuring across the EU. In this light, it launched a public consultation on anticipation of change and restructuring ([1]) aimed at identifying successful practices and policies in this field to promote employment, growth and competitiveness, as well as to contribute to improve synergies between all relevant actors.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1166&furtherNews=yes.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002110/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(22 februari 2012)

Betreft: Nieuwe Franse boetes

Is de Commissie bekend met het artikel in de Telegraaf van 22 februari jl. onder de kop „Nieuwe Franse boetes" ([1])?

Daarin wordt gemeld dat vakantiegangers die deze zomer met de auto naar Frankrijk gaan, rekening moeten houden met een nieuwe wet die navigatieapparatuur verbiedt die de locatie van camera's toont die de snelheid meten. Zelfs als de navigatie uit is, bedraagt de boete 1 500 euro.

Bovendien wordt in juli mogelijk een verkeersmaatregel van kracht die automobilisten (ook buitenlandse) verplicht een ademtester in de auto te hebben. De ademtester kan door de rijder gebruikt worden om zelf te testen of hij te veel alcohol op heeft. President Sarkozy wil met de maatregelen het aantal verkeersongelukken terugdringen.

1. Kan de Commissie dit bericht bevestigen?

2. Hoe verhoudt deze Franse wet zich tot het vrij verkeer van goederen, waarbij navigatieapparatuur die legaal in een lidstaat is gekocht, wordt verboden in Frankrijk?

3. Hoe verhoudt deze Franse wet zich tot het vrij verkeer van personen, opgenomen in titel V van het Handvest van de grondrechten van de Europese Unie, waaronder artikel 45, waarbij mensen het recht hebben zich vrij in een lidstaat te verplaatsen?

4. Wat is de opvatting van de Commissie over het feit dat, ook wanneer de maximumsnelheid niet wordt overtreden en wanneer de navigatieapparatuur niet is ingeschakeld, de berijder van een voertuig beboet kan worden voor het bezit van legaal aangeschafte apparatuur?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(12 april 2012)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van de door het geachte Parlementslid genoemde wijzigingen van de verkeersveiligheidsregels die Frankrijk onlangs heeft ingevoerd. De nieuwe regels voorzien in de verplichting wegwerp-ademtesters aan boord te hebben en in het verbod op het gebruik van apparatuur die bestuurders waarschuwt voor de aanwezigheid van snelheidscontroles. Geen van beide aspecten valt op die moment onder het EU-recht.

De Commissie onderwerpt de nieuwe regelgeving op dit moment aan een inhoudelijk onderzoek en zal de Franse autoriteiten indien nodig om verduidelijking vragen. Zij zal het geachte Parlementslid zo snel mogelijk in kennis stellen van de resultaten van haar onderzoek.

([1]) www.telegraaf.nl/binnenland/11568578/_Nieuwe_Franse _boetes_.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002110/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: New French fines

Is the Commission familiar with the article published in the *Telegraaf* on 22 February 2012 under the headline 'New French fines' ([1])?

According to the article, tourists travelling to France by car this summer must take into account a new law that prohibits navigation devices that show the location of speed cameras. The fine amounts to EUR 1 500, even if the navigation device is switched off.

In addition, a traffic regulation may become effective in July that obligates motorists (including foreign ones) to have a breath analyser in their car. The breath analyser can be used by drivers to self-test whether they are over the legal limit. President Sarkozy wants to reduce the number of traffic accidents with these measures.

1. Can the Commission confirm this report?

2. Where does this French law stand in relation to the free movement of goods, as navigation devices legally purchased in a Member State will be banned in France?

3. Where does this French law stand in relation to the free movement of persons provided for in Title V of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, including Article 45, according to which people have the right to move freely within a Member State?

4. What view does the Commission take of the fact that, even when the speed limit has not been exceeded and the navigation device is switched off, the driver can still be fined for the possession of legally purchased equipment?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2012)

The Commission is aware of the recent amendments to the road safety regulations very recently adopted by France referred to by the Honourable Member. They concern the possession of disposable breath alcohol tests and the use devices that warn the driver about the presence of speed detection systems, neither of which is currently regulated under EC law.

The Commission is examining the content of these legal provisions and will get in contact with the French authorities for clarification if this is necessary. The Commission will inform the Honourable Member of the outcome as soon as possible.

([1]) www.telegraaf.nl/binnenland/11568578/_Nieuwe_Franse _boetes_.html

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002113/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(22 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Νέο ελληνικό μνημόνιο — κατάργηση ΟΕΚ, διαχείριση της περιουσίας του

Το νέο μνημόνιο μεταξύ Ελλάδας και τρόικας (Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, ΕΚΤ και ΔΝΤ) προβλέπει την κατάργησή του Οργανισμού Εργατικής Κατοικίας (ΟΕΚ) μετά από «μεταβατική περίοδο που δε θα υπερβαίνει τους 6 μήνες», γιατί ασχολείται με κοινωνικές δαπάνες που «δεν αποτελούν προτεραιότητα».

Ο ΟΕΚ πραγματοποιεί πολύ σημαντικό έργο για τη στέγαση οικογενειών με οικονομικά προβλήματα και κατά τη διάρκεια των πολλών χρόνων λειτουργίας του δημιούργησε σημαντική περιουσία με πολλά ακίνητα σε όλη τη χώρα. Με την κατάργηση του οργανισμού, πέραν των άλλων, προκύπτει θέμα ιδιοκτησίας και διαχείρισης των ανωτέρω περιουσιακών στοιχείων. Με δεδομένο ότι το κεφάλαιο του ΟΕΚ προέρχεται αποκλειστικά από εισφορές εργαζομένων και εργοδοτών, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποιος αναλαμβάνει την κυριότητα και τη διαχείριση των ανωτέρω ακινήτων μετά τη διάλυση του οργανισμού;

2. Μπορεί να διαβεβαιώσει ότι η περιουσία του ΟΕΚ που προέρχεται από τις εισφορές εργαζομένων και εργοδοτών, σε καμία περίπτωση δεν θα περάσει στη διαχείριση και την κυριότητα του Ταμείου Αξιοποίησης Ιδιωτικής Περιουσίας του Δημοσίου;

3. Μπορεί να διαβεβαιώσει ότι σε κάθε περίπτωση η περιουσία του ΟΕΚ, θα χρησιμοποιηθεί αποκλειστικά και μόνο υπέρ των εργαζομένων, αφού με δικές τους εισφορές δημιουργήθηκε;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002336/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(29 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Κατάργηση των Οργανισμών Εργατικής Κατοικίας και Εργατικής Εστίας

Σύμφωνα με το ψηφισθέν νέο μνημόνιο ([1]), το Ελληνικό Κοινοβούλιο δεσμεύτηκε να υιοθετήσει νομοθεσία για να κλείσουν μικρά ταμεία ειδικού σκοπού που ασχολούνται με κοινωνικές υπηρεσίες, όπως οι Οργανισμοί Εργατικής Κατοικίας (ΟΕΚ) και Εργατικής Εστίας (ΟΕΕ) ([1]). Δημιουργούνται απορίες σχετικά με τη στόχευση αυτής της επιλογής, αφού οι δύο οργανισμοί βασίζονται σε εισφορές εργαζομένων/εργοδοτών και δεν επιβαρύνουν τα δημόσια ταμεία. Αν οι καταργήσεις δεν συνδυαστούν με την αναγκαία μέριμνα για την πολιτική κοινωνικής κατοικίας και των λοιπών κοινωνικών προγραμμάτων, θα οδηγήσουν σε νέο σοβαρό πλήγμα στην κοινωνική συνοχή και πολιτική σε ευαίσθητους και κρίσιμους τομείς, όπως η στέγαση ευάλωτων ομάδων του πληθυσμού, η προσχολική μέριμνα, ο πολιτισμός, και θα επιφέρουν επιπλέον αύξηση στα ήδη εκρηκτικά επίπεδα ανεργίας ([2]). Η Ευρωπαϊκή Ομοσπονδία κοινωνικής, συνεταιριστικής και δημόσιας κατοικίας CECODHAS HOUSING EUROPE — ιδρυτικό μέλος της οποίας είναι ο ΟΕΚ– εκφράζει την αντίθεσή της στην επιλογή αυτή ([3]).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχουν μελετηθεί οι επιπτώσεις από μια τέτοια κίνηση σε θέματα τοπικής οικονομίας, τουρισμού, κοινωνικής συνοχής και απασχόλησης;

2. Είναι συμβατή η απόφαση αυτή με την εφαρμογή της προβλεπόμενης από τη Συνθήκη της Λισαβόνας «οριζόντιας κοινωνικής ρήτρας», αλλά και την ανάγκη κοινωνικής σύγκλισης και προστασίας στη βάση διατύπωσης πανευρωπαϊκών κοινωνικών στόχων και πανευρωπαϊκής ισχύος κοινωνικών δικαιωμάτων;

3. Σκοπεύει να συνεργαστεί με την ελληνική κυβέρνηση για εξεύρεση ισοδύναμων μέτρων που αντισταθμίζουν τις συνέπειες της κατάργησης των οργανισμών; Θα συγχρηματοδοτούσε ένα σχέδιο για να δημιουργήσει το προσωπικό των 2 οργανισμών αυτοδιοικούμενους οικοδομικούς συνεταιρισμούς ή/και για να ενταχθούν στην αυτοδιοίκηση στο πλαίσιο της επίτευξης των στόχων εξοικονόμησης ενέργειας κατά 20 % μέχρι το 2020, με δεδομένο ότι έχουν σημαντική σχετική τεχνογνωσία;

([1]) http://www.et.gr/images/stories/eidika_themata/A_28_2012.pdf (σελίδα 713).
([2]) http://syoek.siteline.gr/enimerotiko-iliko/doc_download/1---.html.
([3]) http://www.housingeurope.eu/news/2267.

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

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στην απάντηση που έχει δώσει σε προηγούμενη πανομοιότυπη ερώτηση με αριθμό P-002348/2012 ([4]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002113/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: New Greek memorandum — abolition of the Workers' Housing Organisation and administration of its property

The new memorandum between Greece and the Troika (European Commission, European Central Bank and the IMF) provides for the abolition of the Workers' Housing Organisation (OEK) following a 'transition period not exceeding six months', because it is involved with social expenditures which 'are not a priority'.

The Workers' Housing Organisation carries out very important work in housing families with economic problems and over its many years of existence, has built up a significant real estate portfolio throughout the country. By abolishing the Organisation, among other things, the question of the ownership and administration of the abovementioned property arises. Given that the capital of the Workers' Housing Organisation comes exclusively from contributions by employees and employers, will the Commission answer the following:

1. Who is to assume proprietorship and management of the property in question following dissolution of the organisation?

2. Can the Commission guarantee that the property of the Workers' Housing Organisation derived from contributions by employees and employers will not pass into proprietorship and control of the Hellenic Republic Assets Development Fund?

3. Can it provide assurances that the property of the Workers' Housing Organisation will be used purely and exclusively for the benefit of the workers whose contributions created it?

Question for written answer E-002336/12
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Closure of the Greek Workers' Housing Organisation (OEK) and the Greek Workers' Club (OEE)

According to the new Memorandum ([1]) which has been adopted, the Greek Government is committed to enacting legislation to close small, special-purpose funds providing social services, such as the OEK and the OEE. Questions are being asked about the purpose of this decision, since both these organisations are funded through employee/employer contributions and are not a burden on State funds. If these closures are carried out with due care for policy regarding social housing and other social programmes, they will deal another serious blow to social cohesion and policy in vulnerable and critical sectors, such as accommodation for vulnerable groups of the population, pre-school care and culture, and will cause another increase in the already explosive levels of unemployment ([2]). The European Federation of Public, Cooperative and Social Housing, of which OEK is a founding member, has expressed its opposition to this decision ([3]).

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Has the impact of this move on the local economy, tourism, social cohesion and employment been studied?

2. Is the decision compatible with implementation of the 'horizontal social clause' provided for in the Lisbon Treaty and the need for social convergence and protection in accordance with declared pan-European social aims and the pan-European validity of social rights?

3. Does it intend to cooperate with the Greek Government to find equivalent measures to offset the impact of the closure of these organisations? Would it jointly fund a plan to allow the staff of the two organisations to create independent building cooperatives and/or to be integrated into the local authorities as part of achieving the aim of saving 20 % of energy by 2020, given that they have significant technical expertise in this field?

([1]) http://www.et.gr/images/stories/eidika_themata/A_28_2012.pdf (p. 713)
([2]) http://syoek.siteline.gr/enimerotiko-iliko/doc_download/1---.html
([3]) http://www.housingeurope.eu/news/2267

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to a previous identical Question P-002348/2012 ([4]).

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002114/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(22 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Σύμβαση κατασκευής 2 υποβρυχείων TYPE 214 και άρση απαγόρευσης κατασκευής εμπορικών πλοίων από τα Ελληνικά Ναυπηγεία

Με δεδομένες τις αιματηρές περικοπές σε μισθούς, συντάξεις, υγεία, παιδεία κλπ εντύπωση προκαλούν οι πληροφορίες ότι η ιδιοκτησία των ελληνικών ναυπηγείων (ΕΝΑΕ), πέραν των 132 εκατ ευρώ που έχει προεισπράξει, διεκδικεί άμεσα και άλλα 100 εκ. ευρώ για τη ναυπήγηση δύο υποβρυχίων TYPE 214. Οργή και έκπληξη προκαλούν οι πληροφορίες ότι στη σύμβαση του έργου δεν προσδιορίζεται με σαφήνεια ο τρόπος πληρωμής, σε συνάρτηση με την πρόοδο του έργου.

Ανεξάρτητα από τη θέση που μπορεί να έχει κάποιος για τη σκοπιμότητα συγκεκριμένων πολεμικών δαπανών, ιδιαίτερα αυτή τη χρονική στιγμή, και με δεδομένο ότι η Επιτροπή έχει θέση ως όρο τα ΕΝΑΕ να λειτουργούν μόνο με στρατιωτικές παραγγελίες και την τραγική κατάσταση της απασχόλησης στην Ελλάδα, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποιο το συνολικό κόστος της παραγγελίας; Πώς έχει καταγραφεί; Πώς προβλέπεται να καταγραφεί λογιστικά στα επόμενα έτη;

2. Μπορεί να μας πληροφορήσει η Επιτροπή αν με βάση τη σύμβαση που έχει υπογράψει το δημόσιο με τα ΕΝΑΕ, οι πληρωμές συναρτώνται με την πρόοδο του εν λόγω έργου; Ποιο είναι το χρονοδιάγραμμα προόδου του έργου που έχει συμφωνηθεί μεταξύ ελληνικού δημοσίου και ΕΝΑΕ;

3. Προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να επανεξετάσει την απόφασή της στην κατεύθυνση της άρσης του ανωτέρου περιορισμού, προκειμένου τα ΕΝΑΕ να συμβάλλουν στην καταπολέμηση της τεράστιας ανεργίας;

Απάντηση του κ. Almunia εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(17 Απριλίου 2012)

Σχετικά με τις πληροφορίες που ζητήθηκαν στα σκέλη 1 και 2 της ερώτησης, πρέπει να υπενθυμίσουμε ότι η απόφαση της Επιτροπής δεν περιλαμβάνει διατάξεις σχετικά με στρατιωτικές δραστηριότητες. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει τις πληροφορίες που ζητάει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος.

Σχετικά με το σκέλος 3, η Επιτροπή θα ήθελε να υπενθυμίσει το πλαίσιο στο οποίο η Ελλάδα και τα ελληνικά ναυπηγεία (ΕΝΑΕ) δεσμεύτηκαν να περιορίσουν τις δραστηριότητες του ναυπηγείου σε στρατιωτικές παραγγελίες. Τα τελευταία δεκαπέντε χρόνια η Ελλάδα επανειλημμένως παρείχε παράνομη και ασύμβατη ενίσχυση στα ΕΝΑΕ και τους παρείχε αθέμιτο πλεονέκτημα έναντι των ανταγωνιστών της. Το 2008, η Επιτροπή ζήτησε από την Ελλάδα να ανακτήσει αυτή την ενίσχυση (πάνω από 230 ευρώ συν τους τόκους) [1]. Μετά από αίτηση της Ελλάδας, και λαμβάνοντας υπόψη λόγους εθνικής ασφάλειας, η Επιτροπή δέχτηκε, το 2010, μια περιορισμένη ανάκτηση, με αντάλλαγμα έναν αριθμό δεσμεύσεων για τη μείωση των στρεβλώσεων του ανταγωνισμού στην μη στρατιωτική αγορά (ιδίως στον περιορισμό του ναυπηγείου σε στρατιωτικές δραστηριότητες για 15 χρόνια) [2]. Μέχρι τώρα, δεν πραγματοποιήθηκε ανάκτηση (έστω περιορισμένη). Με αυτές τις συνθήκες, και απουσία πλήρους ανάκτησης, η άρση του περιορισμού των μη στρατιωτικών δραστηριοτήτων δεν δικαιολογείται.

---

[1] ΕΕ L 225 της 27.8.2009, σ. 104.
[2] Δελτίο Τύπου IP/10/428.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002114/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Contract for the construction of two TYPE 214 submarines and the lifting of the ban on the construction of commercial vessels by Hellenic Shipyards

Given the ruthless cuts in wages and pensions and in health and education spending, etc., it is striking that the owners of Hellenic Shipyards (HSY) are claiming another EUR 100 million directly for the construction of two TYPE 214 submarines, in addition to the EUR 132 million the company has already received. Information that the project contract does not clearly specify whether payment will be linked to the progress of the project has caused anger and surprise.

Whatever views one may have on the expediency of specific military expenditure, particularly at this time, and given that the Commission has restricted HSY to carrying out only military orders, and given furthermore the tragic state of employment in Greece, will the Commission say:

1. What is the total cost of the order? How has it been recorded? How will it be recorded in the accounts in the next few years?

2. In the contract signed by the government and HSY, are the payments related to the progress of this project? What is the schedule for the progress of the project agreed by the Greek Government and HSY?

3. Does it intend to re-examine its decision and lift the abovementioned restriction so that HSY can contribute to combating massive unemployment?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

As regards the information requested in points 1 and 2 of the question, it must be recalled that the Commission's decision does not include any prescriptions on military activities. The Commission does not have the information requested by the Honourable Member.

As regards point 3, the Commission would like to recall the context in which Greece and Hellenic Shipyards (HSY) committed to limit the yards' activities to military orders. Over the past fifteen years, Greece provided repeatedly unlawful and incompatible aid to HSY giving it an unfair advantage over its competitors. In 2008, the Commission requested Greece to recover this aid (more than EUR 230 million plus interest) ([1]). At Greece's request and taking into account reasons of national security, the Commission accepted, in 2010, a limited recovery, in exchange for a number of commitments to minimise competition distortions in the civil market (in particular the limitation of the yard to military activities for 15 years) ([2]). At this stage, no recovery (even limited) has been realised. In these circumstances and in the absence of a full recovery, lifting the ban on civil activities is not justified.

([1]) OJ L 225, 27.8.2009. p. 104.
([2]) Press release IP/10/428.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002115/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(22 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Καταστροφή ιστορικού κάστρου στην κατεχόμενη Κερύνεια

Σύμφωνα με δημοσιεύματα της τουρκοκυπριακής εφημερίδας «Star Kibris», το κάστρο της κατεχόμενης Κερύνειας έχει εγκαταλειφθεί, δεν συντηρείται από τις κατοχικές αρχές και άρχισε να καταστρέφεται.

Λακούβες, σπασμένα ξύλινα σκαλοπάτια και κατεστραμμένα γυαλιά παραθύρων, καθιστούν ανασφαλή την πρόσβαση ξένων επισκεπτών, ενώ ακαθαρσίες, πλαστικά αντικείμενα και σκουπίδια, συνθέτουν μια περιβαλλοντικά απαράδεκτη κατάσταση.

Το κάστρο είναι ιστορικό μνημείο που χρήζει προστασίας και συντήρησης.

Καλείται η Επιτροπή να απαντήσει ξεκάθαρα:

1. Τι προτίθεται να πράξει η ΕΕ για να τερματίσει αυτή την απαράδεκτη κατάσταση και να προστατεύσει ένα τέτοιο μνημείο που αποτελεί δείγμα της ιστορικής κυπριακής αλλά και ευρωπαϊκής κληρονομιάς;

2. Θα το αφήσει έρμαιο στη βορά του χρόνου και του τούρκου κατακτητή;

3. Προτίθεται να τιμωρήσει την Τουρκία με συγκεκριμένες κυρώσεις για τη σύληση της πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς του κυπριακού λαού;

4. Αντιλαμβάνεται ότι στην Κύπρο εξαφανίζεται καθημερινά η ιστορία των κατοίκων του νησιού, και ειδικά των Ελληνοκυπρίων;

Αναμένω την άποψη της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής εάν τέτοιου είδους ενέργειες συμβάλλουν στη δημιουργία θετικού κλίματος για επίτευξη λύσης του Κυπριακού.

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

Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη για την κατάσταση του κάστρου στην Κερύνεια. Ήταν ένα από τα 120 μνημεία τα οποία υποβλήθηκαν σε εμπεριστατωμένη τεχνική εκτίμηση στο πλαίσιο της μελέτης του 2010 σχετικά με την πολιτιστική κληρονομιά στην Κύπρο, η οποία πραγματοποιήθηκε από το Πρόγραμμα Ανάπτυξης των Ηνωμένων Εθνών και χρηματοδοτήθηκε από την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση. Το κάστρο της Κερύνειας δεν περιλαμβάνεται στον κατάλογο των 40 μνημείων που αποτελούν προτεραιότητα όπως συμφωνήθηκε από την δικοινοτική τεχνική επιτροπή για την πολιτιστική κληρονομιά, η οποία τελεί υπό την αιγίδα των Ηνωμένων Εθνών.

Η Επιτροπή συνεργάζεται στενά με το Πρόγραμμα Ανάπτυξης των Ηνωμένων Εθνών (UNDP) και την δικοινοτική τεχνική επιτροπή για την πολιτιστική κληρονομιά για τη χρηματοδότηση των έργων προτεραιότητας τα οποία έχουν συμφωνηθεί και εγκριθεί από την δικοινοτική επιτροπή, με σκοπό τη χορήγηση χρηματοδότησης ΕΕ σε βραχυπρόθεσμη και μακροπρόθεσμη βάση για έργα που βρίσκονται στον κατάλογο της επιτροπής.

Η ερώτηση του Αξιότιμου Μέλους τονίζει εκ νέου την ανάγκη εξεύρεσης ταχείας και ολοκληρωμένης διευθέτησης του Κυπριακού, η οποία θα έλυνε επίσης αποτελεσματικά τα θέματα της πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002115/12
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Destruction of a historic castle in occupied Kyrenia

According to reports published in the Turkish Cypriot newspaper *Star Kibris*, the castle in occupied Kyrenia is deserted, is not being maintained by the occupation authorities and has begun to fall into ruin.

Potholes, broken wooden stairs and smashed window panes pose safety problems for foreign visitors, while dirt, plastic objects and rubbish greatly detract from the castle environment.

The castle is a historic monument that requires protection and maintenance.

Will the Commission give clear answers to the following:

1. What does it intend to do to end this inadmissible situation and start protecting the monument, a prime example of the historical patrimony of Cyprus and also of Europe?

2. Will it abandon it to the passage of time and the Turkish occupier?

3. Does it intend to impose specific sanctions on Turkey for this desecration of the cultural heritage of the Cypriot people?

4. Does it realise that in Cyprus, the history of the island's inhabitants, and particularly the Greek Cypriots, is being eradicated?

Will the Commission give its view on whether actions of this kind are conducive to a positive climate for a resolution of the Cyprus problem?

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

The Commission is aware of the situation of Kyrenia castle. This was one of 120 monuments which underwent an in-depth technical assessment under the 2010 Study of Cultural Heritage in Cyprus, which was implemented by the United Nations Development Programme and funded by the European Union. Kyrenia castle is not on the list of the 40 monuments which are a priority agreed by the Bi-communal Technical Committee on cultural heritage, operating under the auspices of the United Nations.

The Commission is working in close cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Bi-communal Technical Committee on cultural heritage to fund priority projects which have been agreed and approved by the bi-communal committee, with the aim of providing EU funding in the short and medium-term for projects on the list of the Committee.

The Honourable Member's question once again underlines the need for a rapid comprehensive settlement in Cyprus, which would constitute an effective remedy to address the issues of cultural heritage.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002116/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(22 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Μεγάλο ποσοστό περιγεννητικής θνησιμότητας στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με σχετικές μελέτες αλλά και στοιχεία του Κεντρικού Συμβουλίου Υγείας (ΚΕΣΥ) Ελλάδος, πολλά νεογέννητα παιδιά πεθαίνουν και έγκυες κινδυνεύουν να χάσουν τη ζωή τους εξαιτίας των ελλείψεων τόσο σε μονάδες εντατικής φροντίδας νεογνών (και περιγεννητικά κέντρα αυξημένης φροντίδας), όσο και σε ιατρικό και νοσηλευτικό προσωπικό. Συγκεκριμένα, 9 στις 1 000 γεννήσεις δεν έχουν ευτυχή κατάληξη. Ταυτόχρονα, τα τελευταία επίσημα στοιχεία για τη βρεφική θνητότητα χρονολογούνται από το 1998, γεγονός που καταδεικνύει σαφώς την παντελή απουσία συστήματος εθνικής καταγραφής αυτών των θανάτων. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο και με δεδομένη την ανάγκη καταπολέμησης της περιγεννητικής θνησιμότητας, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Διαθέτει στατιστικά στοιχεία για το ποσοστό της περιγεννητικής θνησιμότητας στα κράτη μέλη; Αν ναι, ποια είναι και η διακύμανσή της τα τελευταία 3 χρόνια;

Υπάρχει συγκεκριμένη μεθοδολογία καταγραφής της βρεφικής θνησιμότητας;

Πώς κρίνει το γεγονός ότι η Ελλάδα δεν καταγράφει επισήμως το συγκεκριμένο φαινόμενο και άρα δεν δύναται να γίνει η αξιολόγηση των περιγεννητικών δεικτών σε ετήσια βάση; Προτίθεται να εκδώσει σχετικές συστάσεις; Ποια άλλα κράτη μέλη δεν διαθέτουν επίσημα στοιχεία;

Σκοπεύει να προωθήσει την ανταλλαγή βέλτιστων πρακτικών μεταξύ των κρατών μελών, προκειμένου να αναδειχθούν οι πιο ενδεδειγμένοι τρόποι καταπολέμησης του εν λόγω φαινομένου;

Πώς αξιολογεί την απουσία περιφερειακών περιγεννητικών κέντρων από την ελληνική περιφέρεια;

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Απριλίου 2012)

1. Τα κράτη μέλη διαβιβάζουν σε τακτική βάση δεδομένα για την περιγεννητική θνησιμότητα στην Επιτροπή.

2. Σημειώθηκε ελαφρά αύξηση αυτής της θνησιμότητας ([1]) στην Ελλάδα μεταξύ 2008 και 2010, από 3,8 τοις χιλίοις σε 5,0 τοις χιλίοις επί του συνόλου των γεννήσεων. Ωστόσο, η κατάσταση στην Ελλάδα έχει βελτιωθεί τις δύο τελευταίες δεκαετίες, δεδομένου ότι το 1990, το ποσοστό περιγεννητικής θνησιμότητας στην Ελλάδα ήταν 11,9 τοις χιλίοις επί του συνόλου των γεννήσεων.

3. Τα ποσοστά βρεφικής θνησιμότητας ([2]) που εστιάζονται σε ζωντανές γεννήσεις έχουν μειωθεί τουλάχιστον κατά το ήμισυ στην ΕΕ-27, από 10,3 τοις χιλίοις σε 4,3 τοις χιλίοις ζωντανών γεννήσεων μεταξύ 1990 και 2009. Παρόμοια είναι η τάση και στην Ελλάδα, όπου το ποσοστό βρεφικής θνησιμότητας μειώθηκε από 9,7 τοις χιλίοις ζωντανών γεννήσεων το 1990 σε 3,1 το 2009, κυμαινόμενο μεταξύ 1,4 και 5,0 σε περιφερειακό επίπεδο (NUTS2) ([3]).

4. Η Επιτροπή συγχρηματοδοτεί το έργο Europeristat ([4]) που είναι δίκτυο εμπειρογνωμόνων σε ολόκληρη την Ευρώπη, το οποίο εργάζεται επί των δεικτών περιγεννητικής υγείας. Η πρώτη ευρωπαϊκή έκθεση περιγεννητικής υγείας δημοσιεύτηκε τον Δεκέμβριο 2008 και η επικαιροποίησή της θα γίνει μέχρι το τέλος του 2012.

([1]) Ο «δείκτης περιγεννητικής θνησιμότητας» υπολογίζεται ως η σχέση του αριθμού των θανάτων βρεφών ηλικίας μικρότερης της μίας εβδομάδας συν τις γεννήσεις νεκρών εμβρύων προς τον αριθμό των συνολικών γεννήσεων δεδομένου έτους (συμπεριλαμβανομένων των γεννήσεων νεκρών εμβρύων).

([2]) Ο «δείκτης θνησιμότητας» υπολογίζεται ως η σχέση του αριθμού των θανάτων βρεφών ηλικίας μικρότερης του ενός έτους προς τον αριθμό των ζωντανών γεννήσεων δεδομένου έτους.

([3]) http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=demo_r_d2infmo&lang=en.

([4]) http://www.europeristat.com/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002116/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: High incidence of perinatal mortality in Greece

According to relevant studies and information from Greece's Central Health Council (KESY), many newborn infants die and pregnant women are in danger of losing their lives because of shortages both in neonatal intensive care units (and perinatal intensive care centres) and in medical and nursing staff. Specifically, nine births in every thousand are miscarriages or end in death. Moreover, the latest official statistics on infant mortality date from 1998, testifying clearly to the total absence of a national registration system for recording these deaths. In this context, and given the necessity for combating perinatal mortality:

Does the Commission have statistical data on the incidence of perinatal mortality in the Member States? If so, what fluctuations have been registered in the last three years?

Is there a specific methodology for recording infant mortality?

How does the Commission judge the fact that Greece does not keep official records of the phenomenon, making it impossible for any annual evaluation of the perinatal indicators? Does it intend to issue any relevant recommendations? Which other Member States do not possess official data?

Does the Commission intend to promote the exchange of best practices between Member States, so as to identify the most appropriate means for dealing with the problem?

How does the Commission assess the absence of regional perinatal centres in Greece?

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

1. Member States provide perinatal mortality data to the Commission regularly on a voluntary basis.

2. There was a slight increase in such mortality ([1]) in Greece from 2008 to 2010 from 3.8 to 5.0 per thousand of total births. Overall, the situation has however improved in Greece in the past two decades taking into account that the Greek perinatal mortality rate in 1990 was 11.9 per thousand of total births.

3. Infant mortality rates ([2]) that focus on live births have more than halved in the EU-27, from 10.3 to 4.3 per thousand of live births between 1990 and 2009; in Greece, the trend is very similar, infant mortality rate has declined from 9.7 per thousand live births in 1990 to 3.1 in 2009, ranging from 1.4 to 5.0 at regional level (NUTS2) ([3]).

4. The Commission is co-funding the project Europeristat ([4]) which is a network of experts from all over Europe working on indicators on perinatal health. A first European Perinatal Health Report was published in December 2008 and will be updated by the end of 2012.

([1]) The 'perinatal mortality rate' is calculated as the ratio between the number of deaths of children under one week of age plus the stillbirths to the number of total births in that year (including stillbirths).
([2]) The 'infant mortality rate' is calculated as the ratio between the number of deaths of children under one year of age to the number of live births in that year.
([3]) http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=demo_r_d2infmo&lang=en.
([4]) http://www.europeristat.com/.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002117/12
an die Kommission
Daniel Cohn-Bendit (Verts/ALE)
(22. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Troika — durchgesickerte Fassung der Analyse der Troika zur Tragfähigkeit der Schuldenlage (ATS)

Dem grundlegenden Szenario der Erklärung der Eurogruppe vom 21. Februar 2012 zufolge sollte durch Beiträge des privaten und öffentlichen Sektors „sichergestellt werden, dass die öffentliche Schuldenquote Griechenlands auf einen rückläufigen Weg gebracht wird und bis 2020 120,5 % des BIP erreicht". Eine durchgesickerte Fassung eines Entwurfs der Troika zu einer vorläufigen Analyse zur Tragfähigkeit der Schuldenlage wirft jedoch sehr ernste Zweifel daran auf, ob mit der erreichten Vereinbarung deren Ziele erreicht werden können. Würde die Kommission die Existenz des oben genannten Dokuments und der oben genannten Bewertung bestätigen?

In dem Bericht wird insbesondere dargelegt, dass „es eine fundamentale Spannung zwischen den Programmzielen Schuldenabbau und Verbesserung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit gibt, so dass es aufgrund der internen Entwertung, die zur Wiederherstellung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit Griechenlands erforderlich wäre, kurzfristig unvermeidlich zu einer höheren Schuldenquote kommen wird (…). Dies würde bei der Entwicklung der Schulden zu einer sehr viel höheren Kurve mit einer Schuldenquote von bis zu 160 % im Jahr 2020 führen. Angesichts der Risiken könnte das griechische Programm daher weiter störungsanfällig bleiben und von Zweifeln an seiner Tragfähigkeit überschattet werden." In einem derartigen Szenario würde sich der Finanzierungsbedarf des öffentlichen Sektors Griechenlands bis 2020 auf etwa 245 Mrd. EUR belaufen. Selbst nach ordnungsgemäßer Berücksichtigung von Zusatzmaßnahmen, die die bereits in der ATS integrierten Maßnahmen ergänzen, kommt es bei einem vernünftigen Szenario, in das die in der ATS aufgeführten Risiken einbezogen werden, höchstwahrscheinlich nicht zu einer Schuldenquote unter 150 %.

— Kann die Kommission erläutern, warum sie das Ziel von 120,5 % für glaubwürdig hält?

— Warum ignoriert die Erklärung der Eurogruppe in der Bewertung der ATS aufgeführte Abwärtsrisiken und kommt daher zu einer übermäßig optimistischen Prognose?

— Welche Maßnahmen hat die Kommission für den Fall geplant, dass die in der ATS dargelegten Risiken tatsächlich eintreten?

— Wie plant die Kommission bei Eintritt der Abwärtsrisiken die potenziell gewaltigen finanziellen Verluste für Mitgliedstaaten und EFSF abzumildern?

— Wie kann die Kommission behaupten, dass unter diesen Umständen in den Jahren unmittelbar nach dem Programm der Marktzugang wiederhergestellt werden kann?

— Welche Maßnahmen sind im Hinblick auf die grundlegende Spannung zwischen den Programmzielen Schuldenabbau und Verbesserung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit vorgesehen?

— Gibt die Kommission zu, dass die Prognosen für die ersten beiden Pakete finanzieller Unterstützung für Griechenland in gefährlicher Weise übermäßig optimistisch waren und sowohl für die EU-Steuerzahler als auch für die griechischen Bürger zu unverhältnismäßig hohen Kosten geführt haben?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(17. April 2012)

Die Verhandlungen über das neue Programm, welche die Kommission und ihre Troika-Partner mit den griechischen Behörden geführt haben, hatten zum Ziel, die notwendige Haushaltkonsolidierung und interne Abwertung mit dem sozialen Zusammenhalt und den wachstumsfördernden Reformen in Einklang zu bringen, um die Herausforderungen der griechischen Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und eines tragfähigen Schuldenstandes zu meistern. Die Ergebnisse basieren auch auf den Erfahrungen, die bei der Umsetzung des ersten Programms gesammelt wurden. Vor allem war in den Wachstumsprognosen zu Beginn des ersten Programms das Ausmaß der Rezession unterschätzt worden.

In jedem Fall liegt es auf der Hand, dass ein nachhaltiges Wachstum ohne tragfähige öffentliche Finanzen nicht möglich ist. Die für 2020 angestrebte Schuldenquote von 120 Prozent ist nach der erfolgreichen Umschuldung und den zusätzlichen Maßnahmen zur Beteiligung des privaten und des öffentlichen Sektors, die anlässlich ihres Treffens am 20. und 21. Februar 2012 von der Euro-Gruppe beschlossen wurden, nun glaubwürdiger geworden. Die jüngste Schuldentragfähigkeitsanalyse prognostiziert für 2020 eine Schuldenquote von 116,5 Prozent.

Die Kommission war in ihren Berichten über die Einhaltung der Verpflichtungen immer um eine faire und ausgewogene Präsentation der Programmrisiken bemüht — dies gilt auch für das neue Programm: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu_borrower/greek_loan_facility/index_en.htm

Die Umsetzung des Programms ist für Griechenland, auch zur Wiederherstellung des Marktzugangs, entscheidend. Mechanismen zur Reduzierung der Abwärtsrisiken sind ebenfalls vorgesehen: Die Kapazitäten zur Überwachung vor Ort werden verstärkt und die Task-Force Griechenland wird eine nachhaltige technische Unterstützung zur Verfügung stellen.

Die Staats- und Regierungschefs des Euro-Raums haben am 2. März 2012 noch einmal ihre Absicht und ihre Bereitschaft unterstrichen, alles Nötige zu tun, um die finanzielle Stabilität im gesamten Euro-Raum zu gewährleisten: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/128521.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002117/12
to the Commission
Daniel Cohn-Bendit (Verts/ALE)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Troika-leaked version of the Troika Debt sustainability analysis (DSA)

The baseline scenario of the Eurogroup statement of 21 February 2012 affirms that contributions from the private and the official sector 'should ensure that Greece's public debt ratio is brought on a downward path reaching 120.5 % of GDP by 2020'. However, a leaked version of a preliminary debt sustainability analysis drafted by the Troika throws very serious doubts on the capacity of the deal achieved to reach its objectives. Would the Commission confirm the existence of the document and the assessment mentioned above?

The report points out in particular that, 'there is a fundamental tension between the program objectives of reducing debt and improving competitiveness, in that the internal devaluation needed to restore Greece competitiveness will inevitably lead to a higher debt to GDP ratio in the near term (…) This would result in a much higher debt trajectory, leaving debt as high as 160 % of GDP in 2020. Given the risks, the Greek program may thus remain accident-prone, with questions about sustainability hanging over it'. In such a scenario, Greek public sector financing needs up to 2020 would amount to around EUR 245 billion. Even after taking proper account of additional measures which were added to the measures already integrated in the DSA, a prudent scenario integrating risks foreseen in the DSA is highly unlikely to lead to a debt to GDP ratio below 150 %.

— Can the Commission explain why it deems the 120.5 % target to be credible?

— Why does the Eurogroup statement ignore downside risks enumerated in the DSA assessment, leading therefore to an over-optimistic forecast?

— What measures has the Commission planned should the risks highlighted in the DSA actually materialise?

— How does the Commission propose, if those downsize risks materialise, to mitigate potentially massive financial losses for Member States and the EFSF?

— How can the Commission argue that under such conditions market access can be restored in the immediate post-programme years?

— What measures are envisaged to address the fundamental tension between the programme objectives of reducing debt and improving competitiveness?

— Does the Commission admit that forecasts contained in the first two packages of financial assistance for Greece were dangerously over-optimistic, leading to excessive costs for both EU taxpayers and Greek citizens?

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

The negotiations of the Commission and its Troika partners with the Greek authorities on the new programme aimed to reconcile the necessary fiscal consolidation and internal devaluation with social cohesion and growth enhancing reforms to address the challenges of Greek competitiveness and debt sustainability. The outcome also builds on the lessons learned from the implementation of the first programme. In particular, the growth forecasts at the outset of the first programme underestimated the depth of the recession.

It is clear though that there can be no sustainable growth without sustainable public finances. The targeted debt-to-GDP level of 120 % by 2020 has become more credible following the successful debt exchange and the additional measures for private and official sector involvement agreed by the Eurogroup at its meeting of 20 and 21 February 2012. The latest Debt Sustainability Analysis projects a debt level of 116.5 % of GDP by 2020.

The Commission has always endeavoured to present a fair and balanced presentation of the programme risks in its compliance reports including for the new programme:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu_borrower/greek_loan_facility/index_en.htm

Programme implementation will be key for Greece including to re-gain market access. Mechanisms will be put in place to reduce the downside risks: the monitoring capacity on the ground will be strengthened and substantial technical assistance will be provided by the Task Force Greece.

Euro area Heads of State and Government underlined once again on 2 March 2012 their determination to do whatever is needed to ensure the financial stability of the euro area as a whole, and their readiness to act accordingly: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/128521.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002118/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(22 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Spanair

El pasado 27 de enero de 2012 la compañía aérea Spanair cesó sus operaciones debido al cierre de la compañía ([1]).

Durante la semana anterior al cierre, se publicaron diferentes noticias sobre la posible ampliación de capital de Spanair con Qatar Airways ([2]). Al mismo tiempo, el presidente de Iberia declaró que la compañía Spanair «no tenía futuro».

El mismo día 27 de enero de 2012, se publica que Qatar Airways abandona las negociaciones de invertir en Spanair ante la posible sanción por parte de la Comisión Europea por las subvenciones recibidas por parte de las administraciones públicas ([3]).

En unas declaraciones realizadas el pasado 3 de febrero de 2012 a la emisora Catalunya Ràdio, el Vicepresidente de la Comisión Europea y Comisario de Competencia explicó que la Comisión recibió dos quejas en diciembre y sostuvo que la investigación sigue su curso, aunque está «en los primeros pasos», por lo que declinó anticipar el resultado de ese proceso.

Si como dice el Vicepresidente de la Comisión y Comisario de Competencia, la investigación está «en los primeros pasos», ¿por qué se convocó de urgencia, de un día para otro, a un representante de la Generalitat de Catalunya el día 25 de febrero de 2012, para reunirse con altos cargos de la Dirección General de Competencia?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de abril de 2012)

La información recibida por Su Señoría en relación con la supuesta convocatoria de una reunión el 25 de febrero de 2012 para tratar el caso de ayuda estatal a Spanair no parece ser correcta. Una reunión sobre este tema tuvo lugar entre los servicios responsables de la Dirección General de Competencia de la Comisión y representantes de las autoridades españolas y de la empresa, a petición de ésta última, el 24 de enero de 2012, y no el 25 de febrero de 2012.

([1]) http://www.cadenaser.com/economia/articulo/spanair-cierra-deja-22000-pasajeros-poder-volar-fin-semana/csrcsrpor/20120127csrcsreco_9/Tes
([2]) http://www.cadenaser.com/economia/articulo/spanair-cierra-deja-22000-pasajeros-poder-volar-fin-semana/csrcsrpor/20120127csrcsreco_9/Tes
([3]) http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2012/02/03/catalunya/1328262439_798672.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002118/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Spanair

On 27 January 2012, the airline Spanair ceased operations after being wound up ([1]).

In the week preceding the closure, various news items appeared on a possible capital investment in Spanair by Qatar Airways ([2]). At the same time, the director of Iberia announced that Spanair 'had no future'.

On the same day, 27 January 2012, it was announced that Qatar Airways was withdrawing from negotiations on acquiring a stake in Spanair on the grounds that it was faced with possible European Commission sanctions for subsidies it had received from public authorities ([3]).

On 3 February 2012, the Vice-President of the European Commission and Commissioner for Competition explained in an interview on Catalunya Ràdio that the Commission had received two complaints in December, and said that the investigation should take its course, although he declined to predict the outcome of this process as it was 'in its initial stages'.

If, as the Vice-President of the European Commission and Commissioner for Competition says, the investigation is 'in its initial stages', why, on 25 February 2012, did he urgently summon, at only one day's notice, a representative of the Generalitat de Catalunya for a meeting with senior officials of the Directorate-General for Competition?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2012)

The information received by the Honourable Member on a possible summoning of a meeting on the Spanair state aid case on 25 February 2012 seems to be erroneous. A meeting on this case was indeed held between the responsible services of the Commission's Directorate-General for Competition and representatives of the Spanish authorities and of the company, at the request of the latter, on 24 January 2012, not on 25 February 2012.

([1]) http://www.cadenaser.com/economia/articulo/spanair-cierra-deja-22000-pasajeros-poder-volar-fin-semana/csrcsrpor/20120127csrcsreco_9/Tes.
([2]) http://www.cadenaser.com/economia/articulo/spanair-cierra-deja-22000-pasajeros-poder-volar-fin-semana/csrcsrpor/20120127csrcsreco_9/Tes.
([3]) http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2012/02/03/catalunya/1328262439_798672.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002119/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(22 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Iberia

El pasado 27 de enero de 2012 la compañía aérea Spanair cesó sus operaciones debido al cierre de la compañía ([1]). En unas declaraciones realizadas el pasado 3 de febrero de 2012 a la emisora Catalunya Ràdio, el Vicepresidente de la Comisión Europea y Comisario de Competencia explicó que la Comisión había recibido dos quejas en diciembre y sostuvo que la investigación sigue su curso, aunque está «en los primeros pasos», por lo que declinó anticipar el resultado de ese proceso ([2]).

Los representantes de Spanair afirmaron que la compañía nunca ha recibido subvenciones, sino inversiones de entidades y administraciones públicas. Esta fue la respuesta a las declaraciones del presidente de IAG e Iberia, que aseguró que le parece bien que la Comisión Europea investigue a Spanair por las subvenciones públicas recibidas y que opinara que el proyecto de esta aerolínea «no tiene ningún futuro». En un comunicado, Spanair calificó estas declaraciones de «desafortunadas» al referirse a un competidor «en términos negativos», y recuerda todas las inversiones recibidas por Iberia del Gobierno español.

En esta línea, recuerda que, entre los años 1996 y 1999, el Gobierno español otorgó a Iberia un total de 1 362 millones de euros, una cantidad «significativamente mayor a las inversiones percibidas por Spanair» ([3]).

— ¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de estas «inversiones» millonarias del Gobierno español en la compañía Iberia?

— Según los datos de la Comisión, ¿a cuánto ascienden las «inversiones» de los diferentes gobiernos españoles en Iberia en los últimos 20 años?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de abril de 2012)

La Comisión informa a Su Señoría de que, en los últimos 20 años, ha tomado tres decisiones sobre ayudas estatales en relación con la compañía Iberia, respecto a medidas sobre las que se le había informado. En 1992, la Comisión no planteó objeciones a un incremento de capital de 120 000 millones de pesetas ([4]). En 1996, la Comisión llegó a la conclusión de que una recapitalización de Iberia por un valor de 87 000 millones de pesetas no constituía ayuda estatal ([5]). Por último, en 1999, la Comisión consideró que un nuevo aumento de capital de 20 000 millones de pesetas tampoco representaba ayuda estatal ([6]).

A este respecto, la Comisión recuerda que, cuando una inversión de una autoridad pública sea considerada razonable para un inversor privado en circunstancias similares, se suele estimar por lo general que esta no constituye una ayuda estatal prohibida por la legislación de la Unión Europea.

([1]) http://www.cadenaser.com/economia/articulo/spanair-cierra-deja-22000-pasajeros-poder-volar-fin-semana/csrcsrpor/20120127csrcsreco_9/Tes
([2]) http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2012/02/03/catalunya/1328262439_798672.html
([3]) http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2012/01/23/barcelona/1327340779.html
([4]) DO C 236 de 15.9.1992, p. 2.
([5]) DO L 104 de 27.4.1996, p. 25.
([6]) DO C 351 de 4.12.1999, p. 35.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002119/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Iberia

On 27 January 2012, the airline Spanair ceased trading due to the company's closure ([1]). On 3 February 2012, the Vice-President of the Commission and Commissioner for Competition explained in an interview on Catalunya Ràdio that the Commission had received two complaints in December and that the investigation was taking its course, although as it was 'in its initial stages', he declined to anticipate the possible outcome of this process ([2]).

Representatives of Spanair stated that the company had never received any subsidies, only investment from public bodies and government agencies. This was their response to statements by the Chairman of IAG and Iberia, who claimed that he was in favour of the Commission investigating Spanair over state subsidies received and was of the opinion that there was 'no future' for the airline's operations. In a communiqué, Spanair described these words as 'unfortunate', since they referred to a competitor 'in negative terms', and it pointed out all the investment the Spanish Government had made in Iberia.

On this topic, it recalled that between 1996 and 1999 the Spanish Government had given Iberia EUR 1 362 million, a sum 'significantly larger than the investment Spanair had received' ([3]).

— Is the Commission aware of the millions of euros the Spanish Government 'invested' in Iberia?

— According to the Commission's data, how much have the various Spanish Governments 'invested' in Iberia over the last 20 years?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

The Commission informs the Honourable Member that it has taken three state aid decisions in relation to the Iberia airline in the last 20 years, in relation to measures of which it was made aware. In 1992, the Commission raised no objections to a capital increase of 120 billion pesetas ([4]). In 1996, the Commission came to the conclusion that a recapitalisation of Iberia of 87 billion pesetas did not constitute state aid ([5]). Finally, in 1999, the Commission considered that a further capital increase of 20 billion pesetas did not constitute state aid either ([6]).

In this connection, the Commission recalls that when an investment of a public authority would be deemed reasonable for a private investor in similar circumstances, then it is generally considered that it does not constitute state aid prohibited by European Union law.

([1]) http://www.cadenaser.com/economia/articulo/spanair-cierra-deja-22000-pasajeros-poder-volar-fin-semana/csrcsrpor/20120127csrcsreco_9/Tes
([2]) http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2012/02/03/catalunya/1328262439_798672.html
([3]) http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2012/01/23/barcelona/1327340779.html
([4]) OJ C 236, 15.9.1992, p. 2.
([5]) OJ L 104, 27.4.1996, p. 25.
([6]) OJ C 351, 4.12.1999, p. 35.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002120/12
al Consejo
Daniel Cohn-Bendit (Verts/ALE)
(22 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Versión filtrada del análisis de la sostenibilidad de la deuda realizado por la troika

La hipótesis de referencia de la declaración del Grupo del Euro de 21 de febrero de 2012 afirma que las contribuciones del sector privado y público «deben garantizar que el ratio de la deuda pública de Grecia se orienta a una reducción que alcance el 120,5 % del PIB para 2020». Sin embargo, una versión filtrada del análisis preliminar de la sostenibilidad de la deuda elaborado por la *troika* arroja serias dudas sobre la capacidad del acuerdo alcanzado de cumplir sus objetivos. ¿Podría confirmar el Consejo la existencia de la evaluación y el documento mencionados anteriormente?

El informe apunta en particular a que «existe una tensión fundamental entre los objetivos del programa relativos a la reducción de la deuda y la mejora de la competitividad, y la devaluación interna necesaria para restablecer la competitividad de Grecia provocará inevitablemente un mayor ratio deuda/PIB a corto plazo […]. Esto dará lugar a que la trayectoria de la deuda sea mucho más elevada, siendo la deuda de hasta el 160 % del PIB en 2020. Teniendo en cuenta los riesgos, el programa griego puede ser por tanto proclive a los accidentes y despertar dudas sobre la sostenibilidad». En esta hipótesis, las necesidades de financiación del sector público griego hasta 2020 ascenderían aproximadamente a 245 000 millones de euros. Incluso después de tener debidamente en cuenta las medidas adicionales que se añadieron a las medidas ya integradas en el análisis de la sostenibilidad de la deuda, es muy poco probable que una hipótesis prudente que integre los riesgos previstos en el análisis dé como resultado un ratio deuda/PIB inferior al 150 %.

— ¿Puede explicar el Consejo por qué considera que el objetivo de 120,5 % es creíble?

— ¿Puede explicar el Consejo por qué la declaración del Grupo del Euro ignora los riesgos a la baja enumerados en la evaluación del análisis, dando lugar por tanto a una previsión excesivamente optimista?

— ¿Qué medidas tiene previsto adoptar el Consejo en caso de que los riesgos señalados en el análisis de la sostenibilidad de la deuda se materialicen?

— ¿Cómo propone el Consejo, en caso de que los riegos a la baja se materialicen, mitigar potencialmente las pérdidas financieras masivas de los Estados miembros y el FEEF?

— ¿Cómo puede alegar el Consejo que, en estas condiciones, puede restablecerse el acceso al mercado en los años inmediatos posteriores al programa?

— ¿Qué medidas contempla el Consejo para reducir la brecha entre los objetivos del programa relativos a la reducción de la deuda y la mejora de la competitividad?

— ¿Admite el Consejo que las previsiones incluidas en los dos primeros paquetes de ayuda financiera a Grecia pecaron de un peligroso exceso de optimismo, dando lugar a costes excesivos tanto para los contribuyentes de la UE como para los ciudadanos griegos?

Respuesta
(23 de mayo de 2012)

El Consejo no ha debatido la cuestión, puesto que el apoyo a la estabilidad de Grecia se dispuso al margen de los Tratados, con cargo a la Facilidad Europea de Estabilización Financiera, una sociedad anónima de la que son accionistas los Estados miembros cuya moneda es el euro. Las condiciones del préstamo se estipulan en un memorando de entendimiento anejo al acuerdo de servicio de préstamo entre los prestamistas y Grecia. Por ello, no corresponde al Consejo comentar ni informar sobre las condiciones establecidas por el acuerdo internacional.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002120/12
an den Rat
Daniel Cohn-Bendit (Verts/ALE)
(22. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Troika — durchgesickerte Fassung der Analyse der Troika zur Tragfähigkeit der Schuldenlage (ATS)

Dem grundlegenden Szenario der Erklärung der Eurogruppe vom 21. Februar 2012 zufolge sollte durch Beiträge des privaten und öffentlichen Sektors „ensure that Greece's public debt ratio is brought on a downward path reaching 120,5 % of GDP by 2020" [sichergestellt werden, dass die öffentliche Schuldenquote Griechenlands auf einen rückläufigen Weg gebracht wird und bis 2020 120,5 % des BIP erreicht]. Eine durchgesickerte Fassung eines Entwurfs der Troika zu einer vorläufigen Analyse zur Tragfähigkeit der Schuldenlage wirft jedoch sehr ernste Zweifel daran auf, ob mit der erreichten Vereinbarung deren Ziele erreicht werden können. Würde der Rat die Existenz des oben genannten Dokuments und der oben genannten Bewertung bestätigen?

In dem Bericht wird insbesondere dargelegt, dass „there is a fundamental tension between the program objectives of reducing debt and improving competitiveness, in that the internal devaluation needed to restore Greece competitiveness will inevitably lead to a higher debt to GDP ratio in the near term (…) This would result in a much higher debt trajectory, leaving debt as high as 160 % of GDP in 2020. Given the risks, the Greek program may thus remain accident-prone, with questions about sustainability hanging over it" [es eine fundamentale Spannung zwischen den Programmzielen Schuldenabbau und Verbesserung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit gibt, so dass es aufgrund der internen Entwertung, die zur Wiederherstellung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit Griechenlands erforderlich wäre, kurzfristig unvermeidlich zu einer höheren Schuldenquote kommen wird. Dies würde bei der Entwicklung der Schulden zu einer sehr viel höheren Kurve mit einer Schuldenquote von bis zu 160 % des BIP im Jahr 2020 führen. Angesichts der Risiken könnte das griechische Programm daher weiter störungsanfällig bleiben und von Zweifeln an seiner Tragfähigkeit überschattet werden]. In einem derartigen Szenario würde sich der Finanzierungsbedarf des öffentlichen Sektors Griechenlands bis 2020 auf etwa 245 Mrd. EUR belaufen. Selbst nach ordnungsgemäßer Berücksichtigung von Zusatzmaßnahmen, die die bereits in der ATS integrierten Maßnahmen ergänzen, kommt es bei einem vernünftigen Szenario, in das die in der ATS aufgeführten Risiken einbezogen werden, höchstwahrscheinlich nicht zu einer Schuldenquote unter 150 %.

— Kann der Rat erläutern, warum er das Ziel von 120,5 % für glaubwürdig hält?

— Warum ignoriert die Erklärung der Eurogruppe in der Bewertung der ATS aufgeführte Abwärtsrisiken und kommt daher zu einer übermäßig optimistischen Prognose?

— Welche Maßnahmen plant der Rat für den Fall, dass die in der ATS dargelegten Risiken tatsächlich eintreten?

— Wie plant der Rat bei Eintritt der Abwärtsrisiken die potenziell gewaltigen finanziellen Verluste für Mitgliedstaaten und EFSF abzumildern?

— Wie kann der Rat behaupten, dass unter diesen Umständen in den Jahren unmittelbar nach dem Programm der Marktzugang wiederhergestellt werden kann?

— Welche Maßnahmen sind im Hinblick auf die grundlegende Spannung zwischen den Programmzielen Schuldenabbau und Verbesserung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit vorgesehen?

— Gibt der Rat zu, dass die Prognosen für die ersten beiden Pakete finanzieller Unterstützung für Griechenland in gefährlicher Weise übermäßig optimistisch waren und sowohl für die EU-Steuerzahler als auch für die griechischen Bürger zu unverhältnismäßig hohen Kosten geführt haben?

Antwort
(23. Mai 2012)

Der Rat hat diese Frage nicht erörtert, da die Stabilitätshilfe für Griechenland nicht im Rahmen der Verträge, sondern im Rahmen der Europäischen Finanzstabilisierungsfazilität (EFSF) bereitgestellt wurde; diese ist eine Aktiengesellschaft, deren Gesellschafter diejenigen Mitgliedstaaten sind, deren Währung der Euro ist. Die Kreditbedingungen sind in einer Vereinbarung festgelegt, die dem Darlehensvertrag zwischen den Kreditgebern und Griechenland beigefügt ist. Der Rat ist daher nicht in der Lage, zu den im Rahmen dieser internationalen Vereinbarung festgelegten Bedingungen Stellung zu nehmen oder Informationen zu erteilen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002120/12
to the Council
Daniel Cohn-Bendit (Verts/ALE)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Troika-leaked version of the Troika Debt sustainability analysis (DSA)

The baseline scenario of the Eurogroup statement of 21 February 2012 affirms that the contributions of the private and the official sector 'should ensure that Greece's public debt ratio is brought on a downward path reaching 120.5 % of GDP by 2020'. However, a leaked version of a preliminary debt sustainability analysis drafted by the Troika throws very serious doubts on the capacity of the deal achieved to reach its objectives. Would the Council confirm the existence of the document and the assessment mentioned above?

The report points out in particular that 'there is a fundamental tension between the program objectives of reducing debt and improving competitiveness, in that the internal devaluation needed to restore Greece competitiveness will inevitably lead to a higher debt to GDP ratio in the near term (…) This would result in a much higher debt trajectory, leaving debt as high as 160 % of GDP in 2020. Given the risks, the Greek program may thus remain accident-prone, with questions about sustainability hanging over it'. In such a scenario, Greek public sector financing needs up to 2020 would amount to around EUR 245 billion. Even after taking proper account of additional measures which were added to the measures already integrated in the DSA, a prudent scenario integrating risks foreseen in the DSA is highly unlikely to lead to a debt to GDP ratio below 150 %.

— Can the Council explain why it deems the 120.5 % target to be credible?

— Why does the Eurogroup statement ignore downside risks enumerated in the DSA assessment, leading therefore to an over-optimistic forecast?

— What measures does the Council plan should the risks highlighted in the DSA actually materialise?

— How does the Council propose, if those downsize risks materialise, to mitigate potentially massive financial losses for Member States and the EFSF?

— How can the Council argue that, under such conditions, market access can be restored in the immediate post-programme years?

— What measures are envisaged to address the fundamental tension between the programme objectives of reducing debt and improving competitiveness?

— Does the Council admit that forecasts contained in the first two packages of financial assistance for Greece were dangerously over-optimistic, leading to excessive costs for both EU taxpayers and Greek citizens?

Reply
(23 May 2012)

The Council has not discussed this issue, as the stability support to Greece was set up outside the treaties, under the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF), a public company whose shareholders are those Member States whose currency is the euro. The conditions of the loan are stipulated in a memorandum of understanding attached to the loan agreement between the lenders and Greece. Therefore, the Council is not in a position to comment or provide information on the conditions agreed under the international agreement.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002121/12
aan de Commissie
Marije Cornelissen (Verts/ALE)
(22 februari 2012)

Betreft: Deelname van het maatschappelijke middenveld en maatschappelijke partners aan het Europees semester

Op 1 december 2011 heeft het Europees Parlement een resolutie aangenomen over het Europees semester voor coördinatie van economisch beleid (2011/2071(INI)). Overweging 112 van deze resolutie luidt als volgt: „Vraagt of de Commissie het maatschappelijke middenveld en de sociale partners wil vragen bij te dragen aan een jaarlijks schaduwrapport over de voortgang van de lidstaten ten aanzien van de basisdoelstellingen en de implementatie van de maatregelen zoals voorgesteld in de NHP's, vergelijkbaar met het schaduwrapport gemaakt op basis van de implementatie van het Verdrag inzake de uitbanning van alle vormen van discriminatie tegen vrouwen (CEDAW)".

De deelname van het maatschappelijk middenveld en sociale partners aan het Europees-semesterproces is cruciaal om het democratische verantwoordingsplicht, draagvlak en legitimiteit te geven. Het zou ondersteund kunnen worden door het maatschappelijk veld en sociale partners op het niveau van de lidstaat uit te nodigen en te ondersteunen, om onafhankelijke beoordelingen van de situatie ten aanzien van maatschappelijke aspecten, werkgelegenheid en de financiële positie te verstrekken (vergelijkbaar met de „schaduwrapporten" over de implementatie van het CEDAW) naar de Commissie voordat de richtlijn per land aan de lidstaat wordt afgegeven.

1. Zal de Commissie het verzoek van het Parlement opvolgen om het maatschappelijk middenveld en de sociale partners te verzoeken dergelijke schaduwrapportages dit jaar tijdens het Europees semester te produceren?

2. Zal de Commissie waarborgen dat financiering voor het maatschappelijk middenveld en de sociale partners beschikbaar is voor het produceren van deze schaduwrapporten?

3. Welke overige maatregelen zal de Commissie voorstellen om te waarborgen dat het maatschappelijk middenveld en de sociale partners op een correcte manier in het Europees-semesterproces betrokken zijn, om een democratische verantwoordingsplicht, draagvlak en legitimiteit van het proces te bevorderen?

Antwoord van de heer Rehn namens de Commissie
(12 april 2012)

De Commissie moedigt de regeringen van de lidstaten aan ervoor te zorgen dat de nationale parlementen, sociale partners en andere ter zake relevante belanghebbende partijen nauw worden betrokken bij de werkzaamheden in het kader van de Europa 2020-strategie en het Europees semester. Voor de sociale partners is zowel op EU- als op nationaal niveau een sleutelrol weggelegd als het erop aankomt de kwaliteit van het beleid te helpen waarborgen.

De tripartiete sociale top voor groei en werkgelegenheid, die gewoonlijk twee keer per jaar wordt gehouden, biedt de instellingen en de sociale partners van de EU een platform voor het voeren van een dialoog op hoog niveau. De Commissie zal dit thema verder behandelen in het kader van het werkgelegenheidspakket dat medio april 2012 zal worden gepresenteerd.

De Commissie verleent uit hoofde van het Progress-programma financiële steun ter dekking van de exploitatiekosten van verschillende Europese netwerken die actief zijn op het gebied van de bestrijding van armoede, discriminatie en sociale uitsluiting. Deze netwerken leveren dankzij hun Europawijde institutionele contacten met de sociale sector en hun grote veldexpertise een waardevolle bijdrage tot de vorming van een doeltreffender en degelijk onderbouwd beleid en spelen bovendien een belangrijke rol in het aangaan van actiegerichte partnerschappen met nationale autoriteiten, academici en organisaties uit het maatschappelijk middenveld.

De financiële steun die de Commissie aan de Europese sociale netwerken verleent, is gericht op het versterken van de capaciteit van deze netwerken om de doelstellingen van het sociale beleid op EU-niveau te monitoren, te evalueren en ten uitvoer te leggen, onder meer door het opstellen van onafhankelijke beoordelingen van de sociale, financiële en werkgelegenheidssituatie in de EU-lidstaten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002121/12
to the Commission
Marije Cornelissen (Verts/ALE)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Civil society and social partner participation in the European Semester

On 1 December 2011 the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the European Semester for Economic Policy Coordination (2011/2071(INI)). Paragraph 112 of this resolution reads as follows: 'Calls on the Commission to ask civil society and social partners to contribute an annual shadow report on the progress of the Member States regarding the headline targets and the implementation of measures proposed in the NRPs, comparable with the shadow reports produced on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)'.

The participation of civil society and social partners in the European Semester process is crucial in order to give it democratic accountability, ownership and legitimacy. It could be supported by inviting and supporting civil society organisations and social partners at Member State level to submit independent assessments of the social, employment and financial situation (comparable to the 'shadow reports' on the implementation of the CEDAW) to the Commission before the country-specific guidance is issued to Member States.

1. Will the Commission follow up on Parliament's request by officially inviting civil society and social partners to produce such shadow reports during this year's European Semester?

2. Will the Commission ensure that funding is available for civil society organisation and social partners to produce these shadow reports?

3. What additional measures will the Commission propose to ensure that civil society and social partners are properly involved in the European Semester process in order to stimulate the democratic accountability, ownership and legitimacy of the process?

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

The Commission encourages Member States' governments to ensure the close involvement of national parliaments, social partners and other relevant stakeholders in the context of the Europe 2020 strategy and the European Semester. Social partners have a key role to play at EU and at national level to help to ensure the quality of policy.

The Tripartite Social Summit for Growth and Jobs, which meets usually twice a year, is a high level forum for a dialogue between EU institutions and EU social partners. The Commission will further address this issue in its forthcoming Employment Package to the presented mid-April 2012.

The Commission financially supports through the PROGRESS programme the operational costs of several European networks active in fighting poverty, discrimination and social exclusion. Through their institutional contacts within the social sector across Europe and their prominent expertise in the field, these networks provide a valuable contribution to more effective, evidence-based policies and play an important role in building action-oriented partnerships with national authorities, academics and civil society organisations.

The Commission's funding for the European social networks aims at strengthening their capacity to monitor, evaluate and implement social policy goals at the EU level, including by producing such independent assessments of the social, financial and employment situation in the EU Member States.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002124/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(22 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Dati e misure sul turismo

La crisi economica internazionale ha provocato un generale calo del numero dei turisti, delle notti trascorse in strutture ricettive e del fatturato raggiunto dagli operatori del settore.

Sebbene la diminuzione sia avvenuta in modo difforme da Stato a Stato, alcuni dati comparabili si riscontrano in varie analisi effettuate da esperti di settore. Innanzitutto diminuisce il numero dei giorni di pernottamento: se fino a qualche anno fa le vacanze duravano alcune settimane, adesso si è registrata una contrazione dei giorni di pernottamento. Altro dato è la vicinanza della meta prescelta alla propria abitazione. Rispetto al passato diminuiscono quindi i lunghi viaggi in favore del turismo nazionale e regionale.

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

1. se è può fornire statistiche e dati aggiornati sul numero dei turisti e sul fatturato del settore nei diversi Stati membri,

2. come intende sostenere, alla luce dell'attuale crisi economica internazionale, il settore turistico che in Europa dà lavoro a centinaia di migliaia di persone?

Risposta data da Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(30 marzo 2012)

1. Il Sistema statistico europeo copre le statistiche del turismo in forza della direttiva 95/57 ([1]) (fino al 2011) e del regolamento 692/2011 ([2]) (a decorrere dal 2012). Gli Stati membri trasmettono regolarmente statistiche armonizzate sul turismo alla Commissione (Eurostat). Sono disponibili dati sulla capacità e sul tasso di occupazione delle strutture ricettive (dati più recenti: novembre 2011) e sui viaggi turistici effettuati, sui pernottamenti e sulle spese incorse per tali viaggi dai cittadini dell'UE (dati più recenti: terzo trimestre del 2011).

La base dati nonché le relazioni specifiche sono disponibili sul sito web di Eurostat:
(http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/tourism/introduction).

L'onorevole deputato troverà in allegato ([3]) le cifre chiave del turismo. Non esistono statistiche sul turnover del settore turistico nel suo insieme, ma l'allegato comprende cifre relative al turnover per i sottosettori relativi alle strutture ricettive e alle agenzie di viaggio/ai tour operator (ricavate dalle statistiche strutturali delle imprese).

2. Il quadro politico relativo a tutte le azioni volte a promuovere il turismo è esposto nella comunicazione «L'Europa, prima destinazione turistica mondiale — un nuovo quadro politico per il turismo europeo» ([4]). Questa comunicazione espone 21 azioni che sono ora in corso di realizzazione e dovrebbero recare un sostegno all'industria in tempi di crisi.

L'onorevole deputato troverà la comunicazione e una rassegna completa delle azioni in tema di turismo condotte dalla Commissione nel Programma rinnovabile per il turismo (Tourism Implementation Rolling Plan) all'indirizzo:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=5719.

([1]) GUJ L 291 del 6.12.1995, pag. 32.
([2]) GU L 192 del 22.7.2011, pag. 17.
([3]) L'allegato è inviato direttamente all'onorevole deputato e al segretariato del Parlamento.
([4]) COM(2010)352 definitivo del 30.06.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002124/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Data and statistics on tourism

The global economic crisis has caused a general fall in tourist numbers, in nights spent in holiday accommodation and in the turnover achieved by sectoral operators.

Although the manner in which the decrease has occurred varies from state to state, certain comparable data may be found across various analyses carried out by sectoral experts. Firstly, there has been a reduction in the number of overnight stays: until a few years ago, holidays lasted several weeks; they are now being shortened. Another indicator is the proximity of the chosen destination to the person's home. Compared to the past, long-haul trips are losing ground to national and regional holidays.

In view of this, could the Commission state:

1.whether it can provide up-to-date statistics and data on tourist numbers and on the sectoral turnover in the various Member States;

2. how, in view of the current global economic crisis, it intends to support the tourist sector, which provides employment to hundreds of thousands of people across Europe?

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

1. The European Statistical System covers tourism statistics under Directive 95/57 ([1]) (until 2011) and Regulation 692/2011 ([2]) (as of 2012). Member States regularly transmit harmonised tourism statistics to the Commission (Eurostat). Data is available on capacity and occupancy of accommodation establishments (most recent: November 2011) and on tourism trips made, nights spent and expenditure on those trips by EU residents (most recent: third quarter 2011).

The database as well as topical reports is available on the Eurostat website (http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/tourism/introduction).

The Honourable Member is provided with the key tourism figures in the annex ([3]). Statistics on sectoral turnover of the tourism sector as whole do not exist, but the annex includes turnover figures for the subsectors accommodation and travel agencies/tour operators (extracted from structural business statistics).

2. The political framework for all actions to support tourism is presented in the communication, 'Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination — a new political framework for tourism in Europe' ([4]). This communication contains 21 actions which are currently implemented and are expected to support the industry in times of crisis.

The Honourable Member can find both the communication and a complete overview of tourism actions implemented by the Commission in the Tourism Implementation Rolling Plan available at: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=5719

([1]) OJ L 291, 6.12.1995, p. 32.
([2]) OJ L 192, 22.7.2011, p. 17.
([3]) The annex is sent directly to the Honourable Member and to the Secretariat of Parliament.
([4]) COM(2010) 352 final of 30.6.2010.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002127/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(22 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Αρνητικές συνέπειες στην υγεία από τη χρήση δισφαινόλης

Σύμφωνα με το διαδικτυακό τόπο in.gr, οι ερευνητές του Πανεπιστημίου Μιγκέλ Ερνέντεθ της Ισπανίας διαπίστωσαν ότι ακόμη και σε απειροελάχιστες ποσότητες (ένα τέταρτο του δισεκατομμυριοστού του γραμμαρίου) η δισφαινόλη (BPA) επιδρά στο πάγκρεας πυροδοτώντας την έκκριση διπλάσιας ινσουλίνης από αυτή που είναι απαραίτητη για τη διάσπαση των τροφών.

Τα υψηλά επίπεδα ινσουλίνης, με την πάροδο του χρόνου, προκαλούν την αντίσταση του οργανισμού στη δράση της ορμόνης οδηγώντας σε παχυσαρκία ή διαβήτη τύπου 2.

Η δισφαινόλη Α φαίνεται ότι έχει παρόμοια δράση με τα οιστρογόνα όσον αφορά στους υποδοχείς τους. Για να αποδείξουν αυτή τη δράση της οι ερευνητές αφαίρεσαν δυο υποδοχείς οιστρογόνων από το πάγκρεας ποντικών και, όπως περιγράφεται στη μελέτη τους, η οποία δημοσιεύθηκε στην επιθεώρηση «Public Library of Science One» («PLoS One»), μετά την αφαίρεση των συγκεκριμένων υποδοχέων η έκκριση της ινσουλίνης επανήλθε στα φυσιολογικά επίπεδα, γεγονός το οποίο αποδεικνύει για πρώτη φορά πειραματικά το χημικό μηχανισμό δράσης της BPA. Οι ερευνητές τονίζουν ότι σε δοκιμές σε ανθρώπινα κύτταρα στο εργαστήριο η απόκριση εμφανίστηκε ακόμη πιο ισχυρή.

Η προσπάθεια για την αντιμετώπιση του διαβήτη τύπου 2 αλλά και της παχυσαρκίας με όλες τις καταστροφικές συνέπειες που μπορεί να έχει στην ανθρώπινη υγεία μπορεί να ενταθεί εφόσον υπάρξει συντονισμός σε πανευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Επί του παρόντος διεξάγονται έλεγχοι στις συσκευασίες των προϊόντων που καταναλώνονται εντός της ΕΕ για να περιοριστεί στο μέτρο του δυνατού η χρήση της δισφαινόλης;

2. Υπάρχει κάποιο υποκατάστατο της δισφαινόλης που να μην έχει τα ίδια αρνητικά αποτελέσματα, και εφόσον κάποια εταιρεία επιθυμεί να το χρησιμοποιήσει πειραματικά, υπάρχει κοινοτική στήριξη;

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

1. Στη γνώμη του 2006 για τη δισφαινόλη Α (BPA) ([1]) η Ευρωπαϊκή Αρχή για την Ασφάλεια των Τροφίμων (ΕΑΑΤ) εξέτασε χρήσεις της BPA σε υλικά που έρχονται σε επαφή με τρόφιμα, και με αυτή τη βάση διεξήγε εκτίμηση έκθεσης. Η ΕΑΑΤ προτίθεται να προβεί φέτος στη συλλογή περαιτέρω δεδομένων για τις χρήσεις BPA σε υλικά που έρχονται σε επαφή με τρόφιμα προκειμένου να επικαιροποιήσει τις πληροφορίες για τη διατροφική έκθεση στην BPA.

2. Η χρήση BPA σε υλικά που έρχονται σε επαφή με τρόφιμα είναι πολλαπλή, και τα υποκατάστατα πρέπει να αναλυθούν κατά περίπτωση λαμβάνοντας υπόψη την επίχριση (π.χ. πλαστικό, χρώμα, μελάνη εκτύπωσης) και τον τύπο του τροφίμου με το οποίο έρχεται σε επαφή το υλικό. Επί του παρόντος, δεν προβλέπεται χρηματοδότηση της ΕΕ για έρευνα σε έργα που υποκαθιστούν τη BPA σε υλικά που έρχονται σε επαφή με τρόφιμα.

([1]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/428.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002127/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Detrimental health consequences from the use of Bisphenol

According to the web portal in.gr, researchers at the Miguel Hernandez University in Spain have ascertained that even in infinitely small quantities (a quarter of a billionth of a gram) Bisphenol (BPA) has an effect on the pancreas, inducing the secretion of twice the amount of insulin as is necessary for the breakdown of food.

With the passage of time, high levels of insulin trigger resistance from the body to the action of this hormone, leading to obesity or type 2 diabetes.

Bisphenol A appears to act on its receptors in a manner similar to oestrogen. To demonstrate this, the researchers extracted two oestrogen receptors from the pancreas of mice and, as described in their study, published in the review 'Public Library of Science One' (*PLoS ONE*), following the removal of the receptors in question the secretion of insulin returned to normal levels, providing experimental evidence for the first time of BPA's chemical mechanisms. The researchers emphasise that in laboratory tests on human cells the secretion manifested itself even more strongly.

Efforts to deal with type 2 diabetes as well as obesity, with all the destructive consequences it can have for human health, can be intensified if there is coordination at the pan-European level.

Will the Commission answer the following:

1. Are checks being conducted at this moment on the packaging of products consumed within the EU, in order to limit the use of Bisphenol as far as possible?

2. Does a substitute exist for Bisphenol that does not have the same detrimental effects, and if a company wishes to use any such substitute on an experimental basis, is there provision for Community support?

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

1. In its opinion of 2006 on Bisphenol A (BPA) ([1]) the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) investigated uses of BPA in food contact materials and on this basis performed an exposure assessment. EFSA intends to collect further data this year on the uses of BPA in food contact materials in order to update the information on dietary exposure to BPA.

2. The use of BPA in food contact materials is very versatile and replacements have to be analysed on a case by case basis taking into account the application (e.g. plastics, coatings, printing inks) and the type of food with which the material comes into contact. Currently there is no EU research funding foreseen for projects dealing with replacements on BPA in food contact materials.

([1]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/428.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002129/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(22 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Αποκλεισμός των Νήσων Φώκλαντ

Ότι τα νησιά Φώκλαντ (βρετανικής κυριαρχίας) δεν εντάσσονται στο πλαίσιο των σχέσεων της ΕΕ με τις χώρες της Αφρικής, της Καραϊβικής και του Ειρηνικού είναι κατανοητό, στο πλαίσιο μιας ρεαλιστικής προσέγγισης. Όμως το γεγονός ότι τα νησιά Φώκλαντ αντιμετωπίζουν την απόφαση της Ουρουγουάης, της Βραζιλίας, της Αργεντινής και της Χιλής να προχωρήσουν στην κίνηση αποκλεισμού των λιμανιών τους από τα πλοία που φέρουν τη σημαία των Νήσων, απόφαση που τα στραγγαλίζει οικονομικά, είναι άδικο για τους κατοίκους της μικρής, κυρίως αγροτικής χώρας.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Σχεδιάζει να παρέμβει για να δώσει ένα τέλος στον εν λόγω αποκλεισμό;

2. Σε ποιες κινήσεις σχεδιάζει να προβεί για να υπάρξει αναγνώριση του δίκαιου καθεστώτος, ώστε να επιτευχθεί η αρμονική συνύπαρξη των νήσων με τις χώρες της Λατινικής Αμερικής;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Ιουνίου 2012)

Βάσει της ΣΛΕΕ, τα κράτη μέλη έχουν συμφωνήσει να συνδέουν τα νησιά Φώκλαντ (και άλλες υπερπόντιες χώρες και εδάφη που έχουν συνταγματικούς δεσμούς με ορισμένα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ όπως αυτοί ορίζονται στο παράρτημα ΙΙ της ΣΛΕΕ) με την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση.

Σκοπός της σύνδεσης αυτής είναι η προώθηση της οικονομικής και κοινωνικής ανάπτυξης αυτών των χωρών και εδαφών, και η δημιουργία στενών οικονομικών σχέσεων μεταξύ αυτών και της Ένωσης στο σύνολό της. Τα ζητήματα κυριαρχίας υπάγονται στη δικαιοδοσία των κρατών μελών.

Η ΥΕ/ΑΠ έχει γνώση της διακήρυξης Mercosur στην οποία αναφέρεται το Αξιότιμο Μέλος. Οι επικεφαλής των αποστολών της ΕΕ στην περιοχή παρακολουθούν τις εξελίξεις και κάνουν αναφορές τακτικά επί του θέματος.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002129/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Falkland Islands embargo

Taking a pragmatic approach, it is understandable that the Falkland Islands (a British sovereign territory) are not included in the framework of EU relations with African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. However, the fact that the Falkland Islands are confronted by a decision by Uruguay, Brazil, Argentina and Chile to close their ports to ships flying the Islands' flag, which is tantamount to economic strangulation, is unjust to the inhabitants of this small, primarily agricultural, territory.

Will the Commission say:

1. Does it plan to intervene to put an end to this embargo?

2. What actions does it intend to take to secure recognition of the equitable status quo, ensuring a harmonious coexistence between the Islands and the countries of Latin America?

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

Under the TFEU, Member States have agreed to associate the Falklands Islands (and other overseas countries and territories that have constitutional ties with Member States as set out in Annex II to the TFEU) with the European Union.

The purpose of association is to promote the economic and social development of the countries and territories and to establish close economic relations between them and the Union as a whole.

Issues of soverignty are matters for Member States.

The HR/VP is well aware of the Mercosur declaration referred to by the Honourable Member.

EU Heads of Delegation in the region are monitoring developments and report regularly on the matter.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002130/12
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(22 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Συνέχεια αντιδημοκρατικής δράσης της αιγυπτιακής πολιτείας

Οι οργανώσεις που προωθούν την κοινωνία των πολιτών στην Αίγυπτο βρίσκονται υπό διωγμό. Ο διωγμός αυτός επεκτείνεται και εντείνεται σε βάρος των χριστιανών κατοίκων.

Όλες οι χώρες που είναι φίλα προσκείμενες στο βασανισμένο αιγυπτιακό λαό ανησυχούν λόγω του ότι, όπως φαίνεται, η δημοκρατία δε κερδίζει στη χώρα μετά την ανατροπή του καθεστώτος Μουμπάρακ.

Ερωτάται η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος;

1. Σχεδιάζει να πρωτοστατήσει στην ύπαρξη οργανωμένης δράσης για τη στήριξη της αιγυπτιακής κοινωνίας των πολιτών;

2. Θα υπάρξουν αντικίνητρα από ευρωπαϊκής πλευράς για να αποθαρρυνθεί η υπάρχουσα, απογοητευτική για τη δημοκρατία, δράση;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Μαΐου 2012)

Η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος/Αντιπρόεδρος (ΥΕ/ΑΠ) έχει εκφράσει τη βαθιά της ανησυχία σχετικά με τους περιορισμούς που επιβάλλονται στις οργανώσεις της κοινωνίας των πολιτών (ΟΚΠ) στην Αίγυπτο μέσω δηλώσεων που εξέδωσε στις 30 Δεκεμβρίου 2012 και την 1η Φεβρουαρίου 2012. Το ζήτημα τέθηκε επίσης και στα συμπεράσματα του Συμβουλίου Εξωτερικών Υποθέσεων της 27ης Φεβρουαρίου 2012. Η ΥΑ/ΑΠ έχει ζητήσει από τις αιγυπτιακές αρχές να επιλύσουν την κατάσταση και να επιτρέψουν στις ΟΚΠ να συνεχίσουν το έργο τους για τη στήριξή της μετάβασης. Η υποστήριξη της κοινωνίας των πολιτών από την ΕΕ αποτελεί σημαντική συνιστώσα της αναθεωρημένης Ευρωπαϊκής Πολιτικής Γειτονίας, η οποία βασίζεται στην αμοιβαία λογοδοσία και την κοινή προσήλωση στις καθολικές αξίες των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων, των θεμελιωδών ελευθεριών, της δημοκρατίας και του κράτους δικαίου. Η προώθηση της ελευθερίας του συνεταιρίζεσθαι είναι ένας από του πυλώνες της πολιτικής ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων της ΕΕ. Συνεπώς, η ΕΕ έχει τονίσει τη σημασία που έχει για την Αίγυπτο, η εφαρμογή ενός νέου νόμου σχετικά με τις ΜΚΟ ο οποίος θα ανταποκρίνεται στα διεθνή κριτήρια.

Σε πρόσφατες δηλώσεις (ιδίως στις 18 Δεκεμβρίου, τις 20 Νοεμβρίου, τις 26 Νοεμβρίου και τις 10 Οκτωβρίου), η ΥΕ/ΑΠ ζήτησε επανειλημμένα από τις αρχές της Αιγύπτου να προστατεύουν τις θεμελιώδεις ελευθερίες των πολιτών, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της ανεξιθρησκίας. Οι ανησυχίες αυτές εκφράζονται επίσης τακτικά και σε ανεπίσημες επαφές με τις αιγυπτιακές αρχές. Οι προσπάθειες της νέας αιγυπτιακής ηγεσίας να προχωρήσει προς την οικοδόμηση βαθιάς δημοκρατίας θα αξιολογηθεί προσεκτικά σύμφωνα με την προσέγγιση «περισσότερα για περισσότερα» που είναι ουσιαστικό χαρακτηριστικό της νέας πολιτικής γειτονίας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002130/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Continuing anti-democratic action by the Egyptian State

Civil society organisations in Egypt are being persecuted. Egypt's Christians in particular are being subjected to increasing and more intense persecution.

All countries which are favourably disposed towards the long-suffering Egyptian people are concerned that democracy does not seem to be gaining ground in the country despite the overthrow of the Mubarak regime.

In view of the above, will the Vice-President/High Representative say:

1. Does she intend to take a leading role in taking concerted action in support of Egyptian civil society?

2. Will the EU provide disincentives to discourage current government action, which is disheartening for democracy?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) has expressed her deep concern about the restrictions on civil society organisations (CSOs) in Egypt through statements issued on 30 December 2011 and 1 February 2012. The issue has also been addressed in the conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council of 27 February 2012. The HR/VP has urged the Egyptian authorities to resolve the situation and allow CSOs to continue their work in support of the transition. The EU's support to civil society is a key component of the revised European Neighbourhood Policy, which is based on mutual accountability and a shared commitment to the universal values of human rights, fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law. The promotion of freedom of association is one of the pillars of EU human rights policy. Therefore, the EU has underlined the importance for Egypt of the adoption of a new NGOs law compliant with international standards.

In recent statements (notably on 18 December, 20 November, 26 November and 10 October 2011), the HR/VP has repeatedly called on the Egyptian authorities to protect the fundamental freedoms of the citizens, including freedom of religion or belief. These concerns are also regularly raised in informal contacts with the Egyptian authorities. The efforts made by the new Egyptian leadership to progress towards the development of a deep democracy will be carefully assessed in accordance with the 'more for more approach' inherent to the new neighbourhood policy.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002131/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(22 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Συνέχεια των βασανιστηρίων στη Τυνησία

Ο υπουργός ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων και κυβερνητικός εκπρόσωπος της τυνησιακής κυβέρνησης, Σαμίρ Ντιλού, δήλωσε κατά την έναρξη της «εθνικής διαβούλευσης για την πρόληψη και την εξάλειψη των βασανιστηρίων και της κακομεταχείρισης», ότι η πρακτική των βασανιστηρίων συνεχίζεται στην Τυνησία παρά την πτώση του παλαιού καθεστώτος. Η διαβούλευση πραγματοποιείται με πρωτοβουλία της αποστολής της Παγκόσμιας Οργάνωσης κατά των Βασανιστηρίων (OMCT) στην Τυνησία.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει εικόνα για την ισχύουσα κατάσταση των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων στην Τυνησία;

2. Σε ποιο βαθμό παρεμβαίνει για να συμβάλει στη βελτίωση της αντιμετώπισης των αντιφρονούντων/κρατουμένων στην Τυνησία;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(10 Μαΐου 2012)

1. Πρακτικές που ισοδυναμούσαν με βασανιστήρια και κακή μεταχείριση, ήταν διαδεδομένες και συστηματικές κατά το προηγούμενο καθεστώς, και συνοδεύονταν από γενική ατιμωρησία.

Κατά τους πρώτους μήνες μετά την επανάσταση, η Τυνησία επικύρωσε το προαιρετικό πρωτόκολλο της Σύμβασης κατά των βασανιστηρίων. Η ΕΕ εξέφρασε την ικανοποίησή της για την επικύρωση, μέσω δήλωσης της ΥΕ/ΑΠ (Ιούλιος 2011). Ο εθνικός προληπτικός μηχανισμός για την πρόληψη των βασανιστηρίων (που προβλέπεται στο άρθρο 3 του προαιρετικού πρωτοκόλλου των Ηνωμένων Εθνών (ΗΕ) δεν έχει ακόμα καθιερωθεί. Στις 29 Φεβρουαρίου 2012, η επιτροπή σχετικά με τα δικαιώματα και τις ελευθερίες της Συντακτικής Συνέλευσης κατήργησε το άρθρο 5 του νόμου αριθ. 106 της 22ας Οκτωβρίου 2011, που καθορίζει τη νομοθετημένη περίοδο παραγραφής για το έγκλημα του βασανισμού σε 15 έτη. Ωστόσο, παρά την πτώση του παλαιού καθεστώτος, οι πρακτικές βασανισμού και κακομεταχείρισης δεν έχουν εξαλειφθεί. Όταν διαπιστώνονται, καταδικάζονται συστηματικά από την ΕΕ.

2. Η καταπολέμηση των βασανιστηρίων και της κακομεταχείρισης θα πρέπει επίσης να εξετάζεται στο γενικότερο πλαίσιο των δημοκρατικών μεταρρυθμίσεων. Η ΕΕ έχει επανειλημμένα εκφράσει την προθυμία της να υποστηρίξει τη δημοκρατική μετάβαση. Παρακολουθεί την κατάσταση εκ του σύνεγγυς και είναι σε τακτική επαφή με τις αρχές για τα θέματα αυτά. Επιπλέον, έχει προχωρήσει την προετοιμασία προγράμματος για την υποστήριξη της μεταρρύθμισης του τομέα της δικαιοσύνης το 2012. *Επιπλέον, η ΕΕ έχει αρχίσει διάλογο με τις τυνησιακές αρχές για τη μεταρρύθμιση του τομέα της ασφάλειας και έχει εκφράσει την προθυμία της να συνδράμει τη χώρα όσον αφορά την αποτελεσματική εφαρμογή των δεσμεύσεων των ΗΕ στον τομέα του σεβασμού των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων. Ταυτόχρονα, η ΕΕ θα συνεχίσει να κάνει χρήση των μέσων συνεργασίας που διαθέτει για να στηρίξει τις δραστηριότητες των φορέων της κοινωνίας των πολιτών στις προσπάθειές τους για την προώθηση του σεβασμού των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων και των θεμελιωδών ελευθεριών.*

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002131/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(22 February 2012)

Subject: Continuing torture in Tunisia

The Tunisian Minister for Human Rights and government spokesperson Samir Dilou stated at the opening of the 'National consultation for the prevention and eradication of torture and abuse' that the practice of torture was continuing in Tunisia despite the fall of the previous regime. This consultation exercise is being conducted at the initiative of the World Organisation against Torture (OMCT) mission to Tunisia.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it have any idea of the existing human rights situation in Tunisia?

2. To what extent is it intervening to help improve the treatment of dissidents/prisoners in Tunisia?

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

1. Practices amounting to torture and ill-treatment were widespread and systematic during the previous regime and were accompanied by general impunity.

During the first months after the revolution, Tunisia ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture. The EU has welcomed this ratification, thorough a HR/VP statement (July 2011). The national preventive mechanism for the prevention of torture (foreseen by Article 3 of the United Nations (UN) Optional Protocol) has not been established yet. On 29 February 2012, the Commission on Rights and Freedoms of the Constituent Assembly abolished Article 5 of Law No 106 dating from 22 October 2011 which sets the statute of limitations for the crime of torture at 15 years. However, despite the fall of the old regime, torture and ill-treatment practices have not disappeared. When they happen, they are regularly condemned by the EU.

2. The fight against torture and ill-treatment should also be seen in the more general context of democratic reforms. The EU has repeatedly expressed its willingness to support democratic transition. It is following the situation closely and is in regular contact with the authorities on such issues. Moreover, it has advanced the preparation of a programme in support of the reform of the justice sector to 2012. In addition, the EU has also started a dialogue with the Tunisian authorities on the reform of the security sector and has expressed its readiness to accompany the country in the effective implementation of UN commitments in the field of respect for human rights. At the same time, the EU will continue to use its cooperation instruments to support the activities of civil society actors, in their efforts to promote respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002132/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Aeropuerto de El Prat y aeropuerto de Barajas

La ministra de Fomento del Gobierno español, Ana Pastor, ha asegurado que el aeropuerto de Barajas y el de El Prat compiten en igualdad de condiciones y se ha comprometido a solucionar «el agujero de 14 000 millones de deuda que tienen el conjunto de aeropuertos españoles» ([1]).

La titular de Fomento ha explicado que tanto Barajas como El Prat tienen infraestructuras de calidad y ambos han tenido un crecimiento de tráfico «impresionante». Ha recordado que en el año 2011 El Prat superó los 34 millones de pasajeros mientras que Barajas se situó en los 41,7 millones y ha reiterado que ambos aeropuertos son gestionados con igualdad, «lo que significa que desde AENA se atiende a todos», ha puntualizado.

Por su parte, el diputado del Grupo Mixto, Alfred Bosch i Pascual, ha señalado que las pérdidas de AENA «se explican por las pérdidas atribuibles a Barajas, donde se invierte el 55 % de los recursos cuando sólo tiene el 25 % del tráfico».

— ¿No cree la Comisión que la inversión de AENA en el aeropuerto de Barajas es desproporcionada a su volumen de tráfico?

— Si Barajas tiene un tráfico de 41,7 millones de pasajeros y tiene una inversión de AENA del 55 % de los recursos, El Prat debería tener, según esta lógica, una inversión del 45 % de los recursos dado que su tráfico es de 34 millones de pasajeros. En cambio el Prat recibe solamente el 25 % de los recursos de AENA. ¿No cree la Comisión que esta diferencia de inversión por parte de AENA, perjudica a la competencia del aeropuerto de El Prat con respecto al de Barajas?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de abril de 2012)

1. Es muy probable que la comparación entre la proporción de la inversión realizada en un aeropuerto dentro de un grupo de aeropuertos y la proporción de sus pasajeros varíe en el transcurso del tiempo, por lo que en cierta medida depende de qué período de tiempo se elija para realizar la comparación. A partir de la información facilitada, la Comisión no estaría en condiciones de concluir que la inversión en el Aeropuerto de Barajas sea desproporcionada en relación con su volumen de tráfico. Además, Barajas y El Prat forman parte de una red de aeropuertos más amplia, concepto operativo que se reconoce en la legislación de la UE (por ejemplo, la Directiva 2009/12/CE relativa a las tasas aeroportuarias ([2])).

2. La competitividad de un aeropuerto depende de una serie de factores. A partir de la información recogida sobre los coeficientes de inversión con respecto al número de pasajeros para un período de tiempo concreto, la Comisión no estaría en condiciones de concluir que El Prat sea menos competitivo que Barajas.

([1]) http://www.20minutos.es/noticia/1309639/0/ana-pastor/compromete-ave-asturias/deuda-aeropuertos/
([2]) Directiva 2009/12/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 11 de marzo de 2009, relativa a las tasas aeroportuarias (DO L 70 de 14.3.2009, p. 11).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002132/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: El Prat and Barajas airports

The Spanish Government's Minister for Development, Ana Pastor, has given assurances that Barajas airport and El Prat airport compete on an level playing field and has undertaken to find a solution to 'Spain's airports' cumulative debt of EUR **14 billion'** ([1]).

The Minister of Development explained that both Barajas and El Prat airports had high-quality infrastructures and had seen '**impressive**' **growth in traffic**. The Minister recalled that in 2011 El Prat welcomed more than34 million passengers while Barajas **had 41.7 million** and reiterated that both airports are managed on equal terms, 'which means that AENA takes care of all of them', the Minister clarified.

The Grupo Mixto MP, Alfred Bosch i Pascual, has stated that AENA's losses 'are explained by losses attributable to Barajas**,** in which it invests 55 % of its resources, although it only handles 25 % of traffic'.

— Does the Commission not believe that investment by AENA in Barajas Airport is disproportionate to its volume of traffic?

— If Barajas has traffic of 41.7 million passengers and AENA invests 55 % of its resources in it, El Prat should, by this logic, receive of 45 % of resources, as it has traffic of 34 million passengers. However, El Prat receives only 25 % of AENA's resources. Does the Commission not believe that this difference in AENA investment makes El Prat less competitive than Barajas?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

1. The comparison of the proportion of investment in an airport within an airport group against its proportion of passenger numbers would most likely vary through time, and therefore depend somewhat on exactly which time period it chosen to make the comparison. From the information given the Commission would not be able to draw the conclusion that investment in Barajas Airport is disproportionate to its volume of traffic. In addition, Barajas and El Prat form part of a larger airports network, an operational concept which is recognised in EC law (e.g. Directive 2009/12/EC on Airport charges ([2])).

2. The competitiveness of an airport depends on a number of factors. From the information given about ratios of investment against passenger numbers for one particular time period the Commission would not be able to draw the conclusion that El Prat is less competitive than Barajas.

([1]) http://www.20minutos.es/noticia/1309639/0/ana-pastor/compromete-ave-asturias/deuda-aeropuertos/.
([2]) Directive 2009/12/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2009 on airport charges, OJ L 70, 14.3.2009, p. 11.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002133/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Posible sanción a Spanair

El pasado 27 de enero de 2012 la compañía aérea Spanair cesó sus operaciones debido al cierre de la compañía ([1]). Durante la semana anterior al cierre, se publicaron diferentes noticias sobre la posible apertura de capital de Spanair con Qatar airways ([2]). Al mismo tiempo, el presidente de Iberia, declaró que la compañía Spanair «no tenía futuro». El mismo día 27 de enero de 2012, por la mañana, se publica que Qatar airways abandona las negociaciones de invertir en Spanair ante la posible sanción por parte de la Comisión Europea por las subvenciones recibidas por parte de las administraciones públicas ([3]) ([4]).

¿Tiene constancia la Comisión de tales hechos?

¿Piensa la Comisión iniciar una investigación interna sobre la cuestión? ¿Piensa la Comisión poner en marcha medidas internas para disminuir el número de filtraciones de información privilegiada a los medios de comunicación?

¿Cree la Comisión que la filtración de datos y hechos a los medios de comunicación, específicamente en el ámbito de las sanciones por ayudas de Estado, tiene consecuencias negativas para las empresas envueltas en tales procesos?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(3 de abril de 2012)

En noviembre de 2011, la Comisión abrió, de oficio, una investigación preliminar en materia de ayudas de Estado sobre las posibles ayudas estatales que según informaciones aparecidas en la prensa española se concedieron a Spanair durante los últimos años. Posteriormente, la Comisión recibió también dos denuncias sobre el mismo tema. En diciembre de 2011, la Comisión pidió explicaciones sobre el tema a las autoridades españolas. Esta petición formaba parte de la investigación preliminar en materia de ayudas de Estado que precede a la decisión de incoar o no el procedimiento de investigación formal sobre ayudas estatales. En el momento de redactar esta respuesta, el asunto Spanair está aún en fase de investigación preliminar.

En lo que respecta a la primera pregunta de Su Señoría, la Comisión está efectivamente informada de que: Qatar se retiró de las negociaciones con Spanair; la empresa cesó sus actividades el 27 de enero de 2012; el 1 de febrero de 2012 la empresa fue autorizada a iniciar el procedimiento voluntario ordinario por quiebra («concurso voluntario ordinario»).

Con respecto a la segunda y tercera preguntas, la Comisión no tiene conocimiento de filtración de información alguna sobre este tema. Según lo indicado anteriormente, fueron numerosos los artículos de prensa en los que se informaba de que Spanair había recibido ayuda pública, con anterioridad a que la Comisión iniciara su investigación preliminar.

([1]) http://www.cadenaser.com/economia/articulo/spanair-cierra-deja-22000-pasajeros-poder-volar-fin-semana/csrcsrpor/20120127csrcsreco_9/Tes
([2]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20120125/54245315038/spanair-no-descarta-abrir-su-capital-a-otras-aerolineas.html
([3]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20120127/54245941716/qatar-airways-abandona-negociacion-invertir-spanair.html
([4]) http://elperiodico.com/es/noticias/economia/govern-retira-apoyo-economico-spanair-tras-qatar-airways-1358901.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002133/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: Possible imposition of sanctions on Spanair

On 27 January 2012, the airline Spanair ceased operating due to the company's closure ([1]). In the week preceding its closure, various news items appeared about a possible influx of capital to Spanair from Qatar Airways ([2]). At the same time, the Chairman of Iberia announced that Spanair 'had no future'. On the same day, 27 January 2012, it was announced in the morning that Qatar Airways was withdrawing from negotiations on acquiring a stake in Spanair on the grounds that the Commission might impose sanctions on it for subsidies it had received from public authorities ([3]) ([4]).

— Is the Commission aware of these facts?

— Does the Commission intend to initiate an internal investigation into this issue? Will the Commission implement internal measures to reduce the number of leaks of privileged information to the media?

— Does the Commission believe that the leaking of data and facts to the media, specifically as regards penalties for state aid, has negative consequences for the companies involved?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

In November 2011 the Commission opened, *ex officio*, a preliminary state aid inquiry into the potential state aid measures that, according to Spanish press reports, were granted in recent years to Spanair. Subsequently the Commission also received two complaints on the same subject. The Commission requested explanations on the subject from the Spanish authorities in December 2011. This request was part of the preliminary state aid inquiry, which precedes the decision whether or not to open the formal state aid investigation procedure. At the time of this reply, the Spanair case is still at a preliminary inquiry stage.

With respect to the Honourable Member's first question, the Commission is indeed informed that: Qatar withdrew from the negotiations with Spanair; the company ceased operations as of 27 January 2012; on 1 February 2012 the company was admitted into ordinary voluntary bankruptcy *concurso voluntario ordinario*).

With respect to the second and the third questions, the Commission has no knowledge of any leak of information on this subject. As indicated above, there were many press reports indicating that Spanair had received public support, before the Commission initiating its preliminary inquiry.

([1]) http://www.cadenaser.com/economia/articulo/spanair-cierra-deja-22000-pasajeros-poder-volar-fin-semana/csrcsrpor/20120127csrcsreco_9/Tes
([2]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20120125/54245315038/spanair-no-descarta-abrir-su-capital-a-otras-aerolineas.html
([3]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20120127/54245941716/qatar-airways-abandona-negociacion-invertir-spanair.html
([4]) http://elperiodico.com/es/noticias/economia/govern-retira-apoyo-economico-spanair-tras-qatar-airways-1358901.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002135/12
to the Commission
Gerard Batten (EFD)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: Directive 2005/36/EC

Can the Commission please clarify the position regarding Directive 2005/36/EC regarding a question raised by one of my constituents concerning the powers of the Member State relevant to this directive?

It appears that the UK General Dental Council is of the view that it has no power to test EU citizens for language or clinical skills before allowing them to practice.

It has been reported in the British press that Commissioner Barnier has described this as a 'myth'.

The GDC requires non-EU citizens to pass an IELTS (International English Language Testing System) and ORE (Overseas Registration Exam) exam before being allowed to practice.

— Can you please confirm what powers the General Dental Council has to test and or examine dentists from EU Member States to deem them able or unable to practice in the UK?

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

The profession of a dental practitioner falls under the automatic recognition regime of Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications. This regime is based on compliance with minimum training requirements for that profession specified in Article 34 and Annex V.3 of the directive. The presumption is that once the professional complies with those requirements his/her qualifications must be automatically recognised — without further examination of clinical skills — in other EU Member States. Consequently, the UK competent authorities (we understand that in the present case this is the UK General Dental Council) may not check the clinical skills of dental practitioners falling under the automatic recognition regime.

Regarding the language skills of those professionals, Article 53 of Directive 2005/36/EC stipulates that they must have a knowledge of languages necessary for practising the profession in the host Member State. The UK competent authorities may check that knowledge after the completion of the automatic recognition procedure only in case of serious doubts. Such language checks must be proportionate to the requirements of the specific job position.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002136/12
à la Commission
Anne Delvaux (PPE)
(23 février 2012)

Objet: Paragraphe 4 de l'article 27 de l'Accord anti-contrefaçon (ACAC)

Le paragraphe 4 de l'article 27 de la section 5, relative à la propriété intellectuelle dans l'environnement numérique, de l'Accord anti-contrefaçon (ACAC) dispose: «Une Partie peut prévoir que ses autorités compétentes seront habilitées, en conformité avec ses lois et réglementations, à *ordonner à un fournisseur de services en ligne de divulguer rapidement au détenteur du droit des renseignements suffisants pour lui permettre d'identifier un abonné dont il est allégué que le compte aurait été utilisé en vue de porter atteinte à des droits, lorsque le détenteur du droit a présenté des allégations suffisantes sur le plan juridique, relativement à une atteinte à une marque de fabrique ou de commerce ou au droit d'auteur ou à des droits connexes, et lorsque ces renseignements sont demandés aux fins de la protection ou du respect de ces droits*». La possibilité offerte par l'ACAC aux fournisseurs d'accès à Internet de divulguer des renseignements relatifs à la vie privée des auteurs présumés d'infractions au droit d'auteur, sans décision de justice ou possibilité de faire appel, suscite bon nombre d'inquiétudes parmi les citoyens.

Je suis d'avis qu'il serait constructif de mener une évaluation plus complète des effets que l'accord pourrait avoir sur les droits fondamentaux, notamment la liberté d'expression et le droit à la vie privée dans l'Union européenne et au-delà.

Est-ce que la Commission entend mener cette étude?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(23 avril 2012)

La Commission souligne que la deuxième partie de l'article 27, paragraphe 4, de l'accord commercial anti-contrefaçon (ACTA) garantit expressément que «ces procédures sont mises en œuvre d'une manière qui […] préserve les principes fondamentaux comme la liberté d'expression, les procédures équitables et le respect de la vie privée».

En outre, comme l'Honorable Parlementaire le rappelle à juste titre, l'article 27, paragraphe 4, de l'ACTA dispose clairement que, si une partie choisit volontairement d'introduire une disposition de ce type, les informations doivent être «divulguées» «en conformité avec les lois et réglementations de cette partie». En 2000, l'UE a décidé d'introduire ce type de mécanisme dans son acquis par l'intermédiaire de l'article 15, paragraphe 2, de la directive sur le commerce électronique (directive 2000/31/CE [1]). Cet article dispose que ces informations sont communiquées aux autorités compétentes. L'ACTA n'impose ni n'encourage aucune modification de ces dispositions ou des législations nationales adoptées par chaque État membre de l'UE pour mettre en œuvre la directive sur le commerce électronique.

Qui plus est, afin de clarifier définitivement ce point, la Commission a décidé de porter l'ACTA devant la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne, qui déterminera si l'ACTA est pleinement compatible avec les traités de l'Union européenne et la Charte des droits fondamentaux.

[1] JO L 178 du 17.7.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002136/12
to the Commission
Anne Delvaux (PPE)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: Article 27(4) of the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA)

Article 27(4) of the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA), under Section 5 relating to intellectual property in the digital environment, states: 'A Party may provide, in accordance with its laws and regulations, its competent authorities with the authority to *order an online service provider to disclose expeditiously to a right holder information sufficient to identify a subscriber whose account was allegedly used for infringement, where that right holder has filed a legally sufficient claim of trademark or copyright or related rights infringement, and where such information is being sought for the purpose of protecting or enforcing those rights*'. The opportunity offered by ACTA for online service providers to disclose information relating to the privacy of alleged offenders of copyright, without a court order or opportunity to appeal, has raised many concerns among citizens.

I believe it would be constructive to conduct a more comprehensive assessment of the effects that the agreement could have on fundamental rights, including freedom of expression and the right to privacy in the European Union and beyond.

Does the Commission intend to conduct this study?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2012)

The Commission points out that the second part of Article 27.4 of the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA) expressly ensures that 'These procedures shall be implemented in a manner that […] preserves fundamental principles such as freedom of expression, fair process, and privacy.'

Furthermore, as the Honourable Member rightly points out, Article 27.4 ACTA clearly prescribes that — if a Party voluntarily opts to introduce such a provision — information is to be provided in accordance with that Party's laws and regulations. The EU decided, in 2000, to introduce such a mechanism in its acquis, through Article 15.2 of the E-commerce Directive (2000/31/EC [1]). This Article prescribes that such information shall be provided to the competent authorities. ACTA does not impose or otherwise promote any change to this provisions or to the national legislations adopted by each EU Member State to implement the E-commerce Directive.

More importantly, in order to definitively clarify this issue, the Commission has decided to refer ACTA to the European Court of Justice, which will pronounce itself on ACTA's full compatibility with the EU Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

---

[1] OJ L 178, 17.7.2000.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002137/12
à la Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(23 février 2012)

Objet: Aide pour les doctorants

Lorsque je vais à la rencontre d'étudiants, ils me demandent souvent: «Mais que fait l'Europe pour nous?». Je leur explique que l'Europe fait partie de leur quotidien (dans les cours), leur assure la reconnaissance internationale de leurs diplômes et les encourage à vivre une expérience à l'étranger (programme Erasmus). L'Union a bien compris que c'est en promouvant ses valeurs auprès des jeunes générations qu'elle arrivera à faire émerger une véritable culture populaire européenne.

Mais il est une question à laquelle il est assez difficile de répondre. De nombreux étudiants se rendent dans un autre pays de l'Union afin de poursuivre leurs études dans le cadre d'un doctorat.

1. Dans quelle mesure la Commission peut-elle aider ces étudiants?

2. Leur accorde-t-elle des ressources financières et matérielles pour la mobilité?

3. Les critères d'éligibilité dépendent-ils du mandat de recherche? Spécifiquement, les doctorats à caractère européen ou d'innovation scientifique sont-ils appuyés?

Réponse donnée par Mme Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(29 mars 2012)

L'Union apporte un soutien financier aux chercheurs doctorants dans l'ensemble de l'Europe à travers, notamment, les actions Marie Curie. L'action «Réseaux de formation initiale», en particulier, bénéficie chaque année à environ 1 500 chercheurs doctorants. Cette action est mise en œuvre selon trois modalités: les programmes de doctorat innovants, les doctorats industriels européens et une troisième modalité qui permet l'inscription à un programme de doctorat, mais sans obligation. Les demandes de financement au titre de l'action «Réseaux de formation initiale» sont transmises par des réseaux d'établissements. Les organisations bénéficiant d'une aide financière choisissent les doctorants dont les travaux porteront sur leur projet; la procédure de sélection doit cependant être conforme à la charte européenne du chercheur et au code de conduite pour le recrutement des chercheurs.

Pour les chercheurs doctorants, l'action «Réseaux de formation initiale» Marie Curie

— verse aux chercheurs une indemnité annuelle de séjour et une allocation de mobilité;

— contribue aux frais de formation/de recherche, aux frais de gestion et aux frais généraux engagés par l'établissement.

Tous les domaines de recherche mentionnés dans le TFUE peuvent être financés par les actions Marie Curie (y compris par l'action «Réseaux de formation initiale»). Les candidats choisissent librement leur domaine de recherche. L'évaluation des projets porte uniquement sur la qualité de la recherche, la formation offerte, l'exécution et la portée du projet.

Grâce au programme Erasmus, l'Union finance également la mobilité des doctorants entre États membres pour une période de trois à douze mois (2 500 doctorants par an en moyenne, dont un tiers choisissent les entreprises).

Le site web Europa fournit des informations plus approfondies sur ces questions ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/mariecurieactions/ and http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002137/12
to the Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: Help for PhD students

When I meet students, they often ask me: 'what is Europe doing for us?' I tell them that Europe is part of their daily lives (in their lessons), ensures international recognition of their qualifications and encourages them to experience life abroad (Erasmus programme). The EU is well aware that, by inculcating Europe's youth with its values, a genuine European popular culture will emerge.

Yet it remains difficult to get them to see what Europe actually is doing for them. Many students go to another EU country to continue their education through a PhD.

1. How can the Commission help these students?

2. Does it give them the financial and material means to achieve this mobility?

3. Do eligibility criteria depend on the subject matter? Specifically, is support given for doctorates of a European nature or those involving scientific innovation?

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

The Union finances doctoral researchers all across Europe, mainly through the Marie Curie Actions. The Initial Training Networks action (ITN) in particular finances around 1 500 doctoral researchers each year. This action is divided into three implementation modes: Innovative Doctoral Programmes (IDP), European Industrial Doctorates (EID) and a third mode that allows the registration in a doctoral programme but does not make it mandatory. The applications for ITN financing are sent by networks of institutions. The organisations financed choose the doctoral candidates that will work on their project, but the selection procedure must be in line with the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

For researchers at the doctoral level, the ITN Marie Curie action finances:

— for the researcher: an annual living allowance and a mobility allowance;

— for the institution: training/ research costs, management costs and overheads.

All the fields of research covered by the TFEU can be financed by the Marie Curie actions (including by ITN). The applicants choose their field of research freely. The projects are evaluated only on the quality of the research, training offered, implementation and impact of the project.

The Union also finances the mobility of doctoral candidates between the Member Sates, with the Erasmus programme, for a period of 3 to 12 months (2 500 doctoral candidates per year in average, of which 1/3 go to enterprises).

Further information can be found on the Europa website ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/mariecurieactions/ and http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002138/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(23 février 2012)

Objet: Quinze États européens utilisent un pesticide interdit

Quinze pays européens, dont la Belgique, continuent à utiliser le Métam sodium, un biocide à très large spectre pourtant interdit, et ce grâce à l'une des plus belles «échappatoires» de la législation relative aux pesticides: les dérogations, prévues à l'article 8, paragraphe 4, de la directive 91/414/CEE.

La législation permet donc de continuer à utiliser pour des cultures de produits de consommation très courante un produit interdit, car dangereux. Le Métam sodium est en effet soupçonné, par l'USEPA (Agence américaine pour la protection de l'environnement), d'être cancérigène et un toxique de la reproduction et du développement. Pourtant, des millions de kilogrammes de ce gaz dangereux sont utilisés dans l'Union européenne pour la fumigation du sol. Cette utilisation se fonde sur un subterfuge figurant dans la décision du Conseil 2009/562/CE, qui prévoit des dérogations à cette interdiction.

Malgré l'interdiction de principe, une utilisation large est donc tolérée au nom de «l'usage essentiel» pour les États qui demandent à pouvoir bénéficier de cette dérogation. En France, des dérogations ont ainsi été accordées par l'État pour les cultures suivantes: légumes et plantes fruitières, essentiellement mâche, carottes, tomates, fraises, asperges, plantes ornementales, arbres et arbustes. En déposant une requête formelle d'accès aux documents, PAN Europe a pu récupérer les rapports obligatoires réalisés pour 2010 par ces 15 États membres qui utilisent le Métam sodium au nom de «l'usage essentiel» et les a analysés. Ces documents montrent que la France est le plus gros utilisateur de Métam sodium avec quelque six millions et demi de kilos sur ses terres agricoles! L'Espagne, le Portugal et la Grèce en sont aussi de gros utilisateurs. Des alternatives existent pourtant déjà, comme la pratique de rotations culturales plus longues ou l'utilisation de variétés résistantes. Le fait que 12 États membres n'utilisent pas de Métam sodium démontre bien la non recevabilité des dérogations délivrées!

— La Commission peut-elle expliquer la position laxiste de l'Union européenne à ce sujet?

— Qu'en est-il de la volonté de ces 15 États membres de vouloir légaliser le Métam sodium via une procédure rapide et ce contre l'avis de la FNSEA?

— Pourquoi ne fait-on pas pression sur ces États membres pour les obliger à rechercher des solutions alternatives?

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

La Commission invite l'auteur de la question à se reporter à la réponse qu'elle avait donnée à la question écrite E-010855/2011 ([1]) et appelle son attention sur les considérations ci-après, qui sont destinées à répondre à ses préoccupations.

Sur la base de nouvelles études présentées par le demandeur, l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (EFSA) a revu et actualisé les conclusions sur le métham et les a transmises à la Commission en septembre 2011. Il en ressort qu'un agrément peut être octroyé, étant donné que l'évaluation des risques n'a révélé aucun danger pour le consommateur et que le produit peut être utilisé sans risque. Cet agrément devra toutefois être subordonné à certaines restrictions et à l'application de mesures d'atténuation des risques afin de limiter les effets liés à l'utilisation du produit.

Des recherches sont menées depuis quelques années pour trouver des techniques de substitution. D'autres solutions ont été définies et évaluées, mais elles requièrent souvent une adaptation des systèmes culturaux au niveau national. En outre, pour lutter contre les maladies de quarantaine et gérer la résistance des agents pathogènes, il est souhaitable de disposer de plusieurs moyens de prévention et de contrôle.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002138/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: Fifteen EU Member States are using a banned pesticide

Fifteen European countries, including Belgium, continue to use metam-sodium, a banned broad-spectrum biocide, thanks to a large loophole in the legislation on pesticides: derogations, provided for in Article 8 (4) of Directive 91/414/EEC.

This legislation, therefore, allows the continued use of a dangerous banned product on crops used to produce very common consumer products. USEPA (United States Agency for Environmental Protection) suspects that metam-sodium is carcinogenic and toxic to reproduction and development. Yet millions of kilograms of these hazardous gases are used in the European Union to fumigate soil. Such usage is based on a subterfuge in Council Decision 2009/562/EC, which provides for derogations to this ban.

Despite the ban in principle, widespread use is still tolerated under the name of 'essential use' for states wanting to qualify for this derogation. In France, derogations have been granted by the State for the following crops: vegetables and fruit plants, mainly sweetcorn, carrots, tomatoes, strawberries, asparagus, ornamental plants, trees and shrubs. By filing a formal request for access to documents, PAN Europe retrieved and analysed the mandatory reports made in 2010 by the 15 Member States using metam-sodium under the name of 'essential use'. These documents show that France is the biggest user of metam-sodium with some 6.5 million kilograms pumped into its farmland. Spain, Portugal and Greece are also heavy users. Alternatives are readily available, such as wider crop rotation and the use of resistant varieties. The fact that 12 Member States do not use metam-sodium clearly shows that the derogations issued are not acceptable.

— Can the Commission explain the European Union's lax position on this matter?

— What is the Commission's opinion on the 15 Member States that want to legalise metam-sodium via a fast-track procedure against the advice of the FNSEA?

— Why is the Commission not putting pressure on those Member States, forcing them to seek alternative solutions?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-010855/2011 ([1]) and would draw his attention to the following considerations to address his concern.

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), on the basis of new studies submitted by the applicant, reviewed and updated the conclusions on metam and sent them to the Commission in September 2011. The new outcome allows for an approval since the consumer risk assessment has been positively concluded and a safe use has been identified. However, such approval will have to be subject to restrictions and to the application of risk mitigation measures to limit the impacts due to its use.

Research for alternative techniques has been ongoing for some years. Alternative methods have been identified and evaluated, but they often require adaptation of the cropping systems at national level. Moreover, to control quarantine diseases and for the management of resistance of pathogens it is advisable to have several possible means of prevention and control available.

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002140/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(23 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Rossella Urru

Rapita da un commando nella notte tra il 22 e il 23 ottobre, Rossella Urru, 29 anni, cooperante italiana, che si occupava, per amore e spirito di volontariato, dei rifornimenti alimentari per il campo profughi Saharawi di Rabuni, si trova ormai da 4 mesi nelle mani di un gruppo armato del sud-est dell'Algeria. Le ultime notizie che si hanno di Rossella risalgono a dicembre, quando un gruppo dissidente dell'Aqmi (Jamat Tawhid Wal Jihad Fi Garbi Afriqqiya) ha rivendicato il rapimento. Da allora nessuna notizia è più pervenuta.

— Il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per la politica estera e la sicurezza comune è ha conoscenza di questa situazione?

— Come intende attivarsi affinché l'Europa, con i nuovi poteri conferiti dal trattato di Lisbona, partecipi alle indagini?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Ashton è al corrente della situazione e condanna fermamente il rapimento della Sig.ra Urru e di due operatori umanitari spagnoli.

I suoi servizi stanno seguendo da vicino i progressi delle indagini e la delegazione dell'UE in Algeria è in contatto con le autorità a tale riguardo.

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente sostiene tutti gli sforzi compiuti in collaborazione con i governi della regione per ottenere il rilascio degli ostaggi il più rapidamente possibile.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002140/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Rossella Urru

Rossella Urru was kidnapped by a terrorist group during the night of 22-23 October 2011. The 29-year-old Italian aid worker was, out of compassion and a desire to help, overseeing food supplies at the Saharawi refugee camp in Rabuni. She has now been in the hands of an armed group from south-east Algeria for the past four months. The last news heard about Rossella was in December 2011, when a dissident AQMI (al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb) group (Jamat Tawhid Wal Jihad Fi Garbi Afriqqiya) claimed responsibility for the kidnapping. No further news has been received since.

— Is the Vice-President/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy aware of this situation?

— What action will she take to ensure the EU is involved in the investigation, given the new powers conferred by the Treaty of Lisbon?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) Ashton is aware of the situation and strongly condemns the kidnapping of Mrs Urru and the two Spanish humanitarian workers.

Her services are following the progress of the inquiries closely and the EU Delegation in Algeria is in contact with the authorities regarding this issue.

The HR/VP supports all efforts in cooperation with governments of the region to obtain the release of the hostages as rapidly as possible.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-002142/12
alla Commissione
Debora Serracchiani (S&D)
(23 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Commercio illegale di animali

Con sempre maggiore frequenza gli organi di stampa riferiscono di casi di commercio illegale di animali. Un esempio recente riguarda l'Ungheria, da dove parte un traffico illegale di animali giovani trasportati a bordo di furgoni e altri veicoli, del tutto inadeguati, alla volta di altri Stati membri quali Spagna, Italia, Francia e Portogallo.

L'aumento dell'abbandono di animali è una delle conseguenze del commercio incontrollato di animali negli Stati membri, aggravato dall'ingresso illecito di altri animali vivi a bordo di mezzi di trasporto fatiscenti. Inoltre, questi animali non sono stati sottoposti ad alcun controllo sanitario e le condizioni in cui vengono trasportati mettono a serio rischio non solo la salute degli animali stessi ma anche quella delle persone che sono in contatto con essi.

Considerando che la Commissione sta preparando una seconda strategia europea per la protezione e il benessere degli animali, può essa far sapere quali misure intende adottare per prevenire e reprimere il traffico illecito di animali, tenendo conto dell'articolo 8 della Convenzione europea per la protezione degli animali da compagnia?

Può la Commissione indicare quali misure saranno adottate dall'Ufficio alimentare e veterinario (UAV) europeo, affinché il commercio, l'allevamento e la custodia siano realizzati tenendo realmente conto del benessere degli animali?

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

In relazione al tema del commercio illegale di animali da compagnia la Commissione rimanda l'onorevole parlamentare alle risposte fornite alle precedenti interrogazioni scritte E-004525/2008, E-003787/2009, E-006868/2010, E-002270/2011, E-003343/2011, E-006602/2011 ed E-006808/2011 ([1]).

Il 5 marzo 2012 la Commissione ha adottato una proposta di regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio sui movimenti a carattere non commerciale di animali da compagnia ([2]), che mira ad abrogare il regolamento attualmente in vigore ([3]). La Commissione ha proposto di rafforzare i poteri degli Stati membri in materia di controlli per verificare il rispetto delle disposizioni del nuovo regolamento e impedire quindi, con maggiore efficacia, che movimenti commerciali siano dissimulati fraudolentemente come movimenti non commerciali.

La Commissione desidera, tuttavia, sottolineare che la convenzione europea per la protezione degli animali da compagnia non fa parte del corpus legislativo dell'UE e spetta a ciascuno Stato membro decidere se ratificare e attuare tale convenzione elaborata sotto l'egida del Consiglio d'Europa, ossia al di fuori del quadro istituzionale dell'UE.

Il 19 gennaio 2012 la Commissione ha adottato la strategia dell'Unione europea per la protezione e il benessere degli animali 2012-2015 ([4]). È in questo quadro che nel 2014 la Commissione condurrà uno studio sul benessere di cani e gatti oggetto di pratiche commerciali. Alla luce delle conclusioni dello studio, la Commissione valuterà quali azioni siano necessarie per garantire una migliore protezione del benessere degli animali, nel rispetto dei principi di sussidiarietà e proporzionalità.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB
([2]) COM(2012)89 definitivo.
([3]) Regolamento (CE) n. 998/2003 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 26 maggio 2003, relativo alle condizioni di polizia sanitaria applicabili ai movimenti a carattere non commerciale di animali da compagnia e che modifica la direttiva 92/65/CEE del Consiglio (GU L 146 del 13.6.2003).
([4]) COM(2012)6 definitivo.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002142/12
to the Commission
Debora Serracchiani (S&D)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: Illegal trade in animals

With ever-greater frequency, the press cites cases of the illegal trade in animals. A recent example concerns Hungary, from where young animals are illegally trafficked and transported, in vans and other unsuitable vehicles, to other Member States such as Spain, Italy, France and Portugal.

The increase in animal abandonment is one of the consequences of the uncontrolled trade in animals between Member States and is exacerbated by the illegal influx of other live animals on dilapidated means of transport. Furthermore, these animals have not had any health checks and the conditions in which they are transported put not only the health of the animals at serious risk, but also that of people who come into contact with them.

In view of the fact that the Commission is currently preparing a second European Union strategy for the protection and welfare of animals, could it state which measures it intends to adopt to prevent and curb the illicit trade in animals, in consideration of Article 8 of the European Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals?

Can the Commission state what measures will be adopted by the European Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) to ensure that animals are traded, farmed and kept in a manner which genuinely takes animal welfare into account?

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

With respect to the issue of illegal trade in pet animals the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its replies to previous Written Questions E-004525/2008, E-003787/2009, E-006868/2010, E-002270/2011, E-003343/2011, E-006602/2011 and E-006808/2011 ([1]).

The Commission adopted on 5 March 2012 a proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the non-commercial movement of pet animals ([2]) which aims at repealing the current Regulation ([3]) in force. The Commission has proposed to reinforce the Member States' powers on checks to verify compliance with the provisions of the new Regulation, and so better prevent commercial movements fraudulently disguised as non-commercial movements.

However, the Commission would like to stress that the European Convention for the protection of pet animals is not part of the body of EU legislation and it remains up to each Member State to decide whether they want to ratify and implement this Convention prepared under the aegis of the Council of Europe, i.e. outside the EU institutional framework.

On 19 January 2012, the Commission adopted an EU strategy for the protection and welfare of animals 2012-2015 ([4]). Within this framework in 2014, the Commission will perform a study on the welfare of dogs and cats involved in commercial practices. In the light of the findings of the study, the Commission will assess what actions are necessary to better protect animal welfare with due regard to the principle of subsidiarity and proportionality.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.
([2]) COM(2012) 89 final.
([3]) Regulation (EC) No 998/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 May 2003 on the animal health requirements applicable to the non-commercial movement of pet animals and amending Council Directive 92/65/EEC (OJ L 146, 13.6.2003).
([4]) COM(2012) 6 final.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-002145/12
до Комисията
Илияна Малинова Йотова (S&D)
(23 февруари 2012 г.)

Относно: Програма за развитие на селските райони

За периода 2007-2013 г. България получава финансиране по програмата за развитие на селските райони, възлизащо на 2 642 248 596 EUR. Към 31 януари 2012 г. България е усвоила едва 842 110 143 EUR от тази сума, което представлява 31,87 %. Процентът на договорената сума е само 52,36 % или малко над половината от полагащите се средства — 1 383 580 420 EUR.

— Направила ли е Комисията оценка на нивото на усвояемост на България? Има ли безвъзвратно изгубени средства от програмата, които няма да могат да бъдат реализирани до края на нейното действие?

— Поддържа ли Комисията контакт с българските власти относно нивото на усвояемост по фондовете?

— Възможно ли е Комисията да наложи санкции върху България относно нивото на усвояемост и какви ще бъдат последиците за България, ако нивото на усвояемост не се подобри/покачи?

Отговор, даден от г-н Циолос от името на Комисията
(4 април 2012 г.)

Към края на февруари 2012 г. Комисията е възстановила на България общо 586 млн. EUR от Европейския земеделски фонд за развитие на селските райони (ЕЗФРСР) за плащания, направени в рамките на българската програма за развитие на селските райони 2007-2013 г. (ПРСР), което се равнява на 22 % от общо отпуснатите по ЕЗФРСР средства. В момента се обработва още едно искане за около 251 млн. EUR, което, ако бъде одобрено, ще повиши нивото на плащанията до 32 %.

Да, като част от мониторинга по отношение на програмите на всички държави членки Комисията редовно проверява степента на изпълнение на българската ПРСР. Налице е потенциален риск за първа загуба на финансиране за българската ПРСР за края на 2011 г. по т.нар. n+2 правило за автоматична отмяна на финансов ангажимент. Дали това ще се потвърди, зависи от резултата от разглеждането на една промяна в българската ПРСР, което понастоящем се провежда от службите на Комисията.

Да. Като се има предвид доста ниската степен на изпълнение на българската ПРСР и произтичащия от това риск по правилото n+2, Комисията наблюдава отблизо тези проблеми съвместно с българските власти от 2010 г. насам в контекста на споделеното управление. Целта беше да се проучат възможните начини за ускоряване на изпълнението на ПРСР.

Не, Комисията не може да наложи „наказания“ на България или която и да било друга държава членка поради нивото им на усвояване на средства от ЕЗФРСР. Пълното усвояване на средства от ЕС е на първо място отговорност на съответната държава членка и изцяло в неин интерес. Според Комисията, ако нивото на усвояване по ПРСР не се повиши, има опасност България да бъде изправена пред (още) отмени на финансови ангажименти на средства от ЕЗФРСР по българската програма за развитие на селските райони до края на програмния период 2007-2013 г.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002145/12
to the Commission
Iliana Malinova Iotova (S&D)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: Rural Development Programme

Bulgaria is receiving funding amounting to EUR 2 642 248 596 under the Rural Development Programme, for the 2007-2013 period. By 31 January 2012, Bulgaria had absorbed only EUR 842 110 143, or 31.87 %, of that amount. The contracted amount, in percentage terms, is only 52.36 %, or slightly more than half of the resources due — EUR 1 383 580 420.

— Has the Commission carried out an assessment of Bulgaria's absorption level? Are there any programmed resources which will definitively be forfeited and not available to be used by the end of the operational period for this programme?

— Is the Commission in contact with the Bulgarian authorities to discuss the funding absorption level?

— Can the Commission impose penalties on Bulgaria with regard to the absorption level, and what consequences would arise for Bulgaria if the absorption level failed to improve/rise?

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

As of end February 2012, the Commission has reimbursed a total of EUR 586 million from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) for payments made under the Bulgarian Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 (RDP), equivalent to 22 % of the overall EAFRD allocation. A further claim for some EUR 251 million is currently being processed and, if accepted in full, would bring the level of payments to 32 %.

Yes, as part of its monitoring activities for all Member States programmes, the Commission regularly examines the level of execution of the Bulgarian RDP. There is a potential risk of a first loss of funds to the Bulgarian RDP at end 2011 under the so-called n+2 automatic decommitment rule. Whether or not this will be confirmed depends on the outcome of the processing of a modification of the Bulgarian RDP, which is currently under examination by the Commission services.

Yes. Given the rather low level of implementation of the Bulgarian RDP and the consequent n+2 risk, the Commission has followed these issues closely with the Bulgarian authorities since 2010, in the context of shared management. The aim has to been to explore possible means to accelerate RDP implementation.

No, the Commission cannot impose 'penalties' as such on Bulgaria or any other Member State with regard to their absorption level of EAFRD funds. The full absorption of EU funds is in first instance the responsibility and in the interest of the Member State concerned. The consequence for Bulgaria if the absorption level under the RDP does not accelerate, is, in the Commission's assessment, a risk that Bulgaria may face (further) decommitments of EAFRD funds under its RDP in the remaining years of the 2007-2013 programming period.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002147/12
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(23 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Κίνδυνος για τους νοσηλευόμενους στα συριακά νοσοκομεία

Υπάρχουν πολλές καταγγελίες ότι στα συριακά νοσοκομεία, όπου έχουν διεισδύσει οι κρατικές δυνάμεις ασφαλείας, οι γιατροί αναφέρουν τυχόν τραύματα που μπορεί να οφείλονται σε δραστηριότητες όπως το αντάρτικο πόλεων, με αποτέλεσμα οι ασθενείς να κινδυνεύουν να υποστούν βασανιστήρια από τις δυνάμεις ασφαλείας!

Το γεγονός ντροπιάζει την ιατρική επιστήμη διεθνώς και δείχνει το σημείο όπου έχει φτάσει το συριακό καθεστώς.

Ερωτάται η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος:

1. Παρακολουθώντας τη κατάσταση στη Συρία, γνωρίζει για αυτές τις καταγγελίες;

2. Θεωρεί ότι μπορεί να υπάρξει μια ελάχιστη συνεννόηση με τη συριακή κυβέρνηση, ώστε τα νοσοκομεία να γίνουν τα άσυλα που οφείλουν να είναι σύμφωνα με το ανθρωπιστικό δίκαιο;

3. Θεωρεί δυνατή τη παρέμβαση ώστε να επιτραπεί η παρουσία διεθνών μη κερδοσκοπικών οργανώσεων με αποδεδειγμένα αγαθούς σκοπούς, όπως οι «Γιατροί χωρίς Σύνορα»;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Μαΐου 2012)

Η ΕΕ έχει εκφράσει συστηματικά, πιο πρόσφατα στα συμπεράσματα του Συμβουλίου Εξωτερικών Υποθέσεων της 23ης Μαρτίου 2012, τις ανησυχίες της σχετικά με την επιδείνωση των συνθηκών διαβίωσης του πληθυσμού της Συρίας. Έχει ζητήσει από το καθεστώς να επιτρέψει την άμεση, απρόσκοπτη και πλήρη πρόσβαση των ανθρωπιστικών οργανώσεων σε όλες τις περιοχές της Συρίας, ώστε να τους επιτραπεί να παράσχουν ανθρωπιστική βοήθεια και ιατρική περίθαλψη.

Σε αρκετές δηλώσεις η ΥΕ/ΑΠ, καθώς και οι αρχηγοί αποστολών της ΕΕ στη Δαμασκό, ζήτησαν από τη συριακή κυβέρνηση να σεβαστεί πλήρως την αμεροληψία και ανεξαρτησία των ανθρωπιστικών οργανώσεων και των εργαζομένων σε αυτές. Καταδίκασαν τις παράνομες επιθέσεις εις βάρος του ιατρικού προσωπικού και των εγκαταστάσεων που φέρουν τα σύμβολα της Ερυθράς Ημισελήνου και ζήτησαν από το καθεστώς να προστατεύσει όλες τις εγκαταστάσεις, τους επαγγελματίες και τους εθελοντές στον τομέα της υγείας. Επανειλημμένα τόνισαν ότι η συριακή κυβέρνηση πρέπει να εγγυηθεί και να διευκολύνει την ασφαλή και χωρίς διακρίσεις πρόσβαση σε ιατρική περίθαλψη όλων όσοι την έχουν ανάγκη.

Παράλληλα, η ΕΕ υποστήριξε πλήρως τις διεθνείς προσπάθειες για τη διασφάλιση συντονισμένης, ταχείας και αποτελεσματικής ανθρωπιστικής ανταπόκρισης στην κρίση. Σ' αυτό το πλαίσιο, δέχθηκε με ικανοποίηση τα αποτελέσματα του δεύτερου ανθρωπιστικού φόρουμ για τη Συρία, που πραγματοποιήθηκε στη Γενεύη στις 20 Απριλίου 2012, το οποίο ζητά αυξημένη πρόσβαση και κλιμάκωση των ανθρωπιστικών δυνατοτήτων για την κάλυψη των ανθρωπιστικών αναγκών που έχουν εντοπιστεί. Το συνολικό ποσό της ανθρωπιστικής βοήθειας ανέρχεται σε 32 εκατομμύρια ευρώ, εκ των οποίων 2,2 εκατομμύρια ευρώ θα δοθούν για έκτακτη ιατρική περίθαλψη που θα προσφέρουν η Διεθνής Επιτροπή του Ερυθρού Σταυρού (ΔΕΕΣ) και η Διεθνής Ομοσπονδία Ερυθρού Σταυρού και των Οργανώσεων της Ερυθράς Ημισελήνου (IFRC). Επειδή οι ανάγκες μεγαλώνουν, η ΕΕ και τα κράτη μέλη της αύξησαν την οικονομική στήριξη στις ανθρωπιστικές οργανώσεις και θα συνεχίσουν την κινητοποίηση για την απαραίτητη βοήθεια.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002147/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Dangers facing patients in Syrian hospitals

There are many allegations that in Syrian hospitals, which have been penetrated by State security forces, doctors are reporting injuries caused by actions such as guerrilla warfare, putting patients in danger of being taken for torture by the security forces.

This is an embarrassment for international medical science and shows the point the Syrian regime has reached.

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

1. Through her monitoring of the situation in Syria, is she aware of these allegations?

2. Does she believe that a minimum agreement could be reached with the Syrian Government so as to ensure that hospitals become the sanctuaries they should be in accordance with humanitarian law?

3. Does she believe that action could be taken to facilitate access by international not-for-profit organisations with confirmed good intentions, such as 'Doctors Without Borders?'

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

The EU has consistently, most recently in its Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) conclusions of 23 March 2012 — expressed its concern at the increasingly worsening humanitarian plight of the Syrian population. It has urged the regime to grant immediate, unimpeded and full access of humanitarian organisations to all areas of Syria in order to allow them to deliver humanitarian assistance and medical care.

In several statements the HR/VP, as well as the EU Heads of Mission (HoMs) in Damascus, called on the Syrian Government to fully respect the impartiality and independence of humanitarian workers and organisations. They condemned the illegal attacks against medical staff and installations carrying the symbols of the Red Crescent and requested the regime to protect all medical facilities, professionals and volunteers. They reiterated that the Syrian Government needs to guarantee and facilitate safe access to medical treatment for all those in need without any discrimination.

At the same time, the EU has fully supported international efforts to ensure a coordinated, rapid and effective humanitarian response to the crisis. In this respect, it welcomed the outcome of the second Syria Humanitarian Forum held on 20 April 2012 in Geneva, calling for increased access and scaling up of humanitarian capacities to meet the identified humanitarian needs. The total EU humanitarian assistance amounts to EUR 32 million, out of which EUR 2.2 million are for emergency medical care implemented by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). In the light of growing needs, the EU and Member States have increased their financial support to humanitarian organisations and will continue to mobilise the necessary assistance.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002148/12
to the Commission
Gay Mitchell (PPE)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: Commission's Green Paper on the right to family reunification

In relation to Directive 2003/86/EC on the right to family reunification, a 2008 report by the Commission on said directive notes a number of incorrect transpositions and misapplications of the directive. The report also reveals that the directive's impact on harmonisation in the field of family reunification remains limited.

Will the Commission clarify whether or not it has launched the necessary procedural steps for non-compliance, where appropriate, and in particular in cases where there are clear differences between the Member States and the Commission in the interpretation of Community law?

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

The Commission in its published implementation report (COM(2008) 610) of the directive on the right to family reunification (Directive EC/2003/86) has identified some problems in the ways and means Member States implement these EU rules.

The Commission has and will continue to closely monitor Member States' present legislative and administrative practices with specific regard to the cases where application problems were previously identified and will ensure that the provisions are correctly applied, in particular in conformity with fundamental rights such as respect for family life, the rights of the child and the right to an effective remedy. This can imply where appropriate launching the necessary steps for non-compliance in accordance with Article 258 TFEU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002149/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Gay Mitchell (PPE)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Human rights abuses in Ethiopia

Is the Vice-President/High Representative concerned about the human rights abuses currently taking place in Ethiopia?

Human Rights Watch has previously reported on how the Ethiopian Government is using access to aid as a weapon to control people and crush dissent. Will the Vice-President/High Representative outline what her position is on the matter, and will she make a statement?

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

The EU is following very closely the human rights situation in Ethiopia. We are paying close attention to the application of the Anti Terrorism Proclamation, which allows for a wide interpretation of terrorism and its impact on freedom of media and expression. Democracy and human rights are essential elements of a partnership that both Ethiopia and the EU have subscribed to. While we have a strong desire to remain partners to make progress in the areas of food security, poverty reduction, and economic development as well as to peace and security in the region, we have questions regarding civil and political rights as well as the respect for fundamental human rights in Ethiopia.

The positive results achieved so far confirm the effectiveness of the partnership approach in delivering assistance to Ethiopia. This also provides the basis on which the EU can speak as a partner regarding human rights, democratic principles, good governance and the rule of law, allowing the EU to make full use of the ongoing dialogue with the government to address concerns regarding civil, political as well as human rights in Ethiopia.

In research conducted by the Donor Assistance Group in Ethiopia in response to information referred to by Human Rights Watch in various reports published in 2010 and 2011, we did not find credible evidence of widespread or systemic political distortion. We found that all programmes in question have accountability systems in place that provide checks on distortion, including distortion for political gain. Donors are confident that we have built in monitoring and safeguard mechanisms that give reasonable assurance that aid is being used for its intended purpose.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002150/12
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente / Alta Representante)
Ana Gomes (S&D)
(23 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: VP/HR — Operação Atalanta

Os navios envolvidos na Operação Atalanta e as outras forças navais ao largo da costa da Somália representam um conjunto extraordinário e poderoso de navios de guerra, incorrendo numa enorme despesa operacional, com vista a fornecer proteção contra um número relativamente limitado de piratas mal armados em pequenas embarcações. Considerando as alternativas possíveis, tais como uma guarda costeira equipada com armas ligeiras e os sólidos esforços para lidar com a pesca ilícita e o despejo de resíduos, por que razão insiste a UE na utilização deste tipo de força, tendo em conta, especialmente, o sucesso limitado e as duras críticas recebidas de diversos somalis, inclusive de funcionários do governo?

A Conferência de Londres sustenta que tratará as «causas profundas». Além disso, muitas declarações oficiais referiram a necessidade de uma abordagem «holística». No entanto, a existência de uma grande força naval internacional não parece refletir esta linha de pensamento.

Por que razão não aplica a UE esta abordagem holística à Operação Atalanta e aos esforços globais que desenvolve no âmbito da sua presença ao largo da costa da Somália?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(25 de junho de 2012)

A UE aplica uma abordagem holística para combater a pirataria no mar e tratar as suas causas profundas em terra. Desde o seu lançamento em 2008, a operação Atalanta da Eunavfor foi completada por acordos de transferência com países terceiros, o apoio e a facilitação das estratégias regionais e a execução do código de conduta de Djibuti. O comunicado da Conferência de Londres salienta que o problema da pirataria não pode ser resolvido apenas pela via militar: de facto, os piratas operam frequentemente a partir de pequenas embarcações, mas são eficazes porque dispõem de informações fiáveis. O Grupo de Contacto para a Pirataria ao largo da Costa da Somália (WG V), em que a UE participa ativamente, centra o seu trabalho na deteção dos fluxos financeiros gerados pela pirataria, visando, assim, tanto os que beneficiam da pirataria como os que fornecem informações. Uma missão de reforço das capacidades navais regionais no âmbito da Política Comum de Segurança e Defesa (PCSD) irá fortalecer as capacidades da polícia marítima na Somália e as funções de vigilância costeira nos países do Corno de África. Não dispondo de meios regionais para conduzir operações costeiras com armas ligeiras, não há uma alternativa viável às operações navais.

Existem outras soluções para combater a pirataria que já demonstraram ser eficazes: guardas armados a bordo dos navios que transitam ao largo da costa da Somália (as tripulações acolheram-nos bem) e a adoção das melhores práticas de gestão preconizadas pela Organização Marítima Internacional.

A falta de oportunidades de vida está intrinsecamente ligada à precariedade. Se somarmos a este problema a inexistência de um Estado de direito, temos um ambiente ideal para a criminalidade, nomeadamente a pirataria. A abordagem holística da UE relativamente à Somália visa tratar as causas profundas da insegurança, através de apoio no domínio político, do desenvolvimento, do Estado de direito e da segurança e é nesse contexto que se insere a Operação Atalanta. Desde a sua criação, o mandato da Operação Atalanta já foi ampliado e prorrogado, sempre com o objetivo de estar um passo à frente da tática utilizada pelos piratas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002150/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ana Gomes (S&D)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Operation Atalanta

The ships involved in Operation Atalanta and the other naval forces off the coast of Somalia represent an extraordinary assemblage of powerful advanced warships, incurring enormous operating expense in order to provide protection against a relatively small number of lightly-armed pirates in small boats. Considering the alternative possibilities such as a lightly-armed coastguard and robust efforts to address illegal fishing and dumping, why does the EU persist in this use of force, especially in view of the limited success and the strong criticism it has attracted from many Somalis, including even government officials?

The London Conference says it will address 'root causes', and many official statements have referred to the need for a 'holistic' approach. A large international naval force does not seem to reflect this thinking.

Why is the EU not applying this holistic approach to Operation Atalanta and its overall efforts in its presence off the coast of Somalia?

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

The EU has a 'holistic' approach to tackle piracy at sea and address its root causes on land. Since its launch in 2008, EUNAVFOR Operation Atalanta has been complemented by Transfer Agreements with third countries, by facilitation and support for regional strategies, and implementation of the Djibouti Code of Conduct. The London Conference Communiqué highlights that piracy cannot be solved by military means alone: indeed pirates often operate from small boats, yet are effective due to access to quality intelligence. The Contact Group for Piracy off the Coast of Somalia WG V, where the EU actively participates, works to track the financial flows of piracy, leading to both those benefiting from piracy and providing intelligence. A planned Regional Maritime Capacity Building Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) mission will strengthen maritime police forces in Somalia and coastguard functions of Horn countries. Without regional means to conduct lightly armed coastal operations, there is no viable alternative to naval operations.

Other anti-piracy schemes are also proving effective: armed guards aboard vessels transiting off the Somali coast (crew have welcomed them), as well as the use of Best Management practices advocated by the International Maritime Organisation.

Lack of life chances are intricately linked to insecurity. Together with the absence of the rule of law, they provide an enabling environment for criminality, including piracy. The EU's broader approach to Somalia aims to tackle the root causes of insecurity through political, development, rule of law and security support Operation Atalanta is an integral part of this. Since its inception, its mandate has been broadened and extended, to stay a step ahead of pirates' tactics.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002151/12
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente / Alta Representante)
Ana Gomes (S&D)
(23 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: VP/HR — Operação Atalanta II

A Operação Atalanta é a primeira operação naval da União Europeia no exterior. O mandato prioritário da operação consiste em proteger as embarcações contra a pirataria ao largo da costa da Somália. Devido aos diversos relatos de outros crimes marítimos na região, tais como a pesca estrangeira ilegal e a descarga ilegal de resíduos tóxicos, a operação foi mandatada desde o seu início, em finais de 2008, para controlar a pesca nessas águas. O porta-voz da operação disse recentemente a uma ONG que as informações recolhidas ao abrigo do mandato de pesca, que abrange operações de pesca numa distância de 200 milhas náuticas da costa da Somália, foram «encaminhadas para Bruxelas».

Tendo em conta a importância destas informações para a elaboração de políticas sobre a pirataria ao largo da Somália e sobre a crise da Somália de um modo geral, gostaria de perguntar se as informações recolhidas pela Operação Atalanta sobre as embarcações de pesca durante o período de mais de três anos no qual a força naval europeia foi implementada, nomeadamente as informações sobre navios estrangeiros de grande dimensão que possam estar a operar clandestinamente, se tornarão públicas e, caso contrário, por que razão.

Tendo em conta as acusações de descarga de resíduos tóxicos, gostaria igualmente de perguntar se a Operação Atalanta recolheu qualquer informação sobre este tópico e se esta informação se tornará pública.

Finalmente, gostaria de perguntar se a UE encaminhou esta informação para as Nações Unidas, cujo Conselho de Segurança tem trabalhado ativamente no que diz respeito ao assunto em apreço.

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(8 de junho de 2012)

As informações sobre a pesca ao largo da costa da Somália recolhidas pela Operação Atalanta da Eunavfor são enviadas regularmente à Comissão.

A Operação Atalanta da Eunavfor não recolheu nem enviou informações sobre a descarga de resíduos tóxicos.

A Operação Atalanta da Eunavfor enviou também as informações sobre a pesca ao largo da costa da Somália ao Departamento dos Assuntos Políticos do Secretariado da ONU, a pedido deste departamento.

Assinale-se que não existem provas relativas às alegações referidas. A Comissão sublinhou sempre a falta de consistência das acusações de pesca ilegal praticada por navios da UE nas águas da Somália. No que se refere aos navios de pesca da UE, os dados do Sistema de Localização dos Navios por Satélite (VMS) têm vindo a ser verificados desde há algum tempo e não revelam qualquer entrada nas águas da Somália. Será dada especial atenção, no futuro, à análise cuidada dos registos, de forma a verificar as eventuais incursões ou a prática de pesca ilegal e o modo de combater estes fenómenos. Se forem detetadas incursões, as autoridades competentes serão chamadas a apresentar explicações.

Neste contexto, convém relembrar que os navios de pesca da UE que se encontrem no Oceano Índico estão sujeitos às normas da Comissão do Atum do Oceano Índico, que gere a pesca de atum na região, aos princípios da política comum das pescas e aos acordos de pesca bilaterais que a Comunidade tiver celebrado com países terceiros da região. Além disso, no cumprimento da sua missão no terreno, a Operação Atalanta da Eunavfor não observou qualquer indício de pesca ilegal nas águas da Somália.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002151/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ana Gomes (S&D)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Operation Atalanta II

Operation Atalanta is the European Union's first out-of-area naval operation. The primary mandate of the operation is to protect shipping against piracy off the coast of Somalia. Because there have been many reports of other maritime crimes in the area — illegal foreign fishing and illegal toxic waste dumping — the operation has been mandated since its inception in late 2008 to monitor fishing in these waters. The spokesperson of the operation recently told an NGO that information gathered under the fishing mandate, covering fishing operations within 200 nautical miles of the Somali coast, has been 'forwarded to Brussels'.

In light of the importance of this information to policy making on piracy off Somalia and on the Somalia crisis more generally, I would like to ask whether the information gathered by Operation Atalanta about fishing vessels during the period of more than three years that this European naval force has been deployed — in particular information about large-scale foreign vessels which may be operating illegally — will be made public and, if it will not be, why not.

In light of the charges of toxic dumping, I would also like to ask whether Operation Atalanta has gathered any information on this topic and if this information will be made public.

Finally, I would like to ask whether the EU has forwarded this information to the United Nations, where the Security Council has been active with regard to the matter.

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

Information on fishing off the coast of Somalia collected by EUNAVFOR Operation Atalanta is regularly forwarded to the Commission.

On toxic waste dumping, no information has been gathered or reported by EUNAVFOR Operation Atalanta.

EUNAVFOR Operation Atalanta has also forwarded information on fishing off the coast of Somalia to the United Nations Secretariat's Department of Political Affairs at its request.

It should be underlined that there is a lack of proof regarding these allegations. The Commission has always highlighted the inconsistency of the accusations relating to alleged illegal fishing by EU vessels in the waters of Somalia. With regard to EU fishing vessels, regular monitoring of the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) data has been carried out for some time now and the analysed data records show no entries into Somali waters. Particular attention will be paid to analysing future records in depth to assess whether incursions are taking place, if illegal fishing is going on and to what extent this can be curbed. If incursions are spotted, relevant authorities are asked to explain.

In this context, it should be recalled that EU fishing vessels in the Indian Ocean are bound by the rules of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, which manages the tuna fisheries in the region, the principles of the common fisheries policy and the Bilateral Fisheries Agreements the Community has in the region with third countries. Moreover, in the course of its duty, EUNAVFOR Operation Atalanta has not observed any evidence whatsoever of illegal fishing in Somali waters.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-002152/12
Komisijai
Justas Vincas Paleckis (S&D)
(2012 m. vasario 23 d.)

Tema: Dėl išmetamo CO_2 kiekio

2010 m. valstybės narės sudarė programą, kaip Europa turėtų išbristi iš krizės ir susistiprėti. Susitarta, kad pagal šią ilgalaikę viziją iki 2020 m. išmetamo CO_2 kiekis bus sumažintas 20 proc. Sveikintina, kad EK žengia toliau ir Komunikate „*Galimybių sumažinti išmetamųjų šiltnamio efektą sukeliančių dujų kiekį daugiau nei 20 % analizė ir anglies dioksido nutekėjimo rizikos vertinimas*“ skatina valstybes nares siekti dar didesnio išmetamo CO_2 kiekio sumažinimo.

Tačiau iš naujausios EK pažangos ataskaitos įgyvendinant strategijos „Europa 2020“ tikslus matyti, kad didelė dalis valstybių pasyviai dirba šioje srityje, o pati EK pripažįsta, kad priemonės bendram ES tikslui iki 2020 m. pasiekti yra nepakankamos. Ataskaitoje nepateikiama informacija apie konkrečią valstybių narių pažangą mažinant išmetamo CO_2 kiekį.

Europos Komisija, pristatydama 2012 m. metinę augimo apžvalgą, artimiausiems metams nustatė išimtinai ekonominius Sąjungos prioritetus. Jie susiję su makroekonominiu stabilumu, fiskaline drausme, struktūrinėmis reformomis, augimą skatinančiomis priemonėmis, užimtumu ir kt. EK neišskyrė veiksmų klimato srityje ir energetikos politikoje būtinumo nei dėl jų svarbos ekologiniams valstybių įsipareigojimams, nei kaip priemonės ekonominiam augimui skatinti.

— Ar EK nemano, kad, akcentuodama tik ekonominius ir fiskalinius uždavinius, ji į antrą planą nustumia ES valstybių klimato kaitos planų įgyvendinimą?

— Kokių priemonių EK numato imtis, kad šiais metais ES valstybės narės sumažintų išmetamo CO_2 kiekį?

— Kaip pažangos nedarančios valstybės narės bus skatinamos sumažinti išmetamo CO_2 kiekį?

C. Hedegaard atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. kovo 30 d.)

Tvarus augimas – vienas iš trijų pagrindinių strategijos „Europa 2020“ prioritetų, o klimato kaitos ir energetikos sričių tikslai – vieni iš penkių vienodos svarbos pagrindinių tikslų. 2012 m. metinėje augimo apžvalgoje Komisija paragino valstybes nares imtis aktyvesnių veiksmų ekologinių mokesčių srityje, palaipsniui atsisakyti aplinkai žalingų subsidijų ir daugiau (arba ne mažiau nei dabar) lėšų skirti augimui palankioms sritims, tokioms kaip veiksmingas energijos vartojimas; Komisija priminė, kad tam galima būtų panaudoti pajamas, gautas aukcionuose pardavinėjant apyvartinius CO_2 taršos leidimus.

Klimato kaitos ir energetikos dokumentų rinkinyje nustatytas tikslas pasiekti, kad iki 2020 m. šiltnamio efektą sukeliančių dujų būtų išmetama 20 proc. mažiau, palyginti su 1990 m.; šį tikslą kartu turi pasiekti sektoriai, kuriems ES prekybos taršos leidimais sistema taikoma, ir sektoriai, kuriems ji netaikoma. Sektoriuose, kuriems taikoma ES prekybos taršos leidimais sistema, atitiktį padeda užtikrinti metinis atitikties užtikrinimo ciklas ir galimybė, kad bus skirtos labai didelės finansinės baudos. Kol kas pagal ES prekybos taršos leidimais sistemą nustatytos išmetamųjų teršalų ribos viršytos nebuvo. Sektoriuose, kuriems ES prekybos taršos leidimais sistema netaikoma, teisiškai privalomi metiniai šiltnamio efektą sukeliančių dujų išlakų mažinimo tikslai visose valstybėse narėse bus pradėti taikyti nuo 2013 m. Komisija atidžiai stebi pažangą siekiant šių tikslų, kasmet atsiskaito Tarybai ir Parlamentui ir kiekvienai šaliai teikia jai skirtas rekomendacijas, atsižvelgdama į strategiją „Europa 2020“. Nepavykus pasiekti nacionalinių tikslų būtų taikomos taisomosios priemonės ir pradėta pažeidimo nagrinėjimo procedūra.

Kad padėtų valstybėms narėms pasiekti nustatytus tikslus, Komisija ir toliau remia ES mastu taikomas priemones, kurios šiuo metu įgyvendinamos arba svarstomos (pvz., veiksmingo energijos vartojimo priemonės, parodomoji mažai anglies dioksido į atmosferą išskiriančių technologijų programa, su klimatu susijusių ES išlaidų padidinimas bent iki 20 proc. ES biudžeto).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002152/12
to the Commission
Justas Vincas Paleckis (S&D)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: CO_2 emissions

In 2010, Member States established a programme for Europe to find a way out of the crisis and become stronger. They agreed that, under this long-term vision, CO_2 emissions would be reduced by 20 % by 2020. The fact that the Commission is going further and, in its communication entitled 'Analysis of options to move beyond 20 % greenhouse gas emission reductions and assessing the risk of carbon leakage', is encouraging Member States to seek an even greater reduction in CO_2 emissions is to be welcomed.

However, from the latest Commission progress report on achieving the Europe 2020 targets it can be seen that many Member States are taking a passive approach in this area, and the Commission recognises that measures to achieve the collective EU target by 2020 are insufficient. The report does not provide information on the specific progress made by Member States to reduce CO_2 emissions.

In its Annual Growth Survey 2012, the Commission set out the EU's economic priorities for 2012. They concern macroeconomic stability, fiscal discipline, structural reforms, measures to boost growth and employment, etc. The Commission did not highlight the need for action on the climate and in energy policy, either in terms of their importance for the Member States' environmental obligations or as measures for boosting economic growth.

— Does the Commission feel that, by only emphasising economic and fiscal challenges, it is relegating the climate change plans of EU Member States to a place of secondary importance?

— What steps does the Commission plan to take to ensure that EU Member States reduce CO_2 emissions this year?

— How will Member States that are making no progress be encouraged to reduce CO_2 emissions?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(30 March 2012)

In the Europe 2020 strategy, sustainable growth is one of the three key priorities and the climate and energy objectives constitute one of the five equally important headline targets. In the Annual Growth Survey 2012, the Commission called on Member States to advance on green taxation, to phase out environmentally harmful subsidies and to reinforce or preserve expenditure in growth-friendly areas such as energy efficiency, for which, as the Commission recalled, revenues from the auctioning of CO_2 emission allowances could be used.

The Climate and Energy Package sets a 20 % greenhouse gas emission reduction target by 2020 compared to 1990, which is divided between the Emission Trading System (ETS) and non-ETS sectors. For the sectors covered by the EU ETS, an annual compliance cycle and the possibility of very high financial penalties contribute to ensure compliance. So far, the emission limits set under the EU ETS have never been exceeded. In sectors not covered by the EU ETS, legally-binding annual greenhouse emission reduction targets will apply to all Member States from 2013. The Commission closely monitors progress towards these targets, annually reports to the Council and the Parliament and provides country-specific recommendations as appropriate under the Europe 2020 strategy. Failing to reach the national targets would lead to corrective measures and the launch of an infringement procedure.

In order to help Member States reach their targets, the Commission continues to support EU-wide measures that are currently being implemented or under discussion (e.g. energy efficiency measures, the demonstration programme for low-carbon technologies, the increase of EU climate-related expenditure to at least 20 % of the EU budget).

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002153/12
do Rady
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(23 lutego 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wpisanie rzeki Odry na listę projektów priorytetowych w ramach sieci bazowej TEN-T (Baltic – Adriatic Corridor, załącznik 1 CE

Projekt rozporządzenia Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady z dnia 19.10.2011 r. w sprawie unijnych wytycznych dotyczących rozwoju transeuropejskiej sieci transportowej ((2011/0294) (COD)) w art. 17 ogranicza możliwość wpisania szlaków żeglugi śródlądowej do rzek, które są co najmniej IV klasą drogi wodnej.

Zapis ten automatycznie pozbawia rzeki Polskie m.in. Odry, możliwości znalezienia się w gronie projektów priorytetowych w ramach sieci bazowej.

Należy podkreślić, że Odra w umowie AGN została wpisana jako rzeka o znaczeniu międzynarodowym. Brak Odry wśród priorytetowych projektów Unii Europejskiej doprowadzi do sytuacji, w której trudno będzie mówić o spójności żeglugi śródlądowej w Europie. Ze względów geograficznych jest to wręcz niemożliwe, o czym świadczą liczne wypowiedzi specjalistów zajmujących się tą tematyką.

Modernizacja Odrzańskiej Drogi Wodnej to nie tylko wymagania wynikające z potrzeb transportowych; modernizacja ma również istotne znaczenie dla zwiększenia bezpieczeństwa przeciwpowodziowego, zapewnienia stabilnych stosunków wodnych w dorzeczu oraz wykorzystania rzek jako źródła energii odnawialnej. Modernizacja ta oznacza wzrost znaczenia regionów nadodrzańskich w wymianie gospodarczej oraz ich pełną integrację z systemem europejskich dróg wodnych.

— W związku z powyższym, czy Rada zamierza wycofać się z kontrowersyjnego zapisu w projekcie rozporządzenia z dnia 19.10.2011 r.?

— Jakie działania zamierza podjąć Rada w celu wpisania rzeki Odry na listę projektów priorytetowych w ramach sieci bazowej TEN-T (konkretnie Baltic – Adriatic Corridor, załącznik 1 CEF)?

Odpowiedź
(23 maja 2012 r.)

Wniosek Komisji dotyczący rozporządzenia Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady w sprawie unijnych wytycznych dotyczących rozwoju transeuropejskiej sieci transportowej (wytycznych TEN-T) został przedłożony Radzie w dniu 24 października 2011 r. ([1]) W dniu 28 października 2011 r. Komisja przedłożyła również wniosek dotyczący rozporządzenia Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady ustanawiającego instrument „Łącząc Europę" (CEF) ([2]).

W podejściu ogólnym do wytycznych TEN-T – przyjętym w dniu 22 marca 2012 r. ([3]) – Rada poparła propozycję Komisji, by do sieci TEN-T włączyć jedynie te śródlądowe drogi wodne, które są przynajmniej drogami IV klasy żeglowności. Jednak zgodziła się zastrzec w przypisie, że do tekstu wprowadzony zostanie nowy motyw, który zaleca Komisji, by w roku 2023 w ramach przeglądu we współpracy z zainteresowanymi państwami członkowskimi oceniła, czy do sieci nie należy włączyć także innych elementów, np. niektórych śródlądowych dróg wodnych III klasy. W dniu 19 kwietnia 2012 r. Rada przystąpiła do analizy motywów.

Wniosek w sprawie instrumentu „Łącząc Europę" Rada jeszcze analizuje i na razie nie przyjęła stanowiska w jego sprawie.

([1]) 15629/11.
([2]) 16176/11.
([3]) 8047/12.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002153/12
to the Council
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: Inclusion of the River Oder in the list of priority projects within the TEN-T Core Network (Baltic — Adriatic Corridor, Annex A CEF)

Article 17 of the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 October 2011 on Union guidelines for the development of the Trans-European Transport Network (2011/0294 (COD)) stipulates that only rivers that are at least class IV waterways may be included as inland navigation routes.

This provision automatically deprives Polish rivers, including the Oder, of the possibility of inclusion in the list of Core Network priority projects.

It should be stressed that the Oder was included in the AGN Agreement as a river of international significance. If the Oder is absent from the list of the European Union's priority projects, the result will be a situation in which there can be little talk of coherent inland navigation in Europe. In geographical terms this is impossible, a fact to which numerous specialists in the field have testified.

Modernisation of the Oder waterway is necessitated not only by transport needs; modernisation is also of major significance in terms of providing a greater level of flood defence, ensuring stable water relations in the drainage basin and utilising rivers as a source of renewable energy. Modernisation will increase the significance of the regions surrounding the Oder in terms of trade, and enable their full integration into the European waterways system.

— In connection with the above, does the Council intend to withdraw its support for the controversial provision in the proposal for a regulation of 19 October 2011?

— What action does the Council intend to take with a view to including the River Oder on the list of priority projects within the TEN-T Core Network (specifically Baltic — Adriatic Corridor, Annex A CEF)?

Reply
(23 May 2012)

A Commission proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on guidelines for the development of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T Guidelines) was submitted to the Council on 24 October 2011 ([1]). On 28 October 2011, the Commission also submitted a proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) ([2]).

In its general approach on the TEN-T Guidelines, adopted on 22 March 2012 ([3]), the Council supported the Commission's proposal concerning the inclusion of only inland waterways meeting the IVth class of navigability to the TEN-T. However, the Council agreed upon a footnote which provides for the inclusion of a recital stating that in the framework of the revision in 2023, the Commission should evaluate in cooperation with the Member States concerned whether other parts, such as certain class III inland waterways, should be integrated into the network. The Council has started examining the recitals on 19 April 2012.

The Council is currently examining the CEF proposal and has therefore not yet adopted its position.

([1]) 15629/11.
([2]) 16176/11.
([3]) 8047/12.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002154/12
do Komisji
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(23 lutego 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wpisanie rzeki Odry na listę projektów priorytetowych w ramach sieci bazowej TEN-T (Baltic – Adriatic Corridor, załącznik 1 CEF)

Projekt rozporządzenia Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady z dnia 19.10.2011 r. w sprawie unijnych wytycznych dotyczących rozwoju transeuropejskiej sieci transportowej ((2011/0294) (COD)) w art. 17 ogranicza możliwość wpisania szlaków żeglugi śródlądowej do rzek, które są co najmniej IV klasą drogi wodnej.

Zapis ten automatycznie pozbawia rzeki Polskie m.in. Odry, możliwości znalezienia się w gronie projektów priorytetowych w ramach sieci bazowej.

Należy podkreślić, że Odra w umowie AGN została wpisana jako rzeka o znaczeniu międzynarodowym. Brak Odry wśród priorytetowych projektów Unii Europejskiej doprowadzi do sytuacji, w której trudno będzie mówić o spójności żeglugi śródlądowej w Europie. Ze względów geograficznych jest to wręcz niemożliwe, o czym świadczą liczne wypowiedzi specjalistów zajmujących się tą tematyką.

Modernizacja Odrzańskiej Drogi Wodnej to nie tylko wymagania wynikające z potrzeb transportowych; modernizacja ma również istotne znaczenie dla zwiększenia bezpieczeństwa przeciwpowodziowego, zapewnienia stabilnych stosunków wodnych w dorzeczu oraz wykorzystania rzek jako źródła energii odnawialnej. Modernizacja ta oznacza wzrost znaczenia regionów nadodrzańskich w wymianie gospodarczej oraz ich pełną integrację z systemem europejskich dróg wodnych.

— W związku z powyższym, czy Komisja zamierza wycofać się z kontrowersyjnego zapisu w projekcie rozporządzenia z dnia 19.10.2011 r.?

— Jakie działania zamierza podjąć Komisja w celu wpisania rzeki Odry na listę projektów priorytetowych w ramach sieci bazowej TEN-T (konkretnie Baltic – Adriatic Corridor, załącznik 1 CEF)?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Siima Kallasa w imieniu Komisji
(4 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Komisja stworzyła sieć bazową według obiektywnej metodologii, która przed przyjęciem projektu w sprawie wytycznych TEN-T była przedmiotem dwuletniego procesu konsultacji. Państwa członkowskie były bardzo w niego zaangażowane. W związku z tym Komisja jest przekonana, że wniosek jest dobrze opracowany i nie widzi powodu, aby wprowadzać w nim zmiany.

Odnośnie do włączenia Odry do transeuropejskiej sieci transportowej, Komisja opierała się na podziale na kategorie w ramach klasyfikacji ustanowionej przez Europejską Konferencję Ministrów Transportu ([1]). Podział ten jest przestawiony na mapie europejskich śródlądowych dróg wodnych przygotowanej w 2006 r. przez Europejską Komisję Gospodarczą ONZ (EKG ONZ). Śródlądowe drogi wodne klasy IV są zdefiniowane jako najniższa kategoria dróg o znaczeniu międzynarodowym. Drogi klasy od I do III określa się jako mające jedynie regionalne znaczenie.

Metodologia TEN-T przewiduje włączenie do sieci także tych odcinków śródlądowych dróg wodnych, w stosunku do których państwa członkowskie przedstawiły konkretny plan modernizacji zgodny z prawem UE (a zwłaszcza ze strategiczną oceną oddziaływania na środowisko, Dyrektywą Wodną i projektem Natura 2000). Polska administracja takiego planu nie dostarczyła.

Wniosek Komisji podlega obecnie zwykłej procedurze ustawodawczej w Radzie i Parlamencie Europejskim.

([1]) EKMT/CM(92)6/wersja ostateczna.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002154/12
to the Commission
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: Inclusion of the River Oder in the list of priority projects within the TEN-T Core Network (Baltic — Adriatic Corridor, Annex A CEF)

Article 17 of the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 October 2011 on Union guidelines for the development of the Trans-European Transport Network (2011/0294(COD)) stipulates that only rivers which are at least class IV waterways may be included as inland navigation routes.

This provision automatically deprives Polish rivers, including the Oder, of the possibility of inclusion in the list of Core Network priority projects.

It should be stressed that the Oder was included in the AGN Agreement as a river of international significance. If the Oder is absent from the list of the European Union's priority projects, the result will be a situation in which there can be little talk of coherent inland navigation in Europe. In geographical terms this is impossible, a fact to which numerous specialists in the field have testified.

Modernisation of the Oder waterway is necessitated not only by transport needs; modernisation is also of major significance in terms of providing a greater level of flood defence, ensuring stable water relations in the drainage basin and utilising rivers as a source of renewable energy. Modernisation will increase the significance of the regions surrounding the Oder in terms of trade, and enable their full integration into the European waterways system.

— In connection with the above, does the Commission intend to withdraw its support for the controversial provision in the proposal for a regulation of 19 October 2011?

— What action does the Commission intend to take with a view to including the River Oder on the list of priority projects within the TEN-T Core Network (specifically Baltic — Adriatic Corridor, Annex A CEF)?

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

The Commission has established the Core Network based on an objective methodology that has been discussed during a two year long consultation process preceding the adoption of the TEN-T Guidelines proposal. Member States have been closely involved in this process. The Commission is, therefore, of the opinion that its proposal is robust and there will be no reason to alter it.

With regard to the inclusion of the Oder in the trans-European transport network, the Commission has referred to the categories as defined by the classification laid down by the European Conference of Ministers of Transport ([1]). This is reflected by the map of 'European Inland Waterways' as edited by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) of 2006. The class IV inland waterways (IWW) is defined as the lowest category of international importance. The IWW of categories I to III are defined as only of regional importance.

The TEN-T methodology has also foreseen to include those sections of IWW for which the Member State has a concrete plan to upgrade which is in accordance with EU legislation (notably, the strategic environmental assessment (SEA), water framework directive, NATURA2000). The Polish administration did not provide such a plan.

The Commission's proposal is now subject to the ordinary legislative procedure with Council and European Parliament.

([1]) ECMT/CM(92)6/Final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002155/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(23 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Posible afección sobre el LIC Ríos Cinca y Alcanadre en Pomar de Cinca (Aragón)

En el término municipal de Pomar de Cinca (Huesca, Aragón), se han producido por parte de un particular unas importantes roturaciones y nivelaciones de terreno en las cercanías de la antigua escombrera de Monzón, con el objetivo de adaptarlo a la plantación de frutales.

Esta intervención se ha realizado en una zona incluida en el Lugar de Importancia Comunitaria ES2410073 Ríos Cinca y Alcanadre, que abarca unas 6 200 hectáreas. Ambos ríos constituyen dos importantes arterias fluviales que actúan como corredor biológico de muchas especies de fauna y flora, a la vez que unen el Prepirineo con el fondo del valle del Ebro. Cabe recordar que la llanura de inundación del río Cinca conforma un valle plano en el que discurren numerosos canales separados por barras de gravas y un cauce trenzado de curso bajo, lo cual se corresponde con una tipología muy escasa en el continente europeo y extremadamente sensible ante cualquier regulación artificial del régimen fluvial.

En este marco, una actuación como la realizada en Pomar de Cinca puede provocar un cambio de la raíz de la geomorfología de la zona, de las escorrentías y flujos de agua sobre la superficie del terreno, además de modificar el paisaje existente y afectar a la flora y fauna local, con el agravante de que en caso de lluvia se facilitaría la deposición de fertilizantes sobre el barranco de la Clamor de Pomar.

— Por ello, ¿posee la Comisión información sobre el impacto medioambiental que estas actuaciones pueden tener sobre el LIC Ríos Cinca y Alcanadre? De no ser así, ¿piensa solicitar la Comisión información al Departamento de Agricultura, Ganadería y Medio Ambiente de Aragón?

— En este contexto, ¿qué acciones ha emprendido y va a emprender la Comisión para preservar esta zona de alto valor ecológico y, en particular, para garantizar el respeto de la Directiva 92/43/CEE relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres y de la Directiva 79/409/CEE relativa a la conservación de las aves silvestres?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de abril de 2012)

La Comisión no dispone de información sobre el proyecto mencionado por Su Señoría o sobre la posible incidencia de dicho proyecto en el lugar ES 24100073 «Ríos Cinca y Alcanadre». La información facilitada por Su Señoría no proporciona suficientes detalles sobre la naturaleza de la incidencia y la importancia de los daños que este proyecto podría ocasionar al lugar Natura 2000. La Comisión ruega a Su Señoría le facilite más datos para poder iniciar una investigación.

La Comisión recuerda que corresponde principalmente a las autoridades nacionales garantizar el cumplimiento de la Directiva 92/43/CEE ([1]).

([1]) Directiva 92/43/CEE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres (DO L 206 de 22.7.1992).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002155/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: Possible adverse effects on the Cinca and Alcanadre Rivers SCI in Pomar de Cinca (Aragón)

In the municipality of Pomar de Cinca (Huesca, Aragón), a private individual has carried out major ploughing and levelling of land near the old dump site of Monzón, in order to prepare it for planting an orchard.

This has occurred in an area included in the Cinca and Alcanadre Rivers site of Community importance (SCI, ES2410073), covering an area of some 6 200 hectares. Both rivers constitute important water arteries, acting as a biological corridor for many species of fauna and flora, while also linking the Pyrenean foothills to the floor of the Ebro River valley. It should be noted that the floodplain of the Cinca River forms a valley plain through which numerous shallow channels, separated by gravel banks, run on a braided course of a type that is very rare in the European continent and extremely sensitive to any artificial regulation of river flows.

In this context, action such as that carried out in Pomar de Cinca may cause a fundamental change to the area's geomorphology and to runoffs and water flows on the ground surface, while also modifying the existing landscape and affecting flora and fauna. All of this is made worse by the fact that any rain would facilitate the deposit of fertilisers on the Clamor de Pomar Gorge.

— Given the above, does the Commission have information about the environmental impact these activities may have on the Cinca and Alcanadre Rivers SCI? If not, does the Commission intend to request information from Aragón's Department of Agriculture, Livestock and Environment?

— In this context, what action has the Commission taken, and does it intend to take, to preserve this area of high ecological value and, in particular, to ensure compliance with Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora, and Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

The Commission does not posses information on the project mentioned by the Honourable Member or about the impact that it might have on the site ES 24100073 'Ríos Cinca y Alcanadre'. The information provided by the Honourable Member does not have sufficient details on the nature of the impacts and the significance of the damage that this project could cause on the Natura 2000 site. The Commission would ask the Honourable Member to provide more details in order to be able to launch an investigation.

The Commission would like to recall that the responsibility for ensuring compliance with Directive 92/43/EEC ([1]) lies primarily with the national authorities.

([1]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC, of 21 May 1992, on the protection of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002156/12
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: VAT rates for archivists, archival firms and genealogists

The value added tax (VAT) rates in Ireland have recently changed, with the 'lower' band of VAT — reserved for 'labour-intensive work' — reduced from 13.5 % to 12 %, and the 'higher' band of VAT increased from 21 % to 23 %.

As it stands, the services of archivists, archival firms and genealogists remain in the higher band of VAT. However, the Archives and Records Association, Ireland (ARAI) believe that these professions belong to the lower band of VAT, and has requested that they be classified as such by the Irish Government.

The Irish Minister for Finance, however, has stated in reply that: 'under the EU VAT directive, Member States may only apply the reduced VAT rate to those goods and services which are listed under Annex III of the VAT Directive. As Annex III does not provide for a reduced rate of VAT to be applied to the services of archivists, archival firms and genealogists, it is not possible for the reduced rate to apply to them'.

— Is it definitively the case that archivists, archival firms and genealogists cannot qualify for the reduced band of VAT under the terms of the EU VAT Directive?

— Would the Commission restrict the Irish government from attempting to classify these services under the lower band of VAT, if it chose to do so?

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

The Commission confirms the reply provided to the Honourable Member by the Irish Minister for Finance.

Indeed, only the goods and services listed in Annex III to the VAT Directive ([1]) may be subject to a reduced VAT rate set no lower than 5 %. The services of archivists, archival firms and genealogists do not form part of Annex III and must be taxed at the standard rate.

The application of a reduced VAT rate to these services would therefore be incompatible with the EU VAT Directive.

([1]) Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006 on the common system of value added tax , OJ L 347, 11.12.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002157/12
to the Commission
Edward McMillan-Scott (ALDE)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: The health of honeybees and the existence of varroa-resistant native dark honeybees in the North York Moors National Park

In 2004, the Beekeeping and Biodiversity in Europe (BABE) project was completed, which confirmed through DNA sampling carried out by the University of Copenhagen that native dark honeybees (*Apis mellifera mellifera*) exist in the North York Moors National Park, England. Of 49 samples submitted from the eastern side of the National Park, only three samples were found to have been genetically contaminated by foreign bees. Furthermore, a natural defence mechanism against the varroa mite has been found in all North York Moors native colonies tested, with the most recent figures dating from 2009. Selective breeding to produce bees fully resistant to varroa can only be achieved if beekeepers in the area can maintain this genetically stable population free from foreign bee influence.

In light of the results of the 2001-2004 BABE project, the EU's commitment to the Convention on Biological Diversity, Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 which commits to 'control of varroasis', amongst other measures, and the Commission's 2010 communication COM(2010) 0714 on 'Honeybee Health':

1. What is the Commission doing to promote investment in this area and react to the results of research, such as the findings of the BABE project related to the native dark honeybee in the North York Moors National Park?

2. How has the Commission reacted to the results of research, such as the findings of the BABE project related to the native dark honeybee in the North York Moors National Park?

3. How does the Commission intend to encourage national governments of European Member States, such as the United Kingdom, to take note of such findings and ensure that the necessary funding is invested in this area?

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

1-2.Following the BABE project, the Commission supported EU research to develop still missing knowledge on bee genetics and on sustainable apiculture and pollination. Examples include the FP6 project ALARM ([1]), on pollinators and changes in biodiversity, the FP7 project STEP ([2]) on the pan-European status of pollinators and FP6 Bee Shop ([3]) and FP7 Bee Doc ([4]) projects addressing various aspects of the bee genome and resistance to pests and pathogens in European honeybee races.

To facilitate the use of relevant EU-funded research results (such as those of BABE), the Commission requires the projects to disseminate the results and new knowledge to potential users. By focusing on key societal challenges and innovation, the new research framework programme ([5]) is expected to make uptake of results even more immediate and effective. EU coordination and dissemination of up-to-date science has been strengthened also by designating an EU reference laboratory for bee health ([6]) and an EU bee health research webpage ([7]).

3.It is the responsibility of the Member States and the beekeeping industry to ensure a proper follow-up of research results (e.g. the selective breeding of bees to fight against varroasis). The Commission provides co-financing for certain measures, e.g. the control of varroasis is one of the measures provided for under Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 ([8]) to improve general conditions for the production and marketing of apiculture products. The Commission also supports cooperation with specialised bodies for the implementation of applied research programmes. The Commission is undertaking an evaluation of the use of these measures by Member States and their effectiveness. This will include, as part of an EU overview, a description of the situation in the United Kingdom.

([1]) Assessing large-scale environmental risks for biodiversity with tested methods, http://www.alarmproject.net/alarm/.
([2]) Status and trends of European pollinators, http://www.step-project.net/.
([3]) Bees in Europe and sustainable honey production, http://www2.biologie.uni-halle.de/zool/mol_ecol/bee-shop/index.html
([4]) Bees in Europe and the decline of honeybee colonies, http://www.bee-doc.eu/.
([5]) Horizon 2020, COM(2011) 808 final.
([6]) Regulation (EU) No 87/2011, OJ L29, 3.2.2011, http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/liveanimals/bees/eu_ref_lab_bee_health_en.htm
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/liveanimals/bees/research_en.htm
([8]) OJ L 299, 16.11.2007.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002158/12
to the Commission
Claude Moraes (S&D)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: Human rights and the EU-Colombia Free Trade Agreement

According to the most recent figures from the Trade Union Congress, more trade unionists are killed in Colombia each year than in all other countries combined. Several of my constituents have raised concerns that the free trade agreement which the EU is expected to conclude with Colombia later this year does not go far enough in addressing these atrocities, and may even serve to exacerbate them.

Could the Commission therefore detail how it will address these concerns and how it will ensure that the EU-Colombia Free Trade Agreement is fully supportive of human rights?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2012)

The Commission is aware that the human rights situation in Colombia is far from perfect. Nevertheless, all the efforts deployed by the Colombian government so as to bring justice to the victims of this violence, to enhance protection measures for individuals and to prevent further occurrences of this nature have showed encouraging results. Although there is still much progress to be made, the International Labour Organisation has recognised that the situation has positively changed and significant improvements have been achieved in recent years.

With this in mind, the Commission has monitored this process and has actively engaged in a dialogue with Colombian authorities, International Organisations and NGOs on the nature of human rights violations and the most appropriate means to address the situation. In this respect, special emphasis has been placed on labour rights. The Commission considers that all the steps taken during the negotiation process have already contributed to a series of positive developments in the human rights field, expecting that the Colombian government will be able to deliver further positive results with the entry into force of the Trade Agreement.

The Commission considers the current human rights provisions as negotiated in the agreement are fully addressing the human rights challenges that Colombia is still facing. The unilaterally enforceable human rights clause together with the binding commitments to effectively implement core labour standards and effectively enforce domestic labour laws will be effective mechanisms to hold the Colombian government to its commitments on the integrity of trade unionists and the protection of human rights.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002160/12
to the Commission
Gay Mitchell (PPE)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: Commission proposal for a revision of European Good Distribution Practice Guidelines (GDP)

In relation to the Commission's proposal for a revision of European Good Distribution Practice Guidelines (GDP), will the Commission clarify whether it has considered the cost-benefit impact of the proposed new requirements, to ensure that they are not overly burdensome for wholesale distributors of medicinal products?

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

The revised GDP guidelines are based on advancements of practices for an appropriate storage and distribution of medicinal products in the European Union. The Commission has paid particular attention to avoid any unnecessary costs for wholesale distributors.

The proposed changes to the guidelines take into account extensive feedback from various experts conducting inspections of the wholesale distributors and the GDP guide from the World Health Organisation. Following the consultation in 2011, the Commission will now conduct an in-depth assessment of each comment, in collaboration with the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and will then consult the Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use at the EMA, and the Pharmaceutical Committee where all Member States are represented.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002161/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(23 février 2012)

Objet: Place des agricultrices dans la nouvelle politique agricole commune

Comme la plupart des États membres, la Belgique est confrontée, depuis une trentaine d'années, à une érosion massive du nombre de ses exploitations agricoles. Aujourd'hui, avec une diminution d'environ mille fermes par an, le nombre d'agricultrices (principalement des conjointes aidantes) qui sont contraintes de quitter le monde agricole pour «aller chercher» du travail ailleurs est inquiétant: il avoisinerait les 6 %.

Souvent peu qualifiées, ces agricultrices se résignent, si elles veulent subvenir aux besoins de leurs familles, à accepter des emplois précaires, peu valorisants et mal rémunérés.

Pourtant, tout le monde s'accorde à dire que le potentiel économique des femmes, de toutes les générations, est primordial dans les exploitations agricoles. Les hommes et les femmes doivent conserver des perspectives d'avenir en matière de vie et de prospérité en région rurale.

Il est nécessaire de mettre en œuvre le principe d'égalité des sexes dans la politique agricole commune car c'est un moyen de promouvoir une croissance économique durable et le développement rural. Il est donc essentiel que l'Union européenne recentre ses stratégies de soutien afin de développer les zones rurales de manière à faciliter la vie des femmes.

Il s'agit notamment de promouvoir l'attitude entrepreneuriale et les compétences des femmes dans l'agriculture, d'améliorer l'accès et la formation spécifique des femmes, d'équiper les zones rurales d'infrastructures modernes, de viser une plus grande reconnaissance et plus de soutien pour les réseaux de femmes, de favoriser la qualité et l'accessibilité des installations d'infrastructure et de service, de mettre en place une sécurité sociale adéquate pour les femmes travaillant dans l'agriculture, d'assurer la propriété partagée des exploitations agricoles, et plus généralement de porter une attention particulière aux femmes.

Quelles sont les mesures prioritaires que la Commission compte proposer pour maintenir les femmes dans les exploitations agricoles et ainsi valoriser la pérennisation du nombre des agriculteurs dans l'Union européenne?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(28 mars 2012)

La Commission estime que l'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes et l'entreprenariat féminin dans les zones rurales sont indispensables au développement du potentiel humain et social dans ces zones. Les besoins des femmes dans les zones rurales sont examinés par les orientations stratégiques de la Communauté pour le développement rural, qui énumèrent les priorités du développement rural au niveau européen. La promotion de l'entrée des femmes sur le marché du travail est considérée comme une action clé dans les orientations. Les programmes de développement rural offrent, à l'heure actuelle, des mesures telles que l'aide aux jeunes agriculteurs, la diversification, les microentreprises, l'approche Leader et la formation professionnelle, que les États membres peuvent aussi orienter vers les femmes.

Le principe de non-discrimination entre les sexes sera maintenu dans la future politique agricole commune. Le nouveau projet de loi ([1]) prévoit un nombre suffisant d'outils pour répondre aux besoins des femmes dans les zones rurales, dans le cadre de l'aide au développement des activités agricoles et des entreprises, de la formation et de mesures de transfert des connaissances, mais aussi de mesures de coopération et du programme Leader. La mise à disposition de services de garde abordables pour les autres personnes à charge est également une composante importante permettant aux femmes issues de zones rurales d'obtenir leur indépendance économique. Ces outils peuvent, dans leur ensemble, servir dans le cadre de projets visant les femmes et les femmes entrepreneurs ainsi que des projets développés par les femmes.

([1]) COM(2011) 627 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002161/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(23 February 2012)

Subject: The place of women farmers in the new common agricultural policy

Like most Member States, Belgium has, over the last 30 years or so, seen a huge decline in the number of farms. With about 1 000 farms currently going out of business every year, women farmers (mainly assisting spouses) are being forced to leave farming in order to seek work elsewhere, and the scale of the phenomenon is worrying: the figure is thought to be close to 6 %.

Since, in many cases, they have few qualifications, if they want to provide for their families these women farmers have to resign themselves to accepting poorly paid low-status jobs, with little job security.

Yet everyone agrees that the economic potential of women, of all generations, is essential on farms. Men and women in rural areas are entitled to have a future in terms of living standards and prosperity.

The principle of gender equality needs to be applied to the common agricultural policy, as it is a way of promoting sustainable economic growth and rural development. It is therefore vital for the European Union to refocus its support strategies in order to develop rural areas with a view to making women's lives easier.

In particular, this means promoting the entrepreneurial mind-set and the skills of women in agriculture, improving access and specific training for women, equipping rural areas with modern infrastructure, aiming for greater recognition of, and more support for, women's networks, promoting the quality and accessibility of infrastructure and service facilities, introducing proper social security for women working in agriculture, bringing about shared farm ownership, and, in general, paying more attention to women.

What measures will the Commission propose as a matter of priority to keep women on farms and thereby maintain the number of farmers in the European Union on a lasting basis?

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

The Commission considers gender mainstreaming and female entrepreneurship in rural areas as vital for building their human and social potential in those areas. The needs of women in rural areas are addressed by the Community Strategic Guidelines for Rural Development (RD) which identifies the priorities for RD on European level. The guidelines mention the encouragement of the entry of women into the labour market as a key action. The Rural Development Programmes offer at present measures like support to young farmers, diversification, micro enterprises, Leader approach or vocational training which can also be targeted by Member States to women.

The principle of non-discrimination between genders will be maintained in the future common agricultural policy. Sufficient tools which address the needs of women in rural areas are provided in the new proposed legislation ([1]) in the context of the farm and business development support, the training and knowledge transfer measures as well as through a cooperation measure and Leader. The provision of affordable care services for other dependants is also an important element to allow women from rural areas to gain economic independence. All these tools can cover projects that target women and female entrepreneurs as well as projects developed by women themselves.

([1]) COM(2011) 627 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002164/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(24 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Μετανάστευση της δισφαινόλης Α στο πόσιμο νερό

Σύμφωνα με τη διεθνή περιβαλλοντική οργάνωση Chemsec υπάρχει κίνδυνος επιμόλυνσης του πόσιμου νερού από τη δισφαινόλη Α (BPA) ή τη δισφαινόλη Α διγλυκιδυλικός αιθέρας (BADGE). Οι εποξικές ρητίνες που παρασκευάζονται από BPA ή BADGE χρησιμοποιούνται στην επανεπένδυση (relining) του εσωτερικού των πεπαλαιωμένων σωλήνων ύδρευσης για την αποκατάστασή τους. Σύμφωνα, ωστόσο, με τους Bae *et al* (2002), η BPA μπορεί να διαρρεύσει στο πόσιμο νερό από τους σωλήνες ύδρευσης, με την ποσότητα αυτή να αυξάνεται με την αύξηση της θερμοκρασίας. Διαρροή της BPA από τους σωλήνες στο πόσιμο νερό, έχει αναφερθεί επίσης, όταν η εποξική ρητίνη δεν είχε αναμιχθεί σωστά ή δεν είχε αρκετό χρόνο για να στεγνώσει. Έχουν υπάρξει αναφορές για συγκεντρώσεις της BPA άνω των 30 ppb (μg/lt) στο νερό αφού είχε θερμανθεί μέχρι 70 °C. Με το πέρασμα του χρόνου και την αλλοίωση των εποξικών ρητινών έχει επίσης παρατηρηθεί διαρροή της BPA στο πόσιμο νερό. Η BPA είναι ορμονικός διαταράκτης και η χρήση της έχει συνδεθεί με καρκινογενέσεις, μείωση γονιμότητας, διαβήτη, παχυσαρκία κ.ά. Λόγω των δυσμενών επιπτώσεων της BPA στην υγεία, αρκετές χώρες έχουν απαγορεύσει τη χρήση της κυρίως στα προϊόντα για μικρά παιδιά (μπιμπερό και υλικά συσκευασίας τροφίμων). Στην ΕΕ δεν υπάρχει νομοθεσία για τη χρήση της BPA στους σωλήνες ύδρευσης αλλά ούτε και για τα επίπεδα της BPA στο πόσιμο νερό.

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή θα πρέπει να λάβει υπόψη της τις επιστημονικές μελέτες που καταδεικνύουν την επικινδυνότητα της BPA για τον ανθρώπινο οργανισμό και το περιβάλλον και να απαγορεύσει τη χρήση προϊόντων που περιέχουν BPA στους σωλήνες ύδρευσης.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα ανωτέρω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Γνωρίζει σε ποιο βαθμό και σε ποια κράτη μέλη εφαρμόζεται η επανεπένδυση των σωλήνων ύδρευσης με εποξικές ρητίνες που περιέχουν BPA;

2. Σκοπεύει υπό το πρίσμα της αρχής της προφύλαξης να ρυθμίσει τη χρήση της BPA σε υλικά που έρχονται σε επαφή με το πόσιμο νερό;

3. Προτίθεται να καθορίσει ειδικά κονδύλια έρευνας για εναλλακτικά στην BPA υλικά;

4. Με ποιον τρόπο ενθαρρύνει τις εταιρείες να αναπτύξουν εναλλακτικά στην BPA υλικά;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(16 Απριλίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή είναι πλήρως ενήμερη για τις ανησυχίες σχετικά με τους ενδεχόμενους κινδύνους που συνδέονται με την έκθεση του ανθρώπου στη δισφαινόλη Α μέσω της τροφικής αλυσίδας. Σχετικά με το θέμα αυτό, παραπέμπουμε το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στην απάντηση της Επιτροπής στην κοινοβουλευτική ερώτηση E-010732/2011 ([1]).

Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει καμία πληροφορία σχετικά με τις προσπάθειες που καταβάλλουν τα κράτη μέλη για την αποκατάσταση/αντικατάσταση των σωλήνων ύδρευσης με εποξική ρητίνη που περιέχει δισφαινόλη Α. Η Επιτροπή δεν σχεδιάζει επί του παρόντος να προτείνει ρυθμιστικά μέτρα για τη χρήση δισφαινόλης Α στους σωλήνες ύδρευσης ούτε να διαθέσει ειδικά κονδύλια έρευνας για την εξεύρεση εναλλακτικών υλικών. Προς το παρόν, κανένα πρόγραμμα της Επιτροπής δεν περιλαμβάνει την ενθάρρυνση των επιχειρήσεων να αναπτύξουν υλικά που δεν περιέχουν δισφαινόλη Α.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002164/12
to the Commission
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(24 February 2012)

Subject: Migration of bisphenol A into drinking water

According to the international environmental organisation Chemsec, drinking water is at risk of being contaminated by bisphenol A (BPA) or bisphenol A diglycidyl ether (BADGE). Epoxy resins made from BPA or BADGE are used to reline the inside of deteriorating water pipes to repair them. However, according to Bae et al. (2002), BPA can leak into drinking water from the water pipes, its amount increasing with an increase in temperature. BPA leakage from pipes into drinking water has also been reported when the epoxy resins have not been mixed properly or have not had enough time to dry. There have been reports of BPA concentration of more than 30 ppb (mg/lt) in water reaching a temperature of 70°C. BPA leakage in drinking water has also been observed with the passage of time and the deterioration of the epoxy resins. BPA is a hormone disturber and its use has been linked to carcinogenicity, reduced fertility, diabetes, obesity and others. Due to the detrimental impacts of BPA on health, many countries have banned its use, mainly in products for small children (bottles and food packaging materials). In the EU, there is no legislation on the use of BPA in water pipes, nor on BPA levels in drinking water.

The European Commission should consider the scientific studies that prove the risk of BPA to the human body and the environment and should prohibit the use of products containing BPA in water pipes.

In view of this:

1. Does the Commission know to what extent and in which Member States the restoration of water pipes with epoxy resins containing BPA is being carried out?

2. Does it intend, in view of the precautionary principle, to regulate the use of BPA in materials coming into contact with drinking water?

3. Does it intend to set up special research funds to find alternative materials not containing BPA?

4. In what way does it encourage companies to develop alternative materials not containing BPA?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2012)

The Commission is well aware of the concerns relating to the potential risks associated with human exposure to Bisphenol A through the food chain. In this context the Honourable Member is referred to the Commissions answer to parliamentary Question E-010732/2011 ([1]).

The Commission does not have any information concerning efforts being taken by Member States to restore/replace water pipes with epoxy resin containing BPA. The Commission does not currently have any plans either to propose measures to regulate the use of BPA in water pipes or to set up special research funds to find alternative materials. At this time, encouraging companies to develop materials not containing BPA is not part of a Commission programme.

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002165/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(24 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Προστασία των οικοσυστημάτων και των ειδών βαθέων υδάτων από αλιευτικές δραστηριότητες

Με τον τρόπο που ασκείται επί του παρόντος η αλίευση σε βαθιά ύδατα, έχει σοβαρές περιβαλλοντικές επιπτώσεις ευρείας κλίμακας στα οικοσυστήματα των ωκεανών. Έχει αποδειχθεί ότι η αλιεία σε βαθιά νερά προκαλεί ζημιές στα ευάλωτα οικοσυστήματα λόγω της υπεραλίευσης εξαιρετικά ευάλωτων ειδών βαθέων υδάτων, λόγω των υψηλών ποσοστών παρεμπιπτόντων αλιευμάτων με αποτέλεσμα τις σπάταλες απορρίψεις τους, και επειδή τα αλιευτικά εργαλεία, κυρίως οι τράτες βυθού, έρχονται σε επαφή με το βυθό της θάλασσας. Βάσει μιας νέας ανάλυσης πολιτικής από την περιβαλλοντική οργάνωση PEW και σύμφωνα με διάφορες εκτιμήσεις, αποδεικνύεται ότι το καθεστώς της ΕΕ για τη διαχείριση της αλιείας σε βαθιά ύδατα δεν είναι το κατάλληλο, δεν εφαρμόζεται επαρκώς και δεν συνάδει με τις διεθνείς συμφωνίες ούτε με τις νομικές υποχρεώσεις για βιώσιμη διαχείριση της αλιείας. Πολυάριθμες επιστημονικές μελέτες έχουν καταλήξει στο συμπέρασμα ότι οι τράτες βυθού σε βαθιά ύδατα συνιστούν τη μεγαλύτερη απειλή για τα ευάλωτα είδη και οικοσυστήματα βαθέων υδάτων.

Επιπλέον, το Διεθνές Συμβούλιο για την Εξερεύνηση της Θάλασσας (ICES) εκτιμά ότι η αλιεία βαθέων υδάτων από τους στόλους αλιευτικών της ΕΕ στον βορειοανατολικό Ατλαντικό είναι εντελώς εκτός των ασφαλών βιολογικών ορίων και συστήνει να ελαττωθεί σημαντικά ή να απαγορευτεί δια παντός η αλιεία βαθέων υδάτων.

Ενόψει της προσεχούς πρότασης για το καθεστώς πρόσβασης σε βαθιά ύδατα:

1. Ποια είναι η στρατηγική της Επιτροπής για τη διαφύλαξη των ευάλωτων οικοσυστημάτων και ειδών βαθέων υδάτων από τη δραστηριότητα των αλιευτικών στόλων της ΕΕ;

2. Εξετάζει η Επιτροπή το ενδεχόμενο να καταργήσει σταδιακά τη χρήση αλιευτικών εργαλείων που είναι σε μεγάλο βαθμό μη επιλεκτικά και καταστροφικά;

3. Θα πραγματοποιηθούν εκτιμήσεις επιπτώσεων προτού επιτραπεί η αλίευση σε βαθιά ύδατα;

4. Θα προτείνει η Επιτροπή την απαγόρευση της αλιείας σε περιοχές όπου η αλίευση σε βαθιά ύδατα ενδέχεται να προκαλέσει ζημία σε ευάλωτα θαλάσσια οικοσυστήματα όπως οι κοραλλιογενείς ύφαλοι και τα σπογγοφόρα πεδία ψυχρών υδάτων;

5. Δεδομένου ότι η αλιεία βαθέων υδάτων στον βορειοανατολικό Ατλαντικό φέρεται να ασκείται εκτός των ασφαλών βιολογικών ορίων και ότι τα αλιεύματα βαθέων υδάτων αντιστοιχούν σε ένα ελάχιστο ποσοστό της συνολικής αξίας των αλιευτικών προϊόντων της ΕΕ, εξετάζει η Επιτροπή το ενδεχόμενο να απαγορεύσει ολοκληρωτικά την αλιεία σε βαθιά νερά βάσει της αρχής της πρόληψης;

Απάντηση της κας Δαμανάκη εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Απριλίου 2012)

Στόχος της Επιτροπής είναι η εξασφάλιση της αειφόρου εκμετάλλευσης των ειδών βαθέων υδάτων και η ταυτόχρονη μέγιστη δυνατή μείωση των επιπτώσεων της αλιείας βαθέων υδάτων στο θαλάσσιο περιβάλλον. Η διατήρηση τόσο του ευπαθούς θαλάσσιου οικοσυστήματος, όσο και των ιχθυαποθεμάτων βαθέων υδάτων σε υγιή κατάσταση αποτελεί προτεραιότητα της στρατηγικής της Επιτροπής.

Η Επιτροπή ολοκληρώνει τις διαβουλεύσεις του προπαρασκευαστικού της έργου, με σκοπό την προσεχή έγκριση πρότασης για την ενίσχυση του καθεστώτος πρόσβασης της αλιείας βαθέων υδάτων. Η Επιτροπή είναι πρόθυμη να συζητήσει διεξοδικά με το αξιότιμο μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου τα συγκεκριμένα θέματα που θέτει στην ερώτησή του, μόλις εγκριθεί η πρόταση.

Η Επιτροπή έχει ήδη διενεργήσει εκτίμηση κοινωνικοοικονομικών επιπτώσεων πριν από την κατάρτιση της πρότασής της. Η εκτίμηση αυτή περιλαμβάνει ανάλυση των επιλογών ύστερα από διαβούλευση με όλους τους ενδιαφερόμενους φορείς και τα ενδιαφερόμενα κράτη μέλη και σχολιασμό από μέρους τους και θα καταστεί διαθέσιμη μαζί με την πρόταση.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002165/12
to the Commission
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(24 February 2012)

Subject: Protecting deep-sea ecosystems and species against fishing activities

As currently practiced, deep-sea fishing has serious and widespread environmental consequences for ocean ecosystems. Deep-sea fishing has been found to damage vulnerable ecosystems as a result of overfishing of highly vulnerable deep-sea species, high by-catch rates, leading to wasteful discarding, and fishing gear, particularly bottom trawl gear, coming into contact with the seabed. According to a new policy analysis by the PEW Environmental Group, various assessments have found that the EU's deep-sea fisheries management regime is inadequate, poorly enforced and inconsistent with international agreements and legal obligations for the sustainable management of fisheries. Numerous scientific studies have concluded that deep-sea bottom trawl fishing poses the greatest threat to vulnerable deep-sea species and ecosystems.

In addition, the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) estimates that EU fleets' catch of deep-water fish in the north-east Atlantic by EU fleets is entirely 'outside safe biological limits' and has recommended that fishing for deep-sea species should be significantly reduced or ended entirely.

Pending the forthcoming deep-sea access regime proposal:

1. What is the Commission's strategy to safeguard vulnerable deep-sea ecosystems and species impacted on by EU fleets?

2. Is the Commission considering phasing out highly unselective and destructive fishing gear?

3. Are impact assessments going to be carried out prior to permitting deep-sea fishing?

4. Is the Commission proposing area closures where deep-sea fishing is likely to cause harm to vulnerable marine ecosystems, such as cold-water corals and sponges?

5. Since fishing for deep-sea species in the north-east Atlantic is considered to be outside safe biological limits, and since deep-sea fishing products account for no more than a fraction of the value of EU fishery products as a whole, is the Commission considering completely ending deep-sea fishing on the basis of the precautionary principle?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission.
(3 April 2012)

The Commission aims to ensure sustainable exploitation of deep-sea species while reducing the impact of deep-sea fishing operations in the marine environment as much as possible. Maintaining both, vulnerable marine ecosystem and deep-sea stocks in a healthy situation is a priority of the Commission's strategy.

The Commission is finalising its preparatory work consultations with a view to adopting a proposal reinforcing the access regime for deep sea fisheries shortly. The Commission will be pleased to have an in-depth discussion with the Honourable Member on the matters specifically raised in his question, as soon as the proposal is adopted.

The Commission has already carried out a socioeconomic impact assessment prior to developing its proposal. It contains an analysis of options after consultation and feedback with all the stakeholders and Member States concerned and will become available together with the proposal.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002166/12
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(24 February 2012)

Subject: Minimum standards for WIFI on trains

Further to its answer to Question E-000674/2012, does the Commission feel it important that customers should be entitled to know in advance whether or not a WIFI service will be available on a train, and does the Commission have any plans to encourage train operators, as public transport providers, to increase the availability of WIFI on trains, so as to ensure that there is a modal shift from private motorcars to environmentally sustainable means of transport, which should be a Commission priority?

Can the Commission outline what compensation passengers might be entitled to if a WIFI service did not work properly, resulting in costs for them because they were unable to conduct business?

If there are no EU rules at present, are there plans to introduce guidance measures in relation to this point?

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

The provision of WiFi on trains is not a matter which is, or need be, regulated at EU level. Nonetheless, the Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that the provision of high quality rail services is an important element in encouraging greater use of rail transport, as foreseen in last year's White Paper on the Future of Transport. The rail legislation already adopted by the EU and the further provisions the Commission is planning to propose later in 2012 are intended to further stimulate such innovation in the rail sector.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002167/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(24 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Στρατηγική για την αντιμετώπιση των θανάτων από την πείνα διεθνώς

Κατά το έτος 2011 οι άνθρωποι που αντιμετώπισαν υποσιτισμό διεθνώς προσέγγισαν το ένα δισ. ψυχές σύμφωνα με τον FAO, ενώ κάθε 5 δευτερόλεπτα ένα παιδί συνεχίζει να χάνει τη ζωή του από την πείνα σύμφωνα με το BBC. Παράλληλα, το παγκόσμιο ΑΕΠ αγγίζει τα 70 τρισ. ευρώ και το ύψος της αξίας των χαρτοφυλακίων των επενδυτών διεθνώς προσεγγίζει τα 800 τρισ. ευρώ.

Στα πλαίσια μιας ενιαίας στρατηγικής παγκόσμιας εμβέλειας η ευαισθητοποίηση των εχόντων θα μπορούσε να συμβάλει στη σωτηρία ανθρώπινων ζωών.

Παράλληλα, γεννιούνται ερωτήματα για το κατά πόσον η εξωτερική βοήθεια που δίνει η ΕΕ και κυμάνθηκε στα 12 δισ. ευρώ για το 2011, κατευθύνεται για τη μείωση του παγκόσμιου δράματος που γεννά η πείνα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Θεωρεί ότι υπάρχουν περιθώρια επανεξέτασης της εξωτερικής βοήθειας που παρέχει η ΕΕ για το 2012 με κατεύθυνση τη βιωσιμότητα των πολιτικών εξάλειψης της πείνας;

2. Σκοπεύει να ερευνήσει τις δυνατότητες που θα είχε η ευαισθητοποίηση των επενδυτών διεθνώς για τη σωτηρία ανθρώπινων ζωών, στο πλαίσιο ενός ευρύτερου προγράμματος συνεργασίας για το καλύτερο δυνατό αποτέλεσμα;

3. Υπάρχει σχεδιασμός για συνεργασία με στόχο την ανάληψη νέων πρωτοβουλιών από κοινού με άλλες αναπτυγμένες χώρες σε παγκόσμια κλίμακα;

Απάντηση του κ. Piebalgs εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Απριλίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή διαδραματίζει επί πολλά έτη πρωταρχικό ρόλο στην αντιμετώπιση της πείνας και του υποσιτισμού. Η ΕΕ είναι ο μεγαλύτερος χορηγός βοήθειας στον τομέα της επισιτιστικής ασφάλειας. Μόνο κατά τα δύο τελευταία έτη η Επιτροπή διέθεσε περίπου 4 δισεκατ. USD υλοποιώντας (και υπερβαίνοντας σε ποσό) τη δέσμευση που ανέλαβε το 2009 στην L'Aquila, εξ ονόματος της ΕΕ, να διαθέσει 3,8 δισεκατ. USD για τη στήριξη της γεωργίας και της επισιτιστικής ασφάλειας κατά την περίοδο 2010-2012.

Η γεωργία, η επισιτιστική ασφάλεια και η διατροφή κατέχουν πρωτεύουσα θέση στην ανακοίνωση σχετικά με το «πρόγραμμα δράσης για αλλαγή» ([1]) και στον διάλογο με κυβερνήσεις των χωρών εταίρων. Επιπλέον, το 2010 θεσπίστηκαν, σε υπουργικό επίπεδο στην ΕΕ, πλαίσια πολιτικής για την επισιτιστική ασφάλεια ([2]) και την ανθρωπιστική επισιτιστική βοήθεια ([3]) προσδίδοντας μεγαλύτερη συνοχή και αντίκτυπο στις προσπάθειες της ΕΕ.

Η Επιτροπή αναγνωρίζει ότι θα πρέπει να ενταθούν οι προσπάθειες για συνεργασία με άλλους φορείς που δραστηριοποιούνται στα θέματα αυτά, ιδίως στον ιδιωτικό τομέα, και να αντληθεί χρηματοδότηση από αυτούς. Θα εξακολουθήσει να προωθεί το συντονισμό με άλλους δωρητές, καθώς και με ιδιωτικούς φορείς, με σκοπό την αύξηση των πόρων και την ενθάρρυνση υπεύθυνων επενδύσεων σε μια βιώσιμη γεωργία και στην επισιτιστική και διατροφική ασφάλεια.

Η Επιτροπή αναλαμβάνει συντονισμένες ενέργειες για την επισιτιστική ασφάλεια σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο. Συμβάλλει σημαντικά στην παγκόσμια διακυβέρνηση στον τομέα της επισιτιστικής ασφάλειας, στηρίζοντας ιδίως, μεταξύ άλλων πρωτοβουλιών, τη μεταρρύθμιση της Επιτροπής για την Παγκόσμια Επισιτιστική Ασφάλεια και την εφαρμογή του προγράμματος επισιτιστικής ασφάλειας στο πλαίσιο των G8/G20. Η δρομολόγηση παγκόσμιας πρωτοβουλίας για την επίτευξη του επιμέρους στόχου γ του1ου Αναπτυξιακού Στόχου της Χιλιετίας, κορυφώθηκε με την πρωτοβουλία SUN (Scaling Up Nutrition) στο πλαίσιο της οποίας η Επιτροπή άσκησε την επιρροή της για να διασφαλίσει ότι θα ζητηθεί η γνώμη των πληττόμενων χωρών οι οποίες θα έχουν λόγο επί των διεθνών πολιτικών και συστημάτων που προορίζονται για την παροχή βοήθειας προς αυτές.

([1]) COM(2011)637 τελικό.
([2]) COM(2010)127 τελικό.
([3]) COM(2010)126 τελικό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002167/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(24 February 2012)

Subject: International strategy to address deaths from starvation

According to the FAO, in 2011 almost one billion people suffered from malnutrition worldwide, while, according to the BBC, starvation continues to claim the life of one child every five seconds. At the same time, global GDP is nearly EUR 70 trillion and the global value of investors' portfolios is almost EUR 800 trillion.

A global strategy to raise awareness among more well-off people could save lives.

Questions are also being asked about the extent to which the foreign aid granted by the EU — amounting to EUR 12 billion in 2011 — is directed at reducing the global tragedy caused by hunger.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it consider that there is any scope for reviewing the EU's external aid in 2012 to ensure the viability of policies to eradicate hunger?

2. Does it intend to investigate the potential for saving human lives that raising awareness among international investors could have, as part of a wider programme of cooperation aimed at achieving the best possible results?

3. Are there any plans for cooperation to devise new initiatives with other developed countries on a global scale?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2012)

The Commission has played a leading role in tackling hunger and malnutrition for many years. The EU is the world's largest grant donor to food security. In the past two years alone the Commission has committed nearly USD 4 billion, living up to (and exceeding) the USD 3.8 billion pledge it made, on behalf of the EU, in 2009 in L'Aquila to support agriculture and food security in 2010-2012.

Agriculture, food security and nutrition are placed high on the 'Agenda for Change' communication ([1]) and in dialogue with partner governments. Furthermore, in 2010 policy frameworks on food security ([2]) and humanitarian food assistance ([3]) were adopted at EU ministerial level and give greater coherence and impact to EU efforts.

The Commission recognises that efforts need to be stepped up to join forces with, and attract financing from, other players also active in the sector, namely the private sector. It will continue to promote coordination with other donors, as well as with private actors, to scale up resources and encourage responsible investment in sustainable agriculture and food and nutrition security.

The Commission is taking concerted action on food security at the global level. It is a major contributor to global food security governance — especially through its backing for reform of the Committee on World Food Security and for implementation of the Food Security agenda in the G8/G20 context, among other initiatives. The launch of a global initiative to tackle under-nutrition and boost efforts to achieve Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 1, target c, culminated in the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) initiative in which the Commission was influential in ensuring that affected countries are consulted and have a say on international policies and systems intended to help them.

([1]) COM(2011) 637 final.
([2]) COM(2010) 127 final.
([3]) COM(2010) 126 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002168/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(24 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Bloqueo de importaciones de petróleo a la UE

Según las conclusiones de un estudio del Banco Central Europeo ([1]), un aumento de los precios del petróleo tiene, en la mayoría de los países de la OCDE, un impacto directo en la economía real. Es decir, hay una clara relación entre el aumento de los precios del petróleo y sus efectos negativos sobre el crecimiento real del PIB.

Según un artículo del FT ([2]), los precios del petróleo han tocado techo este jueves 23 de febrero en los mercados, alcanzando un precio record histórico de 93,63 € el barril.

Según diferentes analistas, dicho aumento de los precios denominados en euros puede crear un choque regional en Europa y generar aún más incertidumbre en las maltrechas economías europeas. Además, dada la fungibilidad del mercado del crudo y la importancia de los productores de la región del Golfo, donde —según Corporación de Reservas Estratégicas (CORES)— productores como Irán abastecieron al Estado español, entre septiembre del año 2010 y octubre del 2011, el 14,7 % del total de sus importaciones de crudo. Dado el gran impacto económico que tienen las importaciones de petróleo en la gran mayoría de economías europeas, ya sea en su balanza de pagos o en el crecimiento real del PIB, y teniendo en cuenta el bloqueo a las importaciones provenientes de Irán aprobado recientemente y que entrará en vigor a mediados de este año 2012,

1. ¿Cree la Comisión que dicho bloqueo a las importaciones de petróleo del tercer productor mundial afectará a las expectativas de saneamiento y a la estabilización económica de la Unión y, en especial, a la economía catalana y española?

2. ¿Puede informar la Comisión de si ha hecho un estudio de los costes económicos que dicha decisión acarreará a la UE en su conjunto y, en particular, al Estado español? ¿En caso positivo, puede facilitarlos? Si no, ¿cuál es el motivo para no hacer el estudio?

3. ¿Puede informar la Comisión de si está satisfecha de la flexibilidad de dicho acuerdo y de si Estados como el español llegarán a tiempo para buscar otros socios y así satisfacer su demanda interna y, a la sazón, cumplir con el acuerdo de bloqueo?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de abril de 2012)

1. Habida cuenta de lo limitado de las posibilidades de sustitución a corto plazo, la mayoría de las economías de la UE, incluida la española, están expuestas, efectivamente, a un encarecimiento del petróleo. No obstante, es importante señalar que los principales factores de dicho encarecimiento son el incremento fuerte y constante de la demanda en países no pertenecientes a la OCDE, algunas interrupciones en la producción en diversas partes del mundo y el temor a ulteriores interrupciones del suministro, por ejemplo, en el Estrecho de Ormuz.

2. La decisión de que la UE aplique sanciones ha sido una decisión política de los Estados miembros en respuesta al programa nuclear de Irán.

3. Los refinadores europeos, incluidos los españoles, ya han empezado a sustituir los suministros iraníes por los de otros países y no hay constancia de que se hayan producido problemas al respecto.

([1]) http://www.ecb.int/pub/pdf/scpwps/ecbwp362.pdf
([2]) http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/6efe1e56-5e0f-11e1-b1e9-00144feabdc0.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002168/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(24 February 2012)

Subject: Block on imports of petroleum to the EU

According to the conclusions of a study by the European Central Bank ([1]), in most OECD countries an increase in petroleum prices has a direct impact on the real economy. In other words, there is a clear relationship between increased petroleum prices and negative effects on real GDP growth.

According to an article in the *Financial Times* ([2]), petroleum prices hit a ceiling on Thursday, 23 February 2012 in the markets, reaching a historical record price of EUR 93.63 per barrel.

Various analysts believe that the rise in prices denominated in euros may have a regional impact in Europe and cause even more uncertainty in battered European economies. Moreover, account must be taken of the fungibility of the oil market and the importance of producers in the Gulf region, where — according to the Corporation of Strategic Reserves of Oil-based Products (CORES) — between September 2010 and October 2011 producers such as Iran supplied 14.7 % of Spain's total crude oil imports. Given the huge economic impact of petroleum imports on the great majority of European economies, whether on their balance of payments or on real GDP growth, and taking into account the blocking of imports from Iran that was approved recently and is to enter into force by mid-2012,

1. Does the Commission believe that blocking petroleum imports from the world's third-largest producer will affect the outlook for economic reorganisation and stabilisation in the Union, especially in the Catalan and Spanish economies?

2. Can the Commission say whether it has carried out a study of the economic costs involved in this decision for the EU as a whole and, in particular, for Spain? If so, can it provide this information? If not, what is the reason for not carrying out such a study?

3. Can the Commission say whether it is satisfied with the flexibility provided in this agreement and whether states such as Spain will have time to find other partners to satisfy domestic demand, while also complying with the blocking agreement?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2012)

1. With limited substitution possibilities in the short run, most EU economies, including Spain, are indeed exposed to an oil price shock. However, it is important to point out that the main drivers are the continued robust demand growth in non-OECD countries, several actual production outages across the globe and fears of further disruptions, *inter alia* in the Strait of Hormuz.

2. The decision on EU sanctions was a political decision of Member States, in response to Iran's nuclear programme.

3. European refiners, including those in Spain, have already started to replace Iranian supplies and no difficulties have been reported in this respect.

([1]) http://www.ecb.int/pub/pdf/scpwps/ecbwp362.pdf
([2]) http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/6efe1e56-5e0f-11e1-b1e9-00144feabdc0.html

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-002170/12
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(24. februar 2012)

Om: Kvindekvoter i bestyrelser

Torsdag den 8. marts 2012 vil medlem af Kommissionen med ansvar for retlige anliggender Viviane Reding fremlægge et udkast til et direktiv om kvindekvoter. Udkastet vil efter sigende komme til at indeholde en målsætning, som lyder, at der senest i 2015 skal være 30 % kvinder i europæiske virksomheders bestyrelser, og i 2020 skal det være op til 40 %.

Er Kommissionen enig i, at bestyrelsesposterne i de europæiske virksomheder bør bestrides af personer, som er valgt ud fra de rette erhvervsmæssige kompetencer og kvalifikationer og ikke på baggrund af deres køn?

Kan Kommissionen be- eller afkræfte, at ovennævnte forslag til et direktiv om kvindekvoter også kommer til at gælde for mindre virksomheder med kun 5 000 eller færre ansatte?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Viviane Reding
(3. april 2012)

Det ærede medlem henvises til den statusrapport om kvindernes rolle i den økonomiske beslutningstagning i EU, som Kommissionens næstformand med ansvar for retlige anliggender, grundlæggende rettigheder og EU-borgerskab fremlagde den 5. marts 2012 ([1]). I rapporten konkluderes det, at selv om kvinderne er kompetente, idet 60 % af alle nyuddannede fra universiteterne er kvinder, sker der kun begrænsede fremskridt med hensyn til at forbedre kønsfordelingen i virksomhedsbestyrelserne.

Som opfølgning på de opgaver, der blev opstillet i Kommissionens strategi for ligestilling mellem mænd og kvinder 2010-2015 ([2]), undersøger Kommissionen for tiden politikmulighederne for målrettede foranstaltninger med henblik på at øge kvindernes deltagelse i den økonomiske beslutningstagning på europæisk plan. Sideløbende med offentliggørelsen af statusrapporten har Kommissionen lanceret en offentlig høring, der vil bidrage til vurderingen af virkningerne af eventuelle EU-foranstaltninger til at rette op på de nuværende forhold. Kommissionen vil efter en fuldstændig konsekvensanalyse træffe afgørelse senere i 2012 om eventuelle foranstaltninger, herunder om foranstaltningernes art og omfang.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/women-on-boards_en.pdf (foreligger ikke på dansk).
([2]) KOM(2010)0491 endelig.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002170/12
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(24 February 2012)

Subject: Quotas for women on management boards

On Thursday 8 March 2012, the Commissioner with responsibility for justice, Viviane Reding, will submit a draft directive on quotas for women. The draft will reportedly contain an objective proposing that women should make up 30 % of European firms' management boards 2015 at the latest, rising to 40 % by 2020.

Does the Commission agree that positions on management boards in European companies should be occupied by individuals selected on the basis of the relevance of their professional abilities and qualifications and not on the basis of their gender?

Can the Commission confirm or deny that the abovementioned proposal for a directive on quotas for women will also apply to smaller firms with 5 000 or fewer employees?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

The Honourable Member is referred to the progress report 'Women in economic decision-making in the EU', presented by the Vice-President of the Commission responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship on 5 March 2012 ([1]). The report concludes that in spite of the fact that women are qualified — they represent 60 % of new university graduates — the progress in improving the gender balance on company boards continues to be very limited.

Following the priorities set out in its Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015 ([2]), the Commission is now exploring policy options for targeted measures to enhance female participation in economic decision-making at the European level. In parallel to the publication of the progress report, the Commission has launched a public consultation that will contribute to assessing the impact of possible EU measures to redress the current situation. A decision on possible measures, including on their nature and scope, will be taken by the Commission later in 2012, after a full impact assessment.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/women-on-boards_en.pdf
([2]) COM(2010) 0491 final.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002171/12
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(24 februari 2012)

Betreft: Handelsoorlog om CO_2-vliegtaks dupeert Europese luchtvaartmaatschappijen

Woensdag 22 februari jl. hebben 23 landen, waaronder de Verenigde Staten, Rusland, China, India, Brazilië en Japan maatregelen aangekondigd tegen Europa's eenzijdige invoering van een CO_2-vliegtaks (ETS voor de luchtvaart). De landen, bijeengekomen in Moskou, hebben vergevorderde plannen om hun nationale luchtvaartmaatschappijen bij wet te verbieden zich te onderwerpen aan ETS. Ook wordt er inmiddels openlijk gesproken over tegenmaatregelen waarmee een handelsoorlog tussen de EU en deze landen een feit is. Europese luchtvaartmaatschappijen dreigen in de toekomst landingsrechten en overvliegrechten te worden onthouden. Ook valt in een gezamenlijk verklaring te lezen dat Europese luchtvaartmaatschappijen extra heffingen in rekening kunnen worden gebracht ([1]). Europa's obsessie met CO_2-reductie heeft het op ramkoers gebracht met alle grote vliegnaties ter wereld en stelt het lot van Europese luchtvaartmaatschappijen in de waagschaal.

1. Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat de EU verantwoordelijk is voor de handelsoorlog die is ontstaan door Europa's eenzijdige invoering van ETS in de luchtvaart? Zo neen, waarom niet?

2. Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat het onvergeeflijk is dat Europese luchtvaartmaatschappijen (en passagiers) gedupeerd worden door de handelsoorlog die de EU heeft ontketend? Zo neen, waarom niet?

3. Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat de EU per direct moet afzien van ETS om onherstelbare schade aan handelsrelaties en verliezen voor luchtvaartmaatschappijen te voorkomen? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van mevrouw Hedegaard namens de Commissie
(28 maart 2012)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op schriftelijke vragen E-8691/2011 van het geachte Parlementslid en E-958/2012 van mevrouw Beňová ([2]).

([1]) http://www.ruaviation.com/docs/1/2012/2/22/50/.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=NL.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002171/12
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(24 February 2012)

Subject: Trade war over CO_2 flight tax is harming European airlines

On Wednesday 22 February 2012, 23 countries, including the United States, Russia, China, India, Brazil and Japan, announced measures against Europe's unilateral introduction of a CO_2 flight tax (Emissions Trading Scheme for air travel — ETS). These countries, whose representatives met in Moscow, have advanced plans to forbid their national airlines by law from subjecting themselves to ETS. In the meantime, they are also openly discussing countermeasures, which shows that a trade war between the EU and these countries has begun. In the future, European airlines may be denied landing rights and flyover rights. A joint declaration also says that additional charges can be imposed on European airlines ([1]). Europe's obsession with CO_2 reduction has placed it on a collision course with all the large aviation nations of the world, putting the fortunes of European airlines in jeopardy.

1. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that the EU is responsible for the trade war caused by Europe's unilateral introduction of ETS in air travel? If not, why not?

2. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that it is unforgivable that European airlines (and passengers) are harmed by the trade war launched by the EU? If not, why not?

3. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that the EU must abandon ETS immediately in order to prevent irreparable damage to trade relations and losses for airlines? If not, why not?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-8691/2011 by the Honourable Member and E-958/2012 by Mrs Beňová ([2]).

([1]) http://www.ruaviation.com/docs/1/2012/2/22/50/.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002172/12
alla Commissione
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(27 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: CIP 6 e incentivi all'incenerimento dei rifiuti in Italia: aiuti di Stato illegittimi (3)

Nella sua risposta alla mia interrogazione E-006489/2011 la Commissione segnalava che la chiusura delle procedure di infrazione 2004/5061 e 2004/4336 è motivata dal fatto che le autorità italiane hanno chiarito che l'incenerimento dei rifiuti non biodegradabili è ammesso a beneficiare del regime di sostegno riservato alle fonti energetiche rinnovabili, senza essere considerato rinnovabile. La Commissione stessa, d'altra parte, nella corrispondenza inviata all'Italia (lettere della DG TREN del 12.1.2007 — (2006)227587 e del 24.1.2007 — (2006)228547) segnalava alle autorità italiane che il regime di aiuti ai rifiuti non biodegradabili deve rispettare le norme comunitarie in materia di aiuti di Stato. D'altra parte, nella risposta all'interrogazione E-006489/2011 la Commissione affermava di non aver ricevuto alcuna notifica dall'Italia riguardo un progetto di aiuti di Stato per l'incenerimento dei rifiuti non biodegradabili. La situazione è estremamente grave, poiché la Commissione, pur in assenza di notifica, è a conoscenza almeno dal 2004 dei contributi statali che dal 1992 l'Italia ha garantito e continua a garantire agli inceneritori. Pertanto può la Commissione europea:

1. riferire circa lo stato di avanzamento della procedura di esame sulla conformità rispetto alla normativa comunitaria delle ordinanze governative n. 3656 dello 6.2.2008 e 3657 del 20.2.2008, su cui ha espresso dubbi nelle risposte alle interrogazioni P-1826/2008 e E-006489/2011?

2. esprimersi sulla conformità alla normativa comunitaria in materia di aiuti di Stato del regime di contributi statali all'incenerimento di rifiuti non biodegradabili di cui la Commissione dichiara di essere a conoscenza almeno dal gennaio 2007?

3. riferire circa lo stato di avanzamento della procedura di esame (si veda risposta all'interrogazione E-000477/2011) degli incentivi finanziari concessi in base all'articolo 9 della legge 210/2008 per l'incenerimento dei rifiuti nelle regioni colpite dall'emergenza rifiuti?

4. domandare ufficialmente alle autorità italiane di pubblicare il resoconto dal 1992 a oggi di tutti gli impianti di incenerimento che hanno usufruito di contributi statali, con espressa indicazione di quelli che ne hanno usufruito in quanto fonti rinnovabili e di quelli che ne hanno usufruito senza essere considerati fonti rinnovabili e del periodo di riferimento?

Risposta data da Joaquín Almunia a nome della Commissione
(17 aprile 2012)

La Commissione attualmente verifica la conformità del regime italiano esistente di contributi statali alla produzione di energia dall'incenerimento di rifiuti con la normativa in materia di aiuti di Stato. Per quanto riguarda la domanda sui contributi ricevuti dagli impianti di incenerimento in Italia dal 1992, la Commissione non ha ancora accertato se siano stati concessi aiuti di Stato.

In questa fase, la Commissione non è in grado di fornire ulteriori dettagli sulla sua valutazione delle misure di cui sopra, in quanto il processo è ancora in corso.

La Commissione non ha la facoltà di chiedere alle autorità italiane di pubblicare il resoconto di tutti gli impianti di incenerimento che hanno usufruito di contributi statali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002172/12
to the Commission
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Decision CIP6 and incineration of waste in Italy: unlawful state aid (3)

In its response to my Question E-006489/2011, the Commission indicated that the closure of infringement proceedings 2004/5061 and 2004/4336 was due to the fact that the Italian authorities had made it clear that the incineration of non-biodegradable waste was eligible to benefit from the support regime for renewable energy sources, without being considered renewable. The Commission itself, however, in its correspondence with Italy (letters from DG TREN of 12 January 2007 — (2006)227587 — and of 24 January 2007 — (2006)228547), had informed the Italian authorities that the aid scheme for non-biodegradable waste had to comply with the EU regulations on state aid. However, in its response to Question E-006489/2011, the Commission confirmed that it had not received any notification from Italy on a state aid project concerning the incineration of non-biodegradable waste. The situation is extremely serious, as the Commission, even without having received notification, has been aware — since 2004 at least — of the state aid that Italy has been giving to incinerators since 1992. Can the Commission therefore:

1. provide an update on the latest developments in the procedure to examine whether government orders Nos 3656 of 6 February 2008 and 3657 of 20 February 2008 comply with EC law, given the doubts it expressed in its replies to Questions P-1826/2008 and E-006489/2011;

2. say whether the state contributions scheme for the incineration of non-biodegradable waste, which the Commission says it has been aware of since January 2007 at least, complies with EU legislation on state aid;

3. provide an update on the latest developments in the proceedings to examine the financial incentives granted on the basis of Article 9 of Law 210/2008 on the incineration of waste in the regions affected by the waste crisis (see reply to Question E-000477/2011);

4. officially request that the Italian authorities publish the record, from 1992 to the present day, of all the incineration plants which have received state aid, expressly indicating those which have received aid as renewable sources and those which have received aid without being considered renewable sources, and in which reference period this occurred?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

The Commission is in the process of analysing the compliance of the existing Italian regime of incentives for energy production from waste incineration with the state aid rules. Concerning the question on support received by incineration plants in Italy since 1992, the Commission has not yet established either whether state aid has been granted.

At this stage, the Commission cannot provide further details on its assessment of the above measures, as the process is still ongoing.

The Commission does not have the power to request the Italian authorities to publish the record of all the incineration plants which have received state aid.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002173/12
alla Commissione
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(27 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Attuazione della direttiva sui rifiuti di apparecchiature elettriche ed elettroniche (RAEE) in Italia e inchieste di Greenpeace (3)

Nella risposta all'interrogazione P-006462/2011, la Commissione europea afferma di aver aperto la procedura di infrazione nei confronti dell'Italia con riferimento alla normativa RAEE e che «i risultati delle indagini riferite dall'onorevole parlamentare sollevano dubbi circa l'effettiva attuazione della direttiva in Italia».

La Commissione si riprometteva nell'agosto 2011 di «decidere le ulteriori iniziative per garantire che la Repubblica Italiana si adegui alla direttiva RAEE». In virtù di tale affermazione e del fatto che, sulla base dei negoziati attualmente in corso per la revisione della direttiva RAEE gli Stati membri dovranno verosimilmente prepararsi ad un approccio sempre più ambizioso con riferimento alla riduzione, al riutilizzo, al recupero e allo smaltimento dei rifiuti di apparecchiature elettriche ed elettroniche, può la Commissione europea far sapere qual è lo stato di avanzamento della procedura di infrazione 2009/2264?

Può essa far sapere, inoltre, se durante questi sei mesi l'Italia ha fornito ulteriori informazioni o preso impegni (ed eventualmente con che tempistiche) per uniformarsi tempestivamente alla direttiva RAEE?

Risposta data da Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(3 maggio 2012)

Il 25 novembre 2011 la Commissione ha inviato alla Repubblica italiana una lettera di costituzione in mora complementare nell'ambito del procedimento di infrazione 2009/2264.

La Repubblica italiana ha risposto alla lettera complementare in questione nel gennaio e nel marzo 2012. La Commissione sta esaminando queste risposte. In funzione dell'esito di questa valutazione, la Commissione deciderà quali ulteriori misure adottare.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002173/12
to the Commission
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Implementation of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive in Italy and Greenpeace surveys (3)

In its answer to Question P-006462/2001, the Commission confirmed that it has launched an infringement procedure against Italy with reference to the WEEE Directive and that 'the results of the surveys mentioned by the Honourable Member' raised 'doubts on the effective implementation of the directive in Italy'.

In August 2011, the Commission was due to 'decide which further steps should be taken to ensure that the Italian Republic complies with the WEEE Directive'. Pursuant to this and to the fact that, based on the negotiations currently underway on the review of the WEEE Directive, Member States should probably prepare for an increasingly ambitious approach to the reduction, re-use, recovery and disposal of waste electrical and electronic equipment, can the Commission confirm what progress has been made on infringement procedure No 2009/2264?

Can it also confirm whether, during the last six months, Italy has provided further information or made any commitments (and if so, under what time frames) in order to comply promptly with the WEEE Directive?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2012)

On 25 November 2011 the Commission sent to the Italian Republic a complementary letter of formal notice in the framework of infringement procedure 2009/2264.

The Italian Republic has replied to the complementary letter of formal notice in January and March 2012. These replies are under assessment. Based on the outcome of the assessment, the Commission will decide which further steps need to be taken.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002174/12
alla Commissione
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(27 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Rigassificatori in Italia e aiuti di Stato illegittimi

Nella risposta all'interrogazione E-008555/2011 la Commissione afferma che «la misura in questione sembrava comportare solo un rischio limitato di falsare la concorrenza» e pertanto «i servizi della Commissione hanno deciso di non concedere un trattamento prioritario alla denuncia in oggetto». La Commissione fa riferimento al suo «codice delle migliori pratiche applicabili nei procedimenti di controllo agli aiuti di Stato». Tale codice è stato adottato dalla Commissione per «migliorare l'efficacia, la trasparenza, la credibilità e la prevedibilità del sistema UE degli aiuti di Stato». Proprio in virtù di questi principi si chiede alla Commissione europea di rispondere puntualmente alle seguenti domande, alcune già poste nella precedente interrogazione E-008555/2011 e alle quali non ha dato una risposta:

1. La Commissione riconosce l'esistenza, nel caso in questione, di un aiuto di Stato non conforme alla normativa comunitaria sia pure non prioritario?

2. La Commissione ha mai ricevuto una notifica di tale progetto di aiuto di Stato da parte delle autorità italiane come previsto dal diritto UE?

Con riferimento alla nota della DG Concorrenza del 17.6.2011 (già citata nell'interrogazione E-008555/2011):

3. In che maniera il fatto che la «garanzia di reddito è volta a coprire una quota degli investimenti in conto capitale per la costruzione dell'impianto» consente di escludere l'illegittimità di tali aiuti?

4. Qual è la «capacità di rigassificazione su base nazionale» cui si fa riferimento?

5. Quali sarebbero le «specifiche condizioni» cui sarebbe sottoposta tale «garanzia di reddito»?

6. Quali sono le motivazioni che «con buona probabilità» inducono la Commissione ad affermare che siffatto aiuto è compatibile con il mercato comune?

Risposta di Joaquín Almunia a nome della Commissione
(14 giugno 2012)

La Commissione nota che non è stata adottata alcuna decisione formale in merito al regime normativo applicabile ai terminali di rigassificazione in Italia e che, a questo stadio, non è possibile escludere che la misura in questione costituisca un aiuto.

La Commissione conferma che le autorità italiane non hanno notificato la misura per la valutazione della compatibilità con le norme in materia di aiuti di Stato. A tal proposito, nella nota del 17 giugno 2011 al denunciante, la Commissione ha considerato il livello di garanzia di reddito previsto dalla misura in questione quale criterio per la potenziale compatibilità degli aiuti e non relativamente alla loro eventuale illegalità, come sembra avere inteso l'onorevole parlamentare.

La Commissione nota inoltre che i criteri per l'applicazione della garanzia di reddito (*fattore di garanzia*) sono riportati negli articoli da 15 a 17 della versione consolidata del regime di regolamentazione nazionale (Delibera ARG/gas 92/08 del 7 luglio 2008).

La Commissione vorrebbe inoltre informare l'onorevole parlamentare che, conformemente a questi criteri, la garanzia di reddito non sarà applicata al terminal GNL di Porto Empedocle, a cui la precedente interrogazione ([1]) si riferisce, poiché questo terminal ha recentemente ottenuto un'esenzione ([2]) dalle norme del mercato interno sull'accesso dei terzi e dalle tariffe per la quota eccedente il 71,5 % della sua capacità.

Tuttavia, in seguito alle affermazioni dell'onorevole parlamentare circa l'esistenza di aiuti illegali, la Commissione ha chiesto all'Italia di fornire informazioni che le permetteranno di esprimersi sull'esistenza degli aiuti e, qualora questi aiuti esistano, sulla loro compatibilità.

([1]) E-004831/2010 e E-008555/2011, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=IT.
([2]) Ai sensi dell'articolo 36 della direttiva 2009/73/CE, mediante la decisione del 7 maggio 2012 (pubblicata in: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/exemptions/exemptions_en.htm)

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002174/12
to the Commission
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Regasification plants in Italy and unlawful state aid

In its response to Question E-008555/2011, the Commission stated that 'the measure appeared to have only a limited potential to distort competition' and therefore 'the Commission's services did not decide to grant priority treatment to the complaint'. The Commission made reference to its 'Best Practices Code on the conduct of state aid control proceedings'. This code was adopted by the Commission to 'improve the effectiveness, transparency, credibility and predictability of the state aid regime'. It is precisely because of these principles that the Commission is asked to respond promptly to the following questions, some of which have already been asked in the previous question, No E-008555/2011, and to which it has not provided an answer:

1. Does the Commission acknowledge that, even if is not a priority case, the case in question does involve an instance of state aid which does not comply with EC law?

2. Has the Commission ever been notified of this state aid project by the Italian authorities, as required by EC law?

With reference to the DG Competition note of 17 June 2011 (already mentioned in Question E-008555/2011):

3. How does the fact that the 'income guarantee is designed to cover part of the capital investment for the construction of the plant' mean that such aid cannot be unlawful?

4. What is the 'national re-gasification capacity' referred to?

5. What are the 'specific conditions' to which this 'income guarantee' would apparently be subject?

6. For what reasons does the Commission consider it highly likely that such aid is compatible with the common market?

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

The Commission notes that no formal decision has been adopted concerning the regulatory regime applicable to regasification terminals in Italy and that at this stage it cannot be excluded that this measure constitutes aid.

The Commission confirms that the Italian authorities did not notify the measure for the assessment of compatibility with state aid rules. In this respect, in the note of 17 June 2011 to the complainant, the Commission considered the level of the income guarantee provided by the measure at hand as a criteria for the potential compatibility of the aid, and not with regard to its possible unlawfulness as the Honourable Member seems to have understood.

The Commission also notes that the criteria for the application of the income guarantee (*fattore di garanzia*) are laid down in Articles 15 to 17 of the consolidated version of the national regulatory regime (Delibera ARG/gas 92/08 of 7 July 2008).

The Commission would further like to inform the Honourable Member that, pursuant to these criteria, the income guarantee will not apply to the LNG Terminal in Porto Empedocle, to which her previous questions ([1]) refer, as it has recently been granted an exemption ([2]) from the internal market rules on third party access and from tariffs for the share exceeding 71.5 % of its capacity.

However, following the allegations of the existence of illegal aid brought forward by the Honourable Member, the Commission has requested Italy to submit information that will enable the Commission to take a view on the existence of aid and, if there is aid, on its compatibility.

([1]) E-004831/2010 and E-008555/211, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.
([2]) According to Article 36 of Directive 2009/73/EC, by means of Decision of 7 May 2012 (published in: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/exemptions/exemptions_en.htm)

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002175/12
an den Rat
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(27. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Verbot von Tonaufnahmen vor Ratstagungen

Medienberichten zufolge wurde ein Verbot von Tonaufnahmen der Minister vor EU-Ratstagungen verhängt. Anlassfall war ein Treffen der EU-Finanzminister am 9. Februar 2012, bei welchem ein Kamerateam ein Gespräch zwischen dem deutschen Finanzminister Schäuble und dem Portugiesen Vitor Gaspar aufgenommen hatte. Thema war ein neues Hilfsprogramm für Lissabon. Dies war den beiden Ministern offenbar so unangenehm, dass am 20. Februar 2012 Tonaufnahmen im Vorfeld der Ministerratstagungen verboten wurden. Nun protestiert der Österreichische Journalisten Club (ÖJC) gegen diese Einschränkung der freien Berichterstattung in der EU.

Daraus resultieren folgende Fragen:

1. Wie beurteilt der Rat den oben dargestellten Anlassfall?

2. Stellt dies eine Beschränkung der Pressefreiheit dar?

3. Welche Stelle hat das Verbot erlassen? Wie wurde dies begründet?

4. Wurde bei der Aussprache des Verbots der Verhältnismäßigkeitsgrundsatz gewahrt?

5. Ist es einem Minister während einer Ratstagung zuzumuten, seine Worte so zu wählen, dass er sich im Nachhinein nicht vor der Öffentlichkeit dafür rechtfertigen muss?

6. Hat die Öffentlichkeit nicht ein berechtigtes Interesse daran, zu erfahren, was auf Ratstagungen hinter den Kulissen vor sich geht?

Antwort
(30. April 2012)

In den Regeln für die Arbeit der Pressevertreter im Rat ([1]), die mit dem Internationalen Presseverband (IPA/API) vereinbart worden sind, heißt es (unter Nummer 6): *„Für Foto-/Videoaufnahmen im Sitzungssaal (Tischrunde) gelten folgende Verhaltensregeln: (…) Die Kameramikrofone sind auf Hintergrundgeräusch einzustellen (nicht auf Gesprächsaufnahme); falls trotz dieser Einstellung dennoch Einzelgespräche erfasst werden, dürfen diese Aufzeichnungen keinesfalls verwendet werden“*.

An diesen Regeln hat sich nichts geändert. Nach den jüngsten Verstößen hat das Generalsekretariat des Rates die Journalisten mit Unterstützung der IPA/API an die geltenden Regeln erinnert.

([1]) Allgemeine Regeln für das Pressezentrum siehe: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/1421681/regles-generalescdp-en.pdf.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002175/12
to the Council
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Ban on audio recordings prior to Council meetings

According to reports in the media, a ban has been placed on audio recordings of ministers prior to EU Council meetings. The reason for this was a meeting of the EU Finance Ministers on 9 February 2012, when a camera team recorded a conversation between German Finance Minister, Mr Schäuble, and his Portuguese counterpart, Mr Gaspar. The topic of the conversation was a new aid programme for Lisbon. This was obviously such an embarrassment for the two ministers that audio recordings prior to the meetings of the Council of Ministers were banned on 20 February 2012. The Austrian Journalists Club (ÖJC) is now protesting against this restriction on free reporting in the EU.

The following questions now arise:

1. How does the Council assess the aforementioned case?

2. Does this ban constitute a restriction on the freedom of the press?

3. What is the source of the ban? What were the reasons given for imposing it?

4. Was the principle of proportionality observed when imposing the ban?

5. Is it asking too much of ministers that they should choose their words carefully during a Council meeting, so that they do not need to justify them in public at a later stage?

6. Does the public not have a justified interest in learning what goes on behind the scenes at Council meetings?

Reply
(30 April 2012)

The rules applicable to press activities in the Council ([1]), which have been agreed with the International Press Association (IPA/API), indicate (in point 6), that 'press representatives taking part in full table rounds (photo/video) must: (…) make sure that camera microphones are set to record background noises (not conversations) and, if despite this setting conversations are nonetheless recorded, such recordings must not be used'.

These rules have not changed. Following recent instances of non-adherence to this rule, the General Secretariat of the Council (GSC) reminded journalists of the applicable rules, with the assistance of IPA/API.

([1]) General rules applicable to the Press Centre (see: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/1421681/regles-generalescdp-en.pdf).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002176/12
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(27. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Entwicklungshilfe der Europäischen Union — allgemeine Daten

Im Rahmen der Vergabe von Entwicklungshilfe befasst sich die Entwicklungspolitik der EU mit den unterschiedlichsten Maßnahmen und Projekten in Drittstaaten, um dort die politische, wirtschaftliche und soziale Situation zu verbessern.

Der Abgeordnete bittet in diesem Zusammenhang um Beantwortung folgender Fragen:

1. Wie viel Gelder an Entwicklungshilfe flossen seitens der Europäischen Union im Zeitraum von 2000-2011 insgesamt an Drittstaaten, aufgeschlüsselt nach Jahren?

2. Welche Länder haben seit 2000 von der EU-Entwicklungshilfe profitiert? In welcher Höhe haben welche Drittländer EU-Entwicklungshilfe erhalten?

3. Wie hoch war das durchschnittliche Pro-Kopf-Einkommen in diesen Ländern und wie hat es sich in diesem Zeitraum jeweils entwickelt?

Antwort von Herrn Piebalgs im Namen der Kommission
(10. Mai 2012)

Als Antwort auf die Frage des Herrn Abgeordneten zur Entwicklungshilfe der Europäischen Union verweist die Kommission auf die entsprechenden Statistiken zu den Gesamtausgaben, den geografischen und den länderspezifischen Mittelzuweisungen, die jeweils im Jahresbericht veröffentlicht werden. Auf folgender Website können die Jahresberichte der Kommission eingesehen werden:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/multimedia/publications/index_en.htm.

In Bezug auf die Frage des Herrn Abgeordneten zum durchschnittlichen Pro-Kopf-Einkommen in den Ländern, die von der Europäischen Union Entwicklungshilfe erhalten, teilt die Kommission mit, dass sie auf die Statistiken der Organisation für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (OECD) zurückgreift, wenn es sich um Mitgliedstaaten der OECD handelt (http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/statistics). Handelt es sich um Länder, die nicht Mitglied der OECD sind, bezieht sie sich auf die offiziellen Quellen der Weltbank (http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD). Darüber hinaus steht eine gemeinsame Website von OECD, Weltbank und Asiatischer Entwicklungsbank (http://www.aidflows.org) zur Verfügung, auf der allgemeine statistische Angaben zum Pro-Kopf-Einkommen weltweit veröffentlicht werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002176/12
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Development aid from the European Union — general data

In the context of the granting of development aid, EU development policy considers a wide variety of measures and projects in third countries, with the aim of improving the political, economic and social situation in these countries.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. How much money has been spent by the European Union on development aid to third countries between 2000 and 2011, broken down by year?

2. Which countries have profited from EU development aid since 2000? How much has each third country received in development aid from the EU?

3. What was the average income per capita in these countries, and how has this figure developed in this period?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(10 May 2012)

With reference to the Honourable Member's inquiry about the development assistance of the European Union, the Commission would like to inform that relevant statistical data on the overall spending, geographical and country specific allocations are reflected in the Annual report published yearly. Please visit following website to find Commission's Annual reports: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/multimedia/publications/index_en.htm

As regards the Honourable Member's enquiry about average income per capita in the countries the European Union provided development assistance, the Commission uses statistical data provided by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (please visit http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/statistics) for the OECD members and World Bank official sources for non-OECD members (please visit http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD). In addition a joint website cosponsored by OECD, World Bank and Asia Development Bank — http://www.aidflows.org — could also be used for the overall statistical data related to the income per capita all over the world.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002179/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(27 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — India: profanato cimitero cristiano

Un antico cimitero cristiano è stato profanato e devastato a Sabarmati, nei pressi di Ahmedabad, capitale dello stato di Gujarat (India occidentale). Ne ha dato notizia l'agenzia Fides la scorsa settimana.

Secondo i cristiani dell'All India Christian Council, vi sono fondati sospetti che l'attacco sia opera di gruppi radicali indù, molto attivi nello stato. In merito a questo episodio, l'Aicc ha anche chiesto le dimissioni immediate del Primo ministro del Gujarat, Narendra Modi, noto leader militante nel Baratiya Janata Party (BJP) e molto vicino a gruppi estremisti indù.

Secondo alcuni testimoni oculari, i camion e i bulldozer hanno agito «con il pretesto di fare delle pulizie». Il cimitero ecumenico di Sabarmati risale al periodo britannico. L'area era stata concessa ai fedeli di sette confessioni cristiane presenti ad Ahmedabad (cattolici, metodisti, e alcuni gruppi pentecostali) prima del 1947. I testimoni parlano di «lapidi e croci distrutte e ammucchiate, una parte del campo devastata, un'altra parte del cimitero spianata da bulldozer per diventare un parcheggio».

Si prega pertanto il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante di rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

— È il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante al corrente di questa vicenda?

— In seguito all'ennesimo episodio di intolleranza religiosa contro le comunità cristiane in India, ha il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante già definito una linea politica europea per esprimere contrarietà verso gli episodi di fanatismo religioso?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002180/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(27 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — India: fanatici indù assaltano campus gestito dai gesuiti

Il 30 gennaio scorso l'Istituto universitario San Giuseppe di Anekal, nei pressi di Bangalore, ha subito un'aggressione da parte di un centinaio di estremisti indù.

Il preside dell'istituto gestito dai Gesuiti ha raccontato a Fides di aver vissuto ore di grande paura, soprattutto per la complicità delle istituzioni civili e delle forze di sicurezza con i violenti, di cui facevano parte anche alcuni consiglieri comunali della città. Inoltre la polizia ha permesso che l'occupazione del campus si protraesse per due ore. Il capo dell'istituto ha acconsentito a farsi arrestare, come chiesto dai facinorosi, senza alcun capo di accusa, pur di placare gli animi. Gli agenti di polizia intervenuti lo avrebbero però costretto a camminare fino alla locale stazione di polizia, mettendone a rischio l'incolumità. Alcuni studenti intervenuti per proteggere il preside, che è stato rilasciato solo nella tarda serata, sono stati picchiati e alcuni hanno anche riportato ferite.

Responsabili dell'irruzione nel campus universitario sono giovani appartenenti ai gruppi Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Bajrang Dal, Rashtra Sakthi Sene, Karnataka Rakshana Vedike, movimenti estremisti e di ispirazione xenofoba.

Si prega pertanto il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante di rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

— È il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante al corrente di questa vicenda?

— In seguito all'ennesimo episodio di intolleranza religiosa contro le comunità cristiane in India, ha il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante già definito una linea politica europea per esprimere contrarietà verso gli episodi di fanatismo religioso?

Risposta congiunta di Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(8 giugno 2012)

L'alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton è a conoscenza degli eventi cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare. Il Servizio europeo per l'azione esterna (SEAE) segue attentamente, insieme con la delegazione dell'UE a New Delhi, gli atti di intolleranza religiosa e di discriminazione contro le minoranze in India. La questione è stata sollevata a più riprese con le autorità indiane, anche al livello più alto possibile, e se ne discute regolarmente nell'ambito del dialogo annuale sui diritti umani tra UE e India.

Inoltre, la delegazione dell'UE e le ambasciate degli Stati membri a New Delhi tengono contatti periodici e continui con interlocutori locali e con le ONG europee in diversi stati dell'India per monitorare la situazione delle minoranze, compresa quella dei cristiani. L'UE segue, inoltre, attentamente gli sviluppi per quanto riguarda la sensibilizzazione ai diritti umani, la riforma delle forze di polizia e la legislazione in cui rientra, tra l'altro, il disegno di legge, non ancora adottato, relativo alla prevenzione della violenza collettiva e ne discute con le autorità locali.

Si tratta di un problema complesso che comprende aspetti legati alla libertà di culto, ma anche alla concorrenza economica, come hanno dimostrato gli episodi di violenza collettiva avvenuti nel 2008 in Orissa.

É opportuno ricordare che la preparazione delle relazioni per il prossimo esame periodico universale del 2012 ha rappresentato un'opportunità per fare il punto della situazione per quanto riguarda la libertà di fede e di culto che sarà ampiamente discussa in preparazione del riesame periodico universale dell'India nel giugno di quest'anno.

Va anche notato, a questo proposito, che nel 2008 l'India ha invitato il Relatore speciale delle Nazioni Unite sulla libertà di religione o di credo. Inoltre, va debitamente riconosciuto il ruolo svolto dalla Commissione nazionale per le minoranze che segue attentamente tali questioni con missioni d'indagine e con cui la delegazione dell'UE è regolarmente in contatto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002179/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — India: Christian cemetery desecrated

It was reported last week by the Fides news agency that an ancient Christian cemetery had been desecrated in Sabarmati, near Ahmadabad, the state capital of Gujarat (Western India).

According to Christians from the All India Christian Council (AICC), there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the attack was orchestrated by radical Hindu groups, who are very active in the state. Given the serious nature of the incident, the AICC has called for the immediate resignation of the Prime Minister of Gujarat, Narendra Modi, a well-known militant leader in the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), who has close ties to Hindu extremist groups.

Several eyewitnesses have said that the trucks and bulldozers acted 'under the pretext of cleaning'. The ecumenical cemetery in Sabarmati dates back to the period of British rule. The area had been given to the followers of seven Christian denominations (Catholics, Methodists and a number of Pentecostal groups) who had been present in Ahmadabad prior to 1947. Witnesses spoke of 'crosses and gravestones destroyed and piled up, one side of the plot was devastated whilst the other side was flattened by bulldozers, to be turned into a car park'.

In light of this, could the Vice-President/High Representative respond to the following questions:

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

— Further to the umpteenth incident of religious intolerance against Christian communities in India, has the Vice-President/High Representative now framed a European policy to express the EU's opposition to these incidents of religious fanaticism?

Question for written answer E-002180/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — India: Hindu fanatics attack a Jesuit-run campus

On 30 January 2012, St Joseph's PU College in Anekal, near Bangalore, was attacked by around 100 Hindu extremists.

The principal of the Jesuit-run college told the Fides news agency that he had endured hours of terror, especially as civil institutions and the security forces were complicit with the rioters, amongst whom were several town councillors. Furthermore, the police had allowed the occupation of the campus to go on for two hours. Despite no charge being laid against him, the college's principal had allowed himself to be arrested, simply to placate the rioters who were demanding his arrest. The policemen involved forced him to walk to the local police station, compromising his safety. Several students who intervened to protect the principal, who was only released in the late evening, were beaten and a number of them also sustained injuries.

The perpetrators of the attack on the college campus were youths belonging to the groups *Vishwa Hindu Parishad*, *Bajrang Dal*, *Rashtra Sakthi Sene* and *Karnataka Rakshana Vedike*; extremist organisations that are driven by xenophobia.

In light of this, could the Vice-President/High Representative respond to the following questions:

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

— Further to the umpteenth incident of religious intolerance against Christian communities in India, has the Vice-President/High Representative now framed a European policy to express the EU's opposition to these incidents of religious fanaticism?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the events referred to in the written question. The European External Action Service (EEAS), together with the EU Delegation in Delhi, closely monitors acts of religious intolerance and discrimination against minorities in India. Concerns in this regard have been raised repeatedly with the Indian authorities, including at the highest possible level, and the topic is a standard feature of the annual EU-India Human Rights Dialogue.

The EU Delegation and EU Member State embassies in Delhi are furthermore in regular contact with local interlocutors and with European NGOs in a number of Indian states in order to monitor the situation of minorities in India, including the situation of Christians. The EU is also closely following developments with respect to rights awareness, police reform, and legislation such as the still-awaited Communal Violence Prevention Bill, and discusses these matters with the authorities.

The issue is complex, often including facets related to freedom of religion as well as to economic competition, as was demonstrated by the 2008 Orissa communal violence.

It should be noted that the preparation of reports for the upcoming 2012 Universal Periodic Review (UPR) has been the opportunity to take stock of the situation regarding Freedom of Religion or Belief and will be broadly discussed in the run-up to India's UPR in June this year.

It that regard, it should also be noted that India invited the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief in 2008. Moreover, the role of the National Commission for Minorities, which follows up on these issues through fact finding missions and with which the EU Delegation is in regular contact, should be acknowledged.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002181/12
alla Commissione
Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(27 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Protezione e benessere degli animali

Nell'ultimo mese la stampa locale di Grosseto ha portato alla luce diversi casi di maltrattamenti di cani, uno in particolare legato alle condizioni di un canile-lager in località Roccatederighi.

In Italia sono purtroppo ancora incredibilmente frequenti episodi di questo genere; in Romania si è a conoscenza dell'abominevole prassi dello sterminio utilizzato contro il fenomeno del randagismo, così come lo scandaloso funzionamento di molte perreras spagnole.

Alla luce di ciò:

— non ritiene la Commissione che questi episodi evidenzino la mancanza di parametri minimi comuni a tutela degli animali all'interno dell'Unione europea?

— non ritiene la Commissione che un intervento legislativo per la creazione di una normativa europea sul benessere degli animali che disciplini la custodia di animali domestici si renda imperativo per porre fine a questi comportamenti criminosi?

— può la Commissione spiegare il motivo per cui, a differenza delle intenzioni enunciate nella risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-003312/2011, non ha incluso il benessere di cani e gatti nella Strategia dell'Unione europea per la protezione e il benessere degli animali 2012-2015, approvata recentemente?

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

La Commissione accetta che gli Stati membri adottino approcci diversi in relazione al benessere dei cani, in particolare dei cani randagi. Tuttavia, le differenze d'approccio degli Stati membri non giustificano necessariamente un intervento dell'UE.

In particolare, la Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputato alla propria risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-006543/2011 ([1]) concernente la competenza dell'Unione in tema di cani randagi.

La Commissione ha adottato una strategia UE per la protezione e il benessere degli animali 2012-2015 ([2]). In tale contesto la Commissione eseguirà nel 2014 uno studio sul benessere dei cani e dei gatti oggetto di pratiche commerciali. Sulla base dei risultati dello studio la Commissione esaminerà se siano necessari ulteriori interventi tenendo debitamente conto dei principi di sussidiarietà e proporzionalità.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.
([2]) COM(2012)6 definitivo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002181/12
to the Commission
Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Animal welfare and protection

In the last month, the local press in Grosseto has highlighted various cases of cruelty to dogs, with one particular story concerning conditions in a *canile lager* dog pound in the village of Roccatederighi.

Unfortunately, in Italy, occurrences of this type are still remarkably frequent, whilst in Romania it is well-known that the shocking practice of extermination is used to control the population of strays, and in Spain horrifying methods are used in many of its *perreras* dog pounds.

In light of this:

— Does the Commission not feel that these occurrences highlight the lack of a basic common framework for the protection of animals in the EU?

— Does it not feel that legislation to introduce European rules on animal welfare, regulating domestic animal ownership, is desperately needed in order to put a stop to this criminal behaviour?

— Can the Commission explain the reason why, despite the intentions stated in the answer to Written Question E-003312/2011, it has not included dog and cat welfare in the recently-approved European Union Strategy for the Protection and Welfare of Animals 2012-2015?

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

The Commission accepts that Member States may take different approaches in relation to the welfare of dogs in particular for stray dogs. However, differences in Member States' approaches do not necessarily justify EU intervention.

In particular the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-006543/2011 ([1]) regarding the competence of the Union on stray dogs.

The Commission adopted an EU strategy for the protection and welfare of animals 2012-2015 ([2]). In this framework the Commission will perform in 2014 a study on the welfare of dogs and cats involved in commercial practices. Based on the findings of the study, the Commission will consider whether further actions are necessary with due regard to the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.
([2]) COM(2012) 6 final.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002182/12
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(27 februari 2012)

Betreft: Steun van de EIB voor KMO's

In de Verklaring van de leden van de Europese Raad van 30 januari wordt de nadruk gelegd op maatregelen die economische groei en jobcreatie stimuleren. Er wordt daarbij verwezen naar de noodzaak om de steun van de Europese Investeringsbank (EIB) voor kleine en middelgrote ondernemingen (KMO's) te versterken. De Commissie wordt verzocht passende aanbevelingen te doen, met name aangaande de mogelijkheid „om de EU-begroting als hefboom van de financieringscapaciteit van de EIB-groep te laten fungeren".

Volgens haar maatschappelijk beleidsplan voorziet de EIB-groep in 2012 7,8 miljard euro aan leningen aan KMO's uit de EU en de kandidaat-lidstaten, weliswaar het laagste volume sinds de uitbreiding van het EIB-stelsel voor leningen aan KMO's in 2008. Het Europees Investeringsfonds (EIF) heeft de afgelopen jaren via haar verschillende activiteiten het volume van vrijgemaakt kapitaal voor KMO's kunnen verhogen en wil ook in 2012 meer dan 12 miljard euro aan nieuw kapitaal genereren.

Tussen de verschillende EU-lidstaten zijn er grote relatieve verschillen wat het volume van de afgesloten financieringscontracten betreft. Ondanks de ingevoerde administratieve vereenvoudigingen, blijft de procedurele last voor vele KMO's erg hoog liggen. In een aantal Europese lidstaten zijn de administratieve vereisten van intermediaire financiële instellingen om toegang tot kredieten te verkrijgen immers bijzonder uitgebreid.

Is de Europese Commissie van plan om, in het kielzog van een gecoördineerd Europees economisch beleid, maatregelen te nemen die de coherentie en efficiëntie van de verschillende nationale formele financieringssystemen voor KMO's in de hand werken, ten einde de toegang voor KMO's te versoepelen?

Welke andere instrumenten kan en wil de Europese Commissie aanwenden om de kredietverleningprocedures van de EIB en het EIF aan KMO's te vereenvoudigen?

Welke mogelijkheden ziet de Europese Commissie om de EU-begroting ten dienste van de financieringscapaciteit van de EIB-groep in te zetten?

Antwoord van de heer Tajani namens de Commissie
(24 april 2012)

Nationale financieringsmaatregelen zijn de verantwoordelijkheid van de lidstaten, maar financiële instrumenten van de Europese Unie (EU) worden ontwikkeld om de toegevoegde waarde voor de EU en de complementariteit met nationale regelingen te maximaliseren. Voor de volgende programmeringsperiode (2014-2020) stelt de Commissie voor om via de nieuwe programma's COSME ([1]) en Horizon 2020 ([2]), die in de plaats komen van het kaderprogramma voor concurrentievermogen en innovatie en van de risicodelende financieringsfaciliteit, de beschikbare bedragen van de financiële instrumenten voor vreemd en eigen vermogen van kmo's te verhogen. De Commissie stelt bovendien voor gemeenschappelijke financiële instrumenten te ontwikkelen die EU-middelen en structuurfondsen kunnen combineren voor de verwezenlijking van de doelstellingen van het Europa 2020-beleid. Ten slotte stelt de Commissie voor om de uitvoering van de financiële instrumenten van de EU te harmoniseren en te vereenvoudigen ([3])

Tijdens het „SME Finance Forum" heeft de Commissie de procedurele vereisten van de EIB-groep ([4]) besproken om de eventuele buitensporige administratieve lasten voor de kmo's aan te pakken. Aan intermediaire banken worden echter bepaalde eisen gesteld om transparante en volledige verslaglegging en goed financieel beheer te waarborgen.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/cip/cosme/.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/.
([3]) COM(2011) 662 definitief.
([4]) De EIB-groep wordt gevormd door de Europese Investeringsbank (EIB) en het Europees Investeringsfonds (EIF).

De EIB-groep beschikt over uitgebreide ervaring in de financiering van kmo's via intermediaire banken in de lidstaten ([5]) en in het beheer van EU-programma's die garanties en durfkapitaal aan kmo's verstrekken. Naar aanleiding van de conclusies van de informele Europese Raad van 30 januari 2012 onderzoekt de Commissie, samen met de EIB en de Raad, hoe de EIB de groei nog meer en nog beter kan ondersteunen en zal zij hierover bij de Europese Raad in juni 2012 verslag uitbrengen.

([5]) De EIB-groep heeft in de periode 2009-2011 via intermediaire instellingen voor 46,4 miljard EUR financiering voor kmo's verstrekt (waaronder 13,6 miljard EUR aan leningen via EIF-garanties). De EIB heeft haar doelstelling verhoogd en verwacht dat in 2012 voor 11 miljard EUR aan leningen voor kmo's zal worden goedgekeurd. Voor EIF-activiteiten in 2012 is bovendien 1,3 miljard EUR gepland aan garantie- en financieringsovereenkomsten met intermediaire instellingen, wat naar verwachting 6,2 miljard EUR steun voor kmo's zal opleveren.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002182/12
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: EIB support for SMEs

The Statement of the Members of the European Council dated 30 January 2012 focuses on measures to stimulate economic growth and job creation. The Statement refers to the need to strengthen the European Investment Bank (EIB)'s support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The Commission is requested to make appropriate recommendations, in particular regarding the possibility 'for the EU budget to leverage EIB group financing capacity'.

In line with its corporate operational plan, the EIB Group plans to lend EUR 7.8 billion to SMEs from the EU and candidate Member States in 2012, admittedly the lowest volume since the EIB expanded its SME lending scheme in 2008. Over the past years, the European Investment Fund (EIF) has been able to increase, through its various activities, the volume of available capital for SMEs and also wants to generate more than EUR 12 billion of new capital in 2012.

There are large relative differences between the various EU Member States concerning the volume of financing contracts concluded. Despite the administrative simplifications implemented, the procedural burden for many SMEs remains very heavy. In a number of European Member States, the administrative requirements of intermediary financial institutions in order to obtain access to loans are exceptionally elaborate.

Does the European Commission intend, in the wake of a coordinated European economic policy, to take measures aimed at making various national formal funding systems for SMEs more coherent and efficient in order to facilitate access for SMEs?

Which other instruments is the European Commission able and willing to employ in order to simplify the EIB and the EIF's credit provision procedures for SMEs?

Which possibilities does the European Commission see for applying the EU budget to boost the EIB Group's financing capacity?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2012)

National funding measures are the responsibility of Member States but European Union (EU) financial instruments are being designed with a view to maximising EU added value and complementarity with national schemes. In fact, for the next programming period (2014-2020) the Commission is proposing to increase the amounts available for SME debt and equity financial instruments in the successors of the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme and the Risk Sharing Finance Facility — namely under COSME ([1]) and Horizon 2020 ([2]). Moreover, the Commission proposes to develop joint financial instruments which could combine EU and structural funds in the pursuit of Europe 2020 policy objectives. Finally, the Commission is proposing to harmonise and simplify the implementation of EU financial instruments ([3]).

The Commission has discussed the procedural requirements of the EIB Group ([4]) in the framework of the SME finance Forum in order to address possible excessive administrative burden for SMEs. However, certain requirements are imposed on intermediary banks in order to ensure transparent and comprehensive reporting and sound financial management.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/cip/cosme/.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/.
([3]) COM(2011)662 final.
([4]) The EIB Group consists of the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Investment Fund (EIF).

The EIB Group has significant experience in providing SME financing through intermediary banks in Member States ([5]) and in managing EU programmes providing guarantees and venture capital to SMEs. Following the informal European Council conclusions of 30 January 2012, the Commission, in cooperation with the EIB and the Council, is examining further options to enhance EIB's action to support growth and will report back to the European Council in June 2012.

([5]) In 2009-2011 the EIB Group provided EUR 46.4 billion in SME financing through intermediary institutions (including EUR 13.6 billion lending leveraged through EIF guarantees). EIB increased its target and now foresees EUR 11 billion of SMEs' loan signatures in 2012. In addition, EIF activities in 2012 foresee EUR 1.3 billion guarantee and funding agreements with intermediaries, expected to catalyse over EUR 6.2 billion of support to SMEs.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002183/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Availability of EU trade statistics

Could the Commission provide details (statistics are preferred) of the EU's share of world trade in 1975 and how that share has changed since that date? Could the Commission also explain why there is only EU trade data available from 1999 onward in the Eurostat database, when it is important to study the development of the EU in world trade so that all Member States may be successful in the future?

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

EU's shares of world trade since 1975 based on statistical data are provided in the annex sent directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat.

Official statistics on international trade in goods are published by the Commission (Eurostat). The Comext reference database provides users with harmonised data for the EU since 1988. These data (totals and at product level) can be consulted at the following link: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/newxtweb/

There are two factors that restrain the availability of data.

Firstly, since the EU composition is evolutive, the content of the database follows the same trend and, as a rule, data of new Member States are collected and published from the moment of their membership. However, for the 10 new Member States that joined the EU in 2004, some 'older' national data were transformed to match the EU requirements and integrated into the Comext database. Thus, the data available for these countries date back to 1999.

Secondly, the publication of harmonised data at product level depends on the goods' classification used. Presently published data at product level are the data collected by Member States since the introduction of the Combined Nomenclature ([1]) in 1988. For earlier periods, data at total levels are available. Transformation of countries' data before their EU membership is often not possible because of the often wide differences in the classifications used.

([1]) Council Regulation (EEC) No 2658/87 on the tariff and statistical nomenclature and on the Common Customs Tariff, OJ L 256, 7.9.1987.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002184/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(27 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Crollo al tempio di Giove

Il tempio di Giove a Pompei perde pezzi. Continua l'emergenza archeologica iniziata con il crollo della Casa dei gladiatori. Alcuni frammenti di intonaco provenienti da un muro non affrescato di colore grigio-bianco, sono caduti nell'antico luogo di culto pagano, un gioiello dell'archeologia. I pezzi sono stati già recuperati.

Il distacco — ha reso noto la Soprintendenza di Pompei — riguarda un pezzo di intonaco grezzo di circa un metro ed è avvenuto «dal paramento esterno della parete orientale, della cella del tempio di Giove», che si trova nel Foro. Il tempio, situato nella parte settentrionale del Foro, risale al 250 a. C. Nel 79 d. C., quando ci fu l'eruzione che distrusse la città, il tempio era in fase di ristrutturazione resasi necessaria dopo il terremoto del 62 d.C. Il sacrario è posto su un alto podio, decorato da sei colonne di ordine corinzio.

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

1. Se è a conoscenza del nuovo crollo al tempio di Giove a Pompei,

2. Se intende inviare osservatori per poter controllare lo stato del nuovo crollo al tempio di Giove,

3. Se, oltre all'articolo 4 del regolamento n. 1080/2006 che prevede di cofinanziare investimenti per la tutela, la promozione e la preservazione del patrimonio culturale attraverso il FSR, esistono altri prorammi specifici europei per mettere in sicurezza il tempio di Giove, alla luce dell'importanza storica e artistica del sito a livello mondiale?

Risposta data da Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(19 aprile 2012)

1. La Commissione è al corrente dei più recenti sviluppi relativi al tempio di Giove e segue la situazione del sito archeologico di Pompei dal disastro della Schola Armatorum verificatosi il 6 novembre 2010. Il Membro della Commissione responsabile della politica regionale ha visitato il sito il 26 ottobre 2011.

2. La Commissione non intende inviare ispettori poiché tale potere non le è conferito né dal trattato né dai regolamenti applicabili.

3. Non vi sono altri programmi specifici cofinanziati dall'UE per il restauro del tempio di Giove fatto salvo l'articolo 4 del regolamento (CE) n. 1080/2006 del Parlamento e del Consiglio ([1]) che consente un cofinanziamento UE di investimenti finalizzati alla tutela, alla promozione e alla preservazione del patrimonio culturale attraverso il FESR. In forza di tale articolo l'Italia ha adottato un programma interregionale per le regioni dell'obiettivo «Convergenza», il POI «attrattori culturali, naturali e turismo» (costo totale: 1,015 miliardi di euro, contributo UE: 508 milioni di euro). Nell'ambito di tale programma la Commissione ha cofinanziato un importante progetto con un importo di 42 milioni di euro provenienti dal FESR (su un costo complessivo di 105 milioni di euro) a favore di Pompei, finalizzato a sostenere gli interventi di tutela, restauro e manutenzione del sito archeologico. Il grande progetto è stato approvato il 28 marzo 2012.

([1]) GU L 210 del 31.7.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002184/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Collapse in the Temple of Jupiter

The Temple of Jupiter in Pompeii is crumbling. And so the archaeological crisis that began with the collapse of the House of the Gladiators continues. Several fragments of plaster from a greyish white non-frescoed wall fell in this ancient pagan place of worship, which is considered to be an archaeological jewel. The fragments have now been retrieved.

The head of the Pompeii heritage department announced that it was a fragment of rough plaster approximately a metre long that had become detached 'from the external surface of the eastern wall of the cell in the Temple of Jupiter', situated in the Forum. The Temple, located in the northern section of the Forum, dates back to 250 BC. In 79 AD, when the eruption destroyed the city, the Temple was undergoing essential renovation work following the earthquake in 62 AD. The shrine stands on a raised podium, which is adorned with six Corinthian columns.

In light of this, could the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of this latest collapse in the Temple of Jupiter in Pompeii;

2. whether it intends to send observers to inspect the site of this latest collapse in the Temple of Jupiter;

3. whether, in addition to Article 4 of Regulation 1080/2006, which provides for the co-financing of investments in the protection, promotion and preservation of cultural heritage through the ERDF, there are any other specific EU programmes which could help preserve the Temple of Jupiter and make it safe, given its global historical and artistic importance?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(19 April 2012)

1. The Commission is aware of the latest developments concerning the temple of Jupiter and it has been following the situation of the archaeological site of Pompeii since the disaster of the Schola Armatorum of 6 November 2010. The Member of the Commission responsible for Regional Policy visited the site on 26 October 2011.

2. The Commission does not intend to send inspectors as it is not empowered by either the Treaty nor the applicable regulations to do so.

3. There are no other specific EU co-financed programmes for the restoration of the Temple of Jupiter outside Article 4 of Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 ([1]) which allows the EU co-financing of investments in the protection, promotion and preservation of cultural heritage through the ERDF. Pursuant to this article, Italy has adopted an inter-regional programme for the Convergence Objective regions, the POI 'attrattori culturali, naturali e turismo' (total cost: EUR 1.015 billion; EU contribution: EUR 508 million). Under this programme, the Commission has co-financed a major project with EUR 42 million from the ERDF (out of a total cost of EUR 105 million) in favour of Pompeii, supporting interventions for the preservation, restoration and maintenance of the archeological site. The major project was approved on 28 March 2012.

([1]) OJ L 210, 31.7.2006.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002185/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(27 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Contratti penalizzanti per le donne

Nei contratti di consulente esterno la televisione di Stato italiana inserisce una clausola penalizzante per le donne. «In caso — si legge nei contratti — di malattia, infortunio, gravidanza o altre cause di impedimento insorte durante l'esercizio del contratto, questo potrà essere risoluto senza compenso o indennizzo».

La clausola, quindi, impedisce addirittura al contrattualizzato di avere problemi di salute e, nel caso delle donne, di aspettare un bambino.

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

1. Se è a conoscenza dei contratti discriminatori nei confronti delle donne che lavorano come consulenti esterni alla televisione di Stato italiana, sostenuta da tutti i cittadini con il pagamento del canone,

2. Come intende intervenire, alla luce della direttiva europea 2000/78/CE sulla parità di trattamento in materia di occupazione e di condizioni di lavoro, per risolvere la questione specifica,

3. Come intende evitare che casi del genere si ripetano in tutti gli Stati membri?

Risposta data da Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(25 aprile 2012)

L'articolo 10 della direttiva 92/85/CEE ([1]) vieta espressamente il licenziamento delle lavoratrici nel periodo compreso tra l'inizio della gravidanza e il termine del congedo di maternità. L'uso di clausole di risoluzione finalizzate a licenziare le lavoratrici in caso di gravidanza non è pertanto conforme alla suddetta direttiva.

Se le consulenti esterne in questione non rientrano nella definizione di lavoratrici a norma della direttiva 92/85/CEE, si applica loro la direttiva 2006/54/CE ([2]) o la direttiva 86/613/CEE ([3]), che si applica alle lavoratrici autonome e che, come affermato all'articolo 1, integra la direttiva 76/207/CEE relativamente all'attuazione del principio della parità di trattamento tra gli uomini e le donne che svolgono un'attività autonoma vietando, come la direttiva 76/207/CEE, qualsiasi discriminazione fondata, sia direttamente sia indirettamente, sul sesso. A prescindere da quale sia la direttiva applicabile, è importante garantire alle interessate la tutela concessa dal diritto dell'Unione alle donne gestanti nel caso in cui il rapporto giuridico che le legano ad un altro soggetto sia stato risolto a causa di una gravidanza ([4]).

L'Italia ha recepito la direttiva 92/85/CEE tramite il decreto legislativo 25 novembre 1996, n. 645 (GU n. 299 del 21/12/1996) ([5]), la direttiva 2006/54/CE tramite il decreto legislativo 25 gennaio 2010, n. 5 (GU n. 151 del 5/2/2010) e la direttiva 86/613/CEE tramite una serie di leggi fra cui la legge 19 maggio 1975, n. 151 (GU n. 135 del 23/5/1975) e la legge 30 dicembre 1971, n. 1204 (GU n.14 del 18/1/1972).

Interpretare e applicare le leggi nazionali che recepiscono queste direttive è compito dei tribunali nazionali, cui le donne interessate possono rivolgersi per far valere i loro diritti. La Commissione contatterà inoltre le autorità italiane per ottenere ulteriori informazioni e valutare se, a causa della proprietà pubblica di RAI, l'utilizzo di tali clausole implica un'infrazione della normativa dell'UE da parte dello Stato italiano.

([1]) Direttiva 92/85/CEE del Consiglio, del 19 ottobre 1992, concernente l'attuazione di misure volte a promuovere il miglioramento della sicurezza e della salute sul lavoro delle lavoratrici gestanti, puerpere o in periodo di allattamento (GU L 348 del 28.11.1992, pagg. 1 —8).

([2]) Direttiva 2006/54/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 5 luglio 2006, riguardante l'attuazione del principio delle pari opportunità e della parità di trattamento fra uomini e donne in materia di occupazione e impiego (rifusione).

([3]) Direttiva 86/613/CEE del Consiglio, dell'11 dicembre 1986, relativa all'applicazione del principio della parità di trattamento fra gli uomini e le donne che esercitano un'attività autonoma, ivi comprese le attività nel settore agricolo, e relativa altresì alla tutela della maternità.

([4]) Si veda la sentenza della Corte di giustizia europea nella causa C-232/09, Danosa.

([5]) «Recepimento della direttiva 92/85/CEE concernente il miglioramento della sicurezza e della salute sul lavoro delle lavoratrici gestanti, puerpere o in periodo di allattamento».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002185/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Work contracts that penalise women

Italian state television contracts for external consultants contain a clause that penalises women. It reads as follows: 'In the event of illness, accident, pregnancy or other impediment during the contracted period, the contract may be terminated without any payment or compensation'.

This clause therefore prohibits the contracted party from having any health problems and it discriminates against women who become pregnant.

In light of this, could the Commission state:

1. whether is it aware of the contractual discrimination of women who work as external consultants for Italian state television, which is funded by citizens through the licence fee;

2. how it intends to act, in view of Council Directive 2000/78/EC on equal treatment in employment and occupation, in order to deal with this specific issue;

3. how it intends to prevent cases of this type from occurring in all Member States?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

Article 10 of Directive 92/85/EEC ([1]) explicitly prohibits the dismissal of workers during the period from the beginning of their pregnancy to the end of the maternity leave. Therefore, the use of termination clauses to dismiss female workers in case of pregnancy is not in conformity with the abovementioned directive.

If the female consultants concerned are not workers within the meaning of Directive 92/85/EEC, they falls within the scope of Directive 2006/54/EC ([2]), or for 'a self-employed person' — within the scope of Directive 86/613 ([3]), which applies to self-employed persons and which, as is stated in Article 1 of that directive, supplements Directive 76/207 as regards the application of the principle of equal treatment for those workers, prohibiting, like Directive 76/207, any discrimination whatsoever, whether direct or indirect, on grounds of sex. Whichever directive applies, it is important to ensure, for the person concerned, the protection granted under EC law to pregnant women in cases where the legal relationship linking her to another person has been severed on account of her pregnancy ([4]).

Italy has transposed Directive 92/85/EEC with Leg. Decr. n. 645/1996, OJ of 21.12.1996 n. 299 ([5]), Directive 2006/54 with Leg. Decr. n. 5/2010, OJ of 5.2.2010 n. 151 and Directive 86/613 with a series of laws, including Law 151/1975, OJ of 23.5.1975 n. 135 and Law 1204/1971, OJ of 18.1.1972 n. 14.

It is for the national courts to interpret and apply the national laws transposing these directives and the women concerned can enforce their rights through national courts. In addition, the Commission will contact the Italian authorities for further information to examine whether due to public ownership of RAI the use of such clauses amounts to an infringement of EC law by the Italian State.

([1]) Council Directive 92/85/EEC of 19 October 1992, on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding, OJ L 348, 28.11.1992, p. 1-8.
([2]) Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast).
([3]) Directive 86/613 of the Council of 11 December 1986 on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity, including agriculture, in a self-employed capacity, and on the protection of self-employed women during pregnancy and motherhood.
([4]) See the ECJ ruling in Case C-232/09 *Danosa*.
([5]) 'Transposition of Directive 92/85/EEC on the improvement of safety and health at work of pregnant workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding'.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002187/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(27 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Serre fotovoltaiche

Un'esigenza centrale dell'Italia di oggi è quella di poter praticare linee di sviluppo economico che permettano contemporaneamente creazione di occupazione: dunque soluzioni di sviluppo sostenibile. Questa soluzione di sviluppo sostenibile ha oggi sia una base tecnica che una base economica. La base tecnica di questa linea è la produzione, con alta produttività, di prodotti ortofrutticoli in ambiente controllato assieme a energia elettrica fotovoltaica. Si tratta necessariamente di serre fotovoltaiche effettive, dove il termine effettive significa che deve essere garantito che la produzione elettrica non limiti in nessun modo la producibilità agricola.

Un'unità agricola basata su serre fotovoltaiche effettive (fattoria solare) può mettere a disposizione del produttore alcuni importanti vantaggi, come una produttività agricola nettamente superiore, almeno 50 volte, al corrispondente terreno aperto con culture ad alta qualità e alto prezzo nonché numerosi posti di lavoro stabili (5-8 persone per ettari serra) con attività a chilometro «doppio zero» (produzione e consumi «distribuiti»). In prospettiva a questi vantaggi specifici, possono aggiungersi quelli di un'integrazione con impianti a biomassa (cogenerazione), di uno sviluppo del valore aggiunto lungo la filiera agroalimentare e una valorizzazione azionaria del capitale-terra. Infine, la possibilità di nuovi e più moderni modi di lavoro agricolo. Si apre oggi un'importante linea di sviluppo sostenibile in Italia e con grandi potenzialità di esportazione di soluzioni impiantistiche nei paesi della Sunbelt mondiale (Expo 2015).

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. è a conoscenza della possibilità di utilizzare le serre fotovoltaiche per sviluppare la produttività agricola a fronte della creazione di posti di lavoro?

2. pensa che l'iniziativa delle serre fotovoltaiche possa essere in primo luogo approfondita ed analizzata in modo da poter essere replicata successivamente in paesi europei nell'ambito di futuri progetti pilota a favore dello sviluppo sostenibile?

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

L'orticoltura in serra è un'attività ad uso intensivo di capitale, manodopera e spesso, di energia. La Commissione concorda con l'onorevole parlamentare sul fatto che impiegare parte della copertura delle serre per produrre energia elettrica senza un calo della produttività orticola equivarrebbe a utilizzare le superfici agricole a scarso rendimento in modo ancor più efficiente.

In linea di massima, la produzione di energia fotovoltaica non è ancora economicamente competitiva nell'Unione europea. La costruzione di serre fotovoltaiche è pertanto possibile soltanto nel caso in cui siano previsti incentivi economici.

L'UE è impegnata ad aumentare al 20 % la percentuale delle energie rinnovabili, tra cui l'elettricità verde, nel suo mix energetico entro il 2020. Spetta agli Stati membri definire e attuare le misure per raggiungere gli obiettivi nazionali rispettivi. Tali misure possono prevedere o meno un sostegno all'energia elettrica prodotta da serre fotovoltaiche.

La Commissione incoraggia gli Stati membri a condividere le loro esperienze sulla promozione delle energie rinnovabili, lo scambio delle migliori pratiche e l'elaborazione di strategie comuni, ad esempio attraverso CA-RES, l'azione concertata sulla direttiva relativa alle fonti energetiche rinnovabili ([1]). La Commissione gestisce inoltre il programma dell'UE «Energia intelligente — Europa», nel cui ambito è possibile presentare progetti sulle energie rinnovabili e promuovere le migliori pratiche in tutta Europa.

([1]) http://www.ca-res.eu/.

Anche la politica agricola comune, e in particolare la politica di sviluppo rurale, prevede possibilità di cofinanziamento degli investimenti di agricoltori e orticoltori per la costruzione di nuove serre, il miglioramento dell'efficienza energetica di quelle già esistenti o la produzione e l'uso di fonti energetiche rinnovabili. In tutte le regioni dell'UE, la responsabilità della politica di sviluppo rurale è condivisa tra l'Unione, lo Stato membro e la regione interessata. L'eventuale sostegno per la costruzione di serre fotovoltaiche dipende dal programma di sviluppo rurale in vigore in quella determinata regione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002187/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Photovoltaic greenhouses

Today, one of the things Italy really needs is a way of promoting economic development whilst also creating new jobs: in other words, it needs sustainable development solutions. These days, sustainable development solutions are both technologically and economically based. The technological basis in this case is the production of fruit and vegetables in a controlled environment, achieving a high level of productivity, alongside photovoltaic electricity. The photovoltaic greenhouses used have to be effective, in other words they must ensure that electricity generation does not hinder agricultural productivity in any way.

An agricultural unit based on effective photovoltaic greenhouses (a solar farm) can provide a number of benefits for the producer, such as a marked increase in agricultural productivity, at least 50 times higher than the corresponding area of open farmland, and high-quality, high-value crops, as well as creating numerous permanent jobs (five to eight people per acre of greenhouse) with 'double zero kilometre' activities ('distributed' production and consumption). In addition to these specific advantages, other prospects could be opened up, namely integration with biomass plants (cogeneration), the enhancement of added value in the agri-foodstuffs industry as a whole, an increase in the value of land, and the development of new modernised farming methods. Today we are taking an important step forward for sustainable development in Italy, and there is great potential for exporting plant designs to global Sun Belt countries (Expo 2015).

1. Is the Commission aware of the potential usefulness of photovoltaic greenhouses as a means of increasing agricultural productivity as well as creating new jobs?

2. Does it think that the photovoltaic greenhouse initiative could be developed and explored with a view to being replicated in other European countries in future pilot schemes to encourage sustainable development?

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

Horticulture in greenhouses is a capital-, labour- and often also energy-intensive use of agricultural land. The Commission agrees that using part of the greenhouse roof space for production of electricity without a loss in horticultural productivity would be tantamount to using the scarce resource agricultural land even more efficiently.

Generally, photovoltaic electricity is not yet economically competitive in the EU. Construction of photovoltaic greenhouses will thus only take place if there are economic incentives in place.

The EU is committed to increase its use of renewable energy — including use of green electricity — to 20 % in 2020. It is the responsibility of the Member States to define and to implement measures to achieve their respective national targets. These measures may or may not include support to electricity from photovoltaic greenhouses.

The Commission encourages Member States to share their experiences with promoting renewable energy, to exchange best practices and to develop common approaches, for example through the Concerted Action on the Renewable Energy Sources Directive ([1]). The Commission also manages the EU's Intelligent Energy Europe Programme where innovative renewable energy projects can be demonstrated and best practices promoted across Europe.

The common agricultural policy through its rural development policy can also co-finance investments by farmers and horticulturalists into either new greenhouses, into improving the energy-efficiency of existing greenhouses or into production and use of renewable energy. In any given region in the EU, responsibility for rural development policy is shared between the EU, the Member State and the region. Whether specifically the building of photovoltaic greenhouses can be supported depends on the Rural Development Programme in force in that region.

([1]) http://www.ca-res.eu/.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002188/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(27 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Il futuro della radioterapia

Lo scopo principale è quello di accorciare i tempi del trattamento, migliorando la qualità di vita dei pazienti. Per molte forme di tumore la radioterapia gioca un ruolo cruciale, ma come ben sanno i circa 150mila malati oncologici che ogni anno in Italia vi si sottopongono, la cura spesso prevede numerose sedute prolungate nel tempo, settimane o mesi. Oggi la radioterapia, grazie alla capacità di colpire sempre più selettivamente solo le cellule malate, si propone come cura mirata, rapida e ben tollerata ed è pronta a ritagliarsi un ruolo crescente nella cura dei tumori.

Le tecnologie di ultima generazione utilizzano «raggi intelligenti» per raggiungere un bersaglio, il tumore, che grazie ai progressi dell'imaging, si identifica in modo sempre più circoscritto e preciso. Focalizzarsi sul bersaglio significa risparmiare le aree sane circostanti e quindi conservare i tessuti e le funzionalità degli organi, concentrare le dosi e quindi accorciare sensibilmente i tempi di trattamento. I macchinari acquisiti e presenti nell'Istituto europeo di oncologia di Milano, permettono di curare fino a 4 500 pazienti all'anno. Se si riuscisse a ridurre il numero di sedute radioterapiche per ogni malato, anche il sistema sanitario se ne gioverebbe: si accorcerebbero notevolmente i tempi d'attesa e si spenderebbe complessivamente meno.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. è a conoscenza delle nuove tecniche di radioterapia adottate dall'Istituto europeo oncologico di Milano?

2. pensa che l'iniziativa dell'istituto milanese possa essere replicata in paesi europei nell'ambito di futuri progetti pilota?

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

La Commissione è a conoscenza delle nuove tecniche di radioterapia e prende atto con interesse del fatto che esse sono ora disponibili a Milano.

Le decisioni in merito all'organizzazione dei servizi di assistenza sanitaria spettano ai governi degli Stati membri e la Commissione non commenta pertanto la decisione, quale potrebbe essere presa dal governo italiano, se dotare o meno gli ospedali di apparecchiature di radioterapia di ultima generazione.

Il programma Salute dell'UE per il periodo 2003-2008 finanzia azioni legate al cancro. Le priorità, come anche gli ambiti e i progetti da finanziarsi in un determinato anno, sono definiti nella pianificazione annuale del programma.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002188/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: The future of radiotherapy

The main aim of radiotherapy is to cut down the length of treatment in order to improve patients' quality of life. For many types of tumour, radiotherapy plays a central role. However, as the approximately 150 000 cancer sufferers treated this way each year in Italy know well, the treatment can often involve numerous sessions spread over weeks or months. Today, thanks to the ability to target ever more effectively only the cancerous cells, radiotherapy offers a treatment that is focused, rapid and well-tolerated and which is ready to take on a greater role in treating tumours.

The latest generation technology uses 'intelligent rays' to reach its target, the tumour, the identification of which, thanks to advancements in imaging technology, can be increasingly localised and precise. Focusing on the target allows the surrounding healthy areas to be spared, thus protecting organ tissue and functioning, and concentrated doses can be given which duly shorten the length of treatment considerably. With the equipment they have purchased, the European Institute of Oncology in Milan is able to treat up to 4 500 patients per year. The health system will also benefit if the number of radiotherapy sessions per patient can be reduced, as waiting lists will be shortened and costs will be cut overall.

1. Is the Commission aware of the new radiotherapy techniques being used by the European Institute of Oncology in Milan?

2. Does the Commission think that the Institute's initiative could be replicated in other EU countries through future pilot schemes?

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

The Commission is aware of the new radiotherapy techniques and notes with interest that it is now available in Milan.

Decisions on the organisation of healthcare services are taken by Member States' governments and the Commission does not therefore comment on decisions, such as the Italian government's, on whether or not to equip hospitals with advanced radio therapy equipment.

The EU Health Programme 2003-2008 finances actions related to cancer. Priorities as well as areas and projects to be financed in a given year are defined in the annual work plans of the programme.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002189/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(27 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Shopping da rilancio

Sono almeno 15 le aziende italiane che dal 2008 al 2011 hanno fatto il «grande salto» rilevando concorrenti estere in difficoltà più o meno gravi o rese più fragili dalla crisi. Non colossi, ma piccole e medie imprese che hanno fiutato l'occasione e sono riuscite ad aggiudicarsi marchi collaudati per rafforzare la propria presenza sui mercati internazionali. Lo shopping del rilancio non predilige un unico settore, ma va dal tessile alla pelletteria, passando per la chimica, la meccanica e il software medicale.

La destinazione preferita per lo shopping del rilancio è la Francia: ben 12 operazioni sono state effettuate Oltralpe. Le operazioni di acquisto con rilancio da parte di imprese della Penisola rappresentavano infatti il 18 % dei progetti Made in Italy realizzati in Francia nel 2008, il 10 % nel 2009 e il 16 % nel 2010, una percentuale quasi doppia rispetto al resto del mondo.

Anche chi scommette sugli USA cerca un punto di approdo per diversificare i mercati di sbocco. Qui giocano a favore leggi più flessibili e amichevoli per le aziende. Queste operazioni sono invece più difficili in Cina.

Rilevare un'azienda in difficoltà è più facile che avviare un'attività ex novo e consente di rimodellare l'impresa acquisita secondo le proprie esigenze. Partendo da una situazione di debolezza, i risultati non possono che essere in miglioramento.

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

1. se può fornire statistiche e dati aggiornati sul numero delle aziende acquistate e riavviate nei diversi Stati membri?

2. come intende sostenere, alla luce dell'attuale crisi economica internazionale, il settore delle piccole e medie imprese, che in Europa sta dando segnali di ripresa attraverso queste operazioni di shopping da rilancio?

Risposta data da Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(7 maggio 2012)

1. La Commissione non raccoglie dati statistici dettagliati sull'acquisizione di imprese negli Stati membri dell'UE. Tuttavia, un recente studio effettuato dalla Commissione ([1]) indica che circa 450 000 aziende sono trasferite annualmente nell'UE27, un fenomeno che interessa 2 milioni di lavoratori. Inoltre, è importante definire politiche per dare una seconda opportunità agli imprenditori onesti falliti. La ricerca indica che le imprese create da persone che hanno fruito di una simile seconda opportunità crescono più rapidamente delle imprese di primo avvio sia in termini di turnover che di posti di lavoro creati ([2]). Per tale motivo, il sostegno ai trasferimenti di imprese e la promozione di una seconda opportunità per gli imprenditori rientrano tra le priorità chiave della Commissione al fine di mantenere e creare posti di lavoro incoraggiando gli imprenditori e promuovendo la crescita ([3]) delle PMI.

2. La Commissione è fortemente impegnata a creare un contesto imprenditoriale favorevole per le PMI mettendo in pratica il principio «pensare innanzitutto in piccolo» (Think small first) quale delineato nello «Small Business Act» per l'Europa (SBA) nel suo riesame adottato nel febbraio 2011. Il riesame propone azioni concrete da attuarsi a cura della Commissione e degli Stati membri nei principali ambiti prioritari: migliorare l'accesso delle PMI ai finanziamenti ([4]) e ai mercati, ridurre gli oneri e promuovere l'imprenditorialità. Esso pone inoltre in atto un'apposita struttura di governance per assicurare l'attuazione dei principi e delle azioni dello SBA. È stata costituita una rete di rappresentanti nazionali per le PMI che contribuirà, unitamente all'assemblea annuale delle PMI, a monitorare i progressi realizzati a livello europeo e nazionale.

([1]) Business Dynamics, 2010: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/business-environment/files/business_dynamics_final_report_en.pdf
([2]) Per saperne di più si rinvia al sito: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/business-environment/failure-new-beginning/policy_structure/why_a_second_chance_policy/index_en.htm
([3])Cfr. il «Small Business Act» per l'Europa e il suo riesame: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/small-business-act/index_en.htm
([4]) Cfr. anche il Piano d'azione per migliorare l'accesso delle PMI ai finanziamenti, COM(2011) 870 definitivo, 7/12/2011: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/finance/files/com-2011-870_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002189/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Shopping for acquisitions

Between 2008 and 2011, at least 15 Italian companies took the plunge and bought out foreign competitors who were in varying levels of difficulty or who had been weakened by the crisis. Rather than enormous companies, these were small and medium-sized businesses that spotted the opportunity and were able to gain established brands in order to strengthen their own presence in the global marketplace. This shopping for acquisitions is not restricted to any particular sector, but occurs across sectors: from textiles to leather goods, and through chemicals, mechanics and medical software.

The preferred destination for this acquisition shopping is France: 12 buyouts took place north of the Alps. Buyout operations by Italian companies represented 18 % of the 'Made in Italy' projects that were carried out in France in 2008, 10 % in 2009 and 16 % in 2010 — a percentage that is almost double the global rate.

Even those investing in the USA are searching for a point of arrival in order to diversify their target markets. Here, legislation that is more flexible and favourable to companies is encouraged. Such operations are rather more difficult in China.

Reviving an ailing company is easier than starting a new one from scratch and it allows the company to be restructured in line with the buyer's needs. Starting with a failing situation, any outcome would be an improvement.

In light of this, could the Commission state:

1.Whether it can provide up-to-date statistics and data on the number of companies that have been purchased and restarted in the various Member States?

2. How, in light of the current global economic crisis, it will support the small and medium-sized business sector, which is showing signs of revival throughout Europe thanks to this shopping for acquisitions?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2012)

1. The Commission does not collect detailed statistical data on the acquisition of companies in EU Member States. However, a recent Commission study ([1]) shows that approximately 450 000 firms are transferred each year in the EU-27, affecting 2 million employees. In addition, it is important to set up policies to provide a second chance for honest failed entrepreneurs. Research indicates that businesses set up by re-starters grow faster than businesses set up by first-timers in terms of turnover and jobs created ([2]). For this reason, supporting business transfers and promoting second chance for entrepreneurs are among the key priorities for the Commission in order to maintain and create jobs by encouraging entrepreneurship and the growth ([3]) of SMEs.

2. The Commission is strongly committed to creating a favourable business environment for SMEs by putting the 'Think Small First' principle into practice, as set out in the Small Business Act for Europe (SBA) and its Review adopted in February 2011. The Review proposes concrete actions to be taken by the Commission and by Member States in the key priority areas: improve SME access to finance ([4]) and to markets, reduce burdens and promote entrepreneurship. It also puts in place a dedicated governance structure to ensure the implementation of the SBA principles and actions. A network of National SME Envoys has been set up and will contribute together with the annual SME assembly in monitoring the progress achieved at European and national level.

([1]) Business Dynamics, 2010: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/business-environment/files/business_dynamics_final_report_en.pdf
([2]) See more on: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/business-environment/failure-new-beginning/policy_structure/why_a_second_chance_policy/index_en.htm
([3]) See the Small Business Act on Europe and its Review: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/small-business-act/index_en.htm
([4]) See also the action plan to improve access to finance for SMEs, COM(2011) 870 final, 7.12.2011: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/finance/files/com-2011-870_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002191/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(27 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Ondata di attentati in Iraq

Una serie di attentati ha seminato il terrore in Iraq. A Bagdad e in altre località sono morte sessanta persone. Secondo fonti ufficiali, ci sono anche oltre 200 feriti. Gli attacchi sono avvenuti in un lasso di tempo di due ore e mezza e sono stati condotti contro obiettivi sciiti nella capitale — dove si sono registrate la maggior parte delle vittime — e in numerose altre città e villaggi. Oltre a Bagdad risultano colpite le province di Babilonia, Diyala, Salaheddin e Kirkuk.

Dopo il ritiro delle truppe americane, il paese è nuovamente precipitato nell'incubo delle violenze settarie, riportando alla mente i durissimi scontri del 2006 e 2007 che causarono migliaia di vittime. La nuova ondata di attentati rompe un periodo di relativa calma, seguita al tentativo del premier sciita Nouri al Maliki e dei leader sunniti di trovare un accordo politico.

Almeno 32 sono le vittime registrate nella capitale, dove dieci esplosioni hanno colpito distretti sciiti durante l'ora di punta e hanno colpito pattuglie di polizia, pendolari e la gente che affollava i centri commerciali. Un'altra decina di esplosioni ha interessato diverse città, da Mosul a Hilla, per la maggior parte dirette contro le forze di polizia, che sono un frequente obiettivo degli insorti sunniti.

1. Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, può l'Alto Rappresentante far sapere se è a conoscenza della critica situazione in Iraq a seguito dell'ondata di attentati nella capitale e nelle province?

2. Può indicare se la delegazione dell'UE nella Repubblica dell'Iraq è in grado di fornire maggiori informazioni sul caso, per fare chiarezza sulla sicurezza dei cittadini in terra irachena?

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

L'UE segue con attenzione la situazione in Iraq, in particolare tramite la delegazione a Baghdad, ed è estremamente turbata dai continui atti di violenza che scuotono il paese.

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Ashton ha condannato pubblicamente la recente ondata di violenza brutale, rammaricandosi per la morte e la distruzione provocate da questi atti di terrorismo che possono solo esacerbare una già fragile situazione politica.

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha esortato il governo iracheno e i leader politici ad impegnarsi in un dialogo inclusivo e genuino sottolineando che in questo momento è essenziale un governo che dia prova di unità nazionale, inclusività ed efficacia per evitare un ritorno al circolo vizioso della violenza che tutti si augurano faccia ormai parte del passato del paese.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002191/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Wave of attacks in Iraq

A series of attacks has instilled terror throughout Iraq. Sixty people have been killed in Baghdad and other locations. According to official sources, more than 200 others have been injured. The attacks took place within a two-and-a-half-hour time period and were carried out against Shiite targets in the capital — which saw the majority of victims — and in many other towns and villages. As well as Bagdad, the provinces of Babilonia, Diyala, Salaheddin and Kirkuk were also affected.

Since the withdrawal of American troops, the country has been plunged back into the nightmare of sectarian violence, reminiscent of the harshest clashes of 2006 and 2007 that resulted in thousands of victims. This new wave of attacks shatters a period of relative calm following the attempt by Shiite Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and Sunni leaders to reach a political agreement.

At least 32 victims were recorded in the capital, where 10 explosions struck Shiite areas during the rush hour, affecting police patrols, commuters and passers-by. Around 10 more explosions hit other towns, from Mosul to Hilla, predominantly aimed at security forces, who are a frequent target of Sunni insurgents.

1. In light of the above, can the Vice-President/High Representative state whether she is aware of the critical situation in Iraq following this wave of attacks on the capital and the provinces?

2. Can she indicate whether the EU delegation in the Republic of Iraq can provide more information on the situation in order to clarify the safety of citizens on Iraqi soil?

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

The EU follows the situation in Iraq very closely, in particular through its Delegation in Baghdad, and is concerned about continuing acts of violence across the country.

High Representative/Vice-President Ashton condemned publicly the recent wave of ruthless violence and deplored the death and destruction caused by these acts of terrorism, which can only exacerbate an already fragile political situation.

HR/VP urged the government of Iraq and the political leaders to engage in an inclusive and genuine dialogue and stressed that a government which demonstrates national unity, inclusiveness and effectiveness was now essential to avoid a return to the vicious cycle of violence that everyone hopes will remain firmly consigned to Iraq's past.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002192/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(27 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Esecuzioni capitali in Iran

Nel 2011 sono state almeno 676 le esecuzioni in Iran, cifra che rappresenta il più alto numero di giustiziati negli ultimi undici anni. Ad annunciarlo è l'ONG internazionale «Iran Human Rights», che sottolinea come l'anno scorso la repubblica islamica abbia registrato anche il record di esecuzioni pubbliche, in totale 65. Della cifra complessiva, 416 sono state le esecuzioni rese note dalle autorità iraniane.

Più dell'80 % delle esecuzioni sono state conseguenza di condanne per traffico di droga, anche se buona parte dei processi avvenuti nei tribunali rivoluzionari sono stati a porte chiuse. L'1 % delle persone messe a morte sono state invece condannate per sodomia, in base all'articolo 108 del Codice legale il quale afferma che «la sodomia è una relazione sessuale tra uomini». Infine, è preoccupante il dato relativo alle esecuzioni «segrete», di cui l'ONG ha avuto notizia da fonti non ufficiali in almeno 15 prigioni iraniane.

1. Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, può l'Alto Rappresentante far sapere se è a conoscenza dell'alto numero di esecuzioni capitali in Iran?

2. Può indicare se la delegazione dell'UE in Iran è in grado di fornire maggiori informazioni sul caso, per fare chiarezza sulle esecuzioni capitali in modo da arginare urgentemente la tragica situazione?

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

L'Unione europea mantiene una posizione ferma e di principio contro la pena di morte. L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton ha espresso profonda preoccupazione per il numero di persone giustiziate in Iran, specialmente nel 2011. In particolare, l'AR/VP ha sollevato il problema della mancanza di un equo processo in molti di questi casi, in cui gli imputati sono stati privati del diritto di ricorso e condannati per reati che, in base agli standard internazionali, non sarebbero punibili con la pena capitale. In una dichiarazione del 5 gennaio ha esortato l'Iran, e gli Stati che continuano a mantenere in vigore la pena capitale, a sospendere le esecuzioni e a introdurre una moratoria.

La rappresentanza dell'UE in Iran, guidata da Ungheria e Polonia nel 2011, e dalla Danimarca nel primo semestre del 2012, ha seguito e segue con grande attenzione i casi di condanna a morte e l'Unione europea continua a esprimere la propria preoccupazione alle autorità iraniane, sia direttamente a Teheran, a Bruxelles e nelle capitali dell'Unione sia attraverso organizzazioni multilaterali. L'AR/VP continuerà a monitorare attentamente la questione della pena capitale in Iran.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002192/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Executions in Iran

In 2011, at least 676 executions took place in Iran, the highest number of people sentenced to death in the last 11 years. This was announced by the international NGO 'Iran Human Rights', which emphasises how last year the Islamic Republic also recorded the highest number of public executions, a total of 65. Of the figure as a whole, 416 executions were announced by the Iranian authorities.

More than 80 % of these executions resulted from drug trafficking convictions, although most of the trials carried out in the revolutionary courts were conducted behind closed doors. However, 1 % of those sentenced to death were convicted of sodomy, based on Article 108 of the Iranian legal code which states that 'sodomy is a sexual relationship between men'. Finally, there are concerns over information regarding 'secret' executions, which the NGO has been informed of by non-official sources in at least 15 Iranian prisons.

1. In light of the above, can the Vice-President/High Representative state whether she is aware of the high number of executions in Iran?

2. Can she say whether the EU delegation in Iran can provide more information on the situation in order to clarify details of these executions, in such a way as to stop this tragic situation as a matter of urgency?

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

The EU holds a strong and principled position against the death penalty. High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) Ashton has expressed deep concern regarding the number of individuals executed in Iran, particularly during 2011. She was particularly concerned with the lack of fair trials in a number of those cases, whereby defendants were deprived of their right of appeal and sentenced for offences which according to international standards should not result in capital punishment. In a statement of 5 January 2012, she has called on Iran, as she does on all states which insist on maintaining the death penalty, to halt pending executions and introduce a moratorium.

The local representation of the EU in Iran, ensured by Hungary and Poland in 2011, and Denmark during the first half of 2012, has been and is following death penalty cases very closely, and the EU continues to raise its concerns directly with the Iranian authorities in Tehran, in Brussels, in EU capitals, and through multilateral organisations. The HR/VP will continue to monitor the issue of death penalty in Iran closely.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002193/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(27 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Siria, le bombe sui reporter

Due giornalisti stranieri sono stati uccisi dai bombardamenti delle forze governative siriane a Homs. Secondo la fonte, i due reporter sono rimasti uccisi quando diversi razzi hanno colpito il giardino di una casa usata da attivisti e giornalisti nel quartiere sotto assedio di Baba Amr, dove i bombardamenti delle forze del regime di Bashar Assad sono cominciati lo scorso 4 febbraio. Le due vittime sono la reporter americana Marie Colvin, che lavorava per il Sunday Times, e il francese Remi Ochlik. L'identità del reporter francese è stata confermata dal ministro degli esteri francese, il quale ha poi riferito che le autorità di Parigi hanno già fatto le condoglianze alla famiglia della vittima e stanno lavorando per ottenere i dettagli precisi della sciagura.

Alla luce dei fatti più sopra esposti, può l'Alto Rappresentante far sapere se:

1. è a conoscenza della tragedia dei due reporter francesi rimasti uccisi dall'esplosione della bomba?

2. la delegazione dell'UE in Siria può fornire maggiori informazioni sul caso, tra l'altro al fine di fare chiarezza sulla sicurezza dei giornalisti e reporter in terra siriana?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton è al corrente della morte dei giornalisti Marie Colvin e Rémi Ochlik e ha condannato l'attacco con la massima fermezza nella sua dichiarazione del 22 febbraio 2012. L'UE ricorda costantemente alle autorità siriane la loro responsabilità di garantire la sicurezza dei giornalisti e le esorta a dare libero accesso alla stampa, in modo da permettere a quest'ultima di svolgere il proprio ruolo fondamentale di fornire informazioni indipendenti sugli eventi in Siria.

La delegazione dell'UE a Damasco sta monitorando da vicino la situazione dei giornalisti, dei blogger e degli attivisti online che si trovano nel paese e ha ripetutamente condannato le detenzioni arbitrarie, le intimidazioni e le uccisioni. In numerose occasioni, la delegazione ha chiesto un'indagine completa sugli atti di violenza nei confronti dei giornalisti e ha affermato che i responsabili di tali crimini e i loro complici dovranno rispondere delle loro azioni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002193/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Syria: reporters in the line of fire

Two foreign journalists have been killed in a bombing by Syrian government forces in the city of Homs. According to information received, the two reporters were killed when several rockets hit the garden of a house that was being used by activists and journalists in the besieged Baba Amr district, which forces loyal to the Bashar al-Assad regime began bombarding on 4 February 2012. The two victims were the American reporter Marie Colvin, who was working for *The Sunday Times*, and Rémi Ochlik from France. The identity of the French reporter was confirmed by the French Foreign Minister, who also stated that the Government had already sent its condolences to the victim's family and that it was working to find out the exact circumstances of his death.

1.Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the tragic death of these two reporters killed by a bomb explosion?

2. Is the EU Delegation in Syria able to provide further information in order, amongst other concerns, to shed light on the safety of journalists and reporters in Syria?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the lethal attack on journalists Marie Colvin and Rémi Ochlik, which she condemned in the strongest terms in her statement of 22 February. The EU has consistently reminded the Syrian authorities of their responsibility to guarantee the safety of journalists in their country and urged them to provide the press with unimpeded access to carry out its vital role of providing independent information on the events in Syria.

The EU Delegation in Damascus is closely monitoring the situation of journalists, bloggers and online activists in the country and has repeatedly condemned their arbitrary detention, intimidation, and killing. It has on several occasions demanded full inquiry into acts of violence against journalists and affirmed that all those responsible and complicit with such crimes must be held accountable.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002194/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(27 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Cloud Computing

Sicurezza, interoperabilità, libero commercio. L'Italia del cloud computing è in sesta posizione nel mondo e terza in Europa, all'interno di una classifica guidata dal Giappone: a ricostruirla è stata la Business Software Alliance, un'organizzazione che riunisce alcuni tra i protagonisti dell'hitech e che ha varato la prima edizione del suo Cloud Scorecard, un monitoraggio globale che riguarda la valutazione delle legislazioni nazionali di ventiquattro Stati per la competitività economica.

La lente d'ingrandimento mette a fuoco lo scenario della nuvola informatica a partire dalle normative. Secondo il report, l'Italia ha valide leggi contro i crimini elettronici e per la tutela della privacy: sono misure che favoriscono lo sviluppo del cloud computing. Inoltre garantisce, attraverso il copyright, la tutela dei servizi software abilitati dalla nuvola informatica. Una serie di segnali, come la collaborazione con le Fiamme gialle e alcuni tribunali, permette di essere moderatamente ottimisti su norme e leggi affinché il cloud computing possa essere utilizzato in uno Stato come l'Italia dove le aziende potrebbero beneficiare di servizi «on the cloud», che sono accessibili da realtà locali e permettono anche alle piccole e medie imprese di ottenere vantaggi riservati alle grandi aziende.

A guidare l'elenco è il Giappone: la sua posizione al vertice della classifica è determinata da fattori come la diffusione della banda larga, l'impegno per gli standard d'interoperabilità e una legislazione aggiornata nella lotta al cybercrimine.

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

1. se può fornire statistiche e dati aggiornati sul cloud computing dei diversi Stati membri?

2. se e come intende sostenere lo sviluppo del cloud computing fra gli Stati membri in modo da eguagliare il primato del Giappone, attualmente primo in graduatoria?

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

La Commissione non dispone di statistiche né di dati sul «cloud computing» (nuvola informatica) relativi agli Stati membri e al Giappone. Attualmente sta conducendo uno studio per quantificare la barriere percepite dai potenziali utenti della nuvola. Lo studio non è ancora finalizzato, ma dalle prime conclusioni risulta che le barriere principali percepite sono la necessità di maggiore trasparenza nella gestione della sicurezza dei dati, la mancanza di condizioni armonizzate di servizio e la mancanza di chiarezza sui diritti e sulle responsabilità degli utenti. Per ora le osservazioni del rapporto della Business Software Alliance non sono sufficientemente comprovate.

La Commissione sta elaborando una strategia per il cloud computing, come annunciato dalla Commissaria responsabile per l'Agenda digitale nel gennaio 2012, quando ha presentato il partenariato europeo per la nuvola informatica destinato a ridurre la frammentazione negli appalti pubblici aventi ad oggetto i sistemi che si affidano alla nuvola informatica.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002194/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Cloud computing

Security, interoperability and free trade: Italy is sixth in the world and third in Europe for cloud computing, in a league table that is topped by Japan. The table was produced by the Business Software Alliance, an organisation that brings several high-tech protagonists together and that has launched the first edition of its Global Cloud Computing Scorecard, a global monitoring system that assesses the national legislation of 24 countries for economic competitiveness.

Cloud computing is placed under the microscope, starting with regulations. According to the report, Italy has effective legislation against cybercrime and for the protection of privacy, and these measures are favourable to the development of cloud computing. Moreover, through copyright, it ensures the protection of enabled software services from cloud computing. A series of indicators, such as collaboration from the *Guardia di Finanza* (Italian tax police) and several courts, give a relatively optimistic outlook on the regulations and laws. In this way, in a country such as Italy, cloud computing can be used so that companies can benefit from services that are 'on the cloud'. These are accessible to local entities and even allow small and medium-sized businesses to receive benefits normally reserved for large companies.

Japan is leading the field: its position at the top of the league table is determined by factors such as the spread of broadband, the commitment to interoperability standards and legislation that is up-to-date in the fight against cybercrime.

In light of this, could the Commission state:

1. whether it can provide up-to-date statistics and data on cloud computing throughout the Member States?

2. whether and how it intends to support cloud computing amongst the Member States so as to rival the supremacy of Japan, which is currently ranked top?

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

The Commission does not have statistics and data on cloud computing for the Member States or Japan. The Commission is currently undertaking a study to quantify the barriers perceived by potential users of cloud computing. The study is not complete but initial conclusion indicates that the major perceived barriers are the need for greater transparency in data security governance, the lack of standardised terms of service and lack of clarity about user rights and responsibilities. The claims of the BSA report cannot be substantiated yet.

The Commission is preparing a Cloud Computing Strategy as announced by the Member of the Commission responsible for Digital Agenda in January 2012 when she revealed the European Cloud Partnership designed to reduce fragmentation on the public sector procurement of cloud systems.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002197/12
to the Commission
Marian Harkin (ALDE)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Treatment of small contractors by Ireland's Private Security Authority

In accordance with the rules applied by the Private Security Authority, a body which is responsible for the management and control of licensing for all individuals and companies in Ireland, a small contractor with a low turnover has to pay the same licence fee as a company with a turnover of up to EUR 650 000, and there is only a EUR 1 000 difference in the fee for the next level of turnover (EUR 1.2 million).

Is it lawful under EU competition law for the Private Security Authority to treat small contractors with modest turnovers the same as contractors with a turnover of up to EUR 650 000?

Is it lawful under EU contract law effectively to prohibit small contractors from carrying out maintenance of alarm systems, as will be the case when the maintenance of alarm systems is included in the Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2011?

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

The Private Security Authority is the statutory body with responsibility for licensing and regulating the private security industry in Ireland. The two year licence fee a contractor must pay consists of two components — an administrative fee of EUR 1 000 and a sectorial fee of EUR 1 250 if the turnover is less than EUR 625 000, so a total of EUR 2 250. The Authority has introduced an instalment payment facility for contractors with a turnover of no more than EUR 150 000 having difficulty paying their licence fee, when renewing an existing license.

In the absence of EU legislation on compulsory license fees, Member States may impose license fees on contractors carrying out maintenance of alarm systems. However, disproportionate license fees on small contractors with a very low turnover may be considered as a restriction on the establishment in Ireland of small contractors from other EU Member States (Article 49 TFEU). The European Commission will request additional information and detailed observations from the Irish Government on the justification, the necessity and the proportionality of the above license fees imposed on small contractors.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002198/12
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Fairtrade status for Member States

Following news reports that Scotland will achieve fairtrade status soon, what support is the Commission offering Scotland in this connection? Does the Commission have any plans to assist other Member States in achieving this status?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2012)

The Commission recognises that initiatives promoting trade-related sustainability assurance schemes, such as the work being done by the Fair Trade movement or other initiatives, can play a role in advancing sustainable development and supporting informed public and private purchasing decisions.

In the Commission's view, the flexible nature of private sustainability assurance schemes is a key asset, as they can develop along with societal and consumer awareness and demands. In order to preserve this dynamic element, the Commission considers that it should not take a role in ranking or regulating the criteria underlying such schemes or their relevance in relation to sustainable development objectives ([1]).

At the same time, the Commission considers that public authorities can promote private sustainability schemes ([2]) and is providing support for awareness-raising and educational activities in EU Member States.

([1]) COM(2009) 215 final.
([2]) COM(2012) 22 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002200/12
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(27 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Turismo accessibile

Oggi, nell'Unione europea, una persona su sei (circa 80 milioni di cittadini) è affetta da una disabilità, mentre oltre un terzo dei cittadini oltre i 75 anni è portatore di disabilità che in qualche misura lo limitano. Tali cifre sono destinate ad aumentare, con il progressivo invecchiamento della popolazione. La maggior parte di queste persone troppo spesso non riesce a partecipare pienamente alla vita sociale ed economica, a causa di barriere fisiche o di altro tipo, ma anche di discriminazioni. Abbattere dunque queste barriere non solo è un dovere sociale, ma può anche creare nuove opportunità di mercato.

L'accessibilità è per i disabili la condizione preliminare per poter esercitare pienamente i diritti sanciti dalla convenzione ONU sui diritti delle persone con disabilità, dal trattato dell'Unione europea e dalla carta dei diritti fondamentali.

Attraverso la strategia Europa 2020 delineata dalla Commissione europea, si vuole incentivare un approccio coordinato e definire un quadro d'azione per rafforzare la competitività e la capacità di crescita sostenibile anche nel settore del turismo (obiettivi ripresi e descritti dall'art. 195 TFUE).

Nell'autunno del 2012, infatti, la Commissione presenterà una legge europea sull'accessibilità, per garantire che i disabili abbiano accesso su un piano di parità con gli altri all'ambiente fisico, ai trasporti e ai servizi di informazione e comunicazione.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. stante il significativo impegno promosso dalle Istituzioni europee e le nuove competenze in materia di turismo previste dal trattato se considera necessario rafforzare la struttura dedicata al turismo attraverso un programma specifico, dotato di relative linee di bilancio;

2. in che modo intende monitorare le suddette azioni proposte e verificare la loro concreta attuazione?

Risposta data da Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(30 aprile 2012)

1. La Commissione condivide il punto di vista dell'onorevole deputato quanto alla necessità di assicurare strutture e servizi turistici più accessibili per i viaggiatori disabili nel contesto del nuovo quadro legale per il turismo e della Convenzione delle Nazioni Unite sui diritti delle persone con disabilità.

Non si tratta però soltanto di una questione di diritti; ciò consente anche di dare un forte impulso alla crescita e all'occupazione: si è stimato che un offerta turistica più accessibile potrebbe attirare un mercato addizionale di 140 milioni di turisti.

La Commissione esamina le opzioni per integrare i bisogni dei disabili nel settore turistico. Tuttavia, condizione previa per l'intervento della Commissione è la disponibilità di dati nel merito. La Commissione ha bisogno di dati su scala UE relativi ai bisogni dei turisti disabili e all'impatto economico del turismo accessibile. Si procederà inoltre a un'attenta mappatura dell'offerta di servizi turistici per i disabili in Europa al fine di identificare le lacune e di dare un riconoscimento alle buone pratiche. La Commissione dispone soltanto di dati frammentari su questi elementi e limitatamente ad alcuni Stati membri.

Per espletare questi compiti il Parlamento ha concesso alla Commissione un bilancio di 1 milione di euro per il 2012 nel contesto dell'azione preparatoria «Tourism accessibility for All» (turismo accessibile per tutti) rinnovabile per altri due anni. L'azione preparatoria, una volta completata nel 2014, consentirà alla Commissione di presentare le proposte più appropriate per introdurre a tutti i livelli di governance la tematica dell'accessibilità del turismo.

2. La Commissione prepara inoltre, per la fine del 2012, un Atto europeo per l'accessibilità (European Accessibility Act) per migliorare l'accessibilità a beni e servizi sul mercato interno in base a un approccio di «design for all» (progettazione universale). Questa iniziativa che tiene conto anche delle esigenze delle aziende comprenderà misure vincolanti in tema di appalti e di armonizzazione delle norme d'accessibilità.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002200/12
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Accessible tourism

Today, one in every six EU people citizens (approximately 80 million people) suffers some form of disability, whilst more than one third of citizens aged over 75 are disabled in a way that limits them to some extent. These figures are set to increase as the population gradually ages. Most of these people are, all too often, unable to participate fully in social and economic life, owing to physical or other barriers, and also to discrimination. Eliminating these barriers, therefore, is not only a social duty, but can also create new market opportunities.

For the disabled, accessibility is a precondition to being able to fully exercise the rights enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in the European Union Treaty and in the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Through the Europe 2020 strategy outlined by the European Commission, the idea is to encourage a coordinated approach and define a framework of action by which to strengthen competitiveness and capacity for sustainable growth, including in the tourism section (objectives taken from, and described in, Article 195 TFEU).

In autumn 2012, in fact, the Commission will be presenting a European law on accessibility to guarantee that disabled people have equal access to physical environments, transport and information and communication services.

In light of the above, can the Commission state:

1. whether it considers it necessary, given the significant commitment of the European institutions and the new competences in terms of tourism provided for in the Treaty, to strengthen the framework for tourism through a specific programme, awarded the relevant budget headings;

2. how it intends to monitor the above proposed actions and verify their actual implementation?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2012)

1. The Commission shares the views of the Honourable Member about the need to ensure more accessible tourism facilities and services for disabled travellers within the new legal framework for Tourism, and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

This is not only a matter of rights; it is also a powerful boost for growth and jobs: it has been estimated that a more accessible tourism offer could attract an additional market of 140 million tourists.

The Commission is exploring options to integrate the needs of disabled people in the tourism sector. However, a precondition for the Commission's action is the availability of relevant data. The Commission needs EU-wide data on the needs of disabled tourists, and on the economic impact of accessible tourism. Furthermore, a thorough mapping of the state of the supply of tourism services for disabled people in Europe will be performed to identify gaps and reward good practices in place. The Commission has only fragmentary data on these elements, and only limited to a few Member States.

To perform these tasks, Parliament has granted to the Commission a budget of EUR 1 million for 2012 in the context of the Preparatory Action 'Tourism accessibility for All', which can be renewed for other two years. The Preparatory Action, once finalised in 2014, will allow the Commission to present the most appropriate proposals to mainstream accessibility in tourism.

2. The Commission will regularly inform Parliament of the results obtained during the Preparatory Action. Furthermore, the Commission is preparing, for the end of 2012, a European Accessibility Act to improve accessibility to goods and services in the internal market based on a 'design for all' approach. This business friendly initiative will include binding measures to promote procurement and harmonisation of accessibility standards.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002201/12
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(27 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Caso delle società GFOREX e GTL

Oltre 400 risparmiatori italiani hanno investito somme diverse nella società di investimenti GFOREX s.p.a. di Milano che si avvaleva di una piattaforma telematica e dei servizi di trading forniti dalla società GTL con sede a Dubai. GFOREX ha comunicato ufficialmente ai risparmiatori che i loro soldi erano svaniti nel momento in cui il 18 marzo 2011 il broker GTL ha impedito a GFOREX di accedere alla suddetta piattaforma, bloccando di fatto tutte le operazioni di trading. Circa 36 milioni di dollari sono rimasti così nelle casse della GTL. Si tratta di risparmi che sono stati trasferiti in una banca alle isole Vergini.

I risparmiatori truffati non erano miliardari in cerca di brividi borsistici esotici, ma per lo più pensionati e piccoli commercianti che ci hanno rimesso i risparmi di una vita, fidandosi di una struttura di investimenti che rastrellava risparmi tramite l'opera di decine di promotori finanziari.

La GFOREX, prima di essere dichiarata fallita dal tribunale di Milano proprio per questa storia, ha intrapreso un'azione legale nei confronti della GTL attraverso lo studio Al Maarif di Dubai, presentando una denuncia alla procura di Dubai e una alla procura della Repubblica di Milano.

Alla luce dei fatti esposti, come può la Commissione permettere che società di investimento come queste agiscano senza essere sufficientemente controllate, non solo al fine di tutelare le vittime di questo ennesimo «raggiro» finanziario, ma anche come deterrente per chi non ha scrupoli nell'appropriarsi di soldi altrui e manipolarli senza alcun controllo e cautela, ad esempio trasferendoli nei cosiddetti «paradisi fiscali».

Considerando inoltre che i risparmiatori hanno il diritto di essere informati nel massimo della trasparenza sui rischi e sui vari passaggi dei loro risparmi, perché la Commissione non sollecita le società di investimento ad una più intensa e corretta informazione?

Risposta data da Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(27 aprile 2012)

Il mercato dei cambi è un mercato mondiale sul quale sono scambiate valute. La Commissione è consapevole della complessità e del rischio insito negli scambi di questo tipo, soprattutto quando trattano derivati su valute. La Commissione non ha competenza a interferire nelle relazioni fra investitori e prestatori di servizi, ma è perfettamente conscia delle difficoltà cui si trovano confrontati gli investitori che, come indicato dall'onorevole parlamentare, subiscono perdite a causa di operazioni su valute o di manovre di entità non autorizzate, basate talvolta in paesi terzi.

L'Autorità europea degli strumenti finanziari e dei mercati ha emesso recentemente un avviso per mettere in guardia gli investitori da una serie di imprese non autorizzate che offrono derivati su valute e dai rischi insiti nelle operazioni in cambi ([1]).

Il quadro giuridico dell'Unione europea prevede misure a tutela degli investitori nei casi in cui vengono trattati derivati su valute: questi si configurano infatti come strumenti finanziari ai sensi della direttiva 2004/39/CE (MiFID), che disciplina la prestazione di servizi d'investimento in relazione a qualsiasi strumento finanziario, assoggetta le imprese d'investimento ad autorizzazione e vigilanza e prevede le norme di comportamento cui le imprese devono attenersi nella prestazione di tali servizi. Spetta alle autorità competenti vigilare sull'applicazione delle disposizioni nazionali che attuano la MiFID.

Nell'ottobre 2011 la Commissione ha adottato proposte volte a irrobustire l'attuale regime della MiFID ([2]), tra l'altro riguardo alla prestazione di servizi nell'UE da parte di entità di paesi terzi cui l'onorevole parlamentare si riferisce nella sua interrogazione.

([1]) http://www.esma.europa.eu/system/files/2011_412.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/securities/isd/mifid_en.htm

Le operazioni a pronti sul mercato dei cambi, invece, non comportano strumenti finanziari: le norme della MiFID non si applicano quindi allo scambio di valute sul mercato a pronti, attività che può tuttavia essere disciplinata a livello nazionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002201/12
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: The case of GFOREX and GTL

More than 400 Italian savers have invested varying amounts in the investment company GFOREX s.p.a. of Milan, which used an electronic platform and trading services provided by GTL, with registered offices in Dubai. GFOREX has now officially informed savers that their money disappeared when, on 18 March 2011, the broker GTL prevented GFOREX from accessing the platform, thereby blocking all trading. Approximately USD 36 million has therefore been pocketed by GTL. These are savings that have been transferred to a bank on the Virgin Islands.

The defrauded savers were not billionaires seeking the excitement of exotic stock exchange dealings, but for the most part pensioners and small traders who had entrusted their lifetimes' savings to an investment structure that was collecting savings through the work of dozens of financial promoters.

Before being declared bankrupt by the Court of Milan, precisely in regard to these events, GFOREX filed a lawsuit against GTL through the Al Maarif firm of Dubai, making a statement to the public prosecutor's office of Dubai and another to the public prosecutor's office of Milan.

In view of the above events, how can the Commission allow investment companies like these to act without being properly monitored, not only to protect the victims from yet another financial deception, but also as a deterrent for those with no scruples from appropriating third parties' money and manipulating it with no control or precaution, for example by transferring it to 'tax havens'?

If we also consider that investors have the right to be informed with complete transparency of the risks and various transfers involving their savings, why does the Commission not demand that investment companies provide more consistent and correct information?

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

The foreign exchange market is a global market that trades in currencies. The Commission is aware of the complexity and risk arising from this type of trading, especially when currency derivatives are involved. While the Commission is not competent to intervene in cases concerning the relationship between investors and persons providing services, it has understanding of the difficulties of investors, such as the ones mentioned by the Honorable Member, who suffered losses because of currency trading or because of the role of unauthorised entities, sometimes based in third countries.

The European Securities and Markets Authority has recently issued a warning to warn investors on the number of unauthorised firms offering currency derivatives and on the risks involved in forex trading ([1]).

The European Union (EU) framework contains measures to protect investors when currency derivatives are involved. Currency derivatives are financial instruments under Directive 2004/39/EC (MiFID) which regulates the provision of investment services in relation to any financial instruments. It provides for authorisation and supervision of investment firms and for conduct of business rules in the provision of the services. Competent authorities are responsible to supervise the application of national legislation transposing MiFID.

In October 2011, the Commission adopted proposals to strenghten the current MiFID-regime ([2]), including as regards the provision of services in the EU by third country entities, as mentioned by the Honorable Members.

As regards spot foreign exchange transactions, these are not transactions involving a financial instrument. The trade of currencies on the spot market is not subject to MiFID-rules. This acticity may however be regulated at national level.

([1]) http://www.esma.europa.eu/system/files/2011_412.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/securities/isd/mifid_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002203/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(27 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Discriminação de trabalhador português em França, por razões de nacionalidade

No âmbito do programa Erasmus, um cidadão português efetuou, em 2000/2001, um período de estudos em França, que incluiu um estágio de seis meses na empresa, à época, chamada «EADS Launch Vehicles», hoje «Astrium Space Transportation». Após este estágio, passou aos quadros da empresa.

Desde 2004, este cidadão começou a ser alvo de discriminação na empresa pelo facto de não ser francês. Concretamente, foi-lhe interditado o acesso a vários edifícios da empresa, incluindo o do departamento onde, até então, desenvolvia a sua atividade. O motivo invocado para esta discriminação foi o facto da entidade em que trabalhava desenvolver um projeto para o ministério da defesa francês, onde supostamente só poderão trabalhar cidadãos de nacionalidade francesa. Acontece que o cidadão português não trabalhou nesse projeto classificado e teve contrato com a empresa desde 2001, sem que esse problema fosse levantado. Mesmo assim, foi-lhe sugerido que adquirisse a nacionalidade francesa, o que o cidadão português recusou.

Em finais de 2011, depois de um período no Reino Unido, numa filial do grupo («Astrium Satellites»), onde trabalhou noutros projetos, este cidadão candidatou-se a um outro lugar no projeto em que já havia trabalhado — GNC do Ariane 5, na mesma entidade francesa («Astrium ST»). Foi selecionado, acertou as condições com a entidade empregadora, mas agora o seu lugar foi colocado novamente a concurso, depois de ter sido novamente pressionado para adquirir nacionalidade francesa — o que novamente recusou. Explicaram-lhe que apenas franceses poderiam trabalhar neste projeto.

Questiona-se agora este cidadão se, na Europa da «livre circulação», pode um trabalhador português ser inibido de desenvolver atividade num projeto, financiado por fundos comunitários, apenas por não ter a nacionalidade francesa, alegadamente exigida pelas autoridades deste país.

Em face do exposto, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Tem conhecimento desta situação ou de outras semelhantes? Que avaliação faz da(s) mesma(s)?

2. Que fundos comunitários foram, até à data, canalizados para este projeto? Que entidades estão envolvidas no mesmo?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(18 de abril de 2012)

A Comissão não tem conhecimento desta situação, nem de situações similares, em França.

A legislação da UE dá aos seus cidadãos o direito de trabalhar noutros Estados-Membros. O artigo 45.°, n.° 4, do TFUE prevê uma derrogação no caso de determinados empregos na administração pública.

Em 2001, o Tribunal de Justiça da União Europeia (TJ) ([1]) considerou que esta exceção não podia aplicar-se a empregos no setor privado. Todavia, em 2003, o TJ deu uma interpretação suplementar da aplicação do artigo 45.°, n.° 4, do TFUE aos empregos no setor privado aos quais o Estado confere atribuições de autoridade pública ([2]). Segundo o TJ, um Estado-Membro só pode reservar esses empregos aos seus nacionais na condição de as prerrogativas de autoridade pública atribuída (no caso, aos comandantes e imediatos de navios da marinha mercante) serem efetivamente exercidas de forma habitual e não representarem uma parte muito reduzida das suas atividades.

A Comissão solicita ao Senhor Deputado que lhe transmita informações suplementares de que eventualmente disponha sobre as disposições francesas em causa.

A empresa Astrium Space Transportation desenvolve as suas atividades em três locais diferentes do território francês (Les Mureaux, Saint-Médard-en-Jalles, Kourou). Recebeu financiamento da UE para diferentes projetos. O 7.° Programa-Quadro apoiou financeiramente 19 projetos em que a entidade participa ([3]).

([1]) Processo C-283/99.
([2]) Processos C-405/01 e C-47/02.
([3]) (http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/projects_en.html).

A Comissão necessita de mais informações sobre a localização exata e, se possível, sobre o nome do próprio projeto a fim de informar o Parlamento sobre os eventuais fundos do FEDER ([4]) canalizados para o projeto.

As atividades relacionadas com a orientação, navegação e controlo do Ariane 5 são objeto de um contrato concluído com a Agência Espacial Europeia (ESA) e por ela financiado.

Em fevereiro de 2012, a UE concluiu um contrato separado com a empresa Astrium para a adjudicação da adaptação do Ariane 5 ES às necessidades dos satélites Galileo; a ESA cofinancia esta atividade.

([4]) Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002203/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Discrimination on the basis of nationality against a Portuguese worker in France

In 2000/2001, a Portuguese citizen spent a period of study in France as part of the Erasmus programme, which included a six-month traineeship at a company then called EADS Launch Vehicles, now known as Astrium Space Transportation. Following the traineeship, he became an employee of the company.

Starting in 2004, this citizen began to be subjected to discrimination in the company because he was not French. Specifically, he was barred from entering several company buildings, including that of the department in which he had worked up until then. The reason given for this discrimination was the fact that the unit in which he worked was undertaking a project for the French Ministry of Defence, on which, supposedly, only French nationals could work. The Portuguese citizen did not work on this classified project and had been employed by the company since 2001, without this issue ever being raised. Even so, it was suggested that the Portuguese citizen acquire French nationality, which he refused to do.

In late 2011, following a period in the United Kingdom, at a subsidiary of the group (Astrium Satellites), where he worked on other projects, this citizen applied to work in another location on the project on which he had already worked — guidance, navigation and control (GNC) for Ariane 5 — at the same French company (Astrium ST). He was selected and he met the employing company's conditions but applications for his job have been sought again, after he had been pressured again to acquire French nationality, which he again refused to do. It was explained to him that only French people could work on this project.

This citizen is now asking himself whether, in the Europe of 'freedom of movement', a Portuguese worker can be barred from working on a project, financed by EU funds, simply because he does not have French nationality, which is allegedly required by that country's authorities.

In view of this, can the Commission state:

1. Is the Commission aware of this or other similar situations? What is the Commission's view of them?

2. What EU funds have, to date, been channelled into the project? Which bodies are involved in said project?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2012)

The Commission was not aware of this or similar situations in France.

EC law gives EU citizens the right to work in other Member States. Article 45(4) TFEU provides for an exception for certain public service posts.

In 2001 the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJ) ([1]) held that this exception could not be applied to private sector posts. However, in 2003, the CJ gave an additional interpretation of the application of Article 45(4) TFEU to private sector posts to which the State assigns public authority functions ([2]). According to the CJ, a Member State can reserve such posts for nationals, only if the rights under powers conferred by public law (here on masters and chief mates of private sector ships) are exercised on a regular basis and do not represent a very minor part of their activities.

The Commission would call on the Honourable Member to provide it with any further information he may have on the French provisions concerned.

Astrium Space Transportation develops its activities in France on three different sites (Les Mureaux, Saint-Médard-en-Jalles, Kourou). It has received EU funds for different projects.. The 7th Framework Programme has financially supported 19 projects in which the entity takes part ([3]).

([1]) C-283/99.
([2]) C-405/01, C-47/02.
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/projects_en.html

In order to inform the Parliament on the possible ERDF ([4]) funds channelled through the project, the Commission needs more information on its exact localisation, and, if possible, on the name of the project itself.

The activities related to the guidance, navigation and control or Ariane 5 are the subject of a contract concluded with and funded by the European Space Agency (ESA).

In February 2012 the EU has concluded a separate contract with Astrium for the procurement of the adaptation of Ariane 5 ES to the needs of the Galileo satellites; ESA is co-funding this activity.

([4]) European Regional Development Fund.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002205/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. februára 2012)

Vec: Antidiskriminačná smernica

Diskriminácia sa dotýka prakticky všetkých základných ľudských práv a slobôd a zasahuje do každej sféry ľudského života. V rámci právneho poriadku Európskej únie v súčasnosti existujú štyri oficiálne smernice, ktoré však problematiku diskriminácie riešia iba čiastkovo. Komisia predložila ešte v roku 2008 návrh novej antidiskriminačnej smernice – smernice Rady KOM(2008)426 o vykonávaní zásady rovnakého zaobchádzania s osobami bez ohľadu na náboženské vyznanie, vieru, zdravotné postihnutie, vek alebo sexuálnu orientáciu. Tento právny dokument by zjednotil právnu úpravu členských štátov EÚ v oblasti diskriminácie a poskytol občanom EÚ právnu istotu v rovnakom zaobchádzaní. Po troch rokoch však dokument stále leží v Komisii na stole pracovnej skupiny pre sociálne otázky. Členské štáty rokujú o jeho obsahu stále dookola. Vyškrtnú celé jedno ustanovenie, potom ho zas vrátia späť a následne ho zase pozmenia. Žiadne predsedníctvo zatiaľ smerom k prijatiu smernice nedosiahlo výraznejší posun. Súčasný stav de lege lata spôsobuje, že nie všetky menšinové skupiny sú chránené antidiskriminačnými právnymi predpismi na európskej úrovni. Tento stav má negatívne dôsledky na životy všetkých obyvateľov Európskej únie. Zdĺhavý proces prijímania predmetnej antidiskriminačnej smernice je zároveň neakceptovateľný.

Akým spôsobom Európska komisia v poslednom čase prispela k prijatiu tejto progresívnej antidiskriminačnej smernice?

Aké sú plánované kroky v tejto oblasti?

Považuje Európska komisia skutočnosť, že na prijatie smernice sa požaduje jednomyseľnosť, za dôvod prieťahov schvaľovacieho procesu?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(25. apríla 2012)

Komisia by chcela odkázať váženú pani poslankyňu na svoju odpoveď na písomnú otázku E-010458/2011 ([1]).

Komisia by okrem toho váženej pani poslankyni chcela oznámiť, že diskusie o návrhu smernice v pracovnej skupine Rady prebiehajú. Súčasné dánske predsedníctvo predložilo ďalšie návrhy v súvislosti s vekom ako diskriminačným faktorom. Komisia podporuje predsedníctvo v rámci úsilia dosiahnuť v tejto záležitosti pokrok.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002205/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Anti-discrimination directive

Discrimination affects virtually all basic human rights and freedoms and extends into every sphere of life. Under the EU legal system, there are currently four official directives that address this issue, albeit only partially. The Commission submitted a new draft of the anti-discrimination Directive in 2008: Council Directive COM(2008) 426 on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. This legal document would have harmonised the legislation of the EU Member States in the field of discrimination and provided legal certainty for EU citizens on equal treatment. Three years have passed, however, and the document remains in the Commission with the working group on social issues. Member States have been endlessly discussing its content: deleting an entire provision, only to reinstate it, and then altering it once more. No presidency has achieved significant movement towards the adoption of the directive. The current state of *de lege lata* means that not all minority groups are protected by anti-discrimination legislation at European level. This situation has a negative effect on the lives of all EU citizens and the lengthy adoption process of the anti-discrimination Directive is also unacceptable.

How has the Commission recently contributed to the adoption of this progressive anti-discrimination Directive?

What steps are planned in this area?

Does the Commission consider the requirement for unanimity to be the reason for the delay in the approval process of the directive?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Question E-010458/2011 ([1]).

In addition, the Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that discussions on the draft Directive in the Council working group are ongoing. The current Danish Council Presidency has made further suggestions regarding age as a discrimination factor. The Commission is supporting the Presidency in its efforts to achieve progress on this file.

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

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002207/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. februára 2012)

Vec: Úsporné opatrenia v Portugalsku

Z nedávno zverejnenej štúdie zaoberajúcej sa problematikou úsporných opatrení vyplýva, že úsporné opatrenia v Portugalsku majú negatívny dopad vo výške 6 % z disponibilného príjmu najchudobnejších 10 %. Spomedzi šiestich analyzovaných členských štátov Európskej únie, a to Estónska, Írska, Grécka, Španielska, Portugalska a Spojeného kráľovstva, ide o druhý najvyšší výsledok. V tejto skupine analyzovaných krajín je jedinou krajinou s vyšším percentom zníženia príjmov Írsko. V Írsku však boli pomerne viac postihnuté príjmy najbohatších 50 %, zatiaľ čo naopak v Portugalsku najchudobnejších 10 %. Účinky úsporných opatrení v Portugalsku sú teda regresívne.

Plánuje Európska komisia v súvislosti s týmito výsledkami prehodnotiť svoju politiku úsporných opatrení?

Odpoveď pána Rehna v mene Komisie
(23. apríla 2012)

Program hospodárskeho ozdravenia Portugalska má dôležitý sociálny rozmer so zreteľom na ochranu nízkopríjmových skupín a zachovanie a posilnenie záchranných sociálnych sietí. Napríklad rozsah dávok v nezamestnanosti sa rozšíril, zachovala sa výška minimálnej mzdy a zvýšenie priameho zdanenia práce či nedávne zníženie výdavkov na dôchodky a miezd vo verejnom sektore sa dotkli vo väčšej miere skupín s vyšším príjmom.

Negatívny účinok niektorých konsolidačných opatrení výslovne zavedených na zníženie rozpočtového deficitu na reálne príjmy mohol byť v prípade skupín s najnižšími príjmami vyšší v relatívnom vyjadrení. Môže to byť prípad zmrazenia dôchodkov a dávok, ako sa o tom hovorí v štúdii, ktorú spomenula vážená pani poslankyňa. Na základe samotnej uvedenej štúdie však nie je možné vyvodiť konečný záver o vplyve opatrení v rámci rozdelenia príjmov. Dostupné údaje Eurostatu o nerovnosti príjmov naozaj ukazujú, že nerovnosť príjmov v Portugalsku sa v období 2009 – 2010 znížila.

Komisia sa domnieva, že rozhodné vykonávanie ozdravného programu je pre Portugalsko aj naďalej kľúčové na úpravu ekonomickej nerovnováhy a na zabezpečenie oživenia hospodárstva a fiškálnej udržateľnosti. Uisťuje, že reforma trhu práce, ktorá je významným prvkom ozdravného programu, sa vykonáva v rámci širokej sociálnej podpory, o čom svedčí nedávno prijatá trojstranná dohoda.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002207/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Austerity measures in Portugal

A recently published study examining the issue of austerity measures in Portugal showed the negative impact they are having: a 6 % reduction in the disposable income of the poorest 10 % of the population. It was the second-highest result of the six EU Member States analysed, namely Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, Portugal and the United Kingdom. In this group, the only country with a higher percentage reduction in income was Ireland. In Ireland, however, it was the richest 50 % that were most effected, in contrast to the poorest 10 % in Portugal. The effects of the austerity measures in Portugal are therefore regressive.

In view of this data, does the European Commission intend to review its policy of austerity measures?

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

The economic adjustment programme for Portugal has an important social dimension with a view to protecting low income groups and preserving and strengthening social safety nets. For instance, the coverage of unemployment benefits was extended; the level of minimum wage was preserved; and increases in direct labour taxation and recent cuts in pensions and public sector wages impacted more on the higher income groups.

The negative effect on real incomes of some of the consolidation measures explicitly introduced to reduce the budget deficit might have been higher in relative terms for the lowest income groups. This could be the case of the freeze in pensions and benefits, as discussed by the study mentioned by the Honourable Member. However, it is not possible from that study alone to draw definite conclusions on the impact of the measures across the income distribution. Available Eurostat figures on income inequality show indeed that income inequality decreased in Portugal in the period 2009-2010.

The Commission considers that a determined implementation of the adjustment programme remains key for Portugal to adjust its economic imbalances and to ensure economic recovery and fiscal sustainability. It is reassuring that the labour market reform — an important component of the adjustment programme — is being implemented under a broad social support, as it is demonstrated by the recent tripartite agreement.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002208/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. februára 2012)

Vec: Reforma pravidiel ochrany osobných údajov

Komisia prijala ešte v roku 2010 stratégiu na posilnenie pravidiel Európskej únie na ochranu osobných údajov. Cieľom stratégie je chrániť údaje jednotlivcov vo všetkých oblastiach politiky vrátane presadzovania práva, zároveň znížiť administratívnu záťaž podnikov a v rámci Únie zabezpečiť voľný pohyb údajov. Komisia realizovala samostatnú verejnú konzultáciu s cieľom vykonať revíziu smernice o ochrane údajov z roku 1995. Nutnosť reformy zdôvodňuje technologickým pokrokom a odlišným uplatňovaním pravidiel v rámci jednotlivých členských štátov. Novela smernice, ktorú Komisia nedávno predložila Európskemu parlamentu, upravuje používanie osobných údajov a nariadenie, ktoré zavádza podmienky narábania s osobnými údajmi.

Aký je vzťah tohto návrhu s dohodou ACTA?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(26. apríla 2012)

Európska komisia v návrhoch uverejnených 25. januára 2012 predstavila komplexnú reformu právneho rámca na ochranu osobných údajov v Únii a v členských štátoch, ktorej cieľom je posilnenie základného práva jednotlivca na ochranu údajov, ako je zakotvené v Charte základných práv Európskej únie. Návrhy Komisie aktualizujú a modernizujú zásady zakotvené v smernici o ochrane údajov (smernica 95/46/EHS) a zahŕňajú politické oznámenie, v ktorom sú stanovené ciele Komisie ([1]), a dva legislatívne návrhy: nariadenie, v ktorom sa stanovuje nový všeobecný rámec EÚ pre ochranu údajov ([2]), a smernicu o ochrane osobných údajov spracúvaných na účely predchádzania trestným činom, ich odhaľovania, vyšetrovania alebo stíhania a na účely súvisiacich justičných činností ([3]).

ACTA je medzinárodná obchodná dohoda, ktorá ustanovuje komplexný medzinárodný rámec na vymáhanie práv duševného vlastníctva. Nebude použitá na vymáhanie zverejnenia osobných údajov, ktoré by bolo v rozpore s právnymi predpismi členských štátov a EÚ o ochrane údajov a súkromia, ako sa výslovne uvádza v článku 4, článku 11, článku 22 , článku 27 ods. 2, ods. 3 a 4.

Komisia okrem toho rozhodla o postúpení dohody ACTA Súdnemu dvoru Európskej únie, ktorý vydá stanovisko o jej zlučiteľnosti s Chartou základných práv Európskej únie.

([1]) COM(2012) 09 final–„Ochrana súkromia v prepojenom svete Európsky rámec ochrany údajov pre 21. storočie".
([2]) COM(2012) 011 final – Návrh Nariadenie Európskeho parlamentu a rady o ochrane fyzických osôb pri spracúvaní osobných údajov a o voľnom pohybe takýchto údajov (všeobecné nariadenie o ochrane údajov).
([3]) COM(2012) 010 final – Návrh Smernica Európskeho parlamentu a Rady o ochrane fyzických osôb pri spracúvaní osobných údajov príslušnými orgánmi na účely predchádzania trestným činom, ich vyšetrovania, odhaľovania alebo stíhania alebo na účely výkonu trestných sankcií a o voľnom pohybe takýchto údajov.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002208/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Reform of rules on personal data protection

The Commission adopted a strategy for strengthening EU rules on protecting personal data in 2010. The aim of the strategy is to protect the individual's data in all policy areas, including law enforcement, while also reducing the administrative burden on businesses and ensuring the free movement of data within the EU. The Commission conducted a separate public consultation with the objective of revising the Data Protection Directive of 1995. It points to the advances made in technology and the discrepancies in the application of the rules in individual Member States in justifying the need for reform. The update to the directive, which the Commission recently submitted to the European Parliament, adjusts the use of personal data and the regulation that introduces conditions for handling personal data.

Can the Commission explain the relationship between this proposal and the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

In its proposals published on 25 January 2012, the European Commission sets out a comprehensive reform of the legal framework for the protection of personal data in the Union and its Member States, which seeks to strengthen every individuals' fundamental right to data protection, as enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. The Commission's proposals update and modernise the principles enshrined in the Data Protection Directive (Directive 95/46/EC) and include a policy Communication setting out the Commission's objectives ([1]) and two legislative proposals: a regulation setting out a general EU framework for data protection ([2]) and a directive on protecting personal data processed for the purposes of prevention, detection, investigation or prosecution of criminal offences and related judicial activities ([3]).

ACTA is an international trade agreement establishing a comprehensive international framework for the enforcement of intellectual property rights. It will not be used to enforce the disclosure of personal data that would be contrary to EU and national laws on data protection and privacy, as explicitly foreseen in its Article 4, Article 11, Article 22 and Article 27.2, 27.3 and 27.4.

Additionally, the Commission has decided to refer ACTA to the Court of Justice of the European Union, which will rule on its compatibility with the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

([1]) COM(2012) 09 final —"Safeguarding Privacy in a Connected World A European Data Protection Framework for the 21st Century".
([2]) COM(2012) 11 final — Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation).
([3]) COM(2012) 010 final — Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by competent authorities for the purposes of prevention, investigation, detection or prosecution of criminal offences or the execution of criminal penalties, and the free movement of such data.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002209/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. februára 2012)

Vec: Strata biodiverzity

Členovia Výboru Európskeho parlamentu pre životné prostredie nedávno zverejnili dôvodovú správu k uzneseniu, ktoré sa zaoberá problematikou straty biodiverzity. Európska únia totiž čelí na pozadí ekonomickej či klimatickej krízy aj ďalšej kríze, a to kríze straty biologickej rozmanitosti, ktorá môže mať ďalekosiahle následky. V predmetnej správe je uvedené, že stratégia Európskej únie na zastavenie straty biodiverzity v roku 2010 celkom zlyhala. V návrhu uznesenia sa vyžaduje do roku 2020 obnoviť 30 % zdegradovaných ekosystémov, čo je dvojnásobok oproti pôvodnému návrhu Európskej komisie a Dohovoru o biologickej rozmanitosti. Členovia Výboru pre životné prostredie naliehajú aj na zvýšenie ekologizácie v prvom i druhom pilieri spoločnej poľnohospodárskej politiky a vytvorenie európskej pobrežnej stráže. To by malo zlepšiť kontrolu a presadzovanie práva v rybnom hospodárstve. Európsky parlament Komisiu vyzval, aby sa zamerala na ráznejšie presadzovanie politík súvisiacich s ochranou biologickej rozmanitosti.

Akým konkrétnym spôsobom bude Európska komisia presadzovať politiky súvisiace s ochranou biologickej rozmanitosti?

Akým konkrétnym spôsobom plánuje prinútiť národné vlády členských štátov EÚ, aby dodržiavali prijaté záväzky?

Odpoveď pána Potočnika v mene Komisie
(17. apríla 2012)

1. V úzkej spolupráci s členskými štátmi vypracovala Komisia spoločný vykonávací rámec na uľahčenie vykonávania a na podporu efektívneho plnenia stratégie EÚ v oblasti biodiverzity na úrovni EÚ, ako aj členských štátov. Boli určené pracovné skupiny zložené z útvarov Komisie, členských štátov a zainteresovaných strán, ktoré prispievajú k príprave akcií zameraných na splnenie cieľov tejto stratégie. Účelom navrhnutej riadiacej štruktúry je, aby sa určila zodpovednosť za plnenie stratégie vo všetkých oblastiach politiky a aby sa na nej zúčastňovali všetky relevantné zainteresované strany na príslušnej úrovni tvorby politiky mimo tradičného spoločenstva v oblasti biodiverzity.

2. Komisia zastáva názor, že vlády jednotlivých členských štátov EÚ budú pravdepodobne môcť plniť stratégiu EÚ v oblasti biodiverzity najefektívnejšie, ak budú priamymi účastníkmi prípravy jej plnenia a budú mať možnosť o plnení pravidelne diskutovať. Stretnutia riaditeľov pre ochranu biodiverzity a prírody členských štátov a Komisie budú usmerňovať prácu vykonávanú v súlade so spoločným vykonávacím rámcom. V rámci prípravy týchto stretnutí Komisia a členské štáty zohľadnia prácu Rady a Parlamentu vykonanú prostredníctvom prijatých záverov a uznesení, ktoré sú smerodajné pre určovanie kľúčových oblastí práce. Okrem toho Komisia bude pravidelne podávať správy o pokroku dosiahnutom pri plnení cieľov EÚ vrátane hodnotenia stratégie v polovici jej vykonávania.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002209/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Loss of biodiversity

Members of the European Parliament Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee (ENVI) recently published an explanatory report on a resolution that addresses the issue of loss of biodiversity. In addition to the economic and climate crises, the European Union faces another crisis: the loss of biological diversity, which may have far-reaching consequences. The report states that the EU strategy for halting biodiversity loss by 2010 has failed completely. The draft resolution calls for the recovery of 30 % of degraded ecosystems by 2020, which is twice that of the original proposal of the European Commission and the Convention on Biological Diversity. Members of ENVI also urge an increase in 'greening' in the first and second pillars of the common agricultural policy and the creation of a European coastguard. This should improve monitoring and enforcement in fisheries. The European Parliament asked the Commission to focus on implementing policies concerning the protection of biological diversity in a more decisive manner.

By what specific means will the Commission implement policies relating to the protection of biological diversity?

By what specific means does it plan to ensure that the national governments of EU Member States adhere to the commitments undertaken?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

1. The Commission has developed a common implementation framework in close cooperation with Member States to facilitate implementation and underpin the effective delivery of the EU Biodiversity Strategy at both EU and Member States level. Dedicated working groups involving relevant Commission services, Member States and stakeholders have been identified and help prepare the actions to deliver targets within the strategy. The purpose of the proposed governance structure is to create ownership across all relevant policy areas, and involve all relevant stakeholders at the appropriate level of policy making beyond the traditional biodiversity community.

2. The Commission takes the view that national governments of EU Member States are more likely to implement the EU Biodiversity Strategy most effectively if they are closely involved in preparing its implementation and have the opportunity to discuss implementation regularly. The Biodiversity and Nature Directors meetings of Member States and the Commission will be guiding the work under the common implementation framework. When preparing for these meetings, the Commission and the Member States take into consideration the work of the Council and the Parliament through their conclusions and resolutions, which provide guidance in identifying key areas of work. In addition regular reporting on progress towards reaching the EU targets will be made by the Commission, including through a mid-term review of the strategy.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002210/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. februára 2012)

Vec: Účast na summitoch eurozóny

Doteraz neformálne stretnutia krajín eurozóny sa na decembrovom summite inštitucionalizovali. Konať by sa mali minimálne dvakrát ročne. Otázka účasti členských krajín Európskej únie, ktoré ešte euro za svoju menu neprijali, je však naďalej problematická. Posledná verzia medzivládnej zmluvy, ktorá zakotvuje fiškálnu dohodu o rozpočtovej disciplíne z 19. januára, uvádza, že štáty mimo eurozóny budú na euro summity pozvané vždy vtedy, keď bude vhodné, minimálne však raz ročne. Budú mať právo zúčastniť sa na minimálne polovici stretnutí, potenciálne aj na všetkých. Na summitoch sa však zúčastnia len ako pozorovatelia.

Aké je stanovisko Európskej komisie o otázke účasti členských štátov Európskej únie mimo eurozóny na rokovania súvisiacich s fiškálnou dohodou?

Odpoveď pána Rehna v mene Komisie
(2. apríla 2012)

Komisia sa vždy bude usilovať o zabezpečenie súdržnosti Európskej únie ako celku. Komisia víta ustanovenie Zmluvy o stabilite, koordinácii a správe v hospodárskej a menovej únii (TSCG), podľa ktorého by sa táto účasť mala integrovať do právneho rámca EÚ v priebehu piatich rokov. Komisia má v úmysle zakotviť kľúčové ustanovenia TSCG v právnom rámci EÚ čo možno najskôr, a to prostredníctvom sekundárnej legislatívy. Dovtedy sa však uplatňujú pravidlá článku 12 ods. 3 TSCG podpísanej 2. marca 2012, na základe ktorých sa zmluvné strany dohodli na účasti hláv štátov a vlád členských štátov, ktorých menou nie je euro, na summitoch eurozóny.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002210/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Participation in euro area summits

The previously informal meetings of the euro area countries were institutionalised at a summit held in December 2011. Meetings are to be held at least twice a year. However, the question of the participation of EU Member States that have yet to adopt the euro as their currency remains problematic. The latest version of the intergovernmental fiscal agreement on budgetary discipline of 19 January 2012 states that countries outside the euro area will be invited to EU summit meetings whenever appropriate, and not less than once a year. They have the right to participate in at least half of the meetings, and potentially all of them. They may, however, only participate in summits as observers.

What is the position of the Commission on the participation of EU Member States that are outside the euro area in negotiations relating to the fiscal agreement?

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

The Commission will always seek to ensure the cohesion of the European Union as a whole. The Commission welcomes the provision in the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union (TSCG) that it should be integrated in the EU legal framework within a timeframe of five years. The Commission intends to enshrine key provisions of the TSCG into the EU legal framework as soon as possible through secondary legislation. In the meantime, Article 12(3) of the TSCG signed on 2 March 2012 lays down the rules on which the contracting parties have agreed for participation in Euro Summits of Heads of State and Government of Member States whose currency is not the euro.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002211/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. februára 2012)

Vec: Pravidlá EÚ v súvislosti s prepravou plynu

Európske smernice stanovujú, že produkcia, preprava a predaj plynu musia byť oddelené a otvorené voči tretím stranám. Tieto pravidlá Európskej únie vznikli s cieľom podporiť účasť tretích strán na ruských plynovodoch. Gazprom je najväčším dodávateľom pre jednotlivé národné trhy v Európe. Výkonný riaditeľ Gazpromu sa však nedávno vyjadril, že predmetné pravidlá by mohli viesť k právnym krokom zo strany Ruska. Smernice podľa neho trh blokujú, namiesto toho, aby ho otvárali, pričom vynútená separácia narúša vlastnícke práva.

Bude Európska komisia reagovať na vyjadrenia ruského Gazpromu v súvislosti so zvažovaním právnych krokov proti Európskej únii?

Odpoveď pána Oettingera v mene Komisie
(17. apríla 2012)

Zásady prístupu tretích strán a oddelenia sústav sú základnými kameňmi pravidiel EÚ týkajúcich sa prepravy zemného plynu. Tieto pravidlá sú stanovené v treťom energetickom balíku, konkrétne v smernici 2009/73/ES ([1]) a nariadení (ES) č. 714/2009 ([2]). O tejto problematike sa vedú rozsiahle rokovania s ruskými orgánmi a s Gazpromom, a to aj v rámci dialógu medzi EÚ a Ruskom o energetike. Komisia verí, že týmito rokovaniami sa budú dať odstrániť prípadné nedorozumenia a mylné predstavy o uplatňovaní pravidiel EÚ týkajúcich sa prepravy zemného plynu.

([1]) Smernica Európskeho parlamentu a Rady 2009/73/ES z 13. júla 2009 o spoločných pravidlách pre vnútorný trh so zemným plynom, ktorou sa zrušuje smernica 2003/55/ES.

([2]) Nariadenie Európskeho parlamentu a Rady (ES) č. 714/2009 z 13. júla 2009 o podmienkach prístupu do sústavy pre cezhraničné výmeny elektriny, ktorým sa zrušuje nariadenie (ES) č. 1775/2005.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002211/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: EU rules relating to the transport of gas

European directives state that the production, transport and sale of gas must be separate and open to third parties. These EU rules were drawn up in order to facilitate the involvement of third parties in Russian gas pipelines. Gazprom is the largest supplier to the individual national markets in Europe. However, the executive director of Gazprom has recently said that these rules could lead to legal action by Russia. According to him, the directives block the market rather than opening it, and the forced separation violates ownership rights.

Will the Commission respond to the statement of Russia's Gazprom on the legal action being considered against the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

The principles of third party access and unbundling of networks are cornerstones of the EU rules on transport of natural gas. These rules are laid down in the Third energy package, in particular in Directive 2009/73/EC ([1]) and Regulation (EC) No 714//2009 ([2]). The issue is being extensively discussed with the Russian authorities and with Gazprom, including in the framework of the EU-Russia energy dialogue. The Commission trusts that these discussions will be able to remove possible misunderstandings and misconceptions about the application of the EU rules on transport of natural gas.

([1]) Directive 2009/73/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 concerning common rules for the internal market in natural gas and repealing Directive 2003/55/EC.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 714/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 on conditions for access to the network for cross-border exchanges in electricity and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1775/2005.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002212/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. februára 2012)

Vec: Pôsobnosť Charty základných ľudských práv

K Lisabonskej zmluve sa mala pridať nová deklarácia, ktorá mala byť pridaná k Protokolu 30. Protokol 30 udeľuje Veľkej Británii a Poľsku výnimku z uplatňovania Charty základných práv. Na summite, ktorý sa konal v roku 2009, sa dosiahla dohoda, podľa ktorej sa k predmetnému protokolu na poslednú chvíľu pripojila aj Česká republika. Prezidentovi Českej republiky vadili najmä sociálne práva obsiahnuté v charte, na ktorú Lisabonská zmluva odkazuje, čím ju robí právne záväznou. Oficiálnym dôvodom požiadavky boli obavy, že charta umožní otvorenie Benešových dekrétov. Výbor Európskeho parlamentu pre ústavné záležitosti však ratifikáciu českej výnimky zabrzdil. Výbor zverejnil správu, podľa ktorej sú už poľský a britský protokol nešťastné právne nástroje, ktoré vnášajú do európskeho primárneho práva právnu neistotu a politický zmätok. Keďže Európsky parlament musí dať svoje k stanovisko k akejkoľvek revízii zmluvy, Rada zatiaľ nemôže podrobiť českú deklaráciu právnej analýze. Správa Výboru pre ústavné záležitosti navrhovala Rade odmietnuť súhlas s tým, aby sa k otázke nemusel zvolávať konvent, čo je v prípadne zmeny európskych zmlúv štandardný postup.

Má Európska komisia pripravenú určitú stratégiu, na základe ktorej bude pri riešení tejto právne citlivej otázky postupovať?

Odpoveď pána Barrosa v mene Komisie
(2. apríla 2012)

V súlade s článkom 48 ods. 3 Zmluvy o Európskej únii (ZEÚ) sa predseda Európskej rady 25. októbra 2011 písomne obrátil na Komisiu a požiadal ju o stanovisko k návrhu rozhodnutia Európskej rady v prospech preskúmania navrhovanej zmeny a doplnenia zmlúv v súvislosti s pridaním protokolu o uplatňovaní Charty základných práv Európskej únie na Českú republiku. Požiadal takisto o stanovisko Európskeho parlamentu, ako aj o jeho súhlas s nezvolaním konventu.

Komisia príjme stanovisko k návrhu rozhodnutia Európskej rady v náležitom čase. Je na Európskom parlamente, aby stanovil dátum prijatia svojho stanoviska a prípadného súhlasu s nezvolaním konventu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002212/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Scope of the Charter of Fundamental Human Rights

A new declaration was to be added to Protocol 30 of the Treaty of Lisbon. Protocol 30 grants the United Kingdom and Poland exemptions from the Charter of Fundamental Rights. An agreement was reached at the 2009 summit, with the Czech Republic adding its name to the protocol at the last minute. The President of the Czech Republic was concerned in particular by the social rights contained in the Charter, which are referred to in the Treaty of Lisbon, thus making them legally binding. The official reason for the request was the fear that the Charter would enable the opening of the Beneš Decrees. The Committee on Constitutional Affairs of the European Parliament, however, halted ratification of the Czech exemption. The Committee published a report, which refers to the Polish and British protocols as regrettable legal instruments that bring legal uncertainty and political confusion to European primary law. Because the European Parliament must give its opinion on any revision of the Treaty, the Council cannot yet subject the Czech declaration to a legal analysis. The report of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs proposed that the Council refuse consent so that a Convention would not have to be convened on the issue, which is the standard procedure in the case of a possible change to the European Treaties.

Has the Commission prepared a particular strategy on how it will proceed in the resolution of this legally sensitive issue?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2012)

In accordance with Article 48(3) of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), the President of the European Council wrote to the Commission on 25 October 2011 requesting its opinion on a draft European Council decision in favour of examining the proposed amendment of the Treaties concerning the addition of a Protocol on the application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union to the Czech Republic. He also requested the opinion of the European Parliament as well as its consent not to convene a Convention.

The Commission will adopt its opinion on the draft European Council decision in due course. It is for the European Parliament to establish the date of adoption of its opinion and its possible consent not to convene a Convention.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002213/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. februára 2012)

Vec: Regulácia bridlicového plynu

Európska komisia zverejnila štúdiu, z ktorej vyplýva, že aktivity súvisiace s prieskumom zásob bridlicového plynu v súčasnosti dostatočne podliehajú pravidlám Európskej únie, a aj národným zákonom a reguláciám. Komisia si vypracovanie predmetnej štúdie objednala u belgickej právnickej firmy Philippe & Partners. Štúdia sa publikovala 27. januára 2012 a uskutočnila sa v štyroch členských krajinách EÚ, a to v Poľsku, vo Francúzsku, v Nemecku a vo Švédsku. Zo štúdie vyplýva, že súčasne platné regulácie sú pre bridlicový plyn použiteľné. Tvorba špecifickej legislatívy bude potrebná v prípade ťažby bridlicového plynu na komerčnej úrovni, ktorú podľa štúdie možno očakávať v priebehu niekoľkých rokov.

Aká bude konkrétna reakcia Európskej komisie na výsledky predmetnej štúdie?

Odpoveď pána Oettingera v mene Komisie
(17. apríla 2012)

Komisia sa na základe dostupných technických informácií domnieva, že platné právne predpisy EÚ dostatočným spôsobom upravujú postupy potrebné na prieskum ložísk bridlicového plynu a jeho ťažbu od plánovania po ukončenie činnosti.

Keďže poznatky a skúsenosti z projektov týkajúcich sa bridlicového plynu v EÚ pribúdajú, Komisia bude pokračovať v dôslednom monitorovaní vedeckého vývoja a realizácie projektov, ako aj činností v oblasti regulácie v Európe a mimo nej. V tejto súvislosti bude Komisii aj naďalej citlivou otázkou prípadná potreba neskoršieho prijatia legislatívnych opatrení, aby sa zabezpečila primeraná úroveň ochrany ľudského zdravia a životného prostredia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002213/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 February 2012)

Subject: Regulation of shale gas

The Commission has published a study showing that activities associated with the exploration of shale gas reserves are adequately covered by current EU rules and national laws and regulations. The Belgian law firm Philippe & Partners was commissioned to carry out the study by the Commission. It was published on 27 January 2012 and was conducted in four EU Member States, namely Poland, France, Germany and Sweden. It shows that the regulations currently in force are applicable to shale gas. Specific legislation will need to be drawn up when shale gas is extracted on a commercial scale which, according to the study, could happen over the next few years.

How exactly will the Commission respond to the results of this study?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

The Commission considers that, based on the available technical information, existing EU legislation is sufficiently relevant to practices required for shale gas exploration and production from planning until cessation.

As knowledge and experience with shale gas projects in the EU evolve, the Commission will continue to follow closely scientific and project developments as well as regulatory activities in Europe and beyond. In this context, it will remain sensitive to the question if legislative action is required at a later stage in order to ensure an appropriate level of protection of human health and the environment.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002217/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Hedgefonds verdienen Milliarden mit der Finanzkrise

Hedgefonds haben durch die Krise traumhafte Gewinne lukriert. Beispielsweise soll „Bridgewater Associates" binnen einer Woche drei Milliarden Dollar Gewinn dadurch eingefahren haben, dass die Analysten auf einen Zusammenbruch der Weltwirtschaft wetteten.

1. Wie laufen die EU-Maßnahmen, um ein Wetten auf Staatsbankrotte einzudämmen?

2. Konnten in diesem Zusammenhang Erfolge erzielt werden?

3. Falls ja, welche?

4. Falls nein, sind diesbezüglich weitere Maßnahmen geplant?

Antwort von Michel Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(27. April 2012)

Die Europäische Union hat zu dem vom Herrn Abgeordneten angesprochenen Thema eine Reihe wichtiger Rechtsvorschriften erlassen:

— Erstens wird durch die am 8. Juni 2011 erlassene Richtlinie über die Verwalter alternativer Investmentfonds ([1]) (die auch für Hedgefonds-Manager gilt) ein völlig neuer Aufsichtsrahmen für derartige Fondsverwalter geschaffen, der für mehr Transparenz, eine größere Verantwortlichkeit und eine bessere Kontrolle solcher Fondsverwalter sorgt. Die Mitgliedstaaten müssen diese Richtlinie bis 22. Juli 2013 in nationales Recht umsetzen.

— Zweitens enthält die am 21. Februar 2012 verabschiedete Verordnung über Leerverkäufe und Credit Default Swaps ([2]) ein Verbot ungedeckter Leerverkäufe, das auch für EU-Staatsschuldtitel gilt (sofern der Leerverkauf nicht der Absicherung von bereits im Besitz befindlichen Titeln dient). Ungedeckte Leerverkäufe sind weitgehend spekulative Geschäfte, bei denen Wertpapiere verkauft werden, die der Verkäufer überhaupt nicht besitzt und für die er auch keine Leihvereinbarung oder anderweitige Vereinbarung geschlossen hat, die eine tatsächliche Abwicklung des Geschäfts garantieren würde. Durch diese Verordnung wird somit eine ganz bestimmte Art spekulativer Geschäfte gegen Staatsschuldtitel der EU-Länder verhindert, aus der sich möglicherweise ein systemisches Risiko ergibt. Die Verordnung gilt ab dem 1. November 2012.

Mit den drei neuen europäischen Aufsichtsbehörden und dem seit 1. Januar 2011 bestehenden Europäischen Ausschuss für Systemrisiken hat die EU ein Kontrollsystem für eine striktere mikro- und makroökonomische Beaufsichtigung geschaffen. Die Kommission wird auch weiterhin die Regulierung im Auge behalten und schließt weitere Regulierungsmaßnahmen nicht aus, falls sich solche als notwendig erweisen sollten, um die Finanzstabilität und die Tragfähigkeit des EU-Finanzsektors zu wahren.

([1]) Richtlinie 2011/61/EU vom 8. Juni 2011 über die Verwalter alternativer Investmentfonds (ABl. L 174 vom 1.7.2011, S. 1).
([2]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 236/2012 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 14. März 2012 über Leerverkäufe und bestimmte Aspekte von Credit Default Swaps (ABl. L 86 vom 24.3.2012, S. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002217/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Hedge funds earn billions from the financial crisis

Hedge funds have made incredible profits thanks to the crisis. Bridgewater Associates, for example, are said to have made profits of USD 3 billion within a single week because their analysts gambled on the collapse of the global economy.

1. What steps is the EU taking to put a stop to betting on states going bankrupt?

2. Have any results been achieved in this regard?

3. If so, what are they?

4. If not, are further measures planned in this regard?

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

As regards the matter invoked by the Honourable Member, the European Union (EU) has adopted a number of important legislative measures:

— Firstly, the directive on Alternative Investment Fund Managers (including hedge fund managers) adopted on 8 June 2011 ([1]), creates an entirely new supervisory framework for such fund managers, with greater transparency, accountability and control of managers of such funds. Member States must transpose the directive by 22 July 2013.

— Secondly, the regulation on short-selling and credit default swaps, adopted on 21 February 2012 ([2]), contains a prohibition on so-called 'naked short-selling', including of EU sovereign debt (unless the purpose is hedging of securities already owned). Naked short-selling is a largely speculative activity involving selling securities which the seller does not own and where he has neither entered into a borrowing arrangement or any other kind of other altenative arrangements that would ensure settlement of the transaction. Hence, this regulation will prevent one particular type of speculative activity on EU government debt which can possibly cause systemic risk. The regulation applies from 1 November 2012.

With the three new Eureopan Supervisory Authorities and the European Systemic Risk Board, in place since 1 January 2011, the EU has established a system for stricter micro- and macroeconomic oversight. The Commission continues keeping the regulatory situation under review and will not rule out further regulatory measures, if deemed necessary in order to safeguard financial stability and the soundness of the EU financial sector.

([1]) Directive 2011/61/EU of 8 June 2011 on Alternative Investment Fund Managers (OJ L 174/1 of 1 July 2011).
([2]) Regulation (EU) No 236/2012 of the European Parliament and the Council of 14 March 2012 on short selling and certain aspects of Credit Default Swaps (OJ L 86/1 of 24 March 2012).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002218/12
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin / Hohe Vertreterin)
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(28. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: VP/HR — EU-Außenbeziehungen zu Staaten mit Schariarecht

Durch den Vertrag von Lissabon verpflichtete sich die EU, der Europäischen Menschenrechtskonvention beizutreten. In ständiger Rechtsprechung (*41340/98, 41342/98, 41343/98 and 41344/98, Judgment, Strasbourg, 13 February 2003, No. 123*) entschied der Europäische Gerichtshof für Menschenrechte, dass das Schariarecht mit den Grundprinzipien der Demokratie nicht vereinbar sei („The Court concurs in the Chamber's view that sharia is incompatible with the fundamental principles of democracy, as set forth in the Convention").

In Deutschland existiert ebenfalls eine Judikatur, welche die Anwendung von Schariarecht nur zulässt, soweit sie mit dem völkerrechtlichen „ordre public" vereinbar ist.

Die Hohe Vertreterin wird um die Beantwortung folgender Fragen gebeten:

1. Gibt es eine Liste jener Länder, mit denen die EU diplomatische Beziehungen unterhält, in denen das Schariarecht angewendet wird?

2. Welche dieser Länder erhalten Entwicklungshilfe seitens der EU — und in welcher Höhe?

3. Wie sieht die Hohe Vertreterin die Vereinbarkeit von Schariarecht mit den Grundwerten der EU, speziell betreffend die Todesstrafe und die Gleichstellung der Geschlechter?

4. Ist es angesichts des oben erwähnten Beitritts zur EMRK vertretbar, weiterhin mit diesen Ländern diplomatische Beziehungen zu pflegen bzw. finanzielle Unterstützung zu leisten?

Antwort von Frau Catherine Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(10. Mai 2012)

Es gehört nicht zu den Gepflogenheiten der EU, eine Einstufung der Länder, zu denen sie diplomatische Beziehungen unterhält, nach deren Rechtsgrundlagen bzw. den dort geltenden Gesetzen vorzunehmen.

Die Scharia ist ein allgemeines Konzept, das verschiedene rechtliche Aspekte umfasst und sowohl in den Ländern, in denen es angewandt wird, als auch von Fachleuten unterschiedlich ausgelegt wird. Mit Fragen der eigentlichen Rechtsgrundlagen von Drittländern befasst sich die EU also nicht. Besorgt ist sie allerdings über die Anwendung von Gesetzen und das Vorliegen rechtlicher Rahmenbedingungen, die gegen internationale Menschenrechtsnormen verstoßen und bestimmte Gruppen oder Minderheiten diskriminieren. Aus diesen Gründen prüft die EU eingehend mögliche Menschenrechtsverletzungen und setzt sich aktiv dafür ein, dass die betreffenden Staaten die internationalen Menschenrechtsübereinkommen, die sie unterzeichnet haben, einhalten.

Die weltweite Abschaffung der Todesstrafe ist ein Hauptziel der Menschenrechtspolitik der EU, zu dessen Verwirklichung sie verschiedene Instrumente einsetzt — von bilateraler Diplomatie über Maßnahmen in multilateralen Foren bis hin zur Entwicklungszusammenarbeit. Die Gleichstellung der Geschlechter und die Rechte der Frauen gelten als Prioritäten der Außenpolitik der EU. Sie sollen als Querschnittsthema bei den Außenhilfeprogrammen der EU sowie bei spezifischen diplomatischen Instrumenten (wie den EU-Leitlinien von 2008 betreffend Gewalt gegen Frauen und Mädchen und die Bekämpfung aller Formen der Diskriminierung von Frauen und Mädchen) berücksichtigt werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002218/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — EU external relations with states applying sharia law

In the Treaty of Lisbon, the EU committed itself to sign up to the European Convention of Human Rights. The European Court of Human Rights has consistently ruled (see Judgment No 123, issued in Strasbourg on 13 February 2003 on applications 41340/98, 41342/98, 41343/98 and 41344/98) that sharia law is not compatible with the fundamental principles of democracy ('The Court concurs in the Chamber's view that sharia is incompatible with the fundamental principles of democracy, as set forth in the Convention').

Case law also exists in Germany that only permits sharia law to be applied provided this is compatible with international 'ordre public'.

Will the High Representative answer the following questions:

1. Does a list exist of those countries with which the EU maintains diplomatic relations which apply sharia law?

2. Which of these countries receive development aid from the EU — and how much?

3. What is the High Representative's view on the compatibility of sharia law with the fundamental values of the European Union, in particular in relation to the death penalty and the equality of the sexes?

4. In view of the EU's aforementioned accession to the ECHR, is it possible to justify continuing to maintain diplomatic relations with these countries or providing them with financial support?

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

The EU does not categorize countries with which it maintains diplomatic relations, according to the law sources they refer to and the laws they apply.

Sharia is a general concept that encompasses different legal aspects and is the subject of varying interpretations both in the countries where it is applied and among specialists. Questions related to the sources of law are therefore, as such, not a matter in which the EU will engage. The EU is, however, concerned with the application of a law or legal framework, when it constitutes a violation of international human rights norms and proves discriminatory towards certain groups or minorities. For these reasons, the EU carefully monitors human rights abuses and actively advocates for relevant States to abide by the international human rights treaties to which they are signatories.

As regards the death penalty, the global abolition of which is a key objective of the EU's human rights policy, the EU addresses the issue through a wide range of tools ranging from bilateral diplomacy and action in multilateral fora to cooperation assistance. Gender equality and women's rights feature prominently among the priorities of the EU's foreign policy. As a transversal issue, it is taken into account in the EU's external assistance programmes, as well as in specific diplomatic tools and instruments (such as the 2008 EU Guidelines on violence against women and girls and combating all forms of discrimination).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-002219/12
an die Kommission
Eva Lichtenberger (Verts/ALE)
(28. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Bewertung der Richtlinie 2006/24/EG über die Vorratsspeicherung von Daten

Nachdem kürzlich ein Dokument der Kommission bekannt geworden ist ([1]), aus dem hervorgeht, dass die Kommission nicht die Daten erhalten hat, die belegen sollen, dass die Vorratsspeicherung von Daten erforderlich ist:

Wird sich die Kommission verpflichten, im Zusammenhang mit der aktuellen Bewertung und Folgenabschätzung der Richtlinie 2006/24/EG über die Vorratsspeicherung von Daten die politische Option einer Aufhebung der Richtlinie zu prüfen, wenn von den Mitgliedstaaten keine zwingenden Beweise beigebracht werden?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(26. März 2012)

Konsultationen mit Beteiligten haben bestätigt, dass Kommunikationsdaten häufig eine entscheidende Rolle im Rahmen der strafrechtlichen Ermittlung und Verfolgung spielen. Deshalb muss sichergestellt werden, dass diese Daten verfügbar sind, wo dies notwendig und angemessen ist. Ohne EU-Rechtsvorschriften zur Datenspeicherung gäbe es keine gemeinsamen Normen für die Wahrung der Interessen des Binnenmarktes und für den Schutz der Privatsphäre der Bürger, und das Fehlen dieser Vorschriften würde die Wirksamkeit grenzübergreifender Ermittlungen bei schwerer und organisierter Kriminalität gefährden. Die Kommission wird alle Optionen für EU-Maßnahmen prüfen, die gewährleisten, dass Justiz und Polizei über die notwendigen Instrumente zur Verbrechensbekämpfung und insbesondere zur Bekämpfung grenzübergreifender Kriminalität verfügen.

([1]) http://quintessenz.org/d/000100011699.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002219/12
to the Commission
Eva Lichtenberger (Verts/ALE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Evaluation of Data Retention Directive 2006/24/EC

Following the recent leak ([1]) of a Commission document showing that the Commission has not been provided with the data to show that data retention is necessary, will the Commission undertake to investigate — in the context of its current evaluation and impact assessment of the Data Retention Directive 2006/24/EC — the policy option of repealing the directive if compelling evidence is not forthcoming from the Member States?

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

Consultation with stakeholders has confirmed that communications data are often crucial in criminal investigation and prosecution, and it is important to provide a guarantee that these data will be available where necessary and proportionate. Without EU regulation of data retention, there would be no common standards for upholding the interests of the internal market and for the protection of the privacy of the citizen, and it would jeopardise the effectiveness of cross-border investigations into serious and organised crime. The Commission will consider all options for EU action which ensure that the judiciary and the police have the necessary tools for fighting crime, and particularly cross-border crime.

([1]) http://quintessenz.org/d/000100011699.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-002220/12
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(28 februari 2012)

Angående: Rumänsk domstol om lagring av uppgifter och kommissionens konsekvensanalys

Hur beaktar kommissionen i den föreliggande utvärderingen och konsekvensanalysen om framtida alternativ när det gäller direktiv 2006/24/EG om lagring av uppgifter den Rumänska författningsdomstolens slutsats om att lagring av uppgifter från allmän kommunikation strider mot rätten till personlig integritet enligt artikel 8 i den europeiska konventionen om skydd för de mänskliga rättigheterna och de grundläggande friheterna? Överväger kommissionen alternativet att följa domstolens beslut och förbjuda lagring av uppgifter från allmän kommunikation? Om inte, varför inte?

Svar från Cecilia Malmström på kommissionens vägnar
(13 april 2012)

Kommissionen beaktar de synpunkter som framförs både från medlemsstaterna och på europeisk nivå när det gäller värdet av lagring av uppgifter som en åtgärd inom det straffrättsliga området, även för relevant rättspraxis. Kommissionen anser, såsom den har angett i sin utvärderingsrapport (KOM(2011) 225 slutlig), att det är viktigt för att utreda allvarliga brott och väcka åtal, att det finns tillgång till uppgifter genom lagring av uppgifter. Kommissionen anser emellertid också att den befintliga ramen bör ses över för att man bättre ska kunna hantera ett antal frågor som identifierades i utvärderingsrapporten. Detta har bekräftats i efterföljande samråd med berörda parter. Kommissionen håller därför på att undersöka ett antal alternativ för att garantera att lagring av uppgifter stöds och regleras på EU-nivå i enlighet med stadgan om de grundläggande rättigheterna.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002220/12
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Romanian court ruling on data retention and Commission's impact assessment

In its current evaluation and impact assessment on the future options with regard to the Data Retention Directive (Directive 2006/24/EC), how is the Commission taking account of the Romanian Constitutional Court's finding that blanket communications data retention violates the right to privacy under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)? Is the Commission considering the policy option of following the court's decision and banning blanket communications data retention? If not, why not?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(13 April 2012)

The Commission takes into account the views expressed at national as well as at European level of the value of data retention as a measure for providing criminal justice, including relevant case law. The Commission, as it stated in its evaluation report (COM(2011) 225 final), considers that the available evidence suggests that guaranteeing the availability of data through data retention is important, and often crucial for investigating and prosecuting serious crimes. However the Commission also takes the view that the current framework should be revised in order to better address a number of issues identified in the evaluation report. This has been confirmed in subsequent consultations with stakeholders. The Commission is therefore considering a number of options with the aim to ensure that data retention is supported and regulated at EU level in compliance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-002221/12
aan de Commissie
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)
(28 februari 2012)

Betreft: Dataretentierichtlijn

Gelooft de Commissie dat, wanneer enkele lidstaten gewoonweg beweren dat bewaring van gegevens nodig is, dit toereikend is om haar ervan te overtuigen dat de Dataretentierichtlijn 2006/24/EG in overeenstemming is met het Handvest van de grondrechten van de Europese Unie?

Zo ja, hoe strookt dit met de checklist van de Commissie in verband met de grondrechten COM(2010)0573?

En komt deze overtuiging tot uiting in de beleidskeuzes die de Commissie in overweging neemt in het kader van haar huidige evaluatie en effectbeoordeling van de richtlijn?

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

In het verslag van de Commissie (COM(2011)225 def.) over de evaluatie van de richtlijn gegevensbewaring (Dataretentierichtlijn 2006/24/EC) werd ook gekeken naar het effect ervan op de grondrechten.

De Commissie blijft het belang onderstrepen van betrouwbare kwantitatieve en kwalitatieve gegevens om de noodzaak en de waarde van veiligheidsmaatregelen als gegevensbewaring aan te tonen. In het kader van haar huidige werkzaamheden inzake een effectbeoordeling van een aantal opties voor de hervorming van het wettelijk kader van de EU voor gegevensbewaring, streeft de Commissie bovendien naar de ontwikkeling van bruikbare meetmethoden en verslagleggingsprocedures om bij een toekomstige instrument de verschillende toepassingen beter te kunnen vergelijken en evalueren.

Aangezien gegevensbewaring gevolgen heeft voor de grondrechten die worden gewaarborgd door het Handvest van de grondrechten van de Europese Unie, zal voor elk nieuw wetgevingsvoorstel bij de effectbeoordeling worden nagegaan of het voorstel in overeenstemming is met het Handvest.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002221/12
to the Commission
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Data Retention Directive

Does the Commission believe that the simple assertion by some Member States that data retention is needed is enough to satisfy it that the Data Retention Directive (2006/24/EC) is in line with the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights?

If so, how is this compliant with the Commission's fundamental rights checklist (COM(2010) 0573)?

And is this belief expressed in any of the policy options the Commission is considering in the context of its current evaluation and impact assessment of the directive?

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

The implications of the Data Retention Directive (2006/24/EC) for fundamental rights were examined in the Commission evaluation report on the directive (COM(2011) 225 final).

The Commission continues to emphasise the importance of reliable quantitative and qualitative data for demonstrating the necessity and value of security measures such as data retention. Furthermore, in its current work on an impact assessment of a number of options to reform the EU legal framework for data retention, the Commission seeks to develop feasible metrics and reporting procedures to facilitate comparison of the application and evaluation of a future instrument.

As data retention has an impact on fundamental rights as guaranteed by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, any future legislative proposal will be based on an Impact Assessment covering its compliance with the Charter.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-002222/12
till kommissionen
Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE)
(28 februari 2012)

Angående: Utvärdering och bedömning av direktivet om lagring av uppgifter

Mot bakgrund av den föreliggande utvärderingen och konsekvensanalysen av framtida alternativ när det gäller direktiv 2006/24/EG om lagring av uppgifter, är det sant att kommissionen inte utvärderar alternativet att förbjuda lagring av uppgifter från allmän kommunikation i hela EU till förmån för ett system med skyndsam lagring och målinriktad insamling av datatrafik i enlighet med överenskommelsen i Europarådets konvention om it-relaterad brottslighet? Om inte, varför inte?

Svar från Cecilia Malmström på kommissionens vägnar
(26 mars 2012)

Kommissionen kommer att överväga alla alternativ för EU-åtgärder som garanterar att rättsväsendet och polisen har alla de verktyg som behövs för att bekämpa allvarliga brott, i enlighet med stadgan om de grundläggande rättigheterna.

Samråd med berörda parter har bekräftat att kommunikationsuppgifter som inte avser innehåll ofta kan vara avgörande i polisutredningar och straffrättsliga förfaranden och att det är viktigt att erbjuda en garanti att dessa uppgifter är tillgängliga när det är nödvändigt och rimligt. Under samrådet betonades också behovet av ytterligare information om hur skyndsam lagring används inom Europa och om det behövs ett gemensamt tillvägagångssätt inom EU. Kommissionen håller på undersöka dessa frågor ytterligare som en del av sin översyn av EU:s ram för lagring av uppgifter och användande kommunikationsuppgifter.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002222/12
to the Commission
Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: The evaluation and assessment of the Data Retention Directive

In the context of the current evaluation and impact assessment of the future options with regard to the Data Retention Directive (2006/24/EC), is it true that the Commission is not assessing the option of an EU-wide ban on blanket communications data retention in favour of a system of expedited preservation and targeted collection of traffic data, as agreed on in the Council of Europe's cybercrime convention? If so, why?

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

The Commission will consider all options for EU action which ensures that the judiciary and the police have the necessary tools for fighting serious crime, in compliance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Consultation with stakeholders has confirmed that non-content communications data are often crucial in criminal investigation and prosecution, and it is important to provide a guarantee that these data will be available where necessary and proportionate. Consultation also highlighted the need for further information on how expedited preservation is used in Europe and elsewhere, and on whether there is a need for an EU approach. The Commission is investigating these questions in further detail as part of its review of the EU framework for the retention and use of communications data.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002224/12
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(28 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Violazione della normativa europea in materia di discariche e spedizione di rifiuti pericolosi in relazione alla bonifica della ex Sisas di Pioltello (Milano)

Il 9 settembre 2004 la Corte di giustizia europea ha condannato l'Italia per non aver adottato le misure necessarie per assicurare che i rifiuti depositati nelle discariche di Rodano (Milano) fossero recuperati senza pericolo per la salute dell'uomo e l'ambiente contravvenendo alla direttiva 75/442/CEE. Il governo italiano dichiarava quindi ([1]) lo stato di emergenza nominando Luigi Pelaggi commissario straordinario per la bonifica dell'area ex Sisas, nei comuni di Pioltello e Rodano (MI). Nel luglio 2010 il commissario ha predisposto il bando di gara d'appalto per la bonifica e nel settembre 2010 l'appalto è stato affidato alla società Daneco Impianti S.r.l.

Stando ad un dossier di Greenpeace ([2]) i rifiuti pericolosi provenienti dalla ex Sisas sono stati smaltiti senza la prevista inertizzazione nella discarica di Befesa di Nerva (Andalusia) temporaneamente posta sotto sequestro nel luglio del 2011 dopo due diversi incendi nell'area di scarico dei rifiuti. Sempre Greenpeace riferisce della mancanza di informazioni sulla destinazione finale della frazione di rifiuti pericolosi provenienti dalla ex Sisas contaminati con alte percentuali di mercurio.

Nel giugno del 2011 la Procura di Milano ha aperto un'indagine nei confronti dell'amministratore delegato di Daneco Impianti e del commissario straordinario per la bonifica dell'area ex Sisas in merito ad una presunta tangente da questo ricevuta per agevolare le operazioni di smaltimento di tonnellate di rifiuti tossici non conformi provenienti dall'ex Sisas ([3]).

Cosa intende fare la Commissione rispetto all'eventualità che circa 25 000 tonnellate di rifiuti pericolosi prodotti in Italia siano stati smaltiti in Spagna senza subire alcuna operazione di pretrattamento come richiesto dalla direttiva 2008/98/CE? Ritiene essa che in mancanza di una chiara e risolutiva risposta da parte delle autorità competenti di Italia e Spagna sulle operazioni di pretrattamento e smaltimento dei rifiuti in oggetto, la spedizione delle 25 000 tonnellate di rifiuti pericolosi originati dallo svuotamento delle discariche illegali della ex Sisas debba configurarsi come spedizione illegale ai sensi del regolamento (CE) n. 1013/2006? Quali misure intende prendere nei confronti delle competenti autorità locali italiane che da anni continuano a non far rispettare la normativa comunitaria in materia di rifiuti, nonché il regolamento (CE) n. 1013/ 2006, il cui principale obiettivo è disciplinare la sorveglianza ed il controllo delle spedizioni di rifiuti secondo modalità che tengano conto della necessità di preservare, proteggere e migliorare la qualità dell'ambiente e della salute umana?

Risposta data da Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(16 aprile 2012)

La Commissione ha ricevuto una denuncia da parte di Greenpeace secondo la quale numerose tonnellate di rifiuti pericolosi provenienti dal sito della ex-SISAS nell'area Pioltello-Rodano (Italia) potrebbero essere state smaltite nella discarica di Befesa di Nerva (Spagna), senza aver subito il necessario trattamento preliminare. In seguito a detta denuncia, la Commissione ha avviato un'inchiesta (EU Pilot 2220/11/ENVI) chiedendo alle autorità spagnole di fornire chiarimenti con riferimento alla direttiva 2008/98/CE ([4]) e al regolamento (CE) n. 1013/2006 ([5]). Le autorità spagnole hanno informato la Commissione delle misure adottate per chiarire la situazione, comprese le procedure amministrative e le ispezioni, e hanno trasmesso una risposta molto dettagliata che è attualmente in fase di valutazione.

La Commissione deciderà eventuali ulteriori azioni da intraprendere una volta che la valutazione è stata completata.

([1]) Con DPCM del 16.4.2010.
([2]) http://www.greenpeace.org/italy/Global/italy/file/2011/inquinamento/rifiuti-illegali-made-in-italy.pdf
([3]) Da Corriere del Mezzogiorno: http://corrieredelmezzogiorno.corriere.it/napoli/notizie/cronaca/2011/1-novembre-2011/termovalorizzatore-controlli-daneco-che-ha-vinto-gara-1902015812817_print.html.
([4]) Direttiva 2008/98/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 19 novembre 2008, relativa ai rifiuti (GU L 312 del 22.11.2008, pagg. 3-30).
([5]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1013/2006 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 14 giugno 2006, relativo alle spedizioni di rifiuti (GU L 190 del 12.7.2006, pagg. 1-98).

Per quanto riguarda le presunte omissioni da parte delle autorità locali italiane nell'attuare la legislazione UE in materia di rifiuti, la Commissione richiama l'attenzione dell'onorevole parlamentare sul fatto che solo le autorità amministrative e giudiziarie dello Stato membro interessato possono adottare misure contro le autorità locali competenti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002224/12
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Breach of European regulations on landfills and the shipment of hazardous waste in relation to the reclamation of the former Sisas site in Pioltello (Milan)

On 9 September 2004, the European Court of Justice sentenced Italy for not having taken the necessary steps to ensure that the waste deposited in the landfills of Rodano (Milan) was recovered without endangering human health and without harming the environment, thereby violating Directive 75/442/EEC. The Italian Government therefore declared ([1]) a state of emergency, appointing Luigi Pelaggi extraordinary commissioner for the reclamation of the former Sisas site in the municipalities of Pioltello and Rodano (MI). In July 2010, he organised a call for tenders for the reclamation project and in September 2010, the contract was awarded to Daneco Impianti S.r.l.

According to a report by Greenpeace ([2]), hazardous waste from the former Sisas site was disposed of without the envisaged inertisation in the landfill of Befesa di Nerva (Andalusia), subject to temporary seizure in July 2011, after two separate fires in the waste disposal area. Greenpeace also reports a lack of information on the final destination of the portion of hazardous waste from the former Sisas site, which was contaminated with high levels of mercury.

In June 2011, the Milan public prosecutor's office launched an investigation against the managing director of Daneco Impianti and the extraordinary commissioner for the reclamation of the former Sisas site with regard to an alleged bribe that may have been accepted to facilitate the disposal of tonnes of non-compliant toxic waste from the former Sisas site ([3]).

What does the Commission intend to do with regards to the possibility that approximately 25 000 tonnes of hazardous waste produced in Italy may have been disposed of in Spain without any pre-treatment as required by Directive 2008/98/EC? Does it consider that, in the absence of a clear and definite response by the relevant authorities in Italy and Spain on the pre-treatment and disposal of the waste in question, the shipment of the 25 000 tonnes of hazardous waste originating from the emptying of the illegal landfills of the former Sisas site should be considered as illegal shipment in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006? What measures does it intend to take against the relevant Italian local authorities which for years have constantly failed to comply with European Union legislation on waste disposal and Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006, the main aim of which is to regulate the supervision and control of shipments of waste according to methods that consider the need to preserve, protect and improve the quality of the environment and human health?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2012)

The Commission received a complaint by Greenpeace, according to which several tons of hazardous waste from the Sisas site in Pioltello-Rodano (Italy) might have been disposed of in the Befesa landfill in Nerva (Spain) without having undergone the necessary pre-treatment. Following this complaint, the Commission has launched an investigation (EU Pilot 2220/11/ENVI) asking the Spanish authorities to provide clarifications with respect to both Directive 2008/98/EC ([4]) and Council Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 ([5]). The Spanish authorities have informed the Commission of the measures taken to clarify the situation, including administrative procedures and inspections, and have sent to the Commission a comprehensive reply which is currently under assessment.

The Commission will decide on any further steps to be taken, once the assessment has been completed.

As regards the alleged omissions by local Italian authorities in implementing EU waste legislation, the Commission draws the Honourable Member's attention to the fact that only the administrative and judicial authorities of the Member State concerned can take measures against the competent local authorities.

([1]) By Decree of the President of the Council of Ministers (DPCM) of 16 April 2010.
([2]) http://www.greenpeace.org/italy/Global/italy/file/2011/inquinamento/rifiuti-illegali-made-in-italy.pdf
([3]) From Corriere del Mezzogiorno: http://corrieredelmezzogiorno.corriere.it/napoli/notizie/cronaca/2011/1-novembre-2011/termovalorizzatore-controlli-daneco-che-ha-vinto-gara-1902015812817_print.html
([4]) Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste (OJ L 312, 22.11.2008, p. 3-30).
([5]) Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 June 2006 on shipments of waste (OJ L 190, 12.7.2006, p. 1-98).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-002225/12
an die Kommission
Matthias Groote (S&D)
(28. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Ungerechtfertigte Verschärfung von Arbeitszeitregelungen mit Geltung für die Freiwilligendienste, insbesondere die freiwillige Feuerwehr

Angesichts des erneuten Versuchs der Kommission, die EU-Arbeitszeitrichtlinie zu ändern, teilt der Fragesteller die Bedenken der freiwilligen Feuerwehr.

Die Richtlinie legt Mindestvorschriften für Sicherheit und Gesundheitsschutz bei der Arbeitszeitgestaltung fest, insbesondere im Hinblick auf tägliche Ruhezeiten, Ruhepausen, wöchentliche Ruhezeiten, wöchentliche Höchstarbeitszeit, Jahresurlaub sowie bestimmte Aspekte der Nacht- und der Schichtarbeit. Dass es wichtig ist, diese Zeiten im Arbeitsalltag einzuhalten, steht außer Frage.

Fraglich ist allerdings, wie mit der ehrenamtlichen bzw. freiwilligen Tätigkeit im Rahmen der Arbeitszeitregelung umgegangen wird. So heißt es, dass jedes EU-Mitgliedsland dafür sorgen muss, dass jeder Arbeitnehmer eine tägliche Mindestruhezeit von 11 zusammenhängenden Stunden pro 24-Stunden-Zeitraum einhalten muss, sobald er mehr als sechs Stunden arbeitet. Für die freiwillige Feuerwehr bedeutet das Folgendes: Ein Mitglied der Feuerwehr kommt gegen 17 Uhr nach einem 8-stündigen Arbeitstag nach Hause. Nach dem Abendessen und Ausruhen wird er nach 4 Stunden zu einem Einsatz gerufen. Er kommt nach 2-3 Stunden gegen 0.00 Uhr von seinem Einsatz nach Hause zurück und muss nun seine 11 Stunden Mindestruhezeit einhalten. Es bleibt ihm die Wahl, entweder den Einsatz abzulehnen oder am nächsten Tag erst um 11 Uhr mit seiner beruflichen Tätigkeit zu beginnen.

Vor allem die freiwilligen und ehrenamtlichen Tätigkeiten müssen besonders flexibel ausgestaltet werden, da sie meistens neben der eigentlichen Arbeitstätigkeit geleistet werden und nicht dem Lebensunterhalt dienen. Es sind Tätigkeiten, die ähnlich einem Hobby, zusätzlich aufgenommen werden, weil sie Freude bereiten und vom Arbeitsalltag ablenken und somit auch der Entspannung dienen.

Gibt es Überlegungen, einen einheitlichen EU-Arbeitnehmerbegriff einzuführen bzw. die freiwilligen und ehrenamtlichen Tätigkeiten ausdrücklich auszunehmen? Wird die Kommission vor allem im Hinblick auf das im vergangenen Jahr stattgefundene „Europäische Jahr der Freiwilligentätigkeit 2011“ dieses Engagement auch europarechtlich würdigen?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(23. März 2012)

Die Kommission kennt die Besonderheiten der Tätigkeit der freiwilligen Feuerwehr und ist sich auch bewusst, dass die freiwillige Feuerwehr in vielen Mitgliedstaaten insbesondere in ländlichen Gebieten eine wichtige Rolle für die Sicherstellung umfassender Notfalldienste spielt.

Sie hat keinen Vorschlag zur Änderung der rechtlichen Stellung freiwilliger Feuerwehrleute vorgelegt. Ihre Position hat sie im Kommissionspapier zur zweiten Phase der Anhörung zur Änderung der Arbeitszeitrichtlinie ([1]) dargelegt, das in Form einer Mitteilung ([2]) veröffentlicht wurde.

Sie möchte darauf hinweisen, dass nach dem Anhörungsverfahren die wichtigsten branchenübergreifenden Sozialpartner auf europäischer Ebene im November 2011 beschlossen haben, Verhandlungen im Hinblick auf die Überarbeitung aufzunehmen. Die Sozialpartner können gemäß Artikel 154 des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union derartige Verhandlungen in Gang setzen. Aus Respekt für diesen Prozess hat die Kommission mitgeteilt, dass sie während des im Vertrag für diese Verhandlungen vorgesehenen Zeitraums keinen Vorschlag zur Änderung der Richtlinie vorlegen wird.

([1]) Richtlinie 2003/88/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 4. November 2003 über bestimmte Aspekte der Arbeitszeitgestaltung, ABl. L 299 vom 18.11.2003, S. 9.

([2]) Überarbeitung der Arbeitszeitrichtlinie (zweite Phase der Anhörung der Sozialpartner auf europäischer Ebene gemäß Artikel 154 AEUV), KOM(2010)801 vom 21. Dezember 2010, Abschnitt 5.2 Ziffer v.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002225/12
to the Commission
Matthias Groote (S&D)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Unjustified tightening up of working time arrangements with implications for voluntary services, in particular volunteer fire brigades

In the light of the further attempt by the Commission to amend the EU Working Time Directive, I share the concerns of volunteer fire brigades.

The directive lays down minimum health and safety requirements for the organisation of working time, in particular in respect of daily rest periods, breaks, weekly rest periods, maximum weekly working time, annual leave and certain aspects of night work and shift work. The importance of compliance with these times in the everyday working environment is beyond question.

However, the way in which voluntary activities are dealt with in connection with working time arrangements is questionable. Under the directive, every EU Member State must ensure that all workers, where they work more than six hours, observe a daily minimum rest period of 11 consecutive hours in any 24-hour period. For volunteer fire brigades, this means the following: a fire brigade volunteer arrives home at about 17.00 after an eight-hour working day; four hours later, after dinner and a rest, he is called out to an incident; two to three hours later, at about midnight, he gets back home from duty and must now observe the minimum rest period of 11 hours; he faces the choice of either refusing the call-out or not starting work until 11.00 the next day.

Particular flexibility is required for voluntary activities, as these are mostly carried out by individuals on top of their real jobs and are not how they earn their living. These are additional activities, which, in the same vein as a hobby, are taken on as a source of enjoyment and distraction from everyday work, and thus also as a way of relaxing.

Is thought being given to introducing a standard definition of the term 'worker' within the EU or to expressly exempting voluntary activities? Given, in particular, that 2011 was the European Year of Volunteering, will the Commission acknowledge that commitment in European law?

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

The Commission is fully aware of the special characteristics of the activities of volunteer firefighters, and is also conscious of the importance of volunteer firefighters in ensuring comprehensive emergency services in many Member States, particularly in rural areas.

It has made no proposal to change the legal status of volunteer firefighters. Its position is set out in the Commission's second-stage consultation paper on a review of the Working Time Directive ([1]), which took the form of a communication ([2]).

It would point out that, following the consultation process, the main cross-sectoral social partners at European level decided in November 2011 to open negotiations on the review. The social partners enjoy autonomy regarding such negotiations under Article 154 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. Out of respect for that process, the Commission has stated that it will refrain from putting forward any proposal to amend the directive during the period provided for their negotiations under the Treaty.

([1]) Directive 2003/88/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 November 2003 concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time, OJ L 299, 18.11.2003, p. 9.

([2]) 'Reviewing the Working Time Directive (Second-phase consultation of the social partners at European level under Article 154 TFEU)' (COM(2010) 801 of 21 December 2010), Section 5.2(v).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002226/12
to the Commission
Godfrey Bloom (EFD)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Hungary: Cohesion Fund

Does the suspension of EUR 495 184 000 in Cohesion Fund commitments for Hungary proposed by the Commission on 22 February 2012 relate to past infringements of Hungary's Treaty obligations under the TFEU, or is it a sanction for a suspected future infringement?

Is the Commission able to demonstrate that it has imposed similar sanctions on other Member States having failed to comply with the reference values of the Treaty (notably the 3 % limit on budget deficits)? Why, for example, were similar sanctions not imposed on Germany and France when, in 2005, these were the first two countries to announce in public that they were not complying wit the Stability and Growth Pact?

Why were similar sanctions not imposed on Greece, which over a number of years has misled the Commission with regard to its budget deficit?

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

The suspension of Cohesion Fund commitments for Hungary proposed by the Commission on 22 February 2012 is not a sanction but implements a conditionality provision meant to ensure that Cohesion Funds are spent properly. It applies for past behaviour: on 24 January 2012 the Council decided under Article 126(8) of the Treaty that Hungary did not take effective action to durably correct its excessive deficit. Suspending the commitments does not entail a financial loss for the Member State concerned, as an implementation lag allows for a reinstatement of the commitments following effective action.

The legislation in force envisages this conditionality only for the Cohesion Fund of which France and Germany were not recipients in 2003. Moreover, they did not reach the stage of the excessive deficit procedure (EDP) at which sanctions could have been triggered. Indeed, until the entry into force in December 2011 of the new Regulation on the effective enforcement of budgetary surveillance in the euro area, sanctions in the euro area were only possible at a very advanced stage of the procedure, namely after non-compliance with a notice under Article 126(9) TFEU.

Past cases when the conditionality clause of the Cohesion Fund could have been applied include not only Greece (in 2005 and 2010), but also Hungary itself (twice in 2005). The context in which decisions concerning this conditionality are now taken is very different. The recent reform of economic governance (the so-called 'six-pack') has put in place new financial sanctions for euro area Member States and the Commission has proposed to extend the conditionality provision also to the other four Community Structural Funds.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-002227/12
till kommissionen
Christian Engström (Verts/ALE)
(28 februari 2012)

Angående: Checklista för de grundläggande rättigheterna och granskning av direktivet om lagring av uppgifter

Europeiska kommissionen har förklarat att skydd och tillämpning av de grundläggande rättigheterna är ett viktigt mål och har utfärdat en checklista för de grundläggande rättigheterna (COM(2010)0573).

Har direktivet om lagring av uppgifter 2006/24/EG utvärderats mot bakgrund av denna checklista? Om inte, varför inte?

Används checklistan i kommissionens aktuella utvärdering och konsekvensbedömning av de framtida alternativen med hänsyn till direktivet om lagring av uppgifter? Om ja, hur? Om inte, varför inte?

Svar från Cecilia Malmström på kommissionens vägnar
(26 mars 2012)

Datalagringsdirektivets (2006/24/EG) inverkan på de grundläggande rättigheterna undersöktes i kommissionens utvärderingsrapport om direktivet (KOM (2011) 225 slutlig). Kommissionen har tagit hänsyn till kommissionens checklista över grundläggande rättigheter i sin utvärderingen av direktivet.

Kommissionen tillämpar checklistan över grundläggande rättigheter i sitt aktuella utarbetande av en konsekvensbedömning av ett antal alternativ för att reformera EU:s rättsliga ram för datalagring. Kommissionen följer den tekniska vägledningen om beaktande av de grundläggande rättigheterna i konsekvensbedömningar i enlighet med respektive arbetsdokument från kommissionen (SEK (2011) 567 slutlig).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002227/12
to the Commission
Christian Engström (Verts/ALE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Fundamental rights checklist and revision of the Data Retention Directive

The Commission has declared protection and implementation of fundamental rights an important goal and has published a fundamental rights check-list (COM(2010) 0573).

Has the Data Retention Directive (2006/24/EC) been evaluated against this checklist? If not, why not?

Is the checklist used in the context of the Commission's current evaluation and impact assessment on the future options with regard to the Data Retention Directive? If so, how? If not, why not?

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

The implications of the Data Retention Directive (2006/24/EC) on fundamental rights were examined in the Commission evaluation report on the directive (COM(2011) 225 final). The Commission has taken account of the 'Fundamental Rights Check-List' in this evaluation of the directive.

The Commission applies the 'Fundamental Rights Check-List' in its current work on an impact assessment of a number of options to reform the EU legal framework for data retention. The Commission follows the operational guidance on taking account of fundamental rights in impact assessments as laid down in the respective Commission staff working paper (SEC(2011) 567 final).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002228/12
à la Commission
Françoise Grossetête (PPE)
(28 février 2012)

Objet: Produits cosmétiques

La directive Cosmétiques prévoit l'interdiction totale de la mise sur le marché européen d'ingrédients cosmétiques ayant été testés sur les animaux, à partir de mars 2013.

Le «Rapport sur la mise au point, la validation et l'acceptation légale de méthodes pouvant être substituées à l'expérimentation animale dans le domaine des cosmétiques (2009)» présenté, le 31 janvier dernier, à la commission de l'environnement, de la santé publique et de la sécurité alimentaire du Parlement européen fait état de la non-disponibilité de méthodes alternatives, à court et moyen terme, pour l'établissement des effets toxicologiques complexes.

Dès lors, la Commission pourrait-elle chiffrer l'impact, en termes d'emploi, dans l'industrie mais aussi dans la recherche, de la mise en œuvre de l'échéance de 2013 pour les produits cosmétiques disponibles sur le marché européen? La Commission pourrait-elle aussi indiquer le nombre d'animaux sauvés chaque année par le maintien de cette date limite?

Réponse donnée par M. Dalli au nom de la Commission
(3 avril 2012)

La Commission termine en ce moment l'analyse des incidences de l'échéance de 2013. Cette analyse sera achevée et rendue publique lorsque la Commission aura adopté une éventuelle proposition utile ou lorsqu'elle aura décidé de ne pas faire de proposition. Dans ce contexte, elle a procédé à une consultation ciblée des parties prenantes sur les incidences attendues. Toutes les réponses sont accessibles sur le site *web* de la Commission ([1]).

Avant l'interdiction des essais sur animaux prononcée en 2004, les cosmétiques destinés à l'UE avaient été testés sur 8 988 animaux; ce nombre est tombé à 1 510 en 2008 et à 344 en 2009. Les informations obtenues auprès des parties prenantes indiquent qu'en 2008 une grande partie des essais était déjà effectuée à l'extérieur de l'UE. Il est difficile de déterminer le nombre d'animaux utilisés pour les essais de produits cosmétiques en dehors de l'Union européenne dans le but de satisfaire aux exigences en matière de sécurité de l'UE, étant donné que des essais sur les animaux peuvent également être réalisés pour répondre aux exigences de pays tiers. Toutefois, sur la base des informations reçues, il s'agirait probablement de 15 000 à 27 000 animaux par an.

Concernant les incidences sur l'emploi, les fabricants de produits et d'ingrédients cosmétiques emploient directement 182 500 salariés au total, dont 17 000 dans la recherche et le développement de l'industrie des cosmétiques. Ce sont ces emplois, et ceux des entreprises spécialisées dans les ingrédients cosmétiques, qui sont susceptibles de subir les conséquences de l'échéance de 2013, mais ces chiffres pourraient être plus élevés en fonction de la viabilité économique des entreprises, notamment des plus petites d'entre elles.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/sectors/cosmetics/documents/animal-testing/stakeholders_consultation_fr.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002228/12
to the Commission
Françoise Grossetête (PPE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Cosmetic products

The Cosmetics Directive provides for a total ban, from March 2013, on the placing on the European market of cosmetic ingredients tested on animals.

The 'Report on the Development, Validation and Legal Acceptance of Alternative Methods to Animal Tests in the Field of Cosmetics (2009)', presented to Parliament's Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety on 31 January 2012, notes the lack of alternative methods in the short and medium term for determining complex toxicological effects.

Could the Commission therefore quantify the impact in terms of jobs, both in the industry and in research, of the 2013 deadline for cosmetic products available on the European market? Could the Commission also indicate the number of animals which would be saved each year by keeping to that deadline?

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

The Commission is currently finalising the impact assessment in relation to the 2013 deadline. The impact assessment will be made available and public once the Commission has adopted any relevant proposal or once it has decided not to make a proposal. In this context, the Commission carried out a targeted stakeholder consultation on the expected impacts. All answers received are available on the Commission website ([1]).

Prior to the ban in 2004, 8 988 animals were used for animal testing for cosmetics purposes in the EU and this number came down to 1 510 in 2008 and 344 in 2009. The information obtained from stakeholders indicates that in 2008 a large part of the testing was already done outside the EU. It is difficult to determine the number of animals used for testing cosmetics outside the EU to satisfy EU safety requirements as animal tests may also be carried out to fulfil third country requirements. However, based on the information received the number of animals concerned would probably be somewhere between 15 000 and 27 000 animals per year.

As regards the impact on employment, taking cosmetics and cosmetic ingredients manufacturers together, there are a total of 182 500 direct employees. Out of these employees 17 000 work in the research and development of the cosmetics industry. It is these jobs, and those in specialised ingredient manufacturers that are likely to be impacted though figures could be higher depending on the economic viability in particular of smaller companies.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/sectors/cosmetics/documents/animal-testing/stakeholders_consultation_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002229/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(28 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Retraso del Estado español en la elaboración y aprobación de los planes hidrológicos de cuenca

La presente pregunta hace referencia a las respuestas de la Comisión a las preguntas parlamentarias E-001047/2011, E-005592/2009, E-004005/2010, E-004006/2010 y E-004007/2010, sobre el retraso del Estado español en la elaboración y aprobación de los planes hidrológicos de cuenca.

Los proyectos de planes se deberían haber presentado para su consulta pública en diciembre de 2008. Sin embargo, el Estado español lleva un retraso considerable en la publicación de los planes y hasta la fecha aún no los ha presentado públicamente, a pesar de que, tal y como constató la Comisión en su respuesta del 29 de septiembre, España incumple lo dispuesto en el artículo 3, apartados 2 y 7, de la Directiva 2000/60/CE, ante lo cual la Comisión remitió un dictamen al Gobierno español sobre la cuestión.

Según se publica hoy en *La Vanguardia* ([1]), el Gobierno español pedirá a la UE un aplazamiento en la aplicación de la Directiva europea de aguas, que debería haber sido efectiva antes de finales del 2010.

La política de aguas de la Unión Europea y la Directiva marco del agua, en particular, tienen por objeto lograr un «buen estado ecológico» de las aguas de todos los Estados miembros para 2015, muy necesario en algunos ríos de Cataluña.

Después de varios avisos por parte de la Comisión Europea al Estado español por el incumplimiento del plazo fijado por la Directiva 2000/60/CE, la Comisión ha incoado procedimientos de infracción contra España por no haber notificado a tiempo sus planes hidrológicos de cuenca. ¿Qué piensa hacer la Comisión ante esta posible petición del Gobierno español?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de abril de 2012)

La Comisión no ha recibido solicitud alguna de las autoridades españolas de aplazar la aplicación de la Directiva marco del agua (Directiva 2000/60/CE ([2])). En cualquier caso, es preciso señalar a ese respecto que dicha Directiva no contempla la posibilidad de retrasar la aprobación de los planes hidrológicos de cuenca, las cuales, según su artículo 13, apartado 6, debían publicarse a más tardar en diciembre de 2009.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/medio-ambiente/20120117/54245022969/gobierno-pedira-ue-mas-tiempo-para-recuperar-rios.html
([2]) DO L 327 de 22.12.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002229/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Delay by the Spanish Government in drafting and adopting river basin management plans

This question refers to the Commission's answers to parliamentary questions E-001047/2011, E-005592/2009, E-004005/2010, E-004006/2010 and E-004007/2010, on the Spanish Government's delay in drawing up and adopting river basin management plans.

The draft plans should have been submitted for public consultation in December 2008. However, the Spanish Government is considerably behind schedule in publishing the plans and, to date, still has not made them public, despite Spain being, according to the Commission's answer of 29 September, in breach of Article 3(2) and (7) of Directive 2000/60/EC, in relation to which the Commission issued an opinion to the Spanish Government.

As reported today in *La Vanguardia* ([1]), the Spanish Government will be asking the EU for a postponement in applying the European Water Directive, which should have come into force before the end of 2010.

The purpose of European Union water policy, and the Water Framework Directive in particular, is to achieve 'good ecological status' for the waters of all Member States by 2015, which is much needed in some of Catalonia's rivers.

Following a number of Commission warnings to the Spanish Government over its failure to meet the deadline set in Directive 2000/60/EC, the Commission has launched infringement proceedings against Spain for not having given notice of its river basin management plans in time. How is the Commission intending to respond to any such request by the Spanish Government?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(19 April 2012)

The Commission has not received any request from the Spanish authorities to delay the implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD, 2000/60/EC ([2])). It should be noted that, in any case, there is no possibility in the WFD to delay the adoption of the river basin management plans that, according to Article 13(6), should have been published by December 2009.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/medio-ambiente/20120117/54245022969/gobierno-pedira-ue-mas-tiempo-para-recuperar-rios.html
([2]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002230/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(28 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Greening

En la propuesta de la Comisión Europea sobre la PAC, concretamente en relación con el pago verde o *greening*, puede haber un claro efecto discriminatorio, incluso desde el punto de vista ganadero, ya que las medidas que se proponen —diversificación de cultivos, mantenimiento de pastos permanentes y/o tierras con fines ecológicos— en ningún caso contemplan ni reflejan los esfuerzos de la ganadería del sur de Europa, como la catalana, en materia medioambiental (por ejemplo, menor emisión de gases de efecto invernadero, uso de materia orgánica para su suministro a los suelos catalanes deficitarios en dicha materia, sistemas eficientes de alimentación, etc.).

A la luz de lo anterior y teniendo en cuenta la información facilitada por la FAO ([1]),

1. ¿Considera la Comisión necesario hacer grandes esfuerzos suplementarios a los actuales en relación con estos aspectos medioambientales cuando a la UE nos llega carne de terceros países que no cumplen todos los requisitos que se exigen para producir en la UE?

2. ¿Puede la Comisión indicar si deberían exigirse a terceros países los mismos criterios que imponemos a los productores europeos, es decir, reciprocidad para los productos que importamos, así como las mismas condiciones que exigimos en la aplicación de las directivas y reglamentos europeos?

3. ¿Cree la Comisión que, en vista de que los productores de la UE deben aplicar directivas y reglamentos muy restrictivos, estos productores pueden competir en igualdad de precios con sus homólogos de terceros países, que no deben necesariamente aplicar dichas directivas y reglamentos igual que los productores europeos?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(20 de abril de 2012)

1. Para hacer frente a los desafíos mencionados por Su Señoría relacionados con la mejora del rendimiento ecológico de la agricultura, se proponen varios instrumentos: una continuación de la condicionalidad y de las medidas agroambientales, un refuerzo del sistema de asesoramiento a las explotaciones y un componente ecológico en los pagos directos, que apoya las medidas medioambientales en forma de acciones anuales, simples, generalizadas y extracontractuales, tales como la diversificación de cultivos y el mantenimiento de pastos permanentes y tierras con fines ecológicos. De esta forma, se mejorará el rendimiento ecológico de la PAC, limitando los costes y cargas adicionales. A los agricultores que ya aplican buenas prácticas medioambientales apenas se les pedirá nada más.

2. Los productos agroalimentarios comercializados en el mercado de la UE deben cumplir los requisitos de importación establecidos por el Derecho de la UE, los cuales se refieren a la seguridad de los productos alimenticios, la sanidad animal y la vegetal. Aunque la UE garantiza que las importaciones se ajustan a sus normas en materia de salud y seguridad, no puede imponer procesos y métodos de producción en terceros países en la medida en que no se trate de normas internacionales reconocidas en virtud de la OMC. La UE continúa abogando por un mejor reconocimiento de estas normas en los foros internacionales oportunos.

3. Aunque existen efectivamente normas que imponen requisitos adicionales a la producción primaria de la UE en términos de medio ambiente, bienestar animal, trazabilidad y mantenimiento de registros, los consumidores europeos valoran mucho los bienes públicos que se derivan de dichas normas. El problema consiste en garantizar que los consumidores estén correctamente informados de estos requisitos y de los esfuerzos adicionales necesarios de los agricultores, por ejemplo, mediante el etiquetado apropiado en el marco de las normas de comercialización.

([1]) ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/010/a0701e/a0701e03.pdf; http://www.fao.org/docrep/011/a0701s/a0701s00.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002230/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Greening

The Commission proposal on the common agricultural policy could, as regards the green payment, or greening, have a clearly discriminatory effect that may also affect livestock, since in no way do the measures proposed — crop diversification, maintenance of permanent grasslands and/or ecological set-asides — consider or reflect the environmental efforts made by livestock farmers in southern Europe, for example in Catalonia (lower greenhouse gas emissions, use of organic materials to enrich Catalan soils that lack them, efficient feeding systems, etc.).

In view of the above, and taking into account the information provided by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, ([1])

1. Does the Commission consider that significantly more effort is needed than at present regarding these environmental issues, when meat is coming into the EU from non-EU countries that do not meet all the requirements expected of producers in the EU?

2. In the Commission's opinion, should non-EU countries be required to comply with the same criteria as are imposed on EU producers, i.e. reciprocity for products the EU imports as well as the same conditions as are required under EU directives and regulations?

3. Since EU producers have to apply very restrictive directives and regulations, does the Commission believe that EU producers can compete on equal prices with their counterparts in non-EU countries, which do not necessarily have to apply these directives and regulations in the same way as EU producers?

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

1. To tackle the challenges raised by the Honourable Member concerning improving the environmental performance of farming, several instruments are proposed: a continuation of cross compliance and agri-environment measures, a reinforced Farm Advisory System, and a greening component in direct payments, which supports environmental measures in the form of simple, generalised, non-contractual and annual actions: crop diversification, maintenance of permanent grassland, ecological focus areas. It will enhance the environmental performance of the CAP while limiting additional costs and burden. Farmers who already apply sound environmental practices will face very little additional demand.

2. Agro-food products placed on the EU market must comply with import requirements set by EU legislation. These requirements concern the safety of the food products, animal and plant health. While the EU ensures that imports conform with its health and safety standards, the EU cannot impose process and production methods on third countries as long as these are not international standards recognised under the WTO. The EU continues to push for better recognition of these standards in the appropriate international fora.

3. While there are indeed regulations imposing additional requirements for EU primary production in terms of environment, animal welfare, traceability and record keeping, the public goods deriving from these rules are highly valued by European consumers. The issue is to ensure consumers are properly informed about these requirements and the additional efforts required of farmers, for instance by means of appropriate labelling within marketing standards.

([1]) ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/010/a0701e/a0701e03.pdf, http://www.fao.org/docrep/011/a0701s/a0701s00.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002234/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(28 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Efectos colaterales

La producción cárnica en el Estado español, ya sea de avicultura, porcino o bovino, se basa en el consumo de cereales. Esto genera una actividad económica complementaria a la propia actividad de la explotación (ya sean fábricas de pienso, cooperativas, mataderos, industria agroalimentaria de transformación, transporte, empresas veterinarias). En el caso del bovino, a diferencia de los demás sectores, y tal como está descrito en la propuesta de la PAC, es un sector que queda claramente desfavorecido respecto a las producciones del norte de Europa (grandes perceptores de ayudas en relación con los del sur).

El sector bovino da trabajo, en el Estado español, a alrededor de 150 000 personas ya sea de manera directa o indirecta, la mayoría de ellas empleadas en zonas rurales. Esto genera, por lo tanto, una actividad económica en zonas desfavorecidas en las que sin dicha actividad productiva difícilmente se pueden crear otras suplementarias.

1. ¿Puede informar la Comisión si en la propuesta de la PAC de la CE se han tenido en cuenta los efectos colaterales y directos de la aplicación de la propuesta legislativa?

2. ¿Podría la propuesta de la PAC de la CE dejar sin viabilidad económica explotaciones ganaderas de dichas zonas rurales y, a la sazón, provocar el abandono de tierras, desertización y problemas medioambientales como incendios forestales?

Respuesta del Comisario Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(10 de abril de 2012)

En respuesta a la pregunta de Su Señoría sobre las consecuencias de la propuesta de reforma de la PAC para el sector ganadero de España, la Comisión desearía manifestar cuanto sigue.

Conscientes de sus posibles efectos sobre los productores y las comunidades rurales, se prevé que los Estados miembros puedan introducir el nuevo régimen de ayudas directas con carácter regional, delimitando las regiones de acuerdo con criterios objetivos, tales como las características agronómicas y económicas, y el potencial económico regional. A fin de reducir al mínimo los posibles efectos negativos sobre la viabilidad de las explotaciones, se propone un período transitorio de cinco años. Además, los Estados miembros pueden ofrecer ayudas a aquellos productores que tengan derecho a beneficiarse del régimen de pago básico y cuyas explotaciones se hallen en zonas que presenten limitaciones naturales.

Los Estados miembros pueden también atender a las necesidades específicas de determinados sectores mediante ayudas directas no disociadas de carácter voluntario (artículo 38 de la propuesta legislativa sobre las ayudas directas), si esos sectores atraviesan dificultades y son importantes por motivos económicos, sociales o medioambientales. Estas ayudas no disociadas podrían otorgarse asimismo a los productores que no dispongan de hectáreas admisibles para la activación de derechos dentro del régimen de pago básico.

Asimismo, el segundo pilar servirá para dotar de una mayor resistencia a los sectores y zonas potencialmente más vulnerables. De acuerdo con las propuestas del ámbito del desarrollo rural, los Estados miembros pueden otorgar fondos para diversas medidas de mejora de la situación económica de las explotaciones, por ejemplo, la inversión en activos físicos, la diversificación de cara a aumentar el rendimiento global de las explotaciones, estrategias de mejora de la gestión del riesgo y actuaciones colectivas de productores destinadas a mejorar su situación dentro de la cadena alimentaria, así como ayudas a los productores de zonas que presenten limitaciones naturales u otras limitaciones específicas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002234/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Collateral effects

Meat production in Spain, whether from poultry, pigs or cattle, is based on cereal consumption. This generates economic activities that are complementary to the farm's own activities (such as feed mills, cooperatives, slaughterhouses, food processing industries, transport and veterinary companies). As described in the common agricultural policy (CAP) proposal, the cattle sector, unlike the others, is clearly disadvantaged in comparison with producers in northern Europe (major aid recipients compared to southern producers).

The cattle sector employs, directly or indirectly, around 150 000 people in Spain, most of them in rural areas. Thus, economic activity is generated in disadvantaged areas where, without this productive activity, the creation of other supplementary activities would be unlikely.

1. Can the Commission report on whether account has been taken in the CAP proposal of the direct and collateral effects of implementing the legislative proposal?

2. Could the CAP proposal render livestock farming economically unviable in these rural areas, resulting in abandoned land, desertification and environmental problems such as forest fires?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2012)

In reply to the question of the Honourable Member with regard to the impact of the CAP reform proposal on the livestock sector in Spain, the Commission would like to provide the following answer:

Mindful of the potential impact on producers and rural communities, Member States will have the option to introduce the new direct payment scheme at a regional level, with regions defined according to objective criteria, such as agronomic and economic characteristics and regional economic potential. In order to minimise any disruptive impact on farm viability, a transition period of 5 years has been proposed. In addition the Member States may offer a payment to producers entitled to the basic payment scheme whose holdings are in areas with natural constraints.

Member States also have the option to address the specific needs of certain sectors through voluntary coupled direct payments (Article 38 of the legal proposal on direct payments), if these sectors are undergoing difficulties and are important for economic, social or environmental reasons. Such coupled support would also be available to producers without eligible hectares for activation of entitlements under the basic payment scheme.

Pillar 2 also has a role to play in enhancing the resilience of potentially vulnerable sectors and areas. Under the Rural Development proposals, Member States may provide funding for a variety of measures aimed at improving the economic situation of farms; such as investment in physical assets and diversification to improve overall farm performance, improved risk management strategies and joint action among farmers to improve their position within the food supply chain, as well as payments targeted at producers in areas facing natural or other specific constraints.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002235/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(28 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Especulación con las tierras

A nuestro parecer, en la propuesta sobre la PAC la CE obvia una realidad que se produce con cierta frecuencia en el Estado español. En numerosas ocasiones, el agricultor o ganadero que explota las hectáreas no es el propietario de las mismas, lo que da lugar a menudo a especulación con las tierras.

Las explotaciones agrícolas o ganaderas constituidas por tierras propias y tierras arrendadas no podrían disponer de una base territorial suficiente para poder solicitar la ayuda de la PAC. Además, el anuncio de que la superficie válida será la que se declare dentro de tres años agravará aún más la situación.

En vista de lo expuesto:

¿Considera la Comisión que esto es justo para los productores agricultores y ganaderos que no son propietarios de parte o de la totalidad de la base territorial de sus explotaciones?

¿No cree la Comisión que sería más lógico tratar de evitar la especulación combinando el año de referencia con 2011, por ejemplo?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de abril de 2012)

Al elaborar la propuesta jurídica, una de las consideraciones principales ha sido evitar en lo posible cualquier distorsión potencialmente negativa del mercado de propiedad de la tierra, por lo que el acceso a la asignación de los derechos a la ayuda en 2014 se prevé para los beneficiarios respecto al ejercicio de 2011. La utilización de este año de referencia histórico de los agricultores admisibles debe de limitar el riesgo de que el año de referencia de 2014 para el número de los derechos de ayuda que deben asignarse se traduzca en que determinados propietarios de tierras modifiquen su contrato de arrendamiento antes de 2014.

La Comisión propone que el número de derechos de pago asignados se base en la declaración de las superficies del agricultor correspondiente a 2014, a fin de incluir todas las zonas subvencionables al amparo del régimen de pago básico. Esto está relacionado con la transición de la referencia histórica para la asignación de las ayudas a un mayor reconocimiento del agricultor como gestor de las tierras, el cual suministra bienes públicos. También debe considerarse a la luz del objetivo de tener una amplia cobertura de la medida de integración de las consideraciones medioambientales. Además, la experiencia adquirida desde la reforma de la PAC de 2003 indica que el uso del año de referencia histórico para el número de derechos de pago que se deben asignar plantearía problemas en lo que se refiere a las cesiones de tierras que hayan tenido lugar antes de la asignación de los derechos de pago. Podría aparecer una incongruencia entre las hectáreas subvencionables de un agricultor y su número de derechos, cuya corrección aumentaría considerablemente la carga administrativa de los Estados miembros.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002235/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Land speculation

In our view, the Commission's proposal for the common agricultural policy (CAP) ignores a situation that arises fairly often in Spain. It is very common for farmers or stock-breeders working on a given piece of land not to be the owner of it, which often leads to land speculation.

Crop or livestock farms comprising owned and rented land may not have sufficient land area to be eligible for CAP support. Moreover, the announcement that the valid land area will be the area that is declared within three years will further exacerbate the situation.

In view of the above:

Does the Commission consider this situation to be fair to crop and livestock producers who do not own part or all of the land that they farm?

Does the Commission not believe that it would be more logical to attempt to prevent speculation by, for example, combining the reference year with 2011?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2012)

When preparing the legal proposal one of the main concerns has been to avoid, as much as possible, any potentially negative distortions in the land market. Therefore, as a main rule, the access to the allocation of entitlements in 2014 is foreseen for the beneficiaries in respect of the claim year 2011. The use of this historical reference year for eligible farmers should limit the risk that the 2014 reference year for the number of payment entitlements to be allocated would lead certain landowners to change their lease contract before 2014.

The Commission proposes that the number of allocated payment entitlements is based on the 2014 declaration of a farmer's areas in order to include all eligible areas in the basic payment scheme. This is linked to the move away from a historical reference for allocation of support towards an increased recognition of the farmer as a landmanager, who provides public goods. It should also be seen in light of the objective of having a broad coverage of the greening measure. Furthermore, the experience from the 2003 CAP-reform shows that using a historical reference year for the number of payment entitlements to be allocated would pose problems with regard to transfers of land which have taken place before the allocation of payment entitlements. A 'mis-match' between the eligible hectares of a farmer and his number of entitlements would be created and correcting this would seriously increase the administrative burden of the Member States.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-002236/12
til Kommissionen
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(28. februar 2012)

Om: Uafhængighed hos WHO's eksperter

Det er altafgørende for håndteringen af sygdomspandemier, at vi har tillid til WHO's anbefalinger, men på det seneste har Europarådet udtalt sig meget kritisk omkring forløbet med H1N1 og særligt WHO's anbefaling om massevaccinering af befolkningerne. Når en sådan anbefaling kommer fra WHO, skal medlemslandene jo følge trop og som det mindste indkøbe et lager af vaccine. Men i tilfældet med H1N1 har det efterfølgende vist sig, at vaccinen har forårsaget et stort antal hjerneskader hos især børn. Desuden er det kommet frem, at en række af WHO's eksperter med sæde i de kompetente udvalg, der traf afgørelser om massevaccinerne, har været på lønningslisten hos nogle af de firmaer, som har fremstillet og solgt vaccinen.

Mit spørgsmål til Kommissionen er: Er den manglende uafhængighed hos eksperterne i WHO noget, som EU er opmærksom på, og er det noget, som EU — på vegne af medlemslandene — vil støtte Europarådet i at gribe ind over for?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af John Dalli
(3. april 2012)

Kommissionen er opmærksom på, at Verdenssundhedsorganisationen (WHO) efter H1N1-pandemien i 2009 anmodede kontroludvalget for det internationale sundhedsregulativ, der er et udvalg bestående af eksterne eksperter, om at foretage en vurdering ([1]) af den globale reaktion på pandemien.

I sin rapport om, hvordan det internationale sundhedsregulativ fungerede i forbindelse med pandemien, konkluderede udvalget, at WHO varetog sin rolle tilfredsstillende på mange måder under pandemien, stod over for en række systemiske vanskeligheder og lagde forskellige svagheder for dagen. Udvalget fandt ikke, at der have fundet misbrug sted.

Udvalget pegede dog på, at en række legitime grunde til kritik ikke i tilstrækkelig grad var blevet anerkendt, særlig inkonsistente beskrivelser af en pandemi eller manglende behørig offentliggørelse af forbindelser, der potentielt kunne udgøre en interessekonflikt blandt eksperter, der rådgav om planerne og indsatsen over for pandemien. I sådanne tilfælde kan WHO ifølge rapporten utilsigtet have bidraget til forvirring og mistanke.

Da kontroludvalget ikke fandt dokumentation for, at kommercielle interesser faktisk havde haft — eller forsøgt at få — indflydelse på rådgivning ydet over for WHO eller på beslutninger truffet af WHO, finder Kommissionen, at denne kontrol er tilstrækkelig dokumentation for WHO-eksperternes uafhængighed i udvalgene og ekspertgrupperne.

([1]) http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA64/A64_10-en.pdf .

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002236/12
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Independence of WHO experts

It is essential, when handling disease pandemics, that we have confidence in the WHO's recommendations, but the Council of Europe has recently been very critical of the procedure surrounding H1N1 and in particular of the WHO's recommendation for the mass vaccination of populations. When such a recommendation comes from the WHO, Member States must of course take note, and at least purchase stocks of the vaccine, but in the case of H1N1, it has subsequently been shown that the vaccine has caused many cases of brain damage, especially in children. In addition, it has emerged that a number of the WHO's experts who sit on the competent Committees that made decisions on mass vaccinations have been on the payroll of some of the firms manufacturing and marketing the vaccine.

Is the Commission aware of the lack of independence of WHO experts, and will the EU — on behalf of the Member States — support the Council of Europe in its efforts to address this issue?

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

The Commission is aware that, following the pandemic (H1N1) 2009, the World Health Organisation (WHO) asked the International Health Regulations Review Committee, a committee of external experts, to perform an assessment ([1]) of the global response to the pandemic.

In its Report on the Functioning of the International Health Regulations on the pandemic, the Committee concluded that 'WHO performed well in many ways during the pandemic, confronted systemic difficulties and demonstrated some shortcomings. The Committee found no evidence of malfeasance'.

However, the Committee identified a 'Failure to acknowledge legitimate reasons for some criticism, in particular, inconsistent descriptions of a pandemic, or the lack of timely disclosure of relationships potentially constituting a conflict of interest among experts who advised on plans and response to the pandemic. In such instances, the WHO may have inadvertently contributed to confusion and suspicion'.

As the Review Committee found no evidence of attempted or actual influence by commercial interests on advice given to or decisions made by the WHO, the Commission considers that this review provides sufficient evidence on the independence of the WHO experts in its committees and expert groups.

([1]) http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA64/A64_10-en.pdf .

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002237/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(28. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Zweitstudium in Griechenland

Die griechische Regierung soll einen Erlass geplant haben, nachdem an den Universitäten künftig 10 % der Studienplätze für Studenten reserviert werden, die nach ihrem Studienabschluss dann weiterstudieren wollen, um einen zweiten Abschluss zu erwerben. Aufgrund der derzeitig schwierigen wirtschaftlichen Situation in Griechenland kann davon ausgegangen werden, dass viele Studenten diese Option nutzen, weil sie keinerlei Möglichkeit haben, einen qualifizierten Arbeitsplatz zu finden. Die Maßnahme könnte aber auch so interpretiert werden, dass damit versucht wird, Studenten an den Universitäten zu halten, um damit die ohnehin bereits sehr hohe offizielle Arbeitslosenzahl in Griechenland niedriger zu halten.

1. Ist diese Maßnahme der griechischen Regierung mit europäischem Recht vereinbar?

2. Sind der Kommission ähnliche Quoten in anderen Mitgliedstaaten bekannt?

3. Wie bewertet die Kommission diese Maßnahme? Gedenkt sie hier im Sinne einer europäischen Regelung tätig zu werden?

Antwort von Frau Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(7. Mai 2012)

Die Kommission ist über die Planung eines solchen Gesetzes in Griechenland nicht informiert.

Den Informationen der Kommission zufolge wird die Zahl der Studienplätze in Griechenland zwischen dem Staat und den Hochschulen ausgehandelt. Dies ist das gängigste Modell in der EU, wobei sich die genaue Umsetzung von Mitgliedstaat zu Mitgliedstaat unterscheidet. In einigen Mitgliedstaaten machen die Behörden genaue Vorgaben hinsichtlich des Anteils an Graduierten- und Postgraduiertenplätzen; im Allgemeinen dürfen die Hochschulen die ihnen pro Studienplatz zugeteilten öffentlichen Mittel jedoch nach eigenem Gutdünken auf Fachbereiche und Studienabschnitte aufteilen. Nach Auffassung der Kommission ist es angesichts des Bedarfs an hochqualifizierten Fachkräften und zur Stärkung von Europas Forschungs- und Innovationskapazität wichtig, mehr Studienabsolventen für weiterführende Studien zu gewinnen.

Gemäß Artikel 165 AEUV sind die Mitgliedstaaten für die Gestaltung ihrer Bildungssysteme zuständig. Die Kommission beabsichtigt daher nicht, einheitliche Regeln auf EU-Ebene einzuführen

Da der Kommission keine konkreten Angaben vorliegen, kann sie nicht bewerten, inwieweit ein solches Gesetz mit dem EU-Recht vereinbar wäre.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002237/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Postgraduate study in Greece

The Greek Government is said to be planning to introduce a measure whereby 10 % of university places would be reserved for students who want to continue with postgraduate study after completing their first degree. In view of the current economic difficulties in Greece, it can be assumed that many students will take up this option because they have no prospect of finding a suitable job. However, this measure could also be interpreted as an attempt to persuade students to remain at university so as to prevent the already very high unemployment rate in Greece from increasing even further.

1. Is this measure by the Greek Government compatible with European law?

2. Is the Commission aware of similar quotas in other Member States?

3. What view does the Commission take of this measure? Is it planning to introduce a similar rule at European level?

Answer given by Mrs Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2012)

The European Commission has no information on any such law being prepared in Greece.

The Commission understands that Greece has a model of setting student numbers based on negotiations between the state and the institutions. This is the most common model in the EU although exact methods vary between Member States. In some Member States the public authorities take a specific view on the proportion of undergraduate and postgraduate places, though in general institutions have freedom to allocate the public funding they receive per student place between departments and cycles. In the Commission's view, given the need for high-skilled labour and the strengthening of Europe's research and innovation capacity, it is important to encourage more students to move into postgraduate studies.

In accordance with Article 165 TFEU, Member States are responsible for the organisation of their education systems. The Commission therefore has no plans to introduce similar rules at EU level.

In the absence of concrete information on such a law, the Commission cannot assess its compatibility with EC law.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002238/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Ägypten will Verschwörer vor Gericht stellen

Eine Gruppe von Personen wird bezichtigt, die gewaltsamen Revolten, die zum Sturz des früheren ägyptischen Diktators Mubarak geführt haben, durch ausländische Finanzhilfen angestachelt zu haben. Sie sollen nun vor Gericht angeklagt werden, aus dem Ausland Gewalt, Unruhen und Revolutionen in Ägypten geschürt zu haben. Unter den Angeklagten sollen sich auch zwei Deutsche befinden. Auf die Proteste aus den USA bezüglich der angeklagten Amerikaner, welche auch mit der Streichung der Entwicklungshilfe drohten, antwortete der ägyptische Minister abschlägig. Die US-geführte Intervention würde das demokratische Justizsystem beschädigen, auf dessen Einrichtung die USA bestanden haben.

1. Sind der Kommission diese Vorgänge bekannt?

2. Wie ist die Haltung der Kommission?

3. Welche Reaktionen gab es seitens der Hohen Vertreterin für die Gemeinsame Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik?

4. Was ist in diesem Zusammenhang noch geplant?

Antwort von Frau Catherine Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(24. April 2012)

Die Kommission und die Hohe Vertreterin haben diese Angelegenheit sehr aufmerksam verfolgt. Die große Besorgnis der Hohen Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin über die Einschränkung der Tätigkeit von Organisationen der Zivilgesellschaft in Ägypten wurde in zwei Sprechererklärungen vom 30. Dezember 2011 und 1. Februar 2012 zum Ausdruck gebracht. Auch der Rat (Außenbeziehungen) hat sich in seinen Schlussfolgerungen vom 27. Februar 2012 zu der Frage geäußert. Die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin hat die ägyptischen Behörden nachdrücklich aufgefordert, Abhilfe zu schaffen und den Organisationen der Zivilgesellschaft zu erlauben, ihre Arbeit zur Unterstützung des Übergangs fortzusetzen. Die Unterstützung der Zivilgesellschaft durch die EU ist eine Schlüsselkomponente der überarbeiteten Europäischen Nachbarschaftspolitik, die auf gegenseitiger Rechenschaftspflicht und einer gemeinsamen Verpflichtung zur Achtung der universellen Werte Menschenrechte, Grundfreiheiten, Demokratie und Rechtsstaatlichkeit beruht. Die Förderung der Vereinigungsfreiheit ist ein zentraler Aspekt der Menschenrechtspolitik der EU. Deshalb hat die EU betont, wie wichtig es für Ägypten ist, ein neues Gesetz über Nichtregierungsorganisationen zu verabschieden, das den internationalen Standards entspricht.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002238/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Egypt to put conspirators on trial

A group of people are accused of having used foreign funding to help incite the violent revolt that toppled the Egyptian dictator Hosni Mubarak. They are to stand trial on a charge of fomenting violence, unrest and revolution in Egypt with aid from abroad. The accused apparently include two Germans. The Egyptian Minister has dismissed US protests concerning the accused Americans, including threats to cut off development aid. US intervention would, in his words, damage the democratic justice system that the US had itself called for.

1. Is the Commission aware of these developments?

2. What attitude is it taking?

3. What has been the response of the Vice-President/High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy?

4. What other steps are to be taken?

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

The Commission and the High Representative have followed this issue very closely. The High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) has expressed her deep concern about the restrictions on civil society organisations (CSOs) in Egypt through two spokesperson statements issued on 30 December 2011 and on 1 February 2012. This issue has also been addressed in the conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council of 27 February 2012. HR/VP has urged the Egyptian authorities to resolve the situation and allow CSOs to continue their work in support of the transition. The EU's support to civil society is a key component of the revised European Neighbourhood Policy, which is based on mutual accountability and a shared commitment to the universal values of human rights, fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law. The promotion of freedom of association is one of the pillars of EU human rights policy. Therefore, the EU has underlined the importance for Egypt of the adoption of a new non-governmental organisations' law compliant with international standards.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002239/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Arbeitsmarktöffnung

Für die am 1. Mai 2004 der Europäischen Union beigetretenen Mitgliedstaaten Estland, Lettland, Litauen, Polen, Slowakei, Slowenien, Tschechien und Ungarn ist am 1. Mai 2011 die siebenjährige Übergangsfrist für die EU-Arbeitnehmerfreizügigkeit und Dienstleistungsfreiheit ausgelaufen.

Vor allem in den Niedriglohnbranchen wurde ein Verdrängungswettbewerb befürchtet.

1. Ist innerhalb der letzten Monate ein Anstieg an Niedrigarbeitslohnkräften aus den Ostländern zu verzeichnen?

2. Welche Branchen sind davon besonders betroffen?

3. Gibt es EU-weite Marktbeobachtungen, die es ermöglichen, einen Trend festzumachen?

4. Gibt es eine Zahl, wie viele Arbeitskräfte bereits aus den EU-Ostländern nach Mitteleuropa gekommen sind?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(17. April 2012)

Zu den Fragen 1 und 2: Vom Auslaufen der Übergangsregelungen zur Freizügigkeit der Arbeitnehmer aus den EU-8-Mitgliedstaaten am 1. Mai 2011 waren nur Deutschland und Österreich betroffen. Bislang gab es nur wenige statistische Belege dafür, dass sich der Übergang zur vollen Freizügigkeit auf den Zuzug von Arbeitnehmern aus EU-8-Ländern in diese beiden Mitgliedstaaten auswirkt. Neueste Forschungsergebnisse aus dem Bericht „Mobility in Europe“ (Mobilität in Europa) 2011 ([1]) zeigen jedoch, dass die volle Öffnung der Arbeitsmärkte relativ gesehen keinen massiven Anstieg der Zahl der Arbeitnehmer aus der EU-8 bewirkt hat und dass die erfassten Zahlen niedriger sind als in den Projektionen erwartet.

Im Fall Deutschlands zogen in den ersten vier Monaten nach dem 1. Mai 2011 (d. h. von Mai bis August) etwa 34 000 Personen aus den EU-8-Ländern zu. Betroffene Wirtschaftszweige waren die Landwirtschaft, die Baubranche und das verarbeitende Gewerbe.

Im Fall Österreichs nahm die Zahl der Arbeitnehmer aus den EU-8-Ländern von April bis September 2011 um etwa 30 000 zu. Betroffen waren vor allem der Fremdenverkehr, die Baubranche und der Wirtschaftszweig der Unternehmensdienstleistungen.

Der Bericht „Mobility in Europe“ 2011 enthält keine Angaben zu den Löhnen der betreffenden Arbeitnehmer aus der EU-8.

Zu Frage 3: Die Antwort lautet Ja. Die Kommission hat die Auswirkungen der Erweiterungen von 2004 und 2007 auf den Arbeitsmarkt der Ziel-Mitgliedstaaten wiederholt analysiert ([2]).

Zu Frage 4: Wie aus dem Bericht „Employment and Social Developments in Europe“ 2011 hervorgeht, ist die Zahl der in einem EU-15-Land ansässigen Personen, die die Staatsangehörigkeit eines der (2004 beigetretenen) EU-10-Länder besitzen, von 930 000 im Jahr 2003 auf rund 2,5 Mio. im Jahr 2010 gestiegen, wobei die größte Zunahme in den Jahren 2005 bis 2007 stattfand. 2010 machten die Staatsangehörigen der EU-10-Länder nur 0,6 % der Gesamtbevölkerung der EU-15-Mitgliedstaaten aus. Nach Ziel-Mitgliedstaaten aufgeschlüsselte Angaben finden sich in dem erwähnten Bericht.

([1]) Bericht „Mobility in Europe“ 2011: http://www.mobilitypartnership.eu/WebApp/Reports.aspx

([2]) Siehe insbesondere die Berichte der Kommission über die Anwendung der Übergangsregelungen aus den Jahren 2006, 2008 und 2011 (KOM(2006)48 endg. vom 8. Februar 2006, KOM(2008)765 endg. vom 18. November 2008 und KOM(2011)729 endg. vom 11. November 2011) sowie Kapitel 3 des Berichts „Employment in Europe“ (Beschäftigung in Europa) 2008: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=113&langId=en&newsId=415&furtherNews=yes und Kapitel 6 des Berichts „Employment and Social Developments in Europe“ (Beschäftigung und gesellschaftlicher Wandel in Europa) 2011: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=6176

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002239/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Opening-up of the labour market

On 1 May 2011 the seven-year transitional period in respect of the free movement of workers and the freedom to provide services within the EU ran out for those Member States which joined the Union on 1 May 2004, namely Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Czech Republic and Hungary.

There were fears that domestic workers in other Member States would be crowded out, particularly in low-wage sectors.

1. Has there been any increase in the number of low-wage workers arriving from the eastern EU Member States in recent months?

2. Which sectors have been particularly affected?

3. Are markets being monitored throughout the EU, with a view to identifying a trend?

4. Can a figure be put on how many workers have already moved to central Europe from the eastern EU Member States?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

1 and 2. The expiry on 1 May 2011 of the transitional arrangements relating to free movement of workers from the EU-8 Member States affected Germany and Austria only. To date the statistical evidence of the impact of the transition to full free movement on the number of workers from EU-8 countries moving to those two Member States has been limited. However, recent research published in the 2011 Mobility in Europe report ([1]) shows that the full opening of the labour markets has not led to a massive increase in relative terms in the number of EU-8 workers and the figures recorded are lower than projected.

In Germany's case, around 34 000 persons moved from EU-8 in the first four months after 1 May 2011 (May-August). The sectors concerned were agriculture, construction and manufacturing.

In Austria's case, the number of workers from EU-8 increased by about 30 000 from April to September 2011. Most of the increase involved the tourism, construction and business services sectors.

The 2011 Mobility in Europe report does not provide data of the wages of the EU-8 workers concerned.

3. The answer is yes. The Commission has analysed the impact of the 2004 and 2007 enlargements on the labour markets of the Member States of destination on many occasions ([2]).

4. The 2011 Employment and Social Developments in Europe review shows that the number of nationals of EU-10 countries (which acceded to the EU in 2004) residing in EU-15 countries rose from 930 000 in 2003 to around 2.5 million in 2010, with most of the increase taking place from 2005 to 2007. In 2010, EU-10 nationals accounted for only 0.6 % of the total population of the EU-15 Member States. The abovementioned review gives figures broken down by Member States of destination.

([1]) 2011 Mobility in Europe report: http://www.mobilitypartnership.eu/WebApp/Reports.aspx.

([2]) See in particular the 2006, 2008 and 2011 Commission reports on the functioning of the transitional arrangements (COM(2006) 48 final of 8 February 2006, COM(2008) 765 final of 18 November 2008 and COM(2011) 729 final of 11 November 2011 respectively), Chapter 3 of the 2008 Employment in Europe report (http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=113&langId=en&newsId=415&furtherNews=yes) and Chapter 6 of the 2011 Employment and Social Developments in Europe review (http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=6176).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002241/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(28. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Serbien/Status Beitrittskandidat

Nach Klärung der Kosovo-Frage, so berichten Medien, soll nunmehr Serbien den Status eines EU-Beitrittskandidaten erhalten. Das scheint auf den ersten Blick ein Widerspruch zum allgemeinen Verständnis zu sein, dass die Europäische Union vorerst eine Konsolidierungsphase benötigt (mehr Vertiefung, weniger Erweiterung). Diese Frage ist wichtig insbesondere vor dem Hintergrund des stark angespannten EU-Haushalts sowie für die Verhandlungen für den kommenden MFF, da ein möglicher Serbien-Beitritt auch entsprechende Kosten für die EU mit sich bringt.

1. Wie viel Unterstützung hat Serbien bisher seitens der EU erhalten? Aus welchen Fonds wurden die Gelder bezahlt?

2. Mit welcher Gesamtsumme rechnet die Kommission bis zu dem Zeitpunkt, zu dem Serbien möglicherweise Vollmitglied in der EU wird?

3. Serbien stellte sich bisher immer zusammen mit weiteren Balkan-Staaten als potentieller EU-Kandidat vor. Wie versteht die Kommission diese Aussage vor dem aktuellen Hintergrund?

Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(18. April 2012)

Bereits auf seiner Tagung in Feira im Juni 2000 erkannte der Europäische Rat die am Stabilisierungs- und Assoziierungsprozess beteiligten Länder des westlichen Balkans als „potenzielle Kandidaten" für die EU-Mitgliedschaft an. Die europäische Perspektive dieser Länder wurde auf der Tagung des Europäischen Rates in Thessaloniki im Juni 2003 bestätigt. Auf dieser Tagung wurde zudem die „Agenda von Thessaloniki für die westlichen Balkanstaaten" gebilligt. Serbien stellte seinen Beitrittsantrag am 22. Dezember 2009. Gemäß der Empfehlung der Kommission, die sie in ihrer am 12. Oktober 2011 angenommenen Stellungnahme zum Beitrittsantrag Serbiens aussprach, erkannte der Europäische Rat Serbien am 1. März 2012 den Kandidatenstatus zu.

In den Jahren 2001 bis 2011 erhielt Serbien im Rahmen der Programme CARDS und IPA Finanzhilfe in Höhe von insgesamt rund 2 Mrd. EUR. Darüber hinaus haben die Europäische Investitionsbank und die Europäische Bank für Wiederaufbau und Entwicklung (bei deren Investorenmitgliedern es sich weitgehend um Mitgliedstaaten handelt) seit 2000 über das Instrument der Makrofinanzhilfe Serbien zinsgünstige Darlehen in Höhe von 5,8 Mrd. EUR gewährt.

Die Beitrittsverhandlungen mit Serbien haben noch nicht begonnen und das Gesamtvolumen der Finanzhilfe, die bis zum bzw. beim Beitritt bereitgestellt wird, lässt sich noch nicht abschätzen. In den letzten beiden Jahren (2012 und 2013) des inzwischen überarbeiteten Mehrjahresfinanzrahmens werden im Rahmen des Heranführungsinstruments (IPA) knapp 417 Mio. EUR für Serbien bereitgestellt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002241/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Serbia/Candidate country status

According to reports in the media, Serbia is to be granted EU candidate country status now that the Kosovo issue has been settled. At first glance, this seems to contradict the general understanding that the European Union first needs a consolidation phase (a deepening of integration and less enlargement). This question is particularly important in view of the extremely hard-pressed EU budget and the negotiations on the forthcoming multiannual financial framework (MFF), bearing in mind the costs that would be entailed for the EU if Serbia were to join.

1. How much support has Serbia already received from the EU? From which funds has money been paid?

2. What in the Commission's opinion is likely to be the total volume of expenditure up to the point at which Serbia might become an EU Member State?

3. Until now, Serbia, along with other Balkan countries, has always presented itself as a potential candidate for EU membership. How does the Commission read such assertions in light of the current situation?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2012)

The Feira European Council in June 2000 acknowledged that Western Balkan countries participating in the Stabilisation and Association Process were 'potential candidates' for EU membership. The European perspective of these countries was further confirmed by the Thessaloniki European Council in June 2003 which endorsed the 'Thessaloniki Agenda for the western Balkans'. Serbia applied for membership on 22 December 2009. Following the Commission's recommendation in its Opinion on Serbia's membership application adopted on 12 October 2011, the European Council granted Serbia candidate status on 1 March 2012.

Serbia has received approximately EUR 2 billion in EU financial assistance under the CARDS and IPA programmes over the period 2001-2011. In addition, the EU, via the Macro-financial assistance instrument (MFA), the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (whose financing members are for a large part Member States) have disbursed EUR 5.8 billion in soft loans for Serbia since 2000.

As Serbia has not yet started accession negotiations, it is not possible to estimate the likely total volume of financial assistance that will be made available up to or upon accession. For the two remaining years of the current Multiannual financial framework, according to the revised multi-annual indicative financial framework for 2012-2013, Serbia has been allocated nearly EUR 417 million under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) Programme.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002246/12
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(28 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Το κράτος δικαίου και η νομότυπη διαδικασία στην Αίγυπτο

Το «Ινστιτούτο Ανθρωπίνων Δικαιωμάτων» του Διεθνούς Δικηγορικού Συλλόγου (IBAHRI) δημοσίευσε πρόσφατα έκθεση με τίτλο «Η δικαιοσύνη μπροστά σε ένα σταυροδρόμι: τα νομικά επαγγέλματα και το κράτος δικαίου στη νέα Αίγυπτο» ([1]).

Η έκθεση παραθέτει διάφορους προβληματισμούς σχετικά με την επιδείνωση που παρατηρείται στους νομικούς κανόνες, στην κατάσταση του κράτους δικαίου και στη νομότυπη διαδικασία στην Αίγυπτο. Η έκθεση τονίζει περαιτέρω την απουσία νομότυπης διαδικασίας στα στρατιωτικά, τακτικά και έκτακτα δικαστήρια, την παρενόχληση των συνηγόρων υπερασπίσεως καθώς και τα σοβαρά προβλήματα που υφίστανται όσον αφορά την ανεξαρτησία του δικαστικού συστήματος.

1. Ποια είναι η εκτίμηση της Υπάτου Εκπροσώπου σχετικά με την κατάσταση του κράτους δικαίου και του νομικού συστήματος στην Αίγυπτο;

2. Ποιοι είναι οι προβληματισμοί της Υπάτου Εκπροσώπου σχετικά με την κατάσταση του κράτους δικαίου και της νομότυπης διαδικασίας στην Αίγυπτο;

3. Ποιες προσπάθειες έχει καταβάλει η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος για να επιστήσει την προσοχή των αιγυπτιακών αρχών σε ζητήματα που αφορούν το νομικό σύστημα στην Αίγυπτο;

4. Σε ποιο βαθμό παρέχει η ΕΕ οικονομική και στελεχειακή στήριξη στην Αίγυπτο με σκοπό την ενίσχυση του κράτους δικαίου και του νομικού συστήματος καθώς και την προώθηση της μεταρρύθμισης του δικαστικού συστήματος;

5. Κατά την άποψη της Υπάτου Εκπροσώπου, σε ποιο βαθμό επιδεινώνουν την τρέχουσα πολιτική αστάθεια της Αιγύπτου τα προβλήματα που αντιμετωπίζει με το νομικό της σύστημα και το κράτος δικαίου;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Μαΐου 2012)

Η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος/Αντιπρόεδρος (ΥΕ/ΑΠ) έχει εκφράσει επανειλημμένα την ανησυχία της σχετικά με τον νόμο προσωρινής ισχύος, που προβλέπει την παραπομπή μη στρατιωτικών υποθέσεων σε στρατοδικεία, και ζήτησε να καταργηθεί εντελώς το συντομότερο δυνατό. Ζήτησε από τις αιγυπτιακές αρχές να τιμήσουν την υπόσχεσή τους να σταματήσουν τις στρατιωτικές δίκες πολιτών, οι οποίες δεν ανταποκρίνονται στα πρότυπα ελεύθερης και δίκαιης δίκης.

Σε όλες της τις επαφές με τις προσωρινές αρχές της Αιγύπτου, η ΥΕ/ΑΠ τόνισε τη σημασία της υποστήριξης των βασικών ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων συμπεριλαμβανομένης της δίκαιης δίκης από ανεξάρτητα πολιτικά δικαστήρια. Ο σεβασμός αυτών των θεμελιωδών αρχών ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων αποτελεί απαραίτητο στοιχείο κάθε σύγχρονης δημοκρατικής κοινωνίας, κάτι για το οποίο μάχεται ο αιγυπτιακός λαός.

Στο πλαίσιο της στήριξης του εκσυγχρονισμού του αιγυπτιακού δικαστικού συστήματος, θεσπίστηκε το 2010 ένα πρόγραμμα δικαστικής μεταρρύθμισης ύψους 10 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ. Επιπλέον, η ύπαρξη ανεξάρτητου και λειτουργικού πολιτικού συστήματος δικαιοσύνης που να διασφαλίζει τους κανόνες δικαίου και την προστασία των θεμελιωδών δικαιωμάτων θα αποτελέσει καίριο σημείο αναφοράς σχετικά με την πρόοδο της Αιγύπτου στο πλαίσιο της προσέγγισης «περισσότερα για περισσότερα» που είναι ουσιαστικό χαρακτηριστικό της νέας πολιτικής γειτονίας.

([1]) http://www.ibanet.org/Article/Detail.aspx?ArticleUid=A54B8805-0512-4E5D-BB2E-674A776B150B.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002246/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — The rule of law and due process in Egypt

The International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute recently published a report entitled 'Justice at a crossroads: the legal profession and the rule of law in the new Egypt' ([1]).

The report outlines serious concerns about the deterioration in legal standards, the rule of law and due process in Egypt. The report further highlights lack of due process in military, emergency and ordinary courts, harassment of defence lawyers and major problems with judicial independence.

1. What assessment has the High Representative made about the state of the rule of law and the legal system in Egypt?

2. What concerns does the High Representative have with regard to the situation of the rule of law and due process in Egypt?

3. What efforts has the High Representative made to raise matters concerning the legal system in Egypt with the Egyptian authorities?

4. To what extent is the EU providing financial and personnel support to Egypt to strengthen the rule of law, and the legal system and to promote judicial reform?

5. To what extent does the High Representative believe that the problems in Egypt concerning the legal system and the rule of law are exacerbating the current political instability in Egypt?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) has repeatedly expressed her concern about the emergency law, providing for the referral of civilian cases to military tribunals, and called for it to be lifted completely as soon as possible. She has urged the Egyptian authorities to honour their promise to end military trials for civilians, which do not live up to the standards for a free and fair trial.

In all her contacts with the interim Egyptian authorities the HR/VP emphasised the importance to uphold basic human rights including the right to a fair trial by independent civilian courts. The respect of these fundamental human rights norms is an essential element in any modern democratic society for which the Egyptian population is striving.

In support of the modernisation of the Egyptian judicial system, a EUR 10 million Justice Reform Programme has been adopted in 2010. Moreover, the existence of an independent and functioning civilian justice system, ensuring the rule of law and the protection of fundamental rights, will be one of the key benchmarks that will be used to assess the progresses made by Egypt in the framework of the 'more for more approach' inherent to the new neighbourhood policy.

([1]) http://www.ibanet.org/Article/Detail.aspx?ArticleUid=A54B8805-0512-4E5D-BB2E-674A776B150B.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002247/12
to the Commission
Bill Newton Dunn (ALDE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Risks from radiofrequency electromagnetic fields

The WHO's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has classified radiofrequency (RF) electromagnetic fields as possibly carcinogenic to humans (Group 2B), based mainly on an increased risk of glioma, a malignant type of brain cancer.

EU citizens are continuously exposed to electromagnetic fields in public spaces (schools, hospitals, libraries, universities, etc.), in addition to the exposure stemming from private use of mobile phones, WiFi, and other home-based devices.

1. Does the Commission intend to propose a directive that applies the precautionary principle to RF exposure, establishing a higher level of health protection to help Member States to protect citizens (especially vulnerable groups, such as children and pregnant women) from potentially carcinogenic RF radiation until further research can better clarify the risks?

2. With regard to the objectives of the Commission Health Programme 2008-2013, would it not be appropriate for the Commission to take immediate action to avoid any repetition of past experiences with, for example, tobacco, passive smoking and asbestos, action on which was postponed for far too long, until substantial, precise evidence of harm (which can take decades to prove) was available, causing many thousands of unnecessary deaths, diseases and injuries?

Such limits, as recommended by several EMF experts, could be: for Outdoor Radiofrequency Radiation (RF), such as from mobile phone, radar, TV, FM broadcast and wireless Internet antennas, one tenth of a microwatt per centimetre squared or 0.614 volts per meter (0.1 μW/cm^2 or 0.614 V/m); and for Indoor Radiofrequency Radiation (RF), such as from mobile phones, wireless Internet equipment and the radiation that permeates buildings from outdoor sources, one hundredth of a microwatt per centimetre squared or 0.194 volts per meter (0.01 μW/cm^2 or 0.194 V/m). These limits have been determined for several health/environment stressors on the basis of suggestive evidence for harm and of technical feasibility.

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

1. In accordance with the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the protection of health as such is primarily a responsibility of the Member States. As a consequence, the European Union does not have the legal competence to issue a directive on the limitation of the exposure of the general public to electromagnetic fields.

2. The past experiences cited by the Honourable Member (tobacco, passive smoking and asbestos) are in no way comparable to the exposure of the public to radiofrequency fields. All Member States have regulatory frameworks in place at least equivalent or more stringent than the exposure limits proposed by Council Recommendation 1999/519/EC ([1]) which aim at providing a high level of health protection. The scientific validity of these exposure limits has been assessed periodically since 1999 by the various competent EU scientific committees. No scientific rationale to change them has been identified so far and a new assessment has been launched. Its results are expected at the end of 2012.

([1]) Council Recommendation (1999/519/EC) of 12 July 1999 on the limitation of the exposure of the general public to electromagnetic fields (0Hz-300 GHz).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002248/12
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE) et Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(28 février 2012)

Objet: VP/HR — Recours à la «détention administrative» par Israël (et l'affaire Khader Adnan)

Le 20 février 2012, le Palestinien Khader Adnan a entamé son 65e jour de grève de la faim ([1]). Par cette action, il entend protester contre son placement en «détention administrative» par les autorités israéliennes depuis le 17 décembre 2011. À l'heure actuelle, près de 300 personnes, dont des enfants, sont retenues en «détention administrative» (sans procès ni mise en accusation) en Israël ([2]). Le 17 février, la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante de l'Union européenne a réagi à l'affaire Khader Adnan par une déclaration dans laquelle elle rappelle, entre autres, que «l'UE est préoccupée depuis longtemps par le fait qu'Israël recourt fréquemment à la détention administrative sans mise en accusation formelle».

1. Que pense la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante du recours à la «détention administrative» à la lumière des traités, de la Charte, de la jurisprudence de la CEDH et du droit international, particulièrement, mais pas exclusivement, le Pacte international relatif aux droits civils et politiques et la quatrième Convention de Genève?

2. La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante pourrait-elle spécifiquement présenter son avis sur le recours à la «détention administrative» pour une période de plus de 30 jours dans une affaire sans aucun lien avec des questions d'asile et/ou d'immigration, à la lumière des actes législatifs susmentionnés?

3. La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante pourrait-elle expliquer pourquoi, dans sa déclaration du 17 février, elle n'a pas condamné le recours à la «détention administrative» par les autorités israéliennes dans l'affaire en question et en général, se contentant de rappeler que l'UE est «préoccupée» par le recours fréquent à la «détention administrative»?

4. La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante a-t-elle l'intention de condamner le recours à la «détention administrative» par les autorités israéliennes, dans l'affaire Khader Adnan et en général? Dans la négative, pourquoi?

5. La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante a-t-elle l'intention d'ordonner aux autorités israéliennes d'inculper/faire passer en jugement ou de libérer les personnes placées en «détention administrative»? Dans la négative, pourquoi?

6. Si la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante n'entend pas condamner le recours à la «détention administrative» dans l'affaire qui nous concerne et en général ni ordonner aux autorités israéliennes d'inculper/faire passer en jugement ou de libérer les personnes placées en «détention administrative», pourrait-elle justifier sa décision à la lumière des traités et plus particulièrement de l'article 21, paragraphe 1, du TUE?

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

En l'absence de précision concernant les motifs et la base juridique de la détention administrative dans chaque affaire particulière, il est impossible, dans l'absolu, de qualifier la détention administrative d'illégale. Une telle qualification comprendrait une appréciation de la légalité des périodes de détention. Toutefois, la détention administrative, lorsqu'elle s'appuie sur des bases juridiques solides, ne se pratique pas dans un vide juridique et doit, entre autres, permettre aux autorités compétentes de contrôler les critères justifiant une détention prolongée.

Dans sa déclaration du 17 février 2012, la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante a clairement exprimé ses préoccupations en ce qui concerne le recours fréquent d'Israël à la détention administrative.

([1]) http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/feb/16/khader-adnan-palestinian-hunger-strike.
([2]) http://www.btselem.org/administrative_detention/statistics.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002248/12
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter — Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE) en Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(28 februari 2012)

Betreft: VPHR — Het gebruik van administratieve detentie door Israël (en de zaak Khader Adnan)

Op 20 februari 2012 ging de Palestijn Khader Adnan de 65e dag van zijn hongerstaking in ([1]). Met zijn hongerstaking protesteert Khader Adnan tegen het feit dat hij sinds 17 december 2011 door de Israëlische autoriteiten in administratieve detentie is geplaatst. Op dit moment worden in Israël ongeveer 300 mensen, onder wie kinderen, in administratieve detentie gehouden (dat wil zeggen zonder vorm van proces of aanklacht) ([2]). Op 17 februari heeft de Hoge Vertegenwoordiger van de EU een verklaring uitgegeven als reactie op de zaak Khader Adnan, waarin zij onder andere herhaalde dat „…de EU reeds lange tijd bezorgd is over het gebruik op uitgebreide schaal door Israël van administratieve detentie zonder officiële aanklacht".

1. Hoe ziet de Hoge Vertegenwoordiger het gebruik van administratieve detentie in het kader van de Verdragen, het Handvest, het EHRM, de jurisprudentie van het EHRM en de internationale wetgeving, vooral, maar niet beperkt tot, het Internationaal Verdrag inzake burgerrechten en politieke rechten en het Vierde Verdrag van Genève?

2. Kan de Hoge Vertegenwoordiger specifiek toelichten hoe zij het gebruik van administratieve detentie gedurende een termijn langer dan 30 dagen die geen verband houdt met asiel- en/of immigratiekwesties ziet in de context van bovengenoemde rechtsinstrumenten?

3. Kan de Hoge Vertegenwoordiger aangeven waarom zij in haar verklaring van 17 februari het gebruik van administratieve detentie door de Israëlische autoriteiten in dit specifieke geval en in het algemeen niet heeft veroordeeld, maar slechts nogmaals heeft gewezen op de „bezorgdheid" van de EU over „het gebruik op uitgebreide schaal" van administratieve detentie?

4. Is de Hoge Vertegenwoordiger bereid het gebruik van administratieve detentie door de Israëlische autoriteiten in de zaak Khader Adnan en in het algemeen te veroordelen? Zo niet, waarom?

5. Is de Hoge Vertegenwoordiger bereid van de Israëlische autoriteiten te eisen dat personen die in administratieve detentie worden geplaatst ofwel aangeklaagd/berecht of vrijgelaten worden? Zo niet, waarom?

6. Indien de Hoge Vertegenwoordiger niet bereid is het gebruik van administratieve detentie in bovengenoemd geval en in het algemeen te veroordelen en/of van de Israëlische autoriteiten te eisen dat personen die in administratieve detentie worden geplaatst ofwel aangeklaagd/berecht of vrijgelaten worden, kan zij dan aangeven hoe zij dit beoordeelt in de context van de Verdragen en met name van artikel 21, lid 1, van het VEU?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(6 juli 2012)

Voor zover de redenen voor en de rechtsgrondslag van administratieve detentie niet voor elk afzonderlijk geval worden vastgesteld, kan deze maatregel niet per definitie als illegaal worden aangemerkt. Dit geldt ook voor de duur ervan. Als er voorzien is in een deugdelijke rechtsgrondslag, vindt administratieve detentie echter niet in een juridisch vacuüm plaats. Zo moeten de bevoegde autoriteiten kunnen beoordelen of het nodig is de detentie te verlengen.

In haar verklaring van 17 februari 2012 heeft de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter duidelijk uiting gegeven aan haar bezorgdheid over het grootschalige gebruik van administratieve detentie door Israël.

([1]) http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/feb/16/khader-adnan-palestinian-hunger-strike.
([2]) http://www.btselem.org/administrative_detention/statistics.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002248/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE) and Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Use of administrative detention by Israel and the case of Khader Adnan

On 20 February 2012 a Palestinian man named Khader Adnan entered the 65th day of a hunger strike ([1]) in protest at his having being placed in 'administrative detention' by the Israeli authorities since 17 December 2011. Currently there are approximately 300 people, including children, being held in 'administrative detention' (i.e. without trial or charge) in Israel ([2]). On 17 February 2012 the EU High Representative issued a statement in response to the Khader Adnan case, in which, *inter alia*, she referred to the EU's 'longstanding concern about the extensive use by Israel of administrative detention without formal charge'.

1. How does the High Representative assess the use of 'administrative detention', in the framework of the Treaties, the Charter, the ECHR, ECHR case-law and international law, (especially, but not limited to, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Fourth Geneva Convention)?

2. Can the High Representative specifically explain how she assesses the use of 'administrative detention' that exceeds 30 days and is not related to asylum and/or immigration issues, in the context of the aforementioned legal instruments?

3. Can the High Representative indicate why, in her statement of 17 February, she has not condemned the use of 'administrative detention' by the Israeli authorities in this specific case or in general, but has merely reiterated the EU's 'concern' over its 'extensive use'?

4. Is the High Representative willing to condemn the use of 'administrative detention' by the Israeli authorities, in the case of Khader Adnan and in general? If not, why not?

5. Is the High Representative willing to call on the Israeli authorities to ensure that persons placed in 'administrative detention' are either indicted/put on trial or released? If not, why mot?

6. If the High Representative is not willing to condemn the use of 'administrative detention' in the aforementioned case and in general and/or call on the Israeli authorities to ensure that persons placed in 'administrative detention' are either indicted/put on trial or released, can she then indicate how she would assess this in the context of the Treaties, and especially of Article 21(1) TEU?

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

Without a determination in each individual case of the grounds for administrative detention and the legal basis thereof, it is impossible to generically brand administrative detention as illegal. This includes a determination of the legality of time spans for detention. However, administrative detention when properly sanctioned by a legal basis does not operate in a legal vacuum and needs, *inter alia,* to provide for the possibility of review of the requirement for continued detention by competent authorities

The HR/VP has set out her concerns with regard to the extensive use by Israel of administrative detention clearly in the statement of 17 February 2012.

([1]) http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/feb/16/khader-adnan-palestinian-hunger-strike.
([2]) http://www.btselem.org/administrative_detention/statistics.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002253/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: The 'Rotterdam/Antwerp effect' and its impact on non-EU trade

Can the Commission comment on the phenomenon known as the 'Rotterdam/Antwerp effect'? Specifically, can it comment on the circumstance that, despite this effect being common knowledge, little is being done to address the fact that the transportation of goods outside the EU is under-represented in official customs figures?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

The Commission is fully aware of the phenomenon known as the 'Rotterdam/Antwerp effect' and its consequences, in particular, for EU statistics relating to external trade with non-member countries (extra-EU trade statistics).

Extra-EU trade statistics are compiled on the basis of the customs declarations. Therefore, exports are allocated to the country where the goods are declared and cleared for the customs export procedure.

Without doubt any information obtained on intra-EU goods movements prior to such customs clearance would enhance the relevance of trade statistics. In order to identify the 'Rotterdam/Antwerp effect' in extra-EU trade statistics, the 'Member State of actual export' can be indicated on the customs declaration. However, this data element is currently defined in the customs provisions in force as optional for Member States and thus Member States may decide to waive its collection. This option is taken by some Member States; in those cases, the information is therefore also missing in international trade statistics.

The European Commission has taken the necessary steps to ensure that under the provisions of the Modernised Customs Code — at the moment subject to a recast and to be called then Union Customs Code — the respective information shall be collected by all Member States on a mandatory basis.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002254/12
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Council Directive 2007/43/EC laying down minimum rules for the protection of chickens kept for meat production

In recent years the Commission has sought to improve animal welfare in the agriculture sector. Whilst it is important to help ensure that livestock is reared in conditions and environments which help to minimise stress and improve welfare, there is a balance to be struck between making such improvements and adding extra financial burden on producers. This is particularly the case given the current economic climate plus the fact that farmers within the EU are already producing to arguably the highest production standards in the world. It is also important that the introduction of additional rules and regulations is supported by science and evidence. In this regard there is concern within the poultry sector that the requirements contained within Annex I of Council Directive 2007/43/EC ([1]) were not based on sufficiently robust scientific evidence. Annex I stipulates that:

'All buildings shall have lighting with an intensity of at least 20 lux during the lighting periods, measured at bird eye level and illuminating at least 80 % of the useable area. A temporary reduction in the lighting level may be allowed when necessary following veterinary advice.'

Furthermore, there is a concern that the requirements contained in Annex I of the directive may actually increase stress in certain types of broilers, which can as a result increase the suffering of chickens kept for meat production.

I would therefore ask the Commission to detail what (if any) peer-reviewed science was used as evidence for the inclusion of this specific level of lighting during the drafting of this directive, plus ask the Commission to consider whether the lighting requirement contained in the directive could be reviewed.

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

Council Directive 2007/43/EC lays down minimum rules for the protection of chickens kept for meat production ([2]). Regarding light, points 6 and 7 of Annex I to the directive requires a minimum of light intensity of 20 lux only during the period of lighting of the building; during this period, the light must illuminate at least 80 % of the useable area; it also foresees that during most of the fattening period of chickens periods of lighting and periods of darkness alternate. It is important to consider the light requirements of the directive taking into account both light intensity and the lighting regime requirements.

The directive was adopted on the basis of the report of the Scientific Committee on Animal Health and Animal Welfare of 21 March 2000 on the Welfare of Chickens Kept for Meat production ([3]). Regarding light, the report examined the impact on broilers' welfare of photoperiod, light intensity and light source and wavelength.

The directive applies since 30 June 2010 and at this stage, the Commission does not intend to amend its requirements regarding lighting.

([1]) OJ L 182, 12.7.2007, p. 19.
([2]) OJ L 182, 12.7.2007, p. 19.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fs/sc/scah/out39_en.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002255/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(28. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Die Situation der Roma in Österreich

Es gibt ernsthafte Anlässe zur Besorgnis, dass österreichische Behörden regelmäßig bei der Bekämpfung rassistischer Ausschreitungen versagen, wenn es sich bei den Opfern um Roma handelt. Einzelne Roma mit einer anderen rechtlichen Stellung als einer vollen Staatsbürgerschaft in Österreich wurden in den letzten Jahren effektiv an den äußersten Rand der österreichischen Gesellschaft gedrängt. Selbst die Verpflichtung Österreichs, Roma auf der Flucht vor Verfolgung Schutz zu bieten, wurde durch die derzeitige fremdenfeindliche Stimmung in Österreich beeinträchtigt. Hinsichtlich Beschäftigung sehen sich Roma in Österreich mit zahlreichen weiteren diskriminierenden Auflagen konfrontiert, wie die Europäische Kommission gegen Rassismus und Intoleranz (ECRI, European Commission against Racism and Intolerance) des Europarats festgestellt hat.

1. Ist es der Kommission in Anbetracht der oben genannten Punkte bekannt, dass österreichische Gerichte nicht willens waren, Polizeibeamte wegen rassistisch motivierter Straftaten schuldig zu sprechen?

2. Ist dies mit europäischen Rechtsvorschriften vereinbar?

3. Stehen die Ankündigungen der österreichischen Regierung im Einklang mit den Zielen der Strategie „Europa 2020“ zur Beseitigung der schulischen Ausgrenzung für Roma-Kinder?

4. Beabsichtigt die Kommission eine Zusammenarbeit mit Österreich bei der Organisation einer Informationskampagne für Eltern auf diesem Gebiet und bei Initiativen zum Abbau von Missverständnissen und der Nutzung von Stereotypen, die zu Spaltung und Ablehnung führen?

5. Was für Maßnahmen wird die Kommission ergreifen, um dazu beizutragen, die zahlreichen Nachteile der Roma auf dem Arbeitsmarkt in Österreich abzuwenden?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(30. Mai 2012)

Der Kommission sind die Vorwürfe im Einzelnen nicht bekannt. Sie verurteilt Rassismus in jeder Form, besonders wenn er von Behörden ausgeht, die mit gutem Beispiel vorangehen müssen.

Nach dem Rahmenbeschluss 2008/913/JI sind die Mitgliedstaaten verpflichtet, die vorsätzliche öffentliche Aufstachelung zu Gewalt oder Hass gegen eine nach den Kriterien der Rasse, Hautfarbe, Religion, Abstammung oder nationalen oder ethnischen Herkunft definierte Gruppe von Personen oder Einzelperson unter Strafe zu stellen ([1]). Die Kommission kontrolliert die Anwendung des Rahmenbeschlusses genau. Die Mitgliedstaaten waren verpflichtet, die Richtlinie bis zum 28. November 2010 in innerstaatliches Recht umzusetzen. Die Kommission prüft die von den Mitgliedstaaten mitgeteilten Maßnahmen zur Umsetzung des Rahmenbeschlusses und wird 2013 einen Bericht darüber vorlegen.

Zur nationalen Strategie Österreichs zur Integration der Roma und zur Umsetzung der Strategie EU 2020 in Österreich wird die Kommission im Bericht zur Bewertung der nationalen Strategien zur Eingliederung der Roma Stellung nehmen, der im Frühjahr 2012 angenommen werden soll. Im Nachgang zu dem Bericht wird die Kommission gegebenenfalls bilateral Kontakt zu den jeweiligen nationalen Behörden aufnehmen.

Im vergangenen Jahr ([2]) forderte die Kommission die Mitgliedstaaten auf, Strategien zur Einbeziehung der Roma mit realistischen Zielen in den vier Kernbereichen Bildung, Beschäftigung, Gesundheitsfürsorge und Wohnraum zu entwickeln. Zur Zeit prüft sie diese Strategien und wird dem Europäischen Parlament und dem Rat in den kommenden Monaten über ihre Ergebnisse berichten.

([1]) Rahmenbeschluss 2008/913/JI des Rates vom 28. November 2008 zur strafrechtlichen Bekämpfung bestimmter Formen und Ausdrucksweisen von Rassismus und Fremdenfeindlichkeit (ABl. L 328 vom 6.12.2008).
([2]) KOM(2011)173.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002255/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: The situation of Roma in Austria

There are serious concerns about the fact that the Austrian authorities are regularly failing to take action against racist abuse when the victims are Roma. In recent years, individual Roma in Austria with legal status other than full citizenship have effectively been driven to the extreme margins of Austrian society. Even Austria's attitude towards its obligation to provide protection to Roma fleeing persecution has been affected by the present anti-foreigner mood in Austria. Roma in Austria face numerous other discriminatory burdens in the field of employment, as the Council of Europe's European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) has noted.

1. Is the Commission aware that Austrian courts have been reluctant to find police officers guilty of racially motivated crimes?

2. Is this compatible with European legislation?

3. Are the announcements by the Austrian Government in line with the objectives of the 'Europe 2020' strategy for the elimination of school exclusion for Roma children?

4. Does the Commission intend to cooperate with Austria in organising an information campaign for parents in the area and in initiatives to reduce misunderstanding and the use of stereotypes leading to disruption and confrontation?

5. What kinds of measures will the Commission take to contribute to the prevention of the numerous disadvantages for Roma on the labour market in Austria?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2012)

The Commission has no specific information on these allegations. The Commission condemns any manifestation of racism, particularly by public authorities, who must set an example in this respect.

Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA obliges Member States to penalise intentional public incitement to violence and hatred against groups or individuals by reference to their race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin ([1]). The Commission is monitoring closely the implementation this framework Decision. The Member States were obliged to transpose it by 28 November 2010. The Commission is assessing the notifications on Member States' implementing measures and will prepare a report to this end for 2013.

As regards the Austrian Government's 'National Roma Integration Strategy' and its compliance with the EU2020 strategy, the Commission will take position in the communication reporting on the assessment of National Roma Integration Strategies, which is scheduled for adoption in Spring 2012. As a follow up to the communication, bilateral contacts with the relevant national authorities are envisaged, if the need arises.

Last year ([2]) the Commission requested Member States to set out national strategies for Roma inclusion, incorporating achievable goals in the four priority areas of education, employment, healthcare and housing. The Commission is now assessing these and will report its findings to the European Parliament and the Council in the coming months.

([1]) Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, OJ L 328, 6.12.2008.
([2]) COM(2011) 173.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002257/12
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Post-2015 Millennium Development Goals

The European Union joined world leaders at the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000 with the aim 'to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanising conditions of extreme poverty'. Leaders of 189 countries committed their nations to a new global partnership, focused on eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), to eradicate extreme poverty with a deadline of 2015 by setting out a series of time-bound targets.

The plan was for countries and development partners to work together to reduce poverty and hunger, and tackle ill health, lack of education, gender inequality, lack of access to clean water and environmental degradation.

In 11 years there has been substantial progress in eradicating poverty but it still falls short of achieving the immediate targets.

The EU provides more than half of development aid, therefore it is the biggest supporter of developing countries in achieving MDGs and as such I would like to know what the EU strategy will be towards international development after 2015.

In particular, I wish to ask the Commission what their view is on the implementation of a strategy to deal with the post-2015 Millennium Development Goals, and if they would support a UN-led approach in this area?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2012)

In looking beyond 2015, we should recognise the power the MDG framework has had in catalysing action on development. At the same time, the importance of issues such as growth, good governance, equity, environment and climate change in achieving poverty eradication might need to be better emphasised.

Different options and scenarios have to be considered in a fast changing world: i) no global framework, ii) continuity with or without new indicators and instruments, iii) a new framework. None of these options should be accepted or rejected at this early stage. It will be important that the demands of the poorest countries and the poorest people shapes the design of any post-2015 framework. Whatever the option ultimately chosen, it is important to ensure that a shared understanding is achieved on how global goals can be reached at national level, taking into account the wide range of national differences.

In 2012, the EU will consult relevant stakeholders in order to prepare a communication proposing principles for a possible post-2015 framework. To feed this reflection, the fourth edition of the European Report on Development in 2013 will address the post-2015 perspective and a study will review the EU's contribution to achieving the MDGs in the context of the 2013 United Nations MDG Review.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002258/12
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Barcelona Convention on marine pollution

The newspaper *European Voice*, in its issue of 16 February 2012, claims that the EU representatives attending the recent meeting of the Barcelona Convention had no mandate to sign an agreement to protect shark species, because it had not been determined whether the lead role in decision-making should be played by DG Environment or DG Mare.

Further, it claims that the Commission had no draft negotiating mandate until the day before the meeting, and that this had not been approved by ministers. In consequence, it is said, no agreement was reached regarding the protection of various shark species.

When was it determined which DG would play the lead role at the meeting, and which DG did so? Does the Commission challenge the claims made by *European Voice*, and if not, can it explain why the Commission President did not intervene to resolve the interdepartmental dispute before the EU was left looking divided and weak?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2012)

In accordance with Article 218(9) of the TFEU, the Commission adopted on 7 February a proposal for a Council Decision establishing the EU position in relation to proposals presented at the seventeenth meeting of the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention. Due to the need to assess all available scientific information in relation to the upgrading of ten shark species from Annex III to Annex II of the protocol, the Commission's proposal was adopted too late to be discussed by the Council prior to the Conference. However, Commission services ensured on-the-spot coordination so that the work of the Conference was not affected and the Council prerogatives not prejudged.

Preparations are now in hand to ensure that the EU will notify its final position on the approval of the amendments of the annexes within 180 days after the decision adopted by the Contracting Parties.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002259/12
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Directive 2002/46/EC

Directive 2002/46/EC on food supplements requires the setting of EU-wide maximum and minimum levels for each vitamin and mineral added to supplements.

1. Can the Commission provide an update on the progress the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) is making on setting maximum and minimum vitamin and mineral levels? When does it expect the final opinion to be published?

2. Is the Commission satisfied with the analysis, scientific test criteria and methodology being used by the EFSA to set the maximum and minimum vitamin and mineral levels?

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

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that according to Directive 2002/46/EC the exercise of the setting of maximum and minimum amounts of vitamins and minerals in food supplements is of the competence of the Commission and not of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).

In 2005 EFSA finalised its work on the upper safe levels of vitamins and minerals ([1]) which is one of the criteria for the setting of such amounts

Currently EFSA is in the process of finalising work on two opinions relevant to the setting of maximum and minimum amounts of vitamins and minerals:

— re-evaluating the safety in use of Vitamin D and calcium and, if necessary, providing revised tolerable intake levels for those nutrients (expected date of publication is end of July 2012),

— reviewing and if necessary updating Population Reference Intakes for the concerned vitamins and minerals (work is ongoing).

EFSA provides opinions based on generally accepted scientific evidence and their scientific risk assessments are consistent with the requirements set out in the EU legislation.

([1]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/ndatopics/docs/ndatolerableuil.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002261/12
an die Kommission
Jürgen Creutzmann (ALDE)
(28. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Behandlung von Vertragsverletzungsverfahren bei Online-Glücksspielen

Ziffer 20 der Entschließung des Europäischen Parlaments vom 15. November 2011 zu Online-Glücksspielen im Binnenmarkt (2011/2084(INI)) ([1]) fordert die Europäische Kommission dazu auf, „die seit 2008 anhängigen Vertragsverletzungsverfahren fortzuführen", und „erinnert die Kommission als ‚Hüterin der Verträge' an ihre Verpflichtung, nach dem Eingang von Beschwerden in Bezug auf Verstöße gegen die in den Verträgen verankerten Freiheiten rasch tätig zu werden".

1. Wie viele Beschwerden hat die Kommission seit Januar 2008 zur Anwendung von Artikel 49 des Vertrags auf den Online-Glücksspielsektor erhalten?

2. Für wie viele und welche Vertragsverletzungsverfahren steht derzeit eine Entscheidung der Europäischen Kommission aus?

3. Warum war die Kommission bisher so zögerlich, in diesem Bereich aktiv zu werden? Werden alle Beschwerden und anhängigen Vertragsverletzungsverfahren entsprechend den in der „Mitteilung […] über die Beziehungen zum Beschwerdeführer bei Verstößen gegen das Gemeinschaftsrecht" (KOM(2002)0141) dargelegten Verfahren und insbesondere den Bestimmungen zu Fristen behandelt?

4. Welche Maßnahmen wird die Kommission ergreifen, um den Aufforderungen des Parlaments 2012 nachzukommen?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(25. April 2012)

2008 leitete die Kommission gegen elf Mitgliedstaaten Vertragsverletzungsverfahren in Bezug auf Artikel 56 AEUV und die Bereitstellung sowie Bewerbung von Glücksspielen ein. Nach Gesprächen mit den betroffenen Mitgliedstaaten und den daraufhin erlassenen Rechtsvorschriften sind eine Reihe der Verfahren eingestellt worden. Verfahren gegen neun Mitgliedstaaten laufen weiterhin. Insgesamt 28 Beschwerden gegen zwölf Mitgliedstaaten gingen bei der Kommission hinsichtlich der Anwendung von Artikel 49 bzw. 56 AEUV im Bereich Glücksspiel ein. Die Kommission befindet sich mit einigen dieser Mitgliedstaaten in Gesprächen bezüglich Änderungen von Rechtsvorschriften, an denen derzeit gearbeitet wird und deren Kompatibilität mit dem EU-Recht sichergestellt werden muss.

Die Beschwerdeführer werden nach den Regeln für die Beziehungen zum Beschwerdeführer über den Stand des Verfahrens informiert. Die Untersuchungen haben daneben sowohl im Rat wie auch im Parlament zu Debatten über das Glückspiel geführt, mit dem Ergebnis, dass die Kommission unter anderem ersucht wurde, alternative Lösungen für diese Verfahren zu prüfen ([2]). Daraufhin hat die Kommission 2011 das Grünbuch über Online-Gewinnspiele im Binnenmarkt ([3]) verabschiedet.

Die Kommission stützt sich bei ihren derzeitigen Untersuchungen zu einzelstaatlichen Rechtsvorschriften in den noch laufenden Vertragsverletzungsverfahren auf die im Grünbuch genannten Fakten und detaillierten Informationen. Wenn einzelstaatliche Rechtsvorschriften offensichtlich nicht im Einklang mit der Rechtsprechung des Gerichtshofes stehen, wird sie entsprechende Maßnahmen ergreifen. Die in Kürze erscheinende Mitteilung zum Online-Glücksspiel im Binnenmarkt befasst sich ebenfalls mit der Frage der Kompatibilität von einzelstaatlichen Rechtsvorschriften mit dem Vertrag.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=en&reference=2011/2084(INI).
([2]) Fortschrittsberichte der Ratsvorsitze und Schlussfolgerungen des Rates vom 10. Dezember 2010 zum Rahmen für Glücksspiele und Wetten in den EU-Mitgliedstaaten, Entschließung vom 10. März 2009 zu der Integrität von Online-Glücksspielen.
([3]) KOM(2011)128 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002261/12
to the Commission
Jürgen Creutzmann (ALDE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Treatment of infringement cases in the field of online gambling

Paragraph 20 of the European Parliament resolution of 15 November 2011 on online gambling in the internal market (2011/2084(INI) ([1])) calls on the European Commission 'to pursue those infringement proceedings that have been pending since 2008' and 'reminds the Commission, as "guardian of the Treaties", of its duty to act swiftly upon receipt of complaints about violations of the freedoms enshrined in the Treaties.'

1. How many complaints has the Commission received concerning the application of Article 49 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to the online gambling sector since January 2008?

2. How many and what infringement cases are currently pending decision by the European Commission?

3. Why has the Commission been so reluctant to act in this area? Are all complaints and pending infringement cases dealt with in accordance with the procedures as set out in the communication on relations with the complainant in respect of infringements of community law (COM(2002)0141) and in particular with the provisions on time limits for investigating complaints?

4. What action is the Commission going to take to meet the calls of the Parliament in 2012?

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

In 2008, the infringement proceedings launched by the Commission in relation to Article 56 TFEU and provision and promotion of gambling services concerned 11 Member States. Further to the dialogue established with the Member States concerned and to legislation subsequently adopted, a number of infringement proceedings have been closed. Cases against 9 Member States remain under investigation; 28 complaints registered with the Commission on the application of Articles 49 or 56 TFEU in the field of gambling concern 12 Member States. The Commission is in dialogue with a number of these Member States in light of legislative changes they are undertaking and with a view to ensuring these are consistent with EC law.

Complainants have been kept informed about the status of the proceedings, in accordance with the rules on relations with complainants. The investigations also led to debates on gambling in Council and in Parliament, culminating in calls on the Commission *inter alia* to explore alternatives to these proceedings ([2]). In response to these challenges the Commission adopted in 2011 the Green Paper on online gambling in the internal market ([3]).

The Commission will rely on the facts and the in-depth information gathered in the Green Paper consultation in its ongoing assessment of national legislation in pending infringement cases, and it will take action in respect of national rules clearly not complying with the Court's jurisprudence. The upcoming communication on online gambling in the internal market will also address the issue of compatibility of national gambling rules with the Treaty.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=en&reference=2011/2084(INI).
([2]) Presidency Progress Reports and Council conclusions of 10 December 2010 on the framework for gambling and betting in the EU Member States, European Parliament resolution of 10 March 2009 on the integrity of online gambling.
([3]) COM(2011) 128 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-002262/12
an die Kommission
Silvana Koch-Mehrin (ALDE)
(28. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Dienstliches Interesse

Anhang IVa (8)(96), Teilzeitbeschäftigung, Artikel 2 Absatz 96 Unterabsatz 2 des Statuts der Beamten der Europäischen Gemeinschaften und der Beschäftigungsbedingungen für die sonstigen Bediensteten der Europäischen Gemeinschaften besagt, dass „in Ausnahmefällen und im dienstlichen Interesse die Anstellungsbehörde die Genehmigung vor Ablauf des Zeitraums, für den sie erteilt worden ist, unter Einhaltung einer zweimonatigen Benachrichtigungsfrist zurückziehen kann".

Könnte die Kommission darlegen, was als Ausnahmefall angesehen wird?

Könnte die Kommission erläutern, was „im dienstlichen Interesse" bedeutet?

Verfügt die Kommission über eine Definition von „dienstlichem Interesse"? Falls nicht, auf welcher Grundlage zieht die Kommission die Genehmigung vor Ablauf eines Zeitraums, für den sie erteilt worden ist, zurück?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(20. März 2012)

Zunächst möchte die Kommission der Klarheit halber die Frau Abgeordnete darauf hinweisen, dass die Genehmigung einer Teilzeitbeschäftigung in den in Artikel 55a Absatz 2 Buchstaben a, b und c des Statuts genannten Fällen keinesfalls zurückgezogen werden kann, da das Recht auf Teilzeitbeschäftigung in diesen Fällen ein absolutes Recht ist, das nicht eingeschränkt werden kann, selbst nicht in Ausnahmefällen.

In den unter den Buchstaben d und e aufgeführten Fällen kann eine Genehmigung hingegen verweigert werden, aber nur in Ausnahmefällen und aus zwingenden dienstlichen Gründen (siehe Artikel 55a Absatz 2 Unterabsatz 2). Analog dazu kann die Genehmigung in diesen Fällen gemäß Anhang IVa Artikel 2 Absatz 2 des Statuts in Ausnahmefällen und aus zwingenden dienstlichen Gründen zurückgezogen werden.

Wann ein Ausnahmefall vorliegt, kann nur nach einer Prüfung im Einzelfall unter Berücksichtigung der dienstlichen Interessen festgestellt werden und lässt sich somit nicht allgemein definieren.

Der Begriff „dienstliches Interesse" bedeutet in diesem Zusammenhang, dass der Entzug der Genehmigung für das reibungslose Funktionieren des Organs notwendig ist oder — gemäß der ständigen Rechtsprechung — dass neue Umstände eingetreten sind, die bei der Genehmigung ursprünglich nicht gegeben waren und die eine Verkürzung der Dauer der Teilzeitbeschäftigung erforderlich machen. Darüber hinaus ist die zuständige Behörde verpflichtet, sämtlichen Faktoren Rechnung zu tragen, die Einfluss auf ihre Entscheidung haben könnten, insbesondere die Interessen des Betroffenen („devoir de solicitude", „Fürsorgepflicht").

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002262/12
to the Commission
Silvana Koch-Mehrin (ALDE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: The interests of the service

Annex IVa (Part-time work), Article 2, second paragraph, of the Staff Regulations of Officials and the conditions of employment of other servants of the European Union stipulates that 'The Appointing Authority may, in exceptional cases and in the interests of the service, withdraw the authorisation before the expiry of a period for which it is granted, giving the official two months' notice'.

Could the Commission specify what the exceptional cases are?

Could the Commission explain what is meant by 'in the interests of the service?'

Does the Commission have a definition of 'the interests of the service'? If not, on what grounds does the Commission withdraw the authorisation before the expiry of a period for which it is granted?

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

The Commission would first like to inform the Honourable Member, for the sake of clarity, that an authorisation to work part-time can never be withdrawn for the cases listed under points (a), (b) and (c) of Article 55a(2) of the Staff Regulations (SR), as these entitlements to work part-time constitute an absolute right which cannot be restricted, even under exceptional circumstances.

Regarding the cases listed under (d) and (e) of Article 55a(2), the authorisation may indeed be refused but only in exceptional circumstances and for overriding service-related reasons (see Article 55a(2) second paragraph). Similarly, as provided in Article 2, second paragraph, of Annex IVa of the SR, authorisation given pursuant to these provisions may be withdrawn, but only in exceptional cases and in the interests of the service.

What constitutes such exceptional cases can only be determined following a case by case analysis taking account of the interest of the service and they can thus not be defined in abstract terms.

The term 'interest of the service', in this respect means that the withdrawal is necessary for the proper functioning of the institution or, according to existing case law, when there are new circumstances which did not exist when the initial authorisation was given requiring the period for which the part-time work was granted to be shortened. Moreover, the competent authority is obliged to take into consideration all factors which may affect its decision including in particular, the interests of the member of staff concerned (*devoir de solicitude*, *Fürsorgepflicht*).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002263/12
à la Commission
Frédérique Ries (ALDE)
(28 février 2012)

Objet: Violation de la convention CITES par les pratiques de pêche à la baleine du Japon

La chasse à la baleine est interdite depuis la saison 1985/1986, en vertu du moratoire adopté par la Commission baleinière internationale en 1982, et qui s'applique depuis 1986 à l'égard du Japon. Cet État bénéficie cependant d'une dérogation à ce moratoire et peut ainsi mener des «programmes scientifiques» et commercialiser ensuite la viande des baleines capturées. Le Japon a donc repris en décembre 2011 sa pêche annuelle dans l'Antarctique, sous couvert de recherches scientifiques.

Selon des informations qui nous ont été communiquées, une enveloppe dédiée à la reconstruction des zones touchées par le tsunami du 11 mars 2011 dernier servirait à la financer. Le gouvernement japonais viendrait en effet d'allouer 21,1 millions d'euros (2,3 milliards de yens) aux baleiniers afin qu'ils puissent reconstruire leur flotte, fortement touchée par le tsunami de 2011. Une partie de cette somme irait également au déploiement de navires d'escorte de cette flotte, afin de tenter d'empêcher des militants «anti-chasse» de perturber la chasse des mois à venir, ce qui a fait réagir de nombreuses organisations de protection de l'environnement.

Ces pratiques contreviennent à l'évidence à la lettre et à l'esprit de la Convention sur le commerce international des espèces de faune et de flore sauvages menacées d'extinction (CITES), dont le Japon est membre depuis 1980 et qui protège de nombreuses espèces de baleines. Faut-il rappeler que l'Union européenne applique depuis 1984 sur son territoire la convention CITES et qu'elle en est l'un des ardents défenseurs sur la scène internationale.

1. La Commission peut-elle nous assurer qu'aucun financement européen octroyé dans le cadre de l'aide à la reconstruction suite au tsunami de mars 2011, d'un montant d'environ 15 millions d'euros, n'a été détourné de son usage premier pour financer des pratiques de pêche inacceptables?

2. Quels moyens de pression sur le Japon la Commission entend-elle exercer lors du prochain sommet bilatéral UE-Japon afin de mettre un terme à cette violation flagrante de la CITES par l'un de ses principaux partenaires commerciaux?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(18 avril 2012)

La Commission confirme qu'elle n'a octroyé aucun financement pour des pratiques inacceptables concernant la pêche à la baleine. Elle a accordé 10 millions d'euros au titre d'une aide d'urgence à la Fédération internationale de la Croix-Rouge, dont l'objectif était d'améliorer la situation humanitaire des familles touchées par un tremblement de terre et un tsunami en leur dispensant une aide fondée sur les besoins. Les fonds ont essentiellement été consacrés à la fourniture d'une assistance non alimentaire aux familles touchées par un tremblement de terre ou un tsunami afin de couvrir les besoins de leurs ménages.

Il n'est pas aisé de qualifier les pratiques du Japon concernant la pêche à la baleine de violation de la CITES puisque ce pays a formulé des réserves sur l'inscription des baleines aux annexes de la CITES. Cependant, l'UE ne manque pas, à de nombreuses occasions, d'exprimer sa différence d'approche avec le Japon sur ce sujet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002263/12
to the Commission
Frédérique Ries (ALDE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Japanese whaling practices which contravene the CITES Convention

Whaling has been banned since the 1985/1986 season in keeping with the moratorium which was adopted by the International Whaling Commission in 1982 and which has applied to Japan since 1986. However, that country enjoys a derogation from the moratorium under the terms of which it can carry out 'scientific programmes' and then market the meat from the captured whales. Japan therefore resumed its annual whaling effort in the Antarctic, under the guise of scientific research, in December 2011.

According to information communicated to us, this whaling effort will apparently be financed by a budget earmarked for the reconstruction of the areas affected by the tsunami of 11 March 2011. The Japanese Government has reportedly just made EUR 21.1 million (JPY 2.3 billion) available to whalers to rebuild their fleets which were severely damaged by the 2011 tsunami. Part of this sum would also go towards funding the deployment of escort ships for these fleets in an effort to prevent 'anti-whaling' activists from disrupting the hunt in the coming months, a move which has prompted angry reactions from many environmental organisations.

These practices obviously contravene the letter and spirit of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), of which Japan has been a member since 1980 and under which many species of whale are protected. Need I remind you that the European Union has enforced the CITES Convention on its territory since 1984 and that it is one of the convention's most ardent defenders on the international stage?

1. Can the Commission confirm that none of the European funding of approximately EUR 15 million granted as reconstruction assistance following the March 2011 tsunami has been diverted to fund unacceptable whaling practices?

2. What pressure does the Commission intend to exert on Japan at the next bilateral EU-Japan Summit in order to put a stop to this flagrant violation of CITES by one of the EU's main trading partners?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2012)

The Commission can confirm that no funding was provided for unacceptable whaling practices. The Commission granted EUR 10 million for emergency assistance to the International Federation of the Red Cross with the objective of improving the humanitarian situation of families affected by an earthquake and tsunami through providing needs-based humanitarian aid. The funds were focused on providing a non-food assistance package to families affected by an earthquake and tsunami in order to have their household needs met.

It is not straightforward qualifying whaling practices in Japan as contravening the CITES Convention since Japan introduced reservations on the inclusion of whales into the CITES Appendices. Nonetheless, on numerous occasions, the EU does express its difference of approach to whaling with Japan.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002265/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Carlo Fidanza (PPE), Mario Mauro (PPE), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Antonio Cancian (PPE), Elisabetta Gardini (PPE), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE), Licia Ronzulli (PPE), Marco Scurria (PPE) e Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(28 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Due soldati italiani in stato di fermo in India

Lo scorso 15 febbraio, Massimiliano Latorre e Salvatore Girone, militari italiani in forza al Battaglione San Marco, di stanza sulla petroliera italiana Enrica Lexie come nucleo militare di protezione per fronteggiare i pirati nel golfo di Aden, sono stati posti in stato di fermo dalle autorità dello Stato indiano di Kerala ed accusati dell'omicidio di due pescatori indiani, scambiati per pirati.

Considerando:

— che le dinamiche dell'episodio non sono ancora chiare, dato che i due militari hanno dichiarato di avere sparato colpi di avvertimento in aria e in acqua (warning shots) per salvaguardare il proprio territorio, rispondendo in pieno alle norme esistenti, e di non aver quindi in nessun modo aperto il fuoco contro l'imbarcazione indiana;

— che inoltre, proprio la stessa sera, la petroliera Olympic Fair, battente bandiera greca, ha subito e respinto — come documentato dal dossier 054-12 pubblicato su internet dall'International Maritime Bureau Piracy Reporting Centre — un attacco da parte di pirati 2 km al largo del porto indiano di Kochi;

— che, al momento, manca una perizia balistica sull'imbarcazione colpita e sui proiettili utilizzati;

— che i due militari si trovavano sulla Enrica Lexie in base alle risoluzioni 1970 (2011) e 1973 (2011) del Consiglio di sicurezza dell'ONU e al decreto legge numero 130 del 2 agosto 2011 della Repubblica italiana sulla lotta alla pirateria e che, quindi, come organi dello Stato italiano, godono dell'immunità dalla giurisdizione degli stati stranieri;

— che essendo l'episodio avvenuto in acque internazionali, la petroliera — in base alle norme internazionali — dovrebbe rientrare sotto la giurisdizione del paese di origine, nella fattispecie la giurisdizione italiana;

— che in base al quadro normativo appena descritto, quelli in corso da parte delle autorità di polizia indiane si possono definire atti unilaterali;

si chiede all'Alto Rappresentante dell'Unione per gli affari esteri e la politica di sicurezza quali azioni intende intraprendere per sostenere la diplomazia italiana e agevolare il rilascio e il pronto rimpatrio dei due soldati.

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(8 agosto 2012)

Su richiesta del governo italiano, l'AR/VP ha dato istruzioni al servizio europeo per l'azione esterna (SEAE) di intensificare i contatti con le controparti indiane e di richiamare la loro attenzione sulla complessità del caso. Pur riconoscendo che la questione è al momento pendente presso la giurisdizione indiana, sia il SEAE a Bruxelles che la delegazione dell'UE a New Delhi hanno esaminato con le competenti autorità indiane i vari aspetti del caso e ribadito la necessità di trovare il più presto possibile una soluzione soddisfacente.

La questione del personale armato a bordo delle navi mercantili è oggetto di consultazione nelle varie sedi internazionali, in particolare nell'ambito dell'IMO (Organizzazione marittima internazionale) e del Gruppo di contatto internazionale antipirateria al largo delle coste somale. L'UE e l'India hanno concordato di intensificare i contatti a questo riguardo e di perseguire con fermezza una revisione delle attuali prassi per prevenire il ripetersi di incidenti simili in futuro.

Sono attualmente in corso consultazioni tra il governo italiano e quello indiano nonché con tutte le parti interessate. L'AR/VP si augura quindi che la questione possa essere rapidamente risolta.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002265/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Carlo Fidanza (PPE), Mario Mauro (PPE), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Antonio Cancian (PPE), Elisabetta Gardini (PPE), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE), Licia Ronzulli (PPE), Marco Scurria (PPE) and Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Two Italian soldiers held in custody in India

On 15 February, Massimiliano Latorre and Salvatore Girone, Italian soldiers from the San Marco battalion, stationed on the Italian oil tanker *Enrica Lexie* as a vessel protection detachment to combat pirates in the Gulf of Aden, were taken into custody by the authorities of the Indian State of Kerala, charged with the murder of two Indian fishermen, who had been mistaken for pirates.

The exact events are not yet clear, given that the two soldiers have stated that they fired warning shots in the air and into the water to protect their territory, in full compliance with the rules in force, and that they certainly did not, therefore, open fire on the Indian vessel.

Moreover, that same evening, the Greek-flagged oil tanker *Olympic Fair* was subjected to, and fought off, a pirate attack two kilometres off the Indian port of Kochi, as is documented in file 054-12 published on the Internet by the International Maritime Bureau Piracy Reporting Centre.

At present, there is no ballistic report on the vessel attacked and the bullets used.

The two soldiers were on the *Enrica Lexie* in accordance with UN Security Council Resolutions 1970 (2011) and 1973 (2011) and with the Italian Legislative Decree No 130 of 2 August 2011 Republic on measures to combat piracy and, therefore, as officers of the Italian State, they enjoy immunity from the jurisdiction of foreign countries.

Since the incident took place in international waters, the oil tanker, in accordance with international legislation, should come under the jurisdiction of the country of origin, in this case Italian jurisdiction.

In the light of the legal framework described above, the action taken by the Indian police authorities can only be described as unilateral.

What action will the High Representative take to support Italian diplomatic efforts and facilitate the release and immediate repatriation of the two soldiers?

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

At the request of the Italian Government, the HR/VP has directed the EEAS to intensify contacts with Indian counterparts to draw their attention to the complexity of the case. Whilst acknowledging that the matter is now in front of the Indian jurisdiction, both the EEAS Headquarters and the EU Delegation in Delhi have discussed the various elements with the competent Indian authorities and the need to find a satisfactory solution as soon as possible.

The issue of armed personnel on board merchant vessels is the object of consultation in international fora, in particular within the IMO and the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia. The EU and India have agreed to intensify contacts in this regard and to vigorously pursue review of the current practices in order to prevent such incidents from happening again.

Consultations are currently ongoing between the Italian and Indian Governments as well as with with all interested parties. The HR/VP therefore hopes that the matter will be resolved soon.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002268/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(28 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Mongolia Interna, campagna di persecuzione contro la Chiesa sotterranea

La polizia cinese ha lanciato un'aspra campagna di persecuzione contro la comunità cattolica sotterranea della Mongolia Interna. In poche settimane diversi preti sono stati arrestati; altri hanno dovuto nascondersi per non essere catturati; le decine di comunità sparse nel territorio non hanno la possibilità di partecipare ai sacramenti; molti sacerdoti sono costretti a subire sessioni di lavaggio del cervello sulla politica religiosa; il seminario è stato chiuso.

La comunità cattolica sotterranea della diocesi di Suiyuan è forte di circa 30mila fedeli; ha al suo attivo 35 sacerdoti e 90 suore.

Lo scorso 30 gennaio, sei sacerdoti sono stati arrestati durante un raduno; il 31 gennaio è stato arrestato anche l'amministratore diocesano, insieme a un altro sacerdote.

I quasi 30 sacerdoti rimasti liberi sono andati tutti in clandestinità totale per non farsi arrestare. Dalla scorsa domenica, 19 febbraio, i fedeli non sono riusciti a partecipare ad alcuna celebrazione perché i sacerdoti evitano di uscire allo scoperto, data la grande presenza di forze dell'ordine.

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. É il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante al corrente della situazione?

2. Quali politiche intende attuare il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per garantire il diritto alla libertà religiosa in Mongolia Interna?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(12 giugno 2012)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è al corrente delle recenti relazioni in merito all'arresto dei preti della chiesa clandestina della Mongolia Interna.

L'UE attribuisce grande importanza alla situazione dei diritti umani in Cina ed è particolarmente preoccupata per le restrizioni alla libertà di religione e per la persecuzione delle persone in ragione del loro credo.

L'UE ha espresso ancora una volta la sua preoccupazione durante l'ultima sessione del dialogo UE-Cina sui diritti umani tenutosi nel giugno 2011. La seconda sessione del dialogo UE-Cina sui diritti umani previsto per il 2011 è stata di fatto annullata dalla parte cinese.

Di recente, l'UE ha espresso preoccupazione per la notizia relativa all'arresto di fedeli cristiani in ragione del loro credo e delle loro attività religiose sia in occasione del 14° vertice UE-Cina tenutosi il 14 febbraio 2012 a Pechino, sia durante l'ultima sessione del dialogo UE-Cina sui diritti umani tenutasi il 29 maggio a Bruxelles.

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 in conformità della costituzione cinese e degli impegni internazionali assunti dal paese.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002268/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Inner Mongolia — persecution of the underground Church

The Chinese police force has embarked on a ruthless persecution campaign against the underground Catholic community in Inner Mongolia. Several priests have been arrested in the space of just a few weeks, and others have gone into hiding to avoid capture. The dozens of communities scattered throughout the region can no longer go to confession or receive Holy Communion. Many priests have been forced to endure religious policy brainwashing sessions, and the seminary has been closed.

The underground Catholic community of the diocese of Suiyuan is made up of about 30 000 worshippers, 35 priests and 90 nuns.

On 30 January 2012, six priests were arrested during a rally. On 31 January 2012, a diocesan administrator was also arrested, together with another priest.

The 30 or so remaining priests have all gone underground to avoid being arrested. Worshippers have been unable to attend any service since last Sunday, 19 February 2012, because priests are avoiding going out in public, given the high police presence.

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

2. What policies does she intend to implement in order to guarantee the right to religious freedom in Inner Mongolia?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President is fully aware of recent reports about the arrests of priests of the unofficial church in Inner Mongolia.

The EU attaches great importance to the human rights situation in China. It is particularly concerned by restrictions on freedom of religion and harassment of people in relation to their beliefs.

The EU raised its concern once again at the last round of the EU-China human rights dialogue which took place in June 2011. The second round of the EU-China human rights dialogue foreseen for 2011 was de facto cancelled by the Chinese side.

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 on 14 February 2012 in Beijing and at the last session of the EU-China human rights dialogue which took place in Brussels on 29 May.

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.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002269/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(28 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Kazakistan, nuove leggi sulla libertà religiosa

In Kazakistan le nuove leggi sulla libertà religiosa fanno sparire 579 fra chiese protestanti, sette islamiche, gruppi e comunità di fede con meno di 50 persone registrate.

Dallo scorso 21 ottobre, data di entrata in vigore del provvedimento, il numero delle realtà religiose è sceso del 13 %.

Molte chiese protestanti, fra cui i cristiani battisti e gli avventisti del settimo giorno, saranno costrette a celebrare le proprie funzioni in abitazioni private e sotto lo stretto controllo delle autorità. In questi giorni il governo kazako ha inviato una lettera a tutte le comunità invitandole ad adeguarsi alle nuove normative oppure a cessare subito la propria attività.

Le autorità hanno concesso un anno per raggiungere il limite di fedeli necessario per la registrazione. Tuttavia in questo periodo nessuna realtà con un numero di fedeli inferiore a 50 individui potrà celebrare funzioni pubbliche anche se in regola con le leggi precedenti.

Inoltre, chi rifiuterà di registrarsi o celebrerà funzioni pubbliche senza requisiti sarà punito.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. Se il VP/HR è al corrente della situazione?

2. Quali politiche intende attuare il VP/HR per garantire il diritto alla libertà religiosa in Kazakistan?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton e i suoi servizi sono ben consapevoli della situazione nonché della legge sulla religione e dei nuovi decreti adottati in Kazakistan nel gennaio 2012. L'AR/VP e suoi servizi hanno espresso la propria preoccupazione al riguardo negli incontri bilaterali avuti in Kazakistan, tra cui l'ultimo dialogo sui diritti umani del dicembre 2011. Secondo quanto affermato dall'OSCE/ODIHR nell'ottobre del 2011, al momento dell'adozione della nuova legge sulla religione, c'è il rischio che la libertà di religione e di credo possa essere limitata nel paese senza motivo e l'Unione è dell'avviso che ciò possa costituire un passo indietro per la conformità del Kazakistan agli impegni assunti nel quadro dell'OSCE. Il responsabile dell'agenzia governativa per gli affari religiosi, Kairat Lama Sharif, ha dichiarato pubblicamente che, a partire dall'entrata in vigore del nuovo decreto governativo, i gruppi religiosi minoritari con meno di 50 membri non sono più riconosciuti dal punto di vista legale e non possono più riunirsi. Tali gruppi minoritari tuttavia, non hanno ancora fatto domanda per essere nuovamente registrati. Secondo la legge in oggetto, i gruppi hanno un anno di tempo (entro ottobre del 2012) per completare il processo di riregistrazione previa raccolta delle 50 firme necessarie e fino a quel momento possono ancora esercitare le proprie funzioni e il loro diritto di associazione non può essere limitato. Finora non sono state avviate cause giudiziarie e non sono state applicate sanzioni amministrative nei confronti dei gruppi religiosi che si sono riuniti. La delegazione dell'UE ad Astana sta seguendo e continuerà a seguire da vicino l'applicazione della legge e dei suoi decreti, in stretta collaborazione con i gruppi religiosi, le organizzazioni della società civile e le autorità. L'UE continuerà ad incoraggiare il Kazakistan a tutelare e promuovere la libertà di religione e di credo, che comprende il diritto delle minoranze religiose a manifestare liberamente la propria fede o il proprio credo e ad avere accesso ai servizi statali senza discriminazioni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002269/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Kazakhstan: new laws on religious freedom

In Kazakhstan, new laws on religious freedom will result in the disappearance of 579 Protestant churches Islamic sects, and religious groups and communities with fewer than 50 registered members.

Since 21 October, the date when the rules came into force, the number of religious groups has fallen by 13 %.

A large number of Protestant churches, including Baptist and Seventh Day Adventist churches, will be forced to conduct their services in private homes and under the strict control of the authorities. Over the last few days, the Kazakh Government has sent a letter to all such communities, demanding that they comply with the new regulations or cease activity immediately.

The authorities have granted a period of one year within which to achieve the number of followers necessary for registration. However, during this time, no community with fewer than 50 followers will be entitled to conduct public services, even if compliant with previous laws.

In addition, anyone refusing to register or conducting public services without meeting these requirements will be punished.

This being so,

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

2. What policy does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to adopt with a view to upholding the right to religious freedom in Kazakhstan?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President and her services are well aware of the situation and the law on religion, and its new decrees adopted in January 2012, in Kazakhstan. The HR/VP and her services expressed concerns about this in bilateral meetings with Kazakhstan, including in the last Human Rights Dialogue in December 2011. As OSCE/ODIHR stated at the adoption of the new Law on Religion in October 2011, there is a risk that the freedom of religion or belief could be unnecessarily restricted in Kazakhstan, and it is our understanding that this could constitute a step back in Kazakhstan's compliance with OSCE commitments. The Head of Kazakhstan's Agency for Religious Affairs, Kairat Lama Sharif has publically stated that since the adoption of the new governmental decree the minority religious groups with less than 50 members do not possess any valid legal personality and cannot convene anymore. However, these minority groups have not applied for re-registration yet. According to the law, they have one year (October 2012) to complete re-registration process if they can gather the necessary 50 signatures and until then, they can be active and their right to convene cannot be restricted. So far there have been no court cases initiated or administrative fines applied to those religious minority groups convening. The EU Delegation in Astana is and will continue to closely follow the implementation of the law and its decrees, in close consultation with religious groups and civil society organisations, as well as the authorities. The EU will keep encouraging Kazakhstan to maintain and promote the freedom of religion or belief including the rights of religious minorities to freely manifest their religion or belief and to be able to access government services equally.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002270/12
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(28 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Trans per costrizione

L'allarme è stato lanciato dal ministro brasiliano dei Diritti umani Maria do Rosario. Il governo di Brasilia metterà in campo una speciale task-force per smantellare una rete criminale che adesca adolescenti — anche via internet — nelle regioni povere del Brasile per costringerli a diventare transessuali e poi mandarli a prostituirsi anche in Europa. «Questi giovani — ha detto il ministro — sono trasformati nella loro sessualità in maniera violenta. É una situazione abominevole che deve essere investigata».

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Conosce il contenuto di questa indagine?

2. Sono stati scoperti sui mercati del sesso in Europa dei casi come quelli denunciati dal ministro brasiliano?

3. Non ritiene opportuno che l'Europol collabori con le autorità brasiliane per prevenire il fenomeno dell'emigrazione verso l'Europa dei giovani coinvolti nel losco traffico?

4. É a conoscenza di fenomeni di trasformazione sessuale violenta accaduti nei Paesi dell'Unione?

Risposta data da Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(19 aprile 2012)

La lotta contro la tratta di esseri umani è una priorità dell'Unione e degli Stati membri. La Commissione condivide la preoccupazione dell'onorevole parlamentare per la tratta dei giovani dal Brasile nell'UE.

La Commissione non ha avuto accesso al contenuto dell'indagine menzionata. L'OCTA di Europol del 2011 ([1]) rileva che i criminali brasiliani sono sempre più spesso individuati come facilitatori dell'immigrazione illegale nell'UE. I migranti irregolari possono essere più vulnerabili a diventare vittime della tratta. Inoltre, FRONTEX ([2]) ha riferito che i brasiliani sono la nazionalità più rappresentata fra le potenziali vittime della tratta di cittadini non europei nell'UE. In considerazione di ciò, la tratta degli esseri umani è attualmente oggetto del dialogo fra la Commissione e il Brasile sulla migrazione e del dialogo costante UE-Brasile sui diritti dell'uomo.

Mediante gli strumenti disponibili, quali le squadre investigative comuni e gli archivi di lavoro per fini di analisi, Europol sostiene e rafforza l'azione delle autorità competenti degli Stati membri dell'UE nei casi transfrontalieri di tratta degli esseri umani. Inoltre è all'esame la possibilità di stabilire un accordo di cooperazione per condividere i dati relativi alla tratta degli esseri umani tra il governo brasiliano e Europol.

La direttiva 2011/36/UE ([3]) si applica a tutte le forme di tratta degli essere umani e pone un'attenzione speciale sugli aspetti di genere della tratta. La Commissione ha inoltre finanziato progetti volti a rafforzare la cooperazione internazionale fra il Brasile e i paesi UE di destinazione, come ad esempio il progetto «Promuovere partnership transnazionali» ([4]) che affronta la questione del reclutamento di giovani transessuali brasiliani. Per ulteriori informazioni sui progetti, si rinvia al sito web anti-tratta dell'UE ([5]).

([1]) https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/press/europol-organised-crime-threat-assessment-2011-429.
([2]) http://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/Situational_Overview_on_Trafficking_in_Human_Beings.pdf
([3]) Direttiva 2011/36/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 5 aprile 2011, concernente la prevenzione e la repressione della tratta di esseri umani e la protezione delle vittime, e che sostituisce la decisione quadro del Consiglio 2002/629/GAI, GU L 101 del 15.4.2011, pagg.1-11.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/entity?id=bdf99c5e-eb32-460e-8501-6137bb8a5f0c.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/index.action?breadCrumbReset=true.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002270/12
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: Forced to change sexuality

The alarm was raised by the Brazilian Minister for Human Rights, Maria do Rosário. The Brazilian Government is set to launch a special task-force to dismantle a criminal network that lures teenagers in the poorest regions of Brazil, including via the Internet, forcing them to become transsexuals and sending them into prostitution, even in Europe. 'These young people are being violently forced to change their sexuality', stated the minister. 'This is an abominable situation that must be investigated.'

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is it aware of the substance of this investigation?

2. Have cases such as those reported by the Brazilian minister been discovered in European sex markets?

3. Does it not consider it appropriate for Europol to collaborate with the Brazilian authorities to prevent the emigration towards Europe of young people involved in this shady trafficking?

4. Is it aware of any forced sex changes occurring in EU countries?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(19 April 2012)

Addressing trafficking in human beings is a priority for the EU and the Member States. The Commission shares the Honourable Member's concern about the trafficking of young people from Brazil into the EU.

The Commission has not had access to the content of the mentioned investigation. Europol's OCTA 2011 ([1]) mentions that Brazilian criminals are increasingly detected as facilitators of irregular immigration in the EU. Irregular migrants can be more vulnerable to being trafficked. Furthermore, Frontex ([2]) also indicated that Brazilian is one of the most common nationalities among the potentially trafficked non-Europeans into the EU. In view of this, human trafficking is being addressed by the Commission in a dialogue with Brazil on migration and in the context of the regular EU-Brazil human rights dialogue.

Via the available instruments such as Joint Investigation Teams and Analytical Work Files, Europol supports and strengthens action by the competent authorities of the EU Member States in their cross-border human trafficking cases. In addition, the possibility of establishing a cooperation agreement for sharing of data related to human trafficking between the Brazilian Government and Europol is under consideration.

Directive 2011/36/EU ([3]) applies to all forms of trafficking in human beings. It has a special emphasis on the gendered nature of trafficking. Moreover, the Commission has funded projects such as 'Promoting Transnational Partnerships' ([4]), aimed at strengthening the international cooperation between Brazil and the EU countries of destination. The project addresses the issue of the recruitment of Brazilians young transsexuals. Further information on projects can be found on the EU anti-trafficking website ([5]).

([1]) https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/press/europol-organised-crime-threat-assessment-2011-429.
([2]) http://www.frontex.europa.eu/gfx/frontex/files/situational_overview_on_trafficking_in_human_beings.pdf
([3]) Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA OJ L 101, 15.4.2011, p. 1-11.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/entity?id=bdf99c5e-eb32-460e-8501-6137bb8a5f0c.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/index.action?breadCrumbReset=true.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002271/12
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(28 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Status AEO per la semplificazione doganale

Con riferimento al punto 2 della risposta all'interrogazione n. E-004279/2011, rilevo che, contrariamente a quanto affermato, in Stati come l'Italia non vi sono sostanziali differenze — quanto a minori controlli doganali — tra soggetti certificati AEOS o AEOF e soggetti non certificati. La predetta conclusione è avvalorata dalle risultanze emerse presso gli operatori del settore, nonché da specialisti in diritto doganale e in commercio internazionale da me interpellati, e trova ulteriore conferma nel testo della circolare dell'Agenzia delle Dogane italiane n. 36/D, del 28 dicembre 2007, che, al paragrafo 4.4 (pag. 39), stabilisce una graduatoria di affidabilità doganale suddivisa in due livelli: affidabilità «A», a cui dovrebbero corrispondere riduzioni di controllo dal 10 % al 50 %, e affidabilità «AA», dal 51 % al 90 %. All'atto del rilascio del certificato AEOS o AEOF, gli operatori che ottengono un «rating» pari ad «A» (la stragrande maggioranza) non si ritrovano, di fatto, a godere di alcun beneficio per la riduzione dei controlli, rispetto ad un soggetto non certificato AEO. Ciò anche in considerazione del fatto che l'Agenzia delle Dogane non comunica all'operatore la percentuale di riduzione dei controlli doganali. Tale situazione determina, a mio parere, uno svantaggio competitivo (e quindi un effetto distorsivo della concorrenza nel mercato interno) per le imprese italiane che, pur essendo certificate AEO, non godono dei medesimi benefici accordati alle imprese AEO operanti in altri Stati membri, andando così ad accentuare la prassi ormai diffusa tra gli operatori italiani — soprattutto del Nord — di sdoganare la merce presso dogane di altri Stati membri, con effetti estremamente negativi per l'economia nazionale. Ad aggravare la situazione concorre poi la recente circolare n. 41/D del 30.12.2011 (recante modifiche alla circolare 36/D del 2007) dell'Agenzia delle Dogane che sottopone a requisiti soggettivi ancora più stringenti gli esponenti delle imprese richiedenti lo status di AEO.

La Commissione:

1. Ha un'opinione in ordine alla legittimità della «graduatoria» introdotta con i due livelli di rating, di cui al paragrafo 4.4. della circolare dell'Agenzia delle Dogane?

2. Non ritiene tale graduatoria incompatibile con la normativa comunitaria?

3. Non ritiene la prassi dell'Agenzia delle Dogane di non informare gli operatori certificati AEO della percentuale di riduzione dei controlli, incompatibile con la normativa in vigore?

4. Se i predetti approcci dell'Agenzia delle Dogane non fossero penalizzanti per gli operatori italiani, come spiegherebbe la loro scelta di usufruire di dogane di altri Stati membri (Germania e Olanda di preferenza) per merci che poi vengono immediatamente trasferite in Italia?

Risposta data da Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(13 aprile 2012)

1. e 2. Come giustamente osservato dall'onorevole parlamentare, l'articolo 14*ter*, paragrafo 4, delle DAC (regolamento (CEE) n. 2454/93) dispone che «Il titolare di un certificato AEO sarà sottoposto a controlli fisici e documentali minori rispetto ad altri operatori». L'articolo fissa l'obbligo di ridurre i controlli per un AEO, ma non spiega in che modo e in quale misura i controlli dovrebbero essere ridotti. Le autorità doganali applicano tecniche di analisi del rischio a tutti gli operatori economici. Per i soggetti certificati AEO, il principio generale è che essi sono considerati meno rischiosi di altri operatori. La metodologia italiana si basa sul profilo di rischio specifico di operatori economici autorizzati e classifica questi ultimi in livelli che sono oggetto di minori controlli rispetto alla media. Pertanto, il fatto che qualsiasi controllo doganale dovrebbe essere basato sul rischio e che i soggetti AEO dovrebbero essere soggetti a un minor numero di controlli, è in linea con l'impostazione generale dell'UE.

3. Non esiste un obbligo giuridico di informare gli operatori economici sul loro profilo di rischio e in quale misura i controlli sono ridotti. Al contrario, poiché si tratta normalmente di informazioni sensibili che possono essere utilizzate impropriamente, le autorità doganali di norma non le forniscono.

4. Nell'UE le decisioni logistiche degli operatori economici sono interessate da un'ampia gamma di fattori, che riflette i vantaggi del mercato interno. La Commissione non dispone di informazioni secondo le quali gli operatori economici decidono di avvalersi delle dogane in particolari Stati membri sulla base della considerazione del loro status di operatore economico autorizzato (AEO). Nel monitorare l'attuazione del regime AEO, la Commissione prenderà in considerazione la pertinenza della questione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002271/12
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(28 February 2012)

Subject: 'Customs simplification' AEO status

With reference to point 2 of the answer to Question E-004279/2011, I note that, contrary to what was stated, in Italy and other countries there is no substantial difference — in terms of fewer customs checks — between AEOS- and AEOF-certified entities and uncertified entities. This conclusion is based on information obtained from sector operators and specialists in customs law and international trade. It is also borne out by the text of Italian Customs Authority Circular No 36/D, dated 28 December 2007, paragraph 4.4 (p. 39) of which establishes a hierarchy of customs reliability, divided into two tiers: 'A' reliability, which should equate to 10 % to 50 % fewer checks, and 'AA' reliability, corresponding to a reduction between 51 % and 90 %. When they are issued with an AEOS or AEOF certificate, operators obtaining an 'A' rating (the vast majority) do not, in fact, enjoy any benefits, in terms of reduced checks, compared with a non-AEO-certified entity. The Customs Authority, moreover, does not notify operators of the percentage reduction in customs checks. In my view, this situation entails a competitive disadvantage (and hence distorts competition on the internal market) for Italian businesses, which, despite being AEO-certified, do not enjoy the benefits afforded to AEO-certified businesses operating in other Member States, and is therefore serving to increase the now widespread practice amongst Italian operators — particularly in the North — of clearing goods through customs in other Member States, with extremely detrimental effects on the Italian economy. The recent Customs Authority Circular No 41/D of 30 December 2011 (incorporating amendments to the 2007 Circular 36/D) exacerbates the situation by subjecting businesses requesting AEO status to even more stringent subjective requirements.

1. Does the Commission have an opinion on the legitimacy of the 'hierarchy' introduced with the two rating levels as described in paragraph 4.4 of the Customs Authority circular?

2. Does it consider that hierarchy to be incompatible with EU legislation?

3. Does it not consider that, by failing to inform AEO-certified operators of the percentage reduction in checks, the Customs Authority is failing to comply with the current legislation?

4. If Italian operators were not being penalised by the aforementioned practices of the Customs Authority, why else would they choose to make use of customs in other Member States (with a preference for Germany and the Netherlands) for goods that are then immediately transported to Italy?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(13 April 2012)

1 and 2. As it is correctly pointed out by the Honourable MEP, Article 14 b 4) CCIP (Reg. 2454/1993) stipulates that 'The holder of an AEO certificate shall be subject to fewer physical and document-based controls than other economic operators'. The article sets out the obligation to reduce controls to an AEO but does not explain how and to what extent the controls should be reduced. Customs authorities apply risk analysis techniques for all economic operators. For AEOs, the general principle is that they are considered as being of lower risk than other operators. The Italian methodology is based on the specific risk profile of authorised economic operators and rates them within tiers that benefit from fewer controls than average. Therefore, it is in line with the EU's general approach that any customs control should be based on risk and that AEOs should be subject to fewer controls.

3. There is no legal obligation to inform economic operators about what their risk profile is and to what extent the controls are reduced. On the contrary, as this is usually sensitive information that could be misused, customs authorities do not usually provide it.

4. In the EU, the logistical decisions of economic operators are impacted by a wide range of factors, reflecting the benefits of the internal market. The Commission has no information that economic operators choose to make use of customs in a particular Member States according to the consideration given to their AEO status. In monitoring the implementation of the AEO scheme, the Commission will consider the pertinence of this issue.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002272/12
a la Comisión
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(29 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Utilización de fondos públicos europeos en Ourense (Galicia)

Según afirman diversos medios de comunicación de Galicia, el 22 de febrero de 2012, funcionarios de la Oficina Europea de Lucha contra el Fraude (OLAF) iniciaron una investigación en la Diputación de Ourense, que presuntamente ha utilizado de manera fraudulenta fondos europeos. La opacidad de las cuentas públicas de este organismo público y las dificultades para su fiscalización son un obstáculo para su correcta utilización y para el estudio de la eficiencia de los planes públicos, que frecuentemente el partido que represento, el Bloque Nacionalista Galego (BNG), ha denunciado, y por cuyo motivo planteamos las siguientes cuestiones:

¿Puede confirmar la Comisión si es cierta la información publicada por los medios de comunicación?

¿Puede informar la Comisión de las causas por las que ha abierto la OLAF una investigación a la Diputación de Ourense sobre el uso de fondos europeos?

¿Puede informar la Comisión si la investigación iniciada por la OLAF se corresponde con una visita de control rutinaria de la aplicación y ejecución de fondos comunitarios, o bien si se trata de una investigación exhaustiva a instancia propia, o consecuencia de una denuncia de un particular o particulares, sobre el uso fraudulento de fondos europeos por la Diputación de Ourense?

¿Puede informar la Comisión si la investigación abierta se refiere a la utilización de fondos comunitarios en la ejecución del Plan Daredo 2002-2004, un plan que tenia como objetivo dotar a los ciudadanos del rural de la provincia de Ourense de servicios básicos como la depuración de aguas, a través de la implantación de una red de tratamiento de aguas residuales?

¿Puede informar la Comisión si la investigación iniciada tiene también como objeto supervisar la utilización de los fondos europeos que ha percibido la Diputación de Ourense para ejecutar el proyecto denominado «Estaciones vivas, espacios vivos», consistente en la remodelación de seis estaciones ferroviarias en la provincia de Ourense durante el año 2003?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de abril de 2012)

La Comisión ha sido informada por la Oficina Europea de Lucha contra el Fraude (OLAF) de que hay una investigación en curso sobre determinados asuntos relacionados con los Fondos Estructurales de la UE en Ourense, España. Dado que el caso está en curso, la OLAF no puede aportar información adicional sobre la cuestión.

En cuanto a la pregunta sobre las condiciones para iniciar esta investigación, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría al artículo 5 del Reglamento (CE) n° 1073/1999 ([1]). La OLAF solo puede abrir un expediente cuando existen sospechas suficientemente fundadas de que se han cometido actos de fraude o corrupción u otros actos ilegales que afectan a los intereses financieros de la UE ([2]).

([1]) DO L 136 de 31.5.1999.
([2]) Para más información, véanse las sentencias del Tribunal de Justicia Europeo C-11/00 y C-15/00.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002272/12
to the Commission
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Use of European public funds in Ourense (Galicia)

According to reports in the Galician media, on 22 February 2012, European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) officials launched an investigation into the local council in the province of Ourense — the *Diputación de Ourense* — for alleged fraudulent use of European funds. The council's accounts are not transparent and difficult to audit. As a result, it is difficult to use the accounts properly and to examine the efficiency of public programmes. The party I represent — the Galician Nationalist Bloc (BNG) — has condemned this. With this in mind:

Can the Commission confirm whether the information published in the media is correct?

Can the Commission give any information about the reasons why OLAF has launched an investigation into the *Diputación de Ourense* on the use of European funds?

Can the Commission state whether the OLAF investigation corresponds to a routine inspection of the application and implementation of EU funds, is a case of an exhaustive investigation on OLAF's own initiative, or is the result of a complaint from a private individual or individuals about the fraudulent use of EU funds by the *Diputación de Ourense*?

Can the Commission state whether the investigation in question concerns the use of EU funds in implementing the 2002-2004 *Plan Daredo*, a plan whose objective was to provide the rural population of Ourense province with basic services such as water purification by setting up a wastewater treatment network?

Can the Commission state whether the goal of the investigation is also to scrutinise the use of European funds received by the *Diputación de Ourense* to implement the *Estaciones vivas, espacios vivos* [Living stations, living spaces] project, which consisted of renovating six railway stations in Ourense province during 2003?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2012)

The Commission has been informed by European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) that it has an ongoing investigation into certain matters involving EU structural funds in Ourense, Spain. Given that the case is ongoing OLAF can give no further information in the matter at this stage.

As far as the question on the conditions to open this investigation is concerned, the Commission would refer to Honourable Member to Article 5 of Regulation 1073/1999 ([1]). OLAF can only open cases when sufficiently serious suspicions exist that acts of fraud or corruption or other illegal acts affecting the EU financial interests have been committed ([2]).

([1]) OJ L136, 31.5.1999.
([2]) For more detailed explanations see European Court of Justice case rulings: C-11/00 and C-15/00.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002274/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(29. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Portugal/Privatverschuldung

Im Gegensatz zu Griechenland, wo eine exzessive Staatsverschuldung die aktuelle Krise ausgelöst hat, liegt der Grund im Falle Portugals in der überhöhten Verschuldung des privaten Sektors. Diese Verschuldung wird finanziert von Banken, vornehmlich von Niederlassungen spanischer Banken. Bei einem Ausfall der Privatschuldner würden die Schulden auf die Banken zurückfallen. Dies könnte wiederum zu einer Bankenkrise führen, da die Bankenschulden voraussichtlich zu öffentlichen Schulden würden.

1. Ist sich die Kommission dieser Tatsache bewusst?

2. Welche Maßnahmen trifft sie, damit in Portugal der Konsum auf ein Niveau zurückgeführt wird, das mit den Einkommen kompatibel ist?

3. Überwacht die Kommission etwaige Maßnahmen vor Ort in Portugal?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(19. April 2012)

Notleidende Kredite werden von den nationalen Aufsichtsbehörden genau überwacht und derzeit demonstrieren die portugiesischen Banken eine solide Rückstellungspraxis für überfällige Kredite. Die Rekapitalisierungsziele im Rahmen des wirtschaftlichen Anpassungsprogramms wurden bislang durch bankeninterne Ressourcen und die Zuführung von privatem Kapital erreicht. Das Programm umfasst die Rückgriffsmöglichkeit auf die mit 12 Mrd. EUR ausgestattete Solvenzstützungsfazilität für den Bankensektor für den Fall, dass eine Bank nicht in der Lage ist, sich aus privaten Quellen zu rekapitalisieren.

Nach Ansicht der Kommission bietet die Durchführung des wirtschaftlichen Anpassungsprogramms den vielversprechendsten Ansatz für eine nachhaltige Erholung des Verbrauchs in Portugal. Mit dem Programm soll unter anderem erreicht werden, dass der Verbrauch in Zukunft eher auf der Erwirtschaftung von Einkommen durch die inländische Produktion und weniger auf Krediten aus dem Ausland beruht.

Eine Reihe von Maßnahmen des wirtschaftlichen Anpassungsprogramms dienen der Effizienzsteigerung in Produktion und Dienstleistungserbringung auf lokaler Ebene. Für die Überwachung solcher Maßnahmen sind die portugiesischen Behörden zuständig, die wiederum gemäß der Vereinbarung der EU und dem IWF ([1]) Bericht erstatten.

([1]) Internationaler Währungsfonds.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002274/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(29 February 2012)

Subject: Portugal/private debt

Unlike Greece, where excessive government debt triggered the current crisis, the reason for Portugal's difficulties can be found in excessive debt in the private sector. This debt is financed by banks, mostly subsidiaries of Spanish banks. In the event of a default by private borrowers, the burden of debt would revert to the banks. This could in turn lead to a banking crisis, because the bank debts would probably be shouldered by the public.

1. Is the Commission aware of this fact?

2. What steps is it taking to ensure that consumption in Portugal returns to a level in line with income?

3. Does the Commission monitor any local measures in Portugal?

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

Non-performing loans are closely monitored by the national supervisor and currently Portuguese banks demonstrate sound provisioning for overdue loans. Recapitalisation targets under the economic adjustment programme have so far been met through bank-internal resources and private capital injections. The programme includes a EUR 12 billion back-stop, the Banking Solvency Support Facility, in case a bank is not able to re-capitalise from private sources.

The Commission considers that the implementation of the economic adjustment programme is the most promising way to recover consumption in Portugal in a sustainable manner. It is one of the objectives of the programme that in future consumption will be sustained through the generation of income from domestic production rather than through external borrowing as has happened in the past.

A number of measures in the adjustment programme aim at improving the efficiency in the production and services provision at local level. The monitoring of such measures is in the competence of the Portuguese authorities, which in turn has to report to EU/IMF ([1]) as specified in the Memorandum Of Understanding.

([1]) International Monetary Fund.