IV

(Informacje)

INFORMACJE INSTYTUCJI, ORGANÓW I JEDNOSTEK ORGANIZACYJNYCH UNII EUROPEJSKIEJ

PARLAMENT EUROPEJSKI

PYTANIA PISEMNE Z ODPOWIEDZIĄ

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

(2014/C 206/01)

Treść Strona

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010077/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 septembre 2013)

Objet: Financement «Horizon 2020»

Le Parlement européen, lors de sa session de septembre, a demandé à la Commission, compte tenu de l'importance de la recherche et de l'innovation (R&I) pour l'ensemble de l'économie européenne, de reconnaître l'importance de l'initiative «Horizon 2020» et de prévoir, à ce titre, un financement suffisant.

Quelle est la réponse de la Commission?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Geoghegan-Quinn au nom de la Commission
(17 octobre 2013)

Dans un contexte de compétition économique mondiale, la sortie de crise pour l'Europe exige que nous renforcions les investissements publics et privés dans la recherche, le développement et l'innovation.

La Commission a proposé un budget de 80 milliards d'euros (en prix constants de 2011) pour «Horizon 2020» dans le contexte du cadre financier pluriannuel (CFP) pour la période 2014-2020. Cela permettrait à l'Europe de financer des actions présentant une valeur ajoutée européenne et d'envoyer un signal fort de son engagement pour rester un acteur de rang mondial dans ces domaines.

Les négociations interinstitutionnelles sur le CFP ont permis de conclure un accord sur le programme «Horizon 2020» pour une somme de 70,2 milliards d'euros. Cela envoie un signal fort et constitue un catalyseur indispensable de croissance et un vecteur d'emploi. Elle salue la contribution que peut apporter le programme «Horizon 2020» à la stratégie Europe 2020.

La Commission attend avec intérêt la conclusion rapide des négociations interinstitutionnelles sur le paquet «Horizon 2020», dans lesquelles le Parlement européen a joué un rôle clé. L'objectif est de lancer les premiers appels à propositions dans le cadre de «Horizon 2020» avant la fin de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010077/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: Horizon 2020 funding

At its September part-session, Parliament called on the Commission, in view of the importance of research and innovation (R&I) to the whole European economy, to recognise the importance of the Horizon 2020 initiative and to finance it adequately.

What is the Commission's response?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(17 October 2013)

In a context of global economic competition, the exit from the crisis for Europe requires that we enhance public and private investment in research, development and innovation.

The Commission proposed an appropriate budget of EUR 80 billion (in constant 2011 prices) for Horizon 2020 in the context of the Multi-Annual Financial Framework for 2014-2020 (MFF). This would enable Europe to finance actions marked by European added value and send a strong signal of its commitment to remaining a world class actor in these fields.

Through the interinstitutional negotiations on the MFF, an agreement was reached on Horizon 2020 for a EUR 70.2 billion budget. This still constitutes an important signal and is an essential catalyst for growth and jobs. It strongly acknowledges the contribution that Horizon 2020 can make to the Europe 2020 strategy.

The Commission is looking forward to the swift conclusion of the interinstitutional negotiations on the Horizon 2020 package, in which the European Parliament has played an essential role. The goal is to launch the first calls for proposals under Horizon 2020 by the end of 2013.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010078/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 septembre 2013)

Objet: Cadre favorable à la R&I

La Commission compte-t-elle établir, comme le lui conseille le Parlement, un cadre favorable à la R&I, grâce à la création de systèmes de tarification équitables, efficaces et innovants pour tous les modes de mobilité et de transport, en particulier par l'internalisation des coûts externes, en tenant compte des principes du «pollueur-payeur» et de «l'utilisateur-payeur»?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(23 octobre 2013)

La Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à se référer à trois documents de travail de ses services.

Dans le premier document de travail, qui accompagne le livre blanc sur les transports ([1]), la Commission, reconnaît, au chapitre 3.3, l'importance d'incitations financières adéquates et cohérentes, notamment pour le choix des technologies à déployer. Elle y explique, en outre, la nécessité d'éviter les distorsions de prix, ce qui pourrait également ouvrir la voie à l'innovation dans les modes de transport concurrents.

La Commission considère que les mesures énumérées sous l'initiative n° 39 du livre blanc sur les transports constituent un cadre approprié pour l'internalisation des coûts externes et favorisent ainsi le développement d'un système de transport plus efficient incluant le déploiement de nouvelles technologies ainsi que des services innovants.

Ces aspects sont également présentés dans le document de travail des services de la Commission accompagnant la communication intitulée «La recherche et l'innovation au service de la mobilité européenne de demain» ([2]) comme des domaines de recherche et d'innovation possibles.

Le troisième document de travail pertinent des services de la Commission ([3]), adopté le 3 juillet 2013, établit une synthèse des mesures prises pour internaliser ou réduire les coûts externes de tous les modes de transport liés à l'environnement, au bruit et à la santé.

Ce document fournit également des informations à jour sur la mise en œuvre de la stratégie d'internalisation de la Commission et fait référence à des initiatives en faveur des technologies moins polluantes. Ces initiatives, qui relèvent le plus souvent des domaines de la recherche et des infrastructures, créent d'importantes synergies avec les mesures d'internalisation, qui ne pourront se traduire par un changement réel de comportement que si les usagers disposent de solutions de rechange satisfaisantes. À l'inverse, une tarification correcte contribue à la viabilité économique des modes et des technologies de transport qui présentent un intérêt particulier pour la société du fait de leur capacité à réduire les externalités négatives.

([1]) Feuille de route pour un espace européen unique des transports — Vers un système de transport compétitif et économe en ressources, COM(2011) 144 final, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SEC:2011:0391:FIN:EN:PDF

([2]) Preliminary Descriptions of Research and Innovation Areas and Fields, SWD (2012) 0260 final: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SWD:2012:0260:FIN:EN:PDF

([3]) Report in accordance with Article 11 (4) of Directive 1999/62/EC, SWD(2013) 269 final: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/sustainable/doc/swd(2013)269.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010078/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: Framework favourable to research and innovation (R&I)

Does the Commission, as advised by Parliament, plan to create a framework favourable to R&I by creating fair, efficient and innovative pricing systems for all mobility and transport modes, particularly through the internalisation of external costs, taking into account the 'polluter pays' and 'user pays' principles?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(23 October 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to three of its Staff Working Documents (SWD).

The first SWD, accompanying the White Paper on transport ([1]), recognises in its Chapter 3.3 the importance of correct and consistent monetary incentives, e.g. in terms of decisions taken on the technologies to deploy. Furthermore, it explains the need for avoiding price distortions, which may also lead to innovation in competing modes.

The Commission considers that the measures listed under Initiative 39 of the White Paper on transport provide the appropriate framework for the internalisation of external costs, and thereby promote the development of a more efficient transport system, including the deployment of new technologies, as well as innovative services.

These aspects are also referred to in the SWD accompanying the communication Research and Innovation for Europe's Future Mobility ([2]) as possible research and innovation areas.

The other relevant SWD ([3]) adopted on 3 July 2013 is a summary of the measures taken to internalise or reduce the external costs related to environment, noise and health from all transport modes.

This SWD also provides updated information on the implementation of the Commission's internalisation strategy and refers to initiatives taken to promote less polluting technologies. Those initiatives — typically in the field of research and infrastructure — have strong synergies with internalisation measures, which can only translate into actual change of behaviour if users have satisfactory alternatives. Conversely, the existence of correct pricing contributes to the economic viability of modes and technologies that have a particular value to society for their ability to reduce negative externalities.

([1]) Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area — Towards a competitive and resource-efficient transport system, COM(2011) 144 final, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SEC:2011:0391:FIN:EN:PDF

([2]) Preliminary Descriptions of Research and Innovation Areas and Fields, SWD (2012) 0260 final; http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SWD:2012:0260:FIN:EN:PDF

([3]) Report in accordance with Article 11 (4) of Directive 1999/62/EC, SWD(2013) 269 final, http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/sustainable/doc/swd(2013)269.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010079/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 septembre 2013)

Objet: Projet de développement urbain durable

Que compte faire la Commission pour développer des initiatives, telles que les prix RegioStars, ayant pour but d'identifier et de récompenser les projets de développement urbain durable?

Réponse donnée par M. Hahn au nom de la Commission
(4 novembre 2013)

La Commission continuera à identifier et à diffuser de différentes façons les expériences en matière de développement urbain durable.

Dans le cadre du programme proposé de développement urbain en réseau et du futur programme Urbact, des efforts considérables vont être déployés pour identifier et diffuser les expériences acquises par des villes de toute l'Europe en matière de projets de développement urbain durable.

En outre, la Commission a mis en réserve une enveloppe de 330 000 000 d'euros pour la période 2014-2020, qui sera accordée sur concours aux zones urbaines pour des projets innovants dans le domaine du développement urbain durable. La Commission décerne également un prix CityStar à des projets de développement urbain durable dans le cadre des RegioStars.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010079/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: Sustainable urban development project

What does the Commission plan to do to develop initiatives to identify and reward sustainable urban development programmes, along the lines of, for example, the RegioStars awards?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(4 November 2013)

The Commission will continue to identify and disseminate experiences related to sustainable urban development in a variety of ways.

In the framework of the proposed Urban Development Network, and the future URBACT programme, considerable efforts will be made to identify and disseminate the experiences of cities with regard to sustainable urban development projects throughout Europe.

In addition, the Commission has set aside EUR 330 million for the 2014-2020 period which will be granted to urban areas on a competitive basis for proposed innovative projects in the field of sustainable urban development. The Commission also gives a CityStar award to projects concerning sustainable urban development as part of the RegioStars awards.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-010576/13
alla Commissione
Lara Comi (PPE)
(17 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Caso Riva: anomalie e possibili soluzioni

Sui giornali italiani si trovano decine di articoli ogni giorno sul caso dei sette stabilimenti (Caronno Pertusella, Lesegno, Malegno, Sellero, Cervero, Annone Brianza e Verona) chiusi dalla famiglia Riva in seguito al sequestro di 916 milioni di euro effettuato dalla magistratura. Tale azione si pone nella scia dello spegnimento dell'altoforno dello stabilimento ILVA di Taranto. Alla famiglia Riva, proprietaria di 38 stabilimenti in tutto il mondo, nei quali si producono circa 16 milioni di tonnellate di acciaio (quarto gruppo in Europa), è stato sequestrato un totale di 2,2 miliardi di euro in beni mobili e immobili oltre a titoli bancari e azionari. In estrema sintesi, l'accusa principale è quella di disastro ambientale, per il finanziamento della cui bonifica queste somme sono state sequestrate.

Premesso che:

— gli Stati membri sono assoggettati ai vincoli di finanza pubblica previsti dal Trattato di Maastricht e rafforzati dal Fiscal Compact;

— l'Italia in particolare è soggetta a misure di austerità molto stringenti tra le quali la previsione che ciascuna nuova spesa non può essere autorizzata se non è già presente la relativa copertura;

— la normativa sugli aiuti di Stato vieta, anche qualora ci fossero le risorse, di effettuare interventi lesivi della concorrenza;

può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. ritiene che uno Stato membro può agire per tutelare l'occupazione, anche temporaneamente, dati i predetti vincoli, e stante l'obiettivo primario di salvaguardare 1400 posti di lavoro in stabilimenti che producono utili e, essendo fisicamente e funzionalmente scollegati da quello incriminato, non presentano le stesse problematiche ambientali;

2. reputa che si possa riconvertire il capitale umano al momento inutilizzato, ma a carico della fiscalità generale, in modo da ridurre l'impatto di questa decisione su conti pubblici già seriamente compromessi dalla congiuntura economica?

Risposta di Laszlo Andor a nome della Commissione
(23 ottobre 2013)

1. Il quadro comparativo recentemente proposto dalla Commissione consentirà una migliore e più tempestiva identificazione dei principali problemi occupazionali e sociali nel contesto del semestre europeo ([1]).

La Commissione non ha il potere per interferire nelle decisioni specifiche adottate dalle imprese, ma le sollecita a seguire le buone pratiche ai fini di una gestione proattiva e socialmente responsabile delle ristrutturazioni. Per quanto riguarda il riferimento alle regole sugli aiuti di Stato, le possibilità di cui dispongono gli Stati membri per concedere aiuti ai fini del mantenimento dell'occupazione sono soggette a condizioni precise e in linea di principio sono unicamente fruibili nel contesto di piani di ristrutturazione che devono essere notificati alla Commissione. Se il governo italiano intende attivare una qualche forma di sostegno al gruppo Riva, esso deve pertanto rispettare le regole sugli aiuti di Stato.

([1]) Comunicazione della Commissione «Potenziare la dimensione sociale dell'Unione economica e monetaria», COM(2013)690 def.

2. L'esperienza insegna che gli interventi precoci a sostegno dei lavoratori colpiti dalle ristrutturazioni industriali sono essenziali per aiutarli a trovare un nuovo posto di lavoro. I lavoratori colpiti dalle ristrutturazioni possono fruire del sostegno del Fondo sociale europeo (FSE) e, se sono soddisfatte le pertinenti condizioni, del Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione. I programmi operativi (PO) del FSE sono amministrati a livello nazionale o regionale da apposite autorità di gestione. La Commissione suggerisce pertanto all'onorevole deputata di mettersi in contatto con le autorità di gestione competenti per i PO ([2]) nelle regioni italiane interessate per ottenere maggiori informazioni sugli aiuti eventualmente disponibili per i lavoratori in esubero.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=386&langId=it.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010576/13
to the Commission
Lara Comi (PPE)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Riva case: anomalies and possible solutions

Dozens of articles appear in the Italian press every day concerning the seven plants (in Caronno Pertusella, Lesegno, Malegno, Sellero, Cervero, Annone Brianza and Verona) which have been closed by the Riva family following the seizure by the courts of family assets worth EUR 916 million, a decision which comes in the wake of the decommissioning of the blast furnace at the ILVA plant in Taranto. Movable and immovable assets, bank securities and shares worth a total of EUR 2.2 billion have been confiscated from the Riva family, which owns 38 steel plants throughout the world with an annual output of some 16 million tonnes (making the family firm the fourth-largest steel producer in Europe). Put extremely simply, the main accusation against the family is that of having caused an environmental disaster, and the assets seized will be used to fund the clean-up operations.

Given that:

— the Member States are bound by the deficit and budget rules laid down by the Maastricht Treaty and tightened up by the Fiscal Compact;

— Italy in particular has had very stringent austerity measures imposed on it, including the stipulation that new spending can be authorised only if the corresponding funding is available in the budget;

— the rules on state aid ban anti-competitive measures, even if such funding is available,

can the Commission say whether:

1. in the light of the rules referred to above, a Member State may take action to safeguard employment, even temporarily, if the primary objective is to save 1400 jobs in plants which generate profits and which, because they are operationally and functionally separate from the plant which was the subject of the decommissioning order, do not pose the same environmental problems?

2. the workers who are currently unemployed and receiving State benefits can be retrained in such a way as to reduce the impact of the Riva family's decision on Italy's public finances which are already buckling under the severe strain of the current economic crisis?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(23 October 2013)

1. The Commission's recently proposed scoreboard will allow for better and earlier identification of major employment and social problems in the framework of the European Semester ([1]).

The Commission has no power to interfere in specific decisions taken by companies, but it urges them to follow good practice in the anticipation and socially responsible management of restructuring. As regards the reference to state aid rules, the possibilities for Member States of granting aid for the maintenance of employment are subject to very precise conditions and in principle only accessible in the context of restructuring plans that must be notified to the Commission. If the Italian Government wishes to engage itself in some form of support to Riva companies, all State Aid rules must therefore be followed.

2. Experience shows that early intervention in support of workers affected by industrial restructuring is essential to help them find new jobs. Workers affected by restructuring may qualify for support from the European Social Fund (ESF) and, provided the relevant conditions are met, from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund. ESF operational programmes (OPs) are administered at national or regional level by managing authorities. The Commission therefore suggests that the Honourable Member contact the managing authorities competent for the OPs ([2]) in the Italian regions concerned in order to obtain more information on possible support for the workers made redundant.

([1]) Commission Communication 'Strengthening the social dimension of the Economic and Monetary Union', COM(2013) 690.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=386&langId=en

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-010577/13
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL)
(17 septembre 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Ingérence des États-Unis

Le secrétaire d'État états-uniens John Kerry était invité, ce vendredi 6 septembre, à participer à la réunion informelle des ministres des affaires étrangères des États de l'Union européenne dans le but non dissimulé d'infléchir la diplomatie européenne sur le sujet de la Syrie, et ainsi d'entraîner l'Union européenne dans son projet d'intervention armée.

Cette intrusion des États-Unis dans la diplomatie européenne est humiliante pour l'Union, réduite au rôle de supplétif des USA, auprès desquels elle vient chercher conseil, et marque les tentations d'un positionnement atlantiste au sein même de la Commission.

À noter que, si la plupart des pays membres (hors la France) s'étaient déjà prononcés contre cette intervention ou avaient fait part de leur non-participation à une éventuelle intervention, d'autres (Italie, Belgique, Slovénie…) attendaient le rapport de l'ONU à ce sujet avant de prendre position. Pourtant, à la sortie de cette réunion, vous déclariez sans attendre qu'une «réponse claire et forte» était nécessaire. Les États-Unis ont donc fait encore preuve ici de leur mépris du droit international en devançant l'influence de la seule organisation légitime à décider d'une telle intervention.

Comment la haute représentante de l'Union pour les affaires étrangères et la politique de sécurité entend-elle garantir l'indépendance de l'Union européenne et de ses institutions face à l'ingérence des États-Unis?

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

L'Union européenne mène une coopération approfondie et intensive avec ses partenaires stratégiques, y compris les États-Unis, impliquant un dialogue politique au plus haut niveau. Dans ce contexte, elle entretient un dialogue régulier et soutenu avec le Secrétaire d'État américain sur l'ensemble des questions liées à la coopération UE/États-Unis et conformément à la politique de l'Union européenne. La haute représentante de l'Union pour les affaires étrangères et la politique de sécurité exerce ses fonctions de manière indépendante et conformément aux traités.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010577/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — US interference

US Secretary of State John Kerry was invited to take part in the informal meeting of foreign ministers of EU Member States on Friday 6 September with the clear aim of shifting EU diplomacy on the subject of Syria and dragging the European Union into his plans for armed intervention.

This US intrusion into EU diplomacy is a humiliation for the EU, its role reduced to that of a back-up for the United States, to which it turns for advice, and is indicative of attempts, even within the Commission, to position the EU as Atlanticist.

Note that while most Member States (but not France) had already come out against intervention or had said that they would not take part if it went ahead, others (Italy, Belgium, Slovenia, etc.) were waiting for the UN report on the subject before taking a position. Yet when you came out of this meeting you immediately declared that a 'clear and strong' response was needed. Once again the United States has demonstrated its disregard for international law by seeking to over-ride the influence of the only organisation with the legitimacy to authorise such intervention.

How does the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy intend to guarantee the independence of the European Union and its institutions in the face of interference by the United States?

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

The European Union has an extensive and intense agenda of cooperation with its strategic partners, including the United States, which involves political dialogue at the highest levels. In this context, there is regular and sustained dialogue with the US Secretary of State on the full range of issues relevant to EU-US cooperation, and in accordance with EU policy. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy carries out her functions independently and in accordance with the Treaties.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010578/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(17 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Περιβαλλοντική καταστροφή από διαρροή πετρελαιοειδών στον Κόλπο της Αμμοχώστου, στην Κύπρο

Στις 16 Ιουλίου προκλήθηκε σημαντική περιβαλλοντική καταστροφή, από διαρροή περίπου 100 τόνων πετρελαίου στα νότια παράλια της χερσονήσου της Καρπασίας (περιοχή Γαστριών), στον κόλπο της Αμμοχώστου Κύπρου ([1]). Τις μέρες που ακολούθησαν παρουσιάστηκαν σε αρκετές παραλίες της ευρύτερης περιοχής κηλίδες πετρελαίου. Η περιοχή των Γαστριών είναι προτεινόμενη για ένταξη στο Δίκτυο Natura 2000, ενώ στην ίδια περιοχή (Επτακώμη) προγραμματίζεται να κατασκευαστεί τερματικός σταθμός καυσίμων. Τα αρμόδια τμήματα της κυπριακής κυβέρνησης, αμέσως μετά την ενημέρωση που έλαβαν από τον ΟΗΕ, βρέθηκαν σε επιχειρησιακή ετοιμότητα, ενώ η κυπριακή κυβέρνηση επικοινώνησε με την τουρκοκυπριακή πλευρά για να προσφέρει τη βοήθειά της. Η τουρκοκυπριακή πλευρά έδειξε απροθυμία και αρνήθηκε να δεχθεί την βοήθεια, παρόλο, που, απ' ό,τι φάνηκε, δεν ήταν έτοιμη να αντιμετωπίσει τη διαρροή πετρελαίου και δεν αντέδρασε άμεσα για την αποτροπή της εξάπλωσης και τη συλλογή του.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει πληροφόρηση σχετικά με το γεγονός;

2. Συμφωνεί ότι η κατασκευή τερματικού σταθμού καυσίμων στην περιοχή της Επτακώμης ενέχει σοβαρές περιβαλλοντικές επιπτώσεις για την ευρύτερη περιοχή του κόλπου της Αμμοχώστου;

3. Έχει λάβει η τουρκοκυπριακή πλευρά ευρωπαϊκές χρηματοδοτήσεις για τη σύσταση ομάδας αντιμετώπισης έκτακτων περιστατικών; Αν έχει λάβει, πώς τις έχει αξιοποιήσει; Γνωρίζει αν υπάρχει μια τέτοια ομάδα, που να είναι σε θέση να αντιμετωπίσει παρόμοια προβλήματα;

4. Τι μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει ώστε να προστατεύεται το περιβάλλον της περιοχής;

5. Προτίθεται να ζητήσει τη θέσπιση συγκεκριμένων κανόνων και πρακτικών, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της συνεργασίας με τις υπηρεσίες της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας ή/και του ΟΗΕ, για την αντιμετώπιση φυσικών ή άλλων καταστροφών;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(19 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στην απάντησή της στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-008849/2013 ([2]).

([1]) Χατζηβασίλης Μ. Οικολογική καταστροφή στα Γαστριά. Εφ. Φιλελεύθερος, 17ης Ιουλίου 2013.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010578/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Environmental disaster caused by oil spill in Ammochostos Bay in Cyprus

On 16 July, a major environmental disaster was caused by a leak of around 100 tonnes of oil in Ammochostos Bay on the south coast of the Karpasia peninsula (Gastria region) in Cyprus ([1]). Over the following days, oil slicks appeared on many beaches in the wider area. The Gastria region has been put forward for inclusion in the Natura 2000 network, while there is a plan to construct a fuel terminal in the same area (Eptakomi). After having been informed by the UN, the relevant departments of the Cypriot government immediately placed themselves on operational readiness, and the Cypriot government communicated with the Turkish Cypriot side to offer its assistance. The Turkish Cypriot side was reluctant and refused to accept assistance, in spite of the fact that — as later became clear — it was not ready to deal with the oil spill and failed to respond immediately to prevent the oil spreading and to remove it.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Has it been informed about this event?

2. Does it agree that the construction of a fuel terminal in the Eptakomi region has serious environmental consequences for the wider area of Ammochostos Bay?

3. Has the Turkish Cypriot side received European funding to set up a team for dealing with emergencies? If so, how has the funding been used? Does the Commission know whether there is a team in place that can deal with such problems?

4. What measures does it intend to take to protect the environment in this area?

5. Does it intend to request the introduction of specific rules and procedures, including cooperation with the services of the Republic of Cyprus and/or the UN, in order to deal with natural or any other disasters?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(19 November 2013)

The Commission would kindly refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-008849/2013 ([2]).

([1]) M. Chadzivasillis, Environmental disaster in Gastria. Philelefttheros, 17 July 2013.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010579/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(17 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κρίση και περικοπές στην υγεία

Η δημοσιονομική πολιτική πλήττει βίαια τις πολιτικές συνοχής και υγείας, αντί να συμβάλει στον εξορθολογισμό τους. Πρόσφατα έκλεισαν 5 νοσοκομεία στην Αττική για να τεθούν σε διαθεσιμότητα-κινητικότητά οι εργαζόμενοι. Ένα από αυτά, το Γεν. Νοσοκομείο Πατησίων, παρείχε υψηλή ποιότητα υπηρεσιών προς 1 000 000 κατοίκους μιας ευρύτερης περιοχής, υπηρεσίες, όπως το ιατρείο πόνου, που δεν παρέχονται αλλού, ενώ είχε υγιή οικονομικά και μηδενικά χρέη. 40 000 υπογραφές πολιτών κι ομόφωνα τα Δημοτικά Συμβούλια Αθηναίων, Αγ. Αναργύρων, Φιλαδέλφειας-Χαλκηδόνας εξέφρασαν την αντίθεσή τους στο κλείσιμο.

Με μείωση εισοδημάτων 30-50% και αύξηση του ποσοστού φτώχειας, μικρομεσαίοι χάνουν την πρόσβαση σε υπηρεσίες υγείας, αδυνατώντας να πληρώνουν ασφαλιστικές εισφορές, όπως και οι περισσότεροι από τους 1 400 000 ανέργους. Με σειρά γραφειοκρατικών «ρυθμίσεων» μένουν ακάλυπτοι ή χάνουν οποιαδήποτε οικονομική στήριξη ασθενείς με σοβαρά προβλήματα υγείας και ανάπηροι, ιδιαίτερα από νησιά και απομακρυσμένες περιοχές. Λόγω έλλειψης υπαλλήλων και αύξησης της γραφειοκρατίας, ο ΕΟΠΥΥ χρωστάει 40 000 000 ευρώ σε ασθενείς. Πολλοί, με καρκίνο και άλλες σοβαρές ασθένειες, αναγκάζονται να προκαταβάλουν από το υστέρημά τους υψηλό κόστος για τις θεραπείες, αλλά περιμένουν πάνω από ένα χρόνο για να πάρουν πίσω τα χρήματα.

Ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια είναι η θέση του εκπροσώπου της στην τρόικα για τη βαρβαρότητα αυτή απέναντι σε ανθρώπους που υποφέρουν; Έχει γνώση των συνεπειών από το κλείσιμο νοσοκομείων με στόχο τη «διαθεσιμότητα» 1 700 ατόμων; Έχει συζητήσει με οργανώσεις ασθενών για τις συνέπειες των πολιτικών αυτών στην υγεία;

2. Πώς θα διασφαλίσει την πρόσβαση όλων των Ελλήνων πολιτών σε ποιοτικές υπηρεσίες υγείας, σύμφωνα με το Πολυετές Πλαίσιο για την Υγεία 2014-2020;

3. Πώς θα διασφαλίσει ότι ο ΕΟΠΥΥ θα αποπληρώνει τάχιστα τα κόστη θεραπειών που έχουν προκαταβάλει ασθενείς, ώστε να μην περιμένουν πάνω από ένα χρόνο;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(11 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Οι αποφάσεις στις οποίες αναφέρεται το αξιότιμο μέλος έχουν ληφθεί από τις ελληνικές αρχές ως μέρος ενός ευρύτερου προγράμματος μεταρρυθμίσεων που αποσκοπεί στην αναδιοργάνωση/εξορθολογισμό του νοσοκομειακού δικτύου της Ελλάδας με στόχο τη μείωση των υφιστάμενων προβλημάτων αποτελεσματικότητας και την αξιοποίηση οικονομιών κλίμακας. Η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει αυτό το ευρύτερο πρόγραμμα μεταρρυθμίσεων που εφαρμόζεται από τις ελληνικές αρχές.

Οι αποφάσεις σχετικά με την παροχή της υγειονομικής περίθαλψης εμπίπτουν στην αρμοδιότητα των ελληνικών αρχών δεδομένου ότι, σύμφωνα με τη Συνθήκη, η διαχείριση των υγειονομικών υπηρεσιών και της ιατρικής περίθαλψης, καθώς και η κατανομή των πόρων που διατίθενται για τις υπηρεσίες αυτές είναι ευθύνη των κρατών μελών.

Η Επιτροπή θα συνεχίσει να παρακολουθεί τα θέματα που σχετίζονται με τον τομέα της υγειονομικής περίθαλψης σε μελλοντικές συζητήσεις με τις ελληνικές αρχές κατά τη διάρκεια των τακτικών αποστολών ελέγχου στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010579/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: The crisis and health cuts

Budgetary policy is having a brutal impact on coherence and health policies, rather than contributing towards their rationalisation. In Attica, five hospitals recently closed down in order to put their employees on a transfer status. One of these, the Patission General Hospital, provided high quality services not provided anywhere else — including a pain clinic — for 1 million inhabitants across a broad area, and had healthy finances and zero debts. Opposition to the closure was expressed in a petition signed by 40 000 people and in unanimous votes in the Athens, Agioi Anargyroi and Filadelfeia-Chalkidona local councils.

With incomes down by 30-50% and increasing poverty, middle and lower class people are losing access to health services as a result of their inability to pay insurance contributions, like most of the 1.4 million unemployed. Under a series of bureaucratic 'regulations', patients with serious health problems and disabilities are left without cover or lose all financial support, particularly in the islands and remote regions. Due to staff shortages and increasing bureaucracy, the National Agency for the Provision of Health Services owes EUR 40 million to patients. Some patients with cancer and other serious illnesses are having to make large advance payments for treatment from their savings, and are then having to wait more than a year for their money to be reimbursed.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. What is the view of its representative in the troika with regard to this barbarous treatment of people in distress? Is he aware of the consequences of closing these hospitals in order to put 1 700 people on a transfer status? Has he held discussions with patients' organisations regarding the consequences of these policies for health?

2. How will it safeguard the access of all Greek citizens to high quality health services,in accordance with the 2014-2020 Multiannual Framework for Health?

3. How will it ensure that the National Agency for the Provision of Health Services promptly reimburses the treatment costs prepaid by patients, so that they do not have to wait for more than one year?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(11 November 2013)

The decisions the Honourable Member is referring to have been taken by the Greek authorities as part of a wider reform programme aimed at reorganising/ streamlining Greece's hospital network with a view of reducing existing inefficiencies and utilising economies of scale. The Commission supports this wider reform programme by the Greek authorities.

The decisions regarding the delivery of healthcare fall under the responsibility of the Greek authorities as, according to the Treaty, the management of health services and medical care, and the allocation of the resources assigned to them is the responsibility of the Member States.

The Commission will continue to monitor matters related to healthcare sector in future discussions with Greek authorities during the regular review missions under the Economic Adjustment Programme to Greece.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010580/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(17 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Συνέχιση του έργου θαλασσίου σκι στην Παμβώτιδα χωρίς περιβαλλοντική αδειοδότηση

Η Επιτροπή, στην απάντησή της E-001111/2013 σε προηγούμενη ερώτησή μου για τη λίμνη Παμβώτιδα E-001111/2013, αναφέρει ότι «κάθε έργο με ενδεχόμενες πιθανές σοβαρές επιπτώσεις, όπως οι επίμαχες εγκαταστάσεις θαλάσσιου σκι, πρέπει να υποβάλλεται σε κατάλληλη αξιολόγηση και να εγκρίνεται, μόνον εάν δεν επηρεάζεται η ακεραιότητα της περιοχής» καθώς και ότι «η αρμόδια αρχή (η Αποκεντρωμένη Διοίκηση Δυτικής Ηπείρου-Μακεδονίας) έχει πλέον ζητήσει, μετά από καταγγελίες, την παύση των χωματουργικών έργων στη λίμνη και την αποκατάσταση του υδάτινου οικοσυστήματος που υπέστη ζημίες». Όμως, ενώ πράγματι η Αποκεντρωμένη Διοίκηση αρχικά διέταξε την παύση των παράνομων εργασιών, στη συνέχεια χορήγησε στο δήμο άδεια εκτέλεσης έργου κοπής καλαμιών με τον παραπλανητικό τίτλο «Έργο αξιοποίησης υδατικών πόρων προστασίας οικοσυστημάτων», με παρατήρηση ότι για την κοπή θα χρησιμοποιηθεί ο πλωτός εκσκαφέας Water Master.

Ύστερα από καταγγελίες του Συλλόγου Προστασίας Περιβάλλοντος Ιωαννίνων για εκρίζωση του καλαμιώνα και εκβάθυνση σε βάθος 2 μέτρων με χρήση του τεράστιου μηχανήματος drag line που χρησιμοποιείται σε εκσκαφές λιμένων και μάλιστα χωρίς απόφαση έγκρισης περιβαλλοντικών όρων, η διοίκηση διέκοψε εκ νέου τις εργασίες έπειτα από εισαγγελική παρέμβαση ([1]). Η Αποκεντρωμένη Διοίκηση, αδιαφορώντας για το μέγεθος της καταστροφής του οικοσυστήματος της περιοχής, επανήλθε προ ημερών με νεότερη απόφασή της ([2]) και τροποποιώντας την προηγούμενη απόφασή της αναφορικά με τον τρόπο εκτέλεσης των εργασιών, εγκρίνει τη χρήση μηχανήματος drag line. Σε ένδειξη διαμαρτυρίας για τις συνεχιζόμενες περιβαλλοντικές αυθαιρεσίες τόσο του Δήμου όσο και της Αποκεντρωμένης Διοίκησης Δυτικής Ηπείρου-Μακεδονίας στη λίμνη Παμβώτιδα, παραιτήθηκε ολόκληρο το Διοικητικό Συμβούλιο του Συλλόγου Προστασίας του Περιβάλλοντος Ιωαννίνων ([3]).

Δεδομένης της επιμονής της ελληνικών αρχών να συνεχίσουν, κα μάλιστα χωρίς καμία απόφαση έγκρισης περιβαλλοντικών όρων, ένα έργο στη λίμνη Παμβώτιδα που αντίκειται στις Οδηγίες 92/43/ΕΟΚ για τη διατήρηση των φυσικών οικοτόπων καθώς και της άγριας πανίδας και χλωρίδας και 2009/147/ΕΚ, περί της διατηρήσεως των αγρίων πτηνών, σε τι ενέργειες προτίθεται να προβεί η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Βάσει των νέων στοιχείων που παρασχέθηκαν από το Αξιότιμο Μέλος, η Επιτροπή θα επικοινωνήσει με τις ελληνικές αρχές για να διερευνήσει κατά πόσον η βυθοκόρηση που συνδέεται με τις εν λόγω εγκαταστάσεις θαλάσσιου σκι αξιολογήθηκε και εγκρίθηκε σύμφωνα με τις διατάξεις του άρθρου 6 της οδηγίας για τα ενδιαιτήματα 92/43/ΕΟΚ ([4]).

([1]) http://news.kathimerini.gr/4dcgi/_w_articles_ell_2_13/07/2013_526609
([2]) Αριθμός απόφασης 38036/982/03.07.2013.
([3]) http://goo.gl/ftDIL
([4]) Οδηγία 92/43/ΕΟΚ του Συμβουλίου της 21ης Μαΐου 1992 για τη διατήρηση των φυσικών οικοτόπων καθώς και της άγριας πανίδας και χλωρίδας. ΕΕ L 206 της 22/7/1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010580/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Continuation of water ski facilities project in Lake Pamvotida without environmental authorisation

The Commission, in its Answer E-001111/2013 to my earlier Question E-001111/2013 on Lake Pamvotida, says that 'any project with likely significant effect, such as the water ski facilities in question, needs to undergo an appropriate assessment and can only be authorised if it does not affect the integrity of the area' and also that 'the competent authority (the decentralized administration of Western Epirus-Macedonia) has now ordered, following complaints, the cessation of earthworks in the lake and the restoration of the damaged wetland ecosystem'. However, whilst the decentralised administration did indeed initially order the cessation of the illegal works, it later provided the municipality with an authorisation to cut the reeds under misleading title of 'Water Resource Utilisation and Habitat Protection Project', with an attached note stating that a floating dredger would be used to cut the reeds.

Following complaints from the Environmental Protection Association of Ioannina with regard to the eradication of the reeds and dredging to a depth of two metres with a huge dragline machine used for dredging harbours, and, moreover, without a decision approving the necessary environmental conditions, the administration again halted work following intervention from the public prosecutor ([1]). The decentralised administration, being indifferent to the scale of the disaster for the habitat in the area, came back a few days ago with a fresh decision ([2]) amending its earlier decision in relation to the manner of implementing the project, and approving the use of the dragline machine. The entire governing body of the Environmental Protection Association of Ioannina has resigned in protest at the arbitrary nature of the continuing environmental actions in Lake Pamvotida, carried out not only by the municipality but also by the decentralised administration of Western Epirus-Macedonia ([3]).

Given the Greek authorities' insistence on continuing with the project in Lake Pamvotida, without any decision setting out environmental conditions — contrary to Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, and Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds — what actions is the European Commission planning to take?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(6 November 2013)

In the light of new information supplied by the Honourable Member the Commission will contact the Greek authorities in order to investigate whether the dredging activities connected with the water ski facility in question have been assessed and authorised in accordance with the provisions laid down in Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC ([4]).

([1]) http://news.kathimerini.gr/4dcgi/_w_articles_ell_2_13/07/2013_526609
([2]) Decision number 38036/982/3.7.2013.
([3]) http://goo.gl/ftDIL
([4]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora Official Journal L 206, 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010581/13
to the Commission
Gay Mitchell (PPE)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: European Schools

On 2 April 2012, the European Ombudsman made a finding of maladministration against the Commission for failing to respond to requests for an independent external audit of the European Schools. Has the Commission responded to this ruling?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(6 November 2013)

The Commission sent its comments on the findings of the European Ombudsman in the case 814/2010/JF on 6 July 2012.

The Commission did not share the view that there was an instance of maladministration as found by the Ombudsman. It recalled that the European Schools were educational establishments governed jointly by the governments of the Member States of the European Union in the Board of Governors. In the Board, the Commission has only one vote, and all the Member States that are signatories to the convention have one vote each, therefore the Commission cannot be held the sole responsible for the decisions concerning the European Schools.

The Commission informed the Ombudsman that numerous initiatives had already been taken in order to improve the management of the European Schools System (ESS), including a proposal for the European Schools to take part in the international OECD PISA study which would present a basis for comparison with the Member States' national education systems and evaluating the ESS according to the same criteria, and at the same time representing a cost efficient way of an external evaluation of the system.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010583/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Women's participation in Pakistan elections

The participation of women, as both candidates and voters, in Pakistan's national election of 11 May 2013 was rather low.

Allegedly, one of the reasons for this was threats made by the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) group to kidnap or kill women who took part in these democratic elections.

Similar threats were recently made by the TTP to women in parts of the Hangu district, ahead of the local elections there.

What actions are being taken by the VP/HR to pressure the Government of Pakistan to protect women who wish to exercise their democratic right to vote and/or to stand as candidates?

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

Women's rights, including civil and political, are among the EU's priorities in human rights dialogue with Pakistan, and these are raised regularly with the Pakistani authorities. In the run up to the elections, there was an escalation of violent attacks by extremists targeting particularly the secular political parties but also voters.

In spite of intimidation, the electoral process is generally regarded to have been the best so far in Pakistan. The EU Foreign Affairs Council conclusions in June 2013 noted that there had been an increase in the number of women registered as voters and female candidates compared to 2008, on the basis of which it is hoped that women's participation in political life will strengthen. Nevertheless, as underlined in the final report of the EU Election Observation Mission (EOM) to Pakistan, women continue to be underrepresented as voters, candidates, in elected office and in the campaign.

The EU is ready to accompany Pakistan in following up on recommendations from the EOM, including recommendations concerning women's participation. The EU has also given its commitment to assist Pakistan to combat terrorism. The issue is a priority under the EU's Strategic Dialogue with Pakistan. The EU is supporting projects to augment acces to education especially for girls, to improve law enforcement with the police and prosecution services, and has encouraged the authorities to reinforce cooperation activities in support of security and counter-terrorism.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010584/13
à la Commission
Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL)
(17 septembre 2013)

Objet: Espionnage des États-Unis

En juillet dernier, je vous ai interrogé sur l'espionnage pratiqué par les États-Unis contre l'Union européenne qui a été révélé par Edward Snowden.

Votre réponse a sûrement été mûrement réfléchie car elle ne m'est parvenue, malgré l'urgence de la situation, que le 10 septembre. J'y apprends que «La Commission a demandé au gouvernement américain de lui fournir des clarifications à propos des programmes évoqués par les médias et de leurs conséquences potentielles sur les droits fondamentaux des Européens».

Peut-on connaître la réponse du gouvernement américain à cette demande de clarification?

Il apparaît que cette question a même été évoquée avec le ministre de la justice des États-Unis, Eric Holder, lors de la réunion des ministres de la justice et des affaires intérieures organisée à Dublin, le 14 juin 2013.

Peut-on connaître la position du ministre de la justice des États-Unis sur l'espionnage?

Enfin, on apprend que d'autres précisions ont été demandées par écrit, notamment le volume de données collectées, l'ampleur des programmes et le contrôle judiciaire disponible pour les Européens.

Peut-on avoir accès à ces documents?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(4 décembre 2013)

Comme indiqué dans la question de l'Honorable Parlementaire, la Commission a soulevé la question directement auprès du ministre de la justice, Monsieur Holder, lors de la réunion des ministres de la justice et des affaires intérieures qui s'est tenue à Dublin le 14 juin 2013. M. Holder a fourni des éclaircissements et proposé de fournir des informations complémentaires au niveau des experts.

À la suite de cette réunion, de nouvelles précisions ont été demandées par écrit aux autorités des États-Unis, notamment en ce qui concerne le volume des données collectées, l'ampleur de ces programmes et le contrôle judiciaire dont disposent les citoyens européens. En outre, la Commission a mis en place, conjointement avec la présidence du Conseil de l'UE, un groupe de travail ad hoc entre l'UE et les États-Unis afin d'examiner ces questions de manière plus approfondie. Ce groupe s'est réuni à trois reprises, en juillet, septembre et novembre. Sur la base des informations recueillies, la Commission fera rapport au Parlement européen et au Conseil.

Parallèlement, la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante a demandé des éclaircissements à l'administration américaine sur les allégations de surveillance, par les États-Unis, des missions diplomatiques de l'UE, et a fait passer le message selon lequel l'Union européenne entend être traitée comme le partenaire stratégique qu'elle est, et non pas comme une cible.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010584/13
to the Commission
Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Espionage by the United States

In July 2013 I asked you about the United States' spying on the European Union, as revealed by Edward Snowden.

You clearly thought carefully about your answer because, in spite of the urgency of the situation, I only received it on 10 September. It states that 'The Commission has requested clarifications from the US Government regarding the programmes reported in the media and the potential impact on the fundamental rights of Europeans.'

What was the US Government's response to this request for clarification?

It seems that this question was even raised with United States Attorney General, Eric Holder, at the EU-US justice and home affairs ministerial meeting in Dublin on 14 June 2013.

What is the position of the United States Attorney General on the espionage?

Lastly, it appears that further clarifications have been requested in writing, including the volume of data collected, the scope of the programmes and the judicial oversight available to Europeans.

May we have access to these documents?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(4 December 2013)

As mentioned in the Honorable Member's question, the Commission raised this issue directly with Attorney General Holder at the EU-US Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial meeting of 14 June 2013, in Dublin. Attorney General Holder provided clarifications and offered to provide further information at expert level.

Following this meeting, further clarifications have been requested in writing from the US authorities, including on the volume of the data collected, the scope of the programmes and the judicial oversight available to Europeans. In addition, the Commission has set up, together with the Presidency of the Council of the EU, an ad-hoc EU-US working group to examine these issues further. The working group has met three times, in July, September and November. Based on the information gathered, the Commission will report back to the European Parliament and the Council.

In parallel, the HR/VP has sought clarifications from the US Administration on the allegations of US surveillance of EU diplomatic missions, and conveyed the message that the EU expects to be treated as the strategic partner that it is, not as a target.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010585/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(17 septembre 2013)

Objet: Utilisation de cyanure dans les mines d'or en Roumanie

Une société prévoit d'extraire 300 tonnes d'or et 1 600 tonnes d'argent dans la plus grande mine à ciel ouvert d'Europe, à Rosia Montana, dans le massif des Carpates en Roumanie. Environ 12 000 tonnes de cyanure par an seront nécessaires pour ce projet minier, qui nécessitera le déplacement de centaines de familles et la destruction partielle de quatre montagnes.

Ce projet est dès lors contesté par la population locale, qui est notamment soucieuse des impacts sur l'environnement que pourrait avoir ce projet.

La société canadienne indique que les normes européennes d'environnement seront respectées et affirme que ce projet sera créateur de centaines d'emplois durant les années d'exploitation.

Le Parlement européen avait toutefois adopté une résolution datant du 5 mai 2010 sur l'interdiction générale de l'utilisation des technologies à base de cyanure dans l'industrie minière de l'Union européenne.

Le cyanure est un élément chimique toxique dont l'utilisation massive engendrera des conséquences néfastes non seulement pour le lac qui recueillera les eaux usées de l'exploitation aurifère, mais aussi pour la biodiversité en général dans cette région.

Aussi, la Commission entend-elle renforcer sa politique environnementale contre les menaces pour l'environnement que représente l'utilisation de cyanure et prendre les mesures nécessaires face aux risques qui pèsent sur cette région?

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010596/13
à la Commission
Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(17 septembre 2013)

Objet: Rosia Montana et l'interdiction de l'utilisation du cyanure dans les mines

En 2007, la Rosia Montana Gold Corporation (RMGC), entreprise à capitaux canadiens et roumains, a acheté le sol de Rosia Montana. Depuis, la ville est rythmée par les manifestations sur la place du village, la venue des délégations européennes inspectant les lieux et l'adoption de lois contradictoires par le gouvernement.

Le 27 août 2013, les dirigeants roumains ont exprimé leur intention de favoriser le projet d'exploitation au cyanure des gisements aurifères de Rosia Montana, projet proposé par la RMGC.

S'il est adopté, le projet permettra l'utilisation des techniques d'extraction de l'or par les cyanures, ce qui implique la création d'un bassin de 600 ha où seront déversées des centaines de millions de tonnes de déchets cyanurés. Une telle installation met en péril la biodiversité de la zone, et est susceptible d'engendrer des catastrophes écologiques majeures en cas de fuite, comme ce fut le cas à Baia Mare en 2000. Au-delà des préoccupations environnementales, les préoccupations sociales sont liées au déracinement de plus de 2 000 habitants et à la démolition d'environ 900 maisons ainsi que d'éléments du patrimoine culturel et archéologique. Ces deux types de préoccupations ont également été exprimés en 2004 par la Commission environnement du Parlement européen.

En 2010, le Parlement européen a demandé à la Commission d'interdire totalement l'utilisation des technologies à base de cyanure dans l'industrie minière.

1. La Commission pourrait-elle nous informer quant à l'évolution de la législation sur l'interdiction de l'utilisation du cyanure dans les mines?

2. Compte tenu de ces éléments, la Commission dispose-t-elle des moyens adéquats pour intervenir afin de s'opposer au démarrage de l'exploitation de la mine d'or et d'argent de Rosia Montana?

Réponse commune donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(29 octobre 2013)

En ce qui concerne la question relative à l'éventuelle introduction de l'interdiction de l'utilisation du cyanure dans les technologies minières dans l'UE, la Commission renvoie les Honorables Parlementaires à la réponse qu'elle a donnée à la question écrite E-6197/2012 ([1]), posée par Mme Hassi et M[me] Pietikäinen.

Les autorités roumaines compétentes doivent veiller à la bonne exécution ainsi qu'à l'application et au respect de la législation de l'UE, la Commission se chargeant d'évaluer la conformité avec les exigences applicables.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-006197&language=EN

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010585/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Use of cyanide in gold mines in Romania

A company plans to extract 300 tonnes of gold and 1 600 tonnes of silver in the largest open-cast mine in Europe, at Roşia Montană, in the Carpathian mountains in Romania. This mining project will require about 12 000 tonnes of cyanide per year and involve the relocation of hundreds of families and the partial destruction of four mountains.

Consequently, the project is being challenged by local people, who are particularly concerned about the environmental impact it could have.

The Canadian company says that European environmental standards will be respected and that the project will create hundreds of jobs during the years of operation.

However, on 5 May 2010 the European Parliament adopted a resolution on a general ban on the use of cyanide mining technologies in the European Union.

Cyanide is a toxic chemical whose large-scale use will be harmful not only for the lake into which the wastewater from the gold extraction will flow, but also for the region's biodiversity in general.

Does the Commission therefore intend to strengthen its environmental policy against the environmental threat posed by cyanide use and to take the necessary action to address the risks affecting this area?

Question for written answer E-010596/13
to the Commission
Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Roşia Montană and the ban on using cyanide in mines

In 2007, Roşia Montană Gold Corporation (RMGC), a Canadian and Romanian-owned company, purchased the land of Roşia Montană. Since then, life in the village has been punctuated by demonstrations in the village square, the arrival of European delegations inspecting the site and the adoption of contradictory laws by the government.

On 27 August 2013, Romanian leaders expressed their intention to support the planned exploitation of the gold deposits in Roşia Montană using cyanide, a plan that was proposed by the RMGC.

If it goes ahead, the project will allow the use of cyanide to extract the gold, involving the creation of a 600 ha tailings pond into which hundreds of millions of tonnes of cyanide-laced waste will be dumped. Such a facility is a threat to the area's biodiversity and could cause major environmental disasters were the cyanide to leak, as happened in Baia Mare in 2000. In addition to the environmental concerns, there are social concerns over the displacement of over 2 000 residents and the demolition of some 900 houses and cultural and archaeological heritage assets. The same concerns were also expressed in 2004 by Parliament's Committee on the Environment.

In 2010, Parliament called on the Commission to introduce a total ban on the use of cyanide-based technology in the mining industry.

1. Could the Commission say what progress has been made with regard to legislation banning the use of cyanide in mining?

2. In view of this information, does the Commission have any suitable way of taking action in order to oppose the commencement of gold and silver mining in Roşia Montană?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(29 October 2013)

As regards the question relating to the potential introduction of a ban of the use of cyanide mining technologies in the EU, the Commission would refer the Honourable Members to its answer to Written Question E-6197/2012 ([1]) by Ms Hassi and Ms Pietikäinen.

The competent Romanian authorities have to ensure proper implementation, enforcement and compliance with the EU legislation, and the Commission will monitor compliance with the relevant requirements.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-006197&language=EN

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010586/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(17 septembre 2013)

Objet: Gaspillage alimentaire en Europe et dans le monde

Le gaspillage alimentaire massif dans le monde constitue un danger considérable pour la protection de l'environnement et la sécurité alimentaire. En effet, dans un rapport publié le 11 septembre 2013, la FAO (Organisation des Nations unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture) affirme que plus d'un milliard de tonnes de nourriture sont gaspillées chaque année dans le monde, soit un coût d'environ 750 milliards d'USD.

Au total, plus de 1,3 milliard de tonne de nourriture sont gaspillées chaque année et la production de la nourriture non mangée occupe 30 % des terres cultivables. Les pertes agricoles et alimentaires coûtent chaque année à la planète environ 250 km^3 de ressources en eau et la production de ces denrées non consommées représente une empreinte carbone estimée à 3,3 milliards de tonnes de CO_2. Toujours selon la FAO, 54 % des pertes sont enregistrées dans les phases de production, de récolte et de stockage.

Dans l'Union européenne, le gaspillage alimentaire représente plus de 90 millions de tonnes par an.

Soucieux des impacts de ce phénomène sur l'environnement, le Parlement européen avait déjà pris conscience du problème en adoptant, le 19 janvier 2012, une résolution sur le thème «Éviter le gaspillage des denrées alimentaires: stratégies pour une chaîne alimentaire plus efficace dans l'Union européenne». Par ce moyen, les députés européens ont donc invité la Commission à adopter des démarches significatives pour faire face aux menaces soulevées par le gaspillage alimentaire de masse en Europe, en se centrant notamment sur un effort d'éducation pour lutter contre le gaspillage, ainsi que sur un effort pour un étiquetage et un emballage adéquats.

Aussi la Commission voudrait-elle indiquer quelles démarches et quelles mesures législatives elle a entreprises pour répondre aux enjeux spécifiques de ce problème écologique majeur qu'est le gaspillage alimentaire?

Réponse commune donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(19 novembre 2013)

Les pertes et le gaspillage de denrées alimentaires comestibles et nourrissantes ont des conséquences à la fois pour l'économie et pour l'environnement. Dans ce contexte, la Commission étudie actuellement, en étroite coopération avec les parties prenantes, comment réduire le gaspillage, sans pour autant compromettre la sécurité alimentaire, et examine les mesures qui pourraient être adoptées à l'échelon de l'Union européenne en complément des mesures nationales. Les résultats des réunions du groupe de travail constitué à cet effet sont disponibles à l'adresse suivante (en anglais): http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/sustainability/index_en.htm. Ce site comprend également une campagne de sensibilisation (un clip viral sur les déchets alimentaires, «10 conseils pour réduire les déchets alimentaires» dans toutes les langues de l'Union et une clarification des mentions «à consommer de préférence avant» et «à consommer jusqu'au» dans toutes les langues de l'Union).

Cette démarche s'inscrit dans la lignée des travaux sur la viabilité du système alimentaire dans le cadre desquels une consultation publique, lancée avant l'été, a été clôturée au début du mois d'octobre 2013. La Commission étudie actuellement les résultats de cette consultation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010749/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(19 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Conseguenze economiche e ambientali dello spreco di prodotti alimentari

Nel Rapporto sulle conseguenze ambientali dello spreco di prodotti alimentari presentato dalla FAO risulta che ogni anno si spreca una quantità di cibo pari a 565 miliardi di euro, valore questo pari ai Pil di Turchia e Svizzera. Il volume globale dello spreco è di 1,6 miliardi di tonnellate di prodotti primari e di 1,3 miliardi di tonnellate di cibo commestibile. L'Europa si colloca al 3° posto (dopo Asia e Sud Est asiatico) con uno spreco pari al 15 % del cibo prodotto.

Oltre che a livello economico, questo fenomeno ha un impatto estremamente negativo sull'ambiente: ogni anno a causa dello spreco di cibo che si colloca al terzo posto delle cause di emissione di gas serra circa 3,3 miliardi di tonnellate di CO_2 sono immessi nell'atmosfera. Si evidenziano anche le conseguenze del cibo disperso sull'acqua: per coltivare, stoccare e portare sulle tavole le tonnellate di cibo non mangiato si sprecano 250 chilometri cubi all'anno, quantità d'acqua questa corrispondente al lago di Ginevra. Inoltre ogni anno si utilizzano 1,4 milioni di ettari di suolo per produrre cibo che non sarà mangiato (pari all'intero territorio russo). Infine, sono 9,7 milioni gli ettari di bosco distrutti ogni anno per produrre cibo sprecato, compromettendo pesantemente la biodiversità del nostro pianeta.

Considerato che:

— negli anni a venire si registrerà un aumento della popolazione, un conseguente incremento di domanda di cibo e una richiesta di aumento della produzione alimentare pari al 60 % entro il 2050;

— questo sforzo difficilmente sarà sostenibile dall'industria alimentare;

— si spreca un terzo del cibo prodotto, mentre 870 milioni di persone soffrono la fame ogni giorno;

può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. è consapevole dei danni economici e ambientali legati a tale fenomeno;

2. intende elaborare politiche mirate all'ottimizzazione della produzione, nonché al riutilizzo e al riciclo;

3. intende predisporre campagne di educazione e sensibilizzazione dirette ai consumatori?

Risposta congiunta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(19 novembre 2013)

Le perdite e gli sprechi di cibo ancora commestibile e nutriente hanno conseguenze economiche ed ambientali. La Commissione sta analizzando, in stretta cooperazione con gli stakeholder, il modo per ridurre gli sprechi di alimenti senza compromettere la sicurezza alimentare e sta discutendo eventuali misure unionali per integrare le misure nazionali. I risultati delle riunioni del gruppo di lavoro sono disponibili all'indirizzo:
http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/sustainability/index_en.htm. Questo sito web contiene anche una campagna di informazione e di sensibilizzazione (come il video virale «10 consigli per ridurre gli sprechi alimentari» in tutte le lingue dell'UE, nonché un chiarimento delle etichette «consumare preferibilmente entro il» e «da consumare entro il»).

Questi lavori confluiranno negli imminenti lavori in tema di «Sostenibilità del sistema alimentare», tematica in merito alla quale è stata avviata prima dell'estate una consultazione pubblica conclusasi all'inizio dell'ottobre 2013. La Commissione sta ora analizzando i risultati della consultazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010586/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: European and global food wastage

Worldwide food wastage on a massive scale poses a considerable risk to environmental protection and food security. According to a report published on 11 September 2013 by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations, more than 1 billion tonnes of food go to waste globally every year, at a cost of about USD 750 billion.

In all, more than 1.3 billion tonnes of food go to waste every year and producing the uneaten food takes up 30% of arable land. Losses in agriculture and food cost the planet around 250 km^3 annually in water resources and producing these unused foodstuffs equates to an estimated carbon footprint of 3.3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide. Also according to the FAO, 54% of losses occur during production, harvest and storage.

In the European Union, more than 90 million tonnes of food goes to waste every year.

Conscious of the environmental impact of this wastage, Parliament had already acknowledged there was a problem when it adopted a resolution on 19 January 2012 on how to avoid food wastage: strategies for a more efficient food chain in the EU. In that resolution, the Members of the European Parliament called on the Commission to take meaningful action to address the threats posed by massive food wastage in Europe, focusing on efforts to educate against waste and efforts to ensure appropriate labelling and packaging.

Could the Commission state what steps and legislative measures it has undertaken in response to the specific challenges of this major ecological problem of food wastage?

Question for written answer E-010749/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Economic and environmental impact of food waste

According to the report by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) on the environmental impact of food waste, each year EUR 565 billion worth of food is wasted, a figure equal to the gross domestic products of Turkey or Switzerland combined. The total quantities wasted are 1.6 billion tonnes of raw materials and 1.3 billion tonnes of edible food. Europe is the third biggest waster of food (after Asia and south-east Asia), wasting some 15% of the food it produces.

In addition to its economic consequences, this problem has an extremely negative impact on the environment. Food waste is the third biggest cause of greenhouse gas production, leading to the emission of 3.3 billion tonnes of CO_2 into the atmosphere every year. The report also highlights the impact of food wastage on water: every year, 250 km^3 of water are wasted on growing, storing and bringing to the table the many tonnes of uneaten food, a volume equal to the size of Lake Geneva. Furthermore, 1.4 million hectares of land (an area equivalent to the whole of Russia) are used every year to produce food that will not be eaten. Lastly, 9.7 million hectares of forest are destroyed each year for the sake of producing food which ends up wasted, posing a severe threat to the planet's biodiversity.

In the coming years, we will see an increase in the population and consequently an increase in the demand for food, with a 60% increase in demand for food production by 2050. The food industry will have difficulty sustaining this level of output. Every day, a third of the food we produce is wasted, while 870 million people go hungry.

1. Is the Commission aware of the economic and environmental harm caused by this problem?

2. Does it intend to develop policies aimed at both at optimising production and reusing and recycling?

3. Does it intend to organise educational and awareness-raising campaigns aimed at consumers?

Joint answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(19 November 2013)

Losses and wastage of edible and nutritious food have economic and environmental consequences. The Commission is analysing, in close cooperation with stakeholders, how to reduce food waste without compromising food safety and is discussing possible EU measures to complement national measures. The results of the working group meetings are available at http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/sustainability/index_en.htm

This website also includes awareness raising information campaign (such as viral clip on food waste, '10 tips to reduce food waste' in all EU languages, and a clarification of 'best before' and 'use by' labels in all EU languages).

This work feeds into the forthcoming work on the 'Sustainability of the Food System' on which a public consultation was launched before summer and closed early October 2013. The Commission is currently analysing the results of this consultation.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010587/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(17 septembre 2013)

Objet: Hôtellerie et agences de réservation en ligne

De nos jours, la plupart des voyageurs à la recherche d'un hôtel passent par une agence de réservation en ligne, telle que Booking.com, Expedia.fr ou Hrs.com. Ces agences de réservation sont considérées comme plus pratiques car elles recensent un grand nombre d'hôtels de toutes les catégories pour chaque ville et proposent des chambres qui sont perçues comme moins onéreuses par les clients. Les motifs pécuniaires sont ainsi la principale raison qui pousse nos concitoyens à passer par ces centrales de réservation.

Néanmoins, ces sites sont de plus en en plus contestés par les hôteliers et notamment par l'Union des métiers et des industries de l'hôtellerie (UMIH) en France. En effet, le référencement des hôtels sur ces agences n'est pas exhaustif. Seuls apparaissent les établissements dont les gérants acceptent de verser aux centrales des commissions pouvant atteindre 30 % du prix de la chambre. Ces centrales de réservation sur Internet sont accusées par les hôteliers et les restaurateurs d'exercer une forme de pression et de position dominante, à cause notamment du principe dit de parité tarifaire. Ainsi, un hôtelier voulant faire une promotion de dernière minute sur son site doit en informer préalablement les autres sites qui le commercialisent pour que tout le monde puisse afficher les mêmes prix. Ces pratiques, pouvant constituer une entrave aux règles de concurrence, interdites en Allemagne sont toujours autorisées en France par exemple.

L'Union européenne vise à favoriser la libre circulation des personnes sur son territoire. Cette promotion du tourisme implique de permettre à nos concitoyens de se loger facilement durant leurs voyages. Or, les pressions tarifaires exercées par ces agences de réservation en ligne dans certains États membres peuvent s'avérer néfastes pour nos hôteliers, tout comme pour leurs clients.

1. Aussi, la Commission entend-elle entreprendre des démarches pour s'assurer que les règles de concurrence sont bien appliquées dans le domaine de l'hôtellerie au sein de ses États membres?

2. La Commission a-t-elle l'intention d'harmoniser les règles s'appliquant aux agences de réservation en ligne pour l'hôtellerie au sein de l'Union européenne?

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission
(26 novembre 2013)

À l'heure actuelle, aucune enquête relative à la concurrence n'est en cours à la Commission en ce qui concerne la réservation d'hôtels en ligne. Toutefois, certaines autorités de concurrence des États membres, compétentes pour appliquer les règles tant européennes que nationales en matière de concurrence, enquêtent actuellement sur des pratiques comme celle mentionnée par l'Honorable Parlementaire. Dans le cadre du réseau des autorités européennes de concurrence, la Commission est tenue informée de ces cas et elle les examine en ce moment avec les autorités nationales de concurrence afin de garantir l'application effective et cohérente des règles de concurrence de l'UE sur ces marchés.

La Commission n'a pas l'intention d'harmoniser les règles qui s'appliqueraient spécifiquement aux agences de réservation d'hôtels en ligne dans l'Union.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010587/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: The hotel industry and online booking agencies

Nowadays most travellers looking for a hotel go through an online booking agency such as Booking.com, Expedia.co.uk or Hrs.com. These reservation agencies are considered more convenient because they identify a large number of hotels in every category in each city and offer rooms that the customers see as less expensive. Financial considerations are therefore the main reason why our fellow citizens go through these booking centres.

However, these sites are being increasingly called into question by hoteliers, especially by the French Hotel Trade and Industry Association (UMIH). The hotel listings published by these agencies are not comprehensive. The only establishments which appear are those whose managers agree to pay commissions to the centres, which can be as much as 30% of the room rate. These online booking centres are accused by hotel and restaurant owners of exerting a kind of pressure and market dominance, in particular because of the principle known as rate parity. This means that a hotelier who wants to run a last-minute promotion on his site must first inform the other sites that market his hotel so that they can all display the same prices. As these practices may constitute a barrier to the rules on competition, they are not allowed in Germany, but they are still permitted in France, for example.

The European Union aims to facilitate the free movement of people on its territory. Promoting tourism in this way means that our fellow citizens should be able to find accommodation easily when travelling. However, the pressure put on prices by these online booking agencies in some Member States can prove detrimental to our hoteliers and to their customers.

1. Does the Commission intend to take steps to ensure that the rules on competition are properly applied in the hotel industry in its Member States?

2. Does the Commission intend to harmonise the rules that apply to online hotel booking agencies in the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(26 November 2013)

The Commission has currently no pending competition investigation in relation to online booking of hotels. However, some competition authorities of the Member States, which are competent to apply both EU competition rules and national competition rules, are currently investigating practices such as the one referred to by the Honourable Member. Within the network of European Competition authorities, the Commission is informed of these cases and is discussing them with the national competition authorities in order to safeguard the consistent and effective application of EU competition rules in these markets.

The Commission has no intention to harmonise the rules that would apply specifically to online hotel booking agencies in the Union.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010588/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(17 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Análise do Estudo «Perceção do Parlamento Europeu pelos Portugueses» — DG COMM

Tendo em conta que:

— Pelo segundo ano consecutivo, a Direção-Geral da Comunicação, nomeadamente a Unidade de Acompanhamento da Opinião Pública e a empresa TNS opinion, realizaram um estudo sobre a «Perceção do Parlamento Europeu pelos Portugueses»;

— Foram atualizadas as perguntas realizadas pelo Eurobarómetro sobre temas como «A minha Voz conta na União Europeia» e «No meu País», bem como as dimensões relacionadas com as respostas à crise (medidas isoladas e coordenadas) e a retoma do crescimento;

— Segundo o estudo em causa «O Eurobarómetro é um instrumento que não está concebido para analisar resultados a uma escala regional. Porém, mediante a combinação de dados de vários inquéritos EB/PE, nos quais foram efetuadas perguntas idênticas, é possível obter resultados de âmbito regional.»

— O estudo aborda assim a perceção regional dos Portugueses sobre o Parlamento Europeu, tendo sido realizado um vasto trabalho de campo nas várias regiões portuguesas. No entanto, 28 % das regiões portuguesas foram completamente ignoradas, não tendo sido consideradas no estudo as Regiões Autónomas da Madeira e dos Açores que possuem mais de 510 mil habitantes;

— As Regiões Autónomas são consideradas 2 das 7 regiões portuguesas, devendo ter sido naturalmente incluídas no estudo em causa;

— Segundo o artigo 349°, em articulação com o artigo 355.º do Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia, estas regiões são consideradas Regiões Ultraperiféricas, recebendo um apoio específico adicional para fazer face às suas condicionalidades económicas, sociais e territoriais.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Como justifica que o estudo «Perceção do Parlamento Europeu pelos Portugueses» tenha ignorado as Regiões Autónomas da Madeira e dos Açores?

2. Qual o critério adotado para que apenas se tenha dado importância à opinião das pessoas residentes em 70 % das regiões portuguesas, extrapolando a análise para o espaço nacional?

3. Tenciona realizar um novo estudo completo à escala regional e que seja integrado numa verdadeira análise à escala nacional?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(5 de novembro de 2013)

O título «Perceção do Parlamento Europeu pelos Portugueses» refere-se a um estudo Eurobarómetro realizado pelo próprio Parlamento.

A Comissão Europeia leva a cabo o inquérito Eurobarómetro sobre a opinião pública na União Europeia duas vezes por ano em todos os Estados-Membros. Tal inclui, nomeadamente, perguntas para saber se as pessoas sentem que a sua opinião conta, na União Europeia e no seu país. A Unidade de Acompanhamento da Opinião Pública, da Direção-Geral da Comunicação do Parlamento Europeu, realiza também anualmente um inquérito Eurobarómetro que inclui as mesmas duas questões.

Normalmente, o Eurobarómetro da Comissão tem como objetivo dar uma imagem representativa da opinião pública, em função do Estado-Membro, da região e do grupo sociodemográfico (sexo, idade, atividade profissional, nível de educação, etc.). A Comissão realiza igualmente estudos que analisam os mesmos tipos de questões, de forma mais pormenorizada, ao nível regional.

O Eurobarómetro Flash n.° 356 sobre «Opinião Pública nas Regiões da UE», realizado pela Direção-Geral da Comunicação em agosto-setembro de 2012, incluiu a Madeira e os Açores entre as 170 regiões inquiridas. A Comissão está a planear realizar inquéritos regionais semelhantes no futuro.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010588/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Analysis of the study 'The Portuguese People's Perception of the European Parliament' by the Directorate-General for Communication

For the second year running, the Directorate-General for Communication's Public Opinion Monitoring Unit and the company TNS Opinion have conducted a study on 'The Portuguese People's Perception of the European Parliament'.

Eurobarometer questions on issues such as 'My voice counts in the European Union' and 'My voice counts in my country', as well as aspects concerning responses to the crisis (one-off and coordinated measures) and reviving growth, were updated.

According to the study in question, Eurobarometer is not an instrument that is designed to analyse results on a regional scale. However, combining data from several Eurobarometer/EP surveys, in which the same questions have been asked, makes it possible to obtain regional results.

The study thus deals with the Portuguese people's regional perception of Parliament, with a huge amount of fieldwork having been done in several regions of Portugal. However, 28% of Portuguese regions were completely ignored, as the autonomous regions of Madeira and the Azores, which have over 510 000 residents, were not taken into account by the study.

The autonomous regions count as two of Portugal's seven regions and should, of course, be included in the study in question.

According to Article 349, in conjunction with Article 355, of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, these regions are considered outermost regions, receiving specific additional support to deal with their economic, social and territorial constraints.

1. How can the Commission justify the study 'The Portuguese People's Perception of the European Parliament' ignoring the autonomous regions of Madeira and the Azores?

2. On what basis was only the opinion of people living in 70% of Portuguese regions considered important, with the results extrapolated nationally?

3. Does the Commission plan to conduct a new, comprehensive regional-level study to be integrated into a genuinely national analysis?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

'The Portuguese People's Perception of the European Parliament' refers to a Eurobarometer carried out by the Parliament itself.

The European Commission conducts the Standard Eurobarometer survey on public opinion in the European Union twice yearly in all Member States. This includes, among others, questions on whether citizens feel their voice counts in the European Union and in their country. The Directorate-General for Communication's Public Opinion Monitoring Unit in the European Parliament also conducts an annual Eurobarometer survey, which includes the same two questions.

The Commission's Standard Eurobarometer aims to give a representative overview of public opinion according to Member State, region and socio-demographic grouping (gender, age, occupation, level of education, etc.). The Commission also conducts studies that look into the same types of questions in more detail at a regional level.

Flash Eurobarometer 356 on 'Public Opinion in the EU Regions', carried out by the Commission's Directorate-General for Communication in August-September 2012, included Madeira and the Azores among the 170 regions surveyed. The Commission is planning to carry out similar regional surveys in the future.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010589/13
an die Kommission
Jürgen Creutzmann (ALDE)
(17. September 2013)

Betrifft: Überarbeitung der „De-minimis"-Richtlinie

Die „De-minimis"-Richtlinie ist ein zentrales Instrument der Mittelstandsförderung und eine der wichtigsten Rechtsgrundlagen im EU-Beihilferecht. Die geplante Überarbeitung der Richtlinie in wesentlichen Punkten birgt die Gefahr, dass es EU-weit zu erheblichen Einschränkungen bei der Unternehmensförderung kommt.

1. Wie begründet die Kommission die in ihrem Entwurf vorgesehene Beibehaltung des aktuellen Schwellenwertes bis 2020? Wäre im Hinblick auf die wirtschaftliche Entwicklung seit 2006 eine Anhebung des Schwellenwertes angebracht?

2. Im Entwurf werden KMU mit einer bilanziellen Eigenkapitalquote von 12 % als „Unternehmen in Schwierigkeiten" bezeichnet. Berücksichtigt die Kommission in ihrer Überarbeitung ausreichend die Tatsache, dass üblicherweise gerade KMU in Europa ein geringes Kapitalpolster besitzen und Experten zufolge dadurch mindestens die Hälfte ihres KMU-Bestands aus der Förderung herausfallen würde?

3. Wie rechtfertigt die Kommission die Erstellung eines zentralen nationalen „De-minimis"-Registers und den damit einhergehenden erheblichen bürokratischen und finanziellen Aufwand, der insbesondere für föderal strukturierte Mitgliedstaaten entstünde?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(18. November 2013)

Die Überarbeitung der De-minimis-Verordnung wird auf transparente Weise durchgeführt: Alle Stellungnahmen werden sorgfältig geprüft, und es wurden bisher noch keine endgültigen Entscheidungen getroffen. Ohne jeden Zweifel beabsichtigt die Kommission, dass diese Regelung ein einfaches und flexibles Instrument zur Unterstützung insbesondere von KMU bleibt.

1. Was den Schwellenwert anbelangt, hat die Kommission keine neuen Hinweise erhalten, die eine Anhebung rechtfertigen würden. Die aus den Mitgliedstaaten eingegangenen Angaben zeigen, dass der Durchschnittsbetrag der De-minimis-Beihilfe relativ gering ist und in den allermeisten Fällen der Höchstbetrag nicht ausgeschöpft wird. Bei der letzten Anhebung des Schwellenwerts im Jahr 2006 von 100 000 auf 200 000 EUR wurden bereits sowohl die vorangegangene Inflation als auch die prognostizierten Entwicklungen für 2006-2013 berücksichtigt. Die tatsächliche Inflation war in diesem Zeitraum jedoch niedriger als 2005 erwartet und dürfte in den nächsten Jahren voraussichtlich nicht erheblich steigen.

2. Die vorgeschlagene Definition von „Unternehmen in Schwierigkeiten" beruht auf den verfügbaren Daten. Seither sind bei meinen Dienststellen aus vielen Mitgliedstaaten und von Interessengruppen Informationen und Daten zu diesem Punkt eingegangen. Alle Stellungnahmen werden sorgfältig geprüft, bevor die Entscheidung darüber fällt, ob und wie der Text geändert wird. Außerdem steht die Kommission kurz davor, eine öffentliche Anhörung zur Überarbeitung der Leitlinien der Gemeinschaft für staatliche Beihilfen zur Rettung und Umstrukturierung von Unternehmen in Schwierigkeiten durchzuführen.

3. Die Kommission hat alle Stellungnahmen zur Einführung eines obligatorischen Registers zur Kenntnis genommen und wird diese berücksichtigen, wenn es darum geht, eine ausgewogene Lösung zu finden, die sicherstellt, dass die De-minimis-Reform den Zielen der Modernisierung der staatlichen Beihilfen dient und keinen unverhältnismäßigen Verwaltungsaufwand schafft.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010589/13
to the Commission
Jürgen Creutzmann (ALDE)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Revision of the *de minimis* Directive

The *de minimis* Directive is a key instrument for supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and one of the most important legal bases in the EU State aid *acquis*. The planned substantial revision of the directive is liable to result in considerable restrictions on aid to enterprises throughout the EU.

1. How does the Commission justify the retention of the current threshold until 2020, as provided for in its draft? In view of the economic developments since 2006, would it be appropriate to raise the threshold?

2. In the draft, SMEs with an equity ratio on their balance sheet of 12% are defined as 'undertakings in difficulty'. Is the Commission taking sufficient account in its revision of the fact that SMEs in Europe do usually have a low capital buffer, and, according to experts, this would result in at least half of all its SMEs dropping out of the aid scheme?

3. How does the Commission justify the creation of a national central *de minimis* register and the associated considerable financial commitment and amount of red tape that would result, in particular for Member States with a federal structure?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(18 November 2013)

The review of the *de minimis* Regulation is being carried out in a transparent way in which all comments are carefully considered and no final decisions have been taken yet. It is certainly the Commission's intention to ensure that the *de minimis* instrument will provide a simple and flexible tool to support in particular SMEs.

1. Concerning the ceiling, the Commission has received no new element showing that a higher ceiling would be justified. The data received from Member States (MS) show that the average amount of *de minimis* aid granted is quite low and in the vast majority of cases the ceiling is not exhausted. The previous increase from EUR 100 000 to 200 000 in 2006 already took into account both past inflation and likely developments for 2006-2013. The real inflation for this period was lower than predicted in 2005 and it is not expected to be very significant in the coming years.

2. The proposed definition of undertakings in difficulty was based on the available data. My services have since received information and data from many MS and other stakeholders on this point. All comments are being considered with great care before any decision is taken on whether and how to amend the text. The Commission is also on the point of launching a public consultation on the revision of the guidelines for rescue and restructuring aid to firms in difficulty.

3. Concerning the introduction of a mandatory register, the Commission has listened carefully to all comments and will take these into consideration to find a balanced solution able to ensure that the *de minimis* reform fits with the State Aid Modernisation objectives and does not create a disproportionate administrative burden.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010590/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(17. September 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Menschenrechtsverletzungen im Rahmen der 2012 von Präsident Mursi durchgesetzten Verfassung

Mit Blick auf die Forderungen der internationalen Völkergemeinschaft und der EU insbesondere nach Verhandlungen mit der Muslimbrüderschaft (der Mohammed Mursi angehört), um den Ägypten-Konflikt beizulegen, müssen noch einige Punkte geklärt werden. Während die internationale Völkergemeinschaft nun in Sorge über die Krise in Ägypten ist, sei angemerkt, dass von einigen eine solche Krise angesichts der von Mohammed Mursi 2012 in Kraft gesetzten Verfassung als unausweichlich vorausgesagt worden war. Die Verfassung war zwar im Rahmen eines Referendums mit 68,3 % angenommen worden — aber es hatten sich lediglich 32,9 % der eingetragenen Wähler beteiligt. Damals befürchtete die Opposition, dass die Verfassung den Weg für eine weitere Islamisierung des Gesetzes ebnen würde (Befürchtungen, die sich bewahrheitet haben), wobei Catherine Ashton Präsident Mursi bereits lange vor Inkrafttreten der Verfassung aufgefordert hatte, das Vertrauen der Menschen in die Demokratie wieder herzustellen.

Die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin wird um folgende Auskünfte ersucht:

1. Angesichts der damals offenkundig sehr laxen Haltung von Catherine Ashton gegenüber dem Mursi-Regime und seinen fundamentalen Menschenrechtsverletzungen wird der Rat um Mitteilung darüber ersucht, ob Catherine Ashton nun ihre Herangehensweise in den Verhandlungen mit einer künftigen ägyptischen Regierung wesentlich ändern wird?

2. Catherine Ashton hat nicht energisch auf die Verletzung grundlegender Menschenrechte durch diese Verfassung reagiert (Schutz von Rechten (Artikel 10, 11, 81); Meinungsfreiheit (Artikel 31, 44, 45); Religionsfreiheit (Artikel 43); Rechte der Frau (Artikel 10, 30); Abhaltung von zivilen und militärischen Prozessen (Artikel 198); völkerrechtliche Verpflichtungen (Artikel 145)). Hat sich Catherine Ashton damals die Verfassung aufmerksam durchgelesen oder war sie der Meinung, sie werde keine kurz- oder mittelfristigen Auswirkungen für Ägypten, die EU und den Rest der demokratischen Welt haben?

3. Kann man sich in Anbetracht des oben Gesagten nicht fragen, welche Rolle die EU-Außenbeauftragte Ashton tatsächlich während der Amtszeit von Präsident Mursi gespielt hat? War ihre Rolle eher symbolischer Natur oder hat sie wesentlich zu Vertretung der Interessen der EU in Ägypten beigetragen?

Antwort von Frau Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(9. Dezember 2013)

Die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin verfolgt die Entwicklungen in Ägypten aufmerksam und mit Besorgnis. Die EU vertritt gegenüber Ägypten weiterhin mit Entschiedenheit ihren wertebasierten Ansatz und dringt in diesem Zusammenhang auf die Achtung der Menschenrechte und der Grundfreiheiten sowie des Rechtsstaatlichkeitsprinzips. Die Hohe Vertreterin hat diesen Standpunkt in verschiedenen Erklärungen deutlich gemacht, insbesondere auch gegenüber Gesprächspartnern im Rahmen ihrer Besuche in der Region. Die zentrale Bedeutung dieser grundlegenden Werte wurde von den 28 Mitgliedstaaten in den Schlussfolgerungen des Rates vom 22. Juli und 21. August nachdrücklich bekräftigt.

Ebenso hat sich die EU-Delegation in Kairo bei ihren Kontakten mit Partnern in der Übergangsregierung für die Achtung dieser Werte eingesetzt. Die EU-Delegation verfolgt und überwacht die Entwicklung der Verfassungsfrage genau und steht dabei in engem Kontakt mit der Venedig-Kommission des Europarats. Die Verfassung dient als Grundlage eines demokratischen Ägyptens und sollte daher die uneingeschränkte Achtung der Gewaltenteilung mit allen notwendigen Kontrollmöglichkeiten gewährleisten.

Die EU ruft Ägypten daher dazu auf, rasch zu einem alle Beteiligten einbeziehenden Prozess des Übergangs zur Demokratie finden. Sie weist außerdem immer wieder darauf hin, dass Konfrontation und Polarisierung keine Lösung bieten und vielmehr Aussöhnung und Dialog vorrangige Bedeutung eingeräumt werden muss. Entsprechende Stellungnahmen wurden bereits der Regierung von Präsident Mursi übermittelt.

Die EU unterstützt weiterhin die demokratischen Bestrebungen des ägyptischen Volkes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010590/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Contravention of human rights by the Egyptian Constitution imposed by Mr Morsi in 2012

Given the calls by the international community and the EU in particular for negotiations to be held with the Muslim Brotherhood (of which Mr Morsi is a member) in order to put an end to the Egyptian conflict, certain points need to be clarified. While the international community is now worrying about the Egyptian crisis, it is worth noting that some people had predicted that a crisis of this kind would be inevitable because of the constitution enacted by Mr Morsi in December 2012. Although the constitution was ratified by 68.3% of voters in a referendum, only 32.9% of registered voters turned out to vote. At the time, the opposition was afraid that the constitution would pave the way for greater Islamisation of the law (fears which proved to be well-founded), while Catherine Ashton was calling on President Morsi long before the constitution entered into force to 'restore people's faith in democracy'.

Could the Vice-President/High Representative answer the following questions:

1. Given Ms Ashton's apparently very lax attitude towards Mr Morsi's regime as regards respect for fundamental human rights, will she change her approach substantially in negotiations with any future Egyptian Government?

2. Ms Ashton did not react strongly to the constitution's disregard for fundamental human rights (protection of rights (Articles 10, 11, 81); freedom of expression (Articles 31, 44, 45); freedom of religion (Article 43); women's rights (Articles 10, 30); civilians and military trials (Article 198); obligations under international law (Art. 145)). Did Ms Ashton read through the constitution carefully or did she consider that it would not have any short- or medium-term consequences for Egypt, the EU and the rest of the democratic world?

3. In the light of the above, one is entitled to wonder what role Ms Ashton really played during Mr Morsi's mandate. Was her role a symbolic one or was it crucial in terms of representing the EU in Egypt?

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

The HR/VP is following the developments in Egypt closely and with concern. The EU continues to stress its value-based approach towards Egypt. In this respect, the EU is calling for the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as the rule of law. The High Representative stressed this approach in various statements and in particular with her interlocutors when travelling to the region. These values have likewise been stressed by the 28 Member States in the Council Conclusions on 22 July and 21 August.

Also the EU Delegation in Cairo is underlining these values in its contacts with counterparts of the interim authorities. Moreover, the EU Delegation is following and monitoring closely the issue of the Constitution in close contact with the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe. The Constitution will be the basis for a democratic Egypt and therefore should reflect the full respect of division of powers with the necessary checks and balances.

The EU continues to call on Egypt to rapidly move to an inclusive transformation process. The EU also continues to stress that confrontation and polarization are not a solution. Reconciliation and dialogue are paramount. These messages had already been passed to the Morsi government.

The EU continues to support the democratic aspirations of the Egyptian people.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010591/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(17 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Έρευνα των Ηνωμένων Εθνών φέρνει στο φως αλλεπάλληλα κρούσματα βιασμών σε χώρες της Ασίας και του Ειρηνικού

Σύμφωνα με πρόσφατα δημοσιευμένη έρευνα των Ηνωμένων Εθνών που πραγματοποιήθηκε σε έξι χώρες της Ασίας και του Ειρηνικού και σε πολύ διαφορετικά μεταξύ τους μέρη, το ένα τέταρτο σχεδόν των ερωτηθέντων ανδρών παραδέχτηκαν ότι έχουν βιάσει γυναίκες που συχνά είναι οι ίδιες οι σύντροφοί τους.

Η έρευνα βασίστηκε σε ανώνυμες συνεντεύξεις με περισσότερους από 10 000 άνδρες, ηλικίας 18 έως 49 ετών, από το Μπανγκλαντές, την Κίνα, την Καμπότζη, την Ινδονησία, τη Σρι Λάνκα, και την Παπούα Νέα Γουινέα.

Με αφετηρία έναν ορισμό σύμφωνα με τον οποίο βιασμός είναι μία μη συναινετική σεξουαλική επαφή με διείσδυση, προκύπτει ότι το 11% όσων απάντησαν στη μελέτη έχουν βιάσει γυναίκα που δεν ήταν η σύντροφός τους και ότι το ποσοστό ανεβαίνει στο 24% σχεδόν όταν συμπεριλαμβάνεται ο βιασμός της συντρόφου.

Το 45% αυτών των ανδρών παραδέχτηκαν ότι έχουν βιάσει περισσότερες από μία γυναίκες. Μία ιδιαίτερα ανησυχητική παράμετρος είναι ότι οι μισοί από τους εν λόγω δηλωμένους βιαστές ήταν έφηβοι όταν διέπραξαν το έγκλημα και ότι το 12% αυτών ήταν νεώτεροι από 12 ετών. Στην πλειοψηφία τους δεν αντιμετώπισαν καμία νομική συνέπεια για τις πράξεις τους.

Η μεγαλύτερη συχνότητα παρατηρείται στην Bougainville της Παπούα Νέας Γουινέας, όπου 62% από τους ερωτηθέντες παραδέχτηκαν ότι έχουν διαπράξει βιασμό. Παρόμοια αποτελέσματα καταγράφηκαν και στην γειτονική επαρχία της Ινδονησίας Papau, όπου το 49% σχεδόν από τους ερωτηθέντες παραδέχτηκαν ότι έχουν διαπράξει βιασμό.

Με βάση τα ανωτέρω, παρακαλείται η Επιτροπή να απαντήσει στα ακόλουθα ερωτήματα:

1. Σε ποιες περαιτέρω ενέργειες προτίθεται να προβεί η Επιτροπή όσον αφορά την πρόληψη και την εξάλειψη τούτου του σοβαρότατου φαινομένου, προκειμένου να αλλάξουν οι επικρατούσες ανδρικές αντιλήψεις και νοοτροπίες και προκειμένου να προσαχθούν στη δικαιοσύνη οι αυτουργοί του εγκλήματος του βιασμού;

2. Με ποιους τρόπους μπορεί η ΕΕ να διαδραματίσει αποτελεσματικότερα και αποδοτικότερα τον ρόλο της στη διεθνή σκηνή προκειμένου να παταχθεί η βία εναντίον των γυναικών σε τρίτες χώρες; Παρακαλείσθε επίσης να περιγράψετε συγκεκριμένα μέτρα που έχουν ήδη ληφθεί.

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Το σχέδιο δράσης της ΕΕ σχετικά με την ισότητα των φύλων και τη χειραφέτηση των γυναικών στο πλαίσιο της αναπτυξιακής συνεργασίας για την περίοδο 2010-2015 περιλαμβάνει δεσμεύσεις για όλους τους φορείς της ΕΕ όσον αφορά τη στήριξη των προσπαθειών των αναπτυσσόμενων χωρών για τη βελτίωση της θέσης των γυναικών. Η προστασία έναντι μορφών βίας που σχετίζονται με το φύλο αποτελεί μία από τις προτεραιότητες του στρατηγικού πλαισίου και του σχεδίου δράσης της ΕΕ για τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα και τη δημοκρατία που εγκρίθηκαν το 2012. Η ΕΕ και τα Ηνωμένα Έθνη συνεργάζονται στενά για την υλοποίηση των συμπερασμάτων της 57ης Επιτροπής του ΟΗΕ σχετικά με τη θέση των γυναικών στην πρόληψη και εξάλειψη της βίας κατά των γυναικών και των κοριτσιών.

Έχουν αναπτυχθεί προγράμματα της ΕΕ με στόχο την πρόληψη της βίας, την προστασία και υποστήριξη των θυμάτων και τη δίωξη των δραστών. Τα προγράμματα ανθρωπιστικής βοήθειας συχνά περιλαμβάνουν παροχή βοήθειας σε επιζώντες μορφών βίας που σχετίζονται με το φύλο. Το ζήτημα της βίας κατά των γυναικών τίθεται στο πλαίσιο του διαλόγου για τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα ή άλλων μορφών πολιτικού διαλόγου που διεξάγει η ΕΕ με τις περισσότερες από τις χώρες που αναφέρονται στην ερώτηση του Αξιότιμου Μέλους. Τα θέματα των γυναικών επίσης ενσωματώνονται σε πολλές δραστηριότητες αναπτυξιακής συνεργασίας της ΕΕ: εκπαίδευση, υγεία, δικαιώματα των διακινούμενων εργαζομένων, χειραφέτηση των γυναικών.

Στο Μπαγκλαντές, την Ατσέ και την Καμπότζη, οι προσπάθειες της ΕΕ επικεντρώνονται επίσης στην πρόσβαση στη δικαιοσύνη ώστε να διασφαλιστεί ότι η βία κατά των γυναικών αποτελεί αξιόποινη πράξη και ότι λαμβάνονται μέτρα για τη διευκόλυνση της πρόσβασης των θυμάτων στη δικαιοσύνη. Στην περίπτωση της Παπουασίας-Νέας Γουινέας, η καταπολέμηση της βίας κατά των γυναικών βρίσκεται στην κορυφή των δράσεων που υποστηρίζει η ΕΕ. Ο πρόσφατος διάλογος για τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα με την Κίνα προσέφερε τη δυνατότητα να συζητηθούν ο αντίκτυπος της πολιτικής του ενός παιδιού, η ενδοοικογενειακή βία και η βία κατά των ιερόδουλων. Στη Σρι Λάνκα, η ΕΕ προωθεί την ενσωμάτωση της ισότητας των φύλων σε όλα τα προγράμματα και παρέχει στήριξη σε συγκεκριμένες δράσεις με στόχο την καταπολέμηση των μορφών βίας που σχετίζονται με το φύλο.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010591/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: UN survey reveals rape crisis in countries of Asia-Pacific

According to a recently published UN report, nearly one quarter of men surveyed — in a wide variety of locations in six Asia-Pacific countries — admitted to raping a woman, often their own partner.

The report was based on anonymous interviews with more than 10 000 men aged between 18 and 49 years in Bangladesh, China, Cambodia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Papua New Guinea.

Using a definition of non-consensual, penetrative sex as a benchmark, the study reported that 11% of respondents had raped a woman who was not their partner, with this figure rising to nearly 24% when rape of a partner was included.

45% of these men admitted to having raped more than one woman. Alarmingly, half of the rapists identified were teenagers at the time of committing the crime, of whom 12% were younger than 15 years of age. The majority had not faced any legal consequences for their actions.

The highest prevalence of rape was observed in Bougainville in Papua New Guinea, where 62% of respondents admitted to having committed rape. Similar findings were recorded in the neighbouring Indonesian province of Papau, where nearly 49% of respondents admitted to having committed rape.

In light of the above, could the Commission answer the following:

1. What further actions does the Commission intend to take in order to prevent and put an end to this alarming issue, so as to change the traditional perceptions and culture prevalent among men and to bring aggressors to trial for committing rape crimes?

2. How can the EU adopt a more effective and efficient role as a world player, so as to combat violence against women in third countries? Please outline specific actions that have already been taken.

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

The EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development 2010-2015 contains commitments for all EU actors in terms of supporting developing countries' efforts to improve the situation of women. Protection against gender-based violence (GBV) is one of the priorities under the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy adopted in 2012. The EU and UN work closely on the implementation of the conclusions of the 57th UN Commission on the Status of Women on prevention and ending violence against women and girls.

EU projects have been developed in order to prevent violence; protect and support victims; prosecute perpetrators. Humanitarian aid projects often include assistance to survivors of GBV. Violence against women is raised in the framework of the Human Rights Dialogues or other forms of political dialogues conducted by the EU with most of the countries mentioned in the Honourable Member's question. Women's issues are also mainstreamed into the EU's development cooperation activities: education, health, rights of the migrant workers; empowerment of women.

In Bangladesh, Aceh and Cambodia, EU efforts have been also focused on access to justice so as to ensure that violence against women is punishable by law and that measures are taken to facilitate victims' access to justice. In the case of Papua New Guinea, combatting violence against women is at the top of EU supported actions. The recent Human Rights Dialogue with China offered the opportunity to raise the impact of the one-child policy, domestic violence and violence against sex workers. In Sri Lanka, the EU has been promoting mainstreaming gender across all programmes and offering support to specific actions aimed at combating GBV.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010592/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Infringement proceedings — European health insurance card, Spain

According to newspaper reports, British holidaymakers in need of emergency treatment at Spanish accident and emergency units are being greeted by chip-and-pin machines, as hospitals force them to provide upfront payment details before care is given.

It is understood that the European health insurance card (EHIC) entitles visitors to state-provided, medically-necessary treatment for the duration of their stay. However it has been reported that medical treatment is being refused unless payments are made first.

Can the Commission please clarify exactly what holiday makers are entitled to when travelling within Europe and using the EHIC, and whether payment before treatment (particularly for serious injuries) is considered acceptable?

Can the Commission please clarify whether the position adopted by Spain is legal?

Can the Commission comment on the status of infringement proceedings initiated against Spain?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

The European Health Insurance Card ('EHIC') proves that the holder is an 'insured person' under the state healthcare scheme of a Member State and entitled to receive medically necessary state healthcare during a stay in another Member State. EHIC holders should receive in the Member State of stay the same treatment (procedures and tariffs) as persons insured in that state. Where an insured person has no EHIC, he or she can obtain a Provisional Replacement Certificate ('PRC') from the state of insurance. The PRC also proves that the holder is an insured person.

Where holidaymakers seeking healthcare in the public system in Spain have no EHIC or PRC to prove they are insured persons, they can be treated in the same way as Spanish nationals who are not affiliated to the Spanish social security system, namely, they can be required to pay. If in fact the holidaymakers are insured persons under their home state's healthcare system (but simply had no proof of this), they can request reimbursement of the cost of their treatment either from the health institution of the place of stay, or from the health institution in the state where they are insured. Such reimbursement is made in accordance with the conditions and tariffs in the state of stay. Since most healthcare in Spain is free, this means that, upon presentation of the invoice, 100% reimbursement of any payment made should be possible.

As regards the infringement procedure against Spain, the Honourable Member is referred to the answer to E-010736/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010593/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Pigs Directive

With 13 Member States now fully compliant with Directive 2008/120/EC laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs and many others confronted with infringement proceedings, when does the Commission expect all Member States to comply with this directive?

Does the Commission expect to have to initiate further infringement proceedings before the end of the year?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(7 November 2013)

With regard to the requirement for group housing of sows ([1]), the Member States are making progress towards full compliance. It is difficult for the Commission to give an exact date for when this will have been achieved across the EU as this will depend on the legislative procedures in each of the Member States and how they handle situations that ensue.

Due to the administrative procedures for infringements any further steps will at the earliest occur in November 2013.

([1]) Council Directive 2008/120/EC; OJ L 47, 18.2.2009, p. 5.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010594/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Eggs and the Ukraine — follow-up to Written Question E-004548/2013

In its answer to Written Question E-004548/2013, the Commission does not specify the time frame for an 'interim period'. Could the Commission indicate what it considers an 'interim period' of time to be?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

The draft Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) with Ukraine does not indicate the length of the interim period during which the Ukrainian authorities have to approximate the EU legislation on animal welfare. The length of the interim period has not been fixed. Until the process of approximation of animal welfare legislation has been completed the EU will import products of animal origin, including eggs for the processing industry, from Ukraine under the same conditions as for other third countries.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010595/13
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(17 september 2013)

Betreft: Ontwikkelingshulp vanuit EU begroting aan boevennest Somalie

Vandaag werd bekend ([1]) dat de Commissie voornemens is vanuit de EU-begroting de komende drie jaar 650 miljoen euro aan ontwikkelingshulp richting Somalië te sturen. Al tijdens de aankondiging hiervan waren ernstige waarschuwingen aan het adres van de EU te horen: „Terrorist attacks continue to be a stability threat, and human rights, in particular women's rights, remain at risk". Verder stelde Amnesty International: „Large scale human rights abuses are occurring as people are being forcibly evicted from camps. Sexual violence is widespread and the inability and unwillingness of the Somali authorities to investigate and bring the attackers to justice contributes to a climate of impunity". Transparency International ([2]) plaatst het land Somalië qua corruptie en onbetrouwbaar openbaar bestuur op plaats 174. Lager kan niet, want er zijn maar 174 geïndexeerde landen. In dat kader de volgende vraag:

Hoe is het mogelijk dat de Commissie, kennelijk zonder ook maar een greintje verstand, vanuit de EU-begroting zo veel geld van hardwerkende belastingbetalende Nederlanders in dit bestuurlijk totaal onbetrouwbare en corrupte boevennest Somalië stort? Heeft de Commissie volledig haar verstand verloren? Graag een uitgebreide toelichting.

Antwoord van de heer Piebalgs namens de Commissie
(6 november 2013)

De steun van de EU heeft een aanzienlijk verschil in Somalië teweeggebracht, waar wij sinds 2012 voor het eerst getuige waren van een verkozen regering, van een sterk verminderde invloed van Al-Shabaab en van succesvolle aanvallen door piraten die tot een verwaarloosbaar niveau werden teruggebracht. Er zijn duidelijk nog veel uitdagingen en de aanslagen van de afgelopen maanden in Mogadishu en onlangs in Nairobi door Al-Shabaab moeten aantonen hoe belangrijk het is voor de EU om de veiligheidssector te ondersteunen in het kader van het uitgebreide mandaat voor de EU-opleidingsmissie, van de aanzienlijke financiële middelen ter ondersteuning van de krachten van de missie van de Afrikaanse-Unie-in-Somalië (AMISOM-krachten) en de talrijke andere programma's van de Commissie. Veiligheid en ontwikkeling gaan hand in hand en de EU volgt een alomvattende aanpak van Somalië, waarbij zij naast al haar capaciteiten, ook politieke ontwikkelingsmissies en missies ten behoeve van haar gemeenschappelijk veiligheids- en defensiebeleid (GVDB) inzet. De EU zal blijven werken om ervoor te zorgen dat deze steun volledig coherent is met andere internationale donoren en overeenkomstig de Somalische behoeften. In dit verband betekende de conferentie in Brussel over een „New Deal" voor Somalië op 16 september 2013 een belangrijke mijlpaal voor het aanpakken van de meest kritieke politieke, veiligheids- en sociaaleconomische prioriteiten in Somalië. De EU-steun wordt niet rechtstreeks gericht aan de centrale en lokale overheden, maar de activiteiten worden uitgevoerd door organisaties uit het Europees maatschappelijk middenveld, internationale organisaties of uit agentschappen van de lidstaten op basis van duidelijke en transparante procedures en systemen.

([1]) http://www.euractiv.com/development-policy/new-deal-somalia-business-usual-news-530491?utm_source=EurActiv%20Newsletter & utm_campaign=d2d986c0fa-newsletter_daily_update & utm_medium=email & utm_term=0_bab5f0ea4e-d2d986c0fa-245708337.
([2]) http://cpi.transparency.org/cpi2012/results/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010595/13
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Development aid from the EU budget to the den of thieves that is Somalia

Today it was announced ([1]) that in the next three years the Commission intends to give EUR 650 m in development aid to Somalia. Even at the time of the announcement, the EU was receiving serious warnings: 'Terrorist attacks continue to be a stability threat, and human rights, in particular women's rights, remain at risk'. Amnesty International has also stated: 'Large-scale human rights abuses are occurring as people are being forcibly evicted from camps. Sexual violence is widespread and the inability and unwillingness of the Somali authorities to investigate and bring the attackers to justice contributes to a climate of impunity'. Transparency International ([2]) ranks Somalia in 174th place on the index of corruption and unreliable governance. A lower ranking would not be possible, as only 174 countries are listed.

How is it possible that the Commission, plainly failing to display an ounce of common sense, can transfer so much money from hardworking Dutch taxpayers to the den of thieves that is Somalia, which is administered in a totally unreliable manner and is extremely corrupt? Has the Commission completely taken leave of its senses? Please account for this in detail.

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(6 November 2013)

EU support has made a substantial difference in Somalia, where since 2012 we have seen a government elected for the first time, Al-Shabaab influence seriously diminished and successful piracy attacks brought back down to negligible levels. There are clearly many challenges remaining, and the attacks in recent months in Mogadishu and recently in Nairobi by Al-Shabaab serve to demonstrate the importance that the EU is placing on supporting the security sector, through the enhanced mandate for the EU Training Mission, the substantial funding in support of the African Union Mission in Somalia (Amisom) forces and the many other Commission programmes. Security and development go hand in hand and the EU takes a Comprehensive Approach to Somalia using all its capabilities, political, developmental and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions. The EU will continue to ensure that this support is fully coherent with other international donors and in line with Somali needs. In this regard the Brussels Conference on a New Deal for Somalia on 16 September 2013 was a major milestone for addressing the most critical political, security, and socioeconomic priorities in Somalia. EU support is not provided directly to the Central and Local authorities but the activities are implemented by European Civil Society Organisations, International Organisations or Member States agencies on the basis of clear and transparent procedures and systems.

([1]) http://www.euractiv.com/development-policy/new-deal-somalia-business-usual-news-530491?utm_source=EurActiv%20Newsletter&utm_campaign=d2d986c0fa-newsletter_daily_update&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_bab5f0ea4e-d2d986c0fa-245708337

([2]) http://cpi.transparency.org/cpi2012/results/

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-010597/13
upućeno Komisiji (potpredsjednici/Visokoj predstavnici)
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(17. rujna 2013.)

Predmet: VP/HR — Sankcije koje je Komisija pokrenula protiv Republike Hrvatske zbog kršenja europskog uhidbenog naloga u slučaju „Lex Perković"

Poštovana gospođo potpredsjednice,

budući da su hrvatski mediji u ponedjeljak, 16. rujna objavili da je Komisija pokrenula sankcije protiv Republike Hrvatske zbog kršenja europskog uhidbenog naloga u slučaju Perković, željela bih znati točan sadržaj i opseg razmatranih sankcija. Nadam se nedvosmislenom i krajnje konkretnom odgovoru kako bi se izbjegle potencijalne manipulacije ovim pitanjem u domaćoj javnosti.

Dopustite mi da istaknem kako se u vrijeme gospodarske krize, s kojom se slabije razvijene zemlje poput Hrvatske posebno teško nose, financijske restrikcije mogu drastično odraziti na daljnji napredak zemlje članice. Čak i ako razmatrane sankcije obuhvaćaju isključivo sredstva za pripremu na zonu Schengena, Hrvatsku se takvim potezom može dugoročno osuditi na ostanak izvan te zone, čime će biti nanesena velika šteta, ne samo našoj zemlji, već i Europskoj uniji.

Ovim Vas putem pozivam da uzmete u obzir i rastući trend euroskepticizma i nepovjerenja prema europskim institucijama kod građana Unije, u čemu Hrvatska ne predstavlja iznimku. Iznimno mala izlaznost građana Republike Hrvatske na izvanredne izbore za Europski parlament, održane u svibnju ove godine, jasan je pokazatelj nepovjerenja Hrvata prema Europskoj uniji. Imajte na umu da će nerazumne odluke ove vlade na svojoj koži najviše osjetiti hrvatski građani koji kaznu ničim nisu zaslužili, čime će se to nepovjerenje dodatno produbiti.

Dopustite građanima Republike Hrvatske da neodgovornost ove vlade kazne na jedini primjeren način — na demokratskim izborima. Dotad Vas pozivam da zajedno s nama zastupnicima u Europskom parlamentu radite na izgradnji povjerenja građana Republike Hrvatske prema europskim institucijama, što je posebno značajno u ovoj izbornoj godini.

Odgovor gđe Reding u ime Komisije
(11. studenog 2013.)

Nakon sastanka održanog 25. rujna 2013. između potpredsjednice Reding i hrvatskog ministra pravosuđa Miljenića ([1]), Hrvatski sabor donio je 4. listopada 2013. izmjenu Zakona o pravosudnoj suradnji u kaznenim stvarima. Tom izmjenom Zakon se ponovno usklađuje s Okvirnom odlukom o europskom uhidbenom nalogu u pogledu primjene europskog uhidbenog naloga na sva kaznena djela, bez obzira na datum njihova počinjenja, uklanjajući ograničenje kojim se sprječava njegova primjena na kaznena djela počinjena prije 7. kolovoza 2002. Izmjena stupa na snagu do 1. siječnja 2014. i bit će objavljena u Službenom listu Republike Hrvatske, čime svi postupci usmjereni ka sankcijama postaju nepotrebni.

Potpredsjednica Reding pozdravlja korake koje je Republika Hrvatska poduzela kako bi osigurala da počinitelji budu privedeni pravdi te napominje kako će se brzim, učinkovitim i bezuvjetnim usklađivanjem zakona o provedbi europskog uhidbenog naloga s pravnom stečevinom Europske unije omogućiti da svi zahtjevi za predaju osumnjičenih ili osuđenih počinitelja budu obrađeni u okviru sustava europskog uhidbenog naloga bez obzira na datum počinjenja kaznenog djela.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-824_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010597/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Sanctions imposed on Croatia by the Commission for violating the European Arrest Warrant in the 'Lex Perković' case

Following reports published in the Croatian media on 16 September 2013 which revealed that the Commission had initiated a procedure to sanction Croatia for violating the European Arrest Warrant in the 'Lex Perković' case, I would like to know what the precise details and scope of the sanctions under consideration are. I hope to receive an unambiguous and detailed response that will ensure that this issue cannot be distorted in Croatian public discourse.

During an economic crisis that has hit less-developed countries such as Croatia particularly hard, financial restrictions could have a drastic impact on Croatia's continued progress. Even if the sanctions being considered only affect funds for preparations to join the Schengen zone, imposing such sanctions could condemn Croatia to remain outside the zone for the foreseeable future. This would do a great deal of damage not only to our country, but also to the EU.

I therefore urge you to take the growing euroscepticism and mistrust towards the European institutions felt by EU citizens, including Croatians, into account. The exceptionally low voter turnout for Croatia's special European Parliament elections, which were held in May 2013, is a clear indicator of Croatians' mistrust of the EU. Bear in mind that it is the people of Croatia who will suffer most as a result of the irrational decisions taken by their government. They are entirely innocent, yet it is they who will be punished, and this will only serve to deepen mistrust of the EU.

The Croatian people must be allowed to punish their government's irresponsibility in the only appropriate way — in democratic elections. I urge you to work alongside us, the Members of the European Parliament, to build trust in European institutions among Croatians. This is of particular importance in this election year.

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(11 November 2013)

Subsequent to a meeting on 25 September 2013 between Vice-President Reding and Croatian Minister of Justice Miljenić ([1]), the Croatian parliament adopted on 4 October 2013 an amendment to the Act on judicial cooperation in criminal matters. This amendment has the effect of returning the Act to compliance with the framework Decision on the European arrest warrant in respect of the application of the European arrest warrant to all offences, irrespective of the date of commission by removing the time limitation preventing its application to crimes committed before 7 August 2002. The amendment will enter into force by 1 January 2014 and will be published in the Official Journal of Croatia, thereby making any procedures leading to sanctions unnecessary.

Vice-President Reding has welcomed the steps taken by the Republic of Croatia to ensure that criminals are brought to justice and has noted that the swift, effective and unconditional alignment of the law implementing the European arrest warrant in line with the *acquis communautaire* will allow for all requests for the surrender of suspected and convicted criminals to be dealt within the European arrest warrant system irrespective of the date of commission of the crime.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-824_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010598/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(17 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Sottrazione internazionale di minori — Applicazione della normativa europea ed internazionale in Slovacchia

L'Ufficio del Mediatore del Parlamento europeo per i casi di sottrazione internazionale di minori riceve sempre più spesso richieste da parte di genitori, appartenenti a diverse nazionalità, relative a casi di sottrazione o trattenimento di minori in Slovacchia.

I genitori non slovacchi lamentano numerose difficoltà nell'ottenere, da parte delle autorità slovacche competenti, la corretta applicazione del regolamento (CE) n. 2201/2003 — Brussels II ed il trascorrere di tempi lunghissimi per il riconoscimento e l'esecuzione in Slovacchia di sentenze giudiziarie di altri Stati membri relative a minori di coppie binazionali.

Spesso l'esecuzione in Slovacchia delle sentenze giudiziarie che prevedono il rimpatrio di minori in altri Stati membri, incontrano difficoltà di ordine pratico, che di fatto ne impediscono l'esecuzione rendendo così vano l'intero procedimento espletato ai sensi del regolamento (CE) n. 2201/2003 — Brussels II.

Allo stesso modo alcuni genitori lamentano la non corretta applicazione da parte delle autorità slovacche competenti della convenzione dell'Aia del 25 ottobre 1980 sugli aspetti civili della sottrazione internazionale dei minori, specificatamente in relazione alla richiesta di condizioni «speciali» non previste dalla convenzione stessa per ordinare il rimpatrio del minore nella sua residenza abituale in un altro Stato membro.

Può la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

1. viene svolto a livello dell'UE un monitoraggio relativo alla corretta applicazione del regolamento (CE) n. 2201/2003 — Brussels II da parte della Slovacchia, ivi compresi i tempi impiegati per il ritorno di minori?

2. È in possesso di statistiche recenti in relazione all'applicazione del regolamento (CE) n. 2201/2003 — Brussels II da parte della Slovacchia, riguardante il ritorno di minori?

3. Quali azioni intende, se del caso, intraprendere al fine di richiamare le autorità slovacche ad applicare correttamente la normativa comunitaria in vigore e velocizzare i tempi relativi al ritorno di minori da quel paese?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(5 novembre 2013)

I casi di sottrazione transfrontaliera di minori da parte di uno dei genitori all'interno dell'Unione europea sono disciplinati dal regolamento (CE) n. 2201/2003 (il regolamento «Bruxelles II bis»), che integra la convenzione dell'Aia del 1980 sugli aspetti civili della sottrazione internazionale dei minori. Il regolamento prevede un procedimento rapido e uniforme grazie al quale il genitore leso nei suoi diritti può ottenere il rientro di un minore che è stato trasferito o trattenuto illecitamente. Per quanto riguarda l'esecuzione, il regolamento permette che le decisioni emanate in uno Stato membro siano eseguite in un altro, in linea con le norme e le procedure nazionali.

La Commissione controlla in vari modi l'applicazione del regolamento da parte degli Stati membri. Al fine di esaminare attentamente le denunce presentate dai cittadini, la Commissione si è informata direttamente presso le autorità slovacche in merito all'applicazione del regolamento in casi specifici. Inoltre, la Commissione collabora con le autorità centrali slovacche designate a norma del regolamento ai fini della sua applicazione e discute il corretto funzionamento dello strumento nel quadro della rete giudiziaria europea in materia civile e commerciale. In caso di violazione del diritto dell'UE, la Commissione farà ricorso alle procedure disponibili a norma del trattato.

La Commissione ha inoltre avviato una revisione del regolamento e adotterà una relazione sul modo in cui è stato applicato in pratica.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010598/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: International child abduction — application of EU and international law in Slovakia

The European Parliament Mediator for International Parental Child Abductions is increasingly receiving requests from parents, of various nationalities, relating to cases of child abduction or detention in Slovakia.

Non-Slovak parents complain that they have great difficulty getting the competent Slovak authorities to properly implement Regulation (EC) No 2201/2003 — Brussels II and that it takes a very long time to have judgments from other Member States, concerning children of binational couples, recognised and enforced in Slovakia.

The enforcement in Slovakia of judgments ordering the return of children to other Member States often runs into practical difficulties, actually hindering enforcement, thus making the whole procedure followed pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 2201/2003 — Brussels II a waste of time.

Likewise, some parents complain that the competent Slovak authorities do not properly implement the Hague Convention of 25 October 1980 on the civil aspects of international child abduction, specifically with regard to the need for 'special' conditions not provided for by the convention to order the return of the child to their habitual residence in another Member State.

1. Is Slovakia's proper implementation of Regulation (EC) No 2201/2003 — Brussels II, including the times taken for children to be returned, being monitored at EU level?

2. Does the Commission have any recent statistics on Slovakia's implementation of Regulation (EC) No 2201/2003 — Brussels II, as regards children being returned?

3. If necessary, what action will it take to call on the Slovak authorities to properly implement EC law in force and to speed up the times taken to return children from that country?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

Cases of intra-EU cross-border parental child abduction are covered by Regulation (EC) No 2201/2003 (the Brussels IIa regulation), which supplements the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. The regulation provides for an expeditious uniform procedure whereby the left-behind parent can obtain the return of a child who has been wrongfully removed or retained. As regards enforcement, it renders judgments issued in one Member State capable of execution in another, in line with national rules and procedures.

The Commission monitors Member States' implementation of the regulation in various ways. In order to carefully assess citizens' complaints the Commission has enquired directly with the Slovak authorities on the application of the regulation in specific cases. Additionally, the Commission works together with the Slovak central authorities designated under the regulation to assist in its application and discusses proper operation of the instrument within the framework of European Judicial Network in Civil and Commercial Matters. Where EC law is breached, the Commission will make use of the procedures available under the Treaty.

Furthermore, the Commission has launched a review of the regulation and will adopt a report on how it has been applied in practice.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010599/13
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(17 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Richiesta di misure di sostegno nei confronti di 1.400 lavoratori dell'azienda Ilva, «Gruppo Riva», che rischiano di essere licenziati

L'azienda Ilva «Gruppo Riva» è leader nel settore siderurgico; l'attività produttiva del gruppo è principalmente concentrata in acciaio e derivati. Nel 2011 è il primo nel settore in Italia, quarto in Europa e ventitreesimo nel mondo.

Il gruppo Riva, all'indomani del sequestro di beni mobili e immobili e di conti correnti per 916 milioni di euro eseguito dalla Guardia di finanza nell'ambito dell'inchiesta della Procura di Taranto per disastro ambientale, ha deciso di ricorrere alla chiusura immediata di sette stabilimenti e di due società di servizi e trasporti, con la messa in libertà di circa 1.400 addetti. Gli stabilimenti interessati sono quelli di Verona, Caronno Pertusella (Varese), Lesegno (Cuneo), Malegno, Sellero e Cerveno in provincia di Brescia, Annone Brianza (Lecco) e le società sono Riva Energia e Muzzana Trasporti.

Con la sentenza del gip di Taranto vengono sottratti a Riva Acciaio i cespiti aziendali, tra cui gli stabilimenti produttivi, e vengono sequestrati i saldi attivi di conto corrente attuando di conseguenza il blocco delle attività bancarie e impedendo il normale ciclo dei pagamenti aziendali. Questo provvedimento farà perdere il lavoro a millequattrocento operai delle acciaierie.

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

— è a conoscenza di finanziamenti comunitari, diretti o indiretti, erogati a favore di questa multinazionale?

— Per quanto concerne il diritto d'informazione dei lavoratori nelle imprese con più di 50 dipendenti, come intende agire per evitare che gli impiegati di tali imprese si trovino, senza alcun preavviso, improvvisamente disoccupati?

— Intende introdurre, in occasione della prossima programmazione e della revisione del FSE, un Fondo di emergenza destinato a sostenere lavoratori come quelli del «Gruppo Riva»?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(6 novembre 2013)

Secondo quanto riportato nel sito web «OpenCoesione» ([1])il Gruppo Riva non ha ricevuto alcun finanziamento, erogato attraverso i fondi strutturali europei in Italia.

La Commissione non è in grado di esprimere una valutazione in merito ai fatti riferiti dall'onorevole parlamentare o di stabilire se un'azienda privata abbia ottemperato alle disposizioni nazionali di recepimento delle direttive dell'UE. Spetta alle autorità nazionali competenti, fra cui i tribunali, garantire l'applicazione corretta ed efficace, da parte del datore di lavoro interessato, della normativa nazionale di recepimento delle direttive dell'UE, tenendo conto delle circostanze specifiche di ciascun caso.

Il FSE mira a migliorare le possibilità di occupazione, a promuovere l'istruzione e l'apprendimento permanente nonché ad elaborare politiche di inclusione attiva a norma dell'articolo 162 del trattato. Di per sé il Fondo non fornisce sostegno di emergenza ai lavoratori, quali gli addetti del Gruppo Riva. Questi ultimi possono tuttavia beneficiare delle attività cofinanziate dal FSE e, se sono soddisfatte le condizioni necessarie, dal Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione.

([1]) http://www.opencoesione.gov.it/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010599/13
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Request for measures to support 1 400 workers facing dismissal at Gruppo Riva's Ilva firm

Gruppo Riva's Ilva firm is a leader in the steel industry, with the group concentrating its production on steel and steel derivatives. In 2011, it was the leading steel company in Italy, the fourth largest in Europe and the twenty-third largest in the world.

The day after Italy's finance police seized tangible and intangible assets and bank accounts amounting to EUR 916 million as part of the investigation conducted by the Public Prosecutor's Office of Taranto into environmental disaster, Gruppo Riva decided to close with immediate effect 7 plants and 2 services and transport companies, with the dismissal of around 1 400 workers. The plants affected are those in Verona, Caronno Pertusella (Varese), Lesegno (Cuneo), Malegno, Sellero and Cerveno in the province of Brescia, Annone Brianza (Lecco), and the companies are Riva Energia and Muzzana Trasporti.

The ruling of Taranto's investigating magistrate has deprived Riva Acciaio of its company assets, including its production plants, and seized its bank account balances, consequently blocking banking activities and preventing the normal cycle of company payments. This measure will cost 1 400 steelworkers their jobs.

— Is the Commission aware of direct or indirect EU funding which has been granted to this multinational?

— With regard to the right to information enjoyed by workers in businesses with more than 50 employees, what action does it intend to take to prevent employees of such businesses suddenly finding themselves unemployed, without being given any notice?

— Does it envisage introducing an emergency fund to support workers such as those employed by Gruppo Riva during the next programming period and ESF review?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 November 2013)

According to the 'Open Cohesion' website ([1]), Gruppo Riva has not received any funding from the European structural funds in Italy.

The Commission is not in a position to assess the facts referred to by the Honourable Member or state whether a private company has complied with national provisions implementing EU directives. It is for the competent national authorities, including the courts, to ensure that the national legislation transposing EU Directives is correctly and effectively applied by the employer concerned, having regard to the specific circumstances of the case.

The aim of the ESF is to improve employment opportunities, promote education and life-long learning, and develop active inclusion policies in accordance with Article 162 of the Treaty. As such, it does not provide emergency support to workers such as those employed by Gruppo Riva. However, the workers concerned may benefit from the activities co-financed by the ESF and, if the necessary conditions are met, from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund.

([1]) http://www.opencoesione.gov.it/

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010600/13
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(17 september 2013)

Betreft: Gemeenschappelijke aanpak drugshandel

In haar antwoord op vraag E-008717/2013 merkt de Commissie op dat het Nederlandse gedoogbeleid ten aanzien van coffeeshops verband houdt met het beginsel van opportuniteit van vervolging, dat buiten het toepassingsgebied van het kaderbesluit valt.

Overweegt de EC het beginsel van opportuniteit van vervolging van verkoop van drugs mee te nemen in de toekomstige discussies over de prioriteiten van de EU-drugsstrategie?

Of meent de EC dat dit element geen deel uitmaakt van een coherent Europees drugsbeleid?

Meent de EC dat de verhuizing van Nederlandse coffeeshops vanuit het centrum van Maastricht naar de grens met België in overeenstemming is met het verminderen van de grensoverschrijdende handel en van het faciliteren van activiteiten die dit op het oog hebben (zoals opgenomen in de prioriteiten in de aanbeveling van de Raad over de EU-drugsstrategie 2013-2020)?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(7 november 2013)

De drugsstrategie van de EU (2013-2020) ([1]), die in december 2012 door de Raad Justitie en Binnenlandse Zaken is goedgekeurd, omvat het overkoepelend beleidskader en de prioriteiten voor het drugsbeleid van de EU.

In overeenstemming met het algemene kader van de drugsstrategie van de EU maken de lidstaten op nationaal niveau de keuzes die het best bij hun sociale, economische en culturele context passen. De lidstaten mogen dus zelf beslissen hoe zij omgaan met de zogenaamde coffeeshops.

De drugsstrategie van de EU schrijft echter voor dat de lidstaten en de Europese instellingen samenwerken om synergie, communicatie en een doeltreffende uitwisseling van informatie over ontwikkelingen in het drugsbeleid te verzekeren, in overeenstemming met het beginsel van „loyale samenwerking".

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/nl/12/st17/st17547.nl12.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010600/13
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Common approach to tackling drugs trafficking

In its response to Question E-008717/2013, the Commission notes that the Netherlands' policy of tolerance towards coffee shops relates to the principle of discretionary proceedings, which is outside the scope of application of the framework Decision.

Is the Commission considering including the principle of discretionary proceedings in relation to the sale of drugs in future discussions about the EU Drugs Strategy's priorities?

Or does the Commission believe that this aspect is not part of a coherent European drugs policy?

Does the Commission believe that relocating coffee shops from the centre of Maastricht to close to the Belgian border is consistent with reducing cross-border trafficking and facilitating activities targeting this (as specified in the priorities featuring in the Council's recommendation on the EU Drugs Strategy 2013-2020)?

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

The EU Drugs Strategy (2013-2020) ([1]), which was adopted by the Justice and Home Affairs Council in December 2012, provides the overarching political framework and sets the main priorities for EU drugs policy.

In line with the general framework provided by the EU Drugs Strategy, Member States make, at national level, the choices that suit best their social, economic and cultural context. It is, therefore, within Member States' discretion to decide on their approach as regards the so-called coffee shops.

However, the EU Drugs Strategy requires the Member States and the EU institutions to cooperate to ensure synergies, communication and an effective exchange of information regarding developments in drugs policy, in line with the principle of 'sincere cooperation'.

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/st17/st17547.en12.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-010601/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(17 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Inseguridad jurídica para los investigadores catalanes

Un investigador del Institut Català de Recerca de l'Aigua (ICRA ([1])), con sede en Cataluña, solicitó en 2011, para el proyecto de cooperación Greentech, 140 000 euros en la convocatoria europea (7FP) ERA-NET New Indigo-DST (Programa Nacional de Internacionalización de la I+D, modalidad de Proyectos de Investigación Multilaterales) junto con otros participantes: Ciemat PSA (España); Universidad de Amberes (Bélgica); Universidad de Jadavpur (India); TERI (India). Tan solo nueve de las veintiuna propuestas presentadas fueron admitidas en la convocatoria. Al ICRA, coordinador del proyecto, le fueron finalmente concedidos 35 000 euros. El código del proyecto es PRI-Pimnin-2011-1460.

La fecha de inicio del proyecto era el 1 de junio de 2012. El 14 de junio de 2012 el Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad español publicó una resolución provisional positiva de aprobación del proyecto.

El 3 de julio de 2013 el referido investigador catalán recibió un email del Vicedirector Adjunto de Proyectos Internacionales del citado Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad comunicándole que el informe del Ministerio de Hacienda español no respaldaba la participación de organismos de investigación catalanes en el proyecto de referencia. La razón aducida es que el territorio de Cataluña no está cumpliendo con las expectativas de déficit económico fijadas por el Ministerio español en 2012.

Esto constituye una grave e inaceptable discriminación de las autoridades españolas contra los investigadores y organismos de investigación de Cataluña en el marco del programa de la Unión Europea ERA-NET (FP7), en el que las autoridades nacionales y regionales identifican programas de investigación que desean coordinar o iniciar mutuamente.

¿Conoce la Comisión estos hechos?

¿No cree la Comisión que esta actitud del gobierno español atenta contra la seguridad jurídica de los ciudadanos catalanes?

¿No cree la Comisión que esta actitud del gobierno español afecta a la competitividad de los investigadores catalanes?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de noviembre de 2013)

La cuestión planteada se refiere a la negativa por parte del Ministerio de Economía español de financiar la participación de un investigador catalán en un proyecto de colaboración, Greentech, presentado en el marco de la convocatoria lanzada por el programa *New Indigo Partnership*.

A este respecto, la Comisión observa que el programa *New Indigo Partnership* tiene por objetivo el apoyo a los proyectos de investigación multilateral y de creación de redes desarrollados entre Europa y la India. En particular, las convocatorias llevadas a cabo dentro del apartado Indigo-DST cubren la colaboración con el Ministerio de Ciencia y Tecnología de la India.

Conviene subrayar que *New Indigo Partnership* recibe ayuda del 7° PM ERA-NET solo para los costes relacionados con la coordinación de las acciones que se estén realizando, mientras que las convocatorias que *New Indigo* decide a su vez poner en marcha están financiadas exclusivamente por las organizaciones nacionales de los países participantes, de acuerdo con sus propias normas.

En este contexto, la Comisión no está en posición de interferir en las normas de subvencionabilidad y financiación establecidas a escala nacional o regional.

([1]) http://www.icra.cat/index.php?lang=3

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010601/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Legal insecurity for Catalan researchers

In 2011 a researcher at the Catalan Institute for Water Research (ICRA) ([1]), which is located in Catalonia, applied for EUR 140 000 in funding for a collaborative project, Greentech, under the European FP7 call ERA-NET NEW INDIGO-DST (national research and development internationalisation programme, multilateral research projects option) along with other participants, namely: CIEMAT PSA (Centre for Energy, Environmental and Technological Research — Almería Solar Platform) (Spain); the University of Antwerp (Belgium); Jadavpur University (India); and TERI (The Energy and Resources Institute, India). Only nine of the 21 proposals submitted in this call were granted. The ICRA, which was the coordinator of the project, was granted EUR 35 000. The project code is PRI-PIMNIN-2011-1460.

The start date for the project was 1 June 2012. On 14 June 2012, the Spanish Ministry for Economy and Competitiveness published a positive provisional resolution giving the go-ahead for the project.

On 3 July 2013, however, the Catalan researcher in question received an email from the Deputy Assistant Director-General of International Projects at the Spanish Ministry for Economy and Competitiveness stating that the Spanish Ministry of Finance did not support the participation of Catalan research institutions in the abovementioned project, on the grounds that Catalonia had not met the ministry's economic deficit expectations in 2012.

This constitutes serious and unacceptable discrimination by the Spanish ministries against researchers and research institutions in Catalonia in the context of a European Union ERA-NET scheme (FP7), under which national and regional authorities identify research programmes they wish to coordinate or open up to others.

Is the Commission aware of this situation?

Does it not think that the attitude of the Spanish Government is undermining the legal security of Catalan citizens?

Does it not think that the attitude of the Spanish Government is affecting the competitiveness of Catalan researchers?

Answer given by Ms Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(15 November 2013)

The issue concerns the refuse by the Spanish Ministry for Economy to fund the participation of a Catalan researcher to a collaborative project, Greentech, submitted to a call launched by the New INDIGO Partnership Programme.

In this regard, the Commission observes that the New INDIGO Partnership Programme is established to support Indian-European multilateral research and networking projects. In particular, the calls launched under the INDIGO-DST heading, involve collaboration with the Indian Department for Science and Technology.

It should be underlined that New INDIGO Partnership receives support under the FP7 ERA-NET scheme only to cover costs related to the coordination of the actions being carried out, whereas the calls that New INDIGO decides in turn to launch are exclusively funded by national organisations in participating countries, according to their own rules.

In this context, the Commission is not in a position to interfere with eligibility and funding rules established at national or regional level.

([1]) http://www.icra.cat/index.php?lang=3

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010602/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(17 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: La exención del IVA en la protección de la infancia y la juventud (III)

Con referencia a la pregunta E-005758/2013, de 28 de junio de 2013, sobre la exención del IVA a los comedores escolares, el Sr. Semeta contestó en nombre de la Comisión: «La Comisión ya ha preguntado a las autoridades españolas sobre este asunto. Cuando reciba una respuesta, la Comisión la analizará y decidirá el curso que dará a dicho asunto».

Ya han empezado las clases del nuevo curso escolar 2013-2014. ¿Ha tenido la Comisión respuesta de las autoridades españolas? En caso afirmativo, ¿está satisfecha la Comisión con esta respuesta?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de octubre de 2013)

La Comisión recibió la respuesta de las autoridades españolas el 23 de septiembre de 2013 y actualmente la está estudiando.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010602/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: VAT exemptions for the protection of children and young people (III)

With reference to Question E-005758/2013 of 28 June 2013, regarding a VAT exemption for school canteens, Mr Šemeta replied on behalf of the Commission: 'The Commission has already questioned the Spanish authorities about this issue. Once a response is received, it will be analysed, and the Commission will decide on the way forward regarding this matter'.

Classes in the new academic year, 2013-2014, have now begun. Has the Commission received a response from the Spanish authorities? If so, is the Commission satisfied with this response?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(21 October 2013)

On 23 September 2013, the Commission has received the reply from the Spanish authorities which it is presently examining.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010604/13
an die Kommission
Birgit Collin-Langen (PPE)
(17. September 2013)

Betrifft: Nachteile für europäische Unternehmen durch deutsches Glücksspielrecht

Freies Unternehmertum ist eines der Kernelemente der EU. Es wird durch die unternehmerische Freiheit (Artikel 16 der Grundrechtecharta), das Eigentumsrecht (Artikel 17 der Grundrechtecharta) und die Freiheit des Binnenmarktes, insbesondere die Dienstleistungs- und Niederlassungsfreiheit (Artikel 49, 56 AEUV), begründet. Auch der Gleichbehandlungsgrundsatz (Artikel 20 der Grundrechtecharta) ist wesentlich für das Unternehmertum in der EU.

Der neue deutsche Glücksspielstaatsvertrag widerspricht diesen Grundprinzipien: Private Spielhallen und staatliche Spielbanken werden dort unterschiedlich behandelt. Dies zwingt mehr als die Hälfte der privat geführten Spielhallen zur Geschäftsaufgabe und verletzt somit ihr Eigentumsrecht und ihre unternehmerische Freiheit. Der Glücksspielstaatsvertrag erschwert es auch europäischen Spielhallenbetreibern, sich in Deutschland niederzulassen; dies stellt eine ernsthafte Beschränkung der Unternehmerfreiheit und der Dienstleistungs- und Niederlassungsfreiheit dar.

1. Werden durch diesen regulatorischen Rahmen in Deutschland europäische Unternehmen diskriminiert?

2. Seit 2008 (IP/08/119) hat sich die GD Binnenmarkt und Dienstleistungen mit den Geschehnissen im deutschen Glückspielrecht beschäftigt, und europäische Unternehmen werden in Deutschland mit einer rechtlichen Unsicherheit konfrontiert. Wie beurteilt die GD Unternehmen und Industrie die Situation? Beabsichtigt sie, gegebenenfalls dagegen vorzugehen?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(13. November 2013)

1. Die Kommission erinnert daran, dass es den Mitgliedstaaten obliegt, die Organisation und Kontrolle ihres Glückspielmarktes sowie die Durchführung von Glückspielen im Einklang mit der einschlägigen Rechtsprechung des EuGH zu regeln. Dabei sind die Wett- und Glückspielkonzessionen erteilenden Behörden verpflichtet, die grundlegenden Bestimmungen der Verträge, die Grundsätze der Gleichbehandlung und der Nichtdiskriminierung aufgrund der Staatsangehörigkeit und das daraus folgende Transparenzgebot einzuhalten.

Der geänderte Staatsvertrag zum Glückspielwesen in Deutschland trat im Juli 2012 in Kraft. Die neuen Bestimmungen werden von den deutschen Behörden derzeit umgesetzt. Um die Einhaltung des EU-Rechts zu gewährleisten, verfolgt die Kommission diesen Umsetzungsprozess im Austausch mit den deutschen Behörden auch in Bezug auf die Regulierung der herkömmlichen Spielkasinos und Spielhallen. Diese Dienstleistungen sind allerdings nur teilweise im Staatsvertrag und mehrheitlich im Länderrecht geregelt, das sich teilweise ebenfalls im Änderungsverfahren befindet. Die Kommission wird dafür sorgen, dass auch diese Gesetze im Einklang mit den EU-Vorschriften stehen.

2. Die Mitgliedstaaten teilen der Kommission Gesetzesentwürfe mit technischen Vorschriften, einschließlich Vorschriften betreffend Dienste, im Einklang mit der Richtlinie 98/34/EG ([1]) mit. Im Rahmen dieses Verfahrens, das einen vorbeugenden Kontrollmechanismus darstellt, treten die Kommission und die Behörden der Mitgliedstaaten in einen Dialog, um zu gewährleisten, dass die notifizierten Entwürfe technischer Vorschriften den Anforderungen des Binnenmarktes gemäß den Auslegungen des Gerichtshofs entsprechen. Falls die Bewertung der in Deutschland auf Bundes- oder Landesebene erlassenen spezifischen Rechtsvorschriften ergibt, dass diese den in Artikel 34 AEUV festgeschriebenen freien Warenverkehr nicht gewährleisten, kann die Kommission weitere Maßnahmen in Betracht ziehen.

([1]) Richtlinie 98/34/EG über ein Informationsverfahren auf dem Gebiet der Normen und technischen Vorschriften und der Vorschriften für die Dienste der Informationsgesellschaft.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010604/13
to the Commission
Birgit Collin-Langen (PPE)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Disadvantages for European undertakings as a result of German gambling law

Free enterprise is one of the core elements of the EU. It is based on the freedom to conduct a business (Article 16 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights), the right to property (Article 17 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights) and the freedom of the internal market, in particular the right of establishment and the freedom to provide services (Articles 49 and 56 TFEU). The principle of equality (Article 20 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights) is also essential for enterprise within the EU.

The new German State Treaty on Gambling contradicts these fundamental principles: private and state-owned casinos are treated differently there. This forces more than half of the privately run casinos out of business, and thus violates their right to property and freedom to conduct a business. The State Treaty on Gambling also makes it more difficult for European casino operators to establish themselves in Germany, which constitutes a serious restriction of the right to conduct a business, the right of establishment and the freedom to provide services.

1. Does this regulatory framework in Germany discriminate against European undertakings?

2. The Directorate General for Internal Market and Services has been dealing with the events in German gambling law since 2008 (IP/08/119), and European undertakings are faced with legal uncertainty in Germany. How does the Directorate General for Enterprise and Industry view this situation? Does it intend to take action to tackle this, where appropriate?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(13 November 2013)

1. The Commission would like to recall that it is for the Member States, in accordance with the relevant case-law of the CJEU, to determine the organisation and control of the gambling offer and how gambling is carried out. However, authorities granting betting and gaming licences have a duty to comply with the fundamental rules of the Treaties, the principles of equal treatment and of non-discrimination on grounds of nationality and the consequent obligation of transparency.

The revised German State Treaty on Gambling entered into force in July 2012 and the German authorities are currently implementing the new provisions. The Commission follows closely the implementation process, in a dialogue with the German authorities, in order to ensure compliance with EU rules. This includes regulation of land-based casinos and gambling halls. However, these services are only partly regulated in the State Treaty and mainly in specific legislation at federal and regional level; partly also under review. The Commission will equally ensure that these laws comply with EU rules.

2. Member States notify to the Commission draft legislation which contains technical regulations, including rules on services, in accordance with Directive 98/34/EC ([1]). This procedure, a preventive control mechanism, allows the Commission and the authorities of Member States to enter into a dialogue that aims to ensure the compliance of notified draft technical rules with Internal Market law, as construed by the Court of Justice. Moreover, the Commission might consider further action if the assessment of the specific legislation adopted at federal and regional level in Germany lead to the conclusion that it unduly restricts the free movement of goods laid down in Art. 34 TFEU.

([1]) Directive 98/34/EC laying down a procedure for the provision of information in the field of technical standards and regulations and of rules on Information Society services.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010606/13
an die Kommission
Jürgen Klute (GUE/NGL) und Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(17. September 2013)

Betrifft: Personaleinsparungen im öffentlichen Dienst Griechenlands als Konsequenz der europäischen Sparpolitik

In den letzten Monaten häuften sich die Beschwerden griechischer Staatsbürger in Deutschland anlässlich des Vorgehens beim griechischen Generalkonsulat in Düsseldorf. Die Beantragung eines Reisepasses dauert derzeit mindestens drei Monate, die Beantragung anderer Unterlagen wie Geburtsurkunden oder Heiratsurkunden mehrere Monate. Die Mitarbeiter des Generalkonsulats sind telefonisch derzeit überhaupt nicht mehr erreichbar. Diese Verzögerungen beeinträchtigen das Alltagsleben der griechischen Migranten in erheblichem Maße.

Mehrere Gespräche mit Vertretern des griechischen Konsulats führten nicht zu Verbesserungen. Die Angestellten führten an, dass sie aufgrund der Sparmaßnahmen der griechischen Regierung kaum in der Lage sind, die aufkommenden Aufgaben zu bewältigen. Es handelt sich hierbei um reale Folgen aus der Troika-Politik.

1. Wie bewertet die Kommission die Personaleinsparungen im öffentlichen Dienst, die die EU von Griechenland eingefordert hat und die eine direkte Auswirkung auf die griechischen Staatsbürger haben, die in anderen EU-Ländern leben?

2. Ist sich die Kommission dieser Art der Folgen der rigiden Sparpolitik in den krisengeschüttelten EU-Mitgliedstaaten bewusst?

3. Wie können nach Ansicht der Kommission die notwendigen Dienstleistungen für die griechischen Bürger trotz der Sparmaßnahmen aufrechterhalten werden?

4. Erwägt die Kommission Maßnahmen einzuleiten, um notwendige Dienstleistungen für EU-Bürger trotz der Sparmaßnahmen aufrechtzuerhalten?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(26. November 2013)

Die im Rahmen des zweiten Anpassungsprogramms durchgeführte Reform der griechischen öffentlichen Verwaltung zielt auf die Schaffung einer modernen und transparenten öffentlichen Verwaltung ab, die den Bedürfnissen der griechischen Bürger und Unternehmen effizient und wirksam gerecht wird. Vor der Krise war der öffentliche Sektor in Griechenland äußerst ineffizient, belastete die öffentlichen Finanzen und die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und erbrachte keine angemessenen Dienstleistungen. Diese Situation war eindeutig nicht tragbar und erforderte ehrgeizige Reformanstrengungen.

Eine beträchtliche Verschlankung der öffentlichen Verwaltung war zwar unvermeidlich, da das Land sich seinen überdimensionierten öffentlichen Sektor nicht leisten konnte, doch möchte die Kommission hervorheben, dass die Reformbemühungen ehrgeiziger sind und sehr viel mehr umfassen als lediglich einen Personalabbau. Im Rahmen des Programms werden Maßnahmen ergriffen, um den öffentlichen Sektor und dessen Verfahren zu modernisieren, den Verwaltungsaufwand zu verringern und die Qualität der Dienstleistungen zu steigern.

Besonderes Augenmerk wird darauf gelegt, dass geeignete Beamte eingestellt werden, ihre Leistung ordnungsgemäß bewertet wird und sie dort eingesetzt werden, wo man sie wirklich benötigt, damit die Qualität der Dienstleistungen für die griechischen Bürger nicht nur aufrechterhalten, sondern auch verbessert wird.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010606/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Jürgen Klute (GUE/NGL) και Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(17 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Μειώσεις προσωπικού στον δημόσιο τομέα της Ελλάδας ως συνέπεια της ευρωπαϊκής πολιτικής λιτότητας

Κατά τους τελευταίους μήνες πολλαπλασιάσθηκαν οι καταγγελίες ελλήνων πολιτών στην Γερμανία λόγω των διαδικασιών που εφαρμόζει το ελληνικό γενικό προξενείο στο Ντύσελντορφ. Για τη χορήγηση διαβατηρίου απαιτούνται τουλάχιστον τρεις μήνες, ενώ η χορήγηση άλλων πιστοποιητικών, όπως πιστοποιητικό γέννησης ή γάμου διαρκεί περισσότερους μήνες. Επί του παρόντος δεν είναι δυνατόν να έρθει κανείς σε επαφή τηλεφωνικά με τους εργαζόμενους στο γενικό προξενείο. Οι καθυστερήσεις αυτές επηρεάζουν σε σημαντικό βαθμό την καθημερινή ζωή των ελλήνων μεταναστών.

Πολυάριθμες συζητήσεις με εκπροσώπους του ελληνικού προξενείου δεν οδήγησαν σε βελτίωση της κατάστασης. Οι εργαζόμενοι ισχυρίσθηκαν ότι, λόγω των μέτρων λιτότητας της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης, δεν είναι πλέον σε θέση να ανταποκριθούν στα τρέχοντα καθήκοντά τους. Πρόκειται στο θέμα αυτό για πραγματικές επιπτώσεις από την πολιτική της τρόικα.

1. Πώς αξιολογεί η Επιτροπή τις μειώσεις προσωπικού στον δημόσιο τομέα που έχει ζητήσει η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση από την Ελλάδα και οι οποίες έχουν άμεση επίπτωση στους έλληνες πολίτες που διαβιούν σε άλλες χώρες της ΕΕ;

2. Γνωρίζει η Επιτροπή τις εν λόγω επιπτώσεις από την άκαμπτη πολιτική λιτότητας στα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ που έχουν πληγεί από την κρίση;

3. Πώς είναι δυνατό σύμφωνα με την άποψη της Επιτροπής να συνεχισθούν, παρά τα μέτρα λιτότητας, οι παροχές των απαραίτητων υπηρεσιών προς τους Έλληνες πολίτες;

4. Προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να λάβει μέτρα ώστε να συνεχισθούν, παρά τα υφιστάμενα μέτρα λιτότητας, οι απαραίτητες παροχές υπηρεσιών προς τους πολίτες της ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Στόχος της μεταρρύθμισης της ελληνικής δημόσιας διοίκησης, η οποία εφαρμόζεται στο πλαίσιο του 2ου προγράμματος προσαρμογής είναι ακριβώς να δημιουργήσει μία σύγχρονη και διαφανή δημόσια διοίκηση, που να εξυπηρετεί αποτελεσματικά και αποδοτικά τους Έλληνες πολίτες και τις επιχειρήσεις. Ο ιδιαίτερα αναποτελεσματικός δημόσιος τομέας πριν από την κρίση συνιστούσε βάρος για τα δημόσια οικονομικά της χώρας και την ανταγωνιστικότητα, και δεν μπόρεσε να παράσχει ικανοποιητικές δημόσιες υπηρεσίες. Αυτό συνιστούσε μία σαφώς μη βιώσιμη τάξη πραγμάτων και απαιτούσε φιλόδοξες μεταρρυθμιστικές προσπάθειες.

Ενώ μια σημαντική συρρίκνωση της δημόσιας διοίκησης ήταν αναπόφευκτη, δεδομένου ότι η χώρα δεν μπορούσε να ανθέξει τον υπερτροφικό δημόσιο τομέα, η Επιτροπή θα ήθελε να τονίσει ότι οι μεταρρυθμιστικές προσπάθειες είναι πολύ πιο ολοκληρωμένες και φιλόδοξες από μια απλή μείωση του προσωπικού. Στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος, λαμβάνονται μέτρα για τον εκσυγχρονισμό του δημόσιου τομέα και των διαδικασιών του, τη μείωση του διοικητικού φόρτου και την αναβάθμιση των υπηρεσιών του δημοσίου τομέα.

Ιδιαίτερη προσοχή καταβάλλεται ώστε να εξασφαλιστεί η βελτίωση της ποιότητας των προσλαμβανόμενων δημοσίων υπαλλήλων, η σωστή αξιολόγηση των επιδόσεών τους και η διαθεσιμότητά τους εκεί όπου πραγματικά χρειάζονται, με στόχο όχι μόνο να διατηρηθεί, αλλά να βελτιωθεί η ποιότητα των παρεχόμενων υπηρεσιών στους Έλληνες πολίτες.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010606/13
to the Commission
Jürgen Klute (GUE/NGL) and Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Public service staff reductions by Greece as a consequence of European austerity policy

In recent months, there have been numerous complaints from Greek citizens in Germany in connection with procedures at the Greek Consulate General in Düsseldorf. The process of applying for a passport currently takes at least three months, and requests for other documents, such as birth or marriage certificates, also take several months. It is currently impossible to reach the staff of the Consulate General by telephone. These delays have a considerable detrimental impact on the day-to-day lives of Greek migrants.

Several talks with representatives of the Greek Consulate have failed to result in any improvements. The employees stated that, on account of the austerity measures taken by the Greek Government, they are barely able to cope with the work that comes in. These are the real-life consequences of the Troika policy.

1. What is the Commission's view of the reduction in public service staff that the EU has required Greece to make, and which is having a direct effect on Greek citizens living in other EU countries?

2. Is it aware of these sorts of consequences of the rigid austerity policy in the crisis-stricken EU Member States?

3. In its opinion, how can the essential services for Greek citizens be maintained despite the austerity measures?

4. Is it considering taking measures in order to maintain essential services for EU citizens despite the austerity measures?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(26 November 2013)

The objective of the reform of the Greek public administration which is being implemented in the context of the 2nd adjustment programme is precisely to create a modern and transparent public administration, which serves efficiently and effectively the Greek citizens and businesses. The highly inefficient public sector prior to the crisis was a burden for the country's public finances and competitiveness and failed to provide adequate public services. This was clearly unsustainable and required ambitious reform efforts.

While a significant downsizing of the public administration was unavoidable as the country could not afford its oversized public sector, the Commission would like to highlight that reform efforts are much more comprehensive and ambitious than a simple reduction of staff. In the context of the programme, measures are being taken to modernise the public sector and its procedures, reducing administrative burden and increasing the quality of public sector services.

Close attention is being paid in particular to ensuring that better civil servants are hired, that their performance is properly evaluated, and that they are available where they are really needed, with the aim to not only maintain but actually improve the quality of services to Greek citizens.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010607/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(17 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εγκατάσταση φωτοβολταϊκών συστημάτων και συστημάτων «Net Metering»

Η αξιοποίηση φωτοβολταϊκών συστημάτων για παραγωγή ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας στην Κύπρο αντιμετωπίζει σημαντικές δυσκολίες για διάφορους, διοικητικούς, αλλά και καθαρά οικονομικούς λόγους. Παρόλο που η υψηλή ηλιοφάνεια της χώρας προσφέρει τις συνθήκες για προώθηση της πράσινης ενέργειας, το σχετικό πρόγραμμα δεν φαίνεται να σημειώνει ικανοποιητική πρόοδο.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Μέσα στα πλαίσια της ενεργειακής πολιτικής της ΕΕ, θεωρεί η Επιτροπή ότι η εγκατάσταση φωτοβολταϊκών συστημάτων σε ευρεία κλίμακα θα είναι θετική και επιθυμητή;

2. Μπορεί η Επιτροπή να παράσχει την αναγκαία τεχνική και οικονομική βοήθεια για εγκατάσταση σε νοικοκυριά και επιχειρήσεις του συστήματος «net metering»;

3. Λόγω και της επικρατούσας κακής οικονομικής κατάστασης στην Κύπρο, μπορεί η Επιτροπή να με πληροφορήσει εάν υπάρχουν ειδικά ευρωπαϊκά προγράμματα και πηγές χρηματοδότησης, από τις οποίες θα μπορούσαν να επωφεληθούν τα κυπριακά νοικοκυριά και οι επιχειρήσεις, με στόχο την εγκατάσταση φωτοβολταϊκών συστημάτων παραγωγής ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας και συστημάτων «net metering»;

Απάντηση του κ. Oettinger εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(8 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

1. Η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει θερμά την ανάπτυξη των ανανεώσιμων πηγών ενέργειας. Με την οδηγία για τις ανανεώσιμες πηγές ενέργειας (οδηγία 2009/28/ΕΚ) τέθηκε στόχος της ΕΕ για μερίδιο των ανανεώσιμων πηγών ενέργειας ύψους 20% για το 2020, ο οποίος επιμερίζεται μεταξύ των κρατών μελών με τη μορφή εθνικών δεσμευτικών στόχων. Η Κύπρος έχει δεσμευθεί για την επίτευξη στόχου 13% ανανεώσιμων πηγών ενέργειας επί της τελικής κατανάλωσης ενέργειας έως το 2020. Το 2011, το μερίδιο της κατανάλωσης ενέργειας από ανανεώσιμες πηγές στην Κύπρο ήταν 5,4%, που είναι υψηλότερο από τον ενδιάμεσο στόχο της για την περίοδο 2011/2012 (4,8%). Αυτό δείχνει ότι η Κύπρος βρίσκεται σε τροχιά επίτευξης του στόχου της για το 2020. Ωστόσο, η εφαρμογή της οδηγίας, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της επιλογής των τεχνολογιών ανανεώσιμων πηγών ενέργειας και του σχεδιασμού καθεστώτων στήριξης, εμπίπτει στην αρμοδιότητα των κρατών μελών.

2. και 3. Δεδομένου ότι η υλοποίηση της οδηγίας για τις ανανεώσιμες πηγές ενέργειας εμπίπτει στην αρμοδιότητα των κρατών μελών, δεν υπάρχουν μηχανισμοί υποστήριξης για την ανάπτυξη τεχνολογιών ανανεώσιμων πηγών ενέργειας, όπως τα φωτοβολταϊκά συστήματα ή η καταμέτρηση καθαρής ενέργειας που διατίθενται σε επίπεδο ΕΕ. Εντούτοις, υπάρχει διαθέσιμη οικονομική στήριξη με διάφορα προγράμματα και μέσα της ΕΕ με στόχο την παροχή συνδρομής στα κράτη μέλη για την εφαρμογή της πολιτικής της ΕΕ για τις ανανεώσιμες πηγές ενέργειας και την έναρξη συναφών επενδύσεων. Για παράδειγμα, βάσει του επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος της ΕΕ στο πλαίσιο των Διαρθρωτικών Ταμείων για την περίοδο 2007-2013 (με τίτλο «Βιώσιμη ανάπτυξη και ανταγωνιστικότητα»), αποφασίστηκε η συγχρηματοδότηση της εγκατάστασης φωτοβολταϊκών συστημάτων σε δημόσια κτίρια, συμπεριλαμβανομένου του Προεδρικού Μεγάρου, σχολικών κτιρίων, στρατοπέδων και υπουργείων στην Κύπρο. Επιπλέον, μπορεί να υπάρξει πρόσβαση στη διευκόλυνση ELENA για την παροχή επιχορηγήσεων τεχνικής βοήθειας (έως και 90% των επιλέξιμων δαπανών) σε τοπικές και περιφερειακές αρχές για την ανάπτυξη και την έναρξη επενδύσεων για βιώσιμη ενέργεια στο έδαφός τους.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010607/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Installation of photovoltaic systems and net metering systems

The use of photovoltaic systems for electricity production in Cyprus has come up against considerable difficulties for various administrative and purely financial reasons. Although the long hours of sunshine in Cyprus provide the conditions needed for promoting green energy, this programme does not appear to be making satisfactory progress.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does the Commission think, within the context of EU energy policy, that the installation of photovoltaic systems on a broad scale would be a positive and welcome move?

2. Can the Commission provide the technical and financial assistance needed in order to install net metering systems in households and businesses?

3. Given the prevailing economic situation in Cyprus, can the Commission tell me if there are special European programmes and funds which Cypriot households and businesses could take advantage of in order to install photovoltaic systems for electricity production and net metering systems?

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

1. The Commission strongly supports the development of renewable energy sources. The Renewable Energy Directive (Directive 2009/28/EC) has established an EU 20% renewable energy target for 2020 which is shared between Member States in the form of binding national targets. Cyprus has committed to reach a target of 13% renewable energy in final energy consumption by 2020. In 2011, the share of renewable energy consumption in Cyprus was 5.4%, which is higher than its 2011/2012 interim target (4.8%). This shows that Cyprus is currently on track to meet its 2020 target. The implementation of the directive including the choice of renewable energy technologies and the design of support schemes, however, is the responsibility of the Member States.

2 and 3. As the implementation of the Renewable Energy Directive falls under the responsibility of the Member States, there are no support mechanisms for the deployment of renewable energy technologies like photovoltaic systems or net metering available at the EU level. However, financial support is available through various EU programmes and instruments aimed at assisting Member States in their implementation of the EU renewable energy policy and initiating associated investments. For instance, under the EU Structural Funds Operational Programme for 2007-2013 (titled 'Sustainable development and Competitiveness'), it was decided to co-finance the installation of photovoltaic systems in public buildings, including the Presidential Palace, school buildings, army camps and Ministries in Cyprus. Furthermore, the ELENA Facility could be accessed to provide technical assistance grants (of up to 90% of eligible costs) to local and regional authorities for development and launch of sustainable energy investments over their territories.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-010608/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(17 september 2013)

Angående: Förordningen om den digitala inre marknaden: var är konsekvensbedömningen?

Kommissionen lade nyligen fram ett förslag till förordning om åtgärder för att fullborda den europeiska inre marknaden för elektronisk kommunikation och upprätta en uppkopplad kontinent (KOM(2013)0627). Parlamentet har endast fått en sammanfattning av konsekvensbedömningen, inte den fullständiga bedömningen.

Fanns en fullständig konsekvensbedömning någonstans att få den 12 september 2013? Om så var fallet, varför hade den då inte översänts till parlamentet?

Svar från Neelie Kroes på kommissionens vägnar
(31 oktober 2013)

Den 11 september 2013 överlämnades till Europaparlamentet en fullständig konsekvensbedömning i anslutning till förslaget till Europaparlamentets och rådets förordning om åtgärder för att fullborda den europeiska inre marknaden för elektronisk kommunikation och upprätta en uppkopplad kontinent. Den dagen sände Europeiska kommissionens generalsekretariat en skrivelse (referens ”SG-Greffe (2013) D/13984”) till Francesca Ratti, biträdande generalsekreterare för Europaparlamentet, med förslaget (KOM(2013) 627 final – 2013/0309 (COD)) tillsammans med den fullständiga konsekvensbedömningen (SWD(2013) 331 final) och dess sammanfattning (SWD(2013) 332 final) som åtföljer förslaget.

Den fullständiga konsekvensbedömningen är också tillgänglig på EUR-Lex
(http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SWD:2013:0331:FIN:EN:PDF),

på IPEX, systemet för informationsutbyte mellan parlamenten
(http://www.ipex.eu/IPEXL-WEB/dossier/document/SWD20130331.do),

på Europeiska kommissionens webbplats för konsekvensbedömningar
(http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/ia_carried_out/cia_2013_en.htm#cnect)

och på webbplatsen för en digital agenda för Europa
(http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/impact-assessment-connected-continent).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010608/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Digital Single Market Regulation: where is the impact assessment?

The Commission recently proposed a 'regulation laying down measures concerning the European single market for electronic communications and to achieve a Connected Continent' (COM(2013)0627). Parliament has only been given an executive summary of the impact assessment, but has not been provided with a full impact assessment.

Was a full impact assessment available anywhere on 12 September 2013? If so, why was it not transmitted to Parliament?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(31 October 2013)

On 11 September 2013, the full Impact assessment accompanying the Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down measures concerning the European single market for electronic communications and to achieve a Connected Continent was transmitted to the European Parliament. That day, the Secretariat-General of the European Commission sent a letter (reference 'SG-Greffe(2013) D/13984') to Ms Francesca Ratti, Deputy Secretary-General of the European Parliament, transmitting the proposal (COM(2013) 627 final — 2013/0309(COD)) together with the full impact assessment accompanying the proposal (SWD(2013) 331 final) and its summary (SWD(2013) 332 final).

The full impact assessment is also available on Eur-Lex
(http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SWD:2013:0331:FIN:EN:PDF),

on IPEX, the platform for EU Interparliamentary Exchange
(http://www.ipex.eu/IPEXL-WEB/dossier/document/SWD20130331.do),

on the impact assessment website of the European Commission
(http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/ia_carried_out/cia_2013_en.htm#cnect)

and on the website of the Digital Agenda for Europe
(http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/impact-assessment-connected-continent).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010609/13
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Test-Achat Case

Can the Commission provide me with statistics indicating the impact on insurance premiums following the European Court of Justice ruling in the Test-Achat case, as well as details of how the implementation of this ruling has been monitored?

Can the Commission also confirm whether there is evidence of any inadvertent discrimination as a result of the ruling?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(11 November 2013)

In its ruling in Case C-236/09 (Test-Achats), which was delivered on 1 March 2011, the Court of Justice of the European Union declared Article 5(2) of the directive 2004/113/EC ([1]) invalid with effect from 21 December 2012. The Court considered that the possibility for Member States to maintain an exemption from the unisex rule laid down in Article 5(1), Article 5(2) without temporal limitation runs counter to achievement of the objective of equal treatment between men and women in relation to the calculation of insurance premiums and benefits, and is therefore incompatible with Articles 21 and 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

In December 2011, the Commission published guidelines on the implications of the Test-Achats ruling for the application of Directive 2004/113/EC in the insurance sector ([2]).

The Commission will report in 2014 on the implementation of the directive 2004/113/EC. This report will include as one of its integral elements an analysis of the implementation of the Test-Achats ruling in national law and in insurance practice. The Commission is currently gathering the necessary information to monitor the implementation of the ruling by the Member States and is at this stage not aware of any inadvertent discrimination as a result of the ruling.

In addition, the European Insurance and Occupational Pension Authority (EIOPA) has foreseen in its work programme for 2013 to conduct a survey on the national incorporation of the Test Achats ruling. This survey could also include an analysis of the impact of the ruling on market practice by insurers.

([1]) OJ L 373 of 21.12.2004, p. 37.
([2]) OJ C 011 of 13.1.2012, p. 1.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010610/13
do Komisji
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE)
(17 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Niewłaściwe wdrażanie dyrektywy w sprawie nieuczciwych praktyk handlowych

Właściwe i zharmonizowane wdrażanie prawodawstwa UE ma kluczowe znaczenie dla prawidłowego funkcjonowania jednolitego rynku. Szczegółowa ocena wdrażania dyrektywy w sprawie nieuczciwych praktyk handlowych (dyrektywa 2005/29/WE) pokazuje jednak, że transpozycja dyrektywy do prawa krajowego w niektórych dziedzinach jest niewłaściwa.

W marcu 2013 r. Komisja przyjęła pierwsze sprawozdanie na temat stosowania dyrektywy 2005/29/WE, w którym przedstawiono proces wdrażania dyrektywy w optymistycznych barwach. W sprawozdaniu tym nie wskazano poważnych naruszeń prawodawstwa UE, a w szczególności niewłaściwego wdrażania załącznika I pkt 14 dotyczącego systemów promocyjnych typu „piramida" i decyzji kilku państw członkowskich o utrzymaniu krajowych bezpośrednich zakazów i ograniczeń sprzedaży, które nie są zgodne z dyrektywą w sprawie nieuczciwych praktyk handlowych.

W świetle powyższego jakie kroki zamierza podjąć Komisja, aby zapewnić właściwe i zharmonizowane wdrażanie tej dyrektywy w całej UE oraz aby przeciwdziałać wyżej wspomnianym naruszeniom?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Viviane Reding w imieniu Komisji
(7 listopada 2013 r.)

Komisja pragnie odesłać do swojej odpowiedzi na zapytanie nr E-002171/2013 udzielonej dnia 25 kwietnia 2013 r.

Ponadto szanowna Pani poseł powinna wiedzieć, że niedawno wszczęto wobec pewnej liczby państw członkowskich postępowania w sprawie uchybienia zobowiązaniom państwa członkowskiego ze względu na nieprawidłową transpozycję dyrektywy 2005/29/WE w sprawie nieuczciwych praktyk handlowych. Niektóre z tych postępowań dotyczyły w szczególności nieprawidłowej transpozycji przepisów punktu nr 14 załącznika I do tej dyrektywy.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010610/13
to the Commission
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Improper implementation of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive

Correct, harmonised implementation of EU legislation is key to the proper functioning of the single market. A thorough assessment of the implementation of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (UCPD) (Directive 2005/29/EC) shows, however, that it has not been properly transposed into national legislation in some areas.

In March 2013 the Commission adopted its 'First Report on the Application of Directive 2005/29/EC', which provided an optimistic picture of the implementation of that directive. However, the report did not point out serious breaches of EU legislation, particularly when it comes to the incorrect implementation of Annex I(14) on pyramid promotional schemes and the decision of several Member States to maintain national direct selling bans and restrictions that are not in line with the UCPD.

In the light of the above, what steps is the Commission going to take to ensure the proper, harmonised implementation of the directive across the EU and to stop the abovementioned breaches?

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

The Commission would like to refer to its reply to Question E-002171/2013 given on 25 April 2013.

Furthermore, the Honourable Member should be aware that infringement procedures for inadequate transposition of Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair commercial practices have been recently opened against a number of Member States some of which had, in particular, not adequately transposed No 14 of Annex I to Directive.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010612/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(17 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Παρακολούθηση του δικτύου της Belgacom από την NSA

Σύμφωνα με αναφορές των βελγικών μέσων ενημέρωσης που βασίζονται σε στοιχεία που ήρθαν στο φως εξαιτίας της υπόθεσης Snowden, η Εθνική Υπηρεσία Ασφαλείας των ΗΠΑ (NSA) φέρεται να έχει προβεί σε ηλεκτρονικές παρακολουθήσεις του δικτύου του βελγικού δημόσιου οργανισμού τηλεπικοινωνιών (Belgacom) το 2011.

Οι υποκλοπές είχαν κυρίως στόχο την BICS (Belgacom International Carrier Services) που είναι θυγατρική εταιρία της Belgacom και έχει ως αντικείμενο την διαχείριση των διεθνών τηλεπικοινωνιών. Οι υποκλοπές αφορούσαν τηλεφωνικές συνδιαλέξεις με χώρες όπως η Υεμένη, η Συρία και άλλες που θεωρούνται «ύποπτες» από τις ΗΠΑ.

Σύμφωνα με τις βελγικές υπηρεσίες ασφαλείας, είναι σαφές ότι υπάρχει ανάμειξη της NSA στην υπόθεση μολονότι δεν έχει αποδειχθεί τυπικά κάτι τέτοιο. Σύμφωνα με τις αναφορές, η Πρέσβης των ΗΠΑ στο Βέλγιο ενδέχεται να κληθεί για να δώσει εξηγήσεις ενώ η Belgacom έχει ήδη υποβάλει τα υπάρχοντα στοιχεία στην βελγική ομοσπονδιακή εισαγγελία.

Ο Βέλγος Πρωθυπουργός Elio Di Rupo έχει δηλώσει ότι, εάν επιβεβαιωθούν οι καταγγελίες, τότε θα πρόκειται για υπόθεση ηλεκτρονικής κατασκοπείας την οποία η κυβέρνησή του καταδικάζει αυστηρά ως παρεμβολή και παραβίαση της λειτουργίας ενός δημόσιου φορέα τηλεπικοινωνιών.

1. Έχει υπόψη της η Επιτροπή τις εν λόγω υποκλοπές τηλεφωνικών συνδιαλέξεων και την παραβίαση της ιδιωτικής ζωής που αυτές συνιστούν;

2. Εάν οι καταγγελίες αποδειχθούν βάσιμες, σε ποιες ενέργειες θα προβεί η ΕΕ έναντι της NSA;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει τον κ. βουλευτή στην απάντησή της στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-009773/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010612/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: NSA monitors Belgacom network

According to reports in the Belgian media based on the revelations of the 'Snowden' case, the US National Security Agency (NSA) allegedly monitored the network of Belgacom (the Belgian public telecommunications company) in 2011.

The intercepts mainly targeted Belgacom's subsidiary BICS (Belgacom International Carrier Services), which is responsible for the management of international telecommunications. They were made on telephone conversations with countries such as Yemen, Syria and others deemed 'suspicious' by the US.

According to the Belgian security authorities, it is clear that the NSA was involved in the case, although the claim has not been formally proven. The reports state that the US Ambassador to Belgium may be asked to explain; meanwhile, Belgacom has already submitted the information available to the Belgian federal prosecutor's office.

The Belgian Prime Minister, Elio Di Rupo, has said that if the allegations are confirmed, then this would indeed be a case of electronic espionage and the government would strongly condemn such interference in, and violation of, the functioning of a public telecommunications company.

1. Is the Commission aware of this interference in, and breach of the privacy of, telephone conversations?

2. If the allegations are confirmed, what action will the EU take against the NSA?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-009773/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010613/13
to the Commission
Alyn Smith (Verts/ALE)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Turtle doves

Each spring, thousands of migrant birds, including turtle doves, cross Malta on their way to breeding grounds in Europe.

In Malta, although there are laws in place to govern when shooting can be carried out, a huge number of protected birds are believed to be illegally killed. One of the most common birds targeted by hunters is the turtle dove, a species on the verge of extinction in the UK.

Earlier this year, the UK Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) reported that nationally turtle dove numbers had declined by 93% since 1970.

The opening of a spring hunting season in 2013 again disregards the fact that hunting during spring goes against the Commission's own Hunting Guide. Could the Commission confirm what, if any, action is planned to stop the shooting of turtle doves in Malta during their migration?

Furthermore, is the Commission planning to verify the Maltese Government's ability to enforce, properly control, and limit the spring hunting season in accordance with its derogation under the EU Birds Directive?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(7 November 2013)

The judgment of the Court of Justice of the European Union of 2009 ([1]) left open the possibility of a limited spring hunting derogation of Turtle Dove and Quail under strictly supervised conditions in view of the specific circumstances prevalent in Malta. Malta has over the past few years strengthened and improved the national regulatory framework relating to the spring hunting derogation. The relevant national regulations introduce a number of controls in relation to a spring hunting season, including bag limits and quotas, restrictions pertaining to time and places and a range of reporting requirements. Nevertheless, the Commission is aware of concerns relating to the enforcement of spring hunting regulations, and therefore it is in regular contact with the Maltese authorities with a view to identifying further steps to improve effectiveness of the enforcement regime.

([1]) Case C-76/08 Commission v Malta.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-010614/13
a Bizottság számára
Mészáros Alajos (PPE)
(2013. szeptember 17.)

Tárgy: Uniós jogot sértő közigazgatási gyakorlat és bírói értelmezés

Összeegyeztethető-e az uniós joggal egy olyan tagállami jogszabály, amely nyelvtani értelmezés szerint nem sérti az uniós jogot, de az adott tagállam közigazgatási gyakorlata és bírósági értelmezése – különös tekintettel az adott tagállamban végső fokon eljáró bíróságra – uniós jogot sértő helyzeteket eredményez? Megköveteli-e az uniós jog ilyen esetekben, hogy az adott szabályozást megváltoztassák oly módon, hogy a változtatást követően ne fordulhasson elő uniós jogot sértő értelmezés? ([1])

José Manuel Barroso válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. november 27.)

Az állandó ítélkezési gyakorlat szerint a tagállami bíróságoknak az uniós jog előírásainak megfelelően kell értelmezniük és alkalmazniuk a tagállami jogot. Amennyiben ilyen értelmezésre vagy alkalmazásra nincs lehetőség, a tagállami bíróságoknak el kell tekinteniük a tagállami jog minden olyan rendelkezésének alkalmazásától, amely az uniós jog előírásaival ellentétes (lásd a C-357/06. sz., Frigerio Luigi ügyben hozott ítélet [EBHT 2007., I-12311. o.] 28. és 29. pontját).

Ezen túlmenően, ha maga a tagállami rendelkezés az uniós jog szempontjából semleges, az említett rendelkezés uniós joggal való összeegyeztethetősége annak fényében értékelhető, hogy a tagállami bíróságok miként alkalmazzák és értelmezik azt.

Az Európai Bíróság megállapította továbbá, hogy amennyiben valamely tagállami szabályozással kapcsolatban olyan eltérő bírói értelmezések merülnek fel, amelyek közül egyes értelmezések az említett szabályozásnak az uniós joggal összeegyeztethető alkalmazására, más értelmezések pedig ezzel ellenkező alkalmazásra vezetnének, meg kell állapítani, hogy e szabályozás nem teljesen egyértelmű ahhoz, hogy biztosítsa a szabályozás uniós joggal összeegyeztethető alkalmazását, ezért azt módosítani kell (lásd a C-129/00. sz., Bizottság kontra Olaszország ügyben hozott ítélet [EBHT 2003., I-14637. o.] 29–33. pontját).

A fenti elvek abban az esetben is alkalmazandók, ha az uniós jogot valamely hatóság gyakorlata sérti azáltal, hogy a tagállami rendelkezéseknek az uniós joggal ellentétes értelmezést ad.

([1]) Európai Unió Bírósága, C-129/00.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010614/13
to the Commission
Alajos Mészáros (PPE)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Public administration practice and judicial interpretation in breach of EC law

Can a law of a Member State which, according to its grammatical interpretation, does not violate EC law but the public administration practice and judicial interpretation of which, in the Member State concerned — with particular reference to the court adjudicating at last instance — results in a situation whereby EC law is violated, be reconciled with EC law? In such cases, does EC law require the legislation in question to be amended in such a way as to prevent any future interpretation being in violation of EC law ([1])?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(27 November 2013)

According to established case-law, national courts shall interpret and apply national law in conformity with the requirements of EC law. In so far as such an interpretation or application is not possible, national courts must disapply any provision of domestic law which is contrary to the requirements of EC law (see Case C-357/06 Frigerio Luigi [2007] ECR I-12311, paragraphes 28 and 29).

Furthermore, if a national provision is in itself neutral in respect of EC law, the question whether such provision is compatible with EC law can be assessed in the light of the application made and the interpretation given to them by national courts.

Moreover, the European Court of Justice established that where national legislation has been the subject of different relevant judicial constructions, some leading to the application of that legislation in compliance with EC law, others leading to the opposite application, it must be held that such legislation is not sufficiently clear to ensure its application in compliance with EC law and should therefore be amended (see Case C-129/00, Commission v Italy, [2003] ECR I-14637, paragraphs 29 to 33).

The abovementioned principles apply also when a public administration is violating EC law in its practice, by giving an interpretation of national provisions which would be contrary to EC law.

([1]) Court of Justice of the European Union, C-129/00.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010615/13
do Komisji
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE)
(17 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Cła ochronne na nawozy

Unia Europejska powinna wspierać rodzimy przemysł. Kluczowe jest, aby UE działała szybko i skutecznie przeciwko niesprawiedliwym praktykom dumpingowym lub subsydiom na eksport do UE. Należy zauważyć, że europejskie mechanizmy ochrony są już bardzo liberalne, i należy zapobiegać wszelkim działaniom czy zmianom w prawie, które spowodowałyby nierównowagę na niekorzyść europejskich firm.

Wiele sektorów, włączając w to przemysł nawozowy, jest w sytuacji nieuprzywilejowanej, gdyż musi zmagać się z zawyżonymi cenami gazu, węglanu, potasu czy innych surowców. Rozbieżności w cenach tych podstawowych – na przykład dla przemysłu nawozowego – surowców pomiędzy rynkiem europejskim a rynkami głównych partnerów handlowych są niezwykle głębokie. Różnice te są regularnie wykorzystywane, jako praktyka dumpingowa w stosunku do produktów z UE.

W związku z powyższym chciałabym zadać Komisji poniższe pytania:

1. Czy Komisja popiera rezygnację z zasady mniejszego cła? Rezygnacja z tej zasady będzie dowodem, że UE nie akceptuje niesprawiedliwego i nierównego poziomu cen surowców, zwłaszcza jeśli efekt będzie szkodliwy dla europejskiego przemysłu. Dlatego zwracam się do Komisji o ustosunkowanie się do tej kwestii, co szczególnie małym i średnim przedsiębiorstwom ułatwi udział w zamówieniach publicznych. Co ważne, najniższa cena nie będzie już głównym kryterium, dzięki temu wykluczone zostaną propozycje, które są tanie, bo zaniżają jakość lub są nienaturalnie niskie.

2. Jakie środki Komisja już stosuje lub planuje wprowadzić i kiedy, aby zapewnić zasady równego traktowania przedsiębiorców i wyeliminować niesprawiedliwe praktyki dumpingowe?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Karela De Guchta w imieniu Komisji
(6 listopada 2013 r.)

W przypadkach zakłócenia międzynarodowego handlu towarami poprzez nieuczciwą konkurencję, w zakresie, w jakim subsydiowanie lub praktyki dumpingowe wyrządzają szkodę przemysłowi unijnemu, istnieje możliwość wprowadzenia ceł wyrównawczych lub antydumpingowych po przeprowadzeniu dochodzenia przez Komisję.

Komisja może rozważyć wszczęcie dochodzenia antydumpingowego lub antysubsydyjnego, jeśli posiada wystarczające dowody *prima facie* świadczące o dumpingu lub subsydiowaniu przywożonych towarów, które to praktyki powodują istotną szkodę dla przemysłu unijnego.

Przemysł unijny może wnieść skargę, a jeśli istnieją wystarczające dowody, Komisja jest prawnie zobowiązana do wszczęcia dochodzenia, o ile spełnione są odpowiednie wymogi prawne Światowej Organizacji Handlu (WTO) i UE.

Należy również przypomnieć, że Komisja wystąpiła z inicjatywą modernizacji stosowanych instrumentów ochrony handlu. Inicjatywa ta pozwoliłaby na znaczne zwiększenie skuteczności tych instrumentów w zakresie przeciwdziałania nieuczciwej konkurencji wynikającej z dumpingu i subsydiowania wywozu. W ramach tej modernizacji Komisja zamierza również ułatwić stosowanie instrumentów ochrony handlu małym i średnim przedsiębiorstwom (MŚP), które dzięki temu będą mogły się bronić przeciwko nieuczciwej konkurencji. Wniosek legislacyjny w tej sprawie jest obecnie rozpatrywany przez Parlament i Radę.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010615/13
to the Commission
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Protective tariffs on fertilisers

The EU should support its own industry. It is vital that the EU take swift, effective action against the unfair practices of dumping and subsidising of exports to the EU. It should be noted that European protection mechanisms are extremely liberal, and we should prevent any action or change in the law that would cause an imbalance which puts European businesses at a disadvantage.

Many sectors, including the fertiliser industry, are at a disadvantage as they are struggling with rising prices for gas, carbonates, potassium and other raw materials. There are unusually big differences in the prices of these basic raw materials, for example in the fertiliser industry, on the European market as compared with the markets of Europe's major trade partners. These differences are regularly exploited to practise dumping to the detriment of products from the EU.

1. Does the Commission support abandoning the idea of lowering customs duties? By doing so the EU would signal its refusal to accept unfair, unequal prices for raw materials, particularly where they have an adverse impact on European industry. I therefore call on the Commission to address this issue, in particular so that SMEs will be better able to participate in public procurement procedures. Importantly, lowest price must stop being the main criterion, so that tenders which are low-priced because what they cover is of a lower quality or because artificially low prices are being quoted can be eliminated.

2. What action is the Commission taking or does it plan to take — and when — to ensure that the principle of equal treatment of entrepreneurs is adhered to and eliminate unfair dumping practices?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(6 November 2013)

In cases where international trade in manufactured goods is distorted by unfair competition, in so far as countervailing and/or dumping practices cause injury to the Union industry, anti-subsidy and/or anti-dumping duties may be imposed after investigation by the Commission.

The Commission can consider opening an anti-subsidy and/or an anti-dumping investigation when it has sufficient prima facie evidence that dumping or subsidisation takes place and the Union industry is suffering material injury, caused by the dumped or subsidised imports.

EU industry can bring a complaint and if there is sufficient evidence, the Commission is under a legal obligation to initiate an investigation if the relevant World Trade Organisation and EU legal requirements are met.

It should also be recalled that the Commission launched an initiative to modernize its trade defence instruments. This initiative would significantly strengthen the effectiveness of the trade defence instruments to address unfair competition as a result of dumping and subsidisation of exports. As part of this modernisation exercise, the Commission also intends to help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have recourse to trade defence instruments, and therefore protect themselves against unfair competition. The legislative proposal is currently before Parliament and the Council.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010616/13
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(17 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Rozwój polityki azylowej

Europejska Rada ds. Uchodźców i Wypędzonych opublikowała raport dotyczący praktyk w zakresie przyjmowania imigrantów i przyznawania im ochrony międzynarodowej w 14 państwach UE. Dokument pokazuje wciąż istniejące rozbieżności między 14 badanymi państwami członkowskimi. Dzieje się tak mimo ulepszania narodowych polityk azylowych i podpisania przez UE w czerwcu 2013 r. pakietu azylowego. Różnice dotyczą przede wszystkim kwestii proceduralnych, gwarancji dla poszukujących ochrony, dostępu do zakwaterowania oraz zatrudnienia i zasad umieszczania w ośrodkach zamkniętych. Priorytetową sprawą jest zapewnienie cudzoziemcom dostępu do bezpłatnej pomocy prawnej i pełnomocników w ramach procedury azylowej. Niestety, dostępność takich praktyk w opisanych krajach ciągle się zmniejsza. Dodatkowo w niektórych państwach UE (np. Polska, Wielka Brytania) przepisy nie przewidują odpowiedniego czasu na przygotowanie skargi na decyzję odmowną przez osobę ubiegającą się o przyznanie pomocy międzynarodowej. Z tego powodu w praktyce prawo to nie jest przestrzegane. Konkludując, w niektórych krajach cudzoziemcy, którym odmówiono przyznania statusu uchodźcy lub innej formy pomocy są pozbawieni możliwości odwołania się od decyzji sądu. Jest to praktyka niedopuszczalna w państwach europejskich, godzącą w podstawowe prawa obywatela i gościa Europy.

Zwracam się z poniższym zapytaniem.

1. Czy Komisja przewiduje zharmonizowanie przepisów państw europejskich dotyczących przyznawania ochrony międzynarodowej?

2. Czy Komisja rozważa powołanie instytucji Rzecznika ds. Cudzoziemców?

3. Co Komisja sądzi o powołaniu wspólnej dla wszystkich państw członkowskich instancji odwoławczej od decyzji odmownych w sprawie przyznania azylu?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Cecilię Malmström w imieniu Komisji
(28 października 2013 r.)

Podjęte właśnie zostały dalsze kroki w celu zharmonizowania przepisów państw członkowskich dotyczących przyznawania ochrony międzynarodowej w drodze przyjęcia tzw. „pakietu azylowego" składającego się z trzech dyrektyw ([1]) i dwóch rozporządzeń ([2]). Wspomniany pakiet musi jeszcze nabrać pełnego skutku prawnego, gdyż państwa członkowskie mają czas do lipca 2015 r. na wdrożenie większości jego przepisów. W związku z tym Komisja nie zamierza obecnie proponować dalszej harmonizacji.

W chwili obecnej Komisja nie zamierza proponować powołania instytucji Rzecznika ds. Cudzoziemców ani rozważać takiego wniosku.

Jeśli chodzi o powołanie wspólnej dla wszystkich państw członkowskich instancji odwoławczej od decyzji odmownych w sprawie przyznania azylu, niedawne badanie ([3]) przeprowadzone na zlecenie Komisji pokazało, że istnieją pewne przeszkody natury prawnej i praktycznej.

([1]) Dyrektywy 2011/95/UE, 2013/32/UE, 2013/33/UE.
([2]) Rozporządzenia (UE) nr 603/2013 i (UE) nr 604/2013.
([3]) Studium wykonalności oraz skutków prawnych i praktycznych stworzenia mechanizmu wspólnego rozpatrywania wniosków o azyl na terytorium UE, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/asylum/common-procedures/docs/jp_final_report__final_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010616/13
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(17 September 2013)

Subject: Evolution of asylum policy

The European Council on Refugees and Exiles has published a report on practices in the areas of receiving immigrants and granting asylum in 14 EU Member States. The document shows that disparities remain between the 14 Member States studied. This is in spite of advances in national asylum policies and the EU's adoption, in June 2013, of the Asylum Package. The differences mainly concern procedural matters, guarantees for asylum-seekers, access to accommodation and employment, and the rules on holding people in closed detention centres. A priority issue is ensuring that migrants have access to free legal assistance and attorneys during the asylum process. Sadly, such services are constantly being reduced in the Member States studied. Moreover, in some Member States (e.g. Poland and the United Kingdom) there are no legal provisions giving asylum-seekers an appropriate time frame in which to prepare an appeal against a negative decision. This right, therefore, is not respected in practice. In some countries, asylum-seekers who have been refused refugee status or another form of assistance are deprived of the possibility of appealing against the court's decision. This practice, which strikes at the heart of the rights of citizens and guests in Europe, cannot be permitted to occur in European countries.

1. Does the Commission see scope for harmonising EU Member States' laws on the granting of international protection?

2. Is the Commission considering establishing an Ombudsman for Non-EU Nationals?

3. What is the Commission's position on establishing a common EU instance for appeals against negative decisions on the granting of asylum?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(28 October 2013)

Further steps have just been taken to harmonise Member States' laws on the granting of international protection through the adoption of the so-called 'asylum package' consisting of three directives ([1]) and two regulations ([2]). This package has yet to take full legal effect, since Member States have until July 2015 to implement the bulk of its provisions. Accordingly, the Commission currently has no plans for proposing further harmonisation.

Currently, the Commission has no plans to propose the establishment of an Ombudsman for non-EU nationals, or to consider making such a proposal.

As concerns establishing a common EU instance for appeals against negative asylum decisions, a recent study ([3]) conducted for the Commission, pointed to some legal and practical obstacles.

([1]) Directives 2011/95/EU, 2013/32/EU, 2013/33/EU.
([2]) Regulations (EU) No 603/2013 and 604/2013.
([3]) Study on the Feasibility and legal and practical implications of establishing a mechanism for the joint processing of asylum applications on the territory of the EU, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/asylum/common-procedures/docs/jp_final_report__final_en.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-010617/13
an die Kommission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(18. September 2013)

Betrifft: Rechtsvorschriften über streunende Hunde in Rumänien

Am 10. September 2013 hat das rumänische Parlament ein neues Gesetz verabschiedet, das es den Behörden gestattet, Tausende von gesunden streunenden Hunden einzuschläfern, wenn sie nicht innerhalb von 14 Tagen von Bürgern adoptiert werden. Der rumänische Verfassungsgerichtshof hat bereits 2012 ein ähnliches Gesetz aufgehoben, da man zu dem Schluss gelangt war, dass es gegen die rumänische Verfassung verstößt.

Artikel 13 des Vertrags von Lissabon besagt: „Bei der Festlegung und Durchführung der Politik der Union […] tragen die Union und die Mitgliedstaaten den Erfordernissen des Wohlergehens der Tiere als fühlende Wesen in vollem Umfang Rechnung". Ich möchte daher an die Kommission in ihrer Eigenschaft als Hüterin der Verträge folgende Fragen richten (bitte um getrennte Beantwortung):

1. Steht das neue rumänische Gesetz im Widerspruch zu Artikel 13 des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union? Wenn nicht, warum nicht?

2. Welche Maßnahmen kann die Kommission ergreifen und wirksam umsetzen, um dafür zu sorgen, dass Rumänien den Vertrag über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union einhält?

3. Welche Maßnahmen kann die Kommission ergreifen und wirksam umsetzen, um dafür zu sorgen, dass sich die rumänischen Behörden an die Verfassung ihres Landes halten?

4. Welche der oben genannten Maßnahmen wird die Kommission ergreifen, um dafür zu sorgen, dass Rumänien sich sowohl an den Vertrag über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union als auch an seine eigene Verfassung hält?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(17. Oktober 2013)

Der Kommission sind dieser Fall und andere ähnliche Fälle, die Folge der andauernden problematischen Anwesenheit herrenloser Hunde in einigen Gebieten mehrerer Mitgliedstaaten sind, wohl bekannt. Das Vorgehen gegen diese Tiere unterliegt nicht den EU-Rechtsvorschriften, sondern fällt in die alleinige Zuständigkeit der Mitgliedstaaten.

Daher ist die Kommission nicht befugt, den rumänischen Behörden Maßnahmen in diesem Bereich vorzuschreiben. Es sei allerdings darauf hingewiesen, dass die Weltorganisation für Tiergesundheit (OIE) internationale Leitlinien zur Populationskontrolle bei herrenlosen Hunden angenommen hat, in denen sie betont, dass die örtlichen Regierungsstellen bei der Durchsetzung der Rechtsvorschriften über die Hundehaltung eine wichtige Rolle spielen, und diejenigen Stellen nennt, die für die Ausarbeitung und Durchführung geeigneter Schulungen für das Einfangen, den Transport und die Haltung von Hunden zuständig sind, sowie Mindestkriterien für Unterbringung und Versorgung vorsieht.

In den Leitlinien wird außerdem betont, dass bei der Populationskontrolle bei herrenlosen Hunden eine abgestimmte Vorgehensweise erforderlich ist, dass die Tötung von Hunden, falls diese unumgänglich ist, nach tiergerechten Methoden erfolgen sollte und dass die Tötung allein keine nachhaltige Strategie darstellt.

Als Mitglied der OIE ist es jedoch an Rumänien zu entscheiden, wie diese internationalen Leitlinien auf nationaler Ebene am besten umgesetzt werden können.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010617/13
to the Commission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Legislation in Romania concerning stray dogs

On 10 September 2013, the Romanian Parliament adopted a new law allowing the authorities to euthanise thousands of healthy stray dogs if they are not adopted by citizens within a period of 14 days. The Romanian Constitutional Court already withdrew a similar law in 2012, as it was considered to be in conflict with the Romanian Constitution.

Article 13 of the Lisbon Treaty stipulates that 'in formulating and implementing the Union's […] policies, the Union and the Member States shall, since animals are sentient beings, pay full regard to the welfare requirements of animals.' I therefore wish to ask the Commission, in its capacity as guardian of the Treaties (please answer separately):

1. Does the new Romanian law contradict Article 13 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union? If not, why not?

2. What measures can the Commission take and effectively implement in order to ensure that Romania abides by the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union?

3. What measures can the Commission take and implement effectively in order to ensure that the Romanian authorities abide by their country's constitution?

4. Which of the aforementioned measures will the Commission take in order to ensure that Romania abides by the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union as well as its own constitution?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(17 October 2013)

The Commission is fully aware of this and other similar events that are the result of the persistent problematic presence of stray dogs in some areas of several Member States. However, the control of these animals is not governed by EU rules and remains under the sole responsibility of the Member States.

The Commission is thus not entitled to request any action to the Romanian authorities on this issue. It is important, however, to recall that the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) has adopted international standards on stray dog population control, highlighting the important role of the local government agencies for the enforcement of legislation relating to dog ownership and indicating the bodies responsible for developing and implementing appropriate training to regulate dog capture, transport, and holding as well as minimum housing and care criteria.

These standards also insist on the need to use parallel approaches for controlling stray dog population and consider that killing should be carried out in a humane way when necessary, and it is not a sustainable strategy if performed alone.

However, it is up to Romania, as member of the OIE, to consider how it might most appropriately use these international guidelines in its national context.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-010618/13
do Komisji
Jacek Saryusz-Wolski (PPE)
(18 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Unijne wsparcie bezpieczeństwa energetycznego Mołdawii

W rezolucji z dnia 12 września 2013 r. ([1]) Parlament mocno skrytykował Rosję za naciski wywierane na kraje Partnerstwa Wschodniego w przededniu szczytu Partnerstwa Wschodniego w Wilnie i wezwał Komisję do podjęcia działań w obronie partnerów Unii, do wysłania wszystkim krajom Partnerstwa Wschodniego mocnego sygnału wsparcia oraz do przedstawienia konkretnych, skutecznych środków wsparcia tych partnerów.

Mołdawia, która ma duże osiągnięcia jeśli chodzi o politykę proeuropejską i należy do Wspólnoty Energetycznej, jest szczególnie narażona na naciski ze strony Rosji, która jest obecnie jednym dostawcą gazu dla Mołdawii. Wprawdzie należy pochwalić starania Komisji związane z gazociągiem Iasi-Ungheni (który w 2014 r. ma połączyć Mołdawię z rumuńskim rynkiem gazowym), lecz jakie inne kroki zamierza poczynić Komisja, aby wesprzeć bezpieczeństwo energetyczne Mołdawii, w szczególności w związku:

a) ze staraniami, jakich dokonuje ten kraj, aby zróżnicować źródła i drogi dostaw energii m.in. poprzez dalszą integrację z unijną infrastrukturą energetyczną, w tym za pomocą wzajemnych połączeń elektroenergetycznych;

b) z procesem wdrażania przez Mołdawię dorobku prawnego Wspólnoty Energetycznej (w szczególności trzeciego pakietu energetycznego) oraz restrukturyzacją mołdawskiego sektora gazowego, w tym poprzez prace wspólnej grupy ekspertów powołanej w grudniu 2012?

W świetle kroków, jakie Rosja poczyniła niedawno wobec Mołdawii, oraz obaw, jakie wyrazili mołdawscy ministrowie, co do możliwości przerwania przez Gazprom dostaw energii w trakcie nadchodzącej zimy, czy Komisja przygotowuje tymczasowe plany awaryjne, aby pomóc Mołdawii, gdyby zaistniała taka sytuacja? Jeżeli tak, to jakie są to plany? W jaki sposób UE może przyspieszyć proces uniezależniania się Mołdawii od monopolu Rosji na rynku dostaw gazu?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Günthera Oettingera w imieniu Komisji
(17 października 2013 r.)

Mołdawia ściśle współpracuje z Rumunią w celu określenia wspólnych priorytetów w zakresie projektów dotyczących międzysystemowych połączeń sieci elektrycznej i gazowej, które poprawią bezpieczeństwo dostaw w Mołdawii. Komisja wspiera te projekty zarówno politycznie, jak i finansowo oraz aktywnie uczestniczy w ułatwianiu realizacji priorytetowych projektów przez organizowanie spotkań technicznych z przedstawicielami Mołdawii, Rumunii, EBOR i EBI.

Aby osiągnąć niezależność energetyczną i bezpieczeństwo dostaw, rząd mołdawski koncentruje się na integracji z unijnym rynkiem energii. Komisja i Sekretariat Wspólnoty Energetycznej wspierają Mołdawię we wdrażaniu trzeciego pakietu dotyczącego rynku energii i w restrukturyzacji sektora gazu tego państwa. Wspólna Grupa Ekspertów UE-Mołdawia prowadzi wymianę doświadczeń w zakresie praktycznego wdrażania odpowiednich unijnych przepisów energetycznych.

Przygotowanie UE i państw członkowskich Wspólnoty Energetycznej do kryzysu gazowego jest regularnie oceniane przez unijną grupę koordynującą ds. gazu i przez grupę koordynacyjną ds. bezpieczeństwa dostaw Wspólnoty Energetycznej. Mołdawia, wypełniając swoje zobowiązania w ramach Wspólnoty Energetycznej, jest obecnie na etapie finalizacji oświadczenia o krajowej strategii bezpieczeństwa dostaw w celu lepszego przygotowania się do ewentualnego kryzysu energetycznego. Bezpieczeństwo dostaw zarówno gazu, jak i energii elektrycznej można poprawić także w perspektywie średnio- i długoterminowej przez rozwijanie projektów inwestycyjnych oraz przez umożliwienie odwrócenia kierunku przepływu gazu.

([1]) Teksty przyjęte, P7_TA(2013)0383.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010618/13
to the Commission
Jacek Saryusz-Wolski (PPE)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: EU support for Moldova's energy security

In its resolution of 12 September 2013 ([1]), Parliament strongly criticised Russia for the pressure it has been exerting on the Eastern Partnership countries in the run-up to the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius and called on the Commission to take action in defence of the Union's partners, to send out strong messages of support for all Eastern Partnership countries and to come forward with concrete effective measures to support those partners.

Moldova, which has a good track record when it comes to pro-European policies and is a member of the Energy Community, is particularly vulnerable to pressure from Russia, which is currently the country's sole supplier of gas. Although the Commission's efforts with regard to the Iasi-Ungheni pipeline (which is to link Moldova to the Romanian gas market by 2014) are to be commended, what other steps does the Commission plan to take to support Moldova's energy security, in particular as regards:

(a) the country's efforts to diversify sources and routes of energy supply, through, *inter alia*, further integrating Moldova into the EU's energy infrastructure, including by means of electricity interconnections;

(b) the process for Moldova's implementation of the Energy Community *acquis* (especially the Third Energy Package) and the restructuring of its gas sector, including through the work of the Joint Expert Group set up in December 2012?

In the light of recent steps taken by Russia vis-à-vis Moldova, and the concern expressed by Moldovan ministers at a possible cut-off by Gazprom of energy supplies during the coming winter, is the Commission drawing up provisional contingency plans to aid Moldova should this occur? If so, what are they? How can the EU further speed up the process of making Moldova less dependent on Russia's monopoly of the gas supply market?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(17 October 2013)

Moldova is working closely with Romania to define common priorities on gas and electricity interconnection projects which will improve the security of supply in Moldova. The Commission is supporting these projects both politically and financially and is actively involved in facilitating implementation of the prioritised projects by organising technical meetings with Moldova, Romania, EBRD and EIB.

To achieve energy independence and security of supply, the Moldovan government is focusing on integration with the EU energy market. The Commission and the Energy Community Secretariat are supporting Moldova in implementing the third energy market package and restructuring the gas sector of the country. The Joint EU-Moldova Expert Group shares expertise on the practical implementation of the relevant EU energy law.

The gas crisis preparedness in the EU and in the member countries of the Energy Community is regularly assessed both in the EU Gas Coordination Group and in the Energy Community Security of Supply Coordination Group. As part of its obligations in the Energy Community, Moldova is currently finalising a statement for the national strategy on security of supply in order to be better prepared in the event of an energy crisis situation. The security of supply situtation for both gas and electricity can also be improved in the mid- and long-term by the development of investment projects and by allowing reverse gas flows.

([1]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0383.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-010619/13
alla Commissione
Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(18 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Uso dei fondi europei per la riconversione dell'ex zuccherificio di Finale Emilia

In riferimento all'interrogazione E-009018/2013, il Commissario conclude la sua risposta affermando che «Il programma di sviluppo rurale 2007-2013 della Regione Emilia-Romagna esclude specificamente tali interventi dal finanziamento».

Si chiede alla Commissione se:

1. i fondi europei non potevano essere chiesti/erogati;

2. i fondi siano stati erogati in contrapposizione con quanto previsto dal programma di sviluppo rurale della Regione e se in tal caso dovranno essere restituiti;

3. se l'Europa abbia finanziato un progetto che non poteva finanziare.

Risposta di Dacian Ciolos a nome della Commissione
(7 ottobre 2013)

I criteri di ammissibilità per la concessione dell'aiuto alla ristrutturazione sono previsti dal regolamento (CE) n. 320/2006 del Consiglio, del 20 febbraio 2006, che istituisce un regime temporaneo per la ristrutturazione dell'industria dello zucchero nella Comunità ([1]).

Nel quadro della ristrutturazione del settore dello zucchero gli Stati membri avevano piena responsabilità per la concessione e l'attuazione dei progetti nel loro territorio:

— l'articolo 5, paragrafo 1 del regolamento (CE) n. 320/2006 del Consiglio recita: *«gli Stati membri decidono in merito alla concessione dell'aiuto alla ristrutturazione»;*

— l'articolo 5, paragrafo 4 del regolamento (CE) n. 320/2006 del Consiglio recita: *«gli Stati membri procedono al monitoraggio, al controllo e alla verifica dell'attuazione del piano di ristrutturazione, quale è stato approvato»;*

Il programma di sviluppo rurale (PSR) 2007-2013 della Regione Emilia Romagna escludeva specificamente gli interventi a favore della ristrutturazione di zuccherifici nell'ambito della «Misura 123 — accrescimento del valore aggiunto dei prodotti agricoli e forestali» del PSR. A partire dal 2012 gli interventi a favore di ex produttori di barbabietole da zucchero in Emilia Romagna erano autorizzati per altre misure del PSR, in quanto le risorse per gli aiuti alla ristrutturazione ai sensi del regolamento (CE) n. 320/2006 erano esaurite.

La Commissione verifica la corretta attuazione della normativa europea da parte degli Stati membri, attraverso verifiche periodiche e, se necessario, adotta i provvedimenti opportuni.

([1]) GU L 58 del 28.2.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010619/13
to the Commission
Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Use of European funds for the conversion of the former sugar factory in Finale Emilia

With reference to Question E-009018/2013, the Commission concludes its reply by stating that: 'The 2007-2013 Rural Development Program of the region Emilia Romagna specifically excludes such interventions from funding.'

1. Was it not possible to apply for/grant the European funding?

2. In granting the funds, were the rules governing the Region's rural development programme breached, and if so, will the funding have to be repaid?

3. Did Europe finance a project which it could not finance?

Answer given by Mr Ciolos on behalf of the Commission
(7 October 2013)

The eligibility criteria for granting the restructuring aid are laid down in Council Regulation (EC) No 320/2006 of 20 February 2006 establishes a temporary scheme for the restructuring of the sugar industry in the Community ([1]).

Within the framework of this sugar restructuring Member States had full responsibility for the granting and implementation of the projects within their territory:

— Article 5(1) of Council Regulation (EC) N) 320/2006 states that 'Member States shall decide on the granting of the restructuring aid';

— Article 5(4) of Council Regulation (EC) N) 320/2006 states that 'Member States shall monitor, control and verify the implementation of the restructuring aid as approved by it';

The 2007-2013 Rural Development Program (RDP) of the region Emilia Romagna specifically excluded interventions in favour of the restructuring of sugar refineries under Measure 123 — 'Adding Value to Agricultural and Forestry Products' of the RDP. From 2012 on, interventions in favour of former sugar beet growers in Emilia Romagna were allowed for other RDP measures, since resources for restructuring aid under Regulation (EC) No 320/2006 had been exhausted.

The Commission verifies the correct implementation of European law by Member States through regular audits and will, if necessary, take appropriate actions.

([1]) OJ L 58, 28.2.2006.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-010620/13
till kommissionen
Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (PPE)
(18 september 2013)

Angående: Avskaffande av prövning av det ekonomiska behovet och hinder för fri etablering

I dessa tider då vi inte kan spendera oss ut ur krisen är ett möjliggörande av fri rörlighet för varor och tjänster ett av de bästa sätten att få till stånd tillväxt och sysselsättning utan att spendera skattebetalarnas pengar. Enligt direktiv 2006/123/EG om tjänster på den inre marknaden (tjänstedirektivet) är medlemsstaterna skyldiga att avskaffa omotiverade begränsningar av marknadstillträdet, och denna skyldighet innebär även ett avskaffande av prövning av det ekonomiska behovet.

I rapporten *Den inre marknadens integration 2013*, som ingick i den årliga tillväxtöversikten 2013, fastslår kommissionen att sådana krav (prövning av det ekonomiska behovet) är förbjudna enligt tjänstedirektivet, men att de ändå finns kvar i Rumänien, Österrike, Grekland, Nederländerna, Ungern och i vissa regioner i Tyskland och Spanien.

Dessutom har man i vissa delar av Europa infört särskilda skatter som diskriminerar mot vissa branscher och företagsmodeller, och därmed skapat hinder för den fria etableringen och snedvrider konkurrensen.

Många hinder beror på att tjänstedirektivet inte har integrerats på rätt sätt i annan EU-lagstiftning och nationell lagstiftning. Samtidigt bör man beakta att överträdelseförfaranden i samband med överträdelser av reglerna om den inre marknaden ofta är långdragna.

EU får inte missa några tillfällen att skapa sysselsättning. Hur avser kommissionen att, i dialog med medlemsstaterna, säkerställa att fullt ansvar tas för att man till fullo och på ett korrekt och konsekvent sätt övervakar att reglerna om den inre marknaden följs? Hur kommer nolltoleranspolitiken att tillämpas i praktiken? Tror kommissionen att påskyndade förfaranden kommer att införas som kan snabba upp behandlingen av överträdelseförfaranden?

Svar från Michel Barnier på kommissionens vägnar
(11 november 2013)

Enligt kommissionens meddelande av den 8 juni 2012 om genomförandet av tjänstedirektivet ([1]), kommer kommissionen att tillämpa nolltolerans i fall där de otvetydiga skyldigheterna inte uppfylls och kommer när så krävs att tillämpa nolltolerans genom överträdelseförfaranden.

Förbudet mot en prövning av det ekonomiska behovet, som anges i artikel 14.5 i direktiv 2006/123/EG om tjänster på den inre marknaden (tjänstedirektivet), är en av de otvetydiga skyldigheter som medlemsstaterna måste uppfylla.

Efter en genomgripande undersökning om genomförandet av tjänstedirektivet, som täckte alla medlemsstater, har kommissionen på eget initiativ inlett nästan 40 undersökningar i syfte att kartlägga alla eventuella överträdelser av otvetydiga skyldigheter som anges i tjänstedirektivet. Kommissionen håller också på att göra undersökningar till följd av klagomål där en del av dessa gäller prövning av det ekonomiska behovet.

Att bevaka överträdelser av dessa skyldigheter är en prioriterad fråga för kommissionen. På mindre än ett år har alla ärenden på eget initiativ behandlats. Till följd av det har man i 31 fall (13 av dem har lösts) kunnat inleda en strukturerad dialog med den berörda medlemsstaten och inlett två formella överträdelseförfaranden. Kommissionen har för avsikt att hantera dessa överträdelseförfaranden i linje med de åtaganden som gjordes i meddelandet om styrning och tjänster i juni 2012.

([1]) Meddelande om genomförandet av tjänstedirektivet: Ett partnerskap för ny tillväxt i tjänstesektorn 2012–2015, KOM(2012) 261.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010620/13
to the Commission
Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (PPE)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Removing economic needs tests and barriers to free establishment

At a time when we cannot spend our way out of the crisis, enabling the free movement of goods and services is one of the best ways to generate growth and jobs without spending taxpayers' money. Under Directive 2006/123/EC on services in the internal market (the services directive), Member States are obliged to remove unjustified restrictions to market access, including eliminating economic needs tests.

However, in the report entitled 'State of the single market integration 2013', as part of the Annual Growth Survey 2013, the Commission states that 'such requirements [economic needs tests] are prohibited under the services directive but are nevertheless still in place in Romania, Austria, Greece, the Netherlands, Hungary and in certain regions of Germany and Spain'.

Furthermore, in some parts of the EU, special taxes have been put in place which discriminate against certain sectors or business models, thereby creating obstacles to free establishment and distorting competition.

Many barriers stem from the poor integration of the services directive with other EU and national legislation. At the same time, infringement cases for breaches of internal market rules often take a long time.

The EU cannot afford to miss any opportunity to create jobs. With this in mind, how does the Commission intend, in dialogue with the Member States, to ensure that full responsibility is taken to enforce in a comprehensive, correct and coherent manner existing internal market rules? How will the zero-tolerance policy be applied in practice? Does the Commission foresee the establishment of fast-track procedures that would speed up the processing of infringement cases?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(11 November 2013)

As stated in the Commission's Communication of 8 June 2012 on the implementation of the Services Directive ([1]), 'The Commission will apply a "zero tolerance" policy in cases of non-compliance with the unequivocal obligations' and 'will apply its zero tolerance policy through infringement procedures, where necessary'.

The prohibition of an 'economic needs test', laid down in Article 14(5) of Directive 2006/123/EC on services in the internal market ('the Services Directive'), is one of the unequivocal obligations by which Member States must abide.

Following a horizontal study on the implementation of the Services Directive that covered all of the Member States, the Commission has launched, on its own initiative, nearly 40 investigations in order to identify any possible violations of the unequivocal obligations set out in the Services Directive. Furthermore, the Commission is also conducting investigations triggered by complaints, some of which concern the economic needs test.

The Commission pursues cases infringing these obligations as a matter of priority. In less than one year, all the own-initiative cases have been treated. As a result, 31cases (13 of which have been solved) have led to the opening of a structured dialogue with the Member State concerned and 2 formal infringement procedures have been initiated. The Commission intends to deal with these infringement cases in line with the commitments made in its Governance and Services Communications of June 2012.

([1]) Communication on the implementation of the Services Directive. A partnership for new growth in services 2012-2015, COM 2012(261).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010621/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Child Labour in Tanzania

On 28 August 2013, a number of news agencies publicised the findings of a Human Rights Watch report concerning child labour in Tanzania. The report alleges that thousands of children, some as young as eight years of age, are working in Tanzanian gold mines, whilst also mentioning the inherently dangerous working conditions. A number of hazards are identified in the report, the most serious of which include the risk of mercury poisoning, unstable working conditions in underground mining pits liable to collapse, and the prevalence of long shifts lasting up to 24 hours.

The levels of poverty existing in Tanzania mean that there is an economic imperative for young children, in particular orphans, to seek work. Whilst these obligations are very real, the long-term consequences for the future of these children can be serious. Girls often face sexual harassment and are at risk of contracting diseases such as HIV. Exposure to mercury, not uncommon as part of the mining process, is also a serious problem, causing life-long disabilities for those exposed.

In January 2013, the Tanzanian Government helped to draw up the Minamata Convention on Mercury, which is supported by 140 countries. Nevertheless, Healthcare Research Worldwide states that Tanzania must do more in order to implement the provisions of the convention by monitoring the issue of child labour.

1. What policies has the EU recently adopted in order to monitor the issue of child labour in the gold mining industry across Africa?

2. Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to talk with Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete about his government's commitment to the Minamata Convention?

3. Are EU officials in Tanzania, and in the wider region, taking steps to prevent children being drawn into the gold mining industry? If so, what steps are being taken?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(6 November 2013)

The EU welcomes the signature of the Minamata Convention by Tanzania and will use all upcoming high level discussions to address issues of implementation. The next political dialogue under the Cotonou Agreement between the EU and Tanzania, with the participation of President Kikwete, will be among these. The EU Heads of Mission have also recently made a field trip to mining areas in North Tanzania where the matter was raised with senior authorities and other stakeholders.

Concerning the Commission's action against child labour in Tanzania in particular, the Honourable Members are also referred to the answer to previous Written Question E-010100/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html#sidesForm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010622/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(18 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Instabilità nella Repubblica centrafricana

In seguito alla rimozione dell'ex Presidente Francois Bozize per mano del gruppo di ribelli Seleka, vi è il timore che la Repubblica centrafricana rischi di diventare uno Stato fallito. Il gruppo di ribelli ha preso il controllo della capitale Bangui e molti abitanti del paese denunciano la mancanza di uno Stato di diritto o di sicurezza. Secondo il giornale britannico *The Economist*, molti funzionari statali se ne sono anche andati in quanto non pagati per mesi. Nel frattempo, il gruppo Seleka si sta adoperando per reclutare più persone nelle sue fila e la consistenza del gruppo è lievitata da 2 000 a 20 000 persone nel solo mese di marzo.

Il Presidente Bozize avrebbe dovuto ricevere la protezione della missione di consolidamento della pace nella Repubblica centrafricana, che comprende soldati provenienti da Stati che formano la Comunità economica degli Stati dell'Africa centrale. Tuttavia, stando a quanto affermato dagli osservatori, ciò si è rivelato inefficace. Il paese è attualmente guidato dal leader di Seleka, Michel Djotodia, il quale ha affermato che entro diciotto mesi verranno indette le elezioni. Molti ritengono tuttavia che ciò non sia probabile dal momento che i ribelli hanno distrutto i registri elettorali. M. Djotodia è il primo leader musulmano della Repubblica centrafricana; la maggior parte delle reclute di Seleka proviene dal nord musulmano e sussistono timori secondo cui potrebbero aggravarsi i contrasti etnici e religiosi in tutto il paese. Il Presidente francese, François Hollande, ha affermato che il paese si trova a rischio di «somalizzazione» e ha invitato le Nazioni Unite e l'Unione africana a elaborare un piano di soccorso. Secondo l'articolo pubblicato da The Economist, il timore di instabilità nella Repubblica centrafricana potrebbe estendersi agli Stati circostanti e far sì che il paese diventi un rifugio sicuro per i militanti islamici.

1. Qual è la posizione del Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante in merito al deteriorarsi della situazione nella Repubblica centrafricana? Ritiene che i timori espressi dai leader quali il Presidente François Hollande abbiano fondamento?

2. Quali sono le misure che l'UE sta attualmente adottando al fine di affrontare la crescente crisi umanitaria nel paese?

3. Ritengono i funzionari dell'UE che la Repubblica centrafricana possa diventare un punto nodale della militanza islamica?

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

L'Unione europea è estremamente preoccupata per il deterioramento della situazione nella Repubblica centrafricana. L'intera popolazione è vittima del collasso totale dell'ordine pubblico che sta provocando una crisi umanitaria e causando diffuse violazioni dei diritti umani.

In numerose dichiarazioni l'AR/VP ha condannato la presa di potere incostituzionale da parte dei gruppi ribelli SELEKA e ha ribadito che i responsabili di violazioni dei diritti umani devono essere chiamati a risponderne.

Dato il vuoto di sicurezza causato dal totale collasso delle istituzioni statali, la presenza di combattenti stranieri nonché l'ubicazione geografica della Repubblica centrafricana al centro di numerosi paesi in cui sussistono elevate probabilità di conflitti, esiste un rischio grave di diffusione della crisi in tutta la regione. È di fondamentale importanza che la comunità internazionale agisca rapidamente. L'AR/VP elogia pertanto l'adozione della risoluzione del Consiglio di sicurezza dell'ONU 2121 (10 ottobre) che sottolinea la necessità di ripristinare la sicurezza, fornendo sostegno all'operazione MISCA guidata dall'Unione africana, preparando nel contempo, come eventuale passo successivo, la strada per trasformarla in un'operazione di mantenimento della pace delle Nazioni Unite.

In risposta alla crisi la Commissione ha aumentato a 20 milioni di EUR il suo aiuto umanitario destinato alla Repubblica centrafricana per l'anno in corso, dando la priorità alla protezione, all'accesso all'assistenza sanitaria, all'approvvigionamento alimentare e di acqua potabile, agli impianti igienico-sanitari, alla logistica e al coordinamento umanitario. La Commissaria Georgieva ha visitato il paese due volte nell'arco di tre mesi, l'11-12 luglio e il 13 ottobre — la seconda volta con il Ministro degli Affari esteri francese L. Fabius — ed ha inoltre collaborato all'organizzazione di una riunione ministeriale di alto livello relativa alla Repubblica centrafricana, congiuntamente con il Ministro Fabius e il Sottosegretario per gli affari umanitari delle Nazioni Unite V. Amos durante la settimana dell'assemblea generale dell'ONU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010622/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Instability in the Central African Republic

Following the ousting of former President Francois Bozize by the rebel group Seleka, there have been fears that the Central African Republic (CAR) is at risk of becoming a failed state. The rebel group has seized control of the capital Bangui, and many of the country's inhabitants say that there is no rule of law or security. According to UK newspaper *The Economist*, many civil servants have also fled as they have not been paid in months. In the meantime, Seleka is working to recruit more into its ranks, and its numbers have swelled from 2 000 to 20 000 since March alone.

President Bozize was supposed to have been protected by the Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic, which comprises troops from the states making up the Economic Community of Central African States. Observers claim, however, that they have proved ineffective. The country is now being run by Seleka's leader, Michel Djotodia, who has said that elections will be held within 18 months. Many believe that this is unlikely, however, as the rebels have destroyed electoral registration records. Mr Djotodia is the first Muslim leader of the CAR; most of Seleka's recruits come from the Muslim north and there are fears that ethnic and religious divides could deepen throughout the country. French President François Hollande has said that the country is at risk of 'Somalisation' and has asked the United Nations and the African Union to come up with a rescue plan. The article in The Economist states that the fear of instability in the CAR could spread to surrounding countries and lead to the country becoming a safe haven for Islamist militants.

1. What is the position of the Vice-President/High Representative regarding the deteriorating situation inside the CAR? Does she think that there is any substance to the fears voiced by leaders such as President François Hollande?

2. What steps is the EU currently taking to tackle the growing humanitarian crisis in the country?

3. Do EU officials believe that there is potential for the CAR to become a hub of Islamist militancy?

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

The EU remains strongly concerned about the deteriorating situation in the Central African Republic (CAR). The whole population is affected by the complete breakdown of law and order, causing an ongoing humanitarian crisis and leading to widespread human rights violations.

In several statements the HR/VP condemned the unconstitutional seizure of power by SELEKA rebel groups and reiterated that those responsible for human rights violations should be held accountable.

Given the security vacuum caused by the complete collapse of state institutions, the presence of foreign fighters as well as the CAR's geographic location at the crossroads of several conflict-prone countries, there is a serious risk of the crisis spreading across the region. It is essential for the international community to act swiftly. The HR/VP thus commends on the adoption of the UN Security Council Resolution 2121 (10 Oct.), highlighting the need to restore security, providing support for the African Union-led MISCA operation while, as a possible next step, paving the way for stepping it up into an UN peacekeeping operation.

In response to this crisis, the Commission has increased its humanitarian aid for CAR to EUR 20 million this year, focusing on protection, access to healthcare, food and drinking-water, sanitation, logistics and humanitarian coordination.. Commissioner Georgieva has been visiting CAR on 11-12 July and on 13 October — the second time together with the French FM L. Fabius — her second visit in three months. She has also co-organised a high-level ministerial meeting on CAR, jointly with Minister Fabius, and the UN Under-Secretary General for humanitarian affairs V. Amos during the UN General Assembly Week.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010623/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(18 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Asesinato de senderistas extranjeros en Pakistán

La región pakistaní de Gilgit-Baltistán tiene la novena montaña más alta del mundo y es, por ello, uno de los destinos favoritos de los practicantes del senderismo a escala internacional. El mes pasado, unos talibanes causaron la muerte por disparos a tres agentes de seguridad que estaban investigando la muerte de un senderista extranjero en la región. Los talibanes han reivindicado también la responsabilidad por el asesinato, el 23 de junio de 2013, de otros diez senderistas y de su guía pakistaní en un campamento base de Nanga Parbat.

Aunque el Servicio Europeo de Acción Exterior (SEAE) no es competente para publicar alertas de viaje, ¿está informando a los Estados miembros de la tensa situación reinante y del riesgo para los turistas europeos que tengan previsto viajar a esta zona?

¿Está el SEAE ayudando al Gobierno pakistaní a localizar a los autores de estos crímenes y a ponerlos en manos de la Justicia?

Respuesta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(29 de noviembre de 2013)

La Delegación de la UE en Islamabad apoya la coordinación entre las misiones de los Estados miembros sobre cuestiones relacionadas con el asesoramiento a los ciudadanos de la UE, y se anima a los distintos Estados miembros a difundir los cambios en sus recomendaciones de viaje. No obstante, siguen siendo los ministerios de asuntos exteriores de los Estados miembros los únicos autorizados a emitir alertas de viaje para sus ciudadanos.

Mediante una gestión diplomática, la UE pidió al Gobierno de Pakistán que aclarara las circunstancias del incidente y facilitara información relacionada con las conclusiones de la investigación. La UE también expresó su preocupación sobre la seguridad y la protección de los extranjeros en Pakistán y conversó sobre las medidas que tiene previsto adoptar el Gobierno. Si bien corresponde a las autoridades pakistaníes perseguir a los autores y llevarlos ante la justicia, la Delegación de la UE mantiene contactos con el Gobierno de Pakistán sobre esta cuestión y está dispuesta a colaborar de todas las formas posibles.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010623/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Killing of foreign trekker in Pakistan

The Gilgit-Baltistan region of Pakistan is home to the ninth highest peak in the world and is therefore a favourite among international trekkers. Last month Taliban militants shot dead three security officials who were investigating the recent killing of a foreign trekker in the region. Militants have also claimed responsibility for the killing of 10 foreign trekkers and their Pakistani guide at a base camp of Nanga Parbat on 23 June 2013.

Whilst the European External Action Service (EEAS) does not have the power to issue travel alerts, is it advising Member States of the current tensions and risks to European travellers who are considering travelling to the region?

Is the EEAS helping the Pakistani Government to find the perpetrators and bring them to justice?

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

The EU Delegation in Islamabad supports the coordination among Member States' missions on issues relating to advice to EU citizens and individual Member States are encouraged to share changes to travel advice. Nonetheless it remains the sole authority of the respective Member States' MFA's to issue travel alerts to their citizens.

In a demarche, the EU asked the Pakistani Government to clarify the circumstances of the incident and to provide information related to the findings of the investigation. The EU also conveyed its concerns regarding the safety and security of foreigners in Pakistan and discussed intended measures to be taken by the Government. While it is for the appropriate Pakistani authorities to pursue the perpetrators and bring them to justice, the EU Delegation maintains contact with the Government of Pakistan on this issue and is ready to help in any way possible.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010624/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 septembre 2013)

Objet: Orphacol: responsabilités européennes

Cette question fait suite à une autre question posée début juillet E-008578/2013 sur le dossier Orphacol.

Pour rappel, la Commission s'était fait désavouer par la justice européenne qui a annulé sa décision refusant de mettre sur le marché un médicament orphelin, l'Orphacol, destiné à traiter une maladie rare et mortelle du foie. La fin d'un cauchemar bureaucratique pour CTRS, le petit laboratoire français qui commercialise ce produit dans l'Hexagone, la Commission s'étant acharnée pendant presque 4 ans, en s'appuyant sur des arguties juridiques balayées par le Tribunal de l'Union européenne, pour avoir la peau de l'Orphacol. Sans doute pour complaire à un laboratoire américain — Asklepion Pharmaceuticals —, qui voulait s'emparer du marché. Une première, la Commission s'étant toujours contentée, faute d'expertise scientifique propre, de valider les avis de l'Agence européenne du médicament (AEM) basée à Londres. Le Tribunal de Luxembourg, saisi par CTRS, appuyé par la France, la Grande-Bretagne, l'Autriche, le Danemark et la République tchèque, réduit en lambeaux tous les arguments de la Commission.

Il n'est pas contesté qu'il n'existe aucun médicament mis sur le marché susceptible de soigner les affections hépatiques en cause, susceptible d'entraîner rapidement le décès de la personne affectée.

Comment lors de la parution de l'article de Libération, Frédéric Vincent, le porte-parole du commissaire chargé de la santé, a-t-il osé arguer de manière totalement fallacieuse qu'il existait bien un traitement alternatif, «la greffe du foie»?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(31 octobre 2013)

La Commission accorde un rôle important à l'autorisation des médicaments dans l'Union européenne. Elle ne suit pas aveuglément les avis de l'Agence européenne du médicament (AEM) et, ces trois dernières années, ses services lui ont demandé de préciser certains aspects de ses avis sur les autorisations de mise sur le marché dans plus de 50 cas.

L'utilisation de moyens autres que l'acide cholique (ou la transplantation de foie) pour le traitement des affections hépatiques en cause est mentionnée dans la littérature soumise dans le cadre de l'autorisation de mise sur le marché d'Orphacol, comme l'explique le rapport d'évaluation du comité des médicaments à usage humain de l'Agence européenne du médicament.

À la suite de l'arrêt du Tribunal dans l'affaire T-301/12, la Commission a adopté une décision accordant l'autorisation de mise sur le marché d'Orphacol le 16 septembre 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010624/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: European responsibility with regard to Orphacol

This question follows another question submitted at the beginning of July regarding the Orphacol issue (E-008578/2013).

By way of a reminder, the Commission was ordered by the European Court of Justice (ECJ) to reverse its refusal to authorise Orphacol, an orphan drug used to treat a rare fatal liver condition. This marks the end of a bureaucratic nightmare for CTRS, a small French laboratory that markets Orphacol in France and which the Commission has victimised for four years on the basis of flimsy legal arguments that the ECJ has now comprehensively refuted. This campaign was probably carried out at the behest of an American laboratory, Asklepion Pharmaceuticals, that wished to take over the market. This is a first; up until now the Commission, which has no scientific expertise of its own, has always blindly followed the opinion of the European Medicines Agency in London. The ECJ, seized by CTRS with the support of France, the UK, Austria, Denmark and the Czech Republic, has shown that, legally, the Commission did not have a leg to stand on.

The fact that there is no other drug on the market that can treat the potentially rapidly fatal liver conditions in question is not in doubt.

Why then was Frédéric Vincent, the Commission's spokesman for health and consumer affairs, quoted in the *Libération* newspaper making the ludicrous claim that there was indeed an alternative course of treatment, namely a liver transplant?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(31 October 2013)

The Commission has been given an important role in the authorisation of medicines in the European Union. The Commission does not follow blindly the opinions of the European Medicines Agency and over the past three years the Commission services have requested the Agency to clarify certain aspects of its opinions on marketing authorisations in over 50 cases.

The use of treatments other than cholic acid (or liver transplant) for the treatment of the relevant conditions is referred in the literature data submitted as part of the marketing authorisation for Orphacol, as it is explained in the assessment report of the Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use of the European Medicines Agency ('CHMP').

Following the ruling of the General Court in case T-301/12, the Commission adopted a decision granting the marketing authorisation for Orphacol on 16 September 2013.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010625/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 septembre 2013)

Objet: Révision de la directive sur une plus grande équité salariale entre hommes et femmes

Cette question fait suite à une autre question posée début juillet sur l'inégalité salariale hommes-femmes (E-007129/2013).

Nous vous remercions pour votre réponse mais certains éléments paraissent encore obscurs.

1. La Commission est-elle en faveur de nouvelles mesures pour sanctionner les écarts de rémunération et les réduire de manière efficace?

2. Entend-elle réviser la législation en vigueur à ce sujet, à savoir la directive en objet, comme l'a demandé le Parlement dans sa résolution du 13 mars 2012?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(12 novembre 2013)

La mise en œuvre effective du principe de l'égalité des rémunérations entre les hommes et les femmes est l'une des priorités établies par la Commission dans sa stratégie pour l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes 2010-2015 ([1]).

Le principe de l'égalité des rémunérations est inscrit dans les traités et a été incorporé dans la directive 2006/54/CE ([2]). Les États membres de l'UE sont déjà tenus d'appliquer des sanctions efficaces, proportionnées et dissuasives dans les cas de violation des dispositions nationales transposant les obligations découlant de la directive 2006/54/CE, y compris celle de respecter le principe d'égalité des rémunérations.

Pour le moment, la Commission ne voit pas la nécessité de réviser la directive 2006/54/CE. Au lieu de cela, la priorité de la Commission dans ce domaine est de contrôler l'application correcte et la mise en œuvre du cadre juridique en vigueur sur l'égalité des rémunérations au niveau national. Il s'agit notamment de déterminer si les États membres appliquent les sanctions appropriées imposées par la directive. Il est prévu d'adopter plus tard cette année le rapport sur l'application de la directive 2006/54/CE, qui évalue la mise en œuvre des dispositions en matière d'égalité des rémunérations.

([1]) COM(2010) 491 final.
([2]) Directive 2006/54/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 5 juillet 2006 relative à la mise en œuvre du principe de l'égalité des chances et de l'égalité de traitement entre hommes et femmes en matière d'emploi et de travail (refonte) (JO L 204 du 26.7.2006, p. 23).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010625/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Revision of the directive on greater pay equality between men and women

This question follows another question submitted at the beginning of July on pay inequality between men and women (E-007129/2013).

While we are grateful for your answer, certain points still seem unclear.

1. Does the Commission support new measures to penalise pay gaps and effectively reduce them?

2. Will it revise the current legislation on this subject, namely the abovementioned Directive, as Parliament called for in its resolution of 13 March 2012?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(12 November 2013)

The effective implementation of the principle of equal pay for men and women is one of the Commission's priorities in its Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015 ([1]).

The equal pay principle has been enshrined in the Treaties and is also incorporated in Directive 2006/54/EC ([2]). The EU Member States are already obliged to apply effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions in cases of infringements of the national provisions transposing the obligations of Directive 2006/54/EC, including the equal pay principle.

For the time being, the Commission does not see a need to revise Directive 2006/54/EC. Instead, the Commission's priority in this area is to monitor the correct application and enforcement of the existing legal framework on equal pay at the national level. This includes the question whether Member States are applying the appropriate sanctions as required by the directive. The report on the application of Directive 2006/54/EC, assessing the implementation of the equal pay provisions, is envisaged for adoption later this year.

([1]) COM(2010) 491 final.
([2]) Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of 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); OJ L 204, 26.7.2006, p. 23-36.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010626/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 septembre 2013)

Objet: Avenir européen de la Catalogne

Depuis un an, le gouvernement catalan, mené par le nationaliste Artur Mas, mène une campagne féroce pour défendre l'indépendance. Ses discours, enflammés, sur la richesse de la Catalogne et les brimades du gouvernement central, ses calculs, sujets à controverse, selon lesquels Madrid s'approprierait 8 % du PIB catalan chaque année, soit 16 milliards d'euros, et ses slogans polémiques, voire populistes, comme celui, utilisé récemment par sa coalition CiU, qui affirme que «l'Espagne subventionnée vit aux crochets de la Catalogne productiviste», ont contribué à la montée du mouvement indépendantiste. Une négociation, c'est ce que propose le président du gouvernement espagnol Mariano Rajoy à Artur Mas dans une lettre rendue publique ce week-end. Le chef de l'exécutif ignore sa demande, formulée en juillet, d'organiser un référendum d'autodétermination en 2014. Mais il s'engage à «dialoguer», à condition que ce soit «dans le cadre de la loyauté institutionnelle» et «le cadre juridique qui protège et unit tout un chacun», afin « d'offrir la meilleure réponse aux besoins réels de tous les citoyens». En fait, le dialogue et les négociations ont déjà commencé, en secret: M. Rajoy et M. Mas se sont rencontrés fin août en privé. Reste à savoir ce que l'un comme l'autre sont disposés à céder. Le parti populaire (PP, conservateur, au pouvoir), qui s'appuie sur la constitution espagnole, n'autorisera pas une consultation populaire sur le thème de l'indépendance en Catalogne, mais la région est sur le point de voter sa propre loi régionale qui lui permette d'esquiver l'interdiction madrilène. Le gouvernement central, qui doit revoir le système de financement des autonomies l'an prochain pourrait offrir une amélioration substantielle du traitement économique réservé à la Catalogne pour éviter qu'elle ne se tienne.

1. Quelles seraient les conséquences pour la Catalogne d'une déclaration d'indépendance au niveau européen?

2. Quelle est la position de la Commission sur la tenue de ce référendum?

Réponse donnée par M. Barroso au nom de la Commission
(18 novembre 2013)

Il n'appartient pas à la Commission de s'exprimer sur des questions d'organisation interne en rapport avec les dispositions constitutionnelles d'un État membre donné.

Un scénario tel que la sécession d'une partie d'un État membre ou la création d'un nouvel État ne serait pas neutre au regard des traités de l'UE. La Commission donnerait son avis sur les conséquences juridiques en vertu du droit de l'Union si un État membre, exposant un scénario précis, le lui demandait.

L'UE repose sur les traités qui ne s'appliquent qu'aux États membres qui les ont adoptés et ratifiés. Les traités ne s'appliqueraient plus à une partie du territoire d'un État membre qui ferait sécession par rapport à cet État à la suite de son indépendance. En d'autres termes, un nouvel État indépendant deviendrait, du fait de son indépendance, un pays tiers vis-à-vis de l'UE et les traités ne seraient plus applicables sur son territoire.

En vertu de l'article 49 du traité sur l'Union européenne, tout État européen qui respecte les valeurs visées à l'article 2 du traité sur l'Union européenne peut demander à devenir membre de l'Union. Si cette demande est acceptée par le Conseil, statuant à l'unanimité, un accord est alors négocié entre l'État candidat et les États membres sur les conditions d'adhésion et les mises en conformité avec les traités que cette adhésion induit. Un accord est soumis à ratification par tous les États membres et l'État candidat.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010626/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: The future of Catalonia in the European Union

Over the last year, the Catalan Government, led by nationalist Artur Mas, has been vigorously campaigning to promote independence. Its inflamed rhetoric on Catalonia's wealth and the bullying from central government, its contentious calculations, according to which Madrid allegedly claims 8%, or EUR 16 billion, of Catalonia's GDP per year, and its controversial or even populist slogans, such as the one recently used by the Centre-Right Catalan Nationalist Coalition (CiU), stating that 'subsidised Spain is living off production-driven Catalonia', have contributed to the rise of the independence movement. In a letter made public last weekend, the Spanish Prime Minister, Mariano Rajoy, proposed a negotiation to Artur Mas, ignoring the call made by Mr Mas in July for a self-determination referendum to be held in 2014. However, Mr Rajoy did affirm his commitment to 'dialogue', provided that this take place 'within the framework of institutional loyalty' and 'the legal framework which protects and unites everyone', in order to 'provide the best response to the real needs of all citizens'. In fact, dialogue and negotiations have already commenced in secret, with Mr Rajoy and Mr Mas meeting in private at the end of August. It remains to be seen what each of them is prepared to concede. The ruling conservative People's Party (PP), acting in accordance with the Spanish Constitution, will not allow a public consultation on the topic of independence in Catalonia; however, the region is on the verge of passing its own regional law which will enable it to circumvent the ban by Madrid. Spain's central government, which is due to review its system of funding for autonomous regions next year, could propose a significant improvement in the economic treatment of Catalonia in order to prevent this consultation from taking place.

1. What consequences would there be for Catalonia at EU level if it were to declare independence?

2. What is the Commission's position on the holding of such a referendum?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(18 November 2013)

It is not the Commission's role to express a position on questions of internal organisation related to the constitutional arrangements of a particular Member State.

Scenarios such as the separation of one part of a Member State or the creation of a new state would not be neutral as regards the EU Treaties. The Commission would express its opinion on the legal consequences under EC law upon request from a Member State detailing a precise scenario.

The EU is founded on the Treaties which apply only to the Member States who have agreed and ratified them. If part of the territory of a Member State would cease to be part of that state because it would become a new independent state, the Treaties would no longer apply to that territory. In other words, a new independent state would, by the fact of its independence, become a third country with respect to the EU and the Treaties would no longer apply on its territory.

Under Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union, any European state which respects the principles set out in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union may apply to become a member of the EU. If the application is accepted by the Council acting unanimously, an agreement is then negotiated between the applicant state and the Member States on the conditions of admission and the adjustments to the Treaties which such admission entails. This agreement is subject to ratification by all Member States and the applicant state.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010627/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 septembre 2013)

Objet: Porcherie industrielle et directive «Nitrates»

Le gouvernement français est sur le point d'autoriser un accroissement de capacité des porcheries industrielles de 450 à 2 000 places.

Ayant été en charge de la directive «Nitrates» pour le Parlement européen, je me pose la question suivante:

La Commission estime-t-elle ou non qu'il s'agit là d'un affaiblissement de la mise en œuvre de la directive «Nitrates» et de la lutte contre les algues vertes?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(31 octobre 2013)

La directive 91/676/CEE ([1]) concernant la protection des eaux contre la pollution par les nitrates à partir de sources agricoles a pour objectif de réduire la pollution des eaux provoquée par les nitrates à partir de sources agricoles et de prévenir toute nouvelle pollution de ce type. Pour atteindre ses objectifs, la directive impose aux États membres d'établir des programmes d'action, qui doivent inclure, entre autres mesures, des dispositions spécifiques relatives à l'entreposage et à la gestion du fumier.

La Commission estime qu'une intensification de la production animale doit tenir pleinement compte des risques que représentent ces activités pour les eaux. Le cas échéant, des mesures renforcées appropriées doivent être prises dans le cadre des programmes d'action afin de continuer à respecter les objectifs de la directive «Nitrates». Ces programmes d'action renforcée revêtent une importance capitale dans les régions dans lesquelles la qualité de l'eau est déjà dégradée du fait, par exemple de l'eutrophication.

En outre, l'élevage intensif de porcs (plus de 2 000 emplacements pour les porcs de production ou plus de 750 emplacements pour les truies) est soumis à la directive 2010/75/UE relatives aux émissions industrielles ([2]). Ces activités doivent être mises en œuvre conformément aux conditions fixées dans une autorisation, dont la délivrance est subordonnée à l'application des meilleures techniques disponibles (MTD), afin de prévenir ou, lorsque ce n'est pas réalisable, de réduire dans toute la mesure du possible, la pollution et les émissions dans l'environnement.

([1]) JO L 375 du 31.12.1991.
([2]) JO L 334 du 17.12.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010627/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Industrial pig farming and the Nitrates Directive

The French Government is about to authorise an increase in the capacity of industrial pig farms from 450 to 2 000 places.

Having been responsible for the Nitrates Directive for the European Parliament, I would like to ask the following question:

Does the Commission believe that this will have a negative impact on the implementation of the Nitrates Directive and the fight against green algae?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(31 October 2013)

Directive 91/676/EEC ([1]) concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources aims to reduce water pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources and to prevent further such pollution. To reach its objectives, the directive requires Member States to establish Action Programs, which should include, among other measures, specific provisions on manure storage and management.

The Commission considers that any intensification on livestock production should take full account of the risks these activities pose to waters. If necessary, appropriate reinforced measures in the Action Programs should be taken to ensure that they remain in line with the Nitrates Directive objectives. Reinforced Action Programs are crucial in areas where water quality is already degraded due, for instance, to eutrophication.

Moreover the intensive rearing of pigs (more than 2,000 places for production pigs or more than 750 places for sows) is subject to Directive 2010/75/EU on industrial emissions ([2]). These activities have to be operated in accordance with a permit requiring the application of the best available techniques (BAT) to prevent or, where that is not possible, to minimise pollution and emissions to the environment.

([1]) OJ L 375, 31.12.1991.
([2]) OJ L 334, 17.12.2010.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010628/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 septembre 2013)

Objet: Noms de domaine «.vin» et «.wine»

Aux côtés des traditionnels «.com» ou «.org», de nouvelles extensions comme «.paris», «.archi» ou «.bio» sont en train d'être attribuées par l'Icann, instance mondiale chargée de réglementer les noms de domaine sur internet. Mais certaines font l'objet d'un contentieux, comme «.vin» et «.wine».

Les seuls candidats à ces deux noms de domaine sont des sociétés étrangères n'ayant aucun lien avec le vin, et le secteur viticole français craint que ses précieuses appellations d'origine pâtissent de l'exploitation commerciale de ces extensions par des spéculateurs qui feraient fi de la législation européenne.

1. La Commission rejoint-elle notre avis selon lequel l'Europe ne peut accepter d'avoir sur internet les extensions ".vin" et ".wine" sans que les droits et les intérêts des indications géographiques et ceux des consommateurs ne soient suffisamment protégés?

2. Quel est le réel pouvoir de la Commission sur l'Icann?

3. Que compte faire la Commission pour permettre d'offrir une aire protégée pour les détenteurs d'indications géographiques et les consommateurs?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Kroes au nom de la Commission
(7 novembre 2013)

La Commission est parfaitement au courant du programme gTLD de l'ICANN et elle partage les préoccupations quant aux conséquences potentielles de l'attribution des noms de domaine «.wine» et «.vin» pour la protection des indications géographiques (IG) dans le secteur du vin. La Commission a insisté auprès de l'ICANN sur l'importance économique et politique de cette question pour l'UE.

Au sein du comité consultatif des gouvernements (GAC) de l'ICANN, la Commission défend l'idée selon laquelle des garde-fous doivent être mis en place afin de respecter la législation internationale et celle de l'Union sur les IG. En outre, la Commission a fait part au comité directeur de l'ICANN de son souci, et de la nécessité, de garantir une protection adéquate aux détenteurs de droits sur les IG et aux consommateurs.

La prise de décisions au sein de l'ICANN se faisant sur un mode plurilatéral, la Commission est également en contact étroit avec les organisations de détenteurs de droits de l'UE et leurs instances dirigeantes. La Commission suit attentivement l'évolution des négociations avec les candidats, afin de parvenir à une solution satisfaisante avant que l'ICANN ne puisse décider d'attribuer les deux extensions.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010628/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Domain names '.vin' and '.wine'

Alongside the traditional '.com' or '.org', the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (Icann), the global body responsible for regulating Internet domain names, is now assigning new extensions such as '.paris', '.archi' and '.bio'. However, some are the subject of a dispute, such as '.vin' and '.wine'.

The only candidates for these two domain names are foreign companies which have no association with wine, and the French winegrowing sector is concerned that its precious designations of origin will be affected by the commercial use of these extensions by speculators flying in the face of European legislation.

1. Does the Commission share our opinion that Europe can only accept the existence of the extensions '.vin' and '.wine' on the Internet if the rights and interests of geographical indications and those of consumers are sufficiently protected?

2. What real power does the Commission have over Icann?

3. What does the Commission intend to do in order to provide protection for holders of geographical indications and consumers?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(7 November 2013)

The Commission is fully aware of the ICANN gTLD programme and shares the concerns in relation to the potential implications of the two strings .wine and .vin on the protection of geographical indications (GI) in the wine sector. The Commission has stressed to ICANN the economic and political significance for the EU of the matter.

The Commission is defending the view in the GAC of ICANN that safeguards must be introduced in relation to EU and International legislation on GIs. In addition the Commission has shared with the ICANN Board its concerns and the need for sufficient protection for GI right holders and consumers.

The decisions in ICANN are taken through a multi stakeholder model, therefore the Commission is also in close contact with the EU right holders' organisations and governing bodies. The Commission is actively following the evolution of the negotiations with the applicants in order to reach a satisfactory solution, before ICANN can take the decision to delegate the two strings to the applicants.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010630/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 septembre 2013)

Objet: Châtiments corporels sur les enfants

Pour satisfaire aux exigences de la Charte sociale européenne et de la Charte sociale européenne révisée, d'après le Comité européen des droits sociaux, il convient pour les États membres d'interdire tous les châtiments corporels et toutes les autres formes de châtiment et de traitement dégradant à l'encontre des enfants.

1. La Commission peut-elle expliquer pourquoi cinq États membres ne satisfont toujours pas à leurs engagements car ils n'ont pas de fait interdit tous les châtiments corporels?

2. Que fait à cet égard la Commission pour changer ce triste constat?

3. Que met en place la Commission pour promouvoir l'interdiction et l'élimination des châtiments corporels à l'égard des enfants dans tous les contextes de vie?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(19 novembre 2013)

1. La Charte sociale européenne et la Charte sociale européenne révisée ne font pas en soi partie du droit de l'Union. Par conséquent, la Commission n'est pas compétente en ce qui concerne le respect des obligations qui incombent aux États membres en vertu de ces instruments.

2. Eu égard au fait que la Commission n'est pas compétente en la matière, il appartient aux États membres concernés de répondre aux questions portant spécifiquement sur une violation de la Charte sociale européenne.

3. Le programme de l'Union européenne en matière de droits de l'enfant ([1]) est centré sur une série d'actions dans des domaines dans lesquels l'Union peut apporter une valeur ajoutée, comme la justice adaptée aux enfants, la protection des enfants en situation de vulnérabilité et la lutte contre la violence à l'encontre des enfants, tant à l'intérieur de l'Union européenne qu'à l'extérieur. En outre, dans le cadre des programmes Daphné, la Commission a financé de nombreux projets visant à promouvoir la protection des enfants contre toute forme de violence qui se sont avérés fructueux. Toutefois, la portée de ces programmes se limite au soutien, entre autres, des activités de projets transnationaux et d'ONG portant sur l'étude de la violence, la sensibilisation, la facilitation de la mise en réseau et l'élaboration de programmes d'aide aux victimes. La protection active des enfants dans les États membres ainsi que tout programme de surveillance national se situent en dehors du champ d'application du programme Daphné III et des compétences de la Commission.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011DC0060:fr:NOT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010630/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Corporal punishment of children

According to the European Committee of Social Rights, in order to comply with the European Social Charter and the Revised European Social Charter, Member States must ban all forms of corporal punishment and any other forms of degrading punishment or treatment of children.

1. Can the Commission explain why five Member States still do not meet these requirements as they have not banned all forms of corporal punishment?

2. What is the Commission doing in this respect to change this sad state of affairs?

3. What is the Commission doing to promote the ban and to eliminate corporal punishment of children wherever they live?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(19 November 2013)

1. The European Social Charter and the Revised European Social Charter are as such not part of Union law. Therefore, the Commission has no competence regarding the compliance of Member States with their obligations under these instruments.

2. Considering the absence of competence of the Commission, it is for the Member States concerned to respond to specific questions relating to a violation of the European Social Charter.

3. The 'EU Agenda on the Rights of the Child' ([1]) focuses on a number of actions in areas where the EU can bring added value, such as child-friendly justice, protecting children in vulnerable situations and fighting violence against children both inside the European Union and externally. Moreover, with the Daphne Programmes the Commission has funded numerous successful projects aimed at promoting the protection of children from all forms of violence. However, the remit of these programmes is limited to supporting, *inter alia*, transnational projects and NGOs in studying violence, raising awareness, facilitating networking and developing support programmes for victims. The active protection of children in the Member States as well as any national monitoring programmes lie outside the scope of the Daphne III programme and the competences of the Commission.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011DC0060:en:NOT

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010631/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 septembre 2013)

Objet: Résultat de l'enquête de la Commission européenne sur Google

La Commission enquête depuis trois ans sur les pratiques de Google, après une plainte de Microsoft, TripAdvisor et d'autres concurrents de la firme de Mountain View.

Pour s'assurer de préserver la concurrence, la Commission va-t-elle enfin choisir entre rendre les engagements proposés par Google légalement contraignants et «une possible décision négative», à savoir une lourde amende infligée au moteur de recherche?

Quelle est la motivation de cette décision?

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission
(22 novembre 2013)

Dans une évaluation préliminaire rendue publique en mars 2013, la Commission a fait part à Google de ses préoccupations et, le 3 avril 2013, l'entreprise a présenté des engagements détaillés visant à dissiper les quatre problèmes évoqués. À la suite de la consultation des acteurs du marché lancée le 26 avril 2013, la Commission a informé Google que ses engagements devaient être améliorés afin d'apporter une réponse adéquate aux préoccupations de la Commission. Google a aujourd'hui proposé des améliorations à ses engagements. La Commission demandera prochainement l'avis des plaignants et d'autres acteurs du marché concernés sur cette nouvelle version des engagements. Elle décidera ensuite, à la lumière de leurs réactions, si les engagements proposés par Google apportent une réponse satisfaisante à ses préoccupations en matière de concurrence et, partant, s'ils doivent être rendus obligatoires en vertu de l'article 9 du règlement (CE) n° 1/2003.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010631/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Outcome of the Commission's investigation into Google

The Commission has been investigating Google's practices for three years, following a complaint lodged by Microsoft, TripAdvisor and other competitors of the Mountain View-based company.

To ensure that competition is preserved, is the Commission finally going to choose between making Google's proposed commitments legally binding and 'a possible negative decision', namely imposing a heavy fine on the search engine?

What are the grounds for this decision?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(22 November 2013)

The Commission outlined its concerns to Google in a Preliminary Assessment in March 2013 and Google proposed a detailed text of commitments to address the four concerns on 3 April 2013. Following a market test of these commitments launched on 26 April 2013, the Commission informed Google that improvements to its commitments were required to adequately address the Commission's concerns. Google has now offered improvements to its commitments. The Commission will soon seek feedback on Google's improved commitments from complainants and other relevant market participants. The Commission will then decide in light of the market feedback if the commitments offered by Google adequately address the Commission's competition concerns and thus whether they should be made binding pursuant to Article 9 of Regulation 1/2003.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010632/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 septembre 2013)

Objet: Coupable d'optimisation fiscale

Le *Financial Times* a expliqué que les Pays Bas, l'Irlande et Luxembourg avaient des accords fiscaux qu'ils négocient au cas par cas pour attirer sur leur sol des multinationales. Quelle est la réaction de la Commission?

Va-t-elle dès lors diligenter une enquête formelle, s'il se confirmait que ces régimes constituent un traitement de faveur, voire un soutien public, en violation des règles européennes sur les aides d'État, comme cela a l'air d'être le cas?

Dans ce cadre, faute de législation interdisant de tels régimes, quels instruments peut utiliser la Commission? Contrôle de concurrence?

La démarche vise, entre autres, des sociétés comme Apple, Starbucks et Google (une fois encore), qui parviendraient à réduire comme peau de chagrin leur imposition sur l'Ancien Continent, tout en y réalisant par ailleurs de confortables bénéfices. La Commission compte-t-elle auditionner ces entreprises?

N'est-il pas évident que ces multinationales tentent d'éviter l'impôt partout dans le monde, y compris dans les pays en développement? Quelle est la réaction de la Commission?

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission
(18 novembre 2013)

La Commission n'a pas pour habitude de commenter pas les allégations de violation présumée des règles en matière d'aides d'État reprises dans la presse. En cas de violation de ces règles, elle dispose de procédures d'examen. À l'heure actuelle, aucune décision anticipée en matière fiscale (ruling fiscal) ne fait l'objet d'une procédure formelle d'examen.

Les États membres sont libres de déterminer leurs régimes fiscaux et de choisir la politique économique qu'ils jugent la plus adéquate, pour autant qu'ils exercent cette compétence dans le respect de la législation de l'Union ([1]). En particulier, les États membres ne doivent ni adopter ni maintenir une législation qui prévoie une aide d'État ou une discrimination contraires aux libertés fondamentales.

Les décisions anticipées prises par les administrations fiscales ne constituent pas en soi une aide d'État, sauf si elles octroient un avantage sélectif à certaines sociétés.

La procédure en matière d'aide d'État est une procédure bilatérale entre la Commission et l'État membre concerné. Bien que l'audition de sociétés ne soit pas prévue dans cette procédure, les parties intéressées sont toutefois invitées à formuler des observations.

Il existe déjà un certain nombre d'initiatives visant à lutter contre les stratégies de planification fiscale mises en œuvre par les multinationales afin de réduire leur charge fiscale globale ([2]). Par exemple, le code de conduite dans le domaine de la fiscalité des entreprises, adopté par le Conseil en décembre 1997, vise à lutter contre la concurrence fiscale dommageable et éviter ainsi des pertes trop importantes de recettes fiscales ([3]). En décembre 2012, la Commission a adopté un plan d'action pour renforcer la lutte contre la fraude et l'évasion fiscales ([4]) qui concerne également les pays tiers, dont les pays en développement. En ce qui concerne plus spécifiquement la taxation de l'économie numérique, le président Barroso a annoncé, lors du Conseil européen du 24 octobre 2013, la création d'un groupe d'experts externes qui aidera la Commission à identifier les options envisageables pour faire face à ces questions complexes.

([1]) Voir, notamment, l'arrêt du 17 septembre 2009 dans l'affaire C-182/08, Glaxo Wellcome (Recueil 2009, p. I-8591, point 34) et jurisprudence citée.

([2]) Le plan d'action de l'OCDE sur l'érosion de la base d'imposition et le transfert de bénéfices a, par exemple, été approuvé par les dirigeants du G-20 lors de leur réunion à Saint-Pétersbourg le 5 septembre dernier. Il prévoit un certain nombre d'actions visant à empêcher la double non-imposition ainsi que les cas d'impôt nul ou faible résultant de pratiques qui séparent artificiellement le bénéfice imposable des activités qui le génèrent.

([3]) Conclusions de la réunion du Conseil ECOFIN du 1er décembre 1997 en matière de politique fiscale, (JO C 2 du 6.1.1998 p. 1).

([4]) COM(2012) 722 final. Dans sa recommandation relative à la planification fiscale agressive [C(2012) 8806 final] qui accompagnait le plan d'action, la Commission a notamment recommandé de prendre des mesures de lutte contre la planification fiscale agressive. Ces mesures visent à 1) éviter la double non-imposition par l'inclusion d'une clause appropriée dans les conventions des États membres en matière de double imposition, et 2) invitent les États membres à adopter une règle anti-abus générale, adaptée aux situations nationales et transfrontières.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010632/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Guilty of tax optimisation

According to the *Financial Times*, the Netherlands, Ireland and Luxembourg have tax agreements which they negotiate on a case-by-case basis to attract multinationals to their shores. What does the Commission have to say about this?

Will the Commission therefore conduct a formal investigation if it is confirmed that these regimes constitute preferential treatment, or even official support, in breach of European rules on state aid, as seems to be the case?

In this context, in the absence of legislation prohibiting such regimes, what instruments can the Commission use? A competition test?

This action is aimed at companies including Apple, Starbucks and Google (once again), which manage to minimise their tax liabilities in Europe, while still making healthy profits. Does the Commission plan to hold hearings with these companies?

Is it not obvious that these multinationals are trying to avoid paying tax throughout the world, including in developing countries? What does the Commission have to say about this?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(18 November 2013)

The Commission generally does not comment on allegations on the infringement of state aid rules in the press. The Commission has procedures to investigate infringement of state aid rules. There is currently no formal investigation into any case of tax rulings.

Member States are free to design their tax systems and decide on the economic policy which they consider most appropriate, provided they exercise this competence consistently with Union law ([1]). In particular, Member States must not introduce or maintain legislation which entails state aid or discrimination that is contrary to the fundamental freedoms.

Tax rulings issued by tax administrations do not per se constitute state aid, unless they provide for a selective advantage to certain companies.

The state aid procedure is a bilateral procedure between the Commission and the Member State concerned. No hearings of individual companies are provided for in this procedure; interested parties are however invited to make comments.

A number of initiatives are already in place to fight tax planning strategies employed by multinationals to reduce their overall tax burden ([2]). For example, the Code of Conduct for business taxation, agreed by the Council in December 1997, aims to fight harmful tax competition thereby preventing excessive losses of tax revenue ([3]). In December 2012 the Commission adopted an Action Plan to strengthen the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion ([4]), also in relation to third countries including developing ones. More specifically as regards the taxation of the digital economy, President Barroso at the European Council on 24 October 2013 announced the establishment of a group of external experts that will assist the Commission in identifying options to address these complex issues.

([1]) See, *inter alia*, Case C-182/08 Glaxo Wellcome [2009] ECR I-8591, paragraph 34 and the case-law cited.

([2]) E.g. the OECD's Action Plan on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting was endorsed by G-20 Leaders during their meeting in St-Petersburg on 5 October. It includes a number of actions to prevent double non-taxation, as well as cases of no or low taxation associated with practices that artificially segregate taxable income from the activities that generate it.

([3]) Conclusions of the Ecofin Council meeting on 1 December 1997 concerning taxation policy (98/C 2/01).

([4]) COM(2012) 722 final. In its Recommendation on Aggressive Tax Planning, C(2012) 8806 final, that accompanied the action plan, the Commission recommended, among other things, to take action against aggressive tax planning which includes (1) prevention of double non-taxation by the inclusion of an appropriate clause in their double taxation conventions; and (2) invite Member States to introduce into their national legislation a general anti-abuse rule, adapted to domestic and cross-border situations.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010633/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 septembre 2013)

Objet: Neutralité de l'internet en péril

Soutenu par la commissaire européenne, un projet de règlement concernant les télécommunications a été adopté par la Commission européenne.

1. En prétendant protéger la neutralité d'internet en interdisant le blocage et le ralentissement des communications en ligne, ce texte ne vide-t-il pas ce principe de son sens en autorisant explicitement la discrimination commerciale par le biais de la «priorisation»?

2. La Commissaire comprend-elle que ce règlement va à l'encontre d'un internet vraiment libre?

3. La Commission accepte-t-elle, par respect pour les droits de l'internaute, que cette section du texte soit remplacée par des mesures garantissant l'application réelle et inconditionnelle de la neutralité de l'internet afin de défendre l'intérêt général?

Réponse donnée par M[me] Kroes au nom de la Commission
(31 octobre 2013)

La proposition ([1]) de la Commission garantit un internet vraiment libre et ouvert, étant donné qu'il est interdit aux opérateurs de bloquer, ralentir, détériorer ou pénaliser certains contenus, applications et services, ou certaines catégories de ceux-ci, sauf dans un nombre très limité de cas où il est permis d'exercer une gestion raisonnable du trafic, pour autant que ce soit de manière transparente, non discriminatoire et proportionnée.

La proposition n'autorise pas de «priorisation» du trafic internet. Elle autorise toutefois la différenciation des prix de détail pour l'accès à l'internet en fonction du volume de données et de la vitesse, ce qui est compatible avec la neutralité de l'internet car les opérateurs doivent respecter les règles de gestion du trafic prévues à l'article 23. La pratique consistant à lier les prix au volume est fréquente dans la plupart des secteurs et garantit que les consommateurs ayant une faible consommation ne financent pas les gros utilisateurs par des subventions croisées.

Pour stimuler l'innovation, la proposition permet aux fournisseurs de contenus et d'applications de conclure des accords sur des niveaux de qualité supérieurs pour la fourniture de services spécialisés (tels que la télévision par internet, les applications de santé en ligne, l'informatique en nuage essentielle aux entreprises) aux utilisateurs finals. La proposition précise que ces services spécialisés ne peuvent se substituer à l'internet. En outre, étant donné que les services spécialisés ne doivent pas compromettre la qualité générale de l'internet, ils nécessitent généralement des investissements supplémentaires dans les réseaux, qui devraient profiter à l'ensemble de l'écosystème en ligne, y compris l'internet ouvert.

La proposition prévoit que les autorités réglementaires nationales auront des obligations étendues de surveillance et leur confère le pouvoir d'imposer des exigences minimales de qualité de service afin d'éviter l'altération de la qualité générale de l'internet. Elle prévoit que la qualité de l'internet devrait évoluer avec le progrès technologique.

([1]) Proposition de règlement du Parlement européen et du Conseil établissant des mesures relatives au marché unique européen des communications électroniques et visant à faire de l'Europe un continent connecté, et modifiant les directives 2002/20/CE, 2002/21/CE et 2002/22/CE ainsi que les règlements (CE) n° 1211/2009 et (UE) n° 531/2012. COM(2013) 627 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010633/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Net neutrality at risk

With the Commissioner's support, a draft regulation on telecommunications has been adopted by the Commission.

1. Under the guise of protecting net neutrality by banning the blocking and slowing down of online communications, does this text not render this principle void of all meaning by explicitly authorising commercial discrimination through 'prioritisation'?

2. Does the Commissioner understand that this regulation runs counter to a truly free Internet?

3. Does the Commission accept that, in respect for the rights of Internet users, this section of the text should be replaced by measures ensuring the real and unconditional application of net neutrality in order to defend the general interest?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(31 October 2013)

The Commission's Proposal ([1]) guarantees a truly free and open Internet as operators are prohibited to block, slow down, degrade or discriminate against specific content, applications and services, or specific classes thereof, except in a very limited number of cases when reasonable traffic management can be applied, and this has to be transparent, non-discriminatory and proportionate.

The proposal does not authorise 'prioritisation' of Internet traffic. It does allow differentiation of retail tariffs for Internet access based on data volume and speed, which is compatible with net neutrality because operators have to comply with the traffic management rules set out in Article 23. Volume-linked prices are common in most industries and ensure that consumers with low consumption do not cross-subsidise heavy users.

In order to foster innovation, the proposal allows content and application providers to conclude agreements on enhanced quality which are necessary for the provision of specialised services (such as IPTV, eHealth applications, business-critical cloud computing) to end-users. The proposal makes clear that such specialised services cannot be a substitute for the Internet. In addition, as specialised services must not impair the general quality of the Internet, they typically require additional investments in networks that will be beneficial to the online ecosystem as a whole, including the open Internet.

The proposal requires national regulators to have far-reaching monitoring obligations and confers on them powers to impose minimum quality of service requirements in order to prevent impairment of the general quality of the Internet. The proposal foresees that Internet quality should evolve with technological progress.

([1]) Proposal for a regulation of the European parliament and of the Council laying down measures concerning the European single market for electronic communications and to achieve a Connected Continent, and amending Directives 2002/20/EC, 2002/21/EC and 2002/22/EC and Regulations (EC) No 1211/2009 and (EU) No 531/2012; COM(2013) 0627 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010634/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 septembre 2013)

Objet: Espèces européennes envahissantes

Ce lundi 9 septembre, la Commission européenne a présenté une nouvelle proposition de règlement visant à prévenir et à gérer le danger que représentent les quelque 2 000 espèces envahissantes recensées en Europe.

La proposition s'articule autour d'une liste d'espèces exotiques tout aussi envahissantes que préoccupantes pour l'Union, qui sera établie en concertation avec les États membres, sur la base d'évaluations des risques et de preuves scientifiques.

Les espèces désignées seront interdites dans l'Union européenne, ce qui signifie qu'il ne sera pas possible de les importer, de les acheter, de les utiliser, de les libérer dans l'environnement ni de les vendre.

1. Sur quelles bases s'est faite cette liste?

2. Que met en place la Commission en matière de prévention?

3. Quand la Commission saisira-t-elle le Parlement et pour quand compte-t-elle voir ce règlement d'application?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(31 octobre 2013)

Dans le cadre de la proposition de la Commission ([1]), la liste initiale des espèces exotiques envahissantes (EEE) préoccupantes pour l'Union sera proposée sur la base des évaluations des risques existantes réalisées, entre autres, par des organisations internationales telles que l'Organisation européenne pour la protection des plantes ou d'autres organisations scientifiques, après avoir vérifié le respect des critères définis dans la législation. Les États membres seront également invités à présenter à la Commission des demandes d'inscription d'espèces sur la liste des EEE préoccupantes pour l'Union selon les mêmes critères. La Commission établira et actualisera cette liste au moyen d'actes d'exécution.

La proposition de la Commission prévoit d'assurer la prévention par a) des interdictions accompagnant la liste des EEE préoccupantes pour l'Union et des dispositions visant à faire respecter ces interdictions; b) des mesures visant à remédier aux voies d'introduction non intentionnelle et c) la mise en place d'un système d'alerte précoce et de réponse rapide, soutenu par le Réseau européen d'information sur les espèces exotiques (EASIN — European Alien Species Information Network).

La Commission prévoit de proposer le premier acte d'exécution dans un délai d'un an après l'entrée en vigueur de la législation. Tous les projets d'actes d'exécution seront mis à la disposition du Parlement européen, conformément aux dispositions du règlement (UE) n° 182/2011 ([2]) concernant l'exercice des compétences d'exécution.

([1]) COM(2013) 620.
([2]) JO L 55 du 28.2.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010634/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Invasive species in Europe

On Monday 9 September, the Commission presented a new proposal for a regulation aimed at preventing and managing the danger represented by the approximately 2 000 invasive species recorded in Europe.

The proposal centres around a list of invasive alien species of Union concern, which will be drawn up with the Member States using risk assessments and scientific evidence.

Selected species will be banned from the EU, meaning it will not be possible to import, buy, use, release or sell them.

1. On what basis will this list be drawn up?

2. What is the Commission putting in place in terms of prevention?

3. When will the Commission submit this to Parliament and when does it expect to see this implementing regulation?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(31 October 2013)

Under the Commission proposal ([1]), the initial list of invasive alien species (IAS) of Union concern would be proposed on the basis of existing risk assessments carried out, *inter alia*, by international organisations, such as the European Plant Protection Organisation, or other scientific institutions, after checking compliance with the criteria set out in the legislation. Member States would also be invited to submit to the Commission requests for the inclusion of species on the list of IAS of Union concern, according to the same criteria. The Commission would establish and update the list by means of implementing acts.

The Commission proposal foresees prevention through (a) the bans attached to the list of IAS of Union concern and the provisions to enforce those bans; (b) measures to address the pathways of unintentional introduction; and (c) the establishment of an early warning rapid response system, supported by the European Alien Species Information Network (EASIN).

The Commission plans to propose the first implementing act within a year after the entry into force of the legislation. All draft implementing acts will be made available to the European Parliament in line with the rules of Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 ([2]) on the exercise of implementing powers.

([1]) COM(2013) 620.
([2]) OJ L 55, 28.2.2011.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010635/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 septembre 2013)

Objet: Règle UEFA sur les «joueurs formés localement» en péril

La Commission européenne avait commandité une étude sur l'évaluation de la règle des «joueurs formés localement» adoptée en 2005 par l'UEFA. Cette étude a pour objet de déterminer la compatibilité de cette règle avec le droit communautaire et, en particulier, le principe de la libre circulation des travailleurs.

Les conclusions de l'ouvrage sont assassines avec la règle UEFA. Il y est expliqué, entre autres, que:

— la règle des joueurs formés localement est restrictive de liberté;

— les effets bénéfiques de la règle des joueurs formés localement sont faibles.

En conséquence, il n'est pas démontré l'équilibre (proportionné) entre la nécessité de cette règle et l'atteinte portée à la libre circulation des travailleurs.

1. La Commission confirme-t-elle ces conclusions?

2. Estime-t-elle que l'UEFA ne réalise pas ses objectifs? Pour rappel, l'objectif de l'UEFA est d'encourager la formation locale des jeunes joueurs et d'augmenter l'ouverture et l'impartialité des compétitions européennes. Elle vise également à limiter la tendance à acheter des joueurs à tout-va et à essayer de rétablir l'identité «locale» des clubs.

3. À compter de la saison 2008-2009, les clubs engagés en UEFA Champions League et en UEFA Europa League doivent inscrire au minimum huit joueurs formés localement dans un groupe limité à 25 joueurs. Ces règles ont également été mises en place dans plusieurs championnats nationaux d'Europe. La Commission remet-elle aussi en cause cet aspect-là?

4. Que propose la Commission?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(11 novembre 2013)

1. Selon l'étude mentionnée dans la question, l'équilibre de la concurrence entre les clubs de football qui participent à la Champions League et à l'Europa League s'est amélioré depuis la mise en œuvre de la règle de l'UEFA sur les joueurs formés localement («la règle»). L'étude analyse également l'impact sur la formation des jeunes joueurs et conclut que leur nombre a augmenté dans les compétitions de l'UEFA au cours de ces dernières années. Cette règle revient à limiter la libre circulation des travailleurs dans l'Union européenne. Toutefois, cette limitation peut être justifiée par des objectifs légitimes d'intérêt public, conformément à l'article 45 du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne et à la jurisprudence de la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne.

2. Selon l'étude, cette règle contribue à atteindre les objectifs poursuivis, mais d'autres facteurs peuvent également y avoir contribué. Si l'augmentation du nombre de jeunes joueurs formés localement qui participent aux compétitions de l'UEFA semble être une conséquence directe de cette règle, d'autres mesures mises en œuvre par l'UEFA, par exemple l'obligation de maintenir un centre de formation dans le cadre des conditions d'octroi des licences des clubs, ainsi que des mesures mises en œuvre à l'échelon national, peuvent également avoir exercé une influence.

3. Non, la Commission n'a pas remis en cause la règle en soi (voir la communication de la Commission du 28 mai 2008 ([1])), ni des dispositions nationales similaires, dans la mesure où elles restent proportionnées aux objectifs poursuivis.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-08-807_fr.htm

4. La Commission suivra de près l'évolution de cette règle et des dispositions nationales similaires.

La Commission invitera le comité européen du dialogue social dans le secteur du football professionnel à discuter des conclusions de cette étude et à réfléchir aux recommandations qui y sont proposées.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010635/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: UEFA rule on 'locally trained players' in jeopardy

The Commission commissioned a study evaluating the rule on 'locally trained players' adopted by UEFA in 2005. The aim of this study is to determine whether this rule is compatible with EC law and, in particular, the principle of the free movement of workers.

The conclusions of the study are damning for the UEFA rule. Amongst other items, the study explains that:

— the locally trained players rule is freedom-restricting;

— the beneficial effects of the locally trained players rule are limited.

Consequently, there is no evidence of the (proportionate) balance between the need for this rule and the threat that it poses to the free movement of workers.

1. Can the Commission confirm these findings?

2. Does it believe that UEFA is failing to reach its objectives? By way of reminder, UEFA's objective is to encourage local training of young players and to make European competitions more open and impartial. It also aims to curb the trend of buying players left, right and centre, and is trying to re-establish clubs' 'local' identities.

3. Since the 2008-09 season, UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League clubs must sign at least eight locally trained players in a group limited to 25 players. These rules have also been put in place in several European national championships. Is the Commission calling this into question as well?

4. What does the Commission propose?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(11 November 2013)

1. According to the study the competitive balance among the clubs playing the Champions and Europa League improved since the implementation of the UEFA's home-grown player rule ('the Rule'). The study also analyses the impact on the training of young players and concludes that their number in UEFA competitions increased in the last years. The rule is a limitation to EU free movement of workers. However, it might be justified by legitimate objectives of public interest according to Article 45 TFEU and CJEU case-law.

2. According to the study the Rule helps to reach the pursued objectives, but other factors may have also contributed. While the increase in the number of young home-grown players participating in UEFA competitions seems to be a direct consequence of the Rule, other measures implemented by UEFA, for example the requirement to maintain a training academy as part of the Club Licensing conditions, as well as measures implemented at national level may also have exerted an influence.

3. No. The Commission did not call into question the Rule as such (see the Commission's communication of 28.05.2008 ([1])), or similar national rules as far as they remain proportionate to the pursued objectives.

4. The Commission will closely monitor further development of the Rule and similar national rules.

The Commission will invite the EU Social Dialogue Committee in the Professional Football sector to discuss the study's findings and reflect on the study's recommendations.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-08-807_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010636/13
au Conseil
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 septembre 2013)

Objet: TTF contestée par le Conseil

Le Conseil européen veut remettre en cause la taxe sur les transactions financières au sein de l'Union européenne. Le projet est même tout simplement illégal selon un rapport des experts juridiques du Conseil européen, qui représente les exécutifs des États membres de l'Union européenne. Cette taxe, qui doit rapporter 35 milliards d'euros par an serait contraire au traité européen parce qu'elle empiéterait sur les compétences en matière de fiscalité d'États membres qui ne souhaitent pas s'y soumettre.

1. Que pense le Conseil de l'argument des experts disant qu'en plus de provoquer des «distorsions de concurrence», selon les termes employés par les experts, elle serait en effet un «obstacle» à l'un des piliers du traité fondateur: la libre circulation des capitaux?

L'idée est de prélever 0,1 % sur les transactions d'actions et d'obligations et 0,01 % sur les produits dérivés avec quelques exceptions. Une seule condition: que la transaction soit effectuée par une banque ou une institution financière basée dans l'un des États signataires. C'est principalement cette disposition que les experts du Conseil trouvent excessive.

2. Que répond le Conseil au fait que la volonté de garder une activité de marché au sein de la zone euro ne peut justifier à elle seule une position considérée comme trop agressive?

3. Partagez vous le point de vue de ces experts disant que la taxe frapperait en effet des activités «avec une réelle substance économique qui ne sont pas susceptibles de contribuer au risque systémique et qui sont indispensables pour les activités d'entreprises non financières»?

Réponse
(11 novembre 2013)

Le 28 septembre 2011, la Commission a adopté une proposition de directive du Conseil établissant un système commun de taxe sur les transactions financières et modifiant la directive 2008/7/CE ([1]). L'unanimité requise au sein du Conseil pour que cette taxe puisse être instaurée n'a pu être réalisée et, le 29 juin 2012, le Conseil européen a conclu que la directive proposée ne serait pas adoptée par le Conseil dans un délai raisonnable ([2]).

Onze États membres ont toutefois indiqué qu'ils souhaitaient établir entre eux une coopération renforcée pour instituer cette taxe. Le 22 janvier 2013, le Conseil, sur proposition de la Commission et après avoir obtenu l'accord du Parlement européen, a adopté une décision autorisant une coopération renforcée dans le domaine de la taxe sur les transactions financières ([3]).

Le 14 février 2013, la Commission européenne a donc présenté une proposition de directive du Conseil mettant en œuvre cette coopération renforcée ([4]).

Les discussions sur cette proposition de directive sont en cours et le Conseil n'a pas encore défini de position sur les questions posées par l'Honorable Parlementaire.

([1]) 14942/11.
([2]) EUCO 76/12.
([3]) JO L 22 du 25.1.2013, p. 11.
([4]) 6442/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010636/13
to the Council
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Financial Transaction Tax (FTT) disputed by the Council

The European Council is seeking to challenge the taxing of financial transactions within the European Union. The proposal is quite simply illegal according to a report by legal experts of the European Council, which represents the Heads of State or Government of EU Member States. This tax, which should generate an annual EUR 35 billion, is said to be incompatible with the European Treaty because it would infringe upon the taxing competences of non-participating Member States.

1. What does the Council think of the experts' claim that in addition to causing 'distortions of competition', the tax would in fact, to quote the words of the experts, be an 'obstacle' to one of the cornerstones of the EU Treaty, namely free movement of capital?

The idea is that trading of shares and bonds would be taxed at 0.1% and derivatives at 0.01% with a few exceptions. The only condition would be that the transaction be performed by a bank or financial institution based in one of the Member States having signed up to the FTT. This is the main provision which the Council experts consider to be unreasonable

2. What is the Council's response to the fact that the desire to maintain a trading activity within the euro area cannot by itself justify what has been deemed as an over-aggressive position?

3. Does the Council share the opinion of these experts that the tax would indeed impact activities with a 'genuine economic substance that are not liable to contribute to systemic risk and which are indispensable for the activities of non-financial business entities'?

Reply
(11 November 2013)

On 28 September 2011, the Commission adopted a proposal for a Council Directive on a common system of financial transaction tax and amending Directive 2008/7/EC ([1]). The unanimity required in the Council to proceed with this tax was not achieved and the European Council concluded on 29 June 2012 that the proposed Directive would not be adopted by the Council within a reasonable period ([2]).

However, eleven Member States expressed their willingness to proceed with this tax under enhanced cooperation. On 22 January 2013, the Council adopted a decision authorising enhanced cooperation in the area of financial transaction tax ([3]), on a proposal from the Commission and after obtaining the consent of the European Parliament.

On 14 February 2013, the European Commission thus tabled a proposal for a Council Directive implementing this enhanced cooperation ([4]).

Deliberations are ongoing on the proposed Directive and a position has not been reached within the Council on the questions raised by the Honourable Member.

([1]) 14942/11.
([2]) EUCO 76/12.
([3]) OJ L 22 of 25.1.2013, p. 11.
([4]) 6442/13.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010637/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 septembre 2013)

Objet: TTF contestée par le Conseil

Le Conseil européen veut remettre en cause la taxe sur les transactions financières au sein de l'Union européenne. Le projet est même tout simplement illégal selon un rapport des experts juridiques du Conseil européen, qui représente les exécutifs des États membres de l'Union européenne. Cette taxe, qui doit rapporter 35 milliards d'euros par an serait contraire au traité européen parce qu'elle empiéterait sur les compétences en matière de fiscalité d'États membres qui ne souhaitent pas s'y soumettre.

1. Que pense la Commission de l'argument du Conseil européen disant qu'en plus de provoquer des «distorsions de concurrence», selon les termes employés par les experts, elle serait en effet un «obstacle» à l'un des piliers du traité fondateur: la libre circulation des capitaux.

L'idée est de prélever 0,1 % sur les transactions d'actions et d'obligations et 0,01 % sur les produits dérivés avec quelques exceptions. Une seule condition: que la transaction soit effectuée par une banque ou une institution financière basée dans l'un des États signataires. C'est principalement cette disposition que les experts du Conseil trouvent excessive.

2. Que répond la Commission au fait que la volonté de garder une activité de marché au sein de la zone euro ne peut justifier à elle seule une position considérée comme trop agressive?

3. Partagez vous le point de vue de ces experts disant que la taxe frapperait en effet des activités «avec une réelle substance économique qui ne sont pas susceptibles de contribuer au risque systémique et qui sont indispensables pour les activités d'entreprises non financières»?

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(6 novembre 2013)

1. La Commission ne partage pas ce point de vue ([1]).

2. La Commission ne partage pas ce point de vue ([2]).

3. La Commission a exposé dans ses différentes analyses d'impact et analyses supplémentaires effectuées dans le cadre de ses propositions relatives à la TTF que l'harmonisation de la taxe telle que proposée, tout bien considéré, ne nuira pas à l'économie réelle et ne devrait pas avoir d'incidence négative sur l'efficacité des marchés financiers.

([1]) Pour les arguments qui sous-tendent le point de vue, voir l'analyse d'impact (SWD/2013/28) et son résumé (SWD/2012/29).
([2]) Pour les arguments qui sous-tendent le point de vue, voir l'analyse d'impact (SWD/2013/28) et son résumé (SWD/2012/29).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010637/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Financial Transaction Tax (FTT) disputed by the Council

The European Council is seeking to challenge the taxing of financial transactions within the European Union. The proposal is quite simply illegal according to a report by legal experts of the European Council, which represents the Heads of State or Government of EU Member States. This tax, which should generate an annual EUR 35 billion, is said to be incompatible with the European Treaty because it would infringe upon the taxing competences of non-participating Member States.

1. What does the Commission think of the European Council's claim that in addition to causing 'distortions of competition', the tax would in fact, to quote the words of the experts, be an 'obstacle' to one of the cornerstones of the EU Treaty, namely free movement of capital?

The idea is that trading of shares and bonds would be taxed at 0.1% and derivatives at 0.01% with a few exceptions. The only condition would be that the transaction be performed by a bank or financial institution based in one of the Member States having signed up to the FTT. This is the main provision which the Council experts consider to be unreasonable.

2. What is the Commission's response to the fact that the desire to maintain a trading activity within the euro area cannot by itself justify what has been deemed as an over-aggressive position?

3. Does the Commission share the opinion of these experts that the tax would indeed impact activities with a 'genuine economic substance that are not liable to contribute to systemic risk and which are indispensable for the activities of non-financial business entities'?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(6 November 2013)

1 and 2. The Commission does not share this view ([1]).

3. The Commission showed in its different impact assessments and additional analysis undertaken in the context of its FTT proposals that the harmonisation of the tax as proposed will on balance neither harm the real economy nor is it expected to negatively impact on the efficiency of financial markets.

([1]) For the reasoning behind, see the impact assessment (SWD/2013/28) and its summary (SWD/2012/29).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010638/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 septembre 2013)

Objet: Versement anticipé des aides de la PAC

Les conditions climatiques très défavorables, notamment liées aux pluies exceptionnelles du printemps, ainsi que le contexte économique difficile, en particulier pour les éleveurs, justifieraient un versement anticipé des aides de la PAC.

Plusieurs demandes ont été faites à la fin du mois d'août pour un versement anticipé des aides de la PAC.

La Commission accède-t-elle à cette demande? Si oui, dans quelle mesure, et à quelles conditions?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloș au nom de la Commission
(5 novembre 2013)

La Commission est bien consciente des difficultés auxquelles sont confrontés les agriculteurs européens à la suite des conditions climatiques extrêmes qui ont frappé une grande partie du territoire de l'Union européenne et elle suit de près l'évolution de la situation climatique ainsi que ses conséquences sur l'agriculture.

Afin d'aider les agriculteurs à surmonter ces difficultés, la Commission a adopté le 2 octobre le règlement d'exécution (UE) n° 946/2013 de la Commission ([1]).

Ce règlement prévoit qu'à compter du 16 octobre 2013 les États membres peuvent verser aux agriculteurs des avances jusqu'à concurrence de 50 % des paiements directs énumérés à l'annexe I du règlement (CE) n° 73/2009 ([2]) pour les demandes introduites en 2013. Ces montants peuvent être versés sans tenir compte de l'ajustement visé à l'article 11 du règlement (CE) n° 73/2009 pour autant que la vérification des conditions d'admissibilité au bénéfice de l'aide conformément à l'article 20 du règlement (CE) n° 73/2009 ait été effectuée.

En ce qui concerne les paiements pour la viande bovine prévus au titre IV, chapitre 1, section 11 du règlement (CE) n° 73/2009, les États membres sont autorisés à augmenter ce montant jusqu'à concurrence de 80 %.

([1]) JO 261 du 3.10.2013.
([2]) JO L 30 du 31.1.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010638/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Advance payment of CAP subsidies

The very unfavourable weather conditions, particularly related to exceptionally heavy rain in the spring, in addition to the difficult economic climate, particularly for farmers, would justify an advance payment of CAP subsidies.

Several requests were made at the end of August for an advance payment of CAP subsidies.

Will the Commission agree to these requests? If so, to what extent and on what terms?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

The Commission is well aware of the difficulties European farmers are facing as a consequence of extreme weather conditions affecting a large part of the European Union territory and monitors closely the evolution of the weather situation and the impact on agriculture.

In order to help farmers to face these difficulties, the Commission adopted on 2 October Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 946/2013 ([1])

This regulation foresees that Member States may pay, from 16 October 2013 on, advances to farmers of up to 50% of the direct payments listed in Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 73/2009 ([2]) in respect of applications made in 2013. This can be done without taking into account the adjustment referred to in Article 11 of Regulation (EC) No 73/2009, provided that the verification of the eligibility conditions pursuant to Article 20 of Regulation (EC) No 73/2009 has been finalised.

Regarding the beef and veal payments provided for in Section 11 of Chapter 1 of Title IV of Regulation (EC) No 73/2009, Member States are authorised to increase this amount to up to 80%.

([1]) OJ 261 of 3.10.2013.
([2]) OJ L 30, 31.1.2009.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010639/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 septembre 2013)

Objet: Syriens en Bulgarie

Confronté à un afflux massif de réfugiés fuyant les combats en Syrie, le gouvernement bulgare a lancé, le 16 septembre, un appel «à la solidarité européenne», demandant aux autres pays de l'Union d'en accueillir une partie.

«*Actuellement, 4 010 personnes, dont 1 465 Syriens, sont en procédure de demande d'asile, et près d'un millier, dont 250 Syriens*» en attente, a déclaré le ministre de l'intérieur, Tsvetlin Iovchev. Celui-ci a ajouté que, «*bientôt*», la Bulgarie «*aura atteint le seuil de 5 000 réfugiés qu'elle peut accueillir*» et a annoncé qu'il allait écrire à la Commission européenne pour solliciter son aide.

Le 16 septembre, la police des frontières a arrêté 57 personnes, dont 30 réfugiés syriens, qui avaient franchi illégalement la frontière turco-bulgare. Les trois centres d'accueil du pays tourneraient à plus de 150 % de leur capacité: la Croix-Rouge nationale a lancé une campagne de récolte de fonds pour faire face à une probable urgence humanitaire.

1. Quelle est la réaction de la Commission?

2. Quelles sont ensuite les actions à entreprendre par elle?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Malmström au nom de la Commission
(19 novembre 2013)

La Commission, avec l'appui de Frontex et du Bureau européen d'appui en matière d'asile (BEAA), suit de près l'évolution de la situation sur le terrain dans tous les États membres affectés par le gonflement des flux migratoires ou susceptibles de l'être, y compris en Bulgarie.

Pour aider un État membre à relever de tels défis, la Commission peut lui apporter un soutien financier ou un appui matériel par le truchement de Frontex ou du BEAA, par exemple avec le déploiement d'équipes d'appui «asile» qui aideront les autorités de l'État membre concerné à renforcer leurs capacités et la qualité. Cette assistance peut être fournie si l'État membre concerné en fait la demande.

La Commission discute actuellement de la possibilité d'accorder un soutien financier aux autorités bulgares, et un plan opérationnel BEAA-Bulgarie a été signé le 17 octobre 2013. Un attention particulière est accordée à la nécessité de renforcer et d'améliorer les structures d'accueil et d'hébergement de la Bulgarie, ainsi que les capacités de traitement des demandes de protection de l'Agence d'État bulgare aux réfugiés.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010639/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Syrians in Bulgaria

Faced with a massive influx of refugees fleeing the war in Syria, on 16 September the Bulgarian Government appealed for 'European solidarity', and called on other EU Member States to take charge of some of the asylum-seekers.

'As it stands, asylum applications from 4 010 people, including 1 465 Syrians, are being processed, and close to 1 000 others, of which 250 are from Syrians' are in preparation, declared Interior Minister Tsvetlin Iovchev. The Minister added that Bulgaria would 'soon exceed the limit of 5 000 refugees' and announced his intention to write to the Commission to solicit aid from the EU.

On 16 September, border police arrested 57 people, including 30 Syrian refugees, who had illegally crossed the Bulgarian-Turkish border. The country's three refugee centres are currently operating at 150% of their capacity: the national branch of the Red Cross has launched a campaign to collect funds for a probable humanitarian emergency.

1. What is the Commission's reaction?

2. What actions will the Commission then take?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(19 November 2013)

The Commission, assisted by Frontex and the European Asylum Support (EASO) office, is closely following the situation on the ground in all Member States that are or could be affected by increased migratory flows, including Bulgaria.

The Commission can assist Member States faced with such challenges with financial support and/or offer assistance in kind through EASO or Frontex, for instance through deployment of asylum support teams to assist the authorities of the Member State with capacity and quality building. Such assistance can be provided if it is requested by the authorities of the Member State.

The Commission is currently discussing the possibility of financial support with the Bulgarian authorities, and an EASO-Bulgaria Operating Plan was signed on 17 October 2013. Particular attention is being paid to the need to enlarge and improve Bulgaria's reception and accommodation capacity, as well as capacity of the Bulgarian State Agency for Refugees to process claims for protection.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010640/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 septembre 2013)

Objet: Interdiction du chalutage en eaux profondes

En 2012, la Commission avait proposé d'interdire dans un délai de deux ans le chalutage en eaux profondes, accusé d'avoir un impact négatif sur les fonds des océans. À l'époque, cette demande avait été rejetée par la France et par l'Espagne.

1. N'est-il pas temps, pour la Commission, d'interdire le chalutage en eaux profondes unefois pour toutes?

2. La Commission partage-t-elle notre avis quant à la nocivité de cette pratique pour lesfonds desocéans?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Damanaki au nom de la Commission
(19 novembre 2013)

Le 19 juillet 2012, la Commission a adopté une proposition ([1]) de nouveau régime d'accès pour les pêcheries d'eau profonde prévoyant que les engins identifiés comme nuisibles à l'environnement, à savoir les chaluts de fond et les filets maillants de fond, seraient progressivement supprimés pour des pêcheries ciblées. Cette mesure vise à assurer la protection efficace des écosystèmes marins vulnérables et à réduire les captures accidentelles. Le Comité économique et social européen a rendu son avis le 13 février 2013. La commission de la pêche du Parlement européen s'est prononcée sur le rapport portant modification de la proposition de la Commission le 4 novembre 2013. Le Conseil n'a pas encore commencé l'examen de la proposition de la Commission.

La Commission a fondé sa proposition sur des éléments de preuve démontrant que le chalutage hauturier porte atteinte aux fonds marins et nuit à la structure de l'habitat des fonds marins et de ses communautés associées. Certains habitats, notamment les récifs coralliens d'eau froide et les communautés d'éponges d'eau profonde, sont connus pour être particulièrement sensibles à ces perturbations physiques. Les chaluts de fond et les filets maillants ne seraient donc plus utilisés pour la pêche des stocks de poissons d'eau profonde afin de prévenir ce type de dommages.

([1]) COM(2012) 371.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010640/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Deep-sea trawling ban

In 2012, both France and Spain rejected a Commission recommendation calling for the introduction within two years of a ban on deep-sea trawling in response to concerns that it was damaging the seabed.

1. Is the time not now ripe for the Commission to ban deep-sea trawling once and for all?

2. Does the Commission agree that this activity is causing damage to the seabed?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(19 November 2013)

On 19 July 2012 the Commission adopted a proposal ([1]) for a new access regime for deep sea fisheries whereby those gears identified as environmentally harmful, *i.e.*, bottom trawls and gillnets, would be phased out for targeted fisheries. This measure seeks the effective protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems and to reduce unwanted catches. The European Economic and Social Committee gave opinion on 13 February 2013. The Fisheries Committee in the European Parliament has voted on the report amending the Commission proposal on 4 November 2013. The Council has not started yet discussing the Commission proposal.

The Commission has based its proposal on evidence that deep-sea trawling harms the seabed and damages both the structure of the seabed habitat and its associated communities. Some habitats, including cold-water coral reefs and deep-sea sponge communities, are known to be particularly sensitive to such physical disturbance. Bottom trawls and gillnets would therefore no longer be used in fisheries targeting deep sea fish stocks in order to prevent such harm.

([1]) COM(2012) 371.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010641/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 septembre 2013)

Objet: Protection des données dans le cadre d'eCall

Alerter les secours à l'instant même où l'accident se produit, c'est le boulot d'eCall. Projet de la Commission européenne, ce système permet d'appeler automatiquement ambulance et police en cas de collision entre véhicules ou de sortie de route. C'est le déclenchement de l'airbag ou la détection d'un freinage très appuyé qui pourrait informer le 112, le numéro d'urgence général. Dès 2015, tous les nouveaux véhicules immatriculés dans l'Union européenne devront être équipés d'un tel système. De manière générale, l'efficacité de l'eCall est saluée par tous. Selon la Commission, il permettrait de sauver de nombreuses vies en réduisant le temps de réponse d'au moins 50 %. Des avantages que le TCS relève également. «L'eCall permet une réaction plus rapide et plus ciblée car il transmet les données concernant le véhicule, y compris sa position en cas d'accident», indique Laurent Pignot, porte-parole. Ainsi, les opérations de sauvetage sont accélérées, en particulier dans des régions isolées. En outre, l'eCall permet une communication vocale entre les occupants du véhicule et la centrale appelée. Enfin, le système appelle la centrale même si les occupants sont inconscients. Mais, comme tout système de géolocalisation, il suscite doutes et inquiétudes en termes de protection des données.

1. Quelles sont les dispositions prévues concernant l'enregistrement des données privées et leur type? Qui pourra y avoir accès?

2. En cas de procès après un accident, le système qui vous a sauvé la vie pourrait-il vous la rendre invivable par la suite?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Kroes au nom de la Commission
(29 octobre 2013)

En cas d'accident, des données de localisation sont transmises, comme pour tout autre appel au 112. Toutes les exigences fixées dans les actes législatifs pertinents ([1]), ([2]), ([3]), s'appliquent également à ces données. En outre, des données de localisation plus précises (la position actuelle et deux positions antérieures du véhicule telles que déterminées par le système de navigation par satellite) sont transmises via l'ensemble minimal de données ([4]) (MSD). Ces données sont transmises au centre de réception des appels d'urgence (PSAP) et enregistrées conformément à la législation applicable([2]); dans le cas des appels urgents, le consentement de l'utilisateur n'est pas requis pour le traitement des données de localisation par les organismes chargés de traiter les appels d'urgence et reconnus comme tels par les États membres, notamment les forces de l'ordre, les services d'ambulance et les corps de sapeurs-pompiers, aux fins de réagir à ces appels. Aucun intermédiaire n'a accès à l'ensemble minimal de données qui est transmis par le système embarqué (IVS) aux PSAP.

Les champs obligatoires du MSD comprennent le mode de déclenchement (automatique ou manuel), l'identification du véhicule, le type et le mode de propulsion du véhicule, l'horodatage, la direction du véhicule, sa position actuelle et deux positions antérieures, et le nombre de passagers. Aucune autre donnée n'est collectée ou transmise par le système eCall embarqué (IVS); l'IVS n'est actif qu'en cas d'accident ou d'activation manuelle, de sorte qu'il n'y a pas de problème de protection de la vie privée lié à la localisation.

([1]) Directive 2002/22/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 7 mars 2002 concernant le service universel et les droits des utilisateurs au regard des réseaux et services de communications électroniques (directive «service universel»).

([2]) Directive 2009/136/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 25 novembre 2009 modifiant la directive 2002/22/CE concernant le service universel et les droits des utilisateurs au regard des réseaux et services de communications électroniques, directive 2002/58/CE concernant le traitement des données à caractère personnel et la protection de la vie privée dans le secteur des communications électroniques et règlement (CE) n° 2006/2004 relatif à la coopération entre les autorités nationales chargées de veiller à l'application de la législation en matière de protection des consommateurs.

([3]) Directive 95/46/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 24 octobre 1995 relative à la protection des personnes physiques à l'égard du traitement des données à caractère personnel et à la libre circulation de ces données.

([4]) CEN EN 15722 «Télématique de la circulation et du transport routier — ESafety — Ensemble minimal de données (MSD) pour l'eCall».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010641/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Data protection within the framework of eCall

eCall's task is to alert the emergency services at the very second an accident takes place. As one of the Commission's projects, the system makes it possible to make automatic calls to police and ambulance services in the event of a vehicle collision or roadside accident. When the airbag is released or sudden braking is detected, a call can be made to 112, the general emergency number. From 2015, all new vehicles registered in the European Union will have to be fitted with such a system. Generally speaking, eCall's effectiveness is welcomed by all. According to the Commission, it means that many lives will be saved by reducing response times by at least 50%. Touring Club Suisse (TCS) also highlights these advantages. 'eCall enables a faster and more targeted response as it transmits data about the vehicle, including its position in the event of an accident', according to spokesperson Laurent Pignot. Rescue operations are therefore faster, particularly in isolated areas. In addition, eCall enables voice communication between passengers inside the vehicle and the response centre. Finally, the system calls the response centre even if the passengers are unconscious. However, like any GPS system, it raises doubts and concerns with regard to data protection.

1. What provisions are planned with regard to recording private data and the nature of these data? Who will be able to access them?

2. In the event of a trial following an accident, could the system that saved your life subsequently make your life unliveable?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(29 October 2013)

When an accident occurs, location data are transmitted, as in any other 112 call. All requirements as set out in the relevant legislative acts ([1]) ([2]) ([3]) also apply to these data. Additionally, more accurate location data (the current and two previous positions of the vehicle as determined by the satellite navigation system) are transmitted through the Minimum Set of Data ([4]) (MSD). These data are transmitted to the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) and stored in compliance with the relevant legislation ([2]); in the case of emergency calls the consent of the user is not needed for the processing of location data by organisations dealing with emergency calls and recognised as such by the Member States, including law enforcement agencies, ambulance services and fire brigades, for the purpose of responding to such calls. No intermediate parties have access to the MSD that is transmitted from the IVS to the PSAPs.

The mandatory fields of the MSD include the triggering mode (automatic or manual), vehicle identification, vehicle type and propulsion, timestamp, vehicle direction, current and two previous positions, and number of passengers. No other data is collected or transmitted by the eCall in-vehicle system (IVS); the IVS is only active when an accident occurs or if it is manually triggered, thus there is no privacy issue related to tracking.

([1]) Directive 2002/22/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 March 2002 on universal service and users' rights relating to electronic communications networks and services (Universal Service Directive).

([2]) Directive 2009/136/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2009 amending Directive 2002/22/EC on universal service and users' rights relating to electronic communications networks and services, Directive 2002/58/EC concerning the processing of personal data and the protection of privacy in the electronic communications sector and Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 on cooperation between national authorities responsible for the enforcement of consumer protection laws.

([3]) Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data.

([4]) CEN EN 15722 'Road transport and traffic telematics — ESafety — eCall minimum set of data'.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010642/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 septembre 2013)

Objet: Fair-play financier de l'UEFA en danger

Depuis 2011, les équipes accusant des arriérés de paiement peuvent être sanctionnées. Le club espagnol de Malaga, quart-de-finaliste de la Ligue des champions en avril, a ainsi été exclu de toute compétition européenne en 2013-2014 à cause de ses dettes. Un palier supplémentaire sera franchi cette saison, avec l'obligation de présenter des comptes équilibrés et un déficit autorisé de 5 millions d'euros — en excluant les dépenses liées aux stades et aux centres de formation — ou de 45 millions d'euros dans le cas où des actionnaires pourraient combler les pertes. Les premières sanctions tomberont dès mai 2014, avec de possibles exclusions des coupes continentales.

Si l'Association des clubs européens a validé à l'unanimité les principes du FPF en 2010, tous n'en respectent toujours pas les règles. Et, comme un paradoxe, alors que l'UEFA clame sa volonté d'assainir le football, les dépenses somptuaires ont encore rythmé le marché estival. Fin août, le Real Madrid a ainsi déboursé 100 millions d'euros pour se payer Gareth Bale, un record. Le PSG, propriété des Qataris, peut s'appuyer sur le contrat de sponsoring signé avec la «Qatar Tourism Authority», pour un montant avoisinant les 200 millions d'euros annuels jusqu'à la saison 2015-2016.

1. D'après la Commission, ne s'agit-il pas d'une manière de contourner la règle? Les clubs de milliardaires sont en train de signer des contrats pour des montants faramineux avec des entreprises ou des fondations très proches des actionnaires, comme c'est aussi le cas avec Manchester City, sponsorisé par Etihad Airways.

2. Au-delà de sa capacité à sévir contre les gros clubs dont elle peut difficilement se passer financièrement, l'UEFA risque de voir son cheval de bataille contesté sur le terrain du droit. Selon la Commission, comment peut-on réussir à mettre en œuvre le fair-play financier alors qu'il porte atteinte juridiquement à la liberté d'entreprendre?

3. Interdire à de riches propriétaires d'investir à pertes dans leur club s'annonce ardu. Des clubs contesteront leurs sanctions et certaines batailles juridiques seront très longues alors que le temps sportif est très court. Des clubs comme le PSG ou Monaco iront en justice pour atteinte à la liberté d'entreprendre et à la libre circulation des capitaux, droits encouragés par l'arrêt Bosman. Quelles sont là encore la réaction et les actions de la Commission?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(15 novembre 2013)

La Commission renvoie l'Honorable Parlementaire à ses réponses aux questions écrites E-4447/10, E-8252/11, E-10573/11 et E-4268/13 concernant les règles du fair-play financier de l'UEFA ([1]).

La Commission considère que la mise en œuvre et l'application de ces règles relèvent de la responsabilité de l'UEFA. Elle reste toutefois attentive à ce que ces règles ainsi que leur mise en œuvre et leur application soient conformes au droit de l'UE et en particulier aux principes du marché intérieur.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010642/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: UEFA's financial fair play (FFP) in jeopardy

Since 2011, football teams with outstanding debts have been liable to sanctions. The Spanish club Malaga, which reached the quarter finals of the Champions League in April, has thus been excluded from all European competitions in 2013-2014 because of its debts. This rule will be taken a step further this season, with clubs required to submit balanced accounts and allowed to have a deficit of EUR 5 million — excluding expenditure linked to stadia and training centres — or EUR 45 million where shareholders could cover the losses. The first sanctions will come into effect as of May 2014, with possible exclusions from continental cup competitions.

Although the European Club Association unanimously approved the FFP principles in 2010, not all clubs play by the rules. Moreover, paradoxically, while UEFA claims it wants to clean up football, the summer transfer market has once again been marked by extravagant spending. At the end of August, Real Madrid paid a record EUR 100 million for Gareth Bale. Qatari-owned Paris Saint-Germain can rely on the sponsorship agreement it signed with the Qatar Tourism Authority, worth around EUR 200 million per year until the 2015-2016 season.

1. Is this not a way of getting round the rules, in the Commission's view? Billionaire-owned clubs are in the process of signing contracts for astronomical sums of money with companies or foundations that have very close links with the clubs' shareholders, as is the case with Manchester City, which is sponsored by Etihad Airways.

2. Beyond its capacity to be ruthless with big clubs, which may be difficult to achieve in financial terms, UEFA risks seeing its hobby horse challenged in court. In the Commission's view, how can financial fair play be successfully implemented when it legally damages free enterprise?

3. Banning rich owners from investing in their club at a loss promises to be hard work. Some clubs will dispute their sanctions and some legal battles will be very drawn out whereas things move quickly in sport. Some clubs, like PSG and Monaco, will go to court over the infringement of free enterprise and the free movement of capital, rights encouraged by the Bosman ruling. What is the Commission's reaction and what will it do?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(15 November 2013)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-4447/10, E-8252/11, E-10573/11 and E-4268/13 concerning UEFA's Financial Fair Play rules ([1]).

The Commission considers that the implementation and enforcement of these rules fall under the responsibility of UEFA. The Commission, however, is monitoring whether these rules, and the way they are implemented and applied, comply with EC law, in particular internal market principles.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010643/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 septembre 2013)

Objet: Actionnariat populaire dans le domaine du football

En France, un projet d'actionnariat populaire a vu le jour là où les principes du collectif (sur et en dehors du terrain) avaient su démontrer, en l'espace d'une quarantaine d'années, toute leur efficacité avant que l'actionnariat unique, en l'espace d'une douzaine d'années, ne vienne démontrer toute sa force destructrice.

Les bénévoles de l'association permettent à plus de 2 000 supporters de tous âges, figures de la société civile, acteurs économiques et responsables politiques, de gauche, de droite et du centre, avec la même ardeur, de se tenir par la main pour promouvoir ensemble des valeurs sportives et extra-sportives. «À la nantaise» effectue actuellement une levée de fonds avec un objectif précis: monter au capital du FC Nantes en tant qu'actionnaire minoritaire pour siéger dans les organes de décision et contribuer à la gestion du club, au nom des principes fondamentaux du sport. Les institutions de l'Union européenne se sont clairement positionnées. Le Parlement européen s'est prononcé à une écrasante majorité pour que «les États membres et les instances dirigeantes du sport [stimulent] activement le rôle social et démocratique des supporters sportifs qui soutiennent les principes du fair-play, en favorisant leur participation dans les structures de gouvernance et de propriété des clubs». En Europe, l'actionnariat populaire est une réalité qui démontre toute sa pertinence à la fois sur le plan de la promotion des valeurs éthiques et sur le plan de l'efficacité économique. La forte rentabilité de la Bundesliga serait ainsi principalement le résultat d'une gestion à long terme basée sur un actionnariat stable. Il s'agit là d'un fonctionnement plus démocratique ainsi que d'une gouvernance raisonnable et durable.

1. Que fait la Commission pour encourager l'actionnariat populaire? Comment appréhende-t-elle en particulier ce concept dans le milieu du sport?

2. Dans quels domaines apporte-t-elle son soutien? De quel type est-il?

3. Que prévoit-elle à moyen et à long termes?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(30 octobre 2013)

La Commission estime que la démocratie et la participation de tous sont deux des principes essentiels qui sous-tendent la bonne gouvernance des organisations sportives. Elle reconnaît que l'ouverture de l'actionnariat des clubs sportifs aux supporters est une des expressions de la démocratie participative dans le domaine du sport. La Commission encourage l'implication des acteurs intéressés du monde sportif, comme les supporters, et leur participation active à la gestion de l'activité sportive par le biais de structures démocratiquement élues.

Afin de contribuer à la promotion de ces principes, la Commission a cofinancé le projet intitulé «Améliorer la gouvernance dans le football grâce à la participation des supporters et à l'adhésion de la population locale», l'un des projets sélectionnés dans le cadre de l'action préparatoire dans le domaine du sport pour l'année 2011. L'association française «À la nantaise», mentionnée par l'Honorable Parlementaire, a été un partenaire de ce projet.

La Commission a l'intention de renforcer le dialogue avec les supporters et d'autres catégories d'acteurs afin de poursuivre la discussion sur les moyens d'améliorer la gouvernance du sport dans l'ensemble de l'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010643/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Joint ownership in the field of football

In France, a joint ownership scheme has emerged in which the principles of teamwork (on and off the pitch) have proven their effectiveness over the course of some 40 years, before sole ownership proves to be a destructive force in the space of a dozen years.

The association's volunteers make it possible for more than 2 000 supporters of all ages, civil society leaders, economic actors and politicians from left, right and centre, with the same passion, to join together to promote sporting and non-sporting values. The association, '*À la nantaise*' is currently collecting funds with a specific goal: to raise capital for Nantes FC as a minority shareholder to sit on the decision making bodies and contribute to the management of the club, in the interest of the fundamental principles of the sport. The EU institutions have made their position clear. Parliament ruled, by an overwhelming majority, that 'Member States and sports governing bodies [should] actively stimulate the social and democratic role of sports fans who support the principles of fair play, by promoting their involvement in the ownership and governance structures at their sports clubs'. In Europe, joint ownership is a reality which is proving its relevance both in terms of promoting ethical values and in terms of economic efficiency. The high profitability of the Bundesliga is also mainly due to long-term management based on stable ownership. It is a question of more democratic functioning and reasonable and sustainable governance.

1. What is the Commission doing to encourage joint ownership? How does it perceive this concept in the field of sport in particular?

2. In which areas does it lend its support? What type of support is it?

3. What plans does it have for the medium and long term?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(30 October 2013)

The Commission considers that democracy and inclusiveness are two of the main principles underpinning the good governance of sport organisations. It recognises that joint ownership of sports clubs by supporters is one of the ways in which participatory democracy can express itself in the field of sport. The Commission encourages the empowerment of relevant sports stakeholders, such as supporters, and their active involvement in the governance of the game through democratically elected structures.

To help promote these principles, the Commission co-financed the project called 'Improving Football Governance through Supporter Involvement and Community Ownership' as one of the projects selected under the 2011 Preparatory Action in the field of Sport. The French association A La Nantaise, mentioned by the Honourable Member, was a partner within this project.

The Commission intends to further engage with supporters and other categories of stakeholders in order to continue the discussion on how to improve the governance of sport across the EU.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010644/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Cozzolino (S&D)
(18 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Questione rifiuti Campania — termovalorizzatore Giugliano

Considerando quanto segue:

— il Commissario straordinario ai rifiuti della Campania ha bandito una gara d'appalto per la concessione della progettazione, della realizzazione e della gestione del termovalorizzatore per i rifiuti stoccati in balle nella regione Campania;

— in Campania si stimano circa sei milioni di balle, prevalentemente nel sito di «Taverna del Re», che sono state dichiarate «bruciabili» solo con ordinanza dovuta a motivi emergenziali e limitatamente all'impianto di Acerra;

— le direttive europee prevedono che gli Stati membri debbano preventivamente seguire quattro «gradini» nel ciclo di gestione dei rifiuti;

— molti paesi europei stanno abbandonando la strada dell'incenerimento;

— l'Unione europea ha lanciato un invito a recuperare tutti i materiali preziosi contenuti nei nostri scarti, piuttosto che bruciarli nei termovalorizzatori;

— sono in corso due procedure di infrazione nei confronti dell'Italia,

si chiede:

1. se l'Italia e la Regione Campania abbiano rispettato i principi in materia di corretta gestione del ciclo integrato dei rifiuti;

2. se la scelta di inviare ai termovalorizzatori la frazione non riciclabile sia l'unica possibile strada esistente o se, viceversa, esistono alternative percorribili caratterizzate da tecnologie più moderne e meno inquinanti;

3. se l'Italia rischia di incorrere in una nuova procedura di infrazione, come accaduto per l'impianto di Acerra, nel caso in cui la società che gestirà l'impianto dovesse beneficiare degli incentivi CIP/6;

4. se sia possibile inviare le balle al termovalorizzatore senza avere prima effettuato una caratterizzazione scientifica atta a verificare l'assenza al loro interno di sostanze pericolose, come richiesto dalla decisione 2000/532/CE.

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(21 novembre 2013)

Nel contesto del procedimento d'infrazione 2007/2195 relativo alla gestione dei rifiuti in Campania, l'Italia si è impegnata a dare esecuzione alla sentenza del Tribunale UE del 4.3.2010 attuando il piano di gestione dei rifiuti in Campania («waste management plan» — WMP) adottato nel 2012. Il WMP prevede un passaggio dalla discarica alla riduzione dei rifiuti, alla raccolta differenziata, al recupero dei rifiuti organici e al recupero dell'energia.

A causa della mancata adozione di misure efficaci per attuare il WMP in tempi ragionevoli, la Commissione ha deciso, nel giugno 2013, di adire per la seconda volta la Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea.

Per quanto riguarda in particolare le circa 6 milioni di tonnellate di rifiuti imballati, ancora immagazzinate in Campania, il WMP prevede che questi vecchi rifiuti siano bruciati in un termovalorizzatore da costruire nella regione. Data la gravità della situazione dei rifiuti in Campania e il loro considerevole quantitativo, la Commissione ritiene che la decisione di incenerirli in un termovalorizzatore sia accettabile.

In base alle informazioni fornite dall'Italia, è in corso un'analisi dei rifiuti imballati in modo da stabilire la tecnologia di incenerimento da utilizzare per gli stessi. Tale analisi dovrebbe includere una valutazione della pericolosità dei rifiuti, a norma della direttiva 2008/98/CE ([1]) in combinato disposto con la decisione 2000/532/CE ([2]).

Nel caso in cui l'impianto di termovalorizzazione previsto soddisfi la normativa dell'Unione in materia di ambiente, la concessione di incentivi nell'ambito del programma CIP 6 potrebbe non comportare l'avvio di un procedimento di infrazione. Tuttavia, tali incentivi dovrebbero essere valutati e approvati dalla Commissione in base alle norme sugli aiuti di Stato applicabili.

([1]) Direttiva 2008/98/CE relativa ai rifiuti, GU L 312 del 22.11.2008.

([2]) Decisione 2000/532/CE che sostituisce la decisione 94/3/CE che istituisce un elenco di rifiuti conformemente all'articolo 1, lettera a), della direttiva 75/442/CEE del Consiglio relativa ai rifiuti e la decisione 94/904/CE del Consiglio che istituisce un elenco di rifiuti pericolosi ai sensi dell'articolo 1, paragrafo 4, della direttiva 91/689/CEE del Consiglio relativa ai rifiuti pericolosi (GU L 226 del 6.9.2000).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010644/13
to the Commission
Andrea Cozzolino (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Waste issue in Campania — Giugliano waste-to-energy plant

Taking into account the following facts:

— the special Commissioner for waste in Campania has issued a call for tender to award the project for designing, constructing and managing the waste-to-energy plant for waste stored in bales in the Campania region;

— there are estimated in Campania to be around six million bales, mainly at the 'Taverna del Re' site, which have been declared as being 'burnable' only by ordinance on emergency grounds and restricted to the Acerra plant;

— according to the EU directives, Member States must follow in advance four 'steps' in the waste management cycle;

— many European countries are abandoning the incineration option;

— the European Union has made a call for us to recover all the valuable materials contained in our refuse rather than burn them in waste-to-energy plants;

— they are two ongoing infringement procedures against Italy,

I have the following questions to ask:

1. Have Italy and the Campania region observed the principles for correctly managing the integrated waste cycle?

2. Is the decision to send the non-recyclable fraction to waste-to-energy plants the only possible option available or, conversely, are there viable alternatives deploying more modern and less polluting technologies?

3. Is Italy at risk of facing a new infringement procedure, as happened with the Acerra plant, if the company going to manage the plant were to benefit from the CIP 6 incentives?

4. Can the bales be sent to the waste-to-energy plant without having had a scientific breakdown established first to verify that they do not contain any hazardous substances, as required by Decision 2000/532/EC?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(21 November 2013)

In the context of the infringement procedure 2007/2195 concerning waste management in Campania, Italy engaged to execute the EU Court judgment of 4/3/2010 by implementing the Campania waste management plan (WMP) adopted in 2012. The WMP provides for a shift from landfilling to waste reduction, separate collection, recovery of organic waste and energy recovery.

For lack of effective measures to implement the WMP within reasonable timeframe, the Commission decided in June 2013 to apply to the EU Court for the second time.

As concerns in particular the about 6 million tons of baled waste still stored in Campania, the WMP foresees that this old waste should be burnt in a waste-to-energy plant to be built in Campania. Given the seriousness of the Campania waste situation and the considerable amount, the Commission considers that burning it in a waste-to-energy plant is acceptable.

According to the information provided by Italy, the baled waste is being analysed so as to establish the incineration technology to be used for this kind of waste. This analysis should include an assessment of the hazardousness of the waste, according to Directive 2008/98/EC ([1]) in conjunction with Decision 2000/532/EC ([2]).

([1]) Directive 2008/98/EC on waste (OJ L 312, 22.11.2008).
([2]) Decision 2000/532/EC replacing Decision 94/3/EC establishing a list of wastes pursuant to Article 1(a) of Council Directive 75/442/EEC on waste and Council Decision 94/904/EC establishing a list of hazardous waste pursuant to Article 1(4) of Council Directive 91/689/EEC on hazardous waste (OJ L 226, 6.9.2000).

In case the envisaged waste-to-energy plant meets Union environmental law, the granting of CIP 6 incentives could not lead to an infringement procedure. However, such incentives would have to be assessed and approved by the Commission under the applicable state aid rules.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010645/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(18 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Μεταφορά της έδρας της εταιρείας ΒΙΟΧΑΛΚΟ από την Ελλάδα στο Βέλγιο

Στις 16.9.2013, η ΒΙΟΧΑΛΚΟ, ο μεγαλύτερος ελληνικός μεταλλουργικός όμιλος, ανακοίνωσε την μεταφορά της έδρας της στο Βέλγιο, αποχωρώντας από την ελληνική κεφαλαιαγορά. Είναι η τρίτη μεγάλη ελληνική επιχείρηση, μετά την 3Ε και την ΦΑΓΕ, η οποία τον τελευταίο χρόνο μεταφέρει την έδρα της στο εξωτερικό.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα παραπάνω, καθώς επίσης και το γεγονός πως οι πολιτικές της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης δεσμεύονται από το μνημόνιο συμφωνίας μεταξύ της Ελλάδας και της τρόικας, μέλος της οποίας είναι η Επιτροπή, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Ποιοι είναι, κατά την άποψη της Επιτροπής, οι λόγοι που εξωθούν τις ελληνικές επιχειρήσεις να φεύγουν από την Ελλάδα, τέσσερα χρόνια μετά την έναρξη του προγράμματος δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή έχει πλήρη επίγνωση του ότι η Ελλάδα βρίσκεται σε ύφεση για έκτη συνεχή χρονιά, καθώς και ότι οι οικονομικές συνθήκες και οι όροι χρηματοδότησης είναι δυσχερείς για τον ελληνικό ιδιωτικό τομέα. Η δέσμη πολιτικών που περιλαμβάνεται στο μνημόνιο συμφωνίας στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος προσαρμογής αποσκοπεί στην οικοδόμηση μιας πιο στέρεας βάσης για την ανάπτυξη και τη δημιουργία θέσεων απασχόλησης στην Ελλάδα, που θα στηρίζεται σε βιώσιμα δημόσια οικονομικά, ένα σταθερό χρηματοπιστωτικό σύστημα και μια πιο ανταγωνιστική και δυναμική οικονομία.

Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, το ΜΣ περιέχει μεγάλο αριθμό μέτρων τα οποία στοχεύουν στην ενίσχυση του ιδιωτικού τομέα στην Ελλάδα, που είναι καίριας σημασίας για την εξασφάλιση βιώσιμης ανάπτυξης και δημιουργίας θέσεων απασχόλησης. Εκτός από τις φιλόδοξες μεταρρυθμίσεις της αγοράς εργασίας οι οποίες έχουν ήδη εφαρμοστεί, περιλαμβάνονται μέτρα για τη διευκόλυνση της χρηματοδότησης των ΜΜΕ, όπως είναι η σταθεροποίηση του τραπεζικού συστήματος και ένα νέο μη τραπεζικό χρηματοπιστωτικό ίδρυμα, καθώς και μέτρα για τη βελτίωση του επιχειρηματικού περιβάλλοντος, μεταξύ άλλων μέσω της μείωσης του χρόνου και του κόστους σύστασης νέων επιχειρήσεων, της απλούστευσης των διαδικασιών αδειοδότησης, της διευκόλυνσης των εμπορικών συναλλαγών και της βελτίωσης του δικαστικού συστήματος.

Ως εκ τούτου, η απαρέγκλιτη εφαρμογή του προγράμματος είναι ουσιαστικής σημασίας για τη βελτίωση των συνθηκών στον ελληνικό ιδιωτικό τομέα και της ικανότητας της Ελλάδας να προσελκύει άμεσες ξένες επενδύσεις. Ορισμένες ξένες επιχειρήσεις, όπως η COSCO Pacific, η Hewlett-Packard, η Nokia ή η ZTE Corporation, αποφάσισαν πρόσφατα να επενδύσουν στην Ελλάδα, γεγονός που αποδεικνύει ότι η Ελλάδα αποτελεί όλο και πιο ελκυστική επιλογή για επιχειρήσεις.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010645/13
to the Commission
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Relocation of registered office of Biochalko from Greece to Belgium

On 16 September 2013, Biochalko, the biggest mining group in Greece, announced that it was relocating its registered office to Belgium and exiting the Greek capital market. This is the third largest Greek company, after 3E and Fage, which has recently relocated its registered office abroad.

In view of the above and the fact that Greek Government policy is bound by the memorandum of understanding between Greece and the Troika, of which the Commission is a member, will the Commission say:

What, in its opinion, is pushing Greek companies to leave Greece four years after the economic readjustment programme started?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

The Commission is fully aware that Greece is in its sixth consecutive year of a recession and the current economic and financing conditions are challenging for the Greek private sector. The set of policies included in the memorandum of understanding in the context of the adjustment programme has the objective of building a more solid basis for growth and job creation in Greece, based on sustainable public finances, a stable financial system, and a more competitive and dynamic economy.

In this context, the MoU contains a large number of measures aimed at strengthening the private sector in Greece, which is key to ensure sustainable growth and employment creation. In addition to the ambitious labour market reforms already implemented, this includes measures to facilitate SME financing, such as the stabilisation of the banking system and a new non-bank financial institution, as well as measures to improve the business enviroment, including through the reduction of time and costs to create a company, simplification of licensing, trade facilitation and improvements in the judicial system.

Steadfast implementation of the programme is therefore essential to improve conditions for the Greek private sector as well as Greece's performance in attracting foreign direct investment.A number of foreign companies, such as Cosco Pacific, Hewlett-Packard, Nokia or ZTE Corporation, have recently decided to invest in Greece showing that the country is an increasingly attractive place for business.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010646/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(18 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Προβλέψεις του Διεθνούς Νομισματικού Ταμείου για το 2014 για το ελληνικό τραπεζικό σύστημα

Σύμφωνα με τις προβλέψεις του Διεθνούς Νομισματικού Ταμείου για το 2014 ([1]) ότι μεγέθη όπως private credit growth θα είναι 4,7 και private sector deposit growth θα είναι 5, ενώ, για το 2013, τα ίδια μεγέθη είναι -3,1 και -1,8 αντίστοιχα, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Σύμφωνα με τα επικαιροποιημένα στοιχεία που έχει για την εξέλιξη των πραγμάτων στο ελληνικό τραπεζικό σύστημα η αύξηση αυτή των παραπάνω μεγεθών είναι σύμφωνη με τις προβλέψεις;

και

Αν όχι, τότε τι επιπτώσεις θα έχει αυτή η απόκλιση από τις προβλέψεις στον ρυθμό ανάπτυξης;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή δημοσίευσε προσφάτως ανάλυση των επικαιροποιημένων στατιστικών για το ελληνικό τραπεζικό σύστημα, η οποία είναι διαθέσιμη στην έκθεση συμμόρφωσης του δεύτερου προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα του Ιουλίου 2013. Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή δεν αποφαίνεται για τις προοπτικές όσον αφορά την εξέλιξη των καταθέσεων ή του δανεισμού.

Κατά τη διάρκεια της συνεχιζόμενης επανεξέτασης προτείνεται επικαιροποιημένη αξιολόγηση των στατιστικών για το ελληνικό τραπεζικό σύστημα και τα πορίσματα θα κοινοποιηθούν στα σχετικά έγγραφα του προγράμματος.

([1]) First and Second Reviews Under the Extended Arrangement Under the Extended Fund Facility, Request for Waiver of Applicability, Modification of Performance Criteria, and Rephasing of Access — Staff Report; Staff Supplement; Press Release on the Executive Board Discussion; and Statement by the Executive Director for Greece, IMF Country Report No. 13/20, January 2013, p.52, table 9.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010646/13
to the Commission
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: International Monetary Fund forecasts for the Greek banking system in 2014

As, according to forecasts by the International Monetary Fund for 2014, ([1]) private credit growth will be 4.7 and private sector deposit growth will be 5, compared with -3.1 and -1.8 for 2013, will the Commission say:

Based on the updated statistics on the Greek banking system in its possession, is this increase in the above figures in keeping with forecasts?

If not, what impact will the difference have on anticipated rates of growth?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

The Commission latest published analysis of the updated statistics on the Greek banking system can be found in the July 2013 Compliance Report of the Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece. However, the Commission does not report on deposit or credit developments outlook.

An updated assessment of statistics on the Greek banking system is being proposed during the ongoing review and will be communicated in the related programme documents.

([1]) First and Second Reviews Under the Extended Arrangement Under the Extended Fund Facility, Request for Waiver of Applicability, Modification of Performance Criteria, and Rephasing of Access-Staff Report; Staff Supplement; Press Release on the Executive Board Discussion; and Statement by the Executive Director for Greece, IMF Country Report No 13/20, January 2013, p .52, Table 9.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010647/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(18 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Επιπτώσεις πρόωρων συνταξιοδοτήσεων περιόδου 2010-2012 στο έλλειμμα της γενικής κυβέρνησης

Σε συνέχεια της προηγούμενης ερώτησης και αντίστοιχης απάντησης (E-008078/2013) με θέμα τις πρόωρες συνταξιοδοτήσεις και επιπτώσεις στο έλλειμμα της γενικής κυβέρνησης ([1]), και, ειδικότερα, σε σχέση με τις δύο υποερωτήσεις για το αν η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει ποια είναι η επίπτωσή των πρόωρων συνταξιοδοτήσεων στο έλλειμμα της γενικής κυβέρνησης και αν θεωρεί ότι οι πρόωρες συνταξιοδοτήσεις συμβάλλουν στην προσπάθεια ανάκαμψης της ελληνικής οικονομίας, η Επιτροπή απαντά ότι λεπτομερή στοιχεία θα πρέπει να ζητηθούν από το κράτος μέλος.

Δεδομένου ότι στην εν λόγω ερώτηση δεν ζητήθηκαν λεπτομερή στοιχεία, αλλά ερωτήθηκε η Επιτροπή κατά πόσο έχει γνώση των σχετικών στοιχείων ή όχι, η ερώτηση επαναλαμβάνεται ως εξής:

Γνωρίζει η Επιτροπή ποια είναι η επίπτωσή των πρόωρων συνταξιοδοτήσεων της περιόδου 2010-2012 στο έλλειμμα της γενικής κυβέρνησης;

Αν η Επιτροπή δεν γνωρίζει, γιατί συμβαίνει αυτό; Αντιμετωπίζει το θέμα ως μικρής σημασίας ή δεν υφίστανται τα σχετικά στοιχεία;

Αν η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει, τότε γιατί δεν απάντησε στην υποβληθείσα ερώτηση;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(2 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Όπως αναφέρθηκε στην απάντηση στην κοινοβουλευτική ερώτηση (E-008078/2013), το Ελληνικό Κοινοβούλιο ενέκρινε την περίοδο 2010-2012, ως μέρος του ελληνικού προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής, σημαντικά μέτρα μεταρρύθμισης του συνταξιοδοτικού συστήματος με στόχο τον περιορισμό της πρόωρης συνταξιοδότησης (π.χ. αύξηση του κατώτατου ορίου ηλικίας συνταξιοδότησης, αύξηση της ελάχιστης περιόδου εισφορών ή αναθεώρηση του καταλόγου επικίνδυνων και ανθυγιεινών επαγγελμάτων). Τα μέτρα αναμένεται να μειώσουν την πρόωρη συνταξιοδότηση και να οδηγήσουν σε σημαντική εξοικονόμηση πόρων σε μεσοπρόθεσμη και μακροπρόθεσμη βάση. Ενόψει της επικείμενης θέσπισης αυστηρότερων κανόνων, τα εν λόγω μεταρρυθμιστικά μέτρα οδήγησαν σε μεγαλύτερο αριθμό ατόμων που υπέβαλαν αίτηση πρόωρης συνταξιοδότησης, γεγονός που αύξησε τις συνταξιοδοτικές δαπάνες βραχυπρόθεσμα. Σύμφωνα με την έκθεση του 2012 για τη δημογραφική γήρανση, οι δημόσιες δαπάνες για συντάξεις στην Ελλάδα προβλέπεται ωστόσο να αυξηθούν την περίοδο 2010-2060 μόνο κατά 1,00 π.μ. του ΑΕΠ, ποσοστό σαφώς χαμηλότερο από τον μέσο όρο της ΕΕ (+1,5 π.μ.) και επίσης 11,5 π.μ. χαμηλότερο από την προβλεπόμενη αύξηση για την Ελλάδα στην έκθεση του 2009 για τη δημογραφική γήρανση.

Λεπτομερείς στατιστικές πληροφορίες για τον αριθμό των συντάξεων στην Ελλάδα και την κατανομή μεταξύ κατηγοριών συντάξεων, καθώς και ηλικιακών ομάδων, παρέχονται στις εκθέσεις για «Στατιστικές πληροφορίες για τις συντάξεις» (ΗΔΙΟΣ), όπως δημοσιεύονται σε μηνιαία βάση από το Ελληνικό Υπουργείο Εργασίας, Κοινωνικής Ασφάλισης & Πρόνοιας ([2]). Οι εκθέσεις αυτές αναφέρουν επίσης το ποσό της σύνταξης και, ως εκ τούτου, τις δημοσιονομικές επιπτώσεις.

([1]) Early retirement and its impact on the general government deficit: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2013-008078%2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fEN&language=EN

([2]) http://www.idika.gr/esepsyntax. Βλ. π.χ. την έκθεση του Σεπτεμβρίου, σ. 7-8.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010647/13
to the Commission
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Impact of early retirements in 2010-2012 on the general government deficit

Further to a previous question and reply (E-008078/2013) on the question of early retirement and its impact on the general government deficit ([1]) and, in particular, two sub-questions asking if the Commission knows what impact early retirements are having on the general government deficit and if it considers that early retirements are helping to foster the recovery of the Greek economy, the Commission replied that detailed figures should be requested from the Member State.

In view of the fact that detailed figures were not requested in that question and the Commission was asked if it was aware of those detailed figures, may I repeat the question as follows:

Does the Commission know what impact early retirements in 2010-2012 had on the general government deficit?

If the Commission does not know, why does it not know? Is the issue being treated as an issue of minor importance or do the figures in question not exist?

If the Commission does know, then why did it not reply to the question?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(2 December 2013)

As indicated in the reply to the parliamentary question (E-008078/2013), significant pension reform measures to limit early retirement have been adopted by the Greek parliament between 2010 and 2012 as a part of the Greek economic adjustment programme (e.g. an increased (minimum) retirement age, increased penalties, an increased minimum contributory period or a revision of the list of hazardous and arduous professions). The measures are expected to reduce early retirement and lead to significant savings in the medium- and long-run. In anticipation of forthcoming stricter rules, these reform measures led to a higher number of persons have been seeking early retirement, which has increased pension expenditure in the short-term. According to the 2012 Ageing Report, public pension expenditures in Greece are nevertheless projected to increase between 2010 and 2060 only by 1.0 p.p. of GDP, which is clearly below the EU average (+1.5 p.p.) and even 11.5 p.p. lower than the projected increase for Greece in the 2009 Ageing Report.

Detailed statistical information on the number of pensions in payment in Greece and the division between pension categories as well as age groups can be found in the reports on 'Statistical Information for Pensions' (Helios), as published on a monthly basis by the Hellenic Ministry of Labour, Social Security & Welfare ([2]). These reports also indicate the pension amount and thus the budgetary impact.

([1]) Early retirement and its impact on the general government deficit: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2013-008078%2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fEN&language=EN

([2]) http://www.idika.gr/esepsyntax see e.g. the September report, p.7-8.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010648/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(18 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Μελέτη αναλογιστικής ισορροπίας του ασφαλιστικού συστήματος

Στην σύμβαση δανειακής διευκόλυνσης 2010 και στο πλαίσιο της ασφαλιστικής μεταρρύθμισης, προβλέπεται ότι η «Εθνική Αναλογιστική Αρχή θα εκπονήσει μελέτη προκειμένου να εξασφαλιστεί ότι οι παράμετροι του νέου συστήματος διασφαλίζουν μακροπρόθεσμα αναλογιστική ισορροπία ([1])».

Κατόπιν τούτου, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Έχει ολοκληρωθεί η σχετική μελέτη;

Εάν ναι, έχει περιέλθει στην Επιτροπή;

Με στοιχεία ποιου έτους και ποιο μακροοικονομικό σενάριο έχει ολοκληρωθεί η σχετική μελέτη;

Εάν έχει ολοκληρωθεί και έχει περιέλθει στην Επιτροπή, θεωρεί η Επιτροπή αναγκαία την επικαιροποίησή της και πότε;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Η Εθνική Αναλογιστική Αρχή (ΕΑΑ) εκπόνησε τον Ιανουάριο του 2012 ([2]) αναλογιστική μελέτη αναφορικά με το ελληνικό συνταξιοδοτικό σύστημα. Η Επιτροπή συνεργάστηκε στενά με την ΕΑΑ στην εκπόνηση της μελέτης, η οποία αποτέλεσε αντικείμενο αξιολόγησης από ομοτίμους και εγκρίθηκε από το συμβούλιο οικονομικής πολιτικής. Τα κύρια συμπεράσματα της αναλογιστικής μελέτης παρουσιάζονται στην έκθεση για τη δημογραφική γήρανση του 2012 ([3]).

Το έτος βάσης για τα μακροοικονομικά σενάρια που χρησιμοποιήθηκαν στην έκθεση για τη δημογραφική γήρανση του 2012 ήταν το 2010. Η κατασκευή των μακροοικονομικών σεναρίων περιγράφεται λεπτομερώς στον πρώτο τόμο της έκθεσης για τη δημογραφική γήρανση του 2012 με τίτλο: Underlying Assumptions and Projection Methodologies (Βασικές παραδοχές και μεθοδολογίες πρόβλεψης) ([4]).

Η Ελλάδα, μαζί με όλα τα άλλα κράτη μέλη, αναμένεται να εκπονήσει νέες προβλέψεις για το συνταξιοδοτικό, ενόψει της προσεχούς έκθεσης για τη δημογραφική γήρανση που θα δημοσιευθεί το 2015. Οι προβλέψεις αυτές θα διενεργηθούν στη βάση νέας δέσμης δημογραφικών προβλέψεων από την EUROSTAT.

([1]) ΣΥΜΒΑΣΗ ΔΑΝΕΙΑΚΗΣ ΔΙΕΥΚΟΛΥΝΣΗΣ μεταξύ ΤΩΝ ΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΩΝ ΚΡΑΤΩΝ ΜΕΛΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΟΠΟΙΩΝ ΝΟΜΙΣΜΑ ΕΙΝΑΙ ΤΟ ΕΥΡΩ: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΟ ΤΟΥ ΒΕΛΓΙΟΥ, ΙΡΛΑΝΔΙΑ, ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΟ ΤΗΣ ΙΣΠΑΝΙΑΣ, ΓΑΛΛΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ, ΙΤΑΛΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ, ΚΥΠΡΙΑΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ, ΜΕΓΑΛΟ ΔΟΥΚΑΤΟ ΤΟΥ ΛΟΥΞΕΜΒΟΥΡΓΟΥ, ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΜΑΛΤΑΣ, ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΟ ΤΩΝ ΚΑΤΩ ΧΩΡΩΝ, ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΑΥΣΤΡΙΑΣ, ΠΟΡΤΟΓΑΛΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ, ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΣΛΟΒΕΝΙΑΣ, ΣΛΟΒΑΚΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ και ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΦΙΝΛΑΝΔΙΑΣ και του KfW, που υπόκειται στις οδηγίες, τελεί υπό την εγγύηση και ενεργεί προς το δημόσιο συμφέρον της Ομοσπονδιακής Δημοκρατίας της Γερμανίας, ως Δανειστών και ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗΣ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑΣ ως Δανειολήπτη ΤΗΣ ΤΡΑΠΕΖΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ ως Αντιπροσώπου του Δανειολήπτη 8 ΜΑΪΟΥ 2010, παράγραφος 13, σελ. 68.

([2]) Βλ.: http://www.eaa.gr/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=cGnwVw7zUkk%3D&tabid=92&mid=422&language=el-GR

([3]) Βλ.: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2012/2012-ageing-report_en.htm

([4]) Βλ.: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2011/ee4_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010648/13
to the Commission
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Report on actuarial balance in the pension system

Provision is made under pension reform in the 2010 loan facility agreement for the National Actuarial Authority to produce a report to verify that the parameters of the new system ensure long-term actuarial balance. ([1])

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Has that report been completed?

If so, has the Commission received it?

On which year's figures was the report based and which macroeconomic scenario was used?

If it has been completed and the Commission has received it, does the Commission consider that it should be updated and, if so, when?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(7 November 2013)

An actuarial study on the Greek pension system was conducted by the National Actuarial Authority (NAA) in January 2012 ([2]). The Commission worked in close cooperation with the NAA in conducting the study. It was subject to a peer review and endorsed by the Economic Policy Committee and the main results of the actuarial study are shown in the 2012 Ageing Report ([3]).

The base year for the macroeconomic scenarios used in the 2012 Ageing Report was 2010. The construction of macroeconomic scenarios is laid out in detail in the first volume of the 2012 Ageing Report: Underlying Assumptions and Projection Methodologies ([4]).

Greece, together with all other Member States, is expected to produce new pension projections for the next Ageing Report, to be published in 2015. These projections will be carried out on the basis of a new set of population projections by Eurostat.

([1]) Loan Facility Agreement between the following Member States whose currency is the Euro: Kingdom of Belgium, Ireland, Kingdom of Spain, French Republic, Italian Republic, Republic of Cyprus, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, Republic of Malta, Kingdom of the Netherlands, Republic of Austria, Portuguese Republic, Republic of Slovenia, Slovak Republic and Republic of Finland and KfW, acting in the public interest, subject to the instructions of and with the benefit of the guarantee of the Federal Republic of Germany, as Lenders and the Hellenic Republic as Borrower, the Bank of Greece as Agent to the Borrower 8 May 2010, paragraph 13, p. 68.

([2]) See: http://www.eaa.gr/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=cGnwVw7zUkk%3D&tabid=92&mid=422&language=el-GR

([3]) See: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2012/2012-ageing-report_en.htm

([4]) See: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2011/ee4_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010649/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(18 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Προβλέψεις μνημονίου για τους φόρους επί της ακίνητης περιουσίας

Στο Μνημόνιο Συνεννόησης στις Συγκεκριμένες Προϋποθέσεις Οικονομικής Πολιτικής 2012, στο πλαίσιο της φορολογικής μεταρρύθμισης αναφέρεται ότι «μέχρι τον Ιούνιο του 2012 η κυβέρνηση θα αναθεωρήσει τις αντικειμενικές αξίες της ακίνητης περιουσίας για να τις ευθυγραμμίσει σε μεγαλύτερο βαθμό προς τις τιμές της αγοράς ([1])».

Κατόπιν τούτου, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Πότε προβλέπεται να εκπληρωθεί ο όρος αυτός του Μνημονίου;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Οι ελληνικές αρχές συνεχίζουν τις εργασίες επί της τυπικής διαδικασίας για την αναθεώρηση της αντικειμενικής αξίας των ακινήτων, ώστε να εναρμονιστούν καλύτερα με τις τιμές της αγοράς. Η τυπική αυτή διαδικασία θα ισχύει για τους σκοπούς της φορολογίας ακινήτων για το οικονομικό έτος 2016 ([2]).

([1]) Μνημόνιο Συνεννόησης στις Συγκεκριμένες Προϋποθέσεις Οικονομικής Πολιτικής 9 ΦΕΒΡΟΥΑΡΙΟΥ 2012, Φορολογική Μεταρρύθμιση, παράγραφος 2.3, σελ. 5.

([2]) http://www.tovima.gr/files/1/2012/10/23/MEMORANDUM_1.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010649/13
to the Commission
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Provisions in the memorandum for real estate taxes

The Memorandum of Understanding on Specific Economic Policy Conditionality 2012 states, in connection with fiscal reform, that 'by June 2012, the Government will revise the legal values of real estate to better align them with market prices'. ([1])

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

When is this term of the memorandum expected to be fulfilled?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

The Greek authorities continue to work on a standard procedure for the revision of legal values of real estate in order to better align them with market prices. Such standard procedure will be in place for the purposes of real estate taxation for the fiscal year 2016 ([2]).

([1]) Memorandum of Understanding on Specific Economic Policy Conditionality of 9 February 2012, Fiscal Reforms, paragraph 2.3, p. 5.
([2]) http://www.tovima.gr/files/1/2012/10/23/MEMORANDUM_1.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010650/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(18 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Άδειες ίδρυσης και λειτουργίας Συνεργείων Επισκευής και Συντήρησης Μηχανημάτων Έργων (ΣΕΣΜΕ)

Στην Ελλάδα, σύμφωνα με την παράγραφο 4 του άρθρου 6 του νόμου 1575/85, προβλέπεται η υπογραφή του προεδρικού διατάγματος για την άδειες ίδρυσης και λειτουργίας Συνεργείων Επισκευής και Συντήρησης Μηχανημάτων Έργων (ΣΕΣΜΕ). Η υπογραφή του εν λόγω προεδρικού διατάγματος δεν έχει πραγματοποιηθεί μέχρι και σήμερα, με αποτέλεσμα τα μηχανήματα έργων να μην υποβάλλονται σε τακτικό μηχανολογικό έλεγχο, με τις αντίστοιχες συνέπειες που αυτό έχει στο περιβάλλον — ασύστολη ρύπανση του περιβάλλοντος από τις ανεξέλεγκτες διαρροές λιπαντικών — στο διάστημα των ετών από το 1985 μέχρι και σήμερα. Δηλαδή, επί 28 δηλαδή χρόνια.

Δεδομένης της επίπτωσης που έχουν η καθυστέρηση της ίδρυση και λειτουργίας των ΣΕΣΜΕ, όπως και ο συνεπαγόμενος τακτικός μηχανολογικός έλεγχος των μηχανημάτων έργων στο περιβάλλον, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Είναι ο τακτικός έλεγχος των μηχανημάτων έργων αναγκαίος σύμφωνα με τις γενικές και ειδικές διατάξεις της Ευρωπαϊκής Νομοθεσίας για τον έλεγχο των πηγών ρύπανσης;

Αν ναι, τότε πώς αντιμετωπίζει η Επιτροπή την μακροχρόνια καθυστέρηση υπογραφής του σχετικού προεδρικού διατάγματος και την απουσία τακτικού μηχανολογικού ελέγχουν των μηχανημάτων έργων;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Συναφείς ευρωπαϊκοί κανόνες αφορούν εγκαταστάσεις που ασκούν δραστηριότητες οι οποίες απαριθμούνται στο παράρτημα I της οδηγίας 2010/75/ΕΕ περί βιομηχανικών εκπομπών ([1]). Σύμφωνα με την εν λόγω οδηγία, οι εγκαταστάσεις αυτές λειτουργούν βάσει της αδείας, που επιβάλλει την εφαρμογή των βέλτιστων διαθέσιμων τεχνικών (ΒΔΤ).

Οι δραστηριότητες για τις «μηχανικές επισκευές» και όσον αφορά τις τακτικές μηχανικές δοκιμές μηχανημάτων έργων δεν προσδιορίζονται στο παράρτημα I της οδηγίας 2010/75/ΕΕ. Ως εκ τούτου, οι δραστηριότητες που αναφέρονται δεν καλύπτονται από την νομοθεσία στον τομέα των βιομηχανικών εκπομπών.

([1]) ΕΕ L 334 της 17.12.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010650/13
to the Commission
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Licences to establish and operate works machinery repair and servicing workshops

Provision is being made in Greece for a presidential decree to be signed under Article 6(4) of Law 1575/85 on licences to establish and operate works machinery repair and servicing workshops. The presidential decree in question has not yet been signed, meaning that works machinery is not subject to regular mechanical testing. This has been causing an environment impact in the form of flagrant environmental pollution from uncontrolled leaks of lubricants since 1985 i.e. for 28 years.

In view of the impact that the delay in establishing and operating works machinery repair and servicing workshops and hence regular mechanical testing of works machinery is having on the environment, will the Commission say:

Is regular testing of works machinery necessary under the general and specific provisions of European legislation on controlling sources of pollution?

If so, how will the Commission address the delayed signing of the presidential decree in question and the absence of regular mechanical testing of works machinery?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(4 November 2013)

Relevant European rules concern installations engaged in activities listed in Annex I to Directive 2010/75/EU on industrial emissions ([1]). According to this directive, such installations operate in accordance with a permit requiring the application of the best available techniques (BAT).

The activities for 'machinery repair' and for the regular mechanical testing of works machinery are not specified in Annex I to Directive 2010/75/EU. Therefore, the activities referred to are not covered by the legislation on industrial emissions.

([1]) OJ L 334, 17.12.2010.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010651/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL) e João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(18 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Salvaguarda do interesse público associado à prestação de serviços aéreos regulares aos distritos de Bragança e de Vila Real

No âmbito dos auxílios sociais à mobilidade dos cidadãos residentes nos distritos de Bragança e de Vila Real e outros beneficiários, relativamente ao serviço aéreo entre Bragança-Lisboa, Lisboa-Bragança, Vila Real-Lisboa e Lisboa-Vila Real, o Governo português publicou um decreto-lei, aguardando-se a publicação de uma portaria que definirá o valor, termos e extensão do subsídio social de mobilidade.

Atendendo a que a aprovação da portaria referida depende da decisão da Comissão Europeia, a emitir no âmbito do procedimento de notificação de auxílios de Estado, previsto no Regulamento (CE) n.° 659/1999 do Conselho, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Já tomou qualquer decisão sobre esta matéria? Se sim, qual foi essa decisão e quando será publicada?

2. Se ainda não a tomou, quando prevê que seja tomada, tendo em conta que dela depende o início do seu pagamento em Portugal?

Resposta dada por Joaquin Almunia em nome da Comissão
(6 de novembro de 2013)

A Comissão foi notificada do regime proposto em 26 de março de 2013; no entanto, essa notificação acabou por ser retirada em 30 de setembro de 2013. Nestes termos, não será adotada qualquer decisão no que respeita às referidas ligações aéreas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010651/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL) and João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Protecting the public interest in the provision of regular air services to the Bragança and Vila Real districts

Pending the publication of an ordinance to specify the amount, terms and scope of the subsidy, the Portuguese Government has published a decree-law on providing aid for the mobility of citizens living in the districts of Bragança and Vila Real and other beneficiaries, with regard to the Bragança-Lisbon, Lisbon-Bragança, Vila Real-Lisbon and Lisbon-Vila Real air links.

Approval of this ordinance is dependent on the Commission issuing a decision under the state aid notification procedure laid down in Council Regulation (EC) No 659/1999.

1. Has the Commission already taken a decision on this issue? If so, what was the decision and when will it be published?

2. If not, when does it expect this decision to be taken, given that payment of the subsidy in Portugal is dependent upon it?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(6 November 2013)

The Commission was notified of the proposed scheme referred to on 26 March 2013, however this notification was eventually withdrawn on 30 September 2013. Therefore no decision will be taken with regard to the flight links referred to.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-010652/13
a la Comisión
Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE)
(18 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Uso de los medios de comunicación con fines políticos

En septiembre de 2013, el canal de televisión público Televisió de Catalunya (Canal 33-TV3), en su programa infantil «Info K», emitió un reportaje en el que se entrevistó a niños de 12 y 14 años de edad que explicaban su experiencia en la cadena humana del pasado 11 de septiembre para reclamar la independencia de Cataluña.

El reportaje no sólo ha enviado mensajes políticos a favor de la independencia en un programa en horario infantil y dirigido a la infancia, sino que ha usado menores de edad para dicha finalidad partidista.

Entre las declaraciones de los niños se recogen expresiones como «España se rendirá y podremos tener la independencia», «vengo a luchar por tener la independencia» o incluso «en 1714 dejamos de ser independientes».

¿Cree la Comisión que un medio de comunicación público debe utilizar a menores de edad con fines políticos?

¿Cree la Comisión que enviar mensajes políticos en programas infantiles es atentar contra la libertad de opinión y la protección de la infancia?

Respuesta de la Sra. Kroes en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de noviembre de 2013)

La Directiva de servicios de comunicación audiovisual ([1]) tiene en cuenta que es necesario equilibrar la protección de los menores frente a los servicios de comunicación audiovisual con otros importantes valores de una sociedad democrática, como, por ejemplo, la libertad de expresión. La Comisión observa que, fundamentalmente, es competencia de la autoridad española de reglamentación garantizar la aplicación de la citada Directiva y comprobar el cumplimiento de las medidas nacionales de transposición por parte de los organismos de radiodifusión.

La Comisión no puede afirmar que se aplique a los hechos en cuestión, tal como los describe Su Señoría, el artículo 27 de la Directiva de servicios de comunicación audiovisual, que versa de forma específica sobre los contenidos que pueden perjudicar seriamente el desarrollo de los menores. Independientemente de lo anterior, tampoco considera que el programa en cuestión atente contra la libertad de opinión.

([1]) Directiva 2010/13/UE, de 10 de marzo de 2010 (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:095:0001:0024:ES:PDF).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010652/13
to the Commission
Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Use of the media for political purposes

In September 2013, the public television station Televisió de Catalunya (Channel 33, TV3) broadcast a report in its children's programme 'Info K' featuring interviews with children aged 12 and 14 talking about their experiences as part of the 'human chain' formed on 11 September in support of demands for an independent Catalonia.

The report not only used a programme broadcast during children's viewing hours and aimed specifically at children to deliver political messages in favour of independence, but it did so using minors for party-political purposes.

The children's statements included declarations such as 'Spain will surrender and we will have independence', 'I will fight for independence' and 'in 1714 we ceased to be independent'.

Does the Commission believe that public media should be allowed to use minors for political purposes?

Does the Commission consider using children's programmes to deliver political messages to be an attack on the freedom of opinion and the protection of children?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(19 November 2013)

The Audiovisual Media Services Directive ([1]) takes into account that the protection of minors from audiovisual media services must be balanced with other important values of a democratic society, as for instance freedom of expression. The Commission observes that it is primarily the competence of the Spanish regulatory authorities to ensure implementation of the AVMSD, and scrutinise broadcasters' compliance with domestic transposition measures.

The Commission cannot conclude that the facts of the case, as described by the Honourable Member, would bring into play Article 27 of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive which specifically deals with content which might seriously impair minors' development. Neither does it see how, independently of this, the programme at issue could be said to breach freedom of opinion.

([1]) Directive 2010/13/EU of 10 March 2010 — http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:095:0001:0024:EN:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010654/13
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: European order for payment procedure

Under Article 32 of Regulation (EC) No 1896/2006, the Commission is required to present a detailed report reviewing the operation of the European Order for Payment procedure by 12 December 2013. Member States are required to provide information to the Commission for the purpose of producing the report.

Can the Commission inform us:

1. When the report is expected to be submitted?

2. Whether the UK has made any representations to the Commission regarding the operation of the procedure in Scotland (and in the rest of the UK) and, if not, when it intends to do this?

3. Whether the UK (within Scotland or elsewhere in the UK) is accepting representations from individual parties and practitioners regarding the use of the procedure and, if so, who the representations should be sent to?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(12 November 2013)

The Commission is preparing the report reviewing the operation of the European order for payment procedure in view of submitting it to the European Parliament in December 2013 as foreseen in Article 32 of the regulation (EC) No 1896/2006. To this end, the Commission has launched a detailed questionnaire to Member States on the application of the European order for payment procedure which is in force in their jurisdiction since December 2008.

On the basis of the replies to the questionnaire the report will show how the procedure is used, also in the UK. Furthermore, the Honourable member should be aware that all relevant information concerning the submission of the claim to the courts in England and Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland is already published on the website of the European Judicial Atlas:
http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/judicialatlascivil/html/epo_communicationshtml_uk_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010655/13
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Civil liability of employers

The UK, under the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act, has witnessed the removal of the civil liability of employers for breaches of health and safety rules.

Can the Commission outline how Scottish workers' rights will be protected? Does it believe that this act contravenes EU health and safety law?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 November 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-005951/2013.

In addition, the Commission has sent a request for information to the UK authorities within the frame of the EU Pilot system, regarding the removal of the civil liability of employers for breaches of health and safety rules in the UK legal order, further to the adoption of the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act.

The Commission will thoroughly analyse the reply of the UK authorities in light of assessing the conformity of the mentioned Act with the EU health and safety at work legislation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010656/13
to the Commission
Giles Chichester (ECR)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Recognition of professional qualifications — revision of Directive 2005/36/EC

Does the Commission agree that the proposals made by the Council of European Dentists regarding the proposal for a directive amending Directive 2005/36/EC (2011/0435(COD)) undermine the independent practice of dentistry by non-dentist dental professionals and restrict their movement across the EU?

How does the Commission plan to ensure the freedom of movement and recognition of professional qualifications whilst maintaining high standards of practice?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(21 November 2013)

Directive 2005/36/EC ([1]) constitutes the European framework for the recognition of professional qualifications. For seven professions, including dental practitioners, this directive coordinates the minimum training conditions, which allows for the automatic recognition of these professional qualifications. In December 2011, the Commission presented a proposal for the modernisation of the Professional Qualifications Directive. In June 2013, the European Parliament and the Council reached a political agreement on the modernisation of this directive ([2]).

Under the modernised Directive, the minimum training requirements of basic and specialist dental trainings will be updated ([3]). These changes reflect some of the proposals made by the Council of European Dentists on 20 September 2011 in its response to the Commission's Green Paper Modernising the Professional Qualifications Directive.

The Commission believes that the Modernised Professional Qualifications Directive will further facilitate the mobility of dental practitioners whilst ensuring high quality of dental care in the European Union.

([1]) Directive 2005/36/EC of Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications, OJ L 255, 30.9.2005.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/barnier/headlines/speeches/2013/06/20130612-2_en.htm
([3]) The minimum duration of basic dental training would be expressed not only in years (5 years) but also in training hours (5000 hours); and the principle of automatic recognition would apply also to the dental specialties which are common to at least two-fifths of Member States.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010657/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Aceh and the Helsinki MOU

In 2005 the Government of the Republic of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement signed the memorandum of understanding (generally known as the Helsinki MOU) which brought an end to the violence on the island of Sumatra.

The Aceh conflict left between 10 000 and 30 000 people dead, and organisations such as Amnesty International and other human rights groups have documented a range of crimes committed by members of the security forces and their auxiliaries against the civilian population, including unlawful killings and torture.

The 2005 Helsinki MOU called, in its paragraph 2.3, for the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission for Aceh. It also called, in its paragraph 2.2, for the creation of a human rights court. However, neither of these bodies exists, and there are very few examples of those responsible for serious human rights abuses being brought to justice, while attempts to provide reparation to victims have been described as inadequate.

What representations have been made to the Indonesian authorities to ensure the establishment of the aforementioned court and commission?

What support is the EU offering to assist with justice, reparation and reconciliation in Aceh?

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

A law establishing a national Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was adopted in 2004 but struck down by the Constitutional Court in 2006. A revised law has been prepared by the Ministry of Law and Human Rights but has yet to be submitted to the House of Representatives.

The EU has supported efforts of civil society in Indonesia in the field of human rights and in promoting the establishment of a TRC, by providing, for instance, funding under EIDHR to the International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) and the Institute for Policy Research and Advocacy (ELSAM). Moreover, as part of its support to the Aceh peace process, the EU funded the Access to Justice Project and supported the Crisis Management Initiative (CMI), which helped establish a regular dialogue between Aceh representatives and the central government in addressing outstanding issue under the MOU, including the question of a TRC.

In the context of the annual EU-Indonesia Human Rights Dialogue, the EU has also encouraged Indonesia to establish a TRC and will continue to encourage the regional government and Jakarta to address outstanding issues regarding the implementation of the MOU as well as the 2006 Law on the Governing of Aceh.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010658/13
à la Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(18 septembre 2013)

Objet: Inondations dans le Sud-Ouest: lutte contre le réchauffement climatique et Fonds de Solidarité de l'Union européenne

De sévères inondations ont frappé au mois de juin dernier la France, notamment plusieurs vallées pyrénéennes. Elles ont fait plusieurs centaines de millions d'euros de dégâts publics et privés. De nombreux villages ont été isolés suite à la destruction d'infrastructures, beaucoup d'entreprises ont perdu leurs moyens de production et l'agriculture a subi des pertes considérables.

Ce phénomène n'était pas isolé: l'Allemagne, l'Autriche, la République tchèque, la Slovaquie, la Hongrie ainsi que l'Espagne ont également été touchées. Suite à ces événements, le Parlement européen a adopté le 3 juillet dernier une «résolution sur les inondations en Europe (2013/2683(RSP))» (P7_TA(2013)0316). Ce texte demande à ce que soient revues et simplifiées les règles de fonctionnement du Fonds de Solidarité de l'Union européenne institué par le règlement (CE) n° 2012/2002 du Conseil du 11 novembre 2002 et à ce que la procédure d'attribution d'aides aux régions sinistrées soit accélérée.

Je pense que les dégâts considérables causés par les inondations dans le Sud-Ouest justifient pleinement l'attribution urgente d'aides issues de ce Fonds de solidarité de l'Union européenne.

En dehors de ces aides de gestion de crise, il me semble aussi indispensable d'intervenir en amont pour prévenir ces catastrophes «naturelles». Il est clair que leur fréquence, leur gravité, leur complexité et leur impact se sont accrus ces dernières années. Le groupe d'experts intergouvernemental sur l'évolution du climat (GIEC) prévoit une aggravation significative de ces phénomènes météorologiques extrêmes. Il devient donc urgent que l'Union européenne lutte activement contre le réchauffement climatique. La diminution des émissions de gaz à effet de serre doit devenir notre priorité absolue pour pouvoir maintenir le réchauffement global au-dessous de 2 °C.

1. Comment la Commission compte-t-elle agir pour lutter plus efficacement contre le réchauffement climatique et ainsi prévenir au maximum les événements climatiques extrêmes?

2. Où en est la Commission dans l'instruction des demandes d'aides issues du Fonds de Solidarité de l'Union européenne pour le Sud-Ouest de la France?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Hedegaard au nom de la Commission
(11 novembre 2013)

1. Au titre de la Convention-cadre des Nations unies sur les changements climatiques, la communauté internationale a convenu de maintenir le réchauffement climatique au-dessous de 2 °C. L'Union européenne participe activement aux négociations concernant un nouvel accord international sur les changements climatiques qui devrait entrer en vigueur en 2020 et contribuer au respect de cet objectif. Outre l'application du paquet législatif sur l'énergie et le climat et ses objectifs «20/20/20» pour 2020, la mise en place du cadre d'action de l'UE pour le climat et l'énergie à l'horizon 2030 est également en cours. Il convient que ce cadre soit suffisamment ambitieux pour que l'Union soit en mesure de réduire ses émissions de gaz à effet de serre de 80 % à 95 % par rapport aux niveaux de 1990 d'ici à 2050, dans le cadre des efforts à déployer par les pays développés, et puisse ainsi atteindre son objectif à long terme.

Pour autant, l'Union n'a d'autre choix que de s'adapter aux changements climatiques qui résultent des effets différés des émissions passées et présentes. La stratégie d'adaptation de l'Union européenne ([1]) vise à rendre l'Europe plus résiliente aux changements climatiques. Elle préconise notamment l'adoption de stratégies d'adaptation aux niveaux national et régional, et propose des lignes directrices et éventuellement un soutien financier pour leur élaboration.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/adaptation/what/documentation_en.htm

En vertu de la directive «Inondations» ([2]), les évaluations préliminaires des risques d'inondation, indiquant, le cas échéant, l'incidence des changements climatiques sur les risques d'inondation, devaient être terminées pour la fin de l'année 2011. Les cartes des zones inondables et les cartes des risques d'inondation doivent être établies pour la fin de l'année 2015. Pour cette même date, les États membres doivent également achever et publier leurs plans de gestion des risques d'inondation, qui seront régulièrement revus et, au besoin, actualisés. La définition d'objectifs concrets de réduction des risques d'inondation et le choix des mesures à mettre en œuvre sont laissés à la discrétion des États membres.

2. Le Fonds de solidarité de l'Union européenne ne peut intervenir qu'à la demande des autorités nationales du pays touché dans un délai de 10 semaines à compter de la survenue de la catastrophe. Une telle demande n'a pas été présentée par les autorités françaises.

([2]) Directive 2007/60/CE (JO L 288 du 6.11.2007, p. 27).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010658/13
to the Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Floods in south-west France — combating global warming and the EU Solidarity Fund

In June 2013, severe floods hit France and some valleys in the Pyrenees in particular. Damage amounting to hundreds of millions of euros was done to public and private property. Many villages were cut off, many businesses lost their means of production and famers suffered considerable losses.

This was not an isolated extreme weather event — Germany, Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Spain were also affected. In response to these events, on 3 July 2013 Parliament adopted a resolution on floods in Europe (2013/2683(RSP)) (P7_TA(2013)0316) calling for the rules on the functioning of the EU Solidarity Fund, which was established by Council Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002 of 11 November 2002, to be reviewed and simplified and for the allocation of aid to the affected regions to be speeded up.

The sheer scale of the devastation caused by the floods in south-west France fully justifies the urgent allocation of aid from the EU Solidarity Fund.

This crisis management aid should be accompanied by measures aimed at preventing 'natural' disasters. It is clear that in recent years, these events have become more frequent, serious and complex and their impact even more devastating. What is more, the intergovernmental panel on climate change (IPCC) has warned that these extreme weather events are likely to get significantly worse. The EU should, therefore, take urgent action to combat global warming. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions should become our absolute priority in order to limit the global temperature rise to below 2°C.

1. How does the Commission intend to combat global warming more effectively, thus minimising the risk of extreme weather events?

2. What progress has the Commission made in processing the applications for EUSF aid for south-west France?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(11 November 2013)

1. The international community, under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, agreed on limiting global warming below 2°C. The EU is engaging proactively in the negotiations on a new international climate agreement that should take effect in 2020 and would contribute to meeting this objective. Beyond the application of the EUclimate and energy package and its 20/20/20 targets by 2020, work is also ongoing on the EU climate and energy policy framework for up to 2030. It should be sufficiently ambitious to ensure the EU is on track to meet its long-term goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80-95% below 1990 levels by 2050 as part of the effort needed from developed countries.

In parallel, the EU has no choice but to adapt to climate change, due to the delayed impacts of past and current emissions. The EU Adaptation Strategy ([1]) aims to contribute to a more climate resilient Europe. It notably calls for the adoption of adaptation strategies at national and subnational levels, and provides guidelines and potential financial support for their development.

Under the Floods Directive ([2]), preliminary flood risk assessments, considering where applicable the impact of climate change on floods, were required by the end of 2011. Flood hazard and risk maps should be completed by end of 2015. Member States have to complete and publish Flood Risk Management Plans by end of 2015, to be periodically reviewed and if needed updated. Setting concrete risk reduction objectives and selection of measures is left to Member States.

2. The EU Solidarity Fund can only intervene following an application by the national authorities of the affected country within 10 weeks of the occurrence of the disaster. The French authorities submitted no such application.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/adaptation/what/documentation_en.htm
([2]) Directive 2007/60/EC, OJ L 288, 6.11.2007, p.27.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010659/13
à la Commission
Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(18 septembre 2013)

Objet: Directive sur les services de paiements (PSD II)

Le 24 juillet 2013, la Commission européenne a adopté un paquet législatif portant sur le domaine du cadre européen des paiements. Ce paquet inclut notamment une révision de la directive sur les services de paiements (PSD II) afin d'uniformiser les règles en matière de cartes de paiement dans l'Union européenne.

Or, certaines études montrent que cette directive n'est pas bénéfique pour l'ensemble des consommateurs des vingt-huit États membres de l'Union européenne. En effet, elle pourrait plus particulièrement desservir les consommateurs français en n'ayant pas les effets de simplification espérés. Les consommateurs français paieraient alors des frais plus élevés sur leurs cartes bancaires.

Cette mesure pourrait avoir pour conséquence de détourner les consommateurs français de ce moyen de paiement, ce qui est contraire à l'objectif du paquet législatif.

Ainsi, à la lumière de ces éléments, la Commission prévoit-t-elle de revoir cette directive afin de prendre davantage en compte les conséquences sur les consommateurs européens?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(13 novembre 2013)

Le paquet «Paiements» adopté le 24 juillet se compose d'une proposition de directive sur les services de paiement (PSD2) et d'une proposition de règlement relatif aux commissions d'interchange pour les opérations de paiement liées à une carte. L'objectif de ce paquet est de simplifier et de moderniser le cadre juridique des paiements électroniques, en tenant compte des progrès techniques. Le règlement proposé se fonde sur les informations de marché recueillies durant les dix dernières années, y compris l'expérience acquise dans le cadre des enquêtes de concurrence sur les commissions d'interchange, ainsi sur de très larges consultations menées au cours des deux dernières années.

L'Honorable Parlementaire s'inquiète de ce que les propositions pourraient entraîner une hausse des frais pour les cartes «consommateurs»; cette préoccupation a été exprimée par rapport aux plafonds proposés en matière de commissions d'interchange. Nos analyses, de même des études réalisées par différentes organisations et les contacts avec différentes autorités dans les pays où les commissions d'interchange ont été réglementées, confirment toutefois qu'il n'y a pas de lien de causalité direct entre la réglementation des commissions d'interchange et les frais payés par le consommateur. En fait, c'est généralement dans les pays où les commissions d'interchange sont les plus basses que le coût des services de carte de paiement est le plus faible ([1]).

Une étude concernant l'Espagne et commandée par MasterCard peut donner une impression différente. Toutefois, une analyse plus approfondie de la situation espagnole, et notamment des résultats d'autres études, permet de mettre évidence plusieurs facteurs ayant contribué à cette augmentation des frais; il s'agit en particulier du contexte économique général, qui a conduit à une augmentation globale des frais pour tous les services bancaires, et du fait que les consommateurs espagnols ont délaissé les cartes de débit, moins chères, pour des cartes crédits, plus onéreuses, en raison d'un marketing agressif de la part des banques espagnoles.

La proposition de règlement prévoit un rapport de la Commission sur l'incidence du règlement quatre ans après son entrée en vigueur.

([1]) Par exemple, les Pays-Bas et le Danemark.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010659/13
to the Commission
Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Payment Services Directive (PSD II)

On 24 July 2013, the Commission adopted a legislative package on the EU payments framework. The package includes a revised version of the Payments Services Directive (PSD II) which aims to harmonise the rules on the use of payment cards in the EU.

However, studies show that the new directive will not necessarily benefit all consumers in the 28 EU Member States: if it does not have the desired effect of simplifying the payments market, French consumers could find themselves paying higher charges on their bank cards.

The new measure could therefore discourage French consumers from using bank cards, a development entirely at odds with the purpose of the legislative package.

In the light of the above, does the Commission intend to review the revised directive in an effort to take greater account of the impact it will have on EU consumers?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(13 November 2013)

The Payments Package adopted on 24 July consists of a proposal for a directive on payment Services (PSD2) and a regulation on interchange fees for card-based payments. The aim of the package is to simplify and modernise the legal framework for electronic payments, taking account of new technical developments. The proposed Regulation is based on market information gathered over the last 10 years, including experience from competition investigations on interchange fees and on very extensive consultations during the last two years.

The Honourable Member is concerned that the proposals could lead to higher charges on consumer cards, which is a concern that has been voiced in relation to the proposed caps on interchange fees. Our analyses, studies by different organisations and contacts with different authorities in countries in which the interchange fees have been regulated, however, confirm that there is no direct causal link between the regulation of interchange fees and the consumer charges. In fact, in countries with the lowest interchange fees the costs for card services also tend to be the lowest ([1]).

One study related to Spain and commissioned by MasterCard may create a different perception. However, a more in-depth analysis of the Spanish situation, including results from other studies points to several factors having contributed to these higher fees, notably the general economic context, which has led to generally higher fees for all banking services and the fact that Spanish consumers moved from cheaper debit to more expensive credit cards as a result of aggressive marketing by Spanish banks.

The proposed Regulation foresees a report by the Commission on the impact of the regulation four years after entry into force.

([1]) e.g. Netherlands and Denmark.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010660/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(18 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Criteri EOW per la carta

L'industria cartaria è molto preoccupata per la proposta relativa ai criteri End of Waste (EOW) (cessazione di qualifica di rifiuto) per la carta e ritiene che la Commissione abbia ecceduto nel mandato previsto dalla direttiva Rifiuti 2008/98/CE per i seguenti motivi.

a. La proposta è in contrasto con la definizione di riciclaggio che richiede il «reprocessing of waste», cioè il ritrattamento dei materiali di rifiuto (articolo 3, punto 17, della direttiva n. 98 citata) e con la legislazione esistente in materia di Ecolabel, Green Procurement, Ecodesign e Reach, oltre che con la decisione 2011/753/UE .

b. La Commissione non adduce alcuna giustificazione nel considerare riciclaggio una fase diversa da quella dell'uso in cartiera. Viene considerato con ciò negli obiettivi di riciclaggio un materiale con l'1,5 % di impurità, standard incompatibile con quello del prodotto riciclato nella cartiera.

c. La percentuale di impurità citata al punto 2 è in contrasto con la «gerarchia dei rifiuti» (articolo 4 della direttiva n. 98) e con l'obiettivo prioritario del riciclaggio.

d. Concedendo lo status di EOW a questo materiale si renderà impossibile verificare che gli standard ambientali extra UE siano equivalenti a quelli europei, come prevede il regolamento (CE) n. 1013/2006 sui movimenti transfrontalieri dei rifiuti.

e. Incrementare il commercio globale della carta da macero come EOW non sarà senza conseguenze sulle cartiere europee, che si troveranno costrette a utilizzare più fibre vergini o a fermare la produzione.

La Commissione:

1. condivide queste osservazioni?

2. Cosa risponde all'industria cartaria che, con l'introduzione di questi criteri, corre il rischio di fermare la produzione?

3. Può dirci qual è la *ratio* che l'ha spinta a includere la carta nei nuovi criteri EOW?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(11 dicembre 2013)

La proposta è il risultato del mandato legale di cui all'articolo 6, paragrafo 2 della direttiva 2008/98/CE ([1]) e si basa su studi di valutazione imparziale eseguiti dal Centro comune di ricerca ([2]) della Commissione (CCR), previa consultazione non solo dei produttori di carta, ma anche dei molteplici operatori del settore privato coinvolti in diverse fasi del ciclo di riciclaggio della carta. La proposta della Commissione mira a garantire condizioni ottimali di riciclaggio della carta, mantenendo nel contempo un equilibrio tra gli interessi economici in gioco.

La proposta EoW è pienamente in linea con la pertinente normativa UE, compresa la gerarchia dei rifiuti e la definizione di riciclaggio. Lo status di EoW può essere ottenuto tramite un'operazione di recupero, incluso il riciclaggio. Tali operazioni di recupero possono aver luogo prima della fase di produzione della polpa in cartiere.

La soglia di impurità proposta (< 1,5 %) e lo standard europeo EN 643 ([3]) garantirebbero la disponibilità di carta recuperata di alta qualità per ritrattamento in cartiere e impedirebbero eventuali impatti negativi sull'ambiente.

([1]) GU L 312 del 22.11.2008.
([2]) http://ftp.jrc.es/EURdoc/JRC58206.pdf
([3]) Questo standard, ampiamente utilizzato dall'industria cartaria, definisce i livelli di tolleranza dei componenti non cartacei nell'intervallo tra lo 0,25 % e il 2 %.

Le esportazioni di carta EoW rappresenterebbero un rischio inferiore per l'ambiente, giacché in media il tenore di impurità sarebbe inferiore rispetto alla carta da recupero. La relazione del Centro comune di ricerca ([4]), sulla quale si basa la proposta, riconosce che l'eliminazione di taluni scarti cartacei dalla disciplina dei rifiuti comporterebbe ulteriori esportazioni di entità tale che esse potrebbero minacciare la disponibilità di queste materie prime secondarie sui mercati dell'Unione europea.

L'onorevole deputato sarà a conoscenza del fatto che questa proposta è stata discussa dagli Stati membri ed è ora soggetta al voto del Parlamento europeo in seduta plenaria secondo la procedura di regolamentazione con controllo.

([4]) http://ftp.jrc.es/EURdoc/JRC64346.pdf (pagina 77).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010660/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: End-of-waste criteria for paper

The paper industry is extremely concerned by the proposal on end-of–waste (EoW) criteria for paper and believes that the Commission has gone beyond the remit laid down in the Waste Directive (2008/98/EC) for the following reasons:

(a) The proposal is at odds with the definition of recycling which involves the reprocessing of waste (Article 3, paragraph 17 of Directive 98), as well as with legislation on Ecolabels, Green Procurement, Ecodesign and the REACH Directive and Decision 2011/753/EU.

(b) The Commission does not provide any justification for changing the point at which paper ceases to be waste from its current location in the paper making process. Paper with a 1.5% impurity content is considered to have end-of-waste status — a figure that is incompatible with the standard for recycled paper used in the paper industry.

(c) This percentage is at odds with the waste hierarchy (Article 4 of Directive 98/2008/EC) and the priority given to recycling.

(d) If such paper is given EoW status, it will be impossible to check whether environmental standards outside the EU are equivalent to those applied EU-wide, as required under Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 on shipments of waste.

(e) Increasing the global trade of wastepaper with EoW status will have an impact on EU paper makers, who will be forced to use more virgin fibre or to shut down production.

1. Does the Commission agree with the above views?

2. What does it have to say to paper makers, who, if these criteria are introduced, may have to shut down?

3. Can it say why it has included paper in the new EoW criteria?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(11 December 2013)

The proposal responds to the legal mandate in Article 6 (2) of Directive 2008/98/EC ([1]) and is based on impartial assessment studies carried out by the Commission's own Joint Research Centre ([2]) (JRC) after consultation not only with paper producers, but also the various private sector operators involved at different stages in the 'loop' of paper recycling. The Commission proposal aims at ensuring optimal conditions for paper recycling whilst maintaining a balance of the economic interests involved in the loop.

The EoW proposal is fully in line with applicable EU legislation, including the waste hierarchy and the definition of recycling. EoW status can be reached through a recovery, including recycling, operation. These recovery operations may take place before the pulping stage at paper mills.

The proposed impurity threshold (<1.5%) and the European standard EN 643 ([3]) would ensure the availability of high-quality recovered paper for reprocessing in paper mills and would prevent possible detrimental impacts on the environment.

Exports of EoW paper would pose a lesser threat to the environment as on average the impurity content would be lower than waste paper. The Joint Research Centre's report ([4]), on which the proposal is based, acknowledges that it is not to be expected that removing certain waste paper from the waste regime would lead to additional exports at a scale which could threaten the availability of these secondary raw materials on the EU markets.

([1]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.
([2]) http://ftp.jrc.es/EURdoc/JRC58206.pdf
([3]) This standard, widely used by the paper industry, defines tolerance levels of non-paper component in the range between 0.25% and 2%.
([4]) http://ftp.jrc.es/EURdoc/JRC64346.pdf(page 77)

The Honourable Member will be aware that this proposal has been discussed by Member States and will now be subject to a vote in the EP plenary under the scrutiny procedure.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010662/13
aan de Commissie
Ria Oomen-Ruijten (PPE)
(18 september 2013)

Betreft: Wijzigingen in Nederlandse Zorgverzekeringswet in strijd met het vrij verkeer van patiënten — Vervolgvraag

In antwoord op vraag E-004616/2013 stelt de Commissaris dat Zorgverzekeraars de toegang tot grensoverschrijdende gezondheidszorg niet mogen beperken en terugbetaling niet mogen weigeren op grond van het feit dat zij geen contract hebben met een bepaalde zorgaanbieder in een andere lidstaat van de EU. De Nederlandse regering is van mening dat haar voorgestelde wetswijziging niet in strijd is met Europees recht. Voorafgaand aan het kalenderjaar maken verzekerden een keuze voor een verzekeringspolis voor het komende jaar. Daarbij kiezen zij tussen een naturapolis, een restitutiepolis, of een polis met zowel natura- als restitutie-elementen. Bij een naturapolis maakt de verzekerde in beginsel gebruik van de zorgaanbieders die door zijn zorgverzekeraar zijn gecontracteerd. De selectieve inkoop van zorg door de zorgverzekeraar leidt er doorgaans toe dat voor een naturaverzekering een lagere nominale premie verschuldigd is dan voor een restitutieverzekering.

1. Indien een patiënt een keuze heeft gemaakt voor een natura-polis met de bijbehorende lagere premie en de beperking dat bij genoten zorg bij een niet-gecontracteerde zorgaanbieder een lagere of nihil-vergoeding geldt, mag de Nederlandse zorgverzekeraar dan ook een lagere of nihil-vergoeding bepalen voor genoten zorg bij een niet-gecontracteerde zorgaanbieder in een andere Lidstaat?

2. Hoe verhoudt zich een dergelijke bepaling tot het vrij verkeer van patiënten, zeker gezien de logischerwijs beperktere interesse en mogelijkheden van Nederlandse zorgverzekeraars om contracten af te sluiten met zorgaanbieders in andere lidstaten dan België en Duitsland?

3. Richtlijn 2011/24/EU stelt in overweging 4 dat de omzetting van deze richtlijn in nationale wetgeving en de toepassing ervan, er niet toe mag leiden dat patiënten worden aangemoedigd om buiten hun lidstaat van aansluiting een behandeling te ondergaan. Als een patiënt met een naturapolis voor een behandeling bij een nationale niet-gecontracteerde zorgaanbieder een nihil-vergoeding of lagere vergoeding zou ontvangen, en hij uit hoofde van Jurisprudentie van het Europees Hof recht zou hebben op een hogere vergoeding (arrest van Braekel) indien hij gepland gebruik maakt van een niet-gecontracteerde zorgaanbieder in een andere lidstaat, is er dan volgens de Commissie sprake van aanmoediging zoals gedefinieerd in overweging 4 van de Richtlijn?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(31 oktober 2013)

Overeenkomstig Richtlijn 2011/24/EU betreffende de toepassing van de rechten van patiënten bij grensoverschrijdende gezondheidszorg ([1]) moet een lidstaat erop toezien dat de kosten die zijn gemaakt door een verzekerde die grensoverschrijdende gezondheidszorg ontvangt, worden terugbetaald tot het bedrag dat ten laste zou zijn genomen indien de gezondheidszorg zou zijn verstrekt op het grondgebied van de lidstaat waar die persoon is verzekerd.

Wat de vaststelling van „het bedrag dat ten laste zou zijn genomen" betreft, zij erop gewezen dat de toepassing van terugbetalingstarieven of -bedragen die lager zijn dan die welke worden toegepast voor gezondheidszorg die werd verstrekt door gecontracteerde zorgverleners in Nederland patiënten zou ontmoedigen om gebruik te maken van hun recht op grensoverschrijdende gezondheidszorg. Dat zou bijgevolg een belemmering vormen voor de uitoefening van het vrije verkeer en zou op grond van dwingende redenen van algemeen belang moeten worden gerechtvaardigd. Er zou ook moeten worden aangetoond dat deze belemmering gezien het nagestreefde doel zowel evenredig als noodzakelijk was. Momenteel kan de Commissie zich nog geen definitief oordeel vormen, aangezien haar in dit verband nog geen rechtvaardigingen werden voorgelegd.

Wat uw laatste vraag betreft, zij eraan herinnerd dat de richtlijn de rechten codificeert die het Europees Hof van Justitie duidelijk heeft vastgesteld en die voortvloeien uit de bepalingen van het Verdrag betreffende de werking van de Europese Unie inzake vrij verkeer. Wanneer de nodige voorzieningen worden getroffen waardoor patiënten deze rechten kunnen uitoefenen, houdt dat niet in dat grensoverschrijdende gezondheidszorg als doel op zich wordt aangemoedigd. De keuzemogelijkheden van de patiënten worden er wel door uitgebreid.

([1]) PB L 88 van 4.4.2011, blz. 45-65.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010662/13
to the Commission
Ria Oomen-Ruijten (PPE)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Amendments to the Dutch Care Insurance Act contrary to the free movement of patients — follow-up question

In answer to Question E-004616/2013, the Commissioner stated that care insurers cannot restrict access to cross-border healthcare and reject reimbursement on the grounds that they do not have a contract with a given provider of healthcare in another EU Member State. The Netherlands Government does not consider that its proposed legislative amendment breaches European law. Before the calendar year, policy-holders choose an insurance policy for the year ahead. In so doing, they choose between a 'naturapolis' (designated care providers policy), a 'restitutiepolis' (non-contracted care policy) and a policy combining elements of both. In the case of the 'naturapolis', the insured person is in principle expected to use care providers who have a contract with the care insurer. Thanks to the selective purchase of care by the care insurer, the nominal premium for such a policy is generally lower than for a 'restitutiepolis'.

1. If a patient has opted for a 'naturapolis' at a lower premium, subject to the restriction that if care is received from an uncontracted care provider, the reimbursement will be smaller or zero, is it permissible for the Dutch care insurer to stipulate that the reimbursement will be smaller or zero if care is received from an uncontracted care provider in another Member State?

2. Can such a provision be reconciled with the free movement of patients, particularly as Dutch care insurers, for logical reasons, have less interest in concluding contracts with care providers in Member States other than Belgium and Germany, and less opportunity to do so?

3. Recital 4 of Directive 2011/24/EU provides that the transposition of that directive into national legislation and its application should not result in patients being encouraged to receive treatment outside their Member State of affiliation. If a patient with a 'naturapolis' would receive a reduced or zero reimbursement for treatment by an uncontracted national care provider, while, according to the case-law of the Court of Justice (the van Braekel judgment), he would be entitled to a larger reimbursement if he made use in a planned manner of an uncontracted care provider in another Member State, does this, in the Commission's view, constitute encouragement as referred to in Recital 4 of the directive?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(31 October 2013)

Directive 2011/24/EU on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare ([1]) requires Member States to ensure that the costs incurred by an insured person who receives cross-border healthcare are reimbursed up to the level of costs that would have been assumed had the healthcare been provided in the territory in which that person is insured.

On the point of reference for establishing 'the level of costs that would have been assumed', the application of reimbursement tariffs or amounts lower than those used for care received from contracted providers in the Netherlands would amount to a disincentive for patients to use their rights to cross-border healthcare. It would therefore constitute an obstacle to the exercise of free movement, and would need to be justified with reference to overriding reasons of general interest. It would also need to be demonstrated that this obstacle was both proportionate and necessary with regard to the desired objective. At the current time the Commission is not yet able to make a conclusive assessment as it has not yet seen any justification with regard to this issue.

Regarding the final question, the directive codifies the rights which the European Court of Justice has clearly set out, and which derive from the free movement provisions of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. Ensuring these rights are put into place correctly so that patients may make use of them does not encourage cross-border healthcare as an end in itself, although it does increase the choices available to patients.

([1]) OJ L 88, 4.4.2011, p. 45-65.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010663/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: UE, Islândia e Noruega — pendência da entrada em vigor do Acordo relativo ao aprofundamento da cooperação transfronteiras

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-008435/2013, a senhora Comissária Cecilia Malmström declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «a entrada em vigor do Acordo [entre a União Europeia e a Islândia e a Noruega sobre a aplicação de determinadas disposições da Decisão 2008/615/JAI do Conselho relativa ao aprofundamento da cooperação transfronteiras, em particular no domínio da luta contra o terrorismo e da criminalidade transfronteiras, bem como da Decisão 2008/616/JAI do Conselho referente à execução da Decisão 2008/615/JAI relativa ao aprofundamento da cooperação transfronteiras, em particular no domínio da luta contra o terrorismo e da criminalidade transfronteiras] ainda está pendente por falta das declarações da Islândia e da Noruega, exigidas em conformidade com o seu artigo 8.°».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Face à ausência de informações por parte da Islândia e da Noruega quanto à eventual adoção de medidas tendentes à entrada em vigor do Acordo, pretende contactar as autoridades competentes destes países a este propósito?

2. Quais são, em seu entender, as principais desvantagens da não entrada em vigor do Acordo?

Resposta dada por Cecilia Malmström em nome da Comissão
(12 de novembro de 2013)

A Comissão congratula-se com a adoção do Acordo entre a União Europeia e a Islândia e a Noruega sobre a aplicação de determinadas disposições da Decisão 2008/615/JAI do Conselho relativa ao aprofundamento da cooperação transfronteiras, em particular no domínio da luta contra o terrorismo e da criminalidade transfronteiras, bem como da Decisão 2008/616/JAI do Conselho referente à execução da Decisão 2008/615/JAI relativa ao aprofundamento da cooperação transfronteiras, em particular no domínio da luta contra o terrorismo e da criminalidade transfronteiras.

Espera-se que este acordo possa facilitar o intercâmbio de informações entre autoridades responsáveis pela prevenção e investigação de infrações penais na Islândia, na Noruega e na UE. Estes benefícios só estarão disponíveis para os Estados-Membros da UE, a Noruega e a Islândia após a entrada em vigor do acordo.

Em conformidade com o artigo 8.° do presente acordo, o Secretário-Geral do Conselho da UE deve verificar, antes do acordo entrar em vigor, que todos os requisitos formais foram cumpridos e deve, na qualidade de depositário, tornar públicas quaisquer notificações efetuadas no âmbito do presente acordo. A Comissão não tem conhecimento de qualquer publicação pelo Secretário-Geral sobre as notificações por parte da Noruega ou da Islândia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010663/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: The EU, Iceland and Norway: pending entry into force of the Agreement on the stepping-up of cross-border cooperation

In the Commission's reply to my previous Written Question E-008435/2013, Commissioner Cecilia Malmström said that 'the entry into force of the Agreement [on the application of certain provisions of Council Decision 2008/615/JAI relating to stepping up cross-border cooperation, particularly in combating terrorism and cross-border crime, and Council Decision 2008/616/JAI relating to the implementation of Decision 2008/615/JAI relating to stepping up cross-border cooperation, particularly in combating terrorism and cross-border crime] is still pending failing the declarations by Iceland and Norway required according to Article 8 thereof'.

1. Can the Commission say whether, given the lack of information from Iceland and Norway as to the possible adoption of measures to bring the Agreement into force, it intends to contact the competent authorities in these countries on the subject?

2. What does it see as being the main disadvantages of the Agreement not being applied?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(12 November 2013)

The Commission welcomes the adoption of the agreement between the EU and Iceland and Norway on the application of certain provisions of Council Decision 2008/615/JAI relating to stepping up cross-border cooperation, particularly in combating terrorism and cross-border crime, and Council Decision 2008/616/JAI relating to the implementation of Decision 2008/615/JAI relating to stepping up cross-border cooperation, particularly in combating terrorism and cross-border crime.

This agreement is expected to facilitate the exchange of information between authorities responsible for the prevention and investigation of criminal offences in Island, Norway and in the EU. These benefits will only be available for the EU Member States and Norway and Iceland once the agreement has entered into force.

According to Article 8 of this agreement, the Secretary-General of the Council of the EU shall establish, before the agreement enters into force, that all formal requirements have been fulfilled and shall, acting as depository, make public information on any notification made concerning this agreement. The Commission is not aware of any such publication by the Secretary-General about notifications on the part of Norway or Iceland.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010664/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Eventual alargamento da cooperação com a Suíça e o Liechtenstein

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-008436/2013, a senhora Comissária Cecilia Malmström declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «a União Europeia coopera em muitos domínios com a Suíça e o Liechtenstein. Qualquer cooperação que ultrapasse os atuais domínios de ação terá de ser avaliada em função das necessidades, tendo em conta as relações gerais entre a União Europeia e estes dois países».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão se já identificou áreas em que se possa verificar semelhante necessidade e, em caso afirmativo, que áreas são essas.

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(30 de outubro de 2013)

Nas suas conclusões de dezembro de 2012 sobre a Suiça, o Conselho considerou que «a conclusão de negociações sobre a participação deste país no Mercado Interno depende, em particular, da resolução dos problemas institucionais». Está atualmente em preparação uma recomendação de decisão do Conselho que autoriza negociações com a Suíça sobre um quadro institucional horizontal para as relações com a UE. Tendo isso em conta, os domínios de ação atuais são unicamente os identificados antes das referidas conclusões e aqueles no âmbito dos quais estão já em curso negociações.

No que diz respeito ao Listenstaine, a Comissão não identificou quaisquer novos domínios de cooperação.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010664/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Possible expansion of cooperation with Switzerland and Liechtenstein

In the Commission's reply to my previous Written Question E-008436/2013, Commissioner Cecilia Malmström said that 'the European Union cooperates in many fields with Switzerland and Liechtenstein respectively. Any cooperation going beyond the existing policy fields would need to be assessed on a needs basis taking into account the general relations between the European Union and these two countries'.

Can the Commission say whether it has already identified areas in which such needs exist and if so, which areas these are?

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

In December 2012, Council conclusions on Switzerland stated that 'the conclusion of any negotiation regarding the participation of Switzerland in the internal market is, in particular, dependent on solving the institutional issues'. A recommendation for a Council decision authorising negotiations with Switzerland on a horizontal institutional framework for EU-relations is currently being prepared. In the light of this, only the policy areas identified prior to these Council conclusions or in which negotiations are already ongoing are being pursued.

As concerns Liechtenstein, the Commission has not identified any new areas for further cooperation at present.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010665/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Recomendação da Comissão para as próximas eleições do Parlamento Europeu

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-008438/2013, a senhora Vice-Presidente Viviane Reding declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «a recomendação da Comissão para as próximas eleições do Parlamento Europeu apoia igualmente o espaço público europeu quando sugere candidatos europeus para o cargo de Presidente da Comissão, destaca o papel das famílias políticas europeias e preconiza a realização das eleições no mesmo dia em todos os Estados-Membros».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Considera que as medidas elencadas terão verdadeiro impacto nas eleições europeias?

Dito de outro modo:

2. Crê que a recomendação de apresentação de candidatos europeus para o cargo de Presidente da Comissão e a realização de eleições no mesmo dia tenderá a influir positivamente na afluência às urnas? Por que motivos?

3. Considera que as famílias políticas europeias dispõem de coesão doutrinária e notoriedade pública suficientes para serem reconhecidas pelo eleitorado? Julga que as suas propostas e programas dispõem de um grau de concretude suficiente ou que ainda permanecem excessivamente distantes do eleitor médio, que não conhece essas medidas nem se revê nos seus programas?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(11 de novembro de 2013)

A Recomendação ([1]) sobre o reforço da realização democrática e eficaz das eleições para o Parlamento Europeu a que o Senhor Deputado se refere visa aprofundar a dimensão europeia destas eleições, aumentando a transparência e tornando, assim, o sistema mais próximo dos cidadãos da União. Na prática, estas recomendações podem fomentar verdadeiros debates pan-europeus durante a campanha e motivar o interesse dos cidadãos nas eleições europeias.

A aplicação das recomendações requer a participação de todos as partes envolvidas, incluindo os partidos políticos. Foi precisamente por isso que a Comissão se congratulou com o relatório sobre a melhoria da organização das eleições para o Parlamento Europeu em 2014 ([2]), onde se sublinha a convergência entre as ideias apresentadas no relatório do Parlamento e as suas próprias recomendações, bem como a vontade comum de reforçar a legitimidade do processo de tomada de decisões, aproximando-o dos cidadãos.

([1]) JO L79 de 21.3.2013, p. 29.
([2]) O relatório foi votado na sessão plenária do PE do passado mês de julho (P7_TA-PROV(2013)0323).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010665/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Commission's recommendation for the next election of the European Parliament

In the Commission's reply to my earlier Written Question E-008438/2013, Commissioner Viviane Reding said that 'the Commission's Recommendation for the next election of the European Parliament also supports a European Public Space by suggesting European candidates for the post of President of the Commission, by highlighting the role of European party families and advocating to vote on a single day in all Member States'.

1. Does the Commission believe that these measures will really have an impact on the European elections?

In other words:

2. Does it consider that the recommendation to put forward European candidates for the post of President of the Commission and to hold the voting on the same day will have a positive effect on voter turnout? If so, why?

3. Does it feel that the ideological cohesion and public profile of the European political families are strong enough that they can be recognised by the electorate? Does it view their proposals and programmes as being of sufficient substance or does it feel they are still too far removed from the average voter, who is likely to be unfamiliar with their proposals and unable to see his or herself reflected in their programmes?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(11 November 2013)

The recommendation ([1]) for further enhancing the democratic and efficient conduct of the European elections to which the Honourable Member refers aims at deepening the European dimension of these elections, increasing transparency and thus bringing the system closer to Union citizens. Put to practice, these recommendations can encourage genuine pan-European debates in the campaign and help to stimulate voter interest in the European elections.

The implementation of the recommendations requires the contribution of all involved actors including the political parties. This is precisely why the Commission had welcomed the 'Report on improving the organisation of the elections to the European Parliament in 2014' ([2]), underlining the convergence between the ideas presented in Parliament's report and its own recommendations, as well as the shared will to reinforce the legitimacy of the EU decision-making process and to bring it closer to the citizens.

([1]) OJ L79, 21.3.2013, p. 29.
([2]) The report was voted in the last July EP plenary session (P7_TA-PROV(2013)0323).

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010666/13
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(18 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Programul „Primul tău loc de muncă EURES”

Diferite studii contractate de către Comisia Europeană arată că, în pofida crizei economice actuale și a ratei ridicate a șomajului, în special în rândul tinerilor, în momentul de față în Uniunea Europeană există aproximativ 2 milioane de locuri de muncă vacante. Această situație se datorează, conform acelorași studii, în special, lipsei de competențe și de persoane calificate în anumite domenii.

Una dintre inițiativele Comisiei Europene lansate în acest sens este „Primul tău loc de muncă EURES”. Lansată ca proiect pilot în 2012, unul dintre principalele sale obiective este acela de a răspunde cerințelor actuale ale pieței muncii, având rolul de intermediar între cerințele și ofertele existente, în special pentru ocuparea celor 2 milioane de locuri de muncă vacante la nivelul Uniunii.

Această inițiativă se adresează mai ales sectoarelor cu un nivel scăzut de ocupare a forței de muncă la nivel național, sectoare unde trebuie încurajată mobilitatea profesională, precum: construcții, catering, vânzări, mecanică, inginerie sau sănătate.

Acest program a avut ca obiectiv inițial facilitarea accesului la locuri de muncă pentru 5000 de persoane. Intenționează Comisia să continue acest program și să îl extindă, prin creșterea numărului de persoane eligibile? De asemenea, care sunt mijloacele prin care Comisia a asigurat și intenționează să asigure pe viitor, vizibilitatea programului?

În același context, ce măsuri intenționează Comisia să ia pentru îmbunătățirea funcționării și creșterea vizibilității portalului EURES, atât în rândul persoanelor în căutarea unui loc de muncă, cât și al angajatorilor?

Răspuns dat de dl Andor în numele Comisiei
(6 noiembrie 2013)

Programul „Primul tău loc de muncă EURES” are drept scop să testeze eficacitatea serviciilor de plasament, alături de un sprijin financiar, pentru a-i ajuta pe tineri să-și găsească un loc de muncă în alte state membre. Programul (acțiunea pregătitoare) este gestionat prin cereri anuale de propuneri (2011-2013). Obiectivul este de a plasa 5 000 de tineri pe piața muncii, cu aproximativ 12 milioane de euro.

În total, au fost finanțate nouă proiecte, inițiate de servicii publice și private de ocupare a forței de muncă din mai multe țări din UE. Ultima cerere de propuneri pentru acțiunea pregătitoare a fost publicată în septembrie 2013. Aceasta vizează crearea de locuri de muncă, cursuri de formare și stagii de ucenicie. Implementarea proiectului este prevăzută până la sfârșitul anului 2015. Până în prezent, au fost realizate peste 1 000 de plasamente.

Consiliul European din 27-28 iunie 2013 indică faptul că „se vor depune noi eforturi pentru promovarea mobilității tinerilor aflați în căutarea unui loc de muncă, inclusiv prin consolidarea programului Primul tău loc de muncă EURES”. În perioada 2014-2020, în cadrul Programului UE pentru ocuparea forței de muncă și inovare socială (EaSI), cu un buget anual de 5-9 milioane de euro, vor fi finanțate programe menite să-i sprijine pe tineri în găsirea unui loc de muncă și alte programe speciale de mobilitate a lucrătorilor. De asemenea, prin intermediul unor campanii de recrutare specifice, vor fi elaborate inițiative la scară redusă pentru locurile de muncă vacante care vizează anumite ocupații, sectoare sau state membre. Ocuparea forței de muncă în rândul tinerilor va rămâne o prioritate. Un sprijin financiar pe scară mai largă în favoarea mobilității transnaționale a forței de muncă este disponibil prin intermediul Fondului Social European, în acest caz deciziile de investiții fiind totuși luate de autoritățile naționale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010666/13
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: 'Your first EURES job' programme

Various studies commissioned by the European Commission show that, despite the current economic crisis and high rate of unemployment, particularly amongst young people, there are currently approximately 2 million job vacancies in the European Union. According to the same studies, this situation is due in particular to a lack of competencies and of qualified individuals in certain fields.

One of the European Commission initiatives launched to this end is 'Your first EURES job.' Launched as a pilot project in 2012, one of its main objectives is to meet current labour market requirements by taking on the role of intermediary between these requirements and existing vacancies, particularly with regard to filling the 2 million vacant positions in the European Union.

This initiative particularly addresses sectors with a low rate of employment at the national level, sectors in which professional mobility should be encouraged, such as construction, catering, sales, mechanics, engineering or healthcare.

The initial objective of this programme was to facilitate access to employment for 5 000 people. Does the Commission intend to continue with this programme and to expand it by increasing the amount of eligible candidates? Furthermore, what resources has the Commission used and what resources does it intend to use in the future to ensure the visibility of the programme?

In the same context, what measures does the Commission intend to take to improve the functioning and increase the visibility of the EURES portal, both for those seeking employment and employers?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 November 2013)

'Your first EURES job' aims to test the effectiveness of job search services combined with financial support to help young people find a job in other Member States. The scheme (preparatory action) is run through annual calls for proposals (2011-2013). The objective is to place 5.000 young people with around EUR 12 million.

A total of nine projects have been supported, driven by public and private employment services in several EU countries. The last call of the preparatory action was published in September 2013 covering jobs, traineeship and apprenticeship placements. Project implementation is planned until the end of 2015. To date, more than 1000 placements have been made.

The European Council of 27-28 of June 2013 specifies that 'new efforts will be made to promote the mobility of young jobseekers, including by strengthening "Your first EURES job"'. In 2014-2020, schemes to support young people finding a job and other targeted labour mobility schemes will be funded under the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI), with an annual budget of EUR 5 to 9 million. Small-scale initiatives will be developed to deal with vacancies in certain occupations, sectors or Member States through tailor-made recruitment campaigns. Youth employment will remain a priority. Larger-scale financial support to transnational labour mobility is available from the European Social Fund, where investment decisions are however made by national authorities.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010667/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(18 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Șomaj

Într-o Europă care nu reușește să găsească cele mai eficace soluții pentru depășirea crizei, cu fabrici care se închid în fiecare lună sau își delocalizează activitatea în afara granițelor Uniunii Europene, alegerea unei meserii devine din ce în ce mai dificilă nu doar pentru tineri, dar și pentru părinții și profesorii care trebuie să îi ghideze în identificarea domeniului care corespunde cel mai bine abilităților lor.

Problema tinerilor șomeri este cu atât mai dificilă cu cât numărul celor care abandonează școala înainte de a obține o calificare sau o diplomă este în creștere .

Mai trebuie adăugată și problema „irosirii inteligentei", respectiv tineri înalt calificați care lucrează sub potențialul lor, ceea ce are efecte negative asupra lor, din punct de vedere social și psihologic.

Politica de austeritate practicată la nivel european nu a condus doar la tăieri bugetare, ci și la concedieri masive, alimentând spectrul unei generații pierdute.

Generații întregi de tineri îngroașă numărul șomerilor existenți, iar mulți dintre ei nu au avut până în prezent niciun loc de muncă, cunoscut fiind faptul că, cu cât trece timpul fără să fii încadrat în câmpul muncii, cu atât unui șomer îi va fi mai greu în găsirea unui loc de muncă.

Potrivit datelor oficiale publicate de Organizația Internațională a Muncii, 75 milioane de tineri din întreaga lume nu au locuri de muncă, adică 6% din totalul persoanelor cu vârsta între 18 și 24 de ani.

Numărul persoanelor fără locuri de muncă în Uniune, în special în rândul tinerilor, a atins un nivel record și a devenit una dintre problemele cele mai urgente în majoritatea, dacă nu în toate statele membre.

Șomajul pe termen lung presupune costuri foarte mari, dar și posibilitatea creării unor generații pierdute. Ce are în vedere Comisia pentru reducerea șomajului pe teritoriul Uniunii și pentru integrarea pe piața muncii a șomerilor care nu au lucrat niciodată?

Răspuns dat de dl Andor în numele Comisiei
(7 noiembrie 2013)

În cadrul strategiei Europa 2020, Comisia a propus un set de obiective și inițiative majore. Două dintre acestea vizează promovarea ocupării forței de muncă și reducerea sărăciei ([1]). În plus, începând cu 2012, Comisia a adoptat un pachet privind ocuparea forței de muncă, un pachet privind ocuparea forței de muncă în rândul tinerilor, precum și un pachet de măsuri privind investițiile sociale și o comunicare privind „regândirea educației" ([2]). Acestea fac propuneri concrete, cum ar fi punerea în aplicare a „garanției pentru tineret ([3])" și Alianța europeană pentru ucenicii, prin care se promovează crearea de locuri de muncă mai bune, incluziunea activă, o mai bună corelare a competențelor cu nevoile de pe piața forței de muncă și intensificarea programelor de ucenicie pentru a facilita tranziția de la băncile școlii la câmpul muncii. Cel mai important, prin intermediul semestrului european, Consiliul convine, în fiecare an, asupra unor recomandări specifice adresate statelor membre, în special cu privire la aspecte legate de ocuparea forței de muncă ([4]).

În același timp, UE poate susține financiar combaterea șomajului prin intermediul fondurilor structurale și de investiții, și în special al Fondului social european (FSE). Se preconizează că în principal măsurile de susținere a integrării pe piața forței de muncă și a consolidării competențelor și a capacității de inserție profesională a tinerilor vor facilita angajarea acestora. Este vorba, de exemplu, despre programele de mobilitate în domeniul formării profesionale și al muncii, precum și de programele de ucenicii și stagii în țară sau în străinătate, care le permit tinerilor să dobândească experiență practică.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_ro.htm
([2]) COM(2012) 669 final din 21.11.2012.
([3]) JO C120/1, 26.4.2013.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/index_ro.htm

În plus, inițiativa „Locuri de muncă pentru tineri”, care va fi cofinanțată de FSE și se va desfășura în perioada 2014-2020, se va concentra asupra sprijinirii tinerilor care nu au un loc de muncă și nu urmează studii sau cursuri de formare profesională, în regiunile care înregistrează cele mai ridicate rate ale șomajului în rândul tinerilor. Această inițiativă va furniza regiunilor respective sprijin suplimentar pentru implementarea recomandării Consiliului privind „garanția pentru tineret ([5])”.

([5]) A se vedea Comunicarea Comisiei: „Împreună pentru tinerii Europei — Apel la acțiune pentru combaterea șomajului în rândul tinerilor”.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010667/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Unemployment

In a Europe that is failing to find the most effective solutions to overcome the crisis, and with factories closing every month or relocating their operations outside of the EU, choosing a profession is becoming increasingly difficult, not only for young people but also for the parents and teachers who have to guide them in identifying the fields that best meet their skills.

The issue of youth unemployment is becoming even more difficult with a growing number of pupils dropping out of school before obtaining any qualifications or a diploma.

Added to this is the problem of 'brain drain', specifically relating to highly qualified young people working below their potential, which has a negative effect on them from a social and a psychological perspective.

The austerity policy being implemented at European level has not only led to budget cuts but also to huge waves of redundancies, raising the spectre of a lost generation.

Entire generations of young people are swelling the ranks of those currently unemployed, with many of them having never previously worked and it is a well-known fact that the more time that passes without them finding employment, the harder finding a job will become.

According to official data published by the International Labour Organisation, 75 million young people around the world are unemployed, or 6% of all those aged between 18 and 24.

The number of unemployed in the European Union, particularly amongst young people, has reached record levels and has become one of the most urgent problems in most, if not all Member States.

Long-term unemployment entails huge costs, but also the possibility of creating lost generations. What measures is the Commission intending to take to reduce unemployment in the European Union and to integrate the unemployed who have never worked into the labour market?

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

As part of the Europe 2020 strategy, the Commission has proposed a set of targets and flagship initiatives including two targeted at promoting employment and reducing poverty ([1]). Moreover, since 2012, the Commission has adopted an Employment Package, a Youth Employment Package as well as a Social Investment Package and a communication on 'Rethinking Education' ([2]), which make concrete proposals (such as the implementation of the Youth Guarantee ([3]) and the European Alliance for Apprenticeships) to foster more and better jobs, promote active inclusion, better match skills with labour market needs and step up apprenticeships to promote the transition from education to the labour market. Most importantly, via the European Semester, the Council agrees every year on Country Specific Recommendations addressed to Member States in particular on issues related to employment ([4]).

With the European Structural and Investment Funds, and more specifically the European Social Fund (ESF), the EU can also financially support the fight against. In particular, measures to support labour market integration and enhance young persons' skills and employability are expected to help their transition to employment. This includes job and training mobility programmes, as well as apprenticeships and traineeships at home and abroad to gain practical experience.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm
([2]) COM(2012) 669 final of 21.11.2012.
([3]) OJ C120/1, 26.4.2013.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/index_en.htm

In addition, the 2014-2020 Youth Employment Initiative, which will be co-funded by the ESF, will focus on supporting youth not in employment, education or training, in the regions of the Union worst affected by youth unemployment. This initiative will provide additional support for those regions towards the implementation of the Youth Guarantee Council Recommendation ([5]).

([5]) See the Commission's Communication: 'Working together for Europe's young people: A call to action on youth unemployment'.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор P-010668/13
до Комисията
Iliana Malinova Iotova (S&D)
(18 септември 2013 г.)

Относно: Обществена поръчка за строеж на завод за отпадъци в София

Европейската комисия е открила наказателна процедура срещу България заради неизпълнението от страна на държавата на член 5 от Директива 2006/12/ЕО относно отпадъците. В същото време на 20 април 2012 г. 11 кандидати представиха офертите си за строеж на завод за отпадъци в София. На 26 април т. г., след заседание при затворени врати на оценяващата комисия, проектът е присъден на участника, който предлага най-висока цена за построяване на обекта. Тази сума е с около 13,5 милиона лева повече от определеното за допустимо в търга.

Нарушила ли е Столичната община директива 2004/18/ЕО относно координирането на процедурите за възлагане на обществени поръчки за строителство, услуги и доставки? Счита ли ЕК, че избраната фирма отговаря на изискванията и правилата в горепосочената директива?

Какви ще бъдат последствията за страната, в случай че има нарушение на европейското право?

Отговор, даден от г-н Хаан от името на Комисията
(7 ноември 2013 г.)

Проектът за строеж на завод за третиране на отпадъци в София е сред ключовите инвестиции, съфинансирани от ЕС през периода 2007—2013 г. Съгласно принципа на споделеното управление в рамките на политиката на сближаване държавите членки носят основната отговорност за надзора върху правилното провеждане на процедурите за възлагане на обществени поръчки, както и за гарантирането на правилното прилагане на съответните разпоредби от националното законодателство и законодателството на ЕС. Европейската комисия извършва оценка на проекта от гледна точка на неговата техническа осъществимост и съответствието му с целите на политиката.

Подписването на договора за строителство на завод за механично-биологично третиране на отпадъци в София беше отложено, докато Върховният административен съд се произнесе с решение относно редовността на въпросната процедура за възлагане на обществена поръчка. Съгласно последната информация, с която разполага Комисията, Върховният административен съд се е произнесъл с решение по жалбите във връзка с процедурата за възлагане на обществена поръчка и през идните седмици се очаква Столичната община да подпише договора.

Междувременно конкуриращи се участници в търга подадоха и до Комисията две отделни жалби, които съдържат твърдения за нередности в провеждането на процедурата за възлагане на обществена поръчка. Получаването на тези две жалби бе потвърдено на 8 август 2013 г. На 25 октомври 2013 г. е изпратена трета жалба до Комисията. Комисията ще разгледа надлежно получените жалби и същевременно ще вземе предвид резултата от съдебната процедура на национално равнище. Ако след този анализ се докаже наличието на нередности по отношение на декларираните разходи, свързани с този проект, може да бъде взето решение за финансова корекция.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010668/13
to the Commission
Iliana Malinova Iotova (S&D)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Public contract for the construction of a waste disposal plant in Sophia

The Commission has initiated infringement proceedings against Bulgaria for non-compliance with Article 5 of Directive 2006/12/EC on waste. Meanwhile, on 20 April 2012, 11 tenders were received for the construction of a waste disposal plant in Sophia and on 26 April 2013, following a meeting of the tender evaluation committee behind closed doors, the contract was awarded to the tenderer quoting the highest price. The figure in question is some BGN 13.5 million higher than the specified ceiling for the project.

Has the Sofia municipal authority breached Directive 2004/18/EC on the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts? Does the Commission consider that the company selected meets the requirements and stipulations of the directive?

What will be the consequences for Bulgaria if EC law has been broken?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(7 November 2013)

The project of the construction of the Sofia waste treatment plant is one of the key EU co-financed investments in the 2007-2013 period. Under the principle of shared management of cohesion policy, the Member States have the primary responsibility for overseeing the correct handling of procurement procedures and ensuring that the relevant national and EU legislation are correctly applied. The Commission assesses the project for its technical feasibility and compliance with policy objectives.

The works contract signature for the Mechanical Biological Treatment Plant in Sofia was suspended awaiting the ruling of the Supreme Administrative Court as concerns the regularity of the procurement procedure in question. According to the latest information available to the Commission, the Supreme Administrative Court has issued its ruling as concerns the appeals with respect to the tender procedure and signature of the contract by the City of Sofia is expected in the coming weeks.

In the meantime two separate complaints containing allegations of irregularities in the handling of the procurement procedure have been submitted also to the Commission by competing bidders in the tender. Receipt of both complaints was acknowledged on 8 August 2013. A third complaint has been sent to the Commission on 25 October 2013. These complaints will be duly examined by the Commission while taking full account of the outcome of the court procedure at national level. If, after this analyse, the existence of an irregularity concerning the declared expenditure linked to this project is proved, a decision of financial correction could be approved.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010669/13
aan de Commissie
Philip Claeys (NI)
(18 september 2013)

Betreft: Turkse luchtmacht haalt Syrische helikopter neer

Op 16 september schoot een vliegtuig van de Turkse luchtmacht een helikopter van het Syrische leger uit de lucht. Volgens de Turkse regering had de Syrische helikopter het Turkse luchtruim geschonden, maar de helikopter stortte neer op Syrisch grondgebied ([1]).

Er bestaat grote onduidelijkheid over de „rules of engagement" die Turkije hanteert. Naar verluidt zouden die toelaten dat Syrische vliegtuigen die tot 5 kilometer va de grens met Turkije komen, onder vuur mogen genomen worden. Klopt deze informatie?

Volgens sommige bronnen werd de helikopterpiloot door Syrische „rebellen" gevangen genomen en onthoofd. Heeft de Commissie daarover bevestiging gevraagd aan de Turkse regering?

Deze vijandelijke daad van Turkije kan leiden tot een escalatie van het conflict aan de grens tussen Turkije en Syrië. De Turkse premier Erdogan steunt voluit de Syrische rebellen, die voor een groot deel uit soennitische jihadisten bestaan. Erdogan maakt er overigens geen geheim van dat hij een militaire oplossing van het conflict in Syrië wil. Welke gevolgen heeft dat voor de onderhandelingen over de toetreding van Turkije tot de Europese Unie?

Nam de Commissie hierover contact op met de Turkse regering? Zo ja, wat waren de conclusies?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(8 november 2013)

De kwestie waarnaar wordt verwezen, is een bilaterale kwestie tussen Turkije en Syrië.

De EU blijft in nauw contact met Turkije aangaande de crisis in Syrië. Een voortzetting van de samenwerking en de dialoog over vraagstukken van buitenlands beleid is van belang in het kader van de toetredingsonderhandelingen met Turkije.

([1]) Zie bijvoorbeeld http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/17/world/europe/turkey-syria.html?_r=0.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010669/13
to the Commission
Philip Claeys (NI)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Shooting-down of a Syrian helicopter by the Turkish air force

On 16 September, an aircraft belonging to the Turkish air force shot down a Syrian army helicopter. According to the Turkish Government, the Syrian helicopter had violated Turkish airspace, but the helicopter crashed within Syrian territory ([1]).

The rules of engagement by which Turkey is operating are very unclear. They are said to allow Turkey to shoot at Syrian aircraft if they approach within 5 km of Turkey's border. Is this true?

According to some sources, the helicopter pilot was captured by Syrian 'rebels' and decapitated. Has the Commission asked the Turkish Government to confirm this?

This hostile act by Turkey could escalate the conflict at the border between Turkey and Syria. Turkey's Prime Minister Erdogan fully supports the Syrian rebels, many of whom are Sunni jihadists. Erdogan also makes no secret of the fact that he would like to see a military solution to the conflict in Syria. What consequences will this have for the negotiations on Turkey's accession to the European Union?

Has the Commission contacted the Turkish Government about this? If so, what were the conclusions?

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

The issue referred to is a bilateral matter between Turkey and Syria.

The EU remains in close contact with Turkey on the crisis in Syria. Continued cooperation and dialogue on foreign policy issues is important in the framework of the accession negotiations with Turkey.

([1]) See for example http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/17/world/europe/turkey-syria.html?_r=0

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010670/13
aan de Commissie
Philip Claeys (NI)
(18 september 2013)

Betreft: EU-steun voor „European Council on Tolerance and Reconciliation"

Ontving de „European Council on Tolerance and Reconciliation" (ECTR) in 2011, 2012 en 2013 subsidies of enige andere steun van de Europese Unie? Zo ja, om welke bedragen gaat het? In welk kader werd/wordt deze steun verleend?

Indien er geen steun wordt verleend, diende deze organisatie ooit aanvragen tot steun in?

Op welke basis werd die geweigerd?

Antwoord van de heer Lewandowski namens de Commissie
(23 oktober 2013)

De Commissie deelt het geachte Parlementslid mee dat haar centraal boekhoudsysteem geen gegevens bevat betreffende een derde partij met de naam „European Council on Tolerance and Reconciliation". Evenmin heeft zij enige entiteit geregistreerd onder het acroniem ECTR of het nummer 0899854350 (Belgisch registratienummer).

Wat betreft het deel van de vraag of deze organisatie ooit steun heeft aangevraagd en op welke basis die eventueel werd geweigerd, luidt het antwoord van de Commissie dat zij ten behoeve van het beantwoorden van een schriftelijke vraag niet de tijdrovende en kostelijke naspeuringen kan verrichten die vereist zouden zijn om het geachte Parlementslid de gevraagde informatie te kunnen verstrekken.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010670/13
to the Commission
Philip Claeys (NI)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: EU support for the European Council on Tolerance and Reconciliation

Has the European Council on Tolerance and Reconciliation (ECTR) received subsidies or any other support from the European Union in 2011, 2012 and 2013? If so, how much funding has it received? In what context is or was this support provided?

If no support is being provided, has this organisation ever applied for support? On what basis was its application rejected?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(23 October 2013)

The Commission informs the Honourable Member that it holds no record of any third party in its central accounting system with the name European Council on Tolerance and Reconciliation. It has also not registered any entity with the acronym ECTR or with the number 0899854350 (Belgian registration number) either.

Concerning the part of the question that asks whether the organisation has ever applied for support, and on what basis its potential applications were rejected, the Commission cannot undertake, for the purpose of answering a written question, the lengthy and costly research that would be required to provide the Honourable Member with the information requested.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010671/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(18 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Stato del programma di armi chimiche della Siria

Il 28 agosto 2012 l'agenzia Reuters ha pubblicato una relazione sullo stato del programma di armi chimiche della Siria. Si ritiene che la Siria abbia avviato il suo programma trent'anni fa, con l'obiettivo di contrastare una presunta minaccia da parte di Israele. Il 21 agosto sono stati impiegati razzi contenenti agenti nervini in diversi quartieri di Damasco, causando la morte di almeno 500 persone. La Siria è uno dei sette paesi a non aver aderito alla Convenzione sulle armi chimiche del 1997, con la quale i paesi firmatari si impegnano a distruggere tutte le proprie scorte di armi chimiche. Nel luglio 2012, un portavoce del ministero degli Esteri siriano, Jihad Makdissi, ha dichiarato che l'esercito non avrebbe utilizzato armi chimiche contro i ribelli siriani, ma avrebbe preso in considerazione l'uso di tali armi contro forze straniere.

Il programma di armi chimiche siriano è gestito dal Centro di studi e ricerche scientifiche (SSRC) con sede a Damasco, che è diretto dai servizi di informazione militari siriani ed è considerato «il centro di ricerche dotato delle migliori attrezzature in Siria». Il Centro dispone di strutture per la produzione di agenti vescicanti, quali l'iprite, e agenti nervini, come il sarin e il gas VX. Si ritiene che gran parte della tecnologia per la produzione di armi chimiche e biologiche in Siria provenga da «grandi società di intermediazione di prodotti chimici in tutta Europa». Secondo il generale Mustafa al-Sheikh, il quale ha disertato dall'esercito siriano, le armi chimiche sono ora nelle mani di seguaci del clan alawita del Presidente Assad, addestrati ad usare armi chimiche. Il direttore dei servizi di intelligence statunitensi ha osservato che «il programma globale di armi chimiche della Siria è vasto, complesso ed esteso sul piano geografico, con siti di stoccaggio, produzione e preparazione».

1. Qual è la posizione del Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per quanto riguarda il rischio che le armi chimiche possano cadere in mano a gruppi armati quali Jabhat al-Nusra?

2. Quali sforzi diplomatici l'UE sta mettendo in atto per indurre il regime siriano a rivelare il contenuto delle proprie riserve di armi chimiche?

Risposta dell'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(20 novembre 2013)

L'AR/VP è seriamente preoccupata della minaccia che le armi chimiche della Siria rappresentano per la popolazione siriana e per i paesi vicini così come a livello regionale e internazionale.

L'AR/VP ha appoggiato pienamente l'iniziativa internazionale volta alla soppressione del programma di armi chimiche della Siria. Ha accolto favorevolmente la risoluzione n. 2118 del Consiglio di sicurezza dell'ONU come documento rappresentante «un grosso passo verso una risposta internazionale sostenibile e unificata alla crisi siriana» che «dovrebbe preparare la strada per l'eliminazione delle armi chimiche in Siria e stabilire norme per la risposta della comunità internazionale alle minacce poste dalle armi di distruzione di massa» (si veda la dichiarazione dell'Alto Rappresentante del 28 settembre 2013).

Il regime siriano ha fornito informazioni sul suo programma di armi chimiche all'OPCW, l'organizzazione incaricata di verificare il processo di distruzione delle armi chimiche siriane. L'attuazione di tale processo è cominciata in base a tali informazioni. È fondamentale che il regime siriano continui a fornire tutti i dati rilevanti e che continui a cooperare. La risoluzione del Consiglio di sicurezza dell'ONU contiene adeguate disposizioni in tale ambito. Un esito positivo del processo di distruzione significherà l'eliminazione dei rischi correlati, come quello che le armi cadano in mano a organizzazioni estremiste.

A livello pratico, l'UE sta fornendo specifico sostegno alla missione di ispezione OPCW/ONU in Siria, come indicato nella sopracitata risoluzione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010671/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — The state of Syria's chemical weapons programme

On 28 August 2012, Reuters released a report on the state of Syria's chemical weapons programme. It is believed that Syria began its programme three decades ago, with the aim of countering a perceived threat from Israel. On 21 August, rockets carrying nerve agents were deployed in a number of Damascus suburbs, killing at least 500 people. Syria is one of only seven countries not to have joined the 1997 Chemical Weapons Convention, which commits its signatories to destroy any and all stockpiles of chemical weapons. In July 2012, a Syrian Foreign Ministry Spokesman, Jihad Makdissi, declared that the army would not use chemical weapons against Syrian rebels but that it would consider using them against foreign forces.

The country's chemical weapons programme is directed by the Damascus-based Scientific Studies and Research Centre (SSRC), which is run by Syrian military intelligence. It is believed to be the 'best-equipped research centre in Syria'. SSRC has set up facilities for the production of blister agents, such as mustard gas, and nerve agents, such as sarin and VX gas. It is believed that the bulk of Syria's chemical and biological weapons production technology comes from 'large chemical brokerage houses across Europe'. According to Brigadier-General Mutafa al-Sheikh, who has defected from the Syrian Army, chemical weapons are now in the hands of chemical weapons-trained loyalists of President Assad's Alawite clan. The US Director of National Intelligence has noted that 'Syria's overall chemical weapons programme is large, complex, and geographically dispersed, with sites for storage, production and preparation'.

1. What is the position of the Vice--President / High Representative regarding the threat of chemical weapons falling into the hands of militant groups such as Jabhat al-Nusra?

2. What diplomatic efforts are currently underway by the EU to pressure the Syrian regime to reveal the contents of its chemical stockpiles?

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

The HR/VP is gravely concerned at the threat posed by Syria's chemical weapons for the people of Syria, the neighbouring countries, as well as at the regional and international level.

The HR/VP fully supported the international initiative aimed at destruction of the Syrian chemical weapons programme. She has welcomed the Resolution no. 2118 of the UN Security Council as a document that represented 'a major step towards a sustainable and unified international response to the crisis in Syria', which 'should pave the way to the elimination of chemical weapons in Syria, and set a standard for the international community in responding to threats posed by weapons of mass destruction' (cf. statement of the High Representative of 28 September 2013).

The Syrian regime has provided a disclosure of its chemical weapons programme to the OPCW, the organisation mandated to verify the destruction process of Syria's chemical weapons. The implementation of that process has started based on that disclosure. It remains essential that the Syrian regime continues to provide all relevant information and cooperation. The existing UNSC Resolution includes appropriate provisions in that context. A successful conclusion of the destruction process will mean that the associated risks, such as the weapons falling into the hands of extremist organisations, will be eliminated.

At the practical level, the EU is in the process of implementing specific support for the OPCW/UN inspection mission in Syria, as referred to in the aforementioned Resolution.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010672/13
alla Commissione
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(18 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Complotto terroristico contro il Canale di Suez

Il 25 agosto 2013 il giornale britannico *Sunday Times* ha reso noto che alcuni membri della Jihad islamica egiziana cospirano per affondare una nave nei pressi della città di Porto Said. Il gruppo, legato ad al-Qaeda, avrebbe selezionato tale luogo per perturbare la navigazione commerciale internazionale. In risposta a tale informazione, le forze speciali egiziane sarebbero state spostate dal Sinai a Porto Said, secondo quanto noto.

Le entrate annuali del governo egiziano provenienti dall'uso del canale ammontano all'incirca a 5 miliardi di USD. Un attacco del genere, quindi, potrebbe ripercuotersi gravemente sull'economia dell'Egitto. Porto Said è considerato un centro per i militanti salafiti e le truppe egiziano hanno ricevuto l'ordine di proteggere gli impianti portuali della città. Secondo un funzionario egiziano responsabile della sicurezza, un attacco al molo carburanti del porto potrebbe causare una vera e propria catastrofe.

1. Dato il rischio che i militanti sferrino un attacco per colpire il Canale di Suez, quali misure è disposta ad adottare l'UE, congiuntamente ad altri membri della comunità internazionale, per migliorare la sicurezza degli scambi commerciali attraverso il canale?

2. Quali provvedimenti stanno adottando i funzionari dell'UE in Egitto per valutare le minacce agli interessi europei poste dai gruppi militanti quali la Jihad islamica?

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

L'Unione europea è consapevole del rischio di attacchi di militanti nella zona del Canale di Suez. Nelle conclusioni del Consiglio del 21 agosto, i ministri degli Esteri dell'UE hanno condannato fermamente tutti gli atti di terrorismo quali l'assassinio di poliziotti nel Sinai. Ora come ora l'Unione europea non collabora con l'Egitto nel campo della lotta al terrorismo.

L'Unione europea, e in particolare la sua delegazione in Egitto, segue con attenzione gli sviluppi, in stretta collaborazione con gli Stati membri, onde valutare i rischi per gli interessi europei attraverso contatti regolari con le autorità locali, i partner internazionali con posizioni analoghe e altri interlocutori politici e sociali nel paese.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010672/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Terrorist plot against the Suez Canal

On 25 August 2013, the UK's *Sunday Times* reported that members of Egypt's Islamic Jihad were plotting to sink a ship near the town of Port Said. The group, which has links to al-Qaeda, is believed to have targeted the site with a view to disrupting international commercial shipping. In response to this information, it is understood that Egyptian special forces have been transferred from the Sinai to Port Said.

The Egyptian government earns approximately USD 5 billion in revenue each year from the use of the canal. An attack of this kind could therefore have severe consequences for the Egyptian economy. Port Said is believed to be a hub for Salafi militants, and Egyptian commandos have been ordered to protect the town's port facilities. According to an Egyptian security official, 'an attack on the port's fuel docks could lead to an inferno, a catastrophe'.

1. In light of the risk of militant attacks against the Suez Canal, what steps is the EU prepared to adopt, in conjunction with other members of the international community, to improve safety for commercial traffic through the canal?

2. What steps are EU officials adopting in Egypt in order to assess the risks posed to European interests by militant groups such as Islamic Jihad?

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

The European Union is aware of the risk of militant attacks against the Suez Canal. In the Council Conclusions of 21 August, the Foreign Ministers of the EU strongly condemned all acts of terrorism such as the murder of policemen in Sinai. Currently, the European Union is not cooperating with Egypt on counter-terrorism measures.

The European Union, in particular its Delegation on the ground in Egypt in close cooperation with the EU Member States, is following closely developments in this area to assess the risk to European interests in regular contact with local authorities, likeminded international partners and other political and social actors in the country.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-010673/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(18 september 2013)

Angående: Faktisk användning av standard eller standardisering

I sitt svar på den skriftliga frågan E-005195/2013 om standardisering av specifik användning eller affärsmodeller i webbläsare svarar kommissionen att ”om [den] får information om att sådana [standardiserade] tekniker används för att förstärka begränsningar i avtal i likhet med dem som parlamentsledamoten hänvisar till [C-408/05, Murphy mot Premier League], kommer kommissionen att vidta lämpliga åtgärder”.

Programmeringsgränssnittet DRM API verkar vara utvecklat särskilt med den typen av begränsningar som anges i C-408/05 i åtanke.

Eftersom W3C är den faktiska organisationen för webbstandardisering för alla stora leverantörer av webbläsare kommer alla beslut som fattas i W3C sannolikt att påverka den stora majoriteten av webbläsaranvändarna i Europa och i övriga världen.

Menar kommissionen att endast faktisk användning av den standard som fastställts av W3C kan vara oförenlig med C-408/05?

Svar från Joaquín Almunia på kommissionens vägnar
(18 november 2013)

I sin dom av den 4 oktober 2011 i målen Premier League (C-403/08) och Karen Murphy (C-429/08), som parlamentsledamoten hänvisar till, ansåg domstolen att ”avtal som syftar till att avskärma de nationella marknaderna vid de nationella gränserna eller som försvårar integrationen av de nationella marknaderna” i princip måste anses begränsa konkurrensen i den mening som avses i artikel 101.1 i EUF-fördraget.

Viktigt att poängtera är att domstolen inte bestrider mot själva tilldelningen av exklusiva licenser för sändningar eller det faktum att innehållet var krypterat och endast tillgängligt via avkodare. Snarare ifrågasätter domstolen endast de kompletterande skyldigheter som är avsedda att garantera att programföretagen inte lämnar avkodade anordningar till personer som är bosatta i medlemsstater utanför programföretagens exklusiva område.

Kommissionen känner inte till något som tyder på att programgränssnittet HTML5 DRM som utvecklats och godkänts inom W3C skulle syfta eller bidra till att nationella marknader avskärmas vid de nationella gränserna likt avtalen i de förenade målen C-403/08 och 429/08. Enligt allmänt tillgänglig information om specifikationerna för programgränssnittet HTML 5 DRM verkar det inte finnas någon avsikt från W3C att fastställa en särskild DRM-lösning eller att främja någon form av territoriella begränsningar ([1]).

Trots detta och såsom angivits i dess svar på den skriftliga frågan E-005195/2013, kommer kommissionen inte att tveka att vidta lämpliga åtgärder om företag använder programgränssnittet HTML DRM för att införa begränsningar av denna typ.

([1]) Se http://www.w3.org/TR/encrypted-media/: Denna specifikation fastställer inte ett skydd för datainnehåll eller ett förvaltningssystem för digitala rättigheter. Den fastställer snarare ett gemensamt programgränssnitt som kan användas för att finna, välja och interagera med sådana system, samt innehåll i enklare krypteringssystem. Genomförandet av förvaltningen av digitala rättigheter är inte nödvändig för att den här specifikationen ska efterföljas. Det är endast det enkla, tydliga nyckelsystemet som måste genomföras som en gemensam grund. (vår understrykning).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010673/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: De facto use of standard versus standardisation

In its response to Written Question E-005195/2013 on standardisation of particular use-cases or business models in the browser the Commission responds that 'Should [it] become aware that such [standardised] technologies are used to enforce contractual restrictions similar to those at stake in the case [C-408/05, Murphy v Premier League], it will not hesitate to take an appropriate action.'

The DRM API seems developed particularly with the type of restrictions in mind that are specified in C-408/05.

Since the W3C is the de facto standard setting organisation for all major browser vendors, any decision made in the W3C is likely to affect the vast majority of European browser users and in fact consumers of browsers worldwide.

Does the Commission mean that only de facto usage of the standard made at the W3C can be incompliant with C-408/05?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(18 November 2013)

In its judgment of 4 October 2011 in cases Premier League (C-403/08) and Karen Murphy (C-429/08), to which the Honourable Member refers, the Court held that 'agreements which are aimed at partitioning national markets according to national borders or make the interpenetration of national markets more difficult' must, in principle, be regarded as restricting competition within the meaning of Article 101(1) TFEU.

Importantly, the Court did not take issue with the actual grant of exclusive licences to broadcast or the fact that the content was encrypted and only accessible via decoder. Rather, the Court called into question only the additional obligations designed to ensure that broadcasters do not supply decoding devices to persons resident in Member States outside of the broadcasters' exclusive territory.

The Commission does not have any indication that the HTML5 DRM APIs developed and agreed within W3C would aim at or have an effect of partitioning national markets according to national borders similar to the agreements in Joined Cases C-403/08 and 429/08. According to publicly available information on the specifications for the HTML 5 DRM APIs, there does not seem to be any intention by W3C to define a specific DRM solution, not to mention to foster any kind of territorial restrictions ([1]).

That said and as indicated in its response to Written Question E-005195/2013, the Commission will not hesitate to take appropriate action should undertakings use the HTML DRM APIs to impose restrictions of such kind.

([1]) See http://www.w3.org/TR/encrypted-media/: 'This specification does not define a content protection or Digital Rights Management system. Rather, it defines a common API that may be used to discover, select and interact with such systems as well as with simpler content encryption systems. Implementation of Digital Rights Management is not required for compliance with this specification: only the simple clear key system is required to be implemented as a common baseline.' (emphasis added).

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010674/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(18 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Armenia i rosyjska unia celna

Chociaż Armenia obecnie zamierza zawrzeć układ o stowarzyszeniu z UE, to przygotowuje się także do przystąpienia do unii celnej z Rosją. Częścią starań Rosji o zacieśnienie więzów z byłymi republikami radzieckimi jest wciągnięcie Armenii do umowy handlowej obejmującej już Kazachstan i Białoruś. Taki związek gospodarczy z Rosją utrudni jednak Armenii zawarcie umowy o wolnym handlu z UE, ponieważ unia celna jest nie do pogodzenia z pogłębionymi i kompleksowymi umowami o wolnym handlu z UE.

Czy Wysoka Przedstawiciel jest świadoma tego problemu wywołanego przez kolidujące ze sobą umowy handlowe? Jak UE będzie od tej pory prowadzić negocjacje układu stowarzyszeniowego?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Štefana Füleg w imieniu Komisji
(28 października 2013 r.)

W dniu 3 września Armenia ogłosiła, że zamierza przystąpić do Eurazjatyckiej Unii Celnej. Członkostwo w Eurazjatyckiej Unii Celnej nie jest zgodne z układem o stowarzyszeniu z UE oraz pogłębioną i kompleksową strefą wolnego handlu (DCFTA) z UE. W związku z tym, mimo że negocjacje w sprawie układu o stowarzyszeniu i DCFTA zostały zasadniczo ukończone w lipcu, UE i Armenia nie są już w stanie przystąpić do ich parafowania.

UE i Armenia będą musiały wspólnie zastanowić się nad nowymi podstawami ich wzajemnych stosunków, które mogłyby zastąpić obecną umowę o partnerstwie i współpracy.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010674/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Armenia and the Russian customs union

Although Armenia is currently on track to cement an Association Agreement with the EU, it has indicated a commitment to a customs union with Russia. As part of its attempts to strengthen ties with former Soviet republics, Russia has drawn Armenia into a trade agreement that already features Kazakhstan and Belarus. However, this economic tie with Russia will hinder Armenia's free trade deal with the EU, as the customs union is not compatible with the EU's Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements (DCFTA).

Is the High Representative aware of this issue caused by the conflicting trade agreements? How will the EU proceed with the Association Agreement negotiations from here?

Answer given by Mr Fule on behalf of the Commission
(28 October 2013)

On 3 September, Armenia announced that it intended to join the 'Eurasian' Customs Union. Membership in the Eurasian Customs Union is not compatible with an Association Agreement (AA) and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) with the EU. Therefore, although the negotiations on the AA/DCFTA were substantively completed in July, the EU and Armenia are no longer in a position to proceed with initialling.

The EU and Armenia will need to reflect jointly about a new basis for their relations to replace the current Partnership and Cooperation Agreement.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010675/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(18 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Azerbejdżan i prawa człowieka

Organizacja Human Rights Watch wydała ostatnio ostrzeżenie, że azerbejdżańskie władze zaczęły stosować represje wobec osób krytykujących rząd. Większość zatrzymanych za „wolność wypowiedzi" to młodzi ludzie, którym postawiono rozmaite zarzuty począwszy od przestępstw narkotykowych aż po chuligaństwo, co ma na celu utrzymanie nad nimi kontroli. Azerbejdżański rząd podwyższył również wysokość grzywien wymierzanych protestującym, a wszelkie zniesławienie rządu w Internecie uznał za przestępstwo.

Czy Wysoka Przedstawiciel zamierza poruszyć tę kwestię na zbliżającym się szczycie Partnerstwa Wschodniego?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton
w imieniu Komisji
(25 listopada 2013 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca stale monitoruje sytuację praw człowieka i demokracji w Azerbejdżanie i wyraża obawy w ramach kontaktów dwustronnych z władzami Azerbejdżanu, jak miało to przykładowo miejsce podczas ostatniego posiedzenia Komitetu Współpracy w dniach 1-2 października 2013 r. Kwestie związane z wymiarem sprawiedliwości i prawami człowieka omawiane są szczegółowo na zebraniach odpowiedniego podkomitetu.

Ponadto w niedawnym oświadczeniu rzeczników Wysokiej Przedstawiciel i Komisji (z 3 października 2013 r.) wyrażone zostały obawy dotyczące wolności słowa, zgromadzeń i zrzeszania w okresie przedwyborczym.

Wysoka Przedstawiciel śledzi również rozwój sytuacji w zakresie zmiany azerskiej ustawy dotyczącej zniesławienia. Komisja Wenecka Rady Europy przyjęła niedawno opinię na temat projektu tej ustawy. Jej zdaniem w wielu aspektach, projekt ten nie jest zgodny z zasadami europejskiej konwencji praw człowieka; jest on oderwany od innych części prawa krajowego oraz nie wykazuje postępów na drodze do depenalizacji zniesławienia, natomiast zakres zniesławienia został poszerzony, obejmując również publikacje w internecie.

Pełne poszanowanie praw człowieka, podstawowych wolności i praworządności przez Azerbejdżan są kluczowym elementem jego zobowiązań wynikających z członkostwa w Radzie Europy i uczestnictwa w Organizacji Bezpieczeństwa i Współpracy w Europie (OBWE), a także jego zobowiązań podjętych w ramach partnerstwa wschodniego. UE w dalszym ciągu dąży do wspierania Azerbejdżanu w wypełnianiu jego zobowiązań na arenie międzynarodowej dotyczących praw człowieka i demokratyzacji.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010675/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Azerbaijan and human rights

Human Rights Watch has warned recently that the authorities in Azerbaijan have started to crack down on people who criticise the government. The majority of those arrested for 'free expression' are young people, who are now facing charges ranging from drugs offences to 'hooliganism' that are designed to keep them in check. The Azeri Government has also increased fines for those involved in acts of protest and has made any defamation of the government on the Internet a crime.

Does the High Representative intend to raise this issue during the upcoming Eastern Partnership Summit?

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

The HR/VP continuously monitors the situation of human rights and democracy in Azerbaijan and raises concerns in bilateral contacts with the Azerbaijani authorities, such as, for example, the last Cooperation Committee which met on 1-2 October 2013. Justice and human rights (JLS/HR) issues are discussed in detail at JLS/HR subcommittee meetings.

In addition, concerns about freedom of expression, assembly and association in the pre-election period were recently expressed on 3 October 2013 in a statement by the spokespersons of the HR and the Commission.

The HR/VP is also following developments concerning the amendment of Azerbaijani legislation on defamation. The Council of Europe's Venice Commission has recently adopted an opinion on the draft law. In many respects, it found the draft not to be in line with the principles of the European Convention on Human Rights; to be prepared in complete isolation from other parts of domestic law and not showing progress towards decriminalising defamation, with its scope widened to online expressions.

Full respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law by Azerbaijan are at the heart of its obligations stemming from its Council of Europe membership, its participation in the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), as well as commitments taken within the framework of the Eastern Partnership. The EU remains committed to assisting Azerbaijan in fulfilling its international commitments related to human rights and democratisation.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010676/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(18 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Kuba: sprawa Ivana Fernandeza Depestre

Ivan Fernandez Depestre, obywatel Kuby został skazany na trzy lata pozbawienia wolności za „niebezpieczność" określoną jako „szczególną skłonność osoby do popełniania przestępstw", po tym, jak spotkał się z „antyspołecznymi osobami". Depestre został zaaresztowany, kiedy brał udział w pokojowej imprezie zorganizowanej, aby upamiętnić kubańskiego bohatera narodowego Franka Paísa, po czym odmówiono mu przedstawiciela prawnego. Na mocy art. 78-84 kubańskiego kodeksu karnego wymiar sprawiedliwości może skazać osoby krytycznie wobec rządu oraz działaczy w zakresie praw człowieka na pobyt w „wyspecjalizowanym ośrodku pracy lub nauki" lub też „kolektywie prac".

Czy Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel znana jest sprawa Ivana Fernandeza Depestre?

Jak UE podchodzi do kwestii spraw człowieka w kontaktach z władzami kubańskimi?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(8 listopada 2013 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel i Wiceprzewodnicząca Komisji wie o przedmiotowej sprawie, gdyż została ona zgłoszona przez Amnesty International, która w dniu 11 września br. uznała Iván Fernández Depestre za więźnia sumienia. Delegatura Unii na Kubie uważnie śledzi rozwój sytuacji.

UE porusza systematycznie kwestie praw człowieka w ramach dialogu politycznego z Kubą. Rozmowy te odbywają się regularnie na wszystkich szczeblach władz tak w Hawanie, jak i w Brukseli.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010676/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Cuba: the Case of Iván Fernández Depestre

Iván Fernández Depestre, a Cuban national, was sentenced to three years in prison for 'dangerousness', defined as the 'special proclivity of a person to commit crimes,' after he met with 'antisocial persons'. Depestre was charged after peacefully participating at an event to commemorate the Cuban national hero Frank País and was subsequently denied legal representation. Under Articles 78 to 84 of the Cuban Criminal Code, the justice system may sentence those who are critical of the government and human rights activists to 'specialised work or study establishments' or 'work collective[s]'.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the case of Iván Fernández Depestre?

How is the EU addressing the issue of human rights with the Cuban authorities?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the case, which has been signalled by Amnesty International who adopted Iván Fernández Depestre as prisoner of conscience on 11 September. The Delegation in Cuba is monitoring the situation closely.

The EU adresses human rights questions systematically in the EU-Cuba political dialogue. Such dialogue is taking place on a regular basis, at all levels both in Havana and in Brussels.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010677/13
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(18 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Cyrylica w Chorwacji

Aby móc przystąpić do UE w 2013 r., Chorwacja podjęła kroki na rzecz poprawy sytuacji w zakresie praw człowieka i ochrony mniejszości. Mniejszości mają prawo posługiwać się własnym językiem, a w niektórych częściach kraju, w tym w mieście Vukovar, zamieszkuje liczna mniejszość serbska. Jako echo napięć z czasów wojny w Jugosławii w latach 90. demonstranci chorwaccy usunęli niedawno znaki z napisami serbską cyrylicą. Napięcia między Chorwatami i Serbami nie słabną, a demonstranci uzyskali poparcie weteranów wojennych i mieszkańców sąsiednich miejscowości.

Jak UE może promować pokojowy dialog między Serbami i Chorwatami mieszkającymi w Chorwacji? Czy Komisja posiada strategię, która pomoże zapewnić przestrzeganie praw serbskich mniejszości etnicznych i stosowanie cyrylicy?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Viviane Reding w imieniu Komisji
(19 listopada 2013 r.)

Zgodnie z art. 2 Traktatu o Unii Europejskiej poszanowanie praw osób należących do mniejszości stanowi jedną z podstawowych wartości Unii Europejskiej. Ponadto art. 21 i 22 Karty praw podstawowych Unii Europejskiej zakazują dyskryminacji opartej na przynależności do mniejszości narodowej i przewidują poszanowanie przez Unię różnorodności kulturowej, religijnej i językowej.

Komisja potępia wszelkie formy przemocy wobec osób należących do mniejszości bądź jakiejkolwiek innej grupy. Jednakże, zgodnie z wyjaśnieniami np. w odpowiedzi na pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi na piśmie E-09947/13, Komisja nie posiada żadnych ogólnych uprawnień w odniesieniu do mniejszości. W szczególności Komisja nie posiada kompetencji w zakresie definicji i uznawania mniejszości narodowych, ich prawa do samostanowienia oraz autonomii lub używania języków regionalnych lub mniejszościowych. Kwestie te wchodzą w zakres obowiązków państw członkowskich.

W zakres mandatu Rady Europy wchodzi też między innymi monitorowanie stosowania Konwencji ramowej Rady Europy o ochronie mniejszości narodowych, a także Europejskiej karty języków regionalnych lub mniejszościowych przez jej państwa członkowskie. Chorwacja ratyfikowała obydwa teksty.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010677/13
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: Cyrillic alphabet in Croatia

Croatia took steps to strengthen human rights and protect minorities so that it could join the EU in 2013. Minorities have the right to use their native language, and the Serb minority has a strong presence in some parts of Croatia, including the town of Vukovar. As an echo of the tensions which existed during the Yugoslav war of the 1990s, Croat protesters recently tore down signs written in the Serbian Cyrillic script. Tensions remain high between Croats and Serbs, and protesters have received support from war veterans and neighbouring towns.

What can the EU do to promote peaceful dialogue between Serbs and Croats living in Croatia? Does the Commission have a strategy to help ensure that the rights of Serb ethnic minorities and the use of the Cyrillic alphabet are respected?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(19 November 2013)

According to Article 2 of the Treaty on the European Union, the respect for the rights of persons belonging to minorities constitutes one of the founding values of the European Union. Furthermore, Articles 21 and 22 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union prohibit discrimination based on membership of a national minority and provide for the respect by the Union of cultural, religious and linguistic diversity.

The Commission condemns any form of violence against people belonging to minorities or against any other group. However, as explained e.g. in its reply to Written Question E-09947/13, the Commission has no general powers as regards minorities. In particular, the Commission has no competence over the definition and recognition of national minorities, their self-determination and autonomy or the use of regional or minority languages, which fall under the responsibility of the Member States.

It falls within the mandate of the Council of Europe to monitor, among others, the application of the framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities as well as of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages by its Member States. Croatia has ratified both texts.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010678/13
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(18 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Porozumienie w sprawie połowów między UE a Marokiem

UE przygotowała ostatnio projekt porozumienia z Marokiem w sprawie połowów, na mocy którego statki z państw członkowskich UE mogłyby prowadzić połowy na marokańskich wodach. Mieszkańcy Sahary Zachodniej dali wyraz złości w reakcji na to porozumienie handlowe, które w ich mniemaniu „nie szanuje woli politycznej Saharyjczyków". Mniej więcej połowa wybrzeża, do którego prawa rości sobie Maroko, należy do Sahary Zachodniej, tak więc UE, prowadząc połowy na tych wodach, w gruncie rzeczy „nabywałaby towary kradzione". Sahara Zachodnia nie została zaproszona do negocjacji w sprawie porozumienia, które niektórzy członkowie organizacji Western Sahara Resource Watch określają jako „nieważne".

Jakie jest stanowisko Komisji w tej sprawie? Czy planowane jest włączenie Sahary Zachodniej do negocjacji?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Marię Damanaki w imieniu Komisji
(22 listopada 2013 r.)

Nowy protokół został wynegocjowany w oparciu o wytyczne Rady z dnia 14 lutego 2012 r. oraz przy uwzględnieniu rezolucji PE z dnia 14 grudnia 2011 r. Wzięto pod uwagę także kwestię przestrzegania prawa międzynarodowego i praw człowieka. W dniu 6 listopada 2013 r. Komitet Stałych Przedstawicieli podjął decyzję o zatwierdzeniu tego protokołu.

W myśl stanowiska Rady Bezpieczeństwa Narodów Zjednoczonych Sahara Zachodnia jest spornym terytorium niesamodzielnym administrowanym przez Maroko. Zgodnie z prawem międzynarodowym Maroko musi wykazać, że pod względem możliwych korzyści protokół leży w interesie wszystkich grup społecznych, których dotyczy. W tym celu w protokole zawarto szczegółowe postanowienia zobowiązujące Maroko do regularnego składania sprawozdań na temat skutków społecznych i gospodarczych przewidzianego wsparcia sektorowego, w tym na temat jego rozmieszczenia geograficznego.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010678/13
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: The EU-Morocco fisheries agreement

The EU recently drafted a fisheries agreement with Morocco, which would allow vessels from EU countries to fish in Moroccan waters. The Saharawi people have expressed anger at this business transaction, which they say 'doesn't respect the political will of the Saharawi people.' About half of the coastline that is claimed by Morocco belongs to Western Sahara, so the EU would essentially be 'buying stolen goods' by fishing in these waters. Western Sahara was not invited to the negotiations on the agreement, which some at Western Sahara Resource Watch are now calling 'invalid.'

What is the Commission's position on this issue? Are there new plans to include Western Sahara in the proceedings?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(22 November 2013)

The new protocol has been negotiated following the directives adopted by the Council on 14 February 2012 and taking into account the EP resolution of 14 December 2011, including on the issue of the respect of international law and human rights. On 6 November 2013, the Committee of Permanent Representatives decided to approve this protocol.

According to United Nations Security Council, the Western Sahara is a disputed Non-Self- Governing Territory under Moroccan administration. In order to comply with international law, Morocco needs to demonstrate that the Protocol serves the interests (in terms of benefits generated) of all the populations concerned. To that end, the Protocol contains detailed provisions requiring Morocco to regularly report on the economic and social impact of the sectoral support provided for, including its geographical distribution.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010680/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(18 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Kazachstan: sprawa Zinaidy Mukhortovej

We wrześniu 2009 prawniczka Zinaida Mukhortova wysłała do prezydenta Kazachstanu list, w którym uskarżała się na ingerencję jednego z członków parlamentu Kazachstanu w sprawę, którą się zajmowała. Została ona wtedy zatrzymana przez władze i umieszczona w szpitalu psychiatrycznym, ponieważ cierpi na „chroniczne zaburzenia urojeniowe". Od kiedy przebywa w szpitalu jest nieludzko traktowana i odmówiono jej porady prawnej. Kazachstan łamie Międzynarodowy Pakt Praw Obywatelskich i Politycznych, ponieważ rząd stosuje diagnozę i przymusowe leczenie jako formę odwetu.

Czy Wiceprzewodniczącej Komisji/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel znana jest sprawa Zinaidy Mukhortovej? Czy są podejmowane jakiekolwiek działania z myślą o jej uwolnieniu?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton
w imieniu Komisji
(12 listopada 2013 r.)

Sprawa Zinaidy Mukhortovej jest znana Wysokiej Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącej i jest przez nią uważnie obserwowana, zarówno w siedzibie głównej w Brukseli, jak i delegaturze UE w Astanie. Delegatura UE utrzymuje stały kontakt z miejscowymi obrońcami praw człowieka, którzy zajmują się tą sprawą. Ponadto pracownicy delegatury planują odwiedzić panią Mukhartovą w szpitalu, w którym jest przetrzymywana.

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca otrzymała sprawozdania dotyczące przypadków innych osób, które zostały zatrzymane w ośrodkach psychiatrycznych w Kazachstanie w podobnych okolicznościach. Delegatura UE poruszyła tę sprawę z władzami Kazachstanu.

UE konsekwentnie porusza kwestie związane z prawami człowieka z władzami Kazachstanu, również podczas ostatnich posiedzeń Rady Współpracy UE-Kazachstan i Komitetu ds. Współpracy UE-Kazachstan. Następne posiedzenie w ramach dialogu dotyczącego praw człowieka między UE a Kazachstanem jest zaplanowane w listopadzie w Astanie. Podczas tego spotkania będą omawiane indywidualne przypadki dotyczące praw człowieka.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010680/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Kazakhstan: The Case of Zinaida Mukhortova

In Kazakhstan in September 2009, lawyer Zinaida Mukhortova sent a letter to the President of Kazakhstan complaining about interference by a Member of the Kazakh Parliament in a case in which she was involved. She was then detained by the authorities and placed in a psychiatric hospital on the grounds that she was suffering from a 'chronic delusional disorder'. Since being admitted, she has been subjected to inhumane treatment and has been denied legal counsel. Given that the government is using her diagnosis and forced treatment as a form of retaliation, Kazakhstan is violating the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the case of Zinaida Mukhortova? Are any steps being taken with a view to her release?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the case of Ms Mukhartova and it has been followed it closely, both at headquarters in Brussels and at the EU Delegation in Astana. The EU Delegation has maintained regular contact with local human rights defenders who have been working on the case, and the Delegation plans to visit Ms Mukhartova at the hospital where she is detained.

The HR/VP has received reports of other cases in Kazakhstan where individuals have been detained in psychiatric institutions, in similar circumstances, and the EU Delegation has raised this with the Kazakhstan authorities.

The EU has consistently raised concerns with the authorities of Kazakhstan in relation to Human Rights issues, including in the recent meetings of the EU-Kazakhstan Cooperation Council and the EU-Kazakhstan Cooperation Committee. The next meeting of the EU-Kazakhstan Human Rights Dialogue is scheduled to take place in Astana in November, and individual human rights cases will be addressed during that meeting.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010681/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(18 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Antyukraińskie zarzuty dotyczące dostaw broni do Syrii

„Washington Post" opublikował artykuł, w którym twierdzi, że port Oktiabrsk na Ukrainie był wykorzystywany do wysyłania dostaw broni do reżimu syryjskiego Baszara al-Assada. Ministerstwo spraw zagranicznych Ukrainy zaprzecza tym zarzutom, zdecydowanie twierdząc, że Ukraina w pełni popiera zakończenie syryjskiej wojny domowej. Komentatorzy ukraińscy zauważyli, że możliwe jest, że za fałszywymi zarzutami stoi Rosja, która chciałaby powtórzyć tzw. aferę Kolczuga z 2002 r., która spowodowała izolację Ukrainy od Zachodu na wiele lat. Rosja otwarcie mówi o swojej dezaprobacie w stosunku do zawarcia przez Ukrainę ewentualnego układu o stowarzyszeniu z UE – perspektywa, która wydaje się prawdopodobna – a także wobec podpisania pogłębionej i kompleksowej umowy o wolnym handlu.

Jakie informacje w tej sprawie ma Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych? W jaki sposób Wysoka Przedstawiciel postrzega trudności stwarzane przez Rosję w odpowiedzi na stosunki Ukrainy w UE? Czy jest możliwe, że oskarżenia o handel bronią są częścią kampanii oszczerstw mającej na celu uniemożliwienie Ukrainie integracji z UE?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton
w imieniu Komisji
(27 listopada 2013 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca jest świadoma doniesień prasowych, o których wspomina szanowny Pan Poseł, ale nie są jej znane żadne dowody przemytu broni do Syrii przez ukraiński port Oktiabrsk. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca zwraca uwagę na stwierdzenie ukraińskiego Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych, że Ukraina zaprzestała dostaw broni do Syrii w 2011 r.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010681/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(18 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Anti-Ukrainian allegations concerning arms supplies to Syria

The Washington Post has published an article claiming that Ukraine's Oktyabrsk port was used to send arms supplies to assist Bashar al-Assad's Syrian regime. The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry denies the allegations, firmly stating that Ukraine is in full support of ending the Syrian civil war. Commentators on Ukraine have raised the possibility that Russia is behind the false allegations, with a view to repeating the 'Kolchuga scandal' of 2002, which isolated Ukraine from the West for a number of years. Russia has been open about its disapproval of Ukraine's potential Association Agreement with the EU — a prospect which seems ever more likely — as well as the signing of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement.

What information does the European External Action Service possess on this matter? How does the High Representative view the difficulties that Russia is posing in response to Ukrainian relations with the EU? Is it possible that the arms sale allegations are part of a smear campaign against Ukraine to prevent it from integrating with the EU?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the press reports referred to by the Honourable Member, but is not aware of any evidence of arms smuggling to Syria through the Ukrainian port of Oktyabrsk. The HR/VP notes the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine that Ukraine stopped arms deliveries to Syria in 2011.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010682/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Embargo al Federației Ruse împotriva Moldovei

Federația Rusă a anunțat impunerea unui nou embargo asupra livrărilor de vinuri din Republica Moldova, invocând motive de îngrijorare legate de calitatea producției vinicole moldovenești. Cu toate acestea, măsura pare să constituie mai curând o încercare de a compromite parcursul european al Republicii Moldova și de a o menține în sfera sa de influență. O posibilă dovadă în acest sens o constituie faptul că Rusia face o excepție pentru vinurile și alte băuturi provenite din Transnistria, regiune separatistă a Republicii Moldova.

Comisia este rugată să comenteze măsura anunțată de autoritățile ruse și soluțiile pe care le are în vedere cu privire la această măsură, precum și altele similare din ultimul timp.

Răspuns dat de dl De Gucht în numele Comisiei
(21 noiembrie 2013)

La 25 septembrie, Comisia a adoptat o propunere de modificare a Regulamentului (CE) nr. 55/2008 al Consiliului ([1]) de introducere a unor preferințe comerciale autonome pentru Republica Moldova (Regulamentul APT), pentru a elimina cota anuală cu taxe vamale zero pentru importurile de vin din Republica Moldova și pentru a deschide astfel complet piața Uniunii Europene la aceste importuri. Acest lucru ar ajuta Republica Moldova să-și diversifice mai mult pieţele sale de export de vin și, prin urmare, i-ar permite să reducă la minimum dificultățile cu care se confruntă în prezent pe o parte dintre pieţele sale tradiționale. Această propunere a fost deja prezentată Consiliului și Parlamentului European, iar Comisia așteaptă cu interes să colaboreze îndeaproape cu ambele instituții pentru ca ea să fie aprobată rapid.

În plus, în baza Regulamentului APT, Republica Moldova beneficiază deja de un acces foarte generos la piața UE pentru toate produsele sale, cu puține excepții. Pentru anumite produse, cum ar fi cele de origine animală, acest acces este limitat din cauza lipsei de conformitate cu standardele sanitare și fitosanitare ale UE. Modificarea Regulamentului APT nu este instrumentul care poate contribui la soluționarea acestei probleme. Mai degrabă, prevederile privind o zonă de liber schimb complex și cuprinzător din viitorul acord de asociere pot rezolva această chestiune. Comisia depune toate eforturile pentru a pregăti acordul de asociere pentru semnare în cel mai scurt timp posibil, pentru a permite intrarea în vigoare rapidă a acestuia prin aplicarea sa cu titlu provizoriu.

În final, la solicitarea Republicii Moldova, Comisia pregătește o evaluare *inter pares* pentru a analiza situația reală a controalelor privind siguranța alimentară în sectorul vitivinicol, precum și în cel al producției de struguri de masă și de mere. De asemenea, Comisia a propus să ofere asistență pentru a accelera tranziția la un sistem de asigurare a calității care să respecte normele UE pentru produsele de origine animală.

([1]) JO L 20, 24.1.2008, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010682/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Russian Federation embargo against Moldova

The Russian Federation announced the imposition of a new embargo on Moldovan wines, citing reasons for concern about the quality of Moldovan wine production. However, the measure appears to be more of an attempt to undermine Moldova's course towards the EU and to keep Moldova within its sphere of influence. Possible evidence of this is the fact that Russia is making an exception for wines and other drinks from Transnistria, a separatist region of the Republic of Moldova.

Can the Commission comment on the measure announced by the Russian authorities and the solutions envisaged, as well as other similar measures?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(21 November 2013)

On 25 September the Commission adopted a proposal to amend Council Regulation (EC) No 55/2008 ([1]) introducing autonomous trade preferences for the Republic of Moldova (ATP Regulation) to eliminate the annual duty-free quota for imports of Moldovan wine and thereby fully open the European Union's market to such imports. This would help the Republic of Moldova further diversify its wine export markets and thereby minimise its current difficulties with some of its traditional markets. This proposal has been already submitted to the Council and the European Parliament, and the Commission looks forward to working closely with both institutions to seek approval of this proposal in a swift manner.

Besides, the Republic of Moldova already benefits under the ATP Regulation from a very generous access to the EU market for all its products, with limited exceptions. For certain products, such as those of animal origin, this access is limited by lack of conformity with EU sanitary and phytosanitary standards. Changing the ATP Regulation is not the instrument to help resolve this issue. Rather, the provisions of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area contained in the future Association Agreement aim to tackle this matter. The Commission is making all efforts to prepare the Association Agreement for signature as soon as possible, to enable its swift entry into force through its provisional application.

Finally, the Commission is also currently preparing, on Moldova's request, a peer review to assess the real state of play of food safety controls in the wine sector as well as table grapes and apples. It has also proposed assistance to accelerate the transition to a EU-compliant quality assurance system for products of animal origin.

([1]) OJ L 20, 24.1.2008, p. 1.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010683/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Riscul de supradoză de acetaminofen

O companie din Statele Unite ale Americii, producătoare a unui medicament care conține acetaminofen (substanța activă din paracetamol) a decis ca ambalajele acestui produs să cuprindă un avertisment privind riscul de supradoză. Această măsură se datorează faptului că, în SUA, între 55 000 și 80 000 de persoane sunt spitalizate anual din cauza supradozelor de acetaminofen, iar cel puțin 500 dintre acestea își pierd viața.

Comisia este rugată să precizeze dacă consideră oportună o măsură similară în UE.

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(4 noiembrie 2013)

Medicamentele care conțin paracetamol existente în prezent pe piață sunt autorizate numai prin procedura corespunzătoare la nivel național, de către statele membre. Legislația UE ([1]) prevede posibilitatea de a include un avertisment special pentru anumite medicamente, dacă este necesar. Atunci când autorizează introducerea pe piață a unui medicament care conține paracetamol, statele membre pot solicita ca pe ambalaj să existe un avertisment, precum cel menționat de distinsul membru al Parlamentului European. Dacă există preocupări privind un anumit produs, statele membre pot cere modificări ale etichetării chiar și după acordarea autorizației de introducere pe piață.

([1]) Directiva 2001/83/CE a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului din 6 noiembrie 2001 de instituire a unui cod comunitar cu privire la medicamentele de uz uman (JO L 311, 28.11.2001, p. 67).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010683/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Risk of acetaminophen overdose

A company in the United States that produces a drug containing acetaminophen (the active substance in paracetamol) has decided to put a warning on the packaging of this product concerning the risk of overdose. This measure is being taken on account of the fact that between 55 000 and 80 000 people are hospitalised annually in the US due to acetaminophen overdose and at least 500 of these people lose their lives.

Can the Commission state whether a similar measure is deemed appropriate in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(4 November 2013)

Paracetamol-containing medicinal products currently on the market are only authorised at national level by the Member States. EU legislation ([1]) foresees the possibility of including a special warning for an individual medicine, if needed. When authorising paracetamol-containing medicinal products, Member States may request that a warning, as referred to by the Honourable Member in his question, is provided on the labelling. In case of concerns, Member States may also request modifications to the labelling after a marketing authorisation has been granted.

([1]) Directive 2001/83/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 November 2001on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, OJ L 311, 28.11.2001, p. 67.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010684/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Acordul de Parteneriat cu România

Comisia este rugată să precizeze care este stadiul exact al Acordului de Parteneriat cu România, document care va reglementa modul de utilizare a fondurilor europene pentru 2014-2020.

Răspuns dat de dl Hahn în numele Comisiei
(14 noiembrie 2013)

Autoritățile române cooperează îndeaproape cu Comisia, în contextul dialogului informal inițiat în vederea pregătirii proiectului de acord de parteneriat. Un proiect revizuit și consolidat, suficient de elaborat pentru a permite evaluarea pe plan intern, a sosit la data de 11 octombrie. Dialogul cu autoritățile române este productiv și constructiv.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010684/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Partnership Agreement with Romania

Can the Commission state the exact status of the Partnership Agreement with Romania, which is the document that will regulate the use of EU Funds for 2014-2020?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(14 November 2013)

Romanian authorities are closely cooperating with the Commission, in the context of the informal dialogue with a view to preparing the draft partnership agreement. A revised and consolidated draft arrived on 11 October which is mature enough to be internally assessed. The dialogue with Romanian authorities is fruitful and constructive.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010685/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Memorandumul privind sănătatea animală și siguranța alimentelor dintre România și China

Autoritățile române au încheiat în luna august memorandumul de înțelegere privind sănătatea animală și siguranța alimentelor între autoritatea veterinară din România și cea din China. Potrivit autorităților române, actul are „scopul de a întări cooperarea între cele două țări în domeniul comerțului cu animale vii și produse de origine animală” și „prefigurează deschiderea unor noi domenii de cooperare”.

Comisia este rugată să precizeze dacă încheierea unui astfel de act bilateral este compatibilă cu legislația europeană aplicabilă.

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(27 noiembrie 2013)

Direcția Generală Sănătate și Consumatori a Comisiei Europene a primit din partea autorităților române „Memorandumul de înțelegere privind sănătatea animală și siguranța alimentelor între autoritățile veterinare din România și China”.

Încheierea acestui memorandum de înțelegere este compatibilă cu legislația UE. Acesta se referă exclusiv la promovarea cooperării între părți în domeniul siguranței alimentelor și cel sanitar. În plus, actul ia în considerare competența Comisiei Europene privind aspectele comerciale și nu conține dispoziții care ar putea împiedica buna funcționare a pieței unice a UE pentru produsele supuse cerințelor sanitare și de siguranță alimentară.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010685/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Memorandum on animal health and food safety between Romania and China

In August, the Romanian authorities concluded the memorandum of understanding (MoU) on animal health and food safety between the veterinary authorities of Romania and China. According to the Romanian authorities, the act 'aims to strengthen the cooperation between the two countries on the trade of live animals and animal products' and it 'prefigures the opening of new areas of cooperation'.

Can the Commission state whether the concluding of such a bilateral act is compatible with EU legislation?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(27 November 2013)

The Health and Consumers Directorate-General of the European Commission has received from the Romanian authorities the 'Memorandum of Understanding on animal health and food safety between the veterinary authorities of Romania and China'.

The conclusion of this Memorandum of Understanding is compatible with the EU legislation. It exclusively relates to the promotion of cooperation between the parties in the areas of food safety and sanitary issues. In addition, it takes into account the European Commission competence as regards trade matters and does not contain dispositions which may hinder the good functioning of the EU single market for products subject to food safety and sanitary requirements.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010686/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Statistici privind combaterea corupției, în funcție de apartenența politică

Liderul PNL, unul dintre partidele aflate la guvernare în România, a solicitat ministrului justiției să prezinte o statistică oficială privind activitatea Direcției Naționale Anticorupție (componentă a Parchetului), în care să precizeze apartenența politică a celor anchetați. Comisia este rugată să comenteze această solicitare și eventualele implicații ale acestei declarații în ceea ce privește mecanismul de cooperare și verificare.

Răspuns dat de dl Šefčovič în numele Comisiei
(21 octombrie 2013)

Comisia nu are comentarii de formulat cu privire la solicitare, dar îl invită pe distinsul membru să consulte Raportul tehnic de însoțire a Raportului Comisiei către Parlamentul European și Consiliu privind progresele realizate în România în cadrul mecanismului de cooperare și de verificare din iulie 2012 ([1]), în care se afirmă că „*Din 2007, DNA a continuat să construiască un istoric convingător de anchete imparțiale. Instituția a înaintat cazuri împotriva unor persoane din toate partidele politice*."

([1]) SWD(2012) 231 final — România : Raport tehnic *de însoțire a documentului* Raportul Comisiei către Parlamentul European și Consiliu privind progresele realizate în România în cadrul mecanismului de cooperare și de verificare {COM(2012) 410 final}, p.26.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010686/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Statistics on fighting corruption, by political affiliation

The leader of the PNL, one of the ruling parties in Romania, has asked the Ministry of Justice to submit official statistics on the activities of the National Anticorruption Directorate (a branch of the Prosecutor's Office), stating the political affiliation of those under investigation. Can the Commission comment on this request and the possible implications of this statement on the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism (CVM)?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(21 October 2013)

The Commission has no comment on the request but would refer the Honourable Member to the Technical Report accompanying the report on Progress under the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism of July 2012 ([1]) stating 'Since 2007 DNA [National Anti-Corruption Directorate] has continued to build a convincing track record of impartial investigations. It has taken forward cases against persons from all political parties.'

([1]) SWD(2012) 231 final — Romania : Technical Report *accompanying the document* Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on Progress in Romania under the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism {COM(2012) 410 final}, p.26.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010687/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Impactul măsurilor CE în domeniul siguranței alimentare

La șase luni de la scandalul cărnii de cal din 2012, a avut loc o altă situație similară, implicând carne improprie consumului, care ar viza cai din Olanda, Belgia, Franța și Spania. Această nouă situație a fost semnalată de autoritățile sanitare din Marsilia, Franța. Comisia este rugată să precizeze care a fost valoarea adăugată a măsurilor adoptate de Comisie în acest interval, în condițiile în care o nouă criză majoră, la fel de gravă, are loc în aceste zile.

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(30 octombrie 2013)

Comisia este la curent cu situația care implică un posibil comerț fraudulos cu cai pentru sacrificare între Franța și Belgia, situație despre care s-a relatat în presă în data de 5 septembrie. În acest sens, autoritățile franceze și belgiene nu au semnalat niciun risc grav pentru sănătate. Investigația inițială a început încă din 2011, deci înainte de evenimentele din acest an legate de comercializarea cărnii de cal, iar autoritățile competente au confirmat că în cele două state membre implicate este în curs de desfășurare o procedură judiciară. Comisia își exprimă satisfacția în legătură cu cooperarea transfrontalieră instaurată între anchetatorii din Franța și cei din Belgia, de natură să faciliteze depistarea eventualelor fraude.

În ceea ce privește normele privind identificarea ecvideelor, deși acest lucru nu are o legătură directă cu scandalul cărnii de cal, s-au constatat unele deficiențe în cursul investigațiilor efectuate în urma evenimentelor care au implicat comercializarea cărnii de cal. Comisia se ocupă în prezent de revizuirea normelor privind identificarea ecvideelor cu scopul de a sprijini statele membre în aplicarea acestor norme, precum și pentru a elimina orice deficiențe care ar fi putut facilita abuzul și frauda.

Elementele-cheie ale acestei evaluări au fost discutate cu statele membre la 10 septembrie 2013, în cadrul grupului de lucru privind identificarea cailor, dar și ulterior, în cursul reuniunilor Comitetului permanent pentru lanțul alimentar și sănătatea animală. Chestiunile rămase vor fi discutate în cadrul întâlnirii unui alt grup de lucru, programată pentru sfârșitul lunii octombrie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010687/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Impact of Commission's food safety measures

Six months after the horsemeat scandal of 2012, another similar situation has arisen involving meat not fit for human consumption, affecting horses in the Netherlands, Belgium, France and Spain. This new situation has been highlighted by the health authorities in Marseille, France. Can the Commission clarify what added value has been provided by the measures it has adopted in the interim, at a time when a new and equally serious major crisis has recently arisen?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(30 October 2013)

The Commission is aware of the situation involving a possibly fraudulent trade in horses for slaughter between France and Belgium, which was reported by the press on 5 September. No serious risk for health was reported by the French or Belgian authorities in relation to the facts. The initial investigation started prior to this year's horsemeat events, dating as far back as 2011, and the competent authorities confirmed that a judicial proceeding is ongoing in the two Member States involved. The Commission is satisfied with the cross-border cooperation put in place between investigators in France and Belgium, which is enabling the detection of potential frauds.

As regards the rules for the identification of equidae, although this has no direct link to the horsemeat scandal, certain deficiencies were observed during the follow-up investigations of the horsemeat events. The Commission is currently reviewing the rules on identification of equidae with the aim to further assist Member States in enforcing those rules and to eliminate any flaws that might have offered opportunities for malpractice and fraud.

Key elements of this review have been discussed with Member States during the Working Group on Horse Identification on 10 September 2013, but also subsequently during meetings of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health and remaining questions shall be discussed in another working group scheduled for end of October.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010688/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Interesele și drepturile comunităților locale în proiectele cu finanțare europeană — cazul autostrăzii Arad-Nădlac

Agricultorii din regiunea de vest a României sunt nemulțumiți de încălcarea dreptului lor la proprietate prin construirea autostrăzii Arad-Nădlac. Această nouă autostradă blochează accesul la unele terenuri agricole, aflate în această zonă, ca urmare a faptului că în proiect nu au fost prevăzute drumuri agricole, căile de acces fiind blocate.

Valoarea totală a acestui proiect este de un miliard de lei, iar pentru suma de 913 milioane lei a fost solicitată finanțarea nerambursabilă a Uniunii Europene.

În calitate de finanțator, Comisia este rugată să explice:

1. care sunt obligațiile beneficiarului — statul român — în ceea ce privește interesele și drepturile comunităților locale și

2. care sunt mijloacele de acțiune aflate în acest caz la dispoziția comunităților locale, împiedicate să își desfășoare activitatea economică.

Răspuns dat de dl Hahn în numele Comisiei
(11 noiembrie 2013)

1. În conformitate cu principiul gestionării partajate, aplicabil politicii de coeziune, pregătirea și organizarea licitațiilor, precum și monitorizarea proiectelor, reprezintă responsabilitatea statelor membre. În plus, fiecare stat membru este responsabil, prin intermediul autorității contractante, pentru proiectarea detaliată a proiectelor de investiții în infrastructură.

În pregătirea oricărui proiect de infrastructură de transport, statul membru ar trebui să ia în considerare toate aspectele relevante pe teren, astfel încât populația locală și întreprinderile din zonă să beneficieze de o accesibilitate sporită.

2. Luând în considerare cele de mai sus, comunitățile locale ar trebui să contacteze autoritățile naționale responsabile cu proiectul, pentru a le prezenta problemele cu care se confruntă.

Comisia este conștientă de problemele întâmpinate de agricultorii din zona Nădlac ca urmare a construirii autostrăzii Nădlac-Arad și a adus subiectul în atenția autorităților române. Acestea au început să caute soluții la problema restricționării accesului fermierilor din zona Nădlac la terenurile agricole, cauzată de dezvoltarea acestui proiect.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010688/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Interests and rights of local communities in projects financed by European funds — case of the Arad-Nădlac motorway

Farmers in the western region of Romania are unhappy that their right to property has been breached by the construction of the Arad-Nădlac motorway. This new motorway will block access to some of their farmland located in this area, due to the fact that no provision has been made in the project for agricultural roads, with access roads being blocked.

This project has a total value of RON 1 billion, and an application has been submitted for RON 913 million in non-repayable European Union funding.

As the funding provider, can the Commission explain the following:

1. What obligations does the beneficiary — the Romanian State — have with regard to the interests and rights of the local communities?

2. What means of action are available in this case to the local communities which have been prevented from carrying out their business?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(11 November 2013)

1. According to the shared management principle applicable to cohesion policy, the preparation, tendering and monitoring of a project is the responsibility of the Member State. Moreover, the Member State, through the contracting authority of a project, is responsible for the detailed design of an infrastructure investment project.

In the preparation of any transport infrastructure project, the Member State should take into consideration all the relevant aspects on the ground so that the local people and the businesses of the project area benefit from an increased accessibility.

2. Taking the above into account, local communities should contact the national authorities responsible for the project with their concerns.

The Commission is aware of the problems of the farmers from the Nadlac area as a result of the Nadlac-Arad motorway and has raised the matter with the Romanian authorities . They have started to work on solutions for the issue of access to land resulting from this project for the farmers from the Nadlac area.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010689/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Tratatul de liber schimb între Uniunea Europeană și Ucraina

Comisia este rugată să comenteze declarația Președintelui Federației Ruse, care a avertizat Ucraina că va lua „măsuri de protecție" dacă Ucraina va continua demersurile în vederea semnării unui tratat de liber schimb cu Uniunea Europeană.

Răspuns dat de dl De Gucht în numele Comisiei
(5 noiembrie 2013)

Comisia urmărește cu atenție evoluția poziției Rusiei față de Ucraina și ceilalți parteneri estici care doresc să-și confirme, la summitul de la Vilnius, decizia de a semna acordurile de asociere cu UE. Comisia a afirmat faptul că amenințările adresate în mod deschis de către Rusia sunt inacceptabile, la fel ca și măsurile recente care au avut ca țintă statele membre.

În plus, Comisia este de părere că măsurile sunt nejustificate și în mod clar discriminatorii. Comisia va continua să analizeze situația pentru a identifica soluții adecvate, inclusiv la nivel multilateral, dacă este cazul. În același timp, Comisia se așteaptă ca Rusia să ia măsurile necesare pentru a asigura respectarea obligațiilor impuse de Organizația Mondială a Comerțului.

Fără a aduce atingere rezultatului dezbaterilor politice care vor avea loc în cadrul următoarei reuniuni a Consiliului Afaceri Externe privind decizia de a semna și de a aplica cu titlu provizoriu Acordul de asociere cu Ucraina, Comisia este de părere că cea mai eficientă măsură de sprijin este accelerarea procedurilor interne necesare pentru o aplicare anticipată provizorie a unor părți din Acordul de asociere, cu condiția să existe o acțiune hotărâtă din partea Ucrainei și să se înregistreze progrese tangibile în ceea ce privește reperele de politică stabilite în concluziile Consiliului Afaceri Externe din decembrie 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010689/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: EU-Ukraine free trade agreement

Can the Commission comment on the statement made by the President of the Russian Federation, who warned Ukraine that he will take 'protective measures' if Ukraine continues its efforts towards signing a free trade agreement with the EU?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

The Commission is carefully following the developments in the position of Russia towards Ukraine and those Eastern Partners who are willing to confirm at the Vilnius Summit their decisions to sign the Association Agreements with the EU. The Commission has made clear that Russia's open threats are unacceptable, as are the recent measures targeted at Member States.

Furthermore, the Commission is of the view that the measures are unjustified and clearly discriminatory. The Commission will continue to analyse the situation with a view to identifying adequate solutions including at multilateral levels if appropriate. At the same time, the Commission expects that Russia will take the necessary steps to ensure full compliance with its World Trade Organisation obligations.

Without prejudice to the outcome of the political debate that will take place at the next meetings of the Foreign Affairs Council on the decision to sign and provisionally apply the Association Agreement with Ukraine, the Commission believes that the most effective supporting measure is the acceleration of the internal procedures necessary for an early provisional application of parts of the Association Agreement, provided that there is determined action and tangible progress by Ukraine on the political benchmarks set out in the conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council of December 2012.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010690/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Înțelegere anticoncurențială între comercianții de cereale din România

Autoritățile române au declanșat o investigație în rândul societăților comerciale care fac achiziții pe piața cerealelor, suspectând o înțelegere anticoncurențială între comercianți. Investigația a pornit de la faptul că prețurile obținute din vânzarea recoltei sunt cu 40-45% mai mici decât anul trecut, iar comercianții profită de perisabilitatea produselor și lipsa posibilităților de depozitare.

Comisia este rugată să precizeze dacă are cunoștință de această investigație și dacă s-au înregistrat situații similare anul acesta în alte state membre.

Răspuns dat de dl Almunia în numele Comisiei
(13 noiembrie 2013)

Comisia are cunoștință de ancheta inițiată de autoritatea de concurență din România.

În conformitate cu Regulamentul nr. 1/2003, Comisia și autoritățile naționale din domeniul concurenței („ANC") au competențe paralele de a aplica articolele 101 și 102 din TFUE, în strânsă cooperare. Regulamentul nr. 1/2003 prevede în special mecanisme de consultare și informare aplicabile cazurilor în care ANC au în vedere adoptarea de decizii de asigurare a respectării normelor de concurență.

În ceea ce privește dificultățile cu care se confruntă fermierii cultivatori de cereale în cursul negocierilor cu cumpărătorii acestora, au fost adoptate noi norme în contextul recentei reforme a politicii agricole comune, în vederea consolidării puterii acestora de negociere. Atunci când aceste norme vor intra în vigoare, fermierilor care fac parte din organizațiile de producători (OP) recunoscute li se va permite să negocieze în comun clauzele contractuale, inclusiv prețul, pentru furnizarea produselor lor, cu condiția ca, printre altele, aceștia să se angajeze și în alte activități care pot genera creșteri semnificative ale eficienței, astfel încât activitățile globale ale OP să contribuie la îndeplinirea obiectivelor prevăzute la articolul 39 din tratat ([1]).

Această condiție specifică are ca scop încurajarea fermierilor de a lua măsuri concrete pentru a spori economiile de scară și de gamă ale acestora, de exemplu, prin punerea în comun, la scară corespunzătoare, a achizițiilor acestora de factori de producție, precum și a investițiilor în spațiilor de depozitare. Acest lucru ar permite reducerea costurilor de producție totale ale fermierilor, consolidând în același timp poziția acestora în negocierea cu cumpărătorii produselor lor, contribuind, în ultimă instanță, la marje mai ridicate pentru fermieri.

([1]) Astfel cum este prevăzut la articolul 39 din Tratatul privind funcționarea Uniunii Europene, politica agricolă comună are următoarele obiective: (i) creșterea productivității agricole; (ii) asigurarea unui nivel de trai echitabil pentru populația agricolă; (iii) stabilizarea piețelor; (iv) garantarea siguranței aprovizionării lor; (v) asigurarea unor prețuri rezonabile de livrare către consumatori.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010690/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Anti-competitive agreement among grain traders in Romania

The Romanian authorities have launched an investigation into the commercial companies making purchases on the grain market, suspecting that an anti-competitive agreement has been reached among traders. The investigation is based on the fact that the prices obtained from post-harvest sales were 40-45% lower than last year, with traders exploiting the products' perishability and the lack of storage facilities.

Can the Commission clarify whether it is aware of this investigation and whether similar situations have been noted this year in other Member States?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(13 November 2013)

The Commission is aware of the investigation initiated by the Romanian Competition Authority.

According to Regulation 1/2003, the Commission and the National Competition Authorities ('NCAs') have parallel competences to apply Articles 101 and 102 TFEU in close cooperation. Regulation 1/2003 notably provides for information and consultation mechanisms applicable to cases in which NCAs envisage the adoption of enforcement decisions.

Concerning the difficulties faced by cereal farmers in their negotiations with their buyers, new rules have been adopted in the context of the recent Common Agriculture Policy reform in order to strengthen their bargaining power. When these rules enter into force farmers via recognised Producers Organisations (PO) will be allowed to jointly negotiate contract terms, including price, for the supply of their products, provided i.a. that they also engage in other activities which can create significant efficiencies so that the activities of the PO overall contribute to the fulfilment of the objectives of Article 39 of the Treaty ([1]).

This specific condition is designed to encourage farmers to take concrete steps to increase their economies of scale and scope by, for instance, pooling together at the appropriate scale their input procurement as well as investments in storage facilities. This would enable them to reduce their overall production costs while enhancing their negotiating position towards buyers of their products, ultimately contributing to higher margins for farmers.

([1]) As set out in Article 39 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union the CAP has the following objectives: (i) to increase agricultural productivity; (ii) to ensure a fair standard of living for the agricultural community; (iii) to stabilise markets; (iv) to assure the availability of supplies; (v) to ensure that supplies reach consumers at reasonable prices.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010691/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Achiziționarea de miere în cadrul PEAD 2013 România

Agenția de Plăți și Intervenții pentru Agricultură din România (APIA) a achiziționat la prețuri care pot ridica suspiciuni 750 de tone de miere, prețurile fiind cu mult peste cele practicate pe piață.

APIA a încheiat în 8 august 2013 un contract pentru furnizarea, până la sfârșitul anului, a 750 de tone de miere, ambalată în recipiente de plastic de 0,25 kg. Mierea este achiziționată din mijloacele financiare puse la dispoziție de Comisia Europeană, în cadrul Planului european de ajutorare pentru persoanele cele mai defavorizate din România (PEAD)- 2013.

Achiziția s-a făcut la prețul de aproximativ 13,12 lei kg, față de prețurile de 10-12 lei/kg practicate pe piață. Acest fapt a fost reclamat de apicultori.

Comisia este rugată să prezinte un punct de vedere cu privire la această situație.

Răspuns dat de dl Cioloș în numele Comisiei
(29 octombrie 2013)

Programul european de ajutorare pentru persoanele cele mai defavorizate este defalcat în programe naționale, care, în conformitate cu principiul subsidiarității, sunt stabilite și puse în aplicare în statele membre. În cadrul acestor programe naționale, autoritățile competente lansează și gestionează licitații în conformitate cu normele naționale privind achizițiile publice. Comisia nu este în măsură să ofere un aviz referitor la situația descrisă de distinsul membru al Parlamentului, deoarece nu este implicată în procedura de achiziții publice și nu are cunoștințe amănunțite despre descrierea ofertei (de exemplu, o posibilă includere a cheltuielilor suplimentare precum ambalarea, etichetarea sau livrarea).

În cazul în care există suspiciuni referitoare la nerespectarea normelor privind achizițiile publice, se pot utiliza căile de atac prevăzute în cadrul procedurii de plângere sau pot fi contactate serviciile de anchetă locale. În plus, orice cetățean al UE are libertatea de a trimite informații către OLAF, dacă acesta consideră, în mod rezonabil, că a fost comisă o neregulă.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010691/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Purchase of honey as part of the European Food Aid Programme (PEAD) 2013 in Romania

The Agency for Payments and Intervention in Agriculture (APIA) in Romania has purchased 750 tonnes of honey at prices well above the going market rates, something which could well arouse suspicion.

APIA signed a contract on 8 August 2013 to provide, by the end of the year, 750 tonnes of honey, packaged in 0.25 kg plastic containers. Honey is purchased using the funds provided by the Commission as part of PEAD 2013, the programme for distributing food aid to the most deprived in Romania.

It was purchased for around RON 13.12/kg, compared with the going market price of RON 10-12/kg. This has raised complaints from beekeepers.

Can the Commission offer an opinion on this situation?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(29 October 2013)

The Most Deprived Programme of the EU is broken into national programmes, which, in line with the principle of subsidiarity, are designed and implemented at Member State level. In the framework of these national programmes, the competent authorities open and run tenders in compliance with the national public procurement rules. It is not possible for the Commission to offer an opinion on the situation described by the Honourable Member of the Parliament as it is not involved in the public procurement procedure and does not possess detailed knowledge of the tender description (for example possible inclusion of additional expenses like packaging, labelling or delivery).

In case of any suspicion of non-respect of the public procurement rules, legal remedy may be sought in the framework of the complaint procedure or at the local investigative authorities. Furthermore, any citizen of the EU is free to send information to OLAF if they reasonably believe that an irregularity has been committed.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010692/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Dreptul la acces la achiziția de alimente de bază în România

Aproximativ 75 000 de puncte de vânzare a pâinii (din 150 000 existente în prezent) s-ar putea închide de la 1 ianuarie 2014, dacă autoritățile române vor aproba un proiect de hotărâre de guvern care prevede ca pâinea să se vândă numai în magazine specializate sau în raioane organizate în acest scop în magazinele generale. Practic, locuitorilor zonelor rurale le va fi imposibil să cumpere pâine și produse de panificație. Această nouă măsură apare după ce guvernul român a instituit un impozit agricol pe care locuitorii zonelor rurale trebuie să îl achite personal, în localitatea urbană apropiată — în unele cazuri la peste 100 de km. Comisia este rugată să precizeze dacă există vreo solicitare în această privință pe care să o fi adresat autorităților române.

Răspuns dat de dl Tajani în numele Comisiei
(15 noiembrie 2013)

Măsurile care impun condiții pentru vânzarea de produse se pot încadra în domeniul de aplicare a dispozițiilor tratatului privind libera circulație a mărfurilor. Normele referitoare la locul în care pot fi vândute mărfurile sunt considerate „modalități de vânzare" care nu pot discrimina produsele importate din altă țară a UE ([1]). Distinsul parlamentar menționează că pâinea poate fi vândută numai în magazine specializate sau în raioane create în acest scop în magazinele generale, ceea ce pare să garanteze un acces larg la acest produs. În absența altor informații, Comisia nu poate aprecia dacă se încalcă principiul liberei circulații a mărfurilor.

Având în vedere gradul limitat de armonizare, la nivelul UE, a normelor în domeniul impozitării directe, statele membre sunt libere să stabilească ce și cum să impoziteze, inclusiv procedurile administrative aferente. Cu toate acestea, ele nu au voie să discrimineze resortisanți ai statelor membre, inclusiv pe cei din propria țară, care își exercită libertățile prevăzute de Tratatul UE. De asemenea, nu pot aplica restricții nejustificate cu privire la exercitarea acestor libertăți. În ceea ce privește impozitul aferent veniturilor din activități agricole impus în România, nu am identificat niciun element transfrontalier și nicio discriminare directă sau indirectă care ar putea indica o încălcare a legislației UE.

A fost ridicată problema sarcinilor administrative impuse contribuabililor (fermieri). Din informațiile disponibile, Comisia înțelege că, în urma adoptării Ordonanței Guvernului nr. 28/2013, acest impozit poate fi plătit și în unitățile fiscale locale din primarii, în cazul în care nu există o unitate a Agenției Naționale de Administrare Fiscală (ANAF) în satul sau în orașul în care locuiește contribuabilul. Vor fi încheiate acorduri specifice între unitățile fiscale locale din primării și ANAF.

([1]) Cauzele conexate C-267/91 și C-268/91 Keck și Mithouard [1993] ECR I-6097.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010692/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Right of access to basic food products in Romania

Around 75 000 bread sales outlets (out of 150 000 currently in operation) could close from 1 January 2014 if the Romanian authorities go ahead and approve a draft government resolution stipulating that bread be sold only in specialist shops or in departments set up for this purpose in general stores. This will make it practically impossible for rural inhabitants to buy bread and bakery products. This new measure follows the introduction by the Romanian Government of an agricultural tax which rural inhabitants have to travel to the nearest urban area to pay in person — more than 100 km away in some cases. Can the Commission clarify whether there is any appeal on this matter which it should have submitted to the Romanian authorities?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(15 November 2013)

Measures imposing conditions for the selling of products may fall within the scope of treaty provisions on the free movement of goods. Rules relating to the place where goods can be sold are considered as 'selling arrangements' which cannot discriminate against products imported from another EU country ([1]). It is mentioned by the Honourable Member that bread can be sold only in specialist shops or in departments set up for this purpose in general stores, which seems to guarantee a broad access to this product. In the absence of further details, the Commission cannot judge if the principle of free movement of goods is violated.

Given the limited harmonisation at EU level in the area of direct taxation, Member States are free to determine what and how to tax, including any related administrative procedures. However, they are not allowed to discriminate against nationals of Member States, including their own, who exercise their freedoms under the EU Treaty. Nor can they apply unjustified restrictions to these freedoms. Regarding the agricultural tax imposed in Romania, there does not appear to be any cross-border element nor any direct or indirect discrimination which may amount to a violation of EC law.

The issue has been raised regarding the administrative burdens imposed on taxpayers (farmers). On the basis of available information, the Commission understands that, following the adoption of the Government Ordinance no. 28/2013, this tax can be paid also in local tax offices of town halls in case there is no local office of the national tax administration (ANAF) in the village or city where the taxpayer resides. Specific agreements shall be concluded between the local tax offices of town halls and ANAF.

([1]) Joined Cases C-267/91 and C-268/91 Keck and Mithouard [1993] ECR I-6097.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010693/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Anunțarea tardivă a procedurilor de selectare a partenerilor în România

Ministerul Educației Naționale din România a publicat în data de 23 iulie 46 de anunțuri pentru selectarea de parteneri, entități private, în vederea depunerii de proiecte finanțate din fonduri europene structurale nerambursabile, în care Ministerul Educației Naționale are calitatea de beneficiar. În anunțuri, se arată că termenul pentru depunerea dosarelor este în data de 25 iulie 2013, așadar două zile mai târziu.

A doua zi, 24 iulie, aceeași instituție a mai publicat 5 anunțuri similare, anunțând ca dată pentru depunerea cererilor data de 26 iulie, așadar tot două zile mai târziu.

În total, valoarea celor 51 de proiecte finanțate prin Programul Operațional Sectorial Dezvoltarea Resurselor Umane ([1]) se ridica la aproximativ 100 de milioane de euro.

Proiectele menționate vizează aspecte importante pentru remedierea deficiențelor învățământului românesc.

Solicit Comisiei:

1. un punct de vedere cu privire la această situație ridicolă;

2. să precizeze dacă desfășurarea acestei proceduri este conformă legislației europene;

3. să precizeze măsurile luate în vederea exercitării controlului asupra acestei proceduri.

Răspuns dat de dl Andor în numele Comisiei
(7 noiembrie 2013)

În momentul în care această situație a avut loc, serviciile Comisiei au solicitat autorității de management a SOPHRD să se asigure că Ministerul Educației Naționale din România le oferă potențialilor parteneri suficient timp pentru a-și prezenta propunerile de proiecte și că acesta garantează condiții de concurență echitabile, precum și o procedură de selecție transparentă.

Potrivit informațiilor de care dispune Comisia, Ministerul Educației Naționale din România a anulat procedura de selecție tocmai pentru că propunerile de proiecte nu au putut fi finalizate în termenul prevăzut inițial.

([1]) http://www.fonduri-structurale.ro/Detaliu.aspx?t=resurseumane

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010693/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Late announcement of procedures for selecting partners in Romania

On 23 July the Romanian Ministry of Education published 46 calls to select private entity partners to submit projects financed by non-repayable European Structural Funds, with the Ministry of Education as beneficiary. The announcements state that the deadline for submitting the applications was 25 July 2013, which was two days later.

The next day, 24 July, the same institution published another five similar calls, stating that the date for submitting the applications was 26 July, again two days later.

The 51 projects financed by the Sectoral Operational Programme — Human Resources Development ([1]) have a total value of roughly EUR 100 million.

The aforementioned projects cover key aspects aimed at remedying flaws in the Romanian education system.

I would like to ask the Commission the following:

1. What is its view of this ridiculous situation?

2. Can it clarify whether this procedure is being carried out in accordance with European legislation?

3. Can it clarify the measures which have been taken to exercise oversight of this procedure?

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

At the time when this situation occurred, the Commission services asked the Managing Authority of the SOPHRD to make sure that the MoNE allowed potential partners enough time for the presentation of proper project proposals and to ensure fair competition and transparent selection.

According to information available to the Commission, the MoNE cancelled the selection procedure precisely because project applications could not be finalised within the deadline initially set.

([1]) http://www.fonduri-structurale.ro/Detaliu.aspx?t=resurseumane

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010694/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Instigare la încălcarea Tratatului, din partea unui ministru olandez

Ministrul pentru Afaceri Sociale și Ocuparea Forței de Muncă al Țărilor de Jos, Lodewijk Asscher, a arătat recent că Uniunea Europeană trebuie să elaboreze noi reguli referitoare la libera circulație a lucrătorilor, care să restricționeze aplicarea acestei libertăți numai la persoanele cele mai sărace din Europa de Vest.

Comisia este rugată să precizeze ce poziție are față de această instigare la încălcarea Tratatului și care sunt demersurile pe care le face pentru a împiedica propaganda politică cu caracter anti-european devenită o constantă a politicii statelor europene.

Răspuns dat de dl Andor în numele Comisiei
(7 noiembrie 2013)

Comisia îl invită pe distinsul membru al Parlamentului European să consulte răspunsurile la întrebările E-009936/2013 și E-009726/2013.

În același timp, Comisia reamintește faptul că a publicat, în luna octombrie, un studiu independent care confirmă faptul că marea majoritate a cetățenilor UE se mută în altă țară din UE pentru a munci, și că prestațiile sociale nu sunt utilizate mai intens de către cetățenii provenind din alte țări ale UE decât de către cei ai țării gazdă. Comisia continuă să colaboreze cu toate statele membre pentru a clarifica punerea în aplicare a legislației UE în vigoare.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010694/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Incitement by Dutch minister to violate the Treaty

Lodewijk Asscher, the Dutch Minister of Social Affairs and Employment, recently stated that the European Union needs to devise new rules on the free movement of workers to limit the granting of this freedom only to the poorest people in Western Europe.

Can the Commission clarify its stance with regard to this incitement to violate the Treaty and what measures it is taking to prevent anti-European political propaganda, which has become a fixture of politics in European states?

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

The Commission draws the Honourable Member's attention to the answers to questions E-009936/2013 and E-009726/2013.

Furthermore, the Commission recalls that it published an independent study on 2014 October which confirms that the vast majority of EU nationals move to another EU country to work, and that people from other Member States use welfare benefits no more intensively than the host country's national. The Commission continues to work with all Member States in order to clarify the implementation of existing EC law.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010695/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Fraudarea fondurilor PEAD în România

Directorul general adjunct al Agenției de Plăți și Intervenție pentru Agricultură din România (APIA) este urmărit penal, într-un dosar de luare de mită și trafic de influență, în dosar fiind verificate mai multe licitații care implică fonduri europene. Potrivit anchetatorilor, prejudiciul ar fi de două milioane de euro.

Autoritățile arată că, în perioada mai-august 2013, învinuitul a condiționat atribuirea contractelor de achiziție de ulei către o anumită societate comercială de primirea unui comision de 10% din valoarea contractelor, precum și de obținerea altor beneficii materiale. Potrivit anchetatorilor, valoarea contractelor de achiziție publică este de aproximativ 16 milioane de euro.

Comisia este rugată să precizeze dacă are cunoștință de această situație și care sunt măsurile pe care intenționează să le ia în vederea restabilirii funcționării corecte a sistemului PEAD în România.

Răspuns dat de dl Cioloş în numele Comisiei
(15 noiembrie 2013)

În ceea ce privește responsabilitățile care le revin autorităților statelor membre în cadrul programului UE de distribuire de produse alimentare către persoanele cele mai defavorizate, Comisia îl invită pe distinsul parlamentar să consulte răspunsul la întrebarea scrisă E-010691/2013. ([1])

Comisia are cunoștință de această situație și își exprimă încrederea în măsurile și acțiunile întreprinse de autoritățile române pentru a asigura cheltuirea corectă a fondurilor UE alocate programului. Comisia, prin intermediul oficiului său de luptă antifraudă (OLAF), va continua să urmărească îndeaproape această chestiune.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/ro/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010695/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Fraud in the European Food Aid Programme for the most deprived (PEAD) in Romania

The deputy managing director of the Agency for Payments and Intervention in Agriculture (APIA) in Romania is facing a criminal prosecution, in a case involving bribery and influence peddling, with files being investigated for several tenders involving EU funds. According to the prosecution, the damages could amount to two million euros.

In the period between May and August 2013, the authorities revealed that the accused, fixed the awarding of oil procurement contracts in favour of a particular company, taking a fee of 10% of the contract value as well as obtaining other material benefits. According to the prosecution, the value of the public procurement contracts is approximately 16 million euros.

Can the Commission specify whether it is aware of this situation and what measures it intends to take to restore the proper functioning of the European Food Aid Programme for the most deprived (PEAD) in Romania?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(15 November 2013)

In terms of the responsibilities of Member State authorities in the framework of the Most Deprived Programme of the EU, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-010691/2013. ([1])

The Commission is aware of the case and is confident in the steps and actions undertaken by the Romanian authorities in order to ensure correct spending of EU funds on the programme. The Commission, with the involvement of its anti-fraud office OLAF, will continue to follow the matter closely.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010696/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Redirecționarea către Germania a unor fonduri destinate României și Bulgariei

Potrivit presei germane, o sumă de 1,7 milioane de euro, alocată inițial persoanelor sărace din Bulgaria și România, va fi redirecționată către Germania pentru integrarea nou-veniților români și bulgari în această țară.

Presa arată că cele două țări nu sunt în măsură să utilizeze sumele de bani respective. De asemenea, se menționează că banii au fost redirecționați „din cauza afluxului de români și bulgari în Germania".

Pentru a evita confuziile în rândul opiniei publice, Comisia este rugată să precizeze care este sursa exactă a acestor fonduri, baza legală în care s-a operat redirecționarea și destinația precisă a acestor fonduri.

Răspuns dat de dl Andor în numele Comisiei
(11 noiembrie 2013)

Informațiile prezentate în articolele de presă la care face referire distinsul membru al Parlamentului European nu sunt corecte. Nu a existat niciun transfer de fonduri structurale europene alocate României sau Bulgariei către Germania.

Resursele alocate statelor membre sunt stabilite o dată la șapte ani (actuala perioadă de programare este 2007-2013, iar următoarea acoperă anii 2014-2020). În cazul în care un stat membru nu își cheltuiește fondurile structurale europene alocate, suma rămâne în bugetul UE și nu este redirecționată către fondurile structurale ale altor țări.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010696/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Funds intended for Romania and Bulgaria redirected to Germany

According to the German media, a sum of 1.7 million euros, initially allocated to the poor in Bulgaria and Romania, is to be redirected to Germany to support the integration of newly-arrived Romanians and Bulgarians into that country.

According to the press, these two countries are not in a position to use the respective sums of money. Furthermore, it states that the money was redirected 'as a result of the influx of Romanians and Bulgarians into Germany.'

In order to avoid confusion in public opinion, can the Commission specify the exact source of these funds, the legal basis on which their redirection was undertaken and the precise destination of these funds?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(11 November 2013)

The press reports to which the Honourable Member refers were incorrect. There has been no transfer of European Structural Funds from Bulgaria or Romania to Germany.

Allocations to Member States are set once every seven years (the current programming period covers 2007 to 2013 and the next 2014 to 2020). Should a Member State not spend its European Structural Funds' allocation, the money remains in the EU Budget and it is not re-allocated to the structural funds of other countries.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010697/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Restrângerea drepturilor ONG-urilor în România

Partidul Social Democrat din România, aflat la guvernare, a prezentat recent o inițiativă legislativă prin care se dorește eliminarea posibilității de finanțare a fundațiilor politice de către entități aflate în afara României.

Având în vedere importanța cooperării dintre structurile neguvernamentale din statele membre ale UE și având în vedere prevederile Regulamentului (CE) nr. 1524/2007, Comisia este rugată să exprime un punct de vedere legat de această inițiativă anti-europeană.

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(9 decembrie 2013)

Comisia nu face observații cu privire la inițiativele politice la nivel național.

Măsurile legislative pentru finanțarea fundațiilor politice la nivel național nu intră în domeniul de aplicare a dreptului UE. Regulamentul nr. 1524/2007 ([1]), la care face referire distinsul membru, se referă în mod exclusiv la „partidele politice la nivel european" și la „fundațiile politice la nivel european". Această legislație a UE nu are niciun impact asupra normelor naționale privind fundațiile politice la nivel național și asupra finanțării acestora.

([1]) Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1524/2007 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului din 18 decembrie 2007 de modificare a Regulamentului (CE) nr 2004/2003 privind statutul și finanțarea partidelor politice la nivel european (JO L343, 27.12.2007, p. 5).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010697/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Restricting the rights of NGOs in Romania

The governing Social Democratic Party in Romania recently submitted a legislative initiative which aims to remove the possibility for entities located outside of Romania to finance political foundations.

Given the importance of cooperation between NGOs in EU Member States and in view of the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 1524/2007, can the Commission express a point of view on this anti-European initiative?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(9 December 2013)

The Commission does not comment on political initiatives at national level.

The legal arrangements for financing political foundations at national level fall outside the scope of EC law. Regulation No 1524/2007 ([1]), mentioned by the Honourable Member, concerns exclusively the 'political parties at European level' and to 'political foundations at European level'. This EU legislation has no impact on the national rules concerning political foundations at national level and their financing.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1524/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2007 amending Regulation (EC) No 2004/2003 on the regulations governing political parties at European level and the rules regarding their funding (OJ L343, 27.12.2007, p. 5).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010698/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Autopista R-2 de Madrid, en concurso de acreedores — Ayudas públicas desproporcionadas, sostenibilidad del déficit público (follow-up respuesta E-005354/2013)

HENARSA, sociedad concesionaria de la autopista radial R-2, de Madrid a Guadalajara, ha sido declarada en concurso voluntario de acreedores por el Juzgado de lo Mercantil número 5 de Madrid, con una deuda financiera de unos 450 millones de euros, según informaron a *Europa Press* en fuentes del sector ([1]).

Con esta última, todas las autopistas radiales de Madrid están ya en proceso concursal, dado que las otras tres (R-3, R-5 y R-4) se declararon insolventes a finales del pasado año. Todas ellas suman un pasivo de unos 3 047 millones de euros. Además, con la R-2 ya son siete las vías que actualmente están en concurso del total de nueve que afrontan riesgos de quiebra y que negocian con el Ministerio de Fomento su integración en una sociedad pública de autopistas para solventar sus problemas económicos y financieros.

El sobrecoste que registraron en las expropiaciones de los terrenos sobre los que se construyeron las vías y el desplome de los tráficos por la crisis constituyen los dos principales factores de la situación que atraviesan estas autopistas de peaje. En el caso de la R-2, cuya sociedad concesionaria está participada por Abertis, ACS, Acciona y Globalvía (firma concesional de FCC y Bankia), se ha visto abocada al concurso por la demora de la Administración a la hora de abonar las ayudas que hace unos años articuló para paliar la situación que atraviesan estas vías de pago.

Fomento debe 180 millones de euros a esta carretera radial en concepto de créditos participativos y cuentas de compensación. La R-2 es una autopista de peaje de 62 kilómetros de longitud.

1. En su respuesta a la pregunta E-005354/2013, de 25 de julio de 2013, la Comisión afirmaba que «procederá a solicitar inmediatamente información y aclaraciones a las autoridades españolas», ¿nos puede la Comisión mandar la información recibida? ¿Está satisfecha con la respuesta recibida por parte de las autoridades españolas?

2. ¿Considera la Comisión que estas ayudas estatales distorsionan la competencia favoreciendo a determinadas empresas?

3. En este contexto de crisis económica y de recortes sociales, ¿considera que esta ayudas públicas son compatibles con la obligación de reducir el déficit público del Estado?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de noviembre de 2013)

Tal y como señaló en su respuesta de 25 de julio de 2013 a la pregunta E-005354/2013 de Su Señoría, la Comisión ha pedido información y aclaraciones a las autoridades españolas sobre la denominada «Empresa Nacional de Autopistas» y las medidas a las que hace referencia la prensa, supuestamente aplicadas a una serie de concesionarios privados de autopistas de peaje. En este momento, la Comisión no tiene suficiente información sobre las medidas arriba mencionadas, por lo que no puede posicionarse sobre si constituirían ayuda estatal en la acepción del artículo 107, apartado 1, del TFUE y, por esta razón, ha pedido más información a las autoridades españolas. Si las medidas constituyeran ayuda estatal, la Comisión actuaría como procediera de conformidad con las normas vigentes en la materia.

En el contexto de los procedimientos de ayuda estatal, no le corresponde a la Comisión comentar la relación entre las medidas y el nivel del déficit español. La Comisión limita su análisis a la existencia de ayuda estatal y su compatibilidad con el mercado interior.

([1]) http://www.elconfidencial.com/empresas/2013-09-17/la-autopista-r-2-de-madrid-en-concurso-de-acreedores_29486/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010698/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Insolvency of Madrid's R-2 motorway — disproportionate state aid, sustainability of the deficit (follow-up to the answer to Question E-005354/2013)

Europa Press has heard from industry sources ([1]) that a commercial court in Madrid (the Juzgado de lo Mercantil No 5) has agreed to a request from Henarsa, the company managing the Madrid to Guadalajara R-2 radial motorway, which has debts of EUR 450 million, to begin insolvency proceedings.

This means that all of Madrid's radial motorways are now the subject of insolvency proceedings, since the other three motorways (R-3, R-5 and R-4) declared themselves insolvent at the end of last year. Their total liabilities amount to some EUR 3.047 billion. What is more, of the nine motorways in danger of bankruptcy which are attempting to resolve their economic and financial problems by negotiating with the Ministry of Public Works on their inclusion in a public motorway company, seven are now insolvent.

There are two main reasons why these toll roads are in this situation. Firstly, the cost of the land on which the motorways were built was higher than originally anticipated and, secondly, there has been a sharp drop in traffic as a result of the economic crisis. The R-2 motorway management company is owned by Abertis, ACS, Acciona and Globalvía (which, itself, is jointly owned by FCC and Bankia), has become insolvent as a result of the government's delay in paying out funds that it had earmarked several years previously with the aim of alleviating the plight of the toll roads.

Spain's Public Works Ministry owes this radial motorway EUR 180 million in shareholder's credits and settlement accounts. The R-2 is a 62-km-long toll motorway.

1. In its reply to Written Question E-005354/2013 of 15 July 2013, the Commission stated that it would 'immediately request information and clarification from the Spanish authorities'. Could it pass on the information it has obtained? Is it satisfied with the Spanish authorities' response?

2. Does the Commission believe that this state aid distorts competition by favouring certain companies?

3. In view of the current economic crisis and cuts to social services, does the Commission believe that this state aid can go hand in hand with the requirement to reduce the deficit?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(6 November 2013)

As noted in its reply of 25 July 2013 to Question E-005354/2013 from the Honourable Member, the Commission has requested information and clarifications from the Spanish authorities on the so-called 'National Motorway Company' and the measures referred to in the press allegedly provided to a number of private toll road concession holders. The Commission does not possess at this stage enough information on the abovementioned measures and therefore cannot take a view on whether they would constitute state aid in the sense of Article 107(1) TFEU and for this reason has requested further information to the Spanish authorities. Should the measures constitute state aid the Commission will take all necessary actions in line with state aid rules.

In the context of state aid procedures, it is not for the Commission to comment on the relationship between the measures and the level of the Spanish deficit. The Commission confines its analysis to the existence of state aid and its compatibility with the internal market.

([1]) http://www.elconfidencial.com/empresas/2013-09-17/la-autopista-r-2-de-madrid-en-concurso-de-acreedores_29486/

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010700/13
al Consejo
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(19 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Papel de los depositarios centrales de valores en el recaudación de los impuestos sobre las transacciones financieras

La Comisión Europea presentó en el mes de febrero una propuesta de Directiva por la que se establece una cooperación reforzada en el ámbito del impuesto sobre las transacciones financieras que, tras el dictamen aprobado por el Parlamento Europeo en el mes de julio, está pendiente de la decisión que el Consejo adopte al respecto. La propuesta no especifica los mecanismos de recaudación del impuesto sino que contempla la posibilidad de que la Comisión adopte actos delegados en el marco del artículo 11, relativo a las disposiciones relacionadas con los plazos de pago del impuesto sobre las transacciones financieras (ITF).

En paralelo a este texto, y de forma independiente, se está debatiendo, también, la propuesta de Reglamento sobre la mejora de la liquidación de valores en la Unión Europea y los depositarios centrales de valores, presentada por la Comisión en marzo de 2012. En este caso, el procedimiento legislativo está pendiente de que el Consejo adopte una posición común después de que la Comisión de Asuntos Económicos y Monetarios aprobara su informe en febrero de 2013.

Los impuestos sobre las transacciones financieras son una realidad en diferentes jurisdicciones. En muchos casos, los depositarios centrales de valores desempeñan un papel fundamental en su recaudación. Algunos observadores señalan que para cumplir adecuadamente con los compromisos asumidos en el marco de la tasación de transacciones financieras es necesario concluir ambas iniciativas de manera coordinada.

¿Comparte el Consejo este análisis? ¿Estima la el Consejo que sería necesario asegurar durante el procedimiento legislativo su compatibilidad garantizando el acceso de las autoridades fiscales a la información e integrando las operaciones de liquidación de las transacciones? ¿Cuándo tiene intención el Consejo de adoptar una decisión con respecto a ambos textos?

Respuesta
(18 de noviembre de 2013)

Considernado que se están llevando a cabo negociaciones sobre las dos propuestas legislativas mencionadas por Su Señoría, no se ha planteado en el Consejo la cuestión de concluir simultánemente los trabajos sobre la propuesta de Reglamento sobre la mejora de la liquidación de valores en la Unión Europea y los depositarios centrales de valores y se modifica la Directiva 98/26/CE ([1]), y sobre la propuesta de Directiva por la que se establece una cooperación reforzada en el ámbito del impuesto sobre las transacciones financieras ([2]).

([1]) doc. 7619/12.
([2]) doc. 6442/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010700/13
to the Council
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: The role of central securities depositories in the collection of financial transaction tax revenue

In February 2013, the Commission tabled a proposal for a directive implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of financial transaction tax. Following the adoption of the European Parliament report in July 2013, the file is now awaiting a decision from the Council. The proposal does not specify which methods will be used for the collection of tax revenue. Instead, it proposes that the Commission adopt, under Article 11, delegated acts on the provisions relating to time limits for payments of the financial transaction tax.

The proposal for a regulation on improving securities settlement in the European Union and on central securities depositories, which the Commission published in March 2012, is being discussed in parallel to — yet independently of — this proposal. Following the adoption of the report by Parliament's Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee in February 2013, the Council must now agree on a common position.

Financial transaction taxes already exist in many jurisdictions. Central securities depositories often play a critical role in the collection of the tax. Some observers have stated that, in order to comply with the commitments made within the context of the financial transaction tax, it is important to finalise the work on the two legislative proposals at the same time.

Does the Council share this view? Does it believe that it is necessary to ensure that the two are compatible during the legislative procedure, thereby guaranteeing tax authorities' access to information and the inclusion of transaction settlement operations? When does the Council intend to adopt decisions on the two proposals?

Reply
(18 November 2013)

Whereas negotiations are ongoing on the two legislative proposals referred to by the Honourable Member, the question of simultaneously finalising the work on the Commission Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on improving securities settlement in the European Union and on central securities depositories and amending Directive 98/26/EC ([1]) and the Commission proposal for a Council Directive implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of financial transaction tax ([2]) was not discussed within the Council.

([1]) 7619/12.
([2]) 6442/13.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010701/13
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(19 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Papel de los depositarios centrales de valores en el recaudación de los impuestos sobre las transacciones financieras

La Comisión Europea presentó en el mes de febrero una propuesta de Directiva por la que se establece una cooperación reforzada en el ámbito del impuesto sobre las transacciones financieras que, tras el dictamen aprobado por el Parlamento Europeo en el mes de julio, está pendiente dela decisión que el Consejo adopte al respecto. La propuesta no especifica los mecanismos de recaudación del impuesto sino que contempla la posibilidad de que la Comisión adopte actos delegados en el marco del artículo 11, relativo a las disposiciones relacionadas con los plazos de pago del impuesto sobre las transacciones financieras (ITF).

En paralelo a este texto, y de forma independiente, se está debatiendo, también, la propuesta de Reglamento sobre la mejora de la liquidación de valores y en la Unión Europea y los depositarios centrales de valores, presentada por la Comisión en marzo de 2012. En este caso, el procedimiento legislativo está pendiente de que el Consejo adopte una posición común después de que la Comisión de Asuntos Económicos y Monetarios aprobara su informe en febrero de 2013.

Los impuestos sobre las transacciones financieras son una realidad en diferentes jurisdicciones. En muchos casos, los depositarios centrales de valores desempeñan un papel fundamental en su recaudación. Algunos observadores señalan que para cumplir adecuadamente con los compromisos asumidos en el marco de la tasación de transacciones financieras es necesario concluir ambas iniciativas de manera coordinada.

¿Comparte la Comisión este análisis? ¿Estima la Comisión que sería necesario asegurar durante el procedimiento legislativo su compatibilidad garantizando el acceso de las autoridades fiscales a la información e integrando las operaciones de liquidación de las transacciones?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de octubre de 2013)

La Comisión ha velado por la coherencia de sus iniciativas legislativas relacionadas con el impuesto sobre las transacciones financieras con otras iniciativas suyas, como las dirigidas a regular mejor el sector financiero y así seguirá haciéndolo en el futuro.

Por el momento, el Consejo no ha alcanzado un acuerdo sobre la configuración concreta del impuesto; desde este punto de vista, no está claro hasta qué punto las infraestructuras financieras, tales como los depositarios centrales de valores, participarán en el proceso de recaudación del impuesto.

La Comisión conviene en que no solo las autoridades de control, sino también otras autoridades pertinentes como las autoridades fiscales, deben tener acceso a la información necesaria para el ejercicio de sus funciones.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010701/13
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: The role of central securities depositories in the collection of taxes on financial transactions

In February the Commission presented a proposal for a directive implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of financial transaction tax which, following the opinion approved by Parliament in July, is pending the Council's decision. The proposal does not specify the tax collection mechanisms, but does consider the possibility of the Commission adopting delegated acts within the framework of Article 11 on the provisions relating to the payment of financial transaction tax (FTT).

In parallel to this text, and independently, discussions are also being held on the proposal for a regulation on improving securities settlement in the European Union and on central securities depositories (CSDs), presented by the Commission in March 2012. In this case, the legislative process is pending the Council's adoption of a common position after the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs adopted its report in February 2013.

Financial transaction taxes are a reality in different jurisdictions. In many cases, central securities depositories play a key role in collecting them. Some observers point out that to adequately address all commitments made in the area of financial transaction tax, both initiatives must be coordinated.

Does the Commission share this analysis? Does the Commission believe that it would be necessary to ensure their compatibility during the legislative process, guaranteeing tax authorities access to information and integrating settlement transactions.

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(28 October 2013)

The Commission has ensured the consistency of its legislative initiatives on the financial transaction tax with other Commission initiatives, such as those designed to better regulate the financial sector, and will continue to do so in the future.

For the moment, the Council did not reach an agreement about the precise design of the tax; from this perspective, it is not clear yet to which extent financial infrastructures, such as central securities depositories, will be involved in the tax collection process.

The Commission agrees that not only supervisory authorities but also other relevant authorities, such as tax authorities, should have access to information necessary to the exercise of their functions.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010702/13
a la Comisión
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(19 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Incumplimiento de la Directiva 2008/98/CE en la gestión de residuos en la Comunidad Valenciana

Por las muchas denuncias que ha recibido, la Comisión es conocedora de la situación de los residuos en la Comunidad Valenciana y de las manifiestas carencias en su gestión por parte de sus autoridades. Si bien, en cumplimiento de la Directiva 2008/98/CE, el Gobierno de la Generalitat presentó el Plan Integral de Residuos (PIRCV-2013), su aplicación real presenta numerosas dudas y parece alejarse notablemente de la legislación comunitaria en materia de gestión y tratamiento de residuos.

En concreto, en la aplicación del PIRCV-2013:

— se estarían incumpliendo los apartados b) y d) del artículo 28 de la citada Directiva, pues las autoridades no están adjuntando al Plan información suficiente sobre la ubicación, emplazamiento y capacidad de las instalaciones existentes o futuras;

— no se respetan los preceptos del artículo 4 sobre jerarquización de los residuos priorizando la incineración antes que la prevención, la reutilización o el reciclado;

— no se establece una clara diferencia entre sus objetivos de incineración (eliminación simple) y valorización energética (aprovechamiento);

— al priorizar la incineración para hacer frente al desmesurado volumen de residuos derivado de la incorrecta gestión en el pasado, se olvidan salidas más sostenibles como prevé el artículo 11 de la Directiva, que fija un 50 % mínimo para reutilización y reciclado de los materiales más comunes;

— no se contempla la posibilidad de avanzar en la recogida selectiva de los RSU, de manera que se pierde de nuevo la oportunidad de potenciar la reutilización y el reciclado.

Vista la situación de desbordamiento por el volumen de residuos existente en la Comunidad Valenciana, parece que la Generalitat opta por la fácil solución de la incineración masiva sin tener en cuenta los excelentes instrumentos de gestión que se ofrecen desde la Directiva y despreciando cualquier política de prevención que ponga freno real al incremento generalizado de los residuos.

¿Conoce la Comisión el contenido del PIRCV-2013 y su estado de aplicación?

¿Considera la Comisión que los primeros pasos en la aplicación de dicho Plan podrían no responder a los preceptos de la Directiva 2008/98/CE y, por lo tanto, dar motivo a la apertura de una investigación o de un procedimiento de infracción de la legislación de la UE?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de noviembre de 2013)

La Comisión todavía no ha sido informada por las autoridades competentes españolas del plan de gestión de residuos adoptado en 2013 para la Comunidad Autónoma de Valencia, de conformidad con lo dispuesto en el artículo 33, apartado 1, de la Directiva 2008/98/CE ([1]), sobre los residuos.

La Comisión pedirá a las autoridades competentes españolas que den cumplimiento a esta obligación de información y, posteriormente, evaluará el plan de gestión de residuos a fin de comprobar si este cumple con los requisitos establecidos en la Directiva antes citada.

([1]) DO L 312 de 22.11.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010702/13
to the Commission
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Breach of the directive 2008/98/EC on waste management in the Community of Valencia

Due to the numerous complaints it has received, the Commission is fully aware of the waste situation in the Community of Valencia and of its authorities' flagrant deficiency in managing it. While, in compliance with Directive 2008/98/EC, the Regional Government presented the Integral Waste Plan (PIRCV-2013), its actual implementation raises many doubts and seems to deviate considerably from Community legislation on the management and treatment of waste.

Specifically, the implementation of PIRCV-2013:

— would be in breach of Article 28 (b and d) of the aforementioned Directive since the authorities are not attaching sufficient information to the Plan in relation to the location, site and capacity of existing or future facilities.

— does not comply with the clauses of Article 4 on waste hierarchy since it prioritises incineration over prevention, re-use and recycling.

— does not make a clear distinction between the aims of incineration (simple disposal) and energy recovery (exploitation).

— by prioritising incineration to address the excessive volume of waste as a result of past mismanagement, overlooks more sustainable solutions as provided for in Article 11 of the directive, which sets a minimum of 50% re-use and recycling of the most common materials.

— does not allow for the possibility of separate collection of municipal solid waste (MSW), thereby missing the opportunity to maximise re-use and recycling once again.

Given the overflow situation as a result of the existing volume of waste in the Community of Valencia, it appears that the Regional Government is opting for the easy solution of massive incineration without taking into account the excellent management tools offered by the directive, disregarding any prevention policy that would really curb the general increase in waste.

Is the Commission aware of the content of the PIRCV-2013 and its state of implementation?

Does the Commission consider that the first steps in implementing this Plan could fail to comply with the clauses of the directive 2008/98/EC and thus give rise to the opening of an investigation or proceedings for infringing EU legislation?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(7 November 2013)

The Commission has not yet been informed by the competent authorities in Spain of the waste management plan adopted in 2013 for the Autonomous Region of Valencia as required in Article 33 (1) of Directive 2008/98/EC ([1]) on waste.

The Commission will ask the Spanish competent authorities to comply with the above obligation of information and will subsequently assess the waste management plan in order to check its compliance with the requirements laid down in the aforementioned Directive.

([1]) OJ L 312 of 22.11.2008.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010703/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(19 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Listado de países de pesca ilegal, no declarada y no reglamentada (IUU)

El pasado 12 de junio de 2013, el Pleno del Parlamento Europeo aprobó una Resolución legislativa sobre la propuesta de Reglamento del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo que modifica el Reglamento (CE) n° 1005/2008 del Consejo por el que se establece un sistema comunitario para prevenir, desalentar y eliminar la pesca ilegal, no declarada y no reglamentada ([1]).

En los debates previos en el seno de la Comisión de Pesca se ha debatido, en más de una ocasión, sobre los terceros países y los buques que realizan este tipo de pesca.

La Comisión comentó, en su día, que estaba trabajando en un listado de ambas cuestiones.

¿Podría informar la Comisión en qué situación se encuentra dicho listado? ¿Ha habido algún avance? ¿Qué países se encuentran en ese listado? ¿Está Guinea incluida en el mismo? ¿No cree la Comisión que la adopción de sanciones contra países en vías de desarrollo, como es el caso de Guinea, debe ser muy meditada dado que no solucionan el problema y puede perjudicar, además, a los propios intereses pesqueros europeos de los buques que legítimamente pescan en esas aguas sobre la base de acuerdos privados validados por los canales administrativos y diplomáticos impuestos por los Estados miembros de la UE? ¿Sigue la Comisión adelante con la idea del listado por buques?

Respuesta de la Sra. Damanaki en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de noviembre de 2013)

Tras haber identificado a ocho países terceros ([2]) que no cooperan en la lucha contra la pesca ilegal, no declarada y no reglamentada (INDNR), la Comisión ha propuesto un plan de acción específico para cada uno de esos países y ha examinado con ellos las medidas necesarias para corregir sus deficiencias respectivas.

En julio de 2013, la Comisión confirmó que Fiyi, Panamá, Sri Lanka, Togo y Vanuatu habían realizado avances dignos de crédito y pudo ampliar así hasta febrero de 2014 el período de diálogo entablado con ellos. En el caso de Belice, Camboya y Guinea, se comprobó que los avances no habían sido satisfactorios y la Comisión está estudiando en estos momentos los pasos que deban darse ahora.

La Comisión ha aplicado los mismos criterios para todos esos países, incluida Guinea, y ha investigado el nivel de cumplimiento de cada uno de ellos y su grado de compromiso con la lucha contra la pesca INDNR. En el caso de Guinea, ha tenido especialmente en cuenta el nivel de desarrollo de ese país, cuya capacidad administrativa ha sido reforzada por la ayuda financiera y técnica que le ha prestado la UE en los últimos años en el marco del Acuerdo de Asociación Pesquero (AAP) entre ambas Partes, así como por la asistencia técnica que se le ha proporcionado en 2012 para la lucha contra la pesca INDNR.

La Comisión ha modificado la Parte B de la lista de buques INDNR de la UE ([3]) y está trabajando actualmente en la Parte A de esa lista. Desde 2010 ha investigado más de 200 casos de buques de 27 países que ejercían presuntamente actividades de pesca INDNR y, como resultado de ello, ha habido casi 50 buques que han sido sancionados por el Estado de su pabellón (8 Estados) o por los Estados ribereños (4 Estados). Las investigaciones necesarias son complejas dado que exigen la búsqueda de hechos y el cumplimiento de múltiples requisitos procedimentales tanto con el Estado del pabellón como con los operadores. La inclusión en la lista de buques solo es posible si se cumplen las exigencias legales que impone el Reglamento relativo a la pesca INDNR ([4]).

([1]) COM(2012)0332 — C7-0158/2012 — 2012/0162(COD).

([2]) Los países en cuestión son Belice, Camboya, Fiyi, Guinea, Panamá, Sri Lanka, Togo y Vanuatu. Véase la Decisión de la Comisión, de 15 de noviembre de 2012, por la que se cursa una notificación a los terceros países que la Comisión estima susceptibles de ser considerados terceros países no cooperantes conforme al Reglamento (CE) n° 1005/2008 del Consejo por el que se establece un sistema comunitario para prevenir, desalentar y eliminar la pesca ilegal, no declarada y no reglamentada (DO C 354 de 17.11.2012).

([3]) Reglamento de Ejecución (UE) n° 672/2013 de la Comisión, de 15 de julio de 2013, que modifica el Reglamento (UE) n° 468/2010, por el que se establece la lista de la UE de los buques que practican una pesca ilegal, no declarada y no reglamentada (DO L 193 de 16.7.2013).

([4]) Reglamento (CE) n° 1005/2008 del Consejo (DO L 286 de 29.10.2008).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010703/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Listing of countries that practise illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing

On 12 June 2013, the plenary of Parliament adopted a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 establishing a Community system to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing ([1]).

In prior debates the Committee on Fisheries has, on more than one occasion, discussed third countries and the vessels that engage in this type of fishing.

At the time the Commission commented that it was working on a listing of both issues.

Could the Commission advise how this list is progressing? Has there been any progress? Which countries are on the listing? Has Guinea been included in it? Does the Commission not believe that adopting sanctions against developing countries, such as Guinea, should be well thought-out since they do not solve the problem and may also be contrary to the Community's fishing interests concerning vessels legally fishing in these waters on the basis of private agreements validated by administrative and diplomatic channels imposed by Member States of the EU? Will the Commission proceed with the idea of a listing by vessel?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(13 November 2013)

The Commission pre-identified 8 countries as non-cooperating third countries ([2]) in the fight against IUU fishing. The Commission has proposed a tailored action plan for each of the eight pre-identified countries and followed up with them the necessary actions in order to address their respective shortcomings.

In July 2013 the Commission has established that Fiji, Panama, Sri Lanka, Togo and Vanuatu made credible progress and the Commission has extended the period of a dialogue with them until end February 2014. For Belize, Cambodia and Guinea the progress has not been satisfactory and the Commission is currently elaborating on its possible next steps.

For all of these countries, including Guinea, the Commission has used the same criteria, and carefully investigated the compliance record of each of those countries and the degree of their commitment in fighting IUU. In particular, the Commission has taken into account the level of development of Guinea. Guinea's administrative capacity has been reinforced by the EU's financial and technical assistance in the past years, within the FPA between the EU and Guinea, as well as the technical assistance provided in respect to the fight against IUU fishing in 2012.

The Commission has amended Part B of the EU IUU vessels ([3]). Work on Part A of the list is ongoing. Since 2010 the Commission has investigated more than 200 cases of presumed IUU fishing by vessels from 27 countries. As a consequence, 8 flag States and 4 coastal States have imposed sanctions on almost 50 vessels. The investigations are complex, as they entail fact finding and multiple procedural steps with both flag States and operators. Listing can only be possible if legal requirements of the IUU Regulation ([4]) are fulfilled.

([1]) COM(2012) 0332 — C7-0158/2012 — 2012/0162(COD).

([2]) The countries being: Belize, Cambodia, Fiji, Guinea, Panama, Sri Lanka, Togo and Vanuatu. See: Commission decision of 15 November 2012 on notifying the third countries that the Commission considers as possible of being identified as non-cooperating third countries pursuant to Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 establishing a Community system to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, OJ C 354, 17.11.2012.

([3]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 672/2013 amending Regulation (EU) No 468/2010 establishing the EU list of vessels engaged in IUU fishing, OJ L 193, 16.7.2013.

([4]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008, OJ L 286, 29.10.2008.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010704/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(19 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Negociación de acuerdos pesqueros

La flota atunera congeladora europea está sufriendo en los últimos años las consecuencias de la falta de acuerdos europeos con terceros países. La flota vasca representa una parte importante de la misma y se caracteriza por tener los niveles más bajos de capturas accesorias (*by-catch*) en la pesca industrial, además de contar con medidas de mitigación voluntarias, en el marco de códigos de buenas prácticas pesqueras que son pioneros en el mundo.

El sector pesquero vasco está demostrando una participación activa en la sostenibilidad en el marco de las ORPs, la UE y los institutos científicos, con la presencia voluntaria de observadores, con certificaciones de pesca responsable, siendo generador de empleo en las regiones como Euskadi en las que tiene su implantación.

Además es generador de empleo en los países en desarrollo. Es, en definitiva, un sector estratégico y con alta responsabilidad corporativa.

Por todo ello, se ruega a la Comisión que responda a las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Cómo ve la Comisión la negociación de nuevos acuerdos de pesca atuneros?

2. ¿No considera la Comisión que las asociaciones que representan al sector, habiendo demostrado su responsable trabajo, podrían aportar posibles mejoras al contenido de los acuerdos si se les diera entrada en las rondas negociadoras en calidad de expertos, al igual que ocurre en el caso de las delegaciones de los propios países ribereños?

3. ¿Cómo ve la Comisión el apoyo a este sector en aquellos países en donde, por las razones que sea, no se firman acuerdos de pesca pero, por razones estratégicas, es importante la presencia y el respaldo de la Unión Europea?

Respuesta de la Sra. Damanaki en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de noviembre de 2013)

La flota atunera de la UE se beneficia actualmente de diez acuerdos de pesca que incluyen los principales caladeros de los océanos Atlántico, Índico y Pacífico. Dos protocolos adicionales (con Marruecos y Mauricio) se encuentran en proceso de ratificación. Asimismo, la Comisión ha puesto en marcha estudios de evaluación sobre la conveniencia de firmar acuerdos de pesca con otros países.

Las partes interesadas, entre las que se encuentra el sector pesquero vasco, están participando en la preparación de todas las negociaciones: se les realizan consultas en relación con las evaluaciones, participan en las reuniones preparatorias organizadas por la Comisión, y tanto esta como los Estados miembros les informan periódicamente de los resultados de las negociaciones, inclusive al margen de las negociaciones en caso de estar presentes.

Por último, en beneficio de los países que no cuentan con acuerdos de asociación en el sector pesquero, la Comisión contempla mejorar la transparencia de los acuerdos privados entre la flota de la UE y terceros países a fin de garantizar la igualdad de condiciones, la seguridad jurídica y la pesca sostenible. A tales efectos, la Comisión tiene previsto proponer una revisión del Reglamento sobre la autorización de las actividades pesqueras.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010704/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Negotiation of fisheries agreements

In recent years, the European tuna freezer fleet has been suffering as a result of the lack of European agreements with third countries. The Basque fleet represents a large portion of the Community fleet and is noted for having the lowest levels of by-catches in industrial fishing. In addition, it has adopted globally innovative voluntary mitigation measures within the framework of good fishing practices.

The Basque fisheries sector is demonstrating active involvement in sustainability within the framework of the regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs), the EU and scientific institutes, with the voluntary presence of observers and responsible fishing certification, thus generating employment in regions such as Euskadi where the fishing sector has been established.

Furthermore, it is creating jobs in developing countries. Ultimately, it is a strategic sector with a high degree of corporate responsibility.

Therefore, the Commission is invited to answer the following questions:

1. How does the Commission see the negotiation of new tuna fisheries agreements?

2. Does the Commission not consider that the associations which represent the sector, having demonstrated their responsible work, could make potential improvements to the content of the agreements if allowed to enter the rounds of negotiations as experts, as in the case of the delegations of the riparian countries?

3. How does the Commission view support for this sector in the countries where, for whatever reason, fishing agreements are not signed, but, for strategic reasons, the presence and the backing of the EU is important.

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(13 November 2013)

The EU tuna fleet currently benefits from 10 fisheries agreements covering the main fishing grounds in the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific oceans. Two additional protocols (with Morocco and Mauritius) are under ratification procedure. The Commission has launched evaluation studies on the opportunity to have fisheries agreements with additional countries.

Stakeholders, including the Basque fisheries sector, are involved in the preparation of all negotiations: they are consulted in the context of evaluations, they participate to preparatory meetings organised by the Commission and they are regularly informed by the Commission and the Member States on the outcomes of negotiations, including at the margin of negotiations when they are present.

Finally, for countries where no FPA exists, the Commission is envisaging to improve the transparency of private agreements between the EU fleet and third countries to ensure level-playing field, legal certainty and sustainable fishing. To that end, the Commission is intending to propose a review of the Fisheries Authorisation Regulation.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010705/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(19 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Acuerdo de Pesca entre la UE y Mauricio

La flota atunera congeladora europea se está viendo seriamente perjudicada por la disminución de los acuerdos de pesca con terceros países. La mayor parte de la flota atunera se encuentra en Euskadi. Se trata de un sector estratégico generador de importante mano de obra en los buques, así como en los astilleros y en las industrias auxiliares. Igualmente, su presencia en terceros países genera un importante impulso de su economía y numerosos puestos de trabajo en el ámbito local.

Sin embargo, su actividad se está viendo claramente perjudicada por la ausencia de una estrategia europea clara para culminar los referidos acuerdos. Por otro lado, habiendo negociado y firmado acuerdos de pesca con terceros países, por razones internas de la propia UE, estos devienen inaplicables como es el caso del Acuerdo de Mauricio, o sufren retrasos que complican la continuidad y planificación de las actividades pesqueras atuneras.

1. ¿Puede informar la Comisión de la situación en que se encuentra el Acuerdo de Pesca con Mauricio?

2. ¿No cree la Comisión que estas situaciones dañan claramente la imagen de la UE con terceros países y dificultan el mantenimiento y la ampliación de la red de acuerdos atuneros en el futuro?

Respuesta de la Sra. Damanaki en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de octubre de 2013)

El proceso de adopción de decisiones para la aprobación del acuerdo de colaboración en el sector pesquero (ACP) con Mauricio está actualmente en curso. Después de las negociaciones que se celebraron en febrero de 2012, la Comisión presentó las propuestas relativas a las correspondientes decisiones del Consejo en julio del mismo año. Ambas Partes firmaron el Protocolo el 21 de diciembre de 2012.

Corresponde al Parlamento Europeo y al Consejo finalizar este proceso.

El Parlamento dio su aprobación el 16 de abril de 2013. No obstante, el 4 de octubre de 2013 el Consejo presentó una petición de enmienda de la aprobación del Parlamento en relación con la celebración de este Acuerdo y de su Protocolo, aduciendo la siguiente razón:

Dado que el ACP, incluido el Protocolo, también incluye medidas sobre la fijación de las posibilidades de pesca, que no pueden considerarse únicamente accesorias a los demás elementos del Acuerdo, el Consejo decidió el 23 de septiembre de 2013 modificar la base jurídica sustantiva del proyecto de Decisión sobre la celebración del ACP con Mauricio, de manera que haga referencia al artículo 43 del TFUE en su totalidad.

La enmienda no tiene incidencia alguna ni en la aprobación del ACP ni en el procedimiento que debe aplicarse a efectos de su celebración. Sigue siendo necesaria la aprobación del Parlamento Europeo.

La Comisión confía en que este procedimiento pueda finalizar a la mayor brevedad, con objeto de evitar cualquier otra demora que, efectivamente, podría ir en perjuicio de la imagen de la UE ante terceros países.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010705/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Fisheries Agreement between the EU and Mauritius

The European tuna freezer fleet is being badly affected by the reduction in fishing agreements with third countries. Most of the tuna fleet is in Euskadi. This is a strategic sector, creating an important source of labour on the vessels as well as in the shipyards and the auxiliary industries. Similarly, its presence in third countries gives an important boost to the economy, producing numerous jobs locally.

However, its activity is being adversely affected by the absence of a clear EU strategy to achieve these agreements. On the other hand, having negotiated and signed fishing agreements with third countries, for reasons internal to the EU itself, these become inapplicable as in the case of the Mauritius Agreement, or suffer delays that complicate the continuity and planning of tuna fishing activities.

1. Can the Commission supply information about the progress of the Fisheries Agreement with Mauritius?

2. Does the Commission not believe that these situations clearly damage the image of the EU with third countries, and make it difficult to maintain and expand the network of tuna agreements in the future?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(30 October 2013)

The decision-making process for the adoption of the Fisheries Partnership Agreement (FPA) with Mauritius is ongoing. After the negotiations which took place in February 2012, the Commission presented the proposals for the relevant Decisions to the Council in July 2012. Both Parties signed the Protocol on 21 December 2012.

The completion of this process lies with the European Parliament and the Council.

Parliament gave its consent on 16 April 2013. However, on 4 October 2013 the Council submitted an amended request for the Parliament consent for the conclusion of this Agreement and its protocol, with the following motivation:

Considering that the FPA, including the Protocol, also includes measures on the fixing of fishing opportunities, which cannot be considered as only incidental to the other elements of the Agreement, the Council decided on 23 September 2013 to amend the substantive legal basis of the draft decision on the conclusion of the FPA with Mauritius so as to refer to Article 43 TFEU as a whole.

The amendment has no effect on either the consent of the FPA, or the procedure to be applied for the purpose of its conclusion. The consent of the European Parliament is still required.

The Commission expects that this process can be completed very quickly in order to avoid any further delay, which indeed risks to damage the image of the EU with third countries.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010706/13
an die Kommission
Horst Schnellhardt (PPE)
(19. September 2013)

Betrifft: Zulassung des gentechnisch veränderten Mais „SmartStax" als Futtermittel in der EU

Die gentechnisch veränderte Maissorte „SmartStax" des Herstellers Monsanto steht kurz vor der Zulassung in der Europäischen Union. Wissenschaftler warnen jedoch vor möglichen negativen Auswirkungen auf die Gesundheit von Mensch und Tier. So wurde unter anderem von Forschern der Universität Caen/Frankreich bemängelt, dass die sechs Insektizide, die der Mais ausbildet, nicht hinlänglich auf Gesundheitsrisiken getestet wurden. Eine an Ratten durchgeführte Testreihe der Universität kam zu dem Ergebnis, dass Tiere nach zweijähriger Fütterung mit gentechnisch verändertem Mais Tumore entwickelten und unfruchtbar wurden. In Australien stellten Forscher nach der Verfütterung von Genmais an Schweine schwere Entzündungen in Magen und Darm fest.

Kann die Kommission vor diesem Hintergrund folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Wie bewertet die Kommission die beschriebenen Forschungsergebnisse und vorgebrachten Bedenken bezüglich einer Zulassung von „SmartStax" in der Europäischen Union?

2. Wurden die betroffenen Insektizide ausreichend auf Gesundheitsrisiken getestet?

3. Wurden Studien, auf denen die Zulassung der betroffenen Insektizide beruht, vom Hersteller Monsanto finanziell gefördert?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(31. Oktober 2013)

1./2. Wir weisen den Herrn Abgeordneten auf die Antworten der Kommission auf die schriftlichen Anfragen E-004125/2013 und E-009675/2013 ([1]) hin. Die Europäische Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit (EFSA) ([2]) hat die vom Herrn Abgeordneten angeführte australische Studie (Carman et. al. (2013)) ausgewertet und ist zu dem Schluss gekommen, dass die Untersuchung nicht den Standardverfahren/Leitlinien für die toxikologische Bewertung entspricht und mehrere Ungenauigkeiten und Lücken hinsichtlich des Versuchsaufbaus, der Methodik und der Auswertung der Ergebnisse aufweist. Insgesamt ist die Studie nach Dafürhalten der EFSA nicht geeignet, um Schlussfolgerungen hinsichtlich der Organtoxizität genetisch veränderter Pflanzen bei Schweinen zu ziehen.

3. Die EFSA führt die Risikobewertung von GVO durch, indem sie eine relevante Anzahl von Studien bewertet, die entweder von den Antragstellern gemäß der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1829/2003 eingereicht werden oder bei denen es sich um unabhängige Peer-Review-Studien handelt.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/de/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/130703a-m.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010706/13
to the Commission
Horst Schnellhardt (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Authorisation of genetically modified SmartStax maize as an animal feed in the EU

Genetically modified SmartStax maize from Monsanto is soon to be authorised in the European Union. Scientists are, however, warning of possible adverse effects on human and animal health. Researchers at Caen University in France, for example, have criticised the fact that the six insecticides against which the maize variety is resistant have not been adequately tested for health risks. In a series of tests on rats, the university came to the conclusion that after being fed with the genetically modified maize for a period of two years, animals developed tumours and became infertile. Researchers in Australia report finding serious inflammatory disease in the digestive tract of pigs fed on genetic maize.

In the light of these findings, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What is the Commission's assessment of the above research results and the reservations expressed regarding authorisation of SmartStax in the European Union?

2. Were the insecticides concerned sufficiently tested for their health effects?

3. Were studies on which the authorisation of these insecticides is based given any financial support by Monsanto?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(31 October 2013)

1 and 2. The Honourable Member is referred to the Commission's answers to questions E-004125/2013 and E-009675/2013 ([1]). The Australian study (Carman et al. (2013)) mentioned by the Honourable Member was analysed by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) ([2]) and was found to be non-compliant with the standard practices/guideline for toxicological assessment and to show several inaccuracies and incompleteness in the experimental settings, methodological approaches and data evaluation. Overall, the study is considered by EFSA not suitable for concluding on GM plants-related organ toxicity in pigs.

3. The risk assessment of GMOs is performed by EFSA, which evaluates a relevant number of studies submitted by the applicants on the basis of the provisions of Regulation (EC) 1829/2003, and also independent, peer-reviewed studies.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/130703a-m.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010707/13
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(19 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Ασφάλεια στον κυβερνοχώρο των οργάνων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης

Σύμφωνα με πρόσφατες αναφορές στον διεθνή τύπο, η Υπηρεσία Εθνικής Ασφαλείας των ΗΠΑ (NSA), σε μία προσπάθεια εύκολης υποκλοπής των παγκόσμιων ηλεκτρονικών επικοινωνιών, υποσκάπτει συστηματικά την ασφάλεια και την κρυπτογράφηση του εξοπλισμού και του λογισμικού που κατασκευάζεται από αμερικανικές εταιρείες. Επί πλέον, η υπηρεσία αυτή έφτασε μέχρι του σημείου να κλονίζει τα ευρέως αποδεκτά πρότυπα, ενσωματώνοντας κερκόπορτες (back doors), γεγονός που ανάγκασε το Εθνικό Ινστιτούτο Προτύπων και Τεχνολογίας των ΗΠΑ να αρχίσει την επανεξέταση ορισμένων εκ των προδιαγραφών του. Η NSA φέρεται να έχει υποσκάψει την ασφάλεια του 2006, «Dual EC DRBG standard», το οποίο εγκρίθηκε αργότερα από τη Διεθνή οργάνωση τυποποίησης, μία οργάνωση με μέλη 163 χώρες. Συμβαίνει όμως η συντριπτική πλειοψηφία των υποδομών της τεχνολογίας των πληροφοριών και των τηλεπικοινωνιών που χρησιμοποιούν τα όργανα της ΕΕ να προέρχεται από εταιρίες με έδρα στις ΗΠΑ για τις οποίες είναι γνωστό ότι συνεργάζονται στενά με την NSA. Είναι επίσης γνωστό ότι αυτές οι αμερικανικές εταιρίες παρέχουν στην NSA πρόσβαση μέσω κερκόπορτας στους εξοπλισμούς, λογαρίθμους και δεδομένα τους. Για παράδειγμα, το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο χρησιμοποιεί:

— Ηλεκτρονικούς υπολογιστές με λειτουργικά συστήματα της εταιρίας Microsoft που έχει έδρα στις ΗΠΑ.

— Ηλεκτρονικό ταχυδρομείο και λογισμικό επικοινωνίας που κατασκευάζονται από την εδρεύουσα στις ΗΠΑ Microsoft.

— Βιντεοτηλέφωνα και τηλεφωνικά κέντρα που κατασκευάζονται από την εταιρεία Cisco, με έδρα στις ΗΠΑ.

— Εξοπλισμό δικτύου και ενσύρματα και ασύρματα δίκτυα που κατασκευάζονται από την εταιρεία Cisco, με έδρα στις ΗΠΑ.

— Εξοπλισμό κρυπτογράφησης για την ασφάλεια των εξ αποστάσεως συνδέσεων που κατασκευάζονται από την εταιρία EMC που εδρεύει στις ΗΠΑ.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι η NSA παρακολουθεί τις επικοινωνίες της αντιπροσωπείας της ΕΕ στον ΟΗΕ, στη Νέα Υόρκη, και εν όψει των προσεχών διαπραγματεύσεων για μία διατλαντική εμπορική συμφωνία:

1. Δεν θεωρεί η Ύπατη εκπρόσωπος ότι η κατάσταση αυτή συνιστά απειλή για την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση και για τα συμφέροντά της;

2. Μπορεί η Ύπατη εκπρόσωπος να εγγυηθεί ότι οι ηλεκτρονικές επικοινωνίες των ευρωπαϊκών θεσμικών οργάνων, ιδιαίτερα δε του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου, δεν διατρέχουν κανένα κίνδυνο από τις μυστικές υπηρεσίες των ΗΠΑ;

3. Πρόκειται η Ύπατη εκπρόσωπος να ζητήσει επίσημες διαβεβαιώσεις από την κυβέρνηση των ΗΠΑ ότι τα ευρωπαϊκά θεσμικά όργανα, και το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο ιδιαίτερα, δεν παρακολουθούνται από τις μυστικές υπηρεσίες των ΗΠΑ;

4. Η Ύπατη εκπρόσωπος καλείται να ενημερώσει ανοικτά τους βουλευτές του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και τους πολίτες της ΕΕ σχετικά με την απάντηση που θα λάβει από την κυβέρνηση των ΗΠΑ.

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010708/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(19 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ασφάλεια στον κυβερνοχώρο των οργάνων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης

Σύμφωνα με πρόσφατες αναφορές στον διεθνή τύπο, η Υπηρεσία Εθνικής Ασφαλείας των ΗΠΑ (NSA), σε μία προσπάθεια εύκολης υποκλοπής των παγκόσμιων ηλεκτρονικών επικοινωνιών, υποσκάπτει συστηματικά την ασφάλεια και την κρυπτογράφηση του εξοπλισμού και του λογισμικού που κατασκευάζεται από αμερικανικές εταιρείες. Επί πλέον, η υπηρεσία αυτή έφτασε μέχρι του σημείου να κλονίζει τα ευρέως αποδεκτά πρότυπα, ενσωματώνοντας κερκόπορτες (back doors), γεγονός που ανάγκασε το Εθνικό Ινστιτούτο Προτύπων και Τεχνολογίας των ΗΠΑ να αρχίσει την επανεξέταση ορισμένων εκ των προδιαγραφών του. Η NSA φέρεται να έχει υποσκάψει την ασφάλεια του 2006, «Dual EC DRBG standard», το οποίο εγκρίθηκε αργότερα από τη Διεθνή οργάνωση τυποποίησης, μία οργάνωση με μέλη 163 χώρες. Συμβαίνει όμως η συντριπτική πλειοψηφία των υποδομών της τεχνολογίας των πληροφοριών και των τηλεπικοινωνιών που χρησιμοποιούν τα όργανα της ΕΕ να προέρχεται από εταιρίες με έδρα στις ΗΠΑ για τις οποίες είναι γνωστό ότι συνεργάζονται στενά με την NSA. Είναι επίσης γνωστό ότι αυτές οι αμερικανικές εταιρίες παρέχουν στην NSA πρόσβαση μέσω κερκόπορτας στους εξοπλισμούς, λογαρίθμους και δεδομένα τους. Για παράδειγμα, το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο χρησιμοποιεί:

— Ηλεκτρονικούς υπολογιστές με λειτουργικά συστήματα της εταιρίας Microsoft που έχει έδρα στις ΗΠΑ.

— Ηλεκτρονικό ταχυδρομείο και λογισμικό επικοινωνίας που κατασκευάζονται από την εδρεύουσα στις ΗΠΑ Microsoft.

— Βιντεοτηλέφωνα και τηλεφωνικά κέντρα που κατασκευάζονται από την εταιρεία Cisco, με έδρα στις ΗΠΑ.

— Εξοπλισμό δικτύου και ενσύρματα και ασύρματα δίκτυα που κατασκευάζονται από την εταιρεία Cisco, με έδρα στις ΗΠΑ.

— Εξοπλισμό κρυπτογράφησης για την ασφάλεια των εξ αποστάσεως συνδέσεων που κατασκευάζονται από την εταιρία EMC που εδρεύει στις ΗΠΑ.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι η NSA παρακολουθεί τις επικοινωνίες της αντιπροσωπείας της ΕΕ στον ΟΗΕ, στη Νέα Υόρκη, και εν όψει των προσεχών διαπραγματεύσεων για μία διατλαντική εμπορική συμφωνία:

1. Δεν θεωρεί η Επιτροπή ότι η κατάσταση αυτή συνιστά απειλή για την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση και για τα συμφέροντά της;

2. Μπορεί η Επιτροπή να εγγυηθεί ότι οι ηλεκτρονικές επικοινωνίες των ευρωπαϊκών θεσμικών οργάνων, ιδιαίτερα δε του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου, δεν διατρέχουν κανένα κίνδυνο από τις μυστικές υπηρεσίες των ΗΠΑ;

3. Πρόκειται η Επιτροπή να ζητήσει επίσημες διαβεβαιώσεις από την κυβέρνηση των ΗΠΑ ότι τα ευρωπαϊκά θεσμικά όργανα, και το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο ιδιαίτερα, δεν παρακολουθούνται από τις μυστικές υπηρεσίες των ΗΠΑ;

4. Η Επιτροπή καλείται να ενημερώσει ανοικτά τους βουλευτές του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και τους πολίτες της ΕΕ σχετικά με την απάντηση που θα λάβει από την κυβέρνηση των ΗΠΑ.

Κοινή απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(10 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή συμμερίζεται τις ανησυχίες του Αξιότιμου Μέλους του Κοινοβουλίου σχετικά με τους ισχυρισμούς για κατασκοπεία σε εγκαταστάσεις της ΕΕ. Η ΥΕ/ΑΠ ήγειρε επανειλημμένως τις ανησυχίες αυτές στις αρχές των ΗΠΑ, συμπεριλαμβανομένων του Υπουργού Εξωτερικών John Kerry και της Συμβούλου Εθνικής Ασφαλείας του Προέδρου των ΗΠΑ Susan Rice, και ζήτησε σχετικές διευκρινίσεις και διαβεβαιώσεις.

Η αντικατασκοπία απαιτεί συνεχή επαγρύπνηση, την οποία η Επιτροπή και η Ευρωπαϊκή Υπηρεσία Εξωτερικής Δράσης αντιμετωπίζουν με πολλή προσοχή. Τόσο για πρακτικούς, όσο και για νομικούς λόγους, τα θεσμικά όργανα δεν έχουν το δικαίωμα να δημοσιοποιήσουν τις οικείες εκτιμήσεις κινδύνου, καθώς και τα μέτρα ασφαλείας. Στις 9 Ιουλίου 2013, ο Εκτελεστικός Γενικός Γραμματέας της ΕΥΕΔ ενημέρωσε *in camera* την Επιτροπή Εξωτερικών Υποθέσεων του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου (AFET) για τα μέτρα ασφαλείας που ελήφθησαν στη συνέχεια των ισχυρισμών του Τύπου.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010707/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Cybersecurity of EU institutions

Recent reports in the international press show that, in an effort to intercept global electronic communications, the US National Security Agency (NSA) has systematically undermined the security of, and the encryption of equipment and software manufactured by, US companies. Furthermore, the NSA has gone so far as to undermine widely accepted security standards by introducing 'back doors', leading the US National Institute of Standards and Technology to initiate a process for re-scrutinising some of its standards. The NSA has presumably undermined the security of the 'Dual EC DRBG standard', from 2006, later adopted by the International Organisation for Standardisation, an organisation which counts 163 countries as members. At the same time, the overwhelming majority of the IT and telecommunications infrastructure used by the EU institutions comes from US-based companies that have been known to cooperate closely with the NSA. These US companies have been known to provide the NSA with 'back door' access to their equipment, algorithms and data. For example, the European Parliament uses:

— Computer servers and PCs running operating systems made by the US-based company Microsoft.

— Email and communication software made by Microsoft.

— Video telephones and a telephone centre made by the US-based company Cisco.

— Networking equipment for wired and wireless networks made by Cisco.

— Encryption equipment for securing remote connections made by the US-based company EMC.

Taking into consideration that the NSA was intercepting the communications of the EU delegation to the UN in New York, and in light of the forthcoming negotiations for a transatlantic trade agreement:

1. Does the Vice-President/High Representative feel that this situation poses a threat to the European Union and its interests?

2. Can the VP/HR guarantee that the electronic communications of the European institutions, and in particular those of the European Parliament, have in no way been compromised by US intelligence agencies?

3. Will the VP/HR officially ask for the US Government's assurances that the EU institutions, and in particular the European Parliament, are not being monitored by US intelligence agencies?

4. The VP/HR is asked to disclose fully to the Members of the European Parliament and to the citizens of the EU the answers it receives from the US Government.

Question for written answer E-010708/13
to the Commission
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Cybersecurity of EU institutions

Recent reports in the international press show that, in an effort to intercept global electronic communications, the US National Security Agency (NSA) has systematically undermined the security of, and the encryption of equipment and software manufactured by, US companies. Furthermore, the NSA has gone so far as to undermine widely accepted security standards by introducing 'back doors', leading the US National Institute of Standards and Technology to initiate a process for re-scrutinising some of its standards. The NSA has presumably undermined the security of the 'Dual EC DRBG standard' from 2006, later adopted by the International Organisation for Standardisation, an organisation which counts 163 countries as members. At the same time, the overwhelming majority of the IT and telecommunications infrastructure used by the EU institutions comes from US-based companies that have been known to cooperate closely with the NSA. These US companies have been known to provide the NSA with 'back door' access to their equipment, algorithms and data. For example, the European Parliament uses:

— Computer servers and PCs running operating systems made by the US-based company Microsoft.

— Email and communication software made by Microsoft.

— Video telephones and a telephone centres made by the US-based company Cisco.

— Networking equipment for wired and wireless networks made by Cisco.

— Encryption equipment for securing remote connections made by the US-based company EMC.

Taking into consideration that the NSA was intercepting the communications of the EU delegation to the UN in New York, and in light of the forthcoming negotiations for a transatlantic trade agreement:

1. Does the Commission feel that this situation poses a threat to the European Union and its interests?

2. Can the Commission guarantee that the electronic communications of the European institutions, and in particular those of the European Parliament, have in no way been compromised by US intelligence agencies?

3. Will the Commission officially ask for the US Government's assurance that the EU institutions, and in particular the European Parliament, are not being monitored by US intelligence agencies?

4. The Commission is asked to disclose fully to the Members of the European Parliament and to the citizens of the EU the answer it receives from the US Government.

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(10 December 2013)

The Commission shares the Honourable Member's concerns about the allegations of spying on EU premises. The HR/VP has raised these concerns on several occasions with the US authorities, including Secretary of State John Kerry and the US President's National Security Advisor Susan Rice, and requested clarifications and assurances in this regard.

Counterespionage is a matter of continuous vigilance to which the Commission and the European External Action Service devote a lot of attention. For both practical and legal reasons, the institutions cannot publicly disclose their threat assessments and the details of their security measures.On 9 July 2013, the Executive Secretary General of the EEAS briefed *in camera* the AFET Committee of the European Parliament on the security measures taken in the aftermath ot the press allegations.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010709/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Obszar chroniony na Morzu Rossa

W czerwcu 2013 r. Unia Europejska przedstawiła propozycję utworzenia obszaru chronionego na Morzu Rossa. W negocjacjach nad utworzeniem tego obszaru chronionego uczestniczą Rosja, Stany Zjednoczone, Nowa Zelandia i Australia. Ostatnio projekt dotyczący Morza Rossa utknął w mozaice napięć amerykańsko-rosyjskich. Rosja wniosła sprzeciw w oparciu o interesy własnego rybołówstwa krótko przed tym, jak Stany Zjednoczone zaproponowały zmniejszenie obszaru o 40 %, likwidację statusu ochrony stałej oraz wykluczenie z ochrony niektórych tarlisk. Moskwa zakwestionowała także prawo Komisji do ogłaszania obszaru chronionego. Pew Charitable Trusts prowadzący projekt Rezerwaty Oceanu Południowego sądzi, że negatywny wpływ na plany utworzenia morskiego obszaru chronionego mają dwustronne napięcia związane z sytuacją w Syrii i Iranie. Obszar chroniony Morza Rossa obejmowałby 2,3 mln km^2 jednego z najbardziej wrażliwych ekosystemów na świecie, ale inicjatywa jest zagrożona z powodu obecnych napięć międzynarodowych.

Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel jest świadoma tego, że ten ekosystem morski jest zagrożony? Jaka jest strategia UE w tej dziedzinie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Marię Damanaki w imieniu Komisji
(14 listopada 2013 r.)

Komisja jest świadoma zagrożeń, na jakie narażona jest Antarktyka i inne ekosystemy morskie, i zgodnie ze swoimi międzynarodowymi zobowiązaniami w pełni angażuje się w ochronę oceanów i ustanawianie morskich obszarów chronionych. W tym celu UE przedstawiła wniosek dotyczący utworzenia morskich obszarów chronionych na wodach Antarktyki na forum Komisji do spraw Zachowania Żywych Zasobów Morskich Antarktyki (CCAMLR), której jest członkiem.

UE będzie kontynuować działania na rzecz ustanowienia morskich obszarów chronionych w CCAMLR. UE przedstawiła także wspólnie z Francją i Australią zmieniony wniosek dotyczący ustanowienia morskich obszarów chronionych w Antarktyce Wschodniej. Zmieniony wniosek w sprawie ustanowienia morskiego obszaru chronionego na Morzu Rossa przedstawiły również Stany Zjednoczone i Nowa Zelandia.

Propozycje te omówiono na dorocznym posiedzeniu CCAMLR w Hobart (Australia) w dniach 23 października-1 listopada 2013 r.

W ramach przygotowań do tego dorocznego posiedzenia Komisja oraz ministrowie spraw zagranicznych Australii, Francji, Nowej Zelandii i Stanów Zjednoczonych podpisali wspólne oświadczenie, w którym zaapelowali do wszystkich członków CCAMLR o wyrażenie zgody na utworzenie powyższych morskich obszarów chronionych.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010709/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Marine reserve in the Ross Sea

In July 2013 the EU presented a proposal to create a marine reserve in the Ross Sea. Russia, the United States, New Zealand and Australia are all involved in negotiations concerning this marine reserve. Recently, however, the Ross Sea project has been caught in the crossfire of US-Russian tensions. Russia had raised objections, based on its fishing interests, shortly before the US proposed cutting the reserve area by 40%, undoing its permanent status and removing the protected status of some fish breeding grounds. Moscow has also questioned the authority of the Commission to declare a reserve area. The Pew Charitable Trusts' Southern Ocean Sanctuaries project believes that bilateral tension over the situations in Syria and Iran are to blame for the difficulties facing the marine reserve plans. The Ross Sea reserve would protect 2.3 million square kilometres of one of the most fragile ecosystems in the world, but the initiative is in danger because of current international tensions.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the dangers this marine ecosystem is facing? What is the EU's strategy on this matter?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(14 November 2013)

The Commission is fully aware of the dangers the Antarctic and other marine ecosystems are facing and we are fully committed to the protection of oceans and the establishment of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), in line with our international commitments. To that end the EU has made proposals in the past to create MPAs in the Antarctic waters in the forum of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), to which the EU is a party.

The EU will continue to work for the establishment of MPAs in CCAMLR. The EU has submitted together with France and Australia an amended proposal for the establishment of MPAs in Eastern Antarctica. A revised proposal was also made by the US and New Zealand to establish MPA in the Ross Sea.

These proposals were discussed at the CCAMLR Annual Meeting in Hobart, Australia, from 23 October to 1 November 2013.

In preparation of that Annual Meeting the Commission has signed together with the Foreign Ministers of Australia, France, New Zealand and The United States a joint statement to call on all Members of CCAMLR to agree on the establishment of these MPAs.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010710/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Groźby Rosji wobec Mołdawii

UE i Mołdawia prowadzą obecnie negocjacje w sprawie układu o stowarzyszeniu. Rosja grozi Mołdawii „poważnymi konsekwencjami", twierdząc, że przyszłość Naddniestrza będzie zagrożona. Rosjanie stanowią jedną trzecią populacji Naddniestrza, a w regionie tym znajdują się ich znaczne siły wojskowe. Rosja ostrzega również, że podpisanie układu o stowarzyszeniu pociągnie za sobą konsekwencje dla mołdawskich pracowników w Rosji oraz dla eksportu mołdawskich towarów do Rosji. Groźby te przypominają groźby wobec Ukrainy, które Rosja stosuje ze względu na możliwe podpisanie przez Ukrainę układu o stowarzyszeniu z UE.

Jakie stanowisko w sprawie napiętych stosunków między Rosją a Mołdawią zajmuje Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel? Czy UE udzieli Rosji wyraźnego upomnienia, by ta powstrzymała się od wywierania na Mołdawię presji gospodarczo-politycznej?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(20 listopada 2013 r.)

Komisja przedstawiła już publicznie swoje stanowisko, m.in. w trakcie debaty w Parlamencie Europejskim w dniu 11 września, zgodnie z którym wywieranie przez Rosję presji na wschodnich partnerów UE jest niedopuszczalne. Komisja oraz Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca potwierdziły to stanowisko również w ramach regularnego dialogu politycznego z Rosją, tj. podczas spotkania Wysokiej Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącej Catherine Ashton z ministrem spraw zagranicznych Ławrowem w dniu 24 września, jak również podczas posiedzenia dyrektorów politycznych tydzień wcześniej. UE oczekuje od Rosji uszanowania wolnych, suwerennych i niezależnych decyzji krajów partnerskich w odniesieniu do ich stosunków międzynarodowych, zgodnie z zasadami aktu końcowego z Helsinek. W przypadku wywierania na państwa nadmiernego nacisku Komisja oraz Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca staną w ich obronie.

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca i Komisja ściśle współpracują w tej sprawie ze sobą, a także, w stosownych przypadkach, z władzami Republiki Mołdawii. Kilka dni po tym jak Rosja wprowadziła zakaz przywozu mołdawskich napojów alkoholowych (przy czym decyzja ta ma również wpływ na producentów naddniestrzańskich), Komisja zaproponowała, aby znieść unijne kwoty na wino z Mołdawii. Odnośna procedura legislacyjna, z udziałem Parlamentu Europejskiego, powinna się zakończyć jeszcze w 2013 r. Ponadto Komisja zaoferowała Mołdawii pomoc w zakresie środków sanitarnych i fitosanitarnych w celu zwiększenia tempa przechodzenia na zgodny z normami UE system zapewnienia jakości produktów pochodzenia zwierzęcego. Umożliwi to Republice Mołdawii dywersyfikację rynków eksportowych w odniesieniu do produktów rolnych.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010710/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Russian threats against Moldova

The EU and Moldova are currently in negotiations concerning an Association Agreement. Russia is threatening Moldova with 'serious consequences', claiming that the future of Transnistria will be in danger. Russians make up a third of Transnistria's population, and have a strong military presence in the region. Russia also warns that there would be consequences for the Moldovan workers in Russia, as well as for exports of Moldovan goods to Russia. These threats mirror those made by Russia to Ukraine, owing to the latter's potential Association Agreement with the EU.

What is the Vice-President/High Representative's position concerning the ongoing tension between Russia and Moldova? Will the EU give a strong indication to Russia to refrain from economic and political pressure towards Moldova?

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

The Commission has already publicly stated its position that Russian pressure on the EU's Eastern partners is unacceptable, for instance during the debate in the European Parliament on 11 September. The Commission and the HR/VP have reiterated this position also in the framework of our regular Political Dialogue with Russia, namely during HR/VP Ashton's meeting with Foreign Minister Lavrov on 24 September, as well as during a Political Director's meeting the preceding week. The EU expects Russia to respect partner countries' free, sovereign, and autonomous choices with respect to their international relations, in line with the Helsinki Final Act Principles. Where undue pressure is brought to bear on them, the Commission and the HR/VP will stand by them.

The HR/VP and the Commission work closely together on this issue as well as, where relevant, with the authorities of the Republic of Moldova. A few days after Russia banned the import of Moldovan alcoholic beverages (a decision that also affects the Transnistria-based producers), the Commission proposed to eliminate the EU quota on the import of Moldovan wine. The corresponding legislative procedure, which involves the European Parliament, should normally be completed by the end of 2013. The Commission has also offered Moldova assistance in the sanitary and phytosanitary area to accelerate the transition to an EU-compliant quality assurance system for products of animal origin, with a view to allowing the diversification of the Republic of Moldova's export markets for agricultural products.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010711/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Południowy Sudan: sprawa plemienia Murle

Armia Południowego Sudanu ponosi winę za bezprawne mordowanie ludności cywilnej. Sytuacja w prowincji Jonglei zmusiła ludność cywilną do wyjścia na ulice, co doprowadziło do aktów przemocy na tle etnicznym. Ludowa Armia Wyzwolenia Sudanu (SPLA) zniszczyła wioski i sterroryzowała niewinnych ludzi w dystrykcie Pibor, zabijając 94 członków plemienia Murle, z czego 70 to ludność cywilna. Najczęściej celem ataku są należące do plemienia Murle kobiety, dzieci oraz osoby chore umysłowo. Po ucieczce z miast, członkowie plemienia Murle ryzykują, że zostaną zaatakowani jedynie podczas próby powrotu po tak niezbędne pożywienie.

Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel wie o zabójstwach na tle rasowym członków plemienia Murle? Co UE może zrobić, by zapewnić im bezpieczeństwo?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(6 listopada 2013 r.)

UE odgrywa główną rolę w działaniach międzynarodowych w odniesieniu do prowincji Jonglei – prowadziła dwie misje międzynarodowe wysokiego szczebla w tym regionie, wyraziła poważne zaniepokojenie w dwóch oświadczeniach publicznych ([1]) i podejmuje aktywne działania w stosunku do rządu Sudanu Południowego i odpowiednich podmiotów. Od czasu wybuchu kryzysu humanitarnego i w zakresie praw człowieka UE nieprzerwanie apeluje o znalezienie rozwiązania politycznego, zapewnienie dostępu organizacjom humanitarnym i pociągnięcie do odpowiedzialności winnych pogwałceń praw człowieka w prowincji Jonglei. UE jest przekonana, że rozwiązanie można osiągnąć tylko w drodze negocjacji, i jest gotowa wspierać działania pokojowe rządu Sudanu Południowego wszelkimi sposobami uznanymi za właściwe.

UE niejednokrotnie wyrażała zaniepokojenie doniesieniami o naruszaniu praw człowieka przez SPLA w odniesieniu do cywilów i wzywała rząd Sudanu Południowego do pociągnięcia sprawców do odpowiedzialności. Podjęte niedawno przez rząd Sudanu Południowego pierwsze kroki w tym kierunku są dla UE pozytywnym sygnałem. Prezydent Salva Kiir ogłosił niedawno, że podjęto już dochodzenie w stosunku do wysokich rangą oficerów SPLA oskarżanych o udział w pogwałceniach praw człowieka w prowincji Jonglei, oraz podkreślił, że zadaniem armii jest ochrona kraju i jego obywateli. UE z zadowoleniem przyjmuje również fakt, że w ramach procesu „nowego porozumienia" rząd Sudanu Południowego uzgodnił z darczyńcami, że priorytetem będzie ochrona cywilów i praw człowieka. UE będzie nadal z uwagą śledzić rozwój wydarzeń.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/138254.pdf; http://www.gurtong.net/ECM/Editorial/tabid/124/ctl/ArticleView/mid/519/articleId/12044/Statement-of-the-EU-Delegation-and-EU-Heads-of-Mission-on-Jonglei.aspx

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010711/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — South Sudan: the case of the Murle population

The army of South Sudan is guilty of unlawfully killing civilians. The situation in Jonglei State has driven civilians from their homes and provoked interethnic violence. The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) has destroyed villages and terrorised innocent people in Pibor County, killing 94 ethnic Murle of which 70 were civilians. Murle women, children and mentally ill individuals are most often targeted. Having fled the towns, the Murle only risk attack if they try to return to obtain desperately needed food.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the ethnic killings of the Murle? What can the EU do to ensure their safety?

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

The EU is at the forefront of international efforts on Jonglei, having led two High-level international missions to the area, expressed grave concern through two public statements ([1]) and actively engaging with the Government of South Sudan and relevant actors. Since the humanitarian and human rights crisis broke out, the EU has continuously insisted on finding a political solution, allowing humanitarian access and ensuring accountability for human rights violations in Jonglei. The EU is convinced that a resolution can only be achieved by negotiation, and stands ready to support the Government of South Sudan's peace efforts in any way considered appropriate.

The EU has repeatedly expressed concerns over reports of SPLA's human rights abuses against civilians, and has urged the Government of South Sudan to hold accountable the perpetrators. The EU has recently been encouraged by the Government of South Sudan's first steps in that direction. President Salva Kiir recently announced that senior SPLA officers accused of alleged involvement in human rights violations in Jonglei were already under investigation, stressing that the Army's role is to protect the country and its citizens. The EU has also welcomed that under the New Deal process, the Government of South Sudan has agreed with donors to prioritise the protection of civilians and human rights. The EU will continue to follow developments closely.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/138254.pdf
http://www.gurtong.net/ECM/Editorial/tabid/124/ctl/ArticleView/mid/519/articleId/12044/Statement-of-the-EU-Delegation-and-EU-Heads-of-Mission-on-Jonglei.aspx

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010712/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – syryjscy uchodźcy

Liczba syryjskich uchodźców sięgnęła 2 mln, a około połowa z nich to dzieci poniżej 11. roku życia. Po ucieczce do Libanu, Jordanii, Turcji, Iraku i Egiptu uchodźcy ci znaleźli schronienie w obozach, z których największy to obóz Za'atri w Jordanii, gdzie przebywa 130 000 osób. Niewystarczające zapasy pożywienia i wody, brak miejsca oraz dostępu do edukacji w obozie są spowodowane niedofinansowaniem oraz zbyt dużą liczbą osób wymagających pomocy. Państwa przyjmujące są również pod ogromną presją z powodu ekonomicznych i politycznych żądań wynikających z napływu uchodźców, a także ze względu na narastające napięcia między lokalnymi społecznościami i uchodźcami, które odzwierciedlają zwiększone zapotrzebowanie na towary i usługi.

Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel wie o sytuacji syryjskich uchodźców? Czy UE posiada plan pomocy uchodźcom oraz państwom przyjmującym?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Kristalinę Georgijewą w imieniu Komisji
(4 listopada 2013 r.)

UE doskonale zdaje sobie sprawę z niedawnego rozwoju sytuacji związanej z kryzysem w Syrii, w tym z położenia syryjskich uchodźców, i stale zwiększa wysiłki, aby zaspokoić nieprzerwanie rosnące potrzeby, zarówno w Syrii, jak i w państwach sąsiadujących (Libanie, Jordanii, Iraku i Turcji). UE i jej państwa członkowskie są największym darczyńcą w regionie – od końca 2011 r. pomoc wyniosła łącznie niemal 2 mld EUR zarówno w ramach aktualnego przydziału finansowego, jak i w postaci bezpośredniej reakcji na kryzys (budżet Komisji Europejskiej na pomoc humanitarną: 515 mln EUR; pomoc gospodarcza, rozwojowa i stabilizacyjna: 428 mln EUR ([1]); dwustronna pomoc humanitarna państw członkowskich: 1,023 mld EUR).

Udzielana za pośrednictwem partnerów UE, tj. organizacji należących do tzw. rodziny ONZ, Czerwonego Krzyża/Czerwonego Półksiężyca i międzynarodowych organizacji pozarządowych pomoc humanitarna przeznaczona jest głównie na pomoc medyczną w celu ratowania życia, podstawowe leki, produkty żywnościowe i żywność bogatą w składniki odżywcze, dostęp do wody pitnej, infrastrukturę sanitarną i środki higieniczne, schronienie, podstawowe produkty nieżywnościowe i ochronę w celu niesienia pomocy najbardziej zagrożonym rodzinom (wewnętrznym przesiedleńcom, uchodźcom i społecznościom w kraju przyjmującym uchodźców). W omawianym regionie udziela się również pomocy mającej zaspokoić bardziej długoterminowe potrzeby ludności dotkniętej kryzysem (np. w dziedzinie edukacji lub źródeł utrzymania), zapewnić stabilność państw sąsiadujących oraz łagodzić napięcia między uchodźcami a społecznościami w państwach przyjmujących uchodźców.

Ze względu na skalę kryzysu w Syrii oraz konieczność zaspokajania rosnących potrzeb dotychczasowa reakcja UE miała charakter całościowy przez wykorzystanie wszystkich odpowiednich instrumentów unijnych. Pomimo znacznych działań UE i innych organizacji, ze względu na skalę kryzysu potrzebne będą stałe wysiłki na rzecz gromadzenia funduszy w celu zaspokojenia najbardziej palących potrzeb.

([1]) Na pomoc gospodarczą, rozwojową i stabilizacyjną UE ma zostać przydzielona łączna kwota 453 mln EUR. Środki w wysokości 25 mln EUR przeznaczone na Instrument na rzecz Stabilności nie zostały jednak jeszcze oficjalnie przyjęte, w związku z czym nie są one uwzględnione w tej kwocie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010712/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Syrian refugees

The number of Syrian refugees has reached 2 million, about half of which are children under the age of 11. Having fled to Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt, these refugees now live in camps, the largest of which is Za'atri, in Jordan, which houses 130 000 people. The camps' supplies of food and water, shelter and education facilities are inadequate because they are underfunded and because of the sheer number of individuals in need of aid. The host countries are also under huge strain owing to the economic and political demands caused by the inundation of refugees, as well as to the growing tensions between local communities and refugees reflecting the increased demands on goods and services.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the Syrian refugee situation? Is there any EU plan to aid the refugees as well as the host countries?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(4 November 2013)

The EU is more than aware of the recent developments in relation to the Syria crisis, including the situation of Syrian refugees, and has persistently been increasing its efforts in relation to the constantly growing needs; both inside Syria and in the neighbouring countries (Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Turkey). The EU and its Member States are the largest donor in the region with a current allocation of nearly EUR 2 billion in total support since the end of 2011 and in direct response to the crisis (European Commission's humanitarian budget: EUR 515 million; Economic, development and stabilisation assistance: EUR 428 million ([1]); Member States bilateral humanitarian aid: EUR 1,023 billion).

The humanitarian assistance, channelled through EU partners, i.e. the UN family, the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement and INGOs, primarily supports life-saving medical emergency responses, the provision of essential drugs, food and nutritional items, safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), shelter, distribution of basic non-food items (NFIs) and protection to help the most vulnerable families (Internally displaced persons, refugees, host communities). Development assistance is also provided in the region to address longer term needs of the affected population (Education, livelihoods, etc.), to support the stability of the neighbouring countries and to mitigate tensions between refugees and host communities.

Due to the magnitude of the Syrian crisis and in order to be able to respond to the growing needs, the EU's response to date has been holistic through the mobilisation of all relevant EU instruments. Despite massive efforts by the EU and others, the scale of this crisis means that continuous fundraising efforts will be needed to address the most critical needs.

([1]) A total of EUR 453 million is to be allocated for EU economic, development and stabilisation assistance. However, EUR 25 million from the Instrument for Stability has so far not been officially adopted and thus not yet been included in this figure.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010713/13
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wojna handlowa między Macedonią a Kosowem

Istnieje zagrożenie, że obecna wojna handlowa między Macedonią a Kosowem przerodzi się w konfrontację polityczną po nałożeniu przez Skopje podatku na obywateli Kosowa przekraczających granicę. Wcześniej Macedonia ograniczyła ilość mąki i pszenicy importowanej z Kosowa w celu ochrony rodzimej produkcji. W odpowiedzi Kosowo zabroniło importu żywności z Macedonii. Zaledwie kilka godzin później Macedonia nałożyła na osoby wjeżdżające do Macedonii podatek w wysokości 2 EUR (wprowadzono także podatek w wysokości 5 EUR od samochodów osobowych oraz 10 EUR od samochodów ciężarowych i autobusów). Kosowo posunęło się jeszcze o krok dalej i wprowadziło pełne embargo. W przeszłości wspierano stosunki handlowe między tymi dwoma państwami, jednak obecnie obie strony oskarżają się wzajemnie o zaognianie sporu. Na granicy powstały korki, wielu obywateli przekracza granicę pieszo, a Komisja bada kwestię naruszenia Środkowoeuropejskiej umowy o wolnym handlu (CEFTA).

Co może zrobić UE w celu propagowania dobrosąsiedzkich stosunków między Macedonią a Kosowem w kontekście handlu?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Štefana Füleго w imieniu Komisji
(21 listopada 2013 r.)

Komisja uważnie śledziła tę sprawę i z zadowoleniem przyjmuje fakt, że w międzyczasie została ona rozwiązana.

UE oferuje perspektywę europejską dla wszystkich krajów Bałkanów Zachodnich w ramach procesu stabilizacji i stowarzyszenia. Jest to najbardziej skuteczne narzędzie zapewniające pokój, stabilność i wzrost gospodarczy w regionie. Dobrosąsiedzkie stosunki niezmiennie stanowią zasadniczy element tego procesu. Działając w tych ramach, UE przyczyniła się również do ustanowienia Środkowoeuropejskiej umowy o wolnym handlu (CEFTA) w celu ułatwienia wymiany handlowej oraz rozstrzygania sporów.

Komisja przypomina, że strony powinny rozwiązywać ewentualne spory zgodnie z mechanizmami ustanowionymi w ramach CEFTA. Komisja nie jest stroną CEFTA, ale śledzi jej funkcjonowanie stanowiące część obowiązku utrzymywania dobrosąsiedzkich stosunków i współpracy regionalnej w ramach procesu stabilizacji i stowarzyszenia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010713/13
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Trade war between Macedonia and Kosovo

The recent trade war between Macedonia and Kosovo is threatening to turn into a political confrontation after Skopje implemented a tax on Kosovar nationals crossing the border. Previously, Macedonia limited quantities of flour and wheat imported from Kosovo in order to protect domestic production, and Kosovo responded to this measure by banning food imports from Macedonia. Within a matter of hours, a EUR 2 tax was imposed on persons entering Macedonia (as well as EUR 5 for cars and EUR 10 for trucks and buses). Kosovo raised the stakes one last time by imposing a full embargo. In the past, trade between the two countries had been encouraged, but now each side accuses the other of escalating the dispute. The border between the two has become congested, with many citizens crossing on foot, and the Commission is investigating the question of infringement of the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA).

What can the EU do promote good neighbourly relations between Macedonia and Kosovo in the context of trade?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(21 November 2013)

The Commission has followed the issue closely and is pleased that it has been resolved in the meantime.

The EU offers a European perspective to all the Western Balkan countries through its Stabilisation and Association Process. This is the most effective tool to ensure peace, stability and growth in the region. Good neighbourly relations remain an essential element of this process. Within this framework the EU has also helped set up the Central European Free Trade Area (CEFTA) to facilitate trade and resolve disputes.

The Commission recalls that parties should settle potential disputes according to the mechanisms established by CEFTA. The Commission is not a party to the CEFTA, but it observes its functioning as part of the obligation to good neighbourly relations and regional cooperation under the Stabilisation and Association Process.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010714/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Tunezja i wolność słowa

W dniu 30 sierpnia 2013 r. sąd w Tunezji skazał dwóch raperów na karę pozbawienia wolności za „obrazę rządu". Dwaj młodzi ludzie opublikowali piosenki obrażające policję, a gdy byli przewożeni na komisariat policji w Hammamet, zostali pobici przez policjantów. Nie poinformowano ich o procesie i dopiero z mediów społecznych dowiedzieli się o wyroku skazującym już po jego wydaniu. Prawo tunezyjskie zezwala na skazywanie osób fizycznych, które wygłaszają twierdzenia uważane przez rząd za niedopuszczalne, chociaż Zasady Johannesburskie dotyczące bezpieczeństwa krajowego, wolności słowa i dostępu do informacji chronią prawo obywateli do krytykowania „abstrakcyjnych instytucji", takich jak rząd.

Czy Wysoka Przedstawiciel jest świadoma tego przypadku naruszenia praw człowieka? W jaki sposób UE traktuje przypadki naruszenia wolności słowa w Tunezji?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(31 października 2013 r.)

Unia Europejska zwróciła uwagę władz Tunezji na kwestie związane z wolnością wypowiedzi ze względu na różne ostatnie wydarzenia, w których wydano wyroki ograniczające wolność wypowiedzi, wzywając do zmiany przepisów pochodzących z reżimu Ben Alego, które mogą być wykorzystywane do ograniczania wolności słowa. UE przywiązuje wielką wagę do przepisów prawnych konsolidujących i gwarantujących tę wolność.

W ramach regularnego dialogu politycznego z władzami Tunezji, UE wielokrotnie wzywała do konsolidacji wolności słowa, zgodnie z celami rewolucji tunezyjskiej. Niedawno zawarty, dwustronny plan działania również przewiduje zaangażowanie we wzmacnianie wolności słowa i zgromadzeń, zgodnie z międzynarodowymi standardami.

Ponadto UE ściśle monitoruje ochronę praw człowieka i finansuje szereg projektów, których celem jest wzmocnienie społeczeństwa obywatelskiego. Szczególnym przykładem jest program SPRING, w ramach którego w roku 2012 Tunezja otrzymała wsparcie finansowe w wysokości 7 mln EUR przeznaczone na rozwój potencjału społeczeństwa obywatelskiego. Ponadto Tunezja otrzymuje wsparcie w ramach Instrumentu na rzecz Społeczeństwa Obywatelskiego Krajów Sąsiedztwa oraz Europejskiego Instrumentu na rzecz Wspierania Demokracji i Praw Człowieka (4 mln EUR w latach 2011-2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010714/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Tunisia and freedom of expression

On 30 August 2013, a Tunisian court sentenced two rappers to prison for 'government defamation'. The two youths had released songs insulting the police and were then beaten by the police en route to the Hammamet police station. The pair were not informed of their trial and only later learned of their sentencing through social media. Tunisian law allows for the prosecution of individuals who make statements considered objectionable by the government, even though the Johannesburg Principles on National Security, Freedom of Expression, and Access to Information protects the rights of citizens to criticise 'abstract institutions,' such as government.

Is the High Representative aware of this particular violation of human rights? How is the EU addressing the issue of infringements of freedom of expression in Tunisia?

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

As in different recent events where freedom of expression has been curtailed by judgments, the EU has brought these issues to the attention of Tunisian authorities, calling for the revision of laws inherited from the Ben Ali regime, which can be used to limit freedom of expression. Similarly, the EU attaches great importance to legal provisions consolidating and guaranteeing this freedom.

In its regular political dialogue with the Tunisian authorities, the EU has repeatedly reiterated its pleas for the consolidation of freedom of expression, in line with the aspirations of the Tunisian revolution. The recently concluded bilateral Action Plan also foresees commitments to strengthen freedom of assembly and freedom of expression, in line with international standards.

Additionally, the EU is closely monitoring the protection of human rights and is funding numerous projects aimed at reinforcing civil society. Notably, Tunisia received in 2012 a SPRING allocation of EUR 7 million for a civil society capacity building programme. Moreover it benefits from the Civil Society Facility and from the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EUR 4 million for Tunisia in 2011-2013).

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010715/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Wenezuela a prawa człowieka

Decyzja Wenezueli o odstąpieniu od Amerykańskiej konwencji praw człowieka wejdzie w życie 10 września 2013 r. Spowoduje to ograniczenie jurysdykcji Międzyamerykańskiego Trybunału Praw Człowieka w Wenezueli, a tym samym narazi na ryzyko przyszłe ofiary łamania praw człowieka. Ostatnio Wenezuela popiera wiele inicjatyw związanych z prawami człowieka oraz wzywa inne kraje do ratyfikacji Amerykańskiej konwencji praw człowieka, mimo że sama pozbawia swoich obywateli ochrony oferowanej przez ten system.

Jakie jest stanowisko wysokiej przedstawiciel wobec potencjalnego problemu, jaki może stanowić sytuacja w Wenezueli w kontekście praw człowieka?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel i Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton
w imieniu Komisji
(21 listopada 2013 r.)

Wenezuelskie wypowiedzenie Amerykańskiej konwencji praw człowieka, formalnie zgłoszone Organizacji Państw Amerykańskich (OPA) we wrześniu 2012 r., weszło w życie w dniu 10 września 2013 r. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca wyraża ubolewanie z powodu decyzji rządu Wenezueli.

Konwencja weszła w życie w 1978 r. i została ratyfikowana przez 25 z 35 członków OPA. Unia Europejska dostrzega istotne zmiany w zakresie praw człowieka, jakie miały miejsce w tym regionie oraz uważa, że międzyamerykański system ochrony praw człowieka odegrał w tym procesie istotną rolę.

Należy również przypomnieć, że Rada Praw Człowieka ONZ przyjęła rezolucje mające na celu pogłębianie współpracy i dialogu między międzynarodowymi i regionalnymi podmiotami zajmującymi się prawami człowieka.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010715/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Venezuela and human rights

Venezuela's decision to withdraw from the American Convention on Human Rights will take effect on 10 September 2013. This action will limit the jurisdiction of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in Venezuela, putting the victims of future human rights abuses at risk. Recently, Venezuela has supported various human rights initiatives and it urges other countries to ratify the American Convention on Human Rights, although the country itself deprives its own citizens of the protection offered by this system.

What is the position of the High Representative concerning the potential problem that this situation in Venezuela could pose for human rights?

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

Venezuela's denunciation of the American Convention on Human Rights, formally notified to the OAS in September 2012, took effect on 10 September 2013. The HR/VP regrets the decision of the Venezuelan government.

The Convention entered into force in 1978 and had been ratified by 25 of the 35 members of the OAS. The European Union recognises the important developments that have taken place in the region in terms of human rights and believes that the Inter-American System of Human Rights has played a significant role in this development.

It is also important to recall that the UN Human Rights Council has adopted resolutions aimed at enhancing cooperation and dialogue between international and regional human rights mechanisms.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010716/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Using Scotland's award winning 'active and healthy ageing' practices in Europe

Scotland recently received a double three-star rating in recognition of innovative work on the 'Reshaping Care for Older People' agenda.

What specific steps is the Commission taking to encourage the introduction of efforts similar to those of Scotland in other areas of Europe where there may be a benefit in line with the aims of the Commission's 'Active and Healthy Ageing' flagship initiative?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(6 November 2013)

The European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing has awarded 32 cities and regions for their innovative solutions aimed at helping older people. These regions, among them Scotland, have been implementing innovative technological, social or organisational solutions which serve as a reference to how innovation can help the elderly live healthy and active lives.

The European Commission is keen to facilitate the sustainable deployment of such innovative solutions to other regions in Europe and their scaling up, in line with the aims of the Commission's 'Active and Healthy Ageing' flagship initiative.

To that end, these reference regions have been encouraged to make use of national and European resources, including the European Structural and Investment Funds for the restructuring of their care systems based on their national and regional strategies.

The Commission will also organise a Conference of the European Innovation Partnership on the 25 November 2013 to showcase these examples and enhance support from other Member States and regions. A twinning programme will also be launched during this conference with the aim of connecting Reference Sites with other regions which wish to embark on innovative services for older people and promote knowledge exchange.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010717/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Reducing the carbon footprint in Europe

Scotland's global carbon footprint has fallen by 19% since 2007, and is leading Western European countries on emissions reductions.

Is the Commission aware of this result and will it support the approach used in Scotland to help reduce the carbon footprint elsewhere in Europe?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(13 November 2013)

The Commission is aware of existence of data published by the Scottish authorities on Scotland's global 'carbon footprint'. This data provide quantitative information about greenhouse gas emissions released in Scotland but also of goods and services produced domestically and abroad and consumed in Scotland. These data show an increase of Scotland's carbon footprint until 2007 and a decrease thereafter.

Unlike with national greenhouse gas emissions inventories compiled according to UNFCCC guidelines, there is no robust agreed methodology for calculating a carbon footprint. As a result, it is very difficult to compare the carbon footprint of Scotland with other regions or countries.

In order to reduce Scotland's global 'carbon footprint', the Scottish authorities are underlining the need to reduce waste, offer more sustainable energy and transport, improve energy efficiency, make more sustainable choices easier and raise public awareness of the impacts of current consumption patterns. These policies are in line with the Commission's priorities as set out in the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010718/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Protected Geographical Indication application success rates

Over the years Scottish products have successfully applied for recognition under the Protected Geographical Indication, with items such as Scotch beef and Stornoway Black Pudding benefiting from the EU scheme.

How many applications are submitted to the EU every year from products seeking geographical recognition from within the Member States, and what percentage of applications are successful?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

As for what concerns food-products, covered by Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 ([1]), such as those mentioned by the Honourable member, the Commission has successfully registered so far 1137 designations since 1996, either as protected designations of origin (573), or as protected geographical indications (564).

Over the recent years, the Commission receives on average, per year, around 90 applications — which may include amendment requests regarding already registered designations — whilst around 20 requests are, on average, withdrawn or rejected per year.

([1]) OJ L 343, 14.12.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010719/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Plastic bag charge and environmental benefits

Scotland is to introduce a charge on the use of plastic bags in supermarkets in 2014.

Where schemes of this type exist in Europe, what environmental benefits has the Commission identified?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(29 October 2013)

Plastic carrier bags and their associated littering cause environmental, economic and social problems, including marine pollution, loss of raw materials, and potential impacts on human health. Any reduction of single-use plastic bag consumption will help address these problems. A number of Member States (e.g. Ireland, Luxembourg, Belgium) have taken initiatives to reduce the use of plastic carrier bags, including through pricing methods.

The Commission has undertaken a comprehensive impact assessment to analyse the effectiveness of policies implemented in some Member States to reduce the impact of single use lightweight plastic bags. This assessment will guide the Commission's approach to a forthcoming legislative initiative in this area.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010720/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Eliminating the manufacture of 'legal high' substances

The Commission has announced new plans to tackle 'legal highs'. One example used by Commissioner Reding in her introductory speech of 17 September 2013 highlighted the fatal use of a 'legal high' product in Scotland.

Given that 'legal highs' are easily created, with one new substance being detected somewhere in the EU every week, can the Commission propose to eliminate the manufacture of new substances?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

On 17 September 2013, the Commission presented two legislative proposals on new psychoactive substances, aimed at strengthening the EU response to this growing problem. The proposals seek to enhance the monitoring and risk assessment of new psychoactive substances, and to enable swifter and more proportionate answers to reduce the availability of those substances that pose health, social and safety risks, depending on their level of risk.

Under the proposals, new psychoactive substances posing severe health, social and safety risks would be subjected to market restriction across the EU. This means that their production, manufacture, making available on the market, including importation to the Union, transport, and exportation from the Union will be prohibited, except for explicitly authorised uses, and for research and development. This prohibition would be backed by criminal law, as the proposals envisage that new psychoactive substances posing severe health, social and safety risks are subjected to the criminal law provisions that apply to illicit drugs.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010721/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: The Commission's efforts to tackle racial abuse in spectator sports played in Europe

A Scotland football player was racially abused by opposition supporters in a recent international football match.

What role does the Commission play in combating racial abuse in spectator sports played in Europe?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(15 November 2013)

The Commission is committed to contributing to the prevention of spectator violence and racial abuse in sport.

When monitoring the implementation of the framework Decision on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law ([1]), the Commission takes sport-related issues into consideration. It will present its assessment of Member States' compliance with the provisions of the framework Decision by the end of the year. Until 1 December 2014 the Commission is not authorised to launch infringement proceedings on the basis of Framework Decisions. It is up to national authorities to investigate any concrete case of racist or xenophobic speech; and it is for national courts to determine whether such cases incite violence or hatred.

Various projects selected under different EU funding programmes in the fields of justice, education, youth and sport support the fight against intolerance in sport. The Fight Against Racism in Europe (FARE) network — launched with the financial support of the EU — and various initiatives undertaken by organisations like UEFA demonstrate that sport can be an excellent vehicle to fight racism. EU projects in the field have been regularly monitored. They will help to prepare the way for measures that may be supported under the future sport chapter of the Erasmus+ programme 2014-2020.

Finally, within the framework of Council Decision 2002/348/JHA amended by Council Decision 2007/412/JHA on security at international football matches, National Football Information Points exchange data, e.g. on potentially disruptive supporters. They also cooperate with national football associations and UEFA.

([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.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010722/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(19 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — La Forza di protezione pubblica dell'Afghanistan rischia il tracollo

Recentemente varie fonti di stampa hanno riportato che la società pubblica incaricata della sicurezza in Afghanistan rischierebbe il tracollo a causa della corruzione diffusa e della cattiva amministrazione. Alla Forza di protezione pubblica dell'Afghanistan, istituita nel 2010 dal Presidente Karzai in sostituzione delle guardie di sicurezza straniere, è stato affidato il compito di proteggere i convogli. Stando al *The Times*, tuttavia, la Forza, finanziata principalmente da Stati e organizzazioni esterni all'Afghanistan, può essere sostenuta soltanto per pochi mesi.

La società è composta da 19 000 addetti alla sicurezza, molti dei quali hanno protestato per la mancata retribuzione e per l'assenza di attrezzature e armi adeguate. Pur temendo che senza l'assistenza straniera la Forza possa incorrere nel rischio di insolvenza, il Presidente Karzai non ha risposto alle domande sulle condizioni finanziarie della Forza. Il 30 luglio 2013 il *Washington Times* ha riportato che la Forza non sarebbe nemmeno in grado di svolgere le funzioni di base. Ciononostante dal 2011 il suo costo è aumentato di ben il 47 %. In risposta a tale situazione il numero dei responsabile della gestione dei rischi impiegati per monitorare le minacce alla sicurezza continua a crescere.

1. I funzionari dell'UE in Afghanistan sono costretti ad affidarsi ai servizi della Forza di protezione pubblica dell'Afghanistan. In quest'ottica qual è la posizione del Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante nei confronti delle relazioni secondo cui la Forza rischierebbe il tracollo?

2. Dal 2010 qual è stata l'entità del sostegno finanziario dell'UE destinato alla Forza di protezione pubblica dell'Afghanistan?

3. I funzionari dell'UE prevedono l'attuazione di piani di emergenza alla luce del possibile scioglimento della Forza di protezione pubblica dell'Afghanistan?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton è pienamente consapevole della difficile situazione in cui versa la sicurezza dei funzionari dell'UE in servizio in Afghanistan. Per garantire la sicurezza, la delegazione dell'UE e la missione EUPOL AFGHANISTAN intendono continuare a ricorrere a società private che operano indipendentemente dalla Forza di protezione pubblica afghana (APPF).

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è altresì pienamente consapevole della grande sfida che rappresenta tuttora il potenziamento delle capacità dei servizi di polizia afghana. La comunità internazionale si è impegnata a fornire ulteriore aiuto a questo scopo. Sostenere l'Afghanistan negli sforzi volti a potenziare la polizia civile e lo Stato di diritto continua a essere una priorità per l'UE, che resta in stretto contatto con il ministero dell'Interno afghano al fine di individuare il modo migliore per raggiungere questo obiettivo. Attualmente l'UE fornisce sostegno sia attraverso la missione EUPOL Afghanistan che con finanziamenti tramite il Fondo fiduciario per l'ordine pubblico gestito dal PNUS. L'UE non ha fornito sostegno finanziario all'APPF e non intende farlo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010722/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Afghan Public Protection Force at risk of collapse

Various news sources have recently reported that Afghanistan's state-owned security company is at risk of collapse as a result of widespread corruption and mismanagement. The Afghan Public Protection Force, set up in 2010 by President Karzai to replace foreign security guards, was given the task of protecting convoys. According to the *The Times*, however, the force — largely financed by states and organisations outside of Afghanistan — can only be sustained for another few months.

The company is composed of 19 000 security personnel, many of whom have complained that they are not being paid and that thye lack adequate equipment and weapons. While it is feared that, without foreign assistance, the force risks insolvency, President Karzai has failed to respond to questions about the state of its finances. On 30 July 2013, the *Washington Times* reported that the force is unable to fulfil even basic functions. This notwithstanding, the cost of the force has increased by as much as 47% since 2011. In response, more and more risk managers are being employed to monitor security threats.

1. EU officials in Afghanistan are obliged to rely on the services of the Afghan Public Protection Force. With this in mind, what is the position of the Vice-President/High Representative with regard to reports that the force is at risk of collapse?

2. Since 2010, what has been the extent of EU financial support to the Afghan Public Protection Force?

3. Are EU officials planning to implement contingency plans in light of the possible disbandment of the Afghan Public Protection Force?

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

The HR/VP is fully aware of the difficult security situation for EU officials posted and deployed in Afghanistan. The EU Delegation and the EUPOL AFGHANISTAN mission plan to continue to use private companies to provide security — operating independently from the Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF).

The HR/VP is also fully aware of the still considerable challenge of reinforcing the capacities of Afghan police services. The international community is committed to providing further support to that end. The EU considers it a priority to continue supporting Afghan efforts to strengthen civilian policing and rule of law and remains in close contact with the Afghan Ministry of Interior as to how to best achieve this. At present, the EU provides support through both the deployment of the EUPOL AFGHANISTAN mission and through financial support via the Law and Order Trust Fund, which is managed by the UNDP. The EU has not provided financial support for the APPF and has no plans to do so.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010723/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(19 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Maliani protestano contro il ritorno dei jihadisti a Gao

Il sito di notizie online *Maghrebia* riferisce che il 25 agosto centinaia di giovani maliani sono scesi in strada nella città di Gao, nel Mali settentrionale, protestando furiosamente contro il ritorno degli ex jihadisti. Un insegnante ha dichiarato che «al nord la popolazione è ancora scossa dalla paura e non dimenticherà mai quello che ha passato con gli islamisti. Per questo motivo, la reazione è piuttosto comprensibile, specialmente perché abbiamo appena appreso della fusione del Mujao e della brigata di Belmokhtar». Entrambi i gruppi si erano precedentemente staccati da «al-Qaeda nel Maghreb islamico» (AQIM) e il loro ritorno ha suscitato profonda rabbia e paura nella popolazione locale.

Secondo quanto riferito, i manifestanti sono particolarmente adirati per l'inerzia delle autorità maliane di fronte al ritorno degli islamisti. Gli abitanti hanno esortato la polizia e la gendarmeria a intervenire catturando i jihadisti ricomparsi. Purtroppo, il sito riferisce tuttavia che la polizia si sta lasciando corrompere dai mujaheddin, che vengono pertanto rilasciati (pare che gli alleati dei mujaheddin siano rilasciati in circostanze simili). Dal sito si evince che i manifestanti hanno imposto alle autorità un termine entro cui queste dovranno intervenire, promettendo altrimenti di farsi giustizia da soli.

1. Intende l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente chiedere alle autorità maliane di adottare provvedimenti per affrontare il problema del ritorno dei jihadisti nella città di Gao?

2. Quale è la valutazione dei funzionari UE nella regione per quanto riguarda la probabilità di nuove violenze, nel Mali settentrionale, orchestrate dal Mujao e dai seguaci di Mokhtar Belmokhtar?

3. Offre attualmente l'UE assistenza al Mali ai fini della lotta alla corruzione e del miglioramento dell'ordine pubblico?

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

Il rischio di attacchi terroristici in Mali rimane molto elevato. La fusione del MUJAO con la brigata di Belmokhtar e la creazione del nuovo gruppo terroristico Al-Mourabitoun inaspriscono ulteriormente la concorrenza con AQIM e altri gruppi rivali affiliati ad Al Qaeda. I recenti attentati suicidi di Tombouctou e Kidal (28 settembre 2013) e i bombardamenti del MUJAO a Gao (8 ottobre 2013) potrebbero essere seguiti da altri tentativi di condurre operazioni terroristiche estremamente visibili in Mali o nella più ampia regione del Sahel-Sahara.

In questo contesto, la Missione di stabilizzazione multidimensionale integrata delle Nazioni Unite in Mali e l'operazione militare francese Serval hanno innalzato il livello di allerta nella parte settentrionale del Mali e in particolare a Gao. I due battaglioni dell'esercito maliano addestrati dall'UE sono stati schierati a Gao e in altre zone strategiche del Mali centro-settentrionale.

L'UE ha la ferma intenzione di continuare a sostenere i servizi di difesa e di sicurezza, comprese le forze di sicurezza interna, attraverso lo sviluppo delle capacità e le riforme della giustizia e della governance in tutti i settori. La relazione sull'attuazione della strategia UE per il Sahel nel 2012-2013 ([1]) contiene informazioni dettagliate sul modo in cui i finanziamenti e le missioni dell'UE sostengono lo sviluppo socioeconomico in Mali e in altri paesi vulnerabili del Sahel contribuendo al tempo stesso a migliorare la sicurezza e a combattere la radicalizzazione.

([1]) SWD(2013)317.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010723/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Malians protest Jihadists return to Gao

Maghrebia, an online news site, reported that hundreds of young Malians in the northern town of Gao had taken to the streets on August 25, demonstrating in anger at the return of former jihadists. One teacher said that 'People of the north are still shaken by fear and they will never forget what they have experienced with the Islamists. So, their reaction is quite understandable, especially since we just heard about the merger of MUJAO and Belmokhtar's gang.' Both of these groups previously had broken away from al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), and their return has caused much anger and fear within the local population.

It is reported that the demonstrators are particularly angered by the inaction of the Malian authorities against the Islamists returns. Residents have appealed to police and the gendarmerie to take action by catching the remerged jihadists. Unfortunately, however, the site reports that the police are accepting bribes from the Mujahedeen and subsequently releasing them — allies of the Mujahedeen are allegedly released in similar circumstances. Reports now suggest that protesters have set the authorities a deadline to take action, promising a vigilante response if action is not forthcoming.

1. Will the High Representative/Vice-President ask that the Malian authorities take steps to address the problem of jihadists moving into the town of Gao?

2. What is the assessment of EU officials in the region regarding the likelihood of renewed violence in Northern Mali orchestrated by MUJAO and followers of Mokhtar Belmokhtar?

3. Is the EU offering assistance to Mali for the purposes of combatting corruption and improving law and order?

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

The risk of terrorist attacks in Mali remains very high. The merger of MUJAO and Belmokhtar's group and the creation of a new terrorist group — Al-Mourabitoun — are exacerbating further the competition with AQIM and other rival Al Qaeda affiliated groups. Recent suicide attacks in Timbuktu, Kidal (28 September 2013) and bombings by MUJAO in Gao (8 October 2013) may be followed by other attempts to conduct highly visible terrorist operations in Mali or the broader Sahel-Sahara region.

In this context, the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali and French military operation Serval have enhanced their level of alert in the north of Mali and Gao in particular. The two EU trained battalions of the Malian army were deployed in Gao and other strategic locations in the centre and the north of Mali.

The EU is determined to continue its support to defence and security services, including internal security forces through relevant capacity building, justice and governance reforms across the board. The 2012/2013 implementation report of the EU Sahel Strategy ([1]) provides details on how EU funding and missions are supporting the socioeconomic development in Mali and other vulnerable Sahel countries while helping to improve security and combat radicalisation.

([1]) SWD(2013) 317.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010724/13
to the Commission
Marta Andreasen (ECR)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Finance and accountancy training for Commission staff

What training on accountancy and finance is offered internally to Commission staff?

Who are the course providers, how are they selected, and how long do the contracts last?

What exactly are the courses offered, and what is the attendance for each course per year from 2009 to 2012? What is the projected attendance for 2013?

In what languages are the courses provided?

How many courses have been dropped and what are the criteria for this decision? How many new courses have been added?

Who selects and provides the course materials?

How often are the course materials updated in light of the new accountancy standards and other legislative changes?

What opportunity is given to the participants to provide feedback at the end of a course?

Is there any course assessment carried out based on the feedback given?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(25 October 2013)

1. Staff is offered around 60 different courses on financial procedures, accountancy and the IT software for budget management (ABAC).

2. Courses are provided either by internal trainers or external contractors, selected through open call for tender procedures. Running contracts are with DEMOS (ends 9/6/2016) and Deloitte (ends 7/3/2016).

3. 22 courses relate to financial procedures, around 30 to ABAC, and the accounting curriculum, presently under revision, will comprise 7 modules. The total number of participants was 5 764 in 2012 and up to now 5 158 in 2013.

4. Courses are given in English and French.

5. Regular revisions of course contents (see No 7 below) lead to the merge, split or renewal of courses.

6. The trainers provide the course material, after validation of the competent service.

7. Courses are updated any time their content is affected by external changes (e.g. new release of IT software, revision of Financial Regulations or implementing rules, new accountancy standards) or whenever pedagogical or strategic reasons make it necessary.

8. An evaluation sheet is filled in by each participant after each course.

9. Courses are assessed on the basis of the evaluation sheets to ensure high quality standards.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010725/13
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(19 september 2013)

Betreft: VP/HR — behandeling van minderheden bij Pakistaanse verkiezingen

In het eindverslag van de EU-verkiezingswaarnemingsmissie naar de Pakistaanse verkiezingen in 2013 wordt erop gewezen dat minderheden in Pakistan, en met name de Ahmadiyya-gemeenschap, nog steeds worden gediscrimineerd. In tegenstelling tot andere minderheden moeten de leden van deze gemeenschap gebruikmaken van een apart kiezersregister. Dat staat haaks op internationale verplichtingen. Bovendien is vastgesteld dat verkiezingsspotjes waarin niet-moslims worden opgeroepen om te gaan stemmen, niet door de staatsomroeporganisaties zijn uitgezonden.

Is de HV/VV, vanuit een streven naar vrije en eerlijke verkiezingen, bereid de discriminatie van de Ahmadiyya-gemeenschap aan de orde te stellen bij de Pakistaanse regering?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(11 november 2013)

De kwestie omtrent de behandeling van de Ahmaddiyya-gemeenschap betreft een dossier dat de EU herhaaldelijk bij de Pakistaanse autoriteiten aan de orde heeft gesteld, en aan de orde zal blijven stellen.

In zijn gesprekken met de Pakistaanse regering en met de verkiezingscommissie drukte Europees Parlementslid Michael Gahler, hoofdwaarnemer van de verkiezingswaarnemingsmisssie van de EU (EOM) in Pakistan in 2013, in aanloop naar de verkiezingen persoonlijk zijn bezorgdheid uit over de afzonderlijke lijst voor de Ahmadi-kiezers. Het EOM-eindverslag vat de aanbeveling dat „de afzonderlijke lijst voor de Ahmadi-kiezers moet worden afgeschaft, zodat alle kiezers een uniforme kiezerslijst vormen, al naargelang de eisen inzake leeftijd en Pakistaans burgerschap".

De EU is bereid om samen met Pakistan de aanbevelingen van de verkiezingswaarnemingsmissie op te volgen om het verkiezingsproces in overeenstemming met haar internationale verbintenissen te verbeteren, onder meer door een inclusieve aanpak van alle Pakistaanse minderheden aan te moedigen.

De EU ondersteunt het democratiseringsproces in Pakistan met de financiering van capaciteitsopbouwende projecten in de federale en provinciale instellingen, met inbegrip van de bescherming van de rechten van de mens, van de toegang tot het rechtswezen voor kwetsbare groepen en van de versterking van maatschappelijke organisaties.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010725/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Treatment of minority communities in the Pakistan elections

The Final Report of the EU Election Observation Mission Pakistan 2013 highlighted the continued discrimination against minority communities in Pakistan, in particular the Ahmadiyya community. Unlike in the case of other minority groups, this community's members are required to use a separate electoral register. This is at odds with international obligations. Additionally it was noted that that voter spots promoting non-Muslim participation in the elections were not aired by state-owned broadcasters.

In the context of free and fair elections, is the HR/VP ready to address the issue of discrimination against the Ahmadiyya community with the Government of Pakistan?

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

The issue of the treatment of the Ahmaddiyya community is one that has been raised by the EU repeatedly with the Pakistani authorities, and will continue to be raised.

Michael Gahler MEP, Chief Observer for the EU Election Observation Mission (EOM) to Pakistan in 2013, personally raised concerns about the separate list for Ahmadi voters in his discussions with the Government of Pakistan and the Election Commission in the run up to elections. The EOM final report recommends that 'the separate list for Ahmadi voters be abolished so that all voters are one unified electoral roll, according to requirements for age and Pakistani citizenship'.

The EU is ready to accompany Pakistan in following up on recommendations from the EOM to improve the electoral process in line with its international commitments, including by encouraging an inclusive approach to all of Pakistan's minorities.

The EU is engaged in supporting the democratic process in Pakistan with funding for capacity-building projects in the federal and provincial institutions, including protection of human rights, access to justice for vulnerable groups and strengthening civil society organisations.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010726/13
an die Kommission
Britta Reimers (ALDE)
(19. September 2013)

Betrifft: GVO-Zulassung

Das EU-System zur GVO-Zulassung nimmt deutlich mehr Zeit in Anspruch als die Zulassungssysteme der wichtigsten Exportländer von GV-Produkten des amerikanischen Kontinents, bei denen genauso strenge Risikobewertungen vorgesehen sind. Diese Kluft nimmt zu und entwickelt sich schnell zu einer großen Herausforderung für den Handel. Auf der Website der Kommission und in mehreren von der Kommission finanzierten Berichten wird darauf hingewiesen, dass das System der EU effizienter sein könnte, ohne dass dabei die hohen Sicherheitsstandards beeinträchtigt würden. Die Kommission hat im Juni 2012 eingestanden, dass — was die GVO-Zulassungen betrifft — die rechtlichen Zeitrahmen regelmäßig nicht eingehalten werden können (Antwort auf die parlamentarische Anfrage E-004184/2012). Der Kommission kommt die eindeutige rechtliche Verpflichtung zu, die GVO mit befürwortender Stellungnahme der EFSA innerhalb von drei Monaten den Mitgliedstaaten zur „Komitologie"-Abstimmung vorzulegen. Dieser rechtlich vorgeschriebene Zeitrahmen scheint in anderen Komitologiebereichen im Allgemeinen eingehalten zu werden, im Falle der GVO allerdings nicht.

1. Teilt die Kommission die Auffassung, dass ihre Untätigkeit eine Bedrohung für den Handel mit Agrarerzeugnissen darstellt?

2. Wie sind nach Ansicht der Kommission diese unzulässigen und unnötigen Verzögerungen mit den WTO-Verpflichtungen der EU zu vereinbaren?

3. Wird die Kommission von nun an ihren rechtlichen Verpflichtungen nachkommen und die GV-Produkte mit einer befürwortenden Stellungnahme der EFSA innerhalb von drei Monaten in der Sitzung eines ständigen Ausschusses zur Abstimmung stellen?

4. Hat sich die Situation seit Juni 2012 verbessert?

5. Welche Schritte wird die Kommission unternehmen, um sicherzustellen, dass die rechtlichen Verpflichtungen in Bezug auf die Zeitrahmen künftig erfüllt werden?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(11. November 2013)

1./2. Die Frau Abgeordnete wird auf die Antwort der Kommission auf die Anfrage E-0008611/2013 ([1]) verwiesen.

3./4./5. Die Kommission bemüht sich auch weiterhin um Einhaltung der engen rechtlichen Fristen für die Zulassung. In diesem Zusammenhang sei jedoch auch darauf hingewiesen, dass die EFSA in jüngster Zeit unvollständige oder nicht eindeutige Stellungnahmen abgegeben hat, bei denen die Kommission fehlende Angaben von den Antragstellern einholen muss, was wiederum das Zulassungsverfahren verlängert.

Nach Ansicht der Kommission wird die am 8. Juni 2013 veröffentlichte Durchführungsverordnung (EG) Nr. 503/2013 ([2]) über Anträge auf Zulassung genetisch veränderter Lebens- und Futtermittel zu einer Straffung der Risikobewertung und des Risikomanagements der Erzeugnisse führen, da die Antragsteller aufgefordert werden, mehrere GVO (kombinierte Transformationsereignisse und Unterkombinationen) in einem einzigen Antrag zusammenzufassen, und es wird davon ausgegangen, dass dieses klare Verfahren dazu beitragen wird, die zeitlichen Verschiebungen zwischen den Zulassungen der EU und der exportierenden Drittländer zu verringern.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/de/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) ABl. L 157 vom 8.6.2013, S. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010726/13
to the Commission
Britta Reimers (ALDE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: GMO authorisation

The EU's GMO authorisation system takes significantly longer than those of the major GM commodity exporting countries in the Americas with equally rigorous risk assessments in place. This gap is increasing and is quickly becoming a major challenge for trade. The Commission's website and several Commission-funded reports point out that the EU's system could be more efficient without compromising high safety standards. The Commission admitted in June 2012 that it regularly fails to comply with legal timelines when it comes to GM authorisations (reply to parliamentary Question E-004184/2012). The Commission has a clear legal obligation to put GMOs with a positive EFSA opinion to the 'comitology' vote by Member States within three months. This legally prescribed timeline seems to be generally followed in other comitology areas, but not when it comes to GMOs.

1. Does the Commission agree that its failure to act represents a threat to trade in agricultural commodities?

2. How are these undue and unnecessary delays compatible, in the Commission's view, with the EU's WTO commitments?

3. Will the Commission from now on respect its legal obligations to put GM products with a positive EFSA opinion to the vote at a standing committee meeting within three months?

4. Has the situation improved since June 2012?

5. What steps will the Commission take to ensure that the legal obligations regarding these timelines are fulfilled in the future?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 November 2013)

1 and 2. The Honourable Member is referred to the Commission's reply on Question E-0008611/2013 ([1]).

3, 4 and 5. The Commission will continue with its efforts to comply with the tight legal timelines for authorisation. However it has to be noted that EFSA recently adopted incomplete or inconclusive opinions for which the Commission is asking the missing data to the applicants which prolonges the authorisation process.

The Commission believes that the implementing Regulation (EC) No 503/2013 ([2]) on authorisation of GM food and feed, published on 8 June 2013, will streamline the risk assessment and risk management of the products by asking applicants to include different GMOs (stacks and sub-combinations) in one single application and that it is expected that this clear procedure will contribute to reduce the asynchronicity of authorisations between the EU and exporting third countries.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) OJ L 157, 8.6.2013, p. 1-48.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010727/13
to the Commission
Martina Anderson (GUE/NGL)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: EU legislation on working hours for professional drivers

Professional drivers throughout the EU are required to keep weekly rest reports to track their working hours and to ensure that they are within EU defined safety limits and that no driver has a competitive advantage.

What would the Commission consider a 'fair' fine for minor breaches of the required length of rest time?

Are the Member States obliged to publish a list of escalating fines for different infringements? If so, where is such a list to be found?

If an offence is fined in a Member State other than the one in which it was committed, what is the appeal procedure? Does the Member State in which the offence was committed have jurisdiction over the level of fine or the right to ask for such jurisdiction?

Has the Commission experienced different interpretations of the 'ferry rule' and, if so, how have the disputes been resolved?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(7 November 2013)

Regulation (EC) No 561/2006 ([1]) requires Member States to lay down rules on penalties applicable to infringements of driving times, breaks and rest periods for drivers and make sure that these are effective, proportionate, dissuassive and non-discriminatory. The Court of Justice gave recently some guidance as regards the appreciation of the criterion of proportionality of such penalties in its judgment of 9 February 2012 ([2]). According to the Court, Member States are empowered to choose the penalties which seem to be appropriate to them (the amount of fines may thus depend on socioeconomic situations in the Member States and their penal systems), but should adjust their amount to the seriousness of the breach.

Member States are obliged to notify the Commission of the measures and the rules on penalties. However, there is no requirement to publish the list of such penalties.To gain a detailed overview of penalties applied in different Member States the Commission launched a study in 2012 and its results will be published on the Europa website in the coming months.

The appeal procedure against fines normally follows the rules of the national legal system of the Member State where the fine was imposed. The amount of fines should be determined in accordance with the legislation of that Member States. As regards additional claims from the Member State where the offense was commited, the *ne bis in idem* principle should apply.

To ensure a common understanding and application of the so called 'ferry rule' the Commission issued, in cooperation with Member States, a guidance note, which is published on the Europa website under the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/road/social_provisions/doc/guidance_6_en.pdf

---

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 561/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2006 on the harmonisation of certain social legislation relating to road transport and amending Council Regulations (EEC) No 3821/85 and (EC) No 2135/98 and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 3820/85 (Text with EEA relevance) — OJ L 102, 11.4.2006, p. 1-14.

([2]) Case C-210/10 Márton Urbán.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-010728/13
upućeno Komisiji
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(19. rujna 2013.)

Predmet: Kako iskoristiti novac iz EU fondova

Republika Hrvatska svoju nepripremljenost za ulazak u Europsku uniju najočiglednije je pokazala kroz izuzetno nisku razinu tzv. absorption rate, odnosno iskorištenost fondova EU-a u smislu postotka isplaćenih sredstava u odnosu na alokaciju sredstava dostupnih kroz pretpristupni program IPA 2007.-2013.

Novac koji Hrvatska mora uplatiti za članstvo u EU, u temeljni kapital Europske investicijske banke te u istraživački fond za ugljen i čelik obvezatan je i fiksan, dok se malo zna o tome da je novac koji će Hrvatska uprihodovati tek potencijal koji ovisi o nama samima, odnosno o projektima koje ćemo predložiti kako bismo ga privukli.

Uzevši u obzir dosadašnju praksu negativnih rekordera u broju projektnih odbijenica, te također uzevši u obzir najnovija previranja između Komisije i Vlade Republike Hrvatske, iz kojih je već postalo izvjesno to da će Komisija zamrznuti 80 milijuna eura koji su za Hrvatsku predviđeni kroz tzv. privremeni schengenski instrument, moje pitanje vama je postoji li politički mehanizam koji bi europarlamentarni zastupnici iz Republike Hrvatske mogli pokrenuti, a koji bi Hrvatskoj, s obzirom na nezahvalnu situaciju u kojoj se nalazi, mogao pomoći da poboljša apsorpcijske kapacitete za povlačenje sredstava iz strukturnih i kohezijskih fondova te postoji li mogućnost produljenja roka za apliciranje na iste, ako se to u Hrvatskoj pokaže kao realna potreba.

Takva mogućnost za Hrvatsku uvelike bi pomogla da europska Strategija 2020., za koju se zalažete u svom resoru, zaista bude efikasno realizirana u praksi.

Odgovor g. Hahna u ime Komisije
(19. studenog 2013.)

Hrvatska mora nastaviti pripremati i provoditi projekte u skladu s uredbama. Administrativne kapacitete na nacionalnoj i lokalnoj razini potrebno je dodatno ojačati i povećati zapošljavanjem novog osoblja, razvojem sposobnosti zaposlenika i zadržavanjem već zaposlenih u cilju osiguravanja kontinuiteta. Rok za provedbu programa konvergencije za Hrvatsku (okoliš, promet, regionalna konkurentnost, razvoj ljudskih resursa) produžen je na temelju Ugovora o pristupanju s razdoblja n+2 na razdoblje n+3. Udio koji je Komisija isplatila u okviru programâ 2007. — 2013. trenutačno iznosi 21 %, posebno zbog činjenice što je nakon pristupanja dodano još 450 milijuna EUR.

Komisija bi mogla, kako je predviđeno Aktom o pristupanju, u siječnju 2014. isplatiti godišnji iznos schengenskog instrumenta za 2014. (80 milijuna EUR) jer je hrvatski parlament donio izmjene Zakona o pravosudnoj suradnji u kaznenim stvarima s državama članicama EU-a kojim će se od 1. siječnja 2014. staviti izvan snage odredbe kojima se Europski uhidbeni nalog ograničava na kaznena djela počinjena nakon 7. kolovoza 2002.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010728/13
to the Commission
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: How to draw on money from EU funds

The most obvious way in which Croatia demonstrated its lack of preparedness for EU accession was its exceptionally low absorption rate, i.e. the rate of utilisation of EU funds calculated as the percentage of funds paid out in relation to the funds allocated as part of the pre-accession (IPA) programme for 2007-2013.

The funds that Croatia must pay out for EU membership, as base capital for the European Investment Bank and for the Research Fund for Coal and Steel are compulsory and fixed. However, little is known about the money that Croatia will actually receive; these funds are uncertain and will depend on our actions, that is, on the projects that we propose in order to draw on them.

Given that a record number of projects have now been rejected, and given the recent turmoil between the Commission and the Croatian Government, which has led to news emerging that the Commission is to freeze EUR 80 million in funds earmarked for Croatia under the temporary Schengen Facility, I would like to put the following questions to the Commission: Is there a political mechanism that Croatian MEPs could launch to help Croatia, which currently finds itself in an unenviable position, to improve its absorption rates for structural and cohesion funds? Would it be possible, should there be a real need in Croatia, to extend the deadline for applying for such funds?

This would greatly help Croatia to implement the Europe 2020 strategy, which your institution advocates, in an effective manner.

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(19 November 2013)

Croatia needs to continue preparing and implementing projects according to the regulations. Administrative capacity at national and local level will need to be further strengthened and increased by additional recruitments, by developing the skills of staff and by retaining staff in order to ensure continuity. The deadline for implementation of the convergence programmes (environment, transport, regional competitiveness, human resources development) was extended for Croatia from n+2 to n+3 period by virtue of the Accession Treaty. The rate of payment by the Commission of the 2007-2013 programmes is currently at 21%, notably due to the fact that an additional EUR 450 million was just added following the accession.

The Commission could pay the Schengen Facility annual amount for 2014 (EUR 80 million) in January 2014 as envisaged by the Act of Accession, as the Croatian parliament adopted changes to the Law on Judicial Cooperation in Criminal Matters with the EU Member States which will as of 1 January 2014 put out of force provisions by which the European Arrest Warrant is limited to crimes committed after 7 August 2002.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010729/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(19 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Discarica Co.Ve.Ri. di Casale sul Sile in provincia di Treviso: ulteriori approfondimenti

In riferimento alla risposta all'interrogazione E-006906/2013 «Discarica Co.Ve.Ri. di Casale sul Sile in provincia di Treviso», si richiama l'attenzione della Commissione sulle evidenze sollevate in documenti ufficiali dell'Ente parco naturale del fiume Sile. Tale ente è stato istituito con L.R. 28.01.1991, n. 8, al fine di tutelare i caratteri naturalistici, storici ed ambientali della zona e proteggere le acque, il bacino idrografico, il suolo, il sottosuolo e l'intero ecosistema del territorio del fiume Sile.

Considerato che:

— il piano di gestione del bacino del fiume Sile è stato predisposto ai sensi della direttiva 2000/60/CE ed individua un contesto idrografico composto da un territorio che investe in tutto o in parte 41 territori comunali all'interno delle province di Padova, Treviso e Venezia;

— secondo la legge regionale 6 dicembre 1991, n 349 la nozione di «area contigua ad area protetta» si può far coincidere con l'intero bacino idrografico del fiume Sile;

— il sito in cui si realizzerebbe la discarica si trova in «area contigua ed area protetta» in quanto è ubicato a 700 metri dai confini ovest del Parco e a 1500 metri dalla zona di pregio naturalistico delle ex Cave di Casale;

— l'unità di progetto foreste e parchi in merito al progetto di questa discarica ravvisa che essa «altera in maniera irreversibile l'ecosistema fluviale del parco […] incidendo significativamente sull'acqua, risorsa idropotabile di primario valore e fondamento dell'ampio bacino idrografico del Sile nonché bene prioritario del Parco naturale regionale del fiume Sile. Si ravvisa inoltre la totale incompatibilità all'immissione nei fossati di campagna delle acque provenienti dalla prevista discarica»;

— l'Ente parco naturale del fiume Sile non è mai stato coinvolto dalle direzioni regionali preposte alla valutazione del progetto, non ha mai ricevuto riposte alle richieste di chiarimenti e non è stato convocato presso la Commissione V.I.A.,

— nel territorio del Parco sono presenti anche i siti Natura 2000 — SIC e ZPS — che potrebbero venire irrimediabilmente compromessi dall'immissione delle acque provenienti dalla discarica,

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è informata su questi fatti;

2. se ritiene che la procedura di valutazione di impatto ambientale preventiva (VIA) abbia tenuto conto delle pertinenti normative europee: direttiva 2008/98/CE relativa ai rifiuti (direttiva quadro sui rifiuti), direttiva 1999/31/CE relativa alle discariche di rifiuti (direttiva discariche) e direttiva 2011/92/UE;

3. se ritiene che sia stata rispettata la direttiva 2000/60/CE che istituisce un quadro per l'azione comunitaria in materia di acque?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(29 ottobre 2013)

Conformemente all'articolo 6, paragrafo 1 della direttiva sulla valutazione dell'impatto ambientale (direttiva VIA) ([1]) compete agli Stati membri designare le autorità da consultare, in generale o caso per caso, nell'ambito delle procedure di VIA.

([1]) Direttiva 2011/92/UE concernente la valutazione dell'impatto ambientale di determinati progetti pubblici e privati, GU L 26 del 28.1.2012, pag. 1.

In base alle informazioni fornite dall'onorevole deputato la Commissione non è stata in grado di ravvisare una violazione della direttiva VIA, della direttiva quadro sui rifiuti ([2]), della direttiva sulle discariche ([3]) o della direttiva quadro sulle acque ([4]).

([2]) Direttiva 2008/98/CE relativa ai rifiuti, GU L 312 del 22.11.2008, pag. 3.
([3]) Direttiva 1999/31/CE relativa alle discariche di rifiuti, GU L 182 del 16.7.1999, pag. 1.
([4]) Direttiva 2000/60/CE che istituisce un quadro per l'azione comunitaria in materia di acque, GU L 327 del 22.12.2000, pag. 39.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010729/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Update on Co.Ve.Ri landfill in Casale sul Sile in the Province of Treviso

Further to the Commission's reply to Written Question E-006906/2013 (Co.Ve.Ri landfill in Casale sul Sile, Treviso) I would like to draw attention to a number of facts brought to light in official documents from the River Sile Regional Nature Park authority. This authority was established under Regional Law No 8 of 28 January 1991 with a view to protecting the area's natural, historical and environmental features, in particular, the water, the river drainage basin, the soil and the subsoil.

The Sile river basin management plan was set up under Directive 2000/60/EC and covers a drainage area that runs through all or part of 41 municipalities in the provinces of Padua, Treviso and Venice.

The entire Sile river basin may be considered an 'area adjoining a protected area' within the meaning of Regional Law No 349 of 6 December 1991.

The area where the landfill is to be built is clearly an area 'adjoining a protected area', as it is located 700 metres from the western edge of the Regional Nature Park and 1500 metres from the 'Ex Cave di Casale' area of natural beauty.

The Regional Forestry and Parks Planning Unit takes the view that the proposed landfill 'will irreversibly alter the park's river ecosystem […] and have a significant impact on the water, which is of key importance to drinking water supplies and a fundamental feature of the vast Sile river basin and Regional Nature Park'. The unit also recognises that the release of waste water from the proposed landfill into drainage ditches would be completely wrong.

The Sile River Regional Nature Park authority was not consulted by the regional authority departments responsible for assessing the project. What is more, it received no replies to its requests for clarifications and was not asked for its opinion by the EIA Commission.

Moreover, there are Natura 2000 sites in the park (SCIs and SPAs), which could be irreparably compromised by waste water released from the landfill site.

1. Is the Commission aware of the above?

2. Does it believe that proper account was taken of the relevant European laws including Directive 2008/98/EC on waste, Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste and Directive 2011/92/EU during the environmental impact assessment?

3. Does it believe that Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy has been complied with?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(29 October 2013)

According to Article 6(1) of the EIA Directive ([1]) it is the duty of the Member States to designate which authorities should be consulted as part of the EIA procedures, either in general terms or on a case-by-case basis.

From the information provided by the Honourable Member, the Commission could not identify a breach of the EIA Directive, the Waste Framework Directive ([2]), the Landfill Directive ([3]) or the Water Framework Directive ([4]).

([1]) Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.
([2]) Directive 2008/98/EC on waste, OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.
([3]) Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste, OJ L 182, 16.7.1999.
([4]) Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010730/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(19 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Nuova discarica nel Comune di Paese in provincia di Treviso: a rischio la salute dei cittadini e la sicurezza ambientale

Il comune di Paese in provincia di Treviso convive da anni con le problematiche ambientali derivanti dalla presenza sul suo territorio di ben 29 cave e 14 impianti di smaltimento rifiuti. Gli effetti della presenza di tali installazioni si ripercuotono pesantemente sulle falde acquifere della zona con rischio di contaminazione da agenti chimici, quali ad esempio bromacile e mercurio. Attualmente è stato presentato, da parte di un'azienda locale, un progetto per riclassificare la discarica sita in via Toti nel comune di Paese, al fine di ottenere l'autorizzazione a modificare il suo attuale uso ed adattarla alla ricezione anche di rifiuti classificati come CER 17.06.05: «Materiali da costruzione contenenti amianto». La capacità di stoccaggio del sito diverrà di 650.000 mc di materiali, dei quali 190.000 mc di rifiuti inerti e 460.000 di rifiuti contenenti amianto per una durata stimata di circa 10 anni.

Considerato che:

— in questa discarica sono già stoccati 55.000 mc di rifiuti CER 17.06.05 in seguito ad autorizzazione concessa dalla Provincia di Treviso con D.D.P n. 843/2004 del 21 ottobre 2004;

— lo stesso anno il comune di Paese si costitutiva in giudizio per richiedere l'annullamento di tale disposizione;

— la sentenza del Consiglio di Stato n. 1329 del 20 marzo 2007 annullava il decreto provinciale n. 843/2004 dichiarando contestualmente i materiali contenenti amianto conferimenti illegittimi per il tipo di sito;

— il progetto adesso presentato non fornisce una stima delle polveri disperse in fase di trasferimento dei rifiuti;

— gli automezzi adibiti al conferimento dei materiali percorreranno zone abitate e lo studio d'impatto risulta carente di un'appropriata procedura emergenziale in caso di verificarsi di incidente;

— la concentrazione di discariche e siti di trattamento rifiuti nella zona — elevata,

può la Commissione riferire:

1. se ritiene che una tale concentrazione di siti che stoccano e trattano rifiuti sia in linea con le direttive europee 1999/31/CE e 2008/98/CE;

2. se ritiene che una nuova discarica in cui conferire materiali contenenti amianto, sita nel comune di Paese, il cui territorio ed ecosistema è già stato compromesso da questo genere di attività sia in linea con la normativa europea;

3. come intende agire per tutelare l'ambiente e la salute dei cittadini di Paese;

4. se ritiene che la valutazione di impatto ambientale (VIA) sul sito sopra descritto vada eseguita tenendo conto non solo del singolo progetto, ma anche della criticità territoriale in cui esso si inserisce?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(7 novembre 2013)

Spetta alle autorità competenti degli Stati membri decidere in merito alle autorizzazioni delle discariche, rispettando le pertinenti prescrizioni della legislazione dell'UE, in particolare la direttiva 2008/98/CE relativa ai rifiuti ([1]) («direttiva quadro sui rifiuti»), la direttiva 1999/31/CE relativa alle discariche di rifiuti ([2]) («direttiva Discariche») e la direttiva 2011/92/UE concernente la valutazione dell'impatto ambientale di determinati progetti pubblici e privati ([3]) («direttiva VIA»).

([1]) GU L 312 del 22.11.2008.
([2]) GU L 182 del 16.7.1999.
([3]) GU L 26 del 28.1.2012.

In base alle informazioni fornite dall'onorevole deputato sul progetto di discarica per rifiuti contenenti amianto nel comune di Paese, non si rileva alcuna incompatibilità con la pertinente legislazione dell'UE sui rifiuti. Va tuttavia fatto presente che in generale lo smaltimento in discarica è la soluzione ritenuta meno ottimale sul piano della gestione dei rifiuti, in base alla gerarchia dei rifiuti stabilita nella direttiva quadro summenzionata.

A norma dell'articolo 4, paragrafo 3, della direttiva VIA, gli Stati membri, nell'esaminare i singoli casi o nel fissare le soglie o i criteri per la valutazione, devono tenere conto dei relativi criteri di selezione riportati nell'allegato III della direttiva stessa. L'allegato include anche le caratteristiche dei progetti per quanto concerne il cumulo con altri progetti e/o l'esistenza di impianti nelle vicinanze.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010730/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: New landfill site in the Paese municipality in the Province of Treviso — public health and environmental safety at risk

For years the Paese municipality in the Province of Treviso has been obliged to live with environmental problems caused by the 29 quarries and 14 waste disposal installations in the area. These installations have serious ramifications for the groundwater in the area, bringing a risk of contamination with chemical agents such as bromacil and mercury. A plan to reclassify the landfill site located in via Toti in the Paese municipality is currently being put forward by a local business with a view to obtaining authorisation for it to be used for waste classified under the code CER 17.06.05 (construction materials containing asbestos). The site's capacity would increase to 650 000 m^3 — 190 000 m^3 for inert waste and 460 000 m^3 for waste containing asbestos — for an estimated 10-year period.

Fifty-five thousand cubic metres of CER 17.06.05 waste is already stored at this landfill site following the authorisation granted by the Province of Treviso under Provincial Decree No 843/2004 of 21 October 2004.

In 2004, the Paese municipality requested the annulment of this decree in court.

Council of State ruling No 1329 of 20 March 2007 annulled the decree, finding that it was unlawful for the materials containing asbestos to be stored at this type of site.

The reclassification plan that has been put forward does not include an estimate of the volume of particles that will be dispersed during the transfer of waste.

The vehicles used to transport the waste will travel through residential areas, and the impact assessment did not cover emergency procedures in the event of an accident.

There are a large number of landfill and waste treatment sites in the area.

Does the Commission consider such a high density of waste storage and treatment sites to be in line with Directives 1999/31/EC and 2008/98/EC?

Does it consider the opening of a new landfill site in the Paese municipality (where the ecosystem is already under threat) where materials containing asbestos will be stored to be in line with EC law?

What measures does it intend to take to protect the environment and public health in the area?

Does it think that the environmental impact assessment (EIA) should take account of not only the reclassification plan but also the high number of waste treatment and landfill sites already in the area?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(7 November 2013)

Decisions about the authorisation of landfills shall be taken by the competent authorities in Member States, which must comply with relevant requirements in EC law, particularly the directive 2008/98/EC on waste ([1]) (the 'Waste Framework Directive'), Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste ([2]) (the 'Landfill Directive') and Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment ([3]) (the 'EIA Directive').

On the basis of the information provided by the Honourable Member concerning the planned landfill for asebestos waste in the Paese municipality, no inconsistency with relevant EU waste legislation can be established. It should be noted however that in general landfilling of waste is seen as the least optimal waste management solution according to the waste hierarchy set out in the Waste Framework Directive.

([1]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.
([2]) OJ L 182, 16.7.1999.
([3]) OJ L 26, 28.1.2012 .

According to Article 4(3) of the EIA Directive, when carrying-out a case-by-case assessment or setting thresholds or criteria for the EIA screening, Member States must take into account all the relevant criteria foreseen by Annex III of the directive. This also includes the characteristics of the projects having regard to the cumulation with other projects and/or the neighbouring existent facilities.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010731/13
do Komisji
Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)
(19 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Finansowanie ze środków UE działań ograniczających populację bezdomnych psów w Rumunii

Czy ze środków UE były finansowane działania zmierzające do ograniczania populacji bezdomnych psów w Rumunii? Jeżeli tak, to kiedy to nastąpiło, na jakich warunkach i jakie kwoty zostały przyznane?

W szczególności proszę o informację, czy w ramach tych projektów dopuszczalne było zabijanie bezdomnych psów?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Johannesa Hahna w imieniu Komisji
(14 listopada 2013 r.)

Według informacji, które Komisja otrzymała od instytucji zarządzającej programem regionalnym na lata 2007-2013, żaden z projektów wybranych do finansowania nie obejmuje celów dotyczących bezpańskich psów.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010731/13
to the Commission
Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: EU funding for measures to reduce the stray dog population in Romania

Have EU funds been used to finance measures to reduce the stray dog population in Romania? If so, when did this occur, under what conditions and what amounts were allocated?

In particular, I would like to know whether the killing of stray dogs was permitted as part of these measures.

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(14 November 2013)

According to the information the Commission received from the managing authority of the 2007-2013 regional programme, none of the projects selected for financing includes specific objectives related to stray dogs.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010732/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL) e João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(19 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Assassinato de Pavlos Fyssas por militantes do grupo fascista Aurora Dourada

Pavlos Fyssas, músico grego de 34 anos de idade, foi assassinado às primeiras horas de hoje, quarta-feira, 18 de setembro, em Keratsini, na Grécia. Sabe-se que este assassinato foi perpetrado por militantes do grupo fascista Aurora Dourada cuja atividade tem beneficiado da cumplicidade das autoridades gregas. Este grupo fascista atua com o objetivo de intimidar os trabalhadores e a juventude grega, tentando impedir e usando da violência contra quem luta e defende os seus direitos.

Este brutal assassinato junta-se a outros atos de enorme gravidade que têm vindo a ocorrer na Grécia e em outros países da UE, demonstrando um preocupante recrudescimento de grupos e partidos de extrema-direita e fascistas.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento desta situação? Como a avalia?

2. Considera que há relação entre o recrudescimento de grupos fascistas e a crise económica e social na UE?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(15 de novembro de 2013)

A Comissão remete para a declaração de 9 de outubro de 2013 ao Parlamento Europeu sobre a ascensão do extremismo de direita na Europa.

A Decisão-Quadro 2008/913/JAI do Conselho relativa à luta contra o racismo e a xenofobia obriga todos os Estados-Membros a punir com sanções penais a incitação pública intencional à violência e ao ódio com base na raça, cor, ascendência, religião ou origem nacional ou étnica, bem como a prever circunstâncias agravantes ligadas à motivação racista ou xenófoba. A Comissão apresentará um relatório sobre as medidas adotadas pelos Estados-Membros para dar cumprimento às disposições da decisão-quadro nos próximos meses.

A investigação de situações individuais em matéria de racismo ou xenofobia e a aplicação das legislações nacionais de transposição da decisão-quadro pertence às autoridades nacionais. Em especial, cabe aos tribunais nacionais determinar, em função das circunstâncias e do contexto, se a situação representa uma incitação à violência ou ao ódio.

A Comissão não dispõe de dados concretos sobre a ligação direta entre a crise económica e o extremismo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010732/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL) and João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Assassination of Pavlos Fyssas by activists of the Golden Dawn fascist group

Pavlos Fyssas, a 34-year-old Greek musician, was murdered in the early hours of Wednesday, 18 September 2013 in Keratsini, Greece. It has been established that he was killed by militants of the Golden Dawn fascist group, the activities of which have been shielded by the complicity of the Greek Government. This fascist group carries out actions aimed at intimidating Greek workers and youth, by trying to prevent people from fighting to defend their rights and using violence against them.

This brutal murder is one more in a string of extremely serious incidents which have been taking place in Greece and other EU countries, and indicates an alarming rise in far-right and fascist groups.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation? What is its view of it?

2. Does it see any relationship between the upsurge in fascist groups and the economic and social crisis in the EU?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(15 November 2013)

The Commission refers to its statement of 9 October 2013 to the European Parliament about the rise of right-wing extremism in Europe.

Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on racism and xenophobia obliges all Member States to sanction with criminal penalties the intentional public incitement to violence and hatred based on race, colour, descent, religion, or ethnic or national origin, as well as to provide for aggravating circumstances in relation to crimes with a racist or xenophobic motivation. The Commission will present a report on the Member States' compliance with the provisions of the framework Decision in the coming months.

The investigation of individual situations of racism or xenophobia and the application of national laws transposing the framework Decision belongs to national authorities. In particular, it is for national courts to determine, according to the circumstances and context, whether a situation represents an incitement to violence or hatred.

The Commission does not have concrete data about a direct link between the economic crisis and extremism.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-010733/13
do Komisji
Lena Kolarska-Bobińska (PPE)
(19 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wsteczny przepływ gazu z UE na Ukrainę

Od pewnego czasu państwa członkowskie i Komisja prowadzą dyskusję na temat wstecznego przepływu gazu z UE na Ukrainę. Dotychczas porozumienia techniczne umożliwiające taką sprzedaż gazu zawarto z Polską (Gaz-system) i z Węgrami (MOL Földgazszallito), natomiast nie zawarto jeszcze takiego porozumienia ze Słowacją. Ma to kluczowe znaczenie, ponieważ jedynie słowacki rurociąg ma dostateczną przepustowość – około 30 mld m^3 – aby dostarczyć zamierzoną ilość gazu: bez niego dostawy gazu byłyby bardzo ograniczone.

Według bieżących informacji Gazprom może naciskać na Eustream, aby podniósł kwestie administracyjne, w tym problemy dotyczące kodów dostawców, natomiast Słowacja nie wyraża woli zawarcia porozumienia technicznego z Ukrainą, co zagraża wstecznemu przepływowi gazu na Ukrainę.

Poza brakiem woli ze strony Słowacji, sprawozdania podają, że należy rozwiązać kwestie techniczne dotyczące stacji pomiarowej gazu po ukraińskiej stronie granicy. Ponadto istnieją poważne powody, dla których należałoby zakwestionować okres obowiązywania i handlowy charakter taryfy Eustreamu dla punktu wejścia w Lanžhot (położonego na czesko-słowackiej granicy), która została zatwierdzona przez słowacki krajowy organ regulacyjny, ÚRSO. Trzyipółkrotny wzrost taryfy transgranicznej przepustowości dla punktu wejścia może wyprzeć RWE z rynku, czyniąc przesył gazu na Ukrainę nieopłacalnym.

Czy Komisja mogłaby odpowiedzieć na następujące pytania:

1. Czy Komisja podejmie jakiekolwiek działanie w związku ze wspomnianymi kwestiami? Czy Komisja wyraziła gotowość do wsparcia wysiłków mających na celu zawarcie takiego porozumienia? Czy Komisja przedyskutowała te kwestie ze słowackimi i ukraińskimi operatorami systemów przesyłowych?

2. Czy Komisja jest przekonana, że problemy techniczne mogą zostać rozwiązane, a jeśli tak, jakie działania może podjąć, aby przyspieszyć zastosowanie potrzebnych środków?

3. Czy Komisja jest zdania, że Gazprom powinien odegrać jakąkolwiek rolę w tej dyskusji? Jeśli nie, jaki nacisk może wywrzeć Komisja jako przeciwwagę dla takiej ingerencji?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Günthera Oettingera w imieniu Komisji
(17 października 2013 r.)

1. Ukraina mogłaby odgrywać istotną rolę na zintegrowanym europejskim rynku energii i wyraziła zainteresowanie dywersyfikacją swoich szlaków dostaw gazu. Komisja zdecydowanie popiera zarówno wirtualny, jak i fizyczny wsteczny przepływ gazu na Ukrainę z UE, w tym przez Słowację, i aktywnie ułatwia ustanowienie takiego przepływu, tworząc forum dla wszystkich zainteresowanych stron, w tym dla odpowiednich OSP, na którym mogą one omówić możliwe rozwiązania istniejących problemów technicznych, prawnych i politycznych.

2. Strony nadal pracują nad jasnym określeniem wszystkich istniejących przeszkód, aby znaleźć sposoby ich pokonania. Aby przyspieszyć ten proces, organizowane są regularne spotkania.

3. Ustanowienie wstecznego przepływu gazu jest obowiązkiem operatorów systemów przesyłowych.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010733/13
to the Commission
Lena Kolarska-Bobińska (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Reverse gas flow deliveries from the EU to Ukraine

The Member States and the Commission have been discussing the question of reverse gas flow deliveries from the EU to Ukraine for some time. While technical agreements enabling such gas sales have been reached with Poland (Gaz-system) and Hungary (MOL Földgazszallito), no such agreement has yet been reached with Slovakia. This is significant as only the Slovak pipeline is of sufficient capacity — about 30 bcm — to deliver the intended volume of gas: without it, the gas deliveries would be very limited.

Current information suggests that Gazprom may be pressuring Eustreamto raise administrative issues, such as problems pertaining to shipper codes, and that Slovakia has been unwilling to sign a technical agreement with Ukraine, jeopardising the reverse flow of gas to Ukraine.

In addition to Slovakia's lack of will, reports cite technical issues to be resolved concerning a gas metering station on the Ukrainian side of the border. There are also serious reasons to question the timing and commercial nature of Eustream's tariff for the Lanžhot entry point (on the Czech-Slovak border), which has been approved by the Slovak national regulator, ÚRSO. A 3.5-times increase of the entry cross-border capacity tariff may push RWE out of the market, thereby making it unprofitable to ship gas to Ukraine.

Could the Commission answer the following:

1. Is it taking any action with regard to these issues? Has it offered to assist efforts to reach such an agreement? Has it discussed these issues with the Slovak and Ukrainian transmission system operators concerned?

2. Does it believe that the technical issues can be overcome and, if so, what can it do to speed up the measures needed?

3. Does it believe that Gazprom should have any role in this discussion? If not, what pressure can the Commission apply to counter-balance such interference?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(17 October 2013)

1. Ukraine could play an important role in the integrated European energy market and has expressed interest in diversifying its own gas supply routes. The Commission strongly supports both virtual and physical reverse flows of gas to Ukraine from the EU, including via Slovakia, and is actively facilitating the establishment of such flows by bringing all parties concerned together, including the relevant TSOs, to discuss possible solutions to the technical, legal and political obstacles that currently still exist.

2. The parties are still working on identifying clearly all the barriers that currently exist in order to find solutions on how to overcome them. Meetings are organised regularly to speed up the process.

3. The establishment of reverse flows is the duty of transmission system operators.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-010734/13
aan de Commissie
Marianne Thyssen (PPE)
(19 september 2013)

Betreft: Schuldbemiddelingsactiviteiten in het kader van een particuliere insolventieprocedure

Onlangs werd ik aangesproken door het Vlaams Centrum Schuldenlast (VCS), een door de Vlaamse overheid gesubsidieerd steunpunt en expertisecentrum inzake de schuldenthematiek in Vlaanderen.

Het VCS wil de kwaliteit van de dienstverlening die verleend wordt door budget- en schuldhulpverleners stimuleren en verhogen. Doelgroepen zijn zowel de medewerkers van de erkende instellingen voor schuldbemiddeling in Vlaanderen (zoals OCMW's) als andere beroepsgroepen die in Vlaanderen aan schuldbemiddeling mogen doen (advocaten, gerechtsdeurwaarders, notarissen).

Er werd mij verteld dat er mogelijk een Europees regelgevend initiatief in de maak zou zijn dat er toe zou strekken de activiteiten van schuldbemiddeling, onder meer in het kader van een collectieve schuldenregeling, in de toekomst enkel voor te behouden aan advocaten.

Graag verneem ik van de Commissie of een dergelijk initiatief voorzien wordt, en zo ja waarom de Commissie van mening zou zijn dat dit een aangelegenheid is die op Europees niveau moet worden geregeld?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(7 november 2013)

Volgens Richtlijn 2008/52/EG moet bemiddeling/mediation op een doeltreffende, onpartijdige en bekwame wijze manier worden geleid. De gedragscode voor bemiddelaars/mediators bepaalt dat de bemiddelaars deskundig en vertrouwd moeten zijn met de bemiddelingsprocedure. De lidstaten zijn bevoegd voor de uitvoering van deze bepalingen.

In december 2012 stelde de Commissie een herziening van Verordening (EG) nr. 1346/2000 voor betreffende insolventieprocedures die in een grensoverschrijdende context actief is. Het voorstel behandelt echter niet de verschillen tussen de nationale insolventiewetgevingen die tot rechtsonzekerheid en een onvriendelijk ondernemingsklimaat kunnen leiden. Daarom heeft de Commissie in haar mededeling van december 2012 de bezinning in gang gezet betreffende een nieuwe Europese aanpak van bedrijfsfaillissementen en insolventie. Doel is te komen tot een „redding en herstel"-cultuur voor ondernemingen en personen in financiële moeilijkheden. Van juli tot en met oktober 2013 werd een openbare raadpleging gehouden om de standpunten van belanghebbenden te horen op gebieden waar toenadering van het nationale insolventierecht voordelen kan opleveren. Met name één vraag heeft betrekking op de verschillen in nationale wetgeving die een belemmering kunnen vormen voor de werking van de interne markt, zoals de verschillen betreffende de kwalificaties en de toelatingscriteria voor de benoeming, het verlenen van vergunningen, de regelgeving en het toezicht van de vereffenaar. De Commissie zal de resultaten van de raadpleging beoordelen en zal op basis daarvan alle nodige, passende maatregelen treffen.

Daarenboven werkt de Commissie momenteel aan een studie over de te grote schuldenlast van huishoudens. In de studie worden onder andere de rol van het schuldadvies en de mogelijke hulp in geval van te zware huishoudelijke schuldenlast onderzocht.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010734/13
to the Commission
Marianne Thyssen (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Debt mediation activities in connection with a private insolvency procedure

I was recently approached by the Flemish Indebtedness Centre (VCS), a support and expertise centre concerned with debt problems in Flanders which is subsidised by the Flemish Government.

The VCS wishes to promote and improve the quality of services provided by budget providers and debt advisers. Target groups include both staff of recognised debt mediation bodies in Flanders (e.g. public social welfare centres) and other occupational groups which are permitted to engage in debt mediation in Flanders (lawyers, bailiffs and notaries).

I was told that a European regulatory initiative may be in preparation which would in future reserve debt mediation activities — *inter alia* in connection with a collective debt settlement — solely to lawyers.

Is the Commission planning such an initiative and if so, why does the Commission consider this to be a matter which requires regulation at European level?

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

According to Directive 2008/52/EC mediation should be conducted in an effective, impartial and competent way. The Code of Conduct for Mediators stipulates that mediators must be competent and knowledgeable in the process of mediation. Member States are competent to implement these provisions.

In December 2012 the Commission proposed a revision of Regulation (EC) No 1346/2000 on insolvency proceedings which operates in a cross-border context. However, the proposal does not address the disparities between national insolvency laws which can create legal uncertainty and an unfriendly business environment. Therefore the Commission Communication of December 2012 has launched a process of reflection on a new European approach to business failure and insolvency. The aim is to move towards a 'rescue and recovery' culture in cases of companies, and people in financial difficulties. A public consultation was launched from July to October 2013 to seek views from stakeholders on areas where approximation of national insolvency law could bring benefits. In particular one question deals with the differences in national law on the qualifications and eligibility for the appointment, licensing, regulation and supervision of liquidators that may hamper the functioning of the single market. The Commission will assess the results of the consultation and on that basis it will consider any appropriate action.

In addition, the Commission is currently carrying on a study on households over-indebtedness. The study analyses, among other issues, the role of debt advice and the possible help it may provide to over-indebted households.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010735/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Refinanciación de créditos

Una de las estrategias seguidas por las entidades bancarias para disminuir las tasas de morosidad es la refinanciación de los créditos. Por ello, siempre que creen que existe la posibilidad de recuperar el dinero a medio plazo, el crédito es refinanciado. Si el cliente deja de pagar los intereses y amortizaciones, se cuenta como moroso.

Las entidades tienen, pues, incentivos para refinanciar especialmente aquellos préstamos de gran volumen, normalmente a grandes empresas. Para proteger su balance es más práctico refinanciar un préstamo de cien millones que cien de un millón, y este hecho provoca una distorsión en la asignación de créditos en contra de las PYME.

A la luz de lo anterior, ¿está de acuerdo la Comisión en que las entidades bancarias tengan más incentivos para prestar a grandes empresas que a las PYME?

¿Piensa la Comisión que es posible promover algún cambio legislativo para rectificar esta situación?

Respuesta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de noviembre de 2013)

En función de su estrategia empresarial, el banco o institución financiera se concentra más en las PYME o en empresas más grandes. Los bancos de ahorro y cooperativos, en particular, han sido socios fiables de las PYME durante la crisis y las han seguido apoyando con su financiación.

Por otro lado, desde el inicio de la crisis financiera, los bancos han endurecido considerablemente las condiciones de préstamo a sociedades no financieras. Los últimos datos disponibles del BCE indican que en agosto de 2013 se produjo la mayor disminución del crédito a sociedades no financieras en la zona del euro. La Comisión está atenta a esta evolución.

En el ámbito legislativo, el paquete DRC IV, que incorpora las nuevas normas mundiales sobre el capital bancario (Acuerdo de Basilea III) a la legislación de la UE mediante un Reglamento y una Directiva, y que se aplicará a partir del 1 de enero de 2014, introducirá un elemento de apoyo a las PYME con el fin de reducir los requisitos de capital para los préstamos a estas empresas. La disposición está destinada a fomentar los préstamos a las PYME respecto a otros tipos de financiación e inversión. El límite de exposición del comercio al por menor para beneficiarse de la reducción de las cargas de capital será de 1,5 millones de euros, con el fin de abarcar el mayor número posible de PYME. Las PYME se identifican de acuerdo con la recomendación de la Comisión de 2003 (es decir, son aquellas empresas que no superen un volumen de negocios máximo de cincuenta millones de euros anuales).

Las instituciones de financiación deberán informar cada tres meses a las autoridades competentes sobre la cuantía total de su exposición en relación con las PYME.

Asimismo, en el plazo de treinta y seis meses a partir de la entrada en vigor del Reglamento en cuestión, la Comisión informará acerca del impacto de la medida relativa al crédito a las PYME y adoptará las medidas adecuadas, incluida una propuesta legislativa si es preciso.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010735/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Loan refinancing

One of the strategies banks use to reduce the rates of default on loans is to refinance them, as long as they believe there is a possibility of the money being recovered in the medium term. Clients who fail to pay the interest and principal are considered to be in default.

Banks therefore have a particular incentive to refinance large loans, usually to large companies. In terms of safeguarding their balance sheet, it is more practical for them to refinance a single loan for a hundred million than a hundred loans of one million. But this distorts the allocation of credit to the detriment of SMEs.

Would the Commission not agree, therefore, that banks have a greater incentive to lend to large companies than to SMEs?

Does the Commission believe this situation could be improved by amending the legislation?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(14 November 2013)

Depending on the business strategy of the bank or financing institution, these concentrate more on SMEs or larger corporates. Savings and cooperative banks, in particular, have been reliable partners of SMEs during the crisis and continued to support them with financing.

At the same time considerable tightening has been undertaken by banks in their lending conditions for loans to non-financial corporations since the beginning of the financial crisis. The latest available data by the ECB suggest that August 2013 saw the greatest decrease in credit to non-financial corporation in the euro area. The Commission is keeping an eye on these developments.

In the legislative field the CRD IV package, which transposes the new global standards on bank capital (the Basel III agreement) into EC law via a regulation and a directive and will apply from 1 January 2014, will introduce an SME Supporting factor with the purpose of reducing capital requirements on SME loans. The provision is intended to encourage lending to SMEs vis-a-vis other types of financing and investments. The retail exposure limit in order to benefit from the lower capital charges will be equal to EUR 1.5 million so as to cover a larger group of SMEs. SMEs are identified in accordance with the Commission Recommendation of 2003 (i.e. they shall feature an annual turnover of not more than EUR 50 million).

Financing institutions will have to report to competent authorities every 3 months on the total amount of their exposures to SMEs.

Furthermore the Commission shall, within 36 months after the entry into force of this regulation, report on the impact of the measure on lending to SMEs and take the appropriate steps, including a legislative proposal if necessary.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010736/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Tarjeta sanitaria europea en el Estado español

El pasado mes de mayo, la Comisión lanzó un procedimiento de infracción contra España por no aceptar la tarjeta sanitaria europea en hospitales públicos de zonas turísticas y obligar a los pacientes comunitarios a pagar por los tratamientos, que son gratuitos para los españoles. El expediente fue el resultado de las numerosas quejas recibidas presentadas por ciudadanos europeos ([1]). La Comisión dio un plazo de dos meses a España para tomar medidas en el asunto.

¿Tiene constancia la Comisión de alguna medida tomada, por parte de las autoridades españolas, para solucionar este problema? En caso negativo, ¿qué medidas piensa tomar la Comisión?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de noviembre de 2013)

El 23 de julio de 2013, el Consejo Interterritorial del Servicio Nacional de Salud de España adoptó un acuerdo sobre el acceso de los ciudadanos europeos al sistema sanitario español. Este acuerdo estipula que el sistema sanitario español debe aceptar la tarjeta sanitaria europea (TSE) de aquellas personas que estén aseguradas en otros Estados miembros y no debe exigirles que presenten otros seguros (a excepción de los casos de accidentes de tráfico, laborales o deportivos). Además, el acuerdo establece que aquellas personas que declaren ser beneficiarios de los derechos otorgados por la TSE pero no puedan demostrarlo deberán recibir asistencia, en la medida de lo posible, para obtener el certificado provisional sustitutorio (CPS). No obstante, si el ciudadano es incapaz de demostrar su derecho a recibir la asistencia sanitaria que necesita mediante la presentación de la TSE o del CPS durante una estancia temporal en España, se le cobrará la asistencia sanitaria con arreglo a los precios públicos y se le expedirá una factura detallada.

Este acuerdo se adoptó en respuesta a la carta de emplazamiento enviada por la Comisión en mayo de 2013. En la actualidad, la Comisión está evaluando el acuerdo y su puesta en práctica por parte del sistema sanitario español.

Se remite asimismo al Señor Diputado a la respuesta a la pregunta E-10592/13 ([2]) sobre una cuestión similar.

([1]) http://www.europapress.es/salud/noticia-bruselas-expedienta-espana-no-aceptar-tarjeta-sanitaria-europea-20130530134017.html
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/es/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010736/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: European sickness insurance card in Spain

In May 2013, the Commission launched an infringement procedure against Spain for failing to accept the European sickness insurance card in public hospitals located in tourist areas and forcing patients from EU countries to pay for treatments which are provided free of charge to Spanish citizens. The procedure arose from numerous complaints made by European citizens ([1]). The Commission gave Spain two months in which to address the situation.

Does the Commission know whether the Spanish authorities have taken any steps to resolve this problem? If not, how does the Commission intend to respond?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

On 23rd July 2013 the Interterritorial Council of the Spanish National Health System adopted an agreement for action on European citizens' access to healthcare in Spain. This agreement states that the Spanish health services will accept the European Health Insurance Card ('EHIC') of persons insured in other Member States and will not (with the exception of road traffic, work or sporting accidents) require the presentation of any other insurance cover. In addition, the agreement states that persons, who declare they benefit from the rights conferred by the EHIC but are unable to prove this, shall, insofar as possible, be assisted to obtain the Provisional Replacement Certificate ('PRC'). If the citizen is however unable to prove the right to receive necessary healthcare during a temporary stay in Spain by presentation of either an EHIC or PRC, he or she shall be billed for the healthcare according to public rates and issued with a detailed invoice.

This agreement was adopted in response to the Commission's Letter of Formal Notice sent in May 2013. The Commission is currently assessing the agreement and its implementation in practice by Spanish health providers.

The Honourable Member is referred also to the reply to Question E-10592/13 ([2]) on a similar matter.

([1]) http://www.europapress.es/salud/noticia-bruselas-expedienta-espana-no-aceptar-tarjeta-sanitaria-europea-20130530134017.html
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010737/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Phil Bennion (ALDE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Allegations of torture in Jericho Prison in the West Bank

Further to the Vice-President/High Representative's answer to my Question E-004006/2013, I have received further reports that prisoners in Jericho Prison in the West Bank are being severely tortured by Palestinian Authority security services.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of allegations of torture inside Jericho Prison?

Can the Vice-President/High Representative provide the specific date and details of the next meeting of the EU-PA 'Human Rights, Good Governance and Rule of Law' Sub-Committee in order that NGOs can provide specific information and engage with this issue?

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

The High Representative/ Vice-President is aware of the allegations of torture recently reported by the Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the United Kingdom and, as stated in the previous reply, detention conditions in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip continue to be a matter of concern. The EU raises the issue with the Palestinian Authority each time such reports are received and will continue to do so. The EU also reports on the overall human rights situation in Palestine in the annual European Neighbourhood Policy progress report.

The next session of the subcommittee on 'Human Rights, Good Governance and Rule of Law' is scheduled to take place on 26 November 2013. The EU undertakes consultations with civil society prior to such meetings as a matter of course.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010738/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(19 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Tratta di esseri umani negli Stati dell'Africa occidentale

Nel continente africano sono purtroppo ancora tantissime le vittime della tratta di esseri umani, anche se, data la vastità di questo triste fenomeno, appare difficile fornire delle cifre esatte.

Tutti i paesi membri della Ecowas (Comunità economica degli Stati dell'Africa occidentale) si stanno impegnando per ridurre questa piaga che coinvolge milioni di persone nella regione: donne e uomini, adulti e minori.

Secondo le statistiche fornite da alcune ONG, circa dieci milioni di persone che migrano ogni anno da uno Stato all'altro dell'Africa occidentale rischierebbero di finire vittime dei trafficanti di esseri umani.

Migliaia di migranti provenienti da paesi come Togo, Ghana, Guinea e Mali si ritroverebbero a lavorare per 10 ore al giorno nelle miniere del Senegal; vicino ai luoghi di scavo sorgerebbero spesso anche dei bordelli dove le ragazze sono costrette a prostituirsi.

Nel sud della Nigeria le vittime della tratta spesso spaccano pietre per le imprese di costruzione, guadagnando l'equivalente di pochi centesimi di euro al giorno e dormendo dove capita; in Togo, invece, molti bambini lavorano nei mercati, mentre in Costa d'Avorio vengono sfruttati nelle piantagioni di cacao e caffè e in Burkina Faso nelle miniere d'oro o nei giacimenti di altri metalli preziosi.

A rendere ancor più drammatica la situazione ci sono la scarsità di mezzi di cui si lamentano le ONG presenti in loco e l'incapacità, da parte delle autorità locali, di gestire un problema di tale gravità.

Quali misure intende proporre l'Alto Rappresentante per cercare di arginare questo triste fenomeno che sembra riportare nel continente africano lo spettro della tratta degli schiavi avvenuta nei secoli scorsi?

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

L'UE promuove l'attuazione e la ratifica della convenzione OIL n. 182 sull'eliminazione delle forme peggiori di lavoro minorile (che include la vendita e la tratta dei minori, il lavoro forzato e il lavoro che per sua natura, o per le circostanze nelle quali viene svolto, può mettere a rischio la salute, la sicurezza o l'integrità morale).

L'articolo 8 dell'accordo di Cotonou consente all'UE di esprimere regolarmente la sua preoccupazione nell'ambito del dialogo politico su questioni quali la schiavitù e il lavoro minorile e di invitare i paesi ad assumere impegni specifici per affrontare questi problemi, come parte integrante delle strategie dell'Unione in materia di diritti umani per ciascun paese. Nell'ambito dell'accordo di Cotonou vengono finanziati programmi volti a lottare contro il lavoro minorile e a migliorare l'istruzione dei bambini nei paesi ACP.

Sono stati stanziati 26 milioni di euro per un nuovo progetto inteso a favorire la libera circolazione delle persone e la migrazione nell'Africa occidentale in gestione congiunta con l'Organizzazione internazionale per le migrazioni. Il progetto contribuirà ad ovviare alla mancanza di strategie nazionali globali sulla migrazione e di quadri programmatici dell'ECOWAS e dei suoi Stati membri, nonché a rafforzare l'informazione e la sensibilizzazione a livello regionale in materia di libera circolazione, migrazione dei lavoratori e traffici illeciti. Si sosterranno attivamente le attività degli attori non statali e delle autorità locali volte a informare e proteggere le popolazioni migranti e transfrontaliere, potenziando inoltre le attività di prevenzione, sensibilizzazione e assistenza.

A livello nazionale, l'UE finanzia progetti specifici in Mauritania e in Nigeria, mentre in altri paesi tali questioni sono affrontate nell'ambito di progetti finanziati dall'UE in materia di diritti umani, migrazione, gestione delle frontiere e riforma della giustizia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010738/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Human trafficking in West African states

It is a sad fact that, in Africa, a huge number of people fall victim to human trafficking, although, given the extent of this distressing phenomenon, it is difficult to provide exact figures.

All the Member States of the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas) are committing to fighting this scourge, which involves millions of people in the region: women and men of all ages.

According to figures from some non-governmental organisations, around 10 million people who migrate from one West African state to another every year risk falling prey to human traffickers.

Thousands of migrants from countries such as Togo, Ghana, Guinea and Mali find themselves working 10 hours a day in the mines of Senegal. In addition, brothels, in which girls are forced to work as prostitutes, often spring up near the pits.

In southern Nigeria, victims of trafficking often break rocks for construction companies, earning the equivalent of a few euro cents per day and sleeping wherever they can. In Togo, many children work in the markets. Children are also exploited on the cocoa and coffee plantations of Côte d'Ivoire, and in the gold and precious metal mines of Burkina Faso.

To make matters even worse, NGOs on the ground complain that there are precious few resources available and that local authorities are incapable of dealing with such a serious problem.

What steps will the High Representative propose in an attempt to tackle this distressing phenomenon, which, in Africa, has echoes of the slave trade of centuries past?

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

The EU promotes the implementation and ratification of ILO convention no.182 on the elimination of the worst forms of child labour (which includes the sale and trafficking of children, forced or compulsory labour and work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children).

Art 8 of the Cotonou agreement enables the EU to regularly raise its concern in political dialogue over issues such as slavery and child labour and call upon countries for specific commitments to tackle these problems, as an integral part of our Human Rights Strategies for each country. Under Cotonou programmes fight against child labour and improve education for children in ACP Countries are funded.

EUR 26 million is foreseen for a new project to support the Free Movement of Persons and Migration in West Africa in joint management with the International Organisation for Migration. The project will help address the lack of comprehensive national migration strategies and policy frameworks of Ecowas and its Member States. It will also help reinforce regional information and public awarness in the areas of free movement, labour migration and illegal trafficking. Non State Actors and Local Authorities will be actively supported in their information and protection activities for the benefit of migrant and cross-border populations as well as by strengthening prevention, advocacy and assistance activities.

At national level, the EU funds specific projects in Mauritania and Nigeria, in other countries, such issues are addressed under EU funded projects on Human Rights, migration, border management and justice reform sector.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010739/13
alla Commissione
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(19 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Lotta al crimine organizzato nelle aree del sud-est asiatico

Il recente rapporto «Transnational Organized Crime in East Asia and Pacific» rappresenta il primo studio completo sulla criminalità organizzata transnazionale in una regione strategica del pianeta.

In base a tale rapporto, appare evidente come i traffici più redditizi gestiti dalla criminalità nell'area riguardino le merci contraffatte, il legname illegale, le droghe e i medicinali contraffatti.

Se la maggior parte delle merci contraffatte giunge — come è ben noto — dalla Cina, il legname esportato illegalmente arriva in Europa prevalentemente da Laos, Indonesia e Myanmar/Birmania, con gravi conseguenze per una regione che vede insieme la maggiore biodiversità del pianeta e il tasso di deforestazione più elevato.

L'altissima percentuale di reati ambientali, con in testa — come detto — il traffico di legname, raramente vede colpevoli certi e perseguiti.

Oltre alle droghe sintetiche e all'eroina prodotte nei paesi dell'Asia sud-orientale, che alimentano fiorenti traffici verso il nostro continente, un'altra seria minaccia è rappresentata dai medicinali contraffatti che invadono i mercati di tutto il mondo.

Tutte queste attività si posizionano molto spesso in aree grigie tra settore pubblico e privato, e i flussi di traffici si sviluppano in parallelo a industrie legittime che operano nel settore farmaceutico, nella produzione di legname o nello smaltimento di rifiuti tossici e scorie pericolose.

Negli ultimi anni l'Unione europea ha compiuto grandi passi avanti per contrastare i fenomeni di criminalità organizzata transnazionale provenienti dall'area del sud-est asiatico; quali ulteriori iniziative intende prendere la Commissione per continuare l'opera di contrasto alle grandi strutture organizzate e alle reti criminali più piccole a queste connesse?

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

Il riconoscimento dei progressi compiuti dall'Unione europea nella lotta contro la criminalità organizzata transnazionale nel sud-est asiatico viene accolto con profonda soddisfazione.

L'UE fornisce a tale regione un notevole sostegno tecnico e finanziario per aiutarla ad affrontare problemi quali i traffici illeciti (stupefacenti, legname, flora e fauna selvatiche, medicinali contraffatti, ecc.), il terrorismo, le minacce alla sicurezza marittima e i rischi CBRN ([1]).

L'UE affronta altresì questioni legate alla criminalità transnazionale nell'ambito del dialogo politico con i paesi della regione, nonché nel quadro dell'ASEAN ([2]) e nel più ampio contesto del forum regionale dell'ASEAN. Essa sta accentuando, ad esempio, il proprio coinvolgimento nelle pertinenti riunioni intersessioni di tale forum e, di recente, ha intensificato anche le consultazioni tra alti funzionari UE-ASEAN sulla criminalità transnazionale.

Clausole specifiche sulla cooperazione in materia di lotta contro il terrorismo e diverse forme di criminalità organizzata figurano negli accordi di partenariato e cooperazione attualmente negoziati con numerosi paesi della regione o in corso di ratifica ([3]).

L'UE ha firmato un accordo con l'Indonesia per garantire che soltanto il legname di provenienza legale sia esportato dal paese; accordi analoghi vengono attualmente discussi con altri paesi della regione.

([1]) Chimici, biologici, radiologici e nucleari.
([2]) Associazione delle nazioni del sud-est asiatico.
([3]) Riguardo, in particolare, ai seguenti paesi: Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Filippine, Singapore, Thailandia e Vietnam.

Alcuni paesi della regione del sud-est asiatico partecipano inoltre ad iniziative di cooperazione per far fronte a fenomeni specifici legati alla criminalità organizzata, ad esempio l'Alleanza mondiale contro l'abuso sessuale di minori online ([4]).

L'UE intende confermare e rafforzare il proprio impegno nei confronti della regione per combattere la criminalità transnazionale, compresi nuovi fenomeni come la criminalità informatica. Essa sta esaminando con i partner dell'ASEAN la possibilità di elaborare un piano d'azione specifico sulla criminalità transnazionale.

([4]) All'Alleanza mondiale contro l'abuso sessuale di minori online hanno aderito Cambogia, Filippine e Thailandia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010739/13
to the Commission
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Combating organised crime in parts of south-east Asia

The recent report Transnational Organised Crime in East Asia and Pacific is the first comprehensive study of transnational organised crime in a strategic part of the world.

The report clearly shows that trafficking in counterfeit goods, illegal timber, drugs and counterfeit medicines are the most profitable forms of trafficking conducted by criminals in the region.

It is common knowledge that most counterfeit goods come from China, but illegally exported timber comes to Europe primarily from Laos, Indonesia and Myanmar/Burma, with serious consequences for a region that has both the greatest biodiversity in the world and the highest rate of deforestation.

The extremely high percentage of environmental crimes, with timber trafficking chief among them, rarely leads to those responsible being found and convicted.

As well as synthetic drugs and heroin produced in south-east Asian countries, which supply a booming trade in Europe, another serious threat is posed by counterfeit medicinal products that flood markets around the world.

All these activities very often occupy grey areas between the public and private sectors, and trafficking routes develop alongside legitimate industries in the pharmaceutical sector, wood production or the disposal of toxic and hazardous waste.

The EU has made significant progress in recent years in combating transnational organised crime from south-east Asia. What further initiatives will the Commission undertake to continue the fight against large criminal organisations and smaller criminal networks connected to them?

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

The recognition of the progress made by the EU in combatting transnational organised crime in South East Asia is appreciated.

The EU provides substantial technical and financial support to the South East Asia region to address illicit trafficking (drugs, timber, wildlife, falsified medicines…), terrorism, threats to maritime security and CBRN ([1]) risks.

The EU is also addressing transnational crime issues in the framework of political dialogues with the countries in the region as well as ASEAN ([2]) and the wider ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), for example, the EU is enhancing its involvement in relevant ARF Inter-Sessional Meetings, and has also recently reinvigorated the EU-ASEAN Senior Officials consultations on Transnational Crime.

Specific clauses on cooperation in the fight against terrorism and different forms of organised crime are included in the partnership and cooperation agreements currently under negotiation with several countries in the region or in the process of ratification ([3]).

The EU has signed an agreement with Indonesia to ensure that only legally harvested timber is exported from that country; similar agreements are under discussion with other countries in the region.

Countries from the South East Asia region also participate in cooperation initiatives to address specific phenomena related to organised crime, such as the Global Alliance against Child Sexual Abuse Online ([4]).

([1]) Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear.
([2]) Association of Southeast Asian Nations.
([3]) It concerns in particular the following countries: Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.
([4]) Global Alliance against Child Sexual Abuse Online was joined by Cambodia, the Philippines and Thailand.

The EU intends to maintain and develop its engagement with the South East Asia region in fighting transnational crime, including new areas such as cybercrime. The EU is exploring with ASEAN partners the possibility to develop a specific Action Plan on Transnational Crime.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010740/13
alla Commissione
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(19 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Impoverimento delle risorse idriche in Europa

Secondo stime recenti un miliardo di persone nel pianeta non avrebbe accesso all'acqua potabile; tra i 3 e i 4 miliardi sarebbero quelle prive di acqua sufficiente al fabbisogno quotidiano; 8 milioni quelle in pericolo di vita a causa di malattie legate all'insicurezza dell'approvvigionamento idrico.

Il problema non riguarda solamente aree da sempre affette da carenze idriche ed anche nel nostro continente l'utilizzo dell'acqua andrebbe sfruttato in modo più efficiente: infatti, l'Agenzia europea per l'ambiente ribadisce come tale problema sia attuale anche all'interno della UE e in particolar modo nei Paesi del Sud.

Le risorse idriche sono in effetti oltremodo sfruttate in molte parti d'Europa: la situazione è in progressivo peggioramento e per questo è importante richiamare i Paesi membri ad un uso più consapevole, gestendo la disponibilità d'acqua con la stessa efficienza impiegata per altre risorse naturali.

Le attività agricole e industriali hanno un forte impatto sulla carenza di acqua potabile e ad esse vanno ad aggiungersi diversi fenomeni legati ai cambiamenti climatici come la diminuzione della portata dei fiumi, l'abbassamento del livello dell'acqua nei laghi e nelle falde acquifere, la scomparsa di aree paludose, con potenziali effetti distruttivi sui sistemi naturali, e di conseguenza, sulla produttività economica.

Nell'Unione europea, secondo i dati dell'Agenzia europea per l'ambiente, sarebbe utilizzato a scopo agricolo circa un quarto dell'acqua che dovrebbe servire all'ambiente naturale, dato questo che può raggiungere l'80 % nell'Europa meridionale. Inoltre, un quinto dell'acqua utilizzata in Europa è destinata alla rete pubblica di fornitura idrica, mentre più di un quarto viene utilizzato per i wc o perso a causa di dispersioni nella falda acquifera.

Quali azioni intende intraprendere la Commissione, dopo l'ulteriore allarme lanciato dall'Agenzia europea per l'ambiente, per fronteggiare il grave problema dell'impoverimento delle risorse idriche in Europa?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(5 novembre 2013)

Nel 2007 la Commissione ha presentato la comunicazione intitolata «Affrontare il problema della carenza idrica e della siccità nell'Unione europea» ([1]), nella quale è prospettata una gerarchia che permetta di migliorare l'efficienza idrica: la gestione della domanda di acqua dovrebbe occuparvi il primo posto e si dovrebbe contare su metodi alternativi di approvvigionamento idrico soltanto una volta sfruttate tutte le potenzialità di efficienza idrica.

Da tale comunicazione si è profuso in tutta l'UE un grande impegno per dare attuazione alla politica in materia di carenza idrica e siccità, che la Commissione ha riveduto nel 2012 nel contesto dei lavori preparatori del «Piano per la salvaguardia delle risorse idriche europee» ([2]). La revisione ha evidenziato un elevato potenziale di efficienza idrica in tutti i principali settori che utilizzano acqua (agricoltura, industria, reti di distribuzione, immobili e produzione energetica) e ha indicato le misure atte a migliorare la gestione delle acque in Europa.

Tra le misure si annoverano: migliore attuazione degli incentivi e dei prezzi trasparenti dell'acqua (articolo 9 della direttiva quadro sulle acque ([3])), sviluppo della contabilità delle risorse idriche e fissazione di obiettivi di efficienza idrica per le zone sotto stress idrico, promozione dell'impiego di dispositivi che comportano un uso più efficiente dell'acqua, instaurazione in tutta l'UE di pari condizioni riguardo al riutilizzo delle acque, miglioramento dell'efficienza dell'irrigazione con modalità in linea con gli obiettivi della direttiva quadro sulle acque e riduzione delle perdite dalle reti di distribuzione idrica.

La Commissione sta lavorando, in collaborazione con gli Stati membri e i portatori d'interesse, all'attuazione di queste ed altre misure previste dal Piano nel contesto della strategia comune di attuazione della direttiva quadro sulle acque.

([1]) COM(2007)414 def.
([2]) COM(2012)673 def.
([3]) GU L 327 del 22.12.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010740/13
to the Commission
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Diminishing water resources in Europe

According to recent estimates, 1 billion people around the world have no access to drinking water, between 3 and 4 billion do not have enough water to meet their daily needs, and 8 million lives are at risk due to diseases associated with water insecurity.

The problem does not just concern areas that have always been affected by water shortages; water should also be used more efficiently in Europe. The European Environment Agency reiterates how this is also currently a problem in the EU and particularly in southern European countries.

Water resources are extremely over-exploited in many parts of Europe: the situation is steadily deteriorating and that is why it is important to remind the Member States to be more aware of their water use, managing supplies as efficiently as other natural resources.

Agriculture and industry have a major impact on drinking water shortages, as well as a number of phenomena linked to climate change, such as reduced river flows, falling lake and groundwater levels and disappearing wetlands, with potentially destructive effects on natural systems, and, consequently, on economic productivity.

According to European Environment Agency figures, agriculture in the EU uses around a quarter of water diverted from the natural environment, and this figure can be up to 80% in southern Europe. Moreover, public water supply accounts for a fifth of water used in Europe, while more than a quarter is used in toilets or wasted due to groundwater losses.

After the latest alert from the European Environment Agency, what does the Commission plan to do to deal with the serious problem of diminishing water resources in Europe?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

In 2007 the Commission presented a communication on water scarcity and droughts in the European Union ([1]), which put forward a water hierarchy under which water demand management should come first, to increase water efficiency, and alternative water supply options should be relied on only once the potential for water efficiency has been exhausted.

Since then, major efforts have been undertaken across the EU to implement the water scarcity and droughts policy. In 2012 the Commission reviewed this policy during the preparatory process for the 'Blueprint to safeguard Europe's Water Resources' ([2]). The review showed large potential for water efficiency in all the main water-using sectors (agriculture, industry, distribution networks, buildings and energy production) and identified measures which could improve water management in Europe.

The measures include better implementation of incentives and transparent water pricing (Article 9 of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) ([3])), development of water accounts and water efficiency targets for water stressed areas, fostering the use of more efficient water devices, establishing a level playing field for water re-use accross the EU, improving irrigation efficiency in ways that are consistent with the WFD objectives and reducing leakage from water distribution networks.

The Commission is currently working jointly with Member States and stakeholders on the implementation of these and other measures presented in the Blueprint in the framework of the Common Implementation Strategy of the WFD.

([1]) COM(2007) 414 final.
([2]) COM(2012) 673 final.
([3]) OJ L 327 of 22.12.2000.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010742/13
do Komisji
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(19 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: W sprawie problemów przewoźników towarowych świadczących usługi na trasach UE – Rosja

We wrześniu br. Rosja zamierza wprowadzić niezależnie od posiadanych już karnetów TIR dodatkowe ubezpieczenia dla przewoźników. Według Europejskiej Komisji Gospodarczej ONZ każdorazowo koszty dla przewoźników mogą wzrosnąć nawet o 1000 euro.

Kolejnym problemem, który może utrudnić ruch towarowy UE z Rosją jest fakt, że od 1 grudnia br. stowarzyszenie AsMAP przestanie być uznawane w Rosji za gwaranta karnetów TIR. Wówczas może zabraknąć podmiotu uprawnionego do wydawania, tym razem rosyjskim przewoźnikom, karnetów TIR. Doprowadzi to do sytuacji, w której rosyjskie ciężarówki na granicy z UE będą poddawane szczegółowym kontrolom.

Działania Rosji uderzą w interesy państw europejskich, a w szczególności w interesy polskich przewoźników, którzy wg Eurostatu w 2011 r. mieli 20 procent udziałów w międzynarodowych przewozach oraz tranzycie międzynarodowym. Polscy przewoźnicy byli również liderami w przewozach na dalekich trasach: od tysiąca km do ponad dwóch tysięcy km.

W związku z powyższym zwracam się do Komisji z następującymi pytaniami:

1. Jakie działania zamierza podjąć Komisja w sprawie narastających problemów przewoźników realizujących zlecenia na trasach UE – Rosja?

2. Czy Komisja posiada plan wsparcia europejskich przewoźników w sporze z Rosją?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Algirdasa Šemetę w imieniu Komisji
(31 października 2013 r.)

Komisja zamierza w dalszym ciągu poruszać tę kwestię na odpowiednich szczeblach wielostronnych (np. organów TIR) i dwustronnych, by zagwarantować, że poręczenia TIR będą dostępne w Rosji także po dniu 1 grudnia 2013 r. Komisja uważnie śledzi rozwój sytuacji i podejmuje odpowiednie środki.

Członek Komisji odpowiedzialny za podatki i unię celną, który pozostaje w kontakcie z szefem rosyjskiej Federalnej Służby Celnej (FCS), Andriejem Bieljaninowem, wezwał do odroczenia nowych wymogów z zamiarem ich ewentualnego wycofania. Sytuacja ta była także intensywnie rozpatrywana na szczeblu wielostronnym z Sekretarzem Wykonawczym Europejskiej Komisji Gospodarczej Narodów Zjednoczonych, Radą Wykonawczą TIR i Międzynarodowym Związkiem Transportu Drogowego. W następstwie tych działań FCS ograniczyła wdrażanie przedmiotowych środków w okręgach celnych Syberii i Dalekiego Wschodu, co de facto odroczy ich stosowanie przy granicy między UE i Rosją do dnia 1 grudnia 2013 r.

Chociaż Komisja będzie w dalszym ciągu aktywnie przyczyniać się do jak najszybszego rozwiązania zaistniałej sytuacji, obecnie nie istnieją programy, w ramach których możliwe byłoby udzielenie wsparcia finansowego poszkodowanym przewoźnikom.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010742/13
to the Commission
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Problems faced by freight companies operating on routes between the EU and Russia

In September this year Russia plans to impose new insurance requirements on transport companies in addition to the TIR carnet. According to the UN Economic Commission for Europe this could cost up to EUR 1 000 for each journey.

Another problem which might further hamper the movement of goods from Russia is the fact that, as of 1 December this year, the AsMAP association will cease to be recognised in Russia as a guarantor of the TIR carnet. This means that there will no longer be a body licensed to issue the TIR carnet to Russian freight companies. This will result in a situation whereby Russian lorries will be subjected to rigorous checks at the EU border.

Russia's actions will have a negative effect on the interests of EU Member States and in particular of Polish hauliers, as these accounted for 20% of international transport and transit in 2011, according to Eurostat. Polish firms also led the field in long-haul transport involving journeys of 1 000 to 2 000 km.

1. What action does the Commission intend to take regarding the increasing problems faced by haulage companies working on routes between the EU and Russia?

2. Has the Commission devised a scheme to support European hauliers in dispute with Russia?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(31 October 2013)

The Commission intends to continue raising the issue at the appropriate multilateral (ie. TIR bodies) and bilateral levels with the aim of ensuring that TIR guarantees remain available in Russia after 1 December 2013. The Commission follows closely the development of the situation and takes the appropriate measures.

The Member of the Commission responsible for Taxation and Customs Union has been in contact with the Head of Russia's Federal Customs Service (FCS), Andrey Belyaninov, and called for a postponement of the new requirements with a view to their eventual withdrawal. The situation has also been actively handled at the multilateral level with the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the TIR Executive Board and the International Road Transport Union. Subsequent to this, the FCS limited the implementation of its measures to the Siberian and Far East customs districts, de facto postponing their application to the EU-Russia border to 1 December 2013.

While the Commission continues to actively contribute to solving the situation as soon as possible, there are at the moment no schemes under which financial support could be made available to affected hauliers.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010743/13
do Komisji
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(19 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Zwiększenie podatku VAT na wyroby medyczne w Polsce

Komisja Europejska w styczniu br. wezwała Polskę do zwiększenia wysokości podatku VAT na wyroby medyczne z obowiązujących 8 % do 23 %. Należy zwrócić uwagę, że w obecnej, niezwykle trudnej sytuacji finansowej szpitali w Polsce zwiększenie wysokości podatku VAT na wyroby medyczne w krótkim czasie doprowadzi do dalszego pogorszenia ich sytuacji ekonomicznej, co w konsekwencji ograniczy dostęp pacjentów do usług medycznych.

Postępowanie Komisji Europejskiej, które skutkować będzie ograniczeniem dostępu do opieki zdrowotnej, stoi w sprzeczności z artykułem 35 Karty Praw Podstawowych, który mówi m.in., iż: „każdy ma prawo dostępu do profilaktycznej opieki zdrowotnej i prawo do korzystania z leczenia (…)"

Pamiętając o kryzysie w polskiej ochronie zdrowia oraz w nawiązaniu do art. 35 KPP, zwracam się z pytaniem, czy Komisja wstrzyma działania zmierzające do wymuszenia na Polsce zwiększenia podatku VAT na wyroby medyczne?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Algirdasa Šemetę w imieniu Komisji
(8 listopada 2013 r.)

Polska ustawa o podatku od towarów i usług przewiduje stosowanie obniżonej stawki podatku, wynoszącej 8 %, w odniesieniu do niektórych wyrobów medycznych i produktów farmaceutycznych, niewymienionych w pkt 3 i 4 załącznika III do dyrektywy VAT ([1]).

Przepisy dotyczące obniżonych stawek podatku VAT – stanowiących wyjątek od ogólnej zasady, która wymaga stosowania stawki podstawowej w odniesieniu do dostaw towarów i świadczenia usług – muszą być ściśle interpretowane i przestrzegane. Zasada ta jest ugruntowana i została wielokrotnie potwierdzona przez Trybunał, ostatnio w wyroku w sprawie C-360/11 przeciwko Hiszpanii.

Komisja, jako strażnik traktatów, wymaga od wszystkich państw członkowskich przestrzegania przepisów dotyczących podatku VAT, które państwa te same jednogłośnie przyjęły.

Przepisy obowiązujące w Polsce stanowią odejście od tej rygorystycznej zasady, co jest równoznaczne z naruszeniem prawa UE. Dlatego też Komisja w dniu 26 września 2013 r. postanowiła przekazać sprawę do Trybunału Sprawiedliwości na mocy art. 258 TFUE. Komisja zachęca Szanownego Pana Posła do zapoznania się z komunikatem prasowym z dnia 26 września 2013 r. ([2]).

Co się tyczy skutków finansowych dla szpitali – jakkolwiek stosowanie podstawowej stawki podatku w odniesieniu do sprzętu medycznego lub produktów farmaceutycznych może skutkować wyższymi kosztami dla szpitali, dodatkowe środki uzyskane z podatku VAT trafią do budżetu państwa i mogą zostać ponownie zainwestowane w ochronę zdrowia i budżet szpitali, jeśli taka będzie wola władz Polski.

([1]) Dyrektywa Rady 2006/112/WE.
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-870_pl.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010743/13
to the Commission
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Increasing VAT on medical devices in Poland

In January this year the Commission asked Poland to increase the rate of VAT on medical devices from the current 8% to 23%. In the extremely difficult financial situation currently facing hospitals in Poland, increasing the VAT rate on medical devices will quickly lead to a further deterioration in their economic situation, which in turn will limit patient access to medical services.

The Commission's action, which will restrict access to healthcare, is contrary to Article 35 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which states: 'Everyone has the right of access to preventive healthcare and the right to benefit from medical treatment (…)'.

Given the crisis in Polish healthcare, and with reference to Article 35 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, will the Commission consider not forcing Poland to increase its VAT on medical devices?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(8 November 2013)

The Polish VAT Law provides for the application of a reduced 8% VAT rate to certain medical and pharmaceutical products which are not found in points 3 and 4 of Annex III of the VAT Directive ([1]).

Rules on VAT reduced rates — being exceptions from the general principle that the standard rate applies to the supply of goods and services — have to be strictly observed and interpreted. This principle is established and has been confirmed by the Court many times and recently in a judgment of the EU Court in Case C-360/11 against Spain.

The Commission, as guardian of the treaties, requires all Member States to respect the VAT rules they themselves unanimously approved.

The Polish rules deviate from this strict approach and are thus in breach of EC law. Therefore, the Commission decided on 26 September 2013 to refer the matter to the Court of Justice under Article 258 TFEU. The Commission invites the Honourable Member to see the press release of 26 September 2013 ([2]).

As for the financial consequences for hospitals, even though the application of the standard rate to medical equipment or pharmaceutical products may make the costs for hospitals higher, the additional VAT will go to the national budget and may be reinvested in healthcare and the hospital budget, if that is the will of the Polish authorities.

([1]) Council Directive 2006/112/EC.
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-870_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010744/13
to the Commission
Emma McClarkin (ECR)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Azodicarbonamide

I have been made aware that the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) proposes to make azodicarbonamide (ADCA) subject to 'authorisation' under REACH (Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals) regulations. It is my understanding that this is because the ECHA wants to target respiratory sensitisers which can cause industrial asthma.

A constituent company informs me that ADCA is the perfect foaming agent for plastics and rubbers, and is ideal for wall coverings. Making this chemical subject to 'authorisation' has the potential of damaging a number of small and medium-sized enterprises within the UK that have neither the capacity nor the resources immediately to develop alternative foaming compounds.

Can the Commission tell me why ADCA is facing this action, given that adequate risk management measures can ensure that risks in handling it can be minimised, and that when compounded into PVC it presents no risk to consumers? What advice does the Commission have for businesses which will be badly affected by such measures? What is the exact timetable for implementing this decision? What are the estimated costs for companies applying to use ADCA?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(16 October 2013)

Azodicarbonamide ([1]) (ADCA) was identified as a SVHC ([2]) following a proposal by Austria and included in the Candidate List in December 2012 on the basis of Article 57(f) of REACH ([3]) due to its respiratory sensitisation properties.

The public consultation in accordance with Article 58(4) of REACH on ECHA's draft recommendation suggesting to include ADCA and 5 other substances in the list of substances subject to authorisation (Annex XIV of REACH) ended on 23 September 2013. The final recommendation is expected by early 2014. The Commission will then consider the recommendation with a view to amend Annex XIV in accordance with the regulatory procedure with scrutiny.

If ADCA is included in Annex XIV, authorisation may be granted for specific uses ([4]) subject to the conditions set out in Article 60 of REACH. Information on the risks arising from the specific use, the technical and economic suitability and availability of alternatives and the socioeconomic consequences of not granting an authorisation will be considered at that stage of the process.

REACH does not require each company to apply individually for authorisation. A downstream user may be covered by an authorisation granted to an actor up his supply chain for that use. Moreover, companies may set up consortia to coordinate and facilitate preparation of applications. Such possibilities reduce the impacts on downstream users and may be particularly advantageous for SMEs.

It is difficult to estimate the costs of an application for authorisation for ADCA at this stage. The final costs very much depend on the level in the supply chain of the applicant and on the number of different uses for which an authorisation will be applied for.

([1]) Other name of this substance : azodiformamide.
([2]) Substance of Very High Concern.
([3]) Regulation (EC)No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), establishing a European Chemicals Agency.
([4]) For example, the use as foaming agent for plastics, rubbers and wall covering.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010745/13
a la Comisión
María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(19 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Retraso de las autoridades regionales en el pago de las contribuciones financieras aportadas desde la Comisión Europea a las autoridades locales

Al igual que algunas pequeñas y medianas empresas sufren problemas financieros debido al retraso en el pago de facturas de autoridades públicas y grandes compañías, algunos municipios sufren el impago sistemático de los compromisos económicos asumidos con las autoridades regionales. Se trata de compromisos derivados de las contribuciones financieras aportadas desde la Comisión Europea a través de los fondos estructurales (Fondo Social Europeo y Fondo de Desarrollo Regional).

Si en el primer caso la morosidad de las autoridades públicas y grandes compañías provoca el impago a proveedores y trabajadores —y en algunos casos la quiebra de las pequeñas y medianas empresas—, en el caso de los municipios los retrasos en el pago de los compromisos provocan el endeudamiento de los municipios y problemas financieros y de tesorería que van en detrimento de la calidad de vida de los ciudadanos.

En algún caso concreto, como el del Ayuntamiento de Tembleque (Toledo) y otros casi 400 ayuntamientos castellano-manchegos, estos retrasos han producido irregularidades graves al infringir varios aspectos de la normativa comunitaria, como el principio de integridad de los pagos a los beneficiarios previsto en el artículo 80 del Reglamento (CE) n° 1083/2006. Este artículo exige que los Estados miembros velen por que los beneficiarios reciban el importe total de la contribución pública cuanto antes.

¿Qué tipo de actuación puede llevar a cabo la Comisión para garantizar que las ayudas percibidas por la Comunidad Autónoma de Castilla— La Mancha con cargo a los fondos estructurales lleguen a las administraciones locales cuanto antes?

¿Se plantea la Comisión crear una normativa específica para luchar contra la demora de los pagos a los beneficiarios en los proyectos financiados con cargo a fondos europeos y evitar la asfixia que sufren muchos pequeños municipios?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(8 de noviembre de 2013)

El artículo 78, apartado 1, del Reglamento (CE) n° 1083/2006 del Consejo, de 11 de julio de 2006, establece que en todas las declaraciones de gastos que se presenten a la Comisión debe constar el importe total de los gastos subvencionables que hayan abonado los beneficiarios al ejecutar las operaciones, así como la contribución pública correspondiente que se haya abonado o se deba abonar a los beneficiarios en las condiciones que regulen la contribución pública ([1]).

La Comisión ha abonado dentro del plazo establecido todas las solicitudes de pago recibidas en relación con el programa operativo del FSE y del FEDER en Castilla-La Mancha, con respecto al cual no existe ninguna declaración de gastos pendiente de pago.

La Comisión no tiene constancia de que se haya producido ningún retraso en los pagos a los beneficiarios de las operaciones del FSE o del FEDER en dicha Comunidad. La Comisión ruega a Su Señoría que facilite cualquier información adicional de la que disponga en relación con el municipio de Tembleque para que así pueda consultarse el caso con las autoridades nacionales. De hecho, tal y como establece el artículo 80 del Reglamento (CE) n° 1083/2006 mencionado por Su Señoría, «Los Estados miembros se cerciorarán de que los organismos responsables de efectuar los pagos velen por que los beneficiarios reciban el importe total de la contribución pública cuanto antes y en su integridad».

La Comisión destacó el efecto negativo del retraso en los pagos en su análisis de los avances sociales y económicos en España durante el Semestre Europeo de 2013. Una de las recomendaciones específicas del Consejo a España fue la de «adoptar medidas para reducir los atrasos pendientes de la Administración, evitar que se vuelvan a acumular y publicar regularmente datos sobre las cantidades pendientes» ([2]).

([1]) Artículo 78, apartado 1, del Reglamento (CE) n° 1083/2006 del Consejo, de 11 de julio de 2006, por el que se establecen las disposiciones generales relativas al Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional, al Fondo Social Europeo y al Fondo de Cohesión y se deroga el Reglamento (CE) n° 1260/1999, DO L 210 de 31.7.2006.

([2]) Recomendación 1, disponible en: http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/csr2013_spain_es.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010745/13
to the Commission
María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Delays in regional authority payments of Commission funding for local authorities

Just as some small and medium-sized businesses are experiencing financial problems as a result of late payments on the part of public authorities and major companies, some local councils are suffering as a consequence of persistent failures on the part of regional authorities to fulfil their economic commitments — in this case involving Commission funding under the structural funds (the European Social Fund and the Regional Development Fund).

Late payments on the part of public authorities and major companies mean that suppliers and staff are not paid, and sometimes drive small and medium-sized firms out of business. Where local authorities are concerned, delays in funding payments plunge those authorities into debt, causing financial and cashflow problems that have a negative effect on the quality of life of the general public.

To give a specific example, for the local council in Tembleque, near Toledo, along with nearly 400 other councils in Castilla-La Mancha, such delays have resulted in major irregularities, infringing various EU rules, such as the principle of the wholeness of payment to beneficiaries as referred to in Article 80 of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006. That article stipulates that Member States are to satisfy themselves that the beneficiaries receive the total amount of the public contribution as quickly as possible.

What action can the Commission take to ensure that the aid received by the Autonomous Community of Castilla-La Mancha under the structural funds gets to the local authorities as soon as possible?

Is the Commission intending to draw up specific rules to address the problem of late payments to beneficiaries in the context of EU-funded projects and alleviate the severe financial pressure under which many small local councils find themselves?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(8 November 2013)

Article 78(1) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 provides that all statements of expenditure presented to the Commission must include the total amount of eligible expenditure paid by beneficiaries in implementing the operations and the corresponding public contribution paid or due to be paid to the beneficiaries in accordance with the conditions governing the public contribution ([1]).

The Commission has paid in due time all payment claims received concerning the ESF and ERDF Castilla-la Mancha operational programme, for which no statement of expenditure is outstanding.

The Commission is not aware of any delay in payments to beneficiaries of ESF or ERDF operations in the Region. It invites the Honourable Member to provide any further details in her possession regarding the Municipality of Tembleque so it can ask the national authorities about the case. Indeed, as provided for in Article 80 of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006, referred to by the Honourable Member, 'Member States shall satisfy themselves that the bodies responsible for making the payments ensure that the beneficiaries receive the total amount of the public contribution as quickly as possible and in full'.

The Commission analysis of social and economic developments in Spain during the 2013 European Semester stressed the negative impact of delays in payments. The Council's country-specific recommendations advised Spain to 'take measures to reduce the outstanding amount of government arrears, avoid their further accumulation and regularly publish data on outstanding amounts.' ([2])

([1]) Article 78(1) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999, OJ L 210, 31.7.2006.

([2]) Recommendation 1 at: http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/csr2013_spain_en.pdf

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-010746/13
til Kommissionen
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(19. september 2013)

Om: Totalforbud mod produktion af »Sødmælkskalve« i EU

Produktion af sødmælkskalve finder trods indførelsen af en række direktiver, der skal forhindre mishandling af slagtekvæg, stadig reelt sted indenfor EU's grænser. Produktionen af sødmælkskalve medfører urimelige lidelser for kalvene og er reelt en form for organiseret dyremishandling.

1. Finder Kommissionen, at de nuværende bestemmelser for beskyttelse af dyr, som udtrykt i Rådets direktiv 98/58/EF af 20. juli 1998 om beskyttelse af dyr, der holdes til landbrugsformål, bilag, pkt. 11, om foder, reelt er overholdt i produktionen af sødmælkskalve, som den finder sted i bl.a. Nederlandene?

2. Mener Kommissionen, at de minimumskrav til sammensætningen af kalves foder, som defineres i Rådets direktiv 2008/119/EF om fastsættelse af mindstekrav med hensyn til beskyttelse af kalve, bilag I, pkt. 11, reelt dækker kalvenes behov for nærings- og fiberrig kost?

3. Vil Kommissionen arbejde for en generel indførelse af nye skærpede minimumskrav til foder til kalve, som reelt opfylder de ernæringsmæssige behov, som en kalv har, f.eks. som udtrykt i den danske lovgivning i form af bekendtgørelse om ændring af bekendtgørelse om beskyttelse af kalve BEK nr. 1075 af 22.12.1997 (gældende) pkt. 10, jf. ændring af § 15, stk. 3?

4. Vil Kommissionen arbejde for et egentligt forbud mod produktionen af sødmælkskalve i EU?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Tonio Borg
(11. november 2013)

Kommissionen ligger ikke inde med oplysninger, der tyder på manglende opfyldelse af dyrevelfærdskravene for foder ([1]) i EU's kalveproduktion.

De specifikke foderkrav, som er fastsat i bilag I til direktiv 2008/119/EF ([2]), sikrer, at kalvene får fiberholdigt foder, og udgør en forbedring af deres velfærd.

På nuværende tidspunkt overvejer Kommissionen ikke at ændre foderkravene for kalve eller at forbyde opdræt af sødmælkskalve i EU.

([1]) Rådets direktiv 98/58 (EFT L 221 af 8.8.1998, s. 23).
([2]) Rådets direktiv 2008/119/EF om fastsættelse af mindstekrav med hensyn til beskyttelse af kalve (EUT L 10 af 15.1.2009, s. 11).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010746/13
to the Commission
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Total ban on the rearing of milk-fed calves

Rearing of milk-fed calves is taking place within the EU in spite of the enactment of a number of directives intended to prevent the mistreatment of animals for slaughter. The production of milk-reared calves involves unreasonable suffering for the calves and is in fact a form of organised animal cruelty.

1. Does the Commission consider that the current animal protection provisions as set out in Council Directive 98/58/EC of 20 July 1998 concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes (Annex, point 14, on feed), is really being complied with in the rearing of milk-fed calves as practised in the Netherlands, for example?

2. Does the Commission consider that the minimum requirements for the composition of calf feed as defined in Council Directive 2008/119/EC of 18 December 2008 laying down minimum standards for the protection of calves (Annex, point 11), really cover the calves' need for a nutritious and fibre-rich diet?

3. Will the Commission work towards the comprehensive adoption of new, stricter minimum requirements for calf feed which really meet a calf's dietary needs as set out, for example, in the Danish implementing order amending the (current) Calf Protection Order BEK 1075 of 22 December 1998, point 10, amendment to para. 15(3)?

4. Will the Commission work towards a genuine ban on the rearing of milk-fed calves in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 November 2013)

The Commission does not have any indication of non-compliance with the animal welfare requirements for feed ([1]) in the EU veal production.

The specific feed requirements as laid down in Directive 2008/119/EC, Annex I ([2]), ensure that some fibrous feed is given to the calves and represents an improvement for their welfare.

The Commission is currently not considering to amend the feed requirements for calves or to ban the rearing of milk-fed calves in the EU.

([1]) Council Directive 98/58, OJ L 221, 8.8.1998, p. 23.
([2]) Council Directive 2008/119/EC laying down minimum standards for the protection of calves, OJ L 10, 15.1.2009, p. 11.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-010747/13
til Kommissionen
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(19. september 2013)

Om: Maksimumsgrænser for vitaminer og mineraler i kosttilskud

Direktiv 2002/46/EF om indbyrdes tilnærmelse af medlemsstaternes lovgivninger om kosttilskud indeholder bestemmelser om vitaminer og mineraler og om, i hvilke former de må anvendes til fremstilling af kosttilskud. I henhold til artikel 5 i direktivet skal Kommissionen foreslå maksimumsgrænser for vitaminer og mineraler, der kan anvendes i kosttilskud i EU. Elleve år senere venter vi stadig på, at Kommissionen foreslår sådanne maksimumværdier. De værdier, som producenter og forbrugere skal håndtere, er derfor forskellige fra medlemsstat til medlemsstat.

Kan Kommissionen præcisere, om det er en prioritet at foreslå maksimumsgrænser for vitaminer og mineraler, der anvendes i kosttilskud, og om den har medtaget et sådant forslag i sit arbejdsprogram? I bekræftende fald, hvad er den skønnede tidsplan? I benægtende fald, kan Kommissionen forklare, hvad der bremser processen?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Tonio Borg
(29. oktober 2013)

De omfattende høringer, som Kommissionen har foretaget for at fastsætte de maksimale mængder af vitaminer og mineraler i kosttilskud, har understreget, at emnet stadig er meget kontroversielt. Medlemsstaterne og alle andre berørte parter har givet udtryk for mange divergerende holdninger til sagen.

Derfor er det forberedende arbejde om fastsættelsen af sådanne maksimumsmængder endnu ikke afsluttet, og Kommissionen er ikke i stand til på nuværende tidspunkt at specificere en lovgivningsmæssig tidsplan for de relevante foranstaltninger, der skal gennemføres.

Kommissionen skal henvise det ærede medlem til sine svar på skriftlig forespørgsel E-007985/2013 og E-007867/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010747/13
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Maximum amounts of vitamins and minerals in food supplements

Directive 2002/46/EC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to food supplements defines vitamins and minerals and the forms in which they may be used in the manufacture of food supplements. Article 5 of the directive requires the Commission to propose maximum amounts of vitamins and minerals that may be used in food supplements within the EU. Eleven years later we are still waiting for the Commission to propose such maximums values. As a consequence, the values that producers and consumers have to deal with differ from Member State to Member State.

Could the Commission clarify whether proposing maximum amounts for vitamins and minerals used in food supplements is a priority and whether such a proposal is included in its Work Programme? If so, what is the estimated timeline? If not, could the Commission explain what is halting the process?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(29 October 2013)

The extensive consultation carried out by the Commission in view of setting maximum amounts for vitamins and minerals in food supplements has emphasised that the issue is still highly controversial and many divergent opinions have been expressed by Member States, and all interested stakeholders, in that context.

Therefore, the preparatory work on setting such maximum amounts is still ongoing, and the Commission is not in a position, at this stage, to detail the legislative timetable for the relevant measure to be completed.

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to Written Questions E-007985/2013 and E-007867/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010748/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(19 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Caccia ai globicefali nelle isole Fær Øer in Danimarca

Nelle isole Fær Øer, arcipelago situato nell'Oceano Atlantico appartenente alla Danimarca, ogni anno si svolge la Grindadráp, ossia la caccia ai globicefali (denominati anche balene pilota), che comporta, secondo le stime, la morte di circa 950 balene all'anno in nome delle tradizioni.

I fatti sono noti: le barche formano un semicerchio intorno alle balene per condurle a riva costringendole ad arenarsi. È a questo punto che i cacciatori tagliano il dorso delle prede lungo la spina dorsale con uno speciale coltello. Le immagini del mare completamente rosso presso Hvalba sono state ampliamente diffuse.

Il sottoscritto si era già occupato di tale tematica presentando le interrogazioni parlamentari E-006671/2010 ed E-002577/2011. L'opinione pubblica, alcune associazioni ambientaliste e anche altri deputati al Parlamento europeo hanno più volte richiamato l'attenzione su questa situazione con risultati nulli: il 22 luglio di quest'anno circa 400 globicefali sono stati uccisi.

Si è consapevoli che alle isole Fær Øer, in quanto isole semi indipendenti, non si applica la Convenzione di Berna (che proibisce la vendita e lo scambio di cetacei), né la direttiva 92/43/CEE del Consiglio che vieta la caccia di tutte le specie di cetacei.

Tuttavia, considerato che:

— la motivazione alla base della caccia è esclusivamente il rispetto di una tradizione;

— è stato appurato che la carne della balena pilota contiene alti livelli di mercurio estremamente dannosi per la salute umana;

può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. intende assumere una presa di posizione forte nei confronti del premier delle isole Fær Øer;

2. ritiene sia opportuno esercitare pressioni sul governo danese;

3. prevede di sensibilizzare l'opinione pubblica europea e in particolar modo danese sulla protezione di questa specie animale?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(7 novembre 2013)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputato alla risposta fornita all'interrogazione scritta E-009528/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010748/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Hunting of pilot whales in the Danish Faeroe Islands

Every year in the Faeroe Islands, an archipelago in the Atlantic belonging to Denmark, pilot whales are hunted and killed during the 'Grindadráp'. On these occasions, an estimated 950 whales per year die in the name of tradition.

The sequence of events is well known: the boats form a semicircle around the whales to lead them towards the shore, forcing them to beach. At this point, the hunters cut into their preys' backs along the spine with a special knife. Pictures of the sea off Hvalba stained completely red have been widely published.

I have raised this issue previously, in parliamentary questions E-006671/2010 and E-002577/2011. Members of the public, several environmental protection organisations and other members of the European Parliament have drawn attention to this situation on many occasions, but to no avail: on 22 July this year, around 400 pilot whales were killed.

I am aware that, since the Faeroe Islands are semi-autonomous, the Berne Convention (which bans whale trading or selling) does not apply, nor does Council Directive 92/43/EEC, which bans the hunting of all whale species.

The sole motivation for the slaughter is to continue a tradition. It has also been established that pilot whale flesh contains high levels of mercury which are extremely harmful to human health.

1. Does the Commission intend to adopt a strong stance with respect to the premier of the Faeroe Islands?

2. Does it think it should exert pressure on the Danish Government?

3. Does it plan to raise public awareness in Europe, and especially in Denmark, about the protection of this species?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(7 November 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to the recent Written Question E-009528/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010750/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(19 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Diffusione delle pratiche di telemedicina e di monitoraggio a distanza del paziente

La telemedicina è una pratica che consente al medico di effettuare la diagnosi di un paziente a distanza, attraverso la trasmissione di dati prodotti da strumenti diagnostici. Un'applicazione molto comune della telemedicina è la «second opinion» medica che consiste nel richiedere una seconda valutazione clinica per un paziente semplicemente inviando a un altro medico i dati acquisiti.

I servizi di telemedicina e di monitoraggio a distanza possono e dovrebbero essere inquadrati nel ridisegno strutturale e organizzativo della rete di assistenza di ogni Stato membro. Infatti, questa tecnologia può apportare diversi benefici quali il miglioramento dell'assistenza sanitaria, consentire servizi di diagnosi e di consulenza medica a distanza, rendere possibile il monitoraggio di parametri vitali, oltre che ridurre il rischio d'insorgenza di complicazioni in persone a rischio o affette da patologie croniche. Occorre anche rilevare che la telemedicina permette di usufruire di un sistema d'interdisciplinarietà sanitaria specialistica, consentendo di accrescere la qualità e tempestività delle decisioni del medico. Il monitoraggio a distanza può consentire di ridistribuire in modo ottimale le risorse umane e tecnologiche tra diversi presidi, consentendo di assicurare la continuità dell'assistenza sul territorio.

Considerato che:

— da numerosi studi emerge che la popolazione sta invecchiando e a tutt'oggi molti servizi rivolti a questa fascia di soggetti devono essere migliorati e tarati sulle loro effettive necessità e possibilità;

— si è registrato un incremento di patologie croniche, come il diabete e le malattie cardiocircolatorie, che necessitano un costante monitoraggio;

può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se intende incoraggiare tale pratica e la sua diffusione nei centri ospedalieri;

2. se ritiene opportuno investire sullo sviluppo di una rete di telemedicina diffusa a livello europeo;

3. quali saranno le indicazioni future per una best practice di questa tecnologia in campo sanitario?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(4 novembre 2013)

Mediante l'azione 75, l'Agenda digitale europea mira a conseguire un'ampia diffusione dei servizi di telemedicina entro il 2020. Tali servizi sono fondamentali per la cura dei pazienti affetti da malattie croniche, come i pazienti anziani. L'azione 75 dell'Agenda digitale europea contribuirà inoltre al partenariato europeo per l'innovazione nel quadro dell'invecchiamento attivo e in buona salute (EIP AHA), proposto nell'ambito dell'iniziativa faro «Unione dell'innovazione». I gruppi d'azione e i siti di riferimento dell'EIP AHA stanno lavorando per la diffusione delle migliori pratiche. Inoltre, tramite il programma per la competitività e l'innovazione, la Commissione sta finanziando progetti pilota che mirano a dimostrare l'efficacia, l'efficienza e gli aspetti organizzativi per sostenere l'ampia diffusione dei servizi suddetti e la creazione di reti tematiche al fine di promuovere l'accettazione e la conoscenza dei loro benefici tra i professionisti della sanità. Il piano d'azione eHealth (COM(2012)736 e SWD(2012)413) è volto all'elaborazione di azioni strategiche per facilitare la diffusione ed eliminare le barriere allo sviluppo di tali servizi.

La condivisione delle buone pratiche e delle analisi comparative è essenziale per garantire il successo della diffusione della telemedicina e per creare un quadro più uniforme nell'Unione europea per tali servizi.

L'incremento graduale di servizi efficienti di telemedicina potrebbe contribuire a rendere più sostenibili i servizi di assistenza sanitaria, migliorando la qualità della vita e la salute dei cittadini. Tuttavia, l'attuazione di nuovi servizi sanitari deve affrontare alcuni ostacoli (giuridici, di interoperabilità, accettazione professionale, ecc.). Confidiamo nel fatto che la condivisione delle buone pratiche e di altre misure condurrà all'eliminazione di gran parte degli ostacoli entro il 2020.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010750/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Disseminating telemedicine and remote patient monitoring practices

Telemedicine is a practice which allows doctors to diagnose patients remotely, on the basis of data transmitted by diagnostic instruments. One very common application of telemedicine is in obtaining second opinions. This consists of requesting a second clinical assessment of a patient simply by sending the data acquired to another doctor.

Telemedicine and remote monitoring services can and ought to be incorporated into each Member State's structural and administrative reorganisation of its patient care system. This technology can bring various benefits, such as improvements in patient care, remote diagnosis and consultation services, monitoring of vital signs and a reduction in the risk of complications in vulnerable individuals or those with chronic illnesses. It is also important to highlight the fact that telemedicine provides an opportunity for cross-disciplinary consultation between different medical specialists, thus increasing the quality and speed of doctors' decisions. Remote monitoring can provide an opportunity for a more streamlined distribution of human and technological resources across different hospitals, thus helping to secure continuity of care within the local area.

Numerous studies have shown that the population is ageing and that at present many of the services aimed at this patient group need to be improved and adapted to their actual needs and capabilities.

There has been an increase in chronic illnesses such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease, which require continuous monitoring.

1. Does the Commission intend to encourage these practices and their dissemination among hospitals?

2. Does it believe that investing in the development of an EU-wide telemedicine network would be beneficial?

3. What are the future prospects for establishing best practice for this technology in the healthcare field?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(4 November 2013)

Through action 75, the Digital Agenda for Europe (DAE) aims to achieve by 2020 widespread deployment of telemedicine services. Telemedicine services are crucial to taking better care of chronic diseases patients, including elderly patients. The DAE action 75 will also contribute to the delivery of the European Innovation Partnership in the field of active and healthy ageing (EIP AHA), proposed under the Innovation Union flagship. Action groups and reference sites of EIP AHA are working on the dissemination of best practice. In addition, the Commission is funding, through the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme, pilots which aim at reporting evidence on effectiveness, efficiency and organisational aspects to support wide deployment and thematic networks in order to increase acceptance and awareness of benefits among health professionals. The eHealth Action Plan (COM(2012) 736 and SWD(2012) 413) aim to provide strategic actions to facilitate its up-taking and breaking barriers to deployment.

Sharing good practices and benchmarking activities are essential to ensure a successful deployment and to provide a more equal telemedicine framework in the European Union.

Scaling up efficient telemedicine services could contribute to more sustainable healthcare services, providing better quality of life and healthier citizens. However, implementing new health services needs addressing certain barriers (legal, interoperability, professional acceptance, etc). We are confident that sharing best practices and other measures will break down most barriers by 2020.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010751/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(19 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Inquinamento del Mar Mediterraneo causato dai rifiuti plastici

Recentemente è stato realizzato uno studio per cui sono state analizzate oltre 3000 km di tratte marine nel Mediterraneo, osservando i rifiuti in mare per 136 ore. I risultati indicano che la plastica costituisce il 95 % del totale dei rifiuti, di questi i sacchetti e i frammenti rappresentano la percentuale più consistente (41 %). Il dato più allarmante riguarda il Tirreno centro-meridionale con 13,3 detriti ogni chilometro quadrato. Tuttavia non si tratta di un problema solo italiano in quanto l'UNEP, il Programma ambientale delle Nazioni Unite, stima che la plastica rappresenti il 60-80 % del totale dei rifiuti in mare, con punte del 90-95 % in alcune regioni.

Con il passare del tempo si formano dei coriandoli di plastica che vengono scambiati per cibo dalla fauna marina per cui si danneggia l'intera catena alimentare. L'Italia fino al 2010 era il primo paese europeo per consumo di sacchetti plastica (25 % del consumo totale in Europa), ma a seguito dell'entrata in vigore dei sacchetti compostabili ha ridotto sensibilmente tale percentuale.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, la Commissione :

1. intende promuovere presso tutti gli Stati membri il modello italiano della messa al bando dei sacchetti non compostabili;

2. ritiene sia opportuno rafforzare le misure a livello comunitario sulla corretta gestione dei rifiuti;

3. pensa di promuovere progetti o campagne che possano essere mirate alla conoscenza e salvaguardia dei mari, la tutela della biodiversità e la fauna marina?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(21 novembre 2013)

L'impatto più ampio dell'uso e dello smaltimento della plastica è stato oggetto di un Libro verde e di una consultazione pubblica ([1]). In risposta a tali iniziative il Parlamento sta elaborando una relazione che dovrebbe essere presentata alla sessione plenaria di dicembre ([2]).

Il 4 novembre 2013 la Commissione ha proposto una modifica alla direttiva sugli imballaggi e i rifiuti di imballaggio ([3]), che richiederà agli Stati membri di adottare provvedimenti per ridurre il consumo di borse di plastica in materiale leggero, compresa la possibilità di imporre un divieto. Le modalità di attuazione specifiche di tali misure sono di competenza degli Stati membri, purché siano conformi al diritto dell'UE.

La Commissione ha adottato una serie di misure concrete per migliorare la gestione dei rifiuti a livello di UE, tra cui l'organizzazione di seminari di sensibilizzazione negli Stati membri, l'apertura, in ultima istanza, di procedure d'infrazione e, più di recente, lo svolgimento di seminari di promozione della conformità in materia di gestione dei rifiuti urbani, tenuti anche in Italia.

La Commissione sostiene attivamente numerosi progetti di sensibilizzazione sulla protezione dell'ambiente marino, in particolare tramite lo strumento di finanziamento LIFE ([4]). In tutta Europa il 10 maggio 2014 sarà un giorno dedicato alla pulizia del nostro ambiente. Si auspica che nel quadro di quest'iniziativa sia dato il giusto spazio alle spiagge ([5]). Quest'iniziativa fa seguito anche a una dichiarazione scritta del Parlamento ([6]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/resource_efficiency/news/up-to-date_news/22102013-1_en.htm
([2]) Relazione di iniziativa di Romano Prodi: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=en&reference=COM(2013)0123.
([3]) Direttiva 94/62/CEE, GU L 365 del 31.12.1994.
([4]) Per una rassegna dei progetti LIFE riguardanti l'ambiente marino nel precedente periodo di finanziamento, cfr. http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/publications/lifepublications/lifefocus/documents/marine_lr.pdf Un quadro d'insieme analogo è in preparazione per il periodo in corso.
([5]) Per ulteriori dettagli, cfr. http://www.ewwr.eu/lets-clean-up-europe.
([6]) PE457.600 del 14.2.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010751/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by plastic waste

A study was recently carried out which examined over 3 000 km of stretches of the Mediterranean Sea, observing marine waste for 136 hours. According to the results, plastic accounts for 95% of all waste, the largest proportion of that being made up of bags and scraps (41%). The most alarming figure concerns the central-southern Tyrrhenian, with 13.3 items of rubbish per square kilometre. However, this is not an exclusively Italian problem since, according to United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) estimates, plastic accounts for 60-80% of all marine waste, rising to as much as 90-95% in some regions.

Over time a kind of plastic confetti forms, which marine animals mistake for food, damaging the entire food chain. Until 2010, Italy was the biggest European consumer of plastic bags (25% of the total used in Europe), but since the introduction of compostable bags, this figure has fallen significantly.

1. Does the Commission plan to encourage all Member States to adopt the Italian model of banning non-compostable bags?

2. Does it think it should strengthen proper waste management measures at EU level?

3. Is it planning to promote projects or campaigns on awareness and protection of the seas, protecting biodiversity and marine fauna?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(21 November 2013)

The wider impacts of plastic waste use and disposal were addressed in a Green Paper on the issue and a public consultation. ([1]) The Parliament is preparing a Report in reaction to this which is expected to be presented to the plenary in December. ([2])

The Commission proposed on 4th November 2013 an amendment to the directive on Packaging and Packaging Waste ([3]) that will require Member States to take measures to reduce the consumption of lightweight plastic carrier bags, including the possibility of banning them. The precise design of such measures is a matter of Member States provided these measures comply with EC law.

The Commission has taken a number of concrete steps to strengthen waste management at EU level, including awareness raisings seminars in Member States, infringement action where this was the last resort and, most recently, the compliance promotion seminars in municipal waste management, including with Italy.

The Commission actively promotes numerous awareness-raising projects on marine protection, notably through the LIFE funding instrument. ([4]) A Europe-wide 'Clean-up day' is planned for 10 May, 2014 which is expected to have a strong beach clean-up element. ([5]) This also responds to a Written Declaration of the Parliament. ([6])

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/resource_efficiency/news/up-to-date_news/22102013-1_en.htm
([2]) Own initiative report of Mr Prodi:
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=en&reference=COM(2013)0123
([3]) Directive 94/62/EC, OJ L 365, 31.12.1994.
([4]) For an overview of marine-related LIFE projects in the previous funding period, see:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/publications/lifepublications/lifefocus/documents/marine_lr.pdf
A similar overview is in preparation for the current period.
([5]) For further details, see http://www.ewwr.eu/lets-clean-up-europe
([6]) PE457.600 of 14.2.2011.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010752/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(19 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Campagna comunitaria per standardizzazione vaccini e informazione-promozione

In una recente conferenza stampa è stato lanciato un allarme dall'Associazione italiana medici pediatri riguardante l'inquietante propagarsi di propagande anti-vaccini sulla rete.

Visitando un campione di siti dedicati all'argomento, infatti, mediamente 95 siti su 100 risultano essere considerabili «anti-vaccini».

L'importanza dei vaccini come la più potente arma di prevenzione contro le infezioni non è messa in discussione da nessuna istituzione sanitaria nazionale dei paesi membri, ma la riduzione dei casi di malattie infettive dovuta proprio alle vaccinazioni ha fatto calare nella popolazione la percezione del rischio.

Questa percezione non viene certamente coadiuvata dalla mancanza di strategia comune a livello europeo: i vaccini proposti ai bambini nei 29 paesi europei (27 dell'Unione europea, più Islanda e Norvegia) sono 15: alcuni obbligatori per tutti, o solamente per i soggetti a rischio o per fasce di età, altri sono raccomandati o consigliati. In quindici nazioni non esistono vaccinazioni obbligatorie, mentre in altre quattordici ne esiste almeno una. Anche l'obbligatorietà del vaccino è stabilita con provvedimenti legislativi molto diversi da paese a paese (conseguenze penali per i genitori, sanzioni pecuniarie, o difficoltà a frequentare le scuole pubbliche) o può essere molto più mite, con sanzioni solo teoriche e mai applicate, permettendo in pratica l'obiezione e l'adozione di calendari vaccinali alternativi.

Anche i programmi di vaccinazione differiscono considerevolmente: sono diversi i vaccini, il tipo utilizzato, il numero totale di dosi, e la tempistica delle somministrazioni.

Considerata la sempre maggiore mobilità dei cittadini europei e delle loro famiglie, può la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

1. è possibile intraprendere un'attività regolatoria per stabilire a livello comunitario degli standard minimi di vaccinazione da rispettare su tutto il territorio?

2. Non ritiene opportuno intraprendere una attività mediatica di promozione ed informazione sull'importanza e sicurezza delle vaccinazioni?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(11 novembre 2013)

Una sempre minore accettazione dell'immunizzazione da parte dell'opinione pubblica e l'infondatezza delle percezioni riguardanti rischi e benefici della vaccinazione sono fattori controproducenti per gli sforzi realizzati nell'ambito dei programmi nazionali di vaccinazione e delle attività di coordinamento a livello UE volte a migliorare il tasso di copertura delle vaccinazioni negli Stati membri dell'UE.

L'articolo 168 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea stabilisce che gli Stati membri, in collegamento con la Commissione, sono tenuti a coordinare tra loro le rispettive politiche e i rispettivi programmi nel settore della sanità pubblica. Questo significa che la competenza in materia di politiche e programmi di vaccinazione spetta agli Stati membri, mentre alla Commissione spetta il compito di contribuire al coordinamento dei programmi nazionali di vaccinazione.

Per questo motivo non è possibile intraprendere un'attività regolatoria per stabilire a livello dell'UE standard minimi di vaccinazione da rispettare in tutta l'Unione europea. Tuttavia, la decisione del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio relativa alle gravi minacce per la salute a carattere transfrontaliero prevede la possibilità di coordinare le misure nazionali per far fronte a tali minacce, comprese le misure di vaccinazione come elemento di gestione del rischio. Tale decisione costituisce inoltre la base giuridica per un'aggiudicazione congiunta delle contromisure mediche.

La Commissione coopera inoltre in modo continuo con il Centro europeo per la prevenzione ed il controllo delle malattie su questioni attinenti alla vaccinazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010752/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: EU campaign for the standardisation of vaccines and information and promotional activities

At a recent press conference, the Italian Association of Paediatricians sent out a warning about the worrying spread of anti-vaccination propaganda on the Internet.

Visiting a sample of websites on the subject reveals that 95% on average are distinctly 'anti-vaccination'.

None of the Member States' national health institutions has ever challenged the importance of vaccines as the most powerful preventive tool against infectious diseases; however, the fall in the number of cases of these diseases (precisely because of vaccination) has weakened the perception of risk among the population.

This perception is certainly not helped by the lack of a common strategy at European level. Across the 29 European countries (27 EU countries plus Iceland and Norway), 15 vaccines are available for children; some are compulsory for all children or only for vulnerable individuals or certain age groups, whilst others are recommended or advised. In 15 of the countries, there are no compulsory vaccines, whilst in the other 14 at least one is compulsory. The legislative provisions enforcing compulsory vaccination also differ widely from one country to the next (criminal sanctions for parents, fines, difficulty obtaining admission to state schools). Some provisions are much milder, with sanctions that exist in theory but are never applied, which means that, in practice, parents can object or adopt alternative vaccination schedules.

The vaccination programmes also differ considerably: there are differences in the vaccines themselves, the types of vaccine used, the total number of doses and the vaccination schedule.

In view of the increasing mobility of European citizens and their families:

1. Can a regulatory process be undertaken that will establish EU-level minimum vaccination standards to be adhered to throughout the European Union?

2. Does the Commission not think it should undertake an information and promotional media campaign on the importance and safety of vaccination?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 November 2013)

Declining public acceptance of immunisation and unfounded perceptions of the risks and benefits of vaccination are counter-productive to efforts of national vaccination policies and EU coordination activities to enhance vaccination coverage rates in the EU Member States.

Article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union provides that Member States shall, in liaison with the Commission, coordinate among themselves their policies and programmes in the area of public health. This means that the competence for vaccination policies and programmes is with the EU Member States and the Commission's role is to contribute to the coordination of national vaccination policies.

So, no regulatory process can be undertaken to establish an EU-level minimum vaccination standard to be adhered to throughout the European Union. However, the decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on serious cross-border threats provides the possibility of coordinating national responses to serious cross-border threats to health including vaccination measures as part of risk management. Furthermore, this decision provides a legal basis for a joint procurement of medical countermeasures.

The Commission is also continuously cooperating on vaccination issues with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010753/13
aan de Commissie
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(19 september 2013)

Betreft: Brandveiligheid in Europa

Ongeveer een derde van de woningbranden in Europa wordt veroorzaakt door consumentenproducten. Door de toepassing van steeds meer kunststoffen in inventaris en het steeds beter isoleren van woningen kan al na drie minuten een niet-overleefbare situatie ontstaan die met een snelle opkomsttijd niet is te compenseren. De prestaties van de brandweer worden enkel afgemeten op basis van opkomsttijden, dus hoe snel de brandweer bij een incident ter plaatse is. Dit is belangrijk, maar enkel sturen op opkomsttijden draagt niet bij aan vergroting van de brandveiligheid. Een situatie waarbij een brand zich soms tientallen minuten kan ontwikkelen alvorens deze gemeld wordt, kan namelijk niet meer worden gecompenseerd met strakke opkomsttijden en snel ter plaatse zijn.

Is de Commissie ook van mening dat een flinke impuls op het gebied van preventie — dus mensen bewust maken wat zij zelf kunnen doen om te voorkomen dat brand uitbreekt — vele malen effectiever is? En waarom wel of niet?

Weet de Commissie welke lidstaten wetgeving hebben op het gebied van normering van brandweeroptreden c.q. effectmeting van de activiteiten van de brandweer?

Welke van deze lidstaten hebben specifieke wetgeving of richtlijnen voor opkomsttijden en voertuigbezetting?

Welke overwegingen liggen aan de betreffende wetgeving of richtlijnen ten grondslag?

Is de Commissie van plan geharmoniseerde brandveiligheidseisen voor in de EU verkochte consumentenproducten in te voeren om de brandveiligheid in alle Europese lidstaten te vergroten? Zo nee waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Mimica namens de Commissie
(13 november 2013)

Krachtens artikel 6 VWEU is de bevoegdheid van de Unie op het gebied van civiele bescherming ertoe beperkt het optreden van de lidstaten te ondersteunen, te coördineren of aan te vullen.

Op basis van deze bevoegdheid heeft de Commissie al in 1999 het communautair actieprogramma voor civiele bescherming ontwikkeld ([1]). In het kader van dit programma is een verslag over de preventie van branden en andere ongevallen ([2]) gepubliceerd.

De Commissie beschikt niet over gedetailleerde informatie over de nationale voorschriften inzake het optreden van de brandweer (inclusief opkomsttijden en voertuigbezetting).

Krachtens Richtlijn 2001/95/EG inzake algemene productveiligheid ([3]) mogen alleen veilige consumentenproducten in de Unie in de handel worden gebracht. Wanneer de nationale autoriteiten voor markttoezicht brandonveilige producten opsporen, moeten ze de nodige maatregelen nemen en de Commissie en de andere lidstaten via het systeem voor snelle uitwisseling van informatie (Rapex) in kennis stellen ([4]) van de maatregelen om het in de handel brengen en het gebruik van producten die een ernstig risico voor de gezondheid en de veiligheid van de consumenten vormen, te beletten of te beperken ([5]).

De Commissie overweegt momenteel niet om naast de bestaande gezondheids- en veiligheidseisen voor consumentenproducten specifieke geharmoniseerde brandveiligheidseisen voor consumentenproducten in te voeren. De Commissie zal de gezondheids- en milieueffecten van brandvertragers echter blijven beoordelen en ze verwijst naar haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-11339/2012 ([6]).

([1]) Beschikking 1999/847/EG, PB L327, blz. 53.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/echo/civil_protection/civil/prote/pdfdocs/fire_prevention.pdf
([3]) PB L 11 van 15.1.2002, blz. 4.
([4]) Overeenkomstig artikel 12 van Richtlijn 2001/95/EG of artikel 22 van Verordening (EG) nr. 765/2008 inzake accreditatie en markttoezicht (PB L 218 van 13.8.2008, blz. 30).
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/rapex/index_en.htm
([6]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010753/13
to the Commission
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(19 September 2013)

Subject: Fire safety in Europe

Approximately one third of house fires in Europe are caused by consumer products. Because more and more plastics are being used in furniture and because homes are increasingly well insulated, it can take as little as three minutes to create a non-survivable situation, which cannot be compensated for by rapid callout times. The performance of fire brigades is measured only in terms of callout times, i.e. how quickly they arrive on the scene of a fire. This is important, but taking callout times as the only criterion does not help to improve fire safety. A situation in which a fire may sometimes develop for tens of minutes before being reported can no longer be compensated for by a swift response and arrival on the scene.

Does the Commission agree that strong action to promote prevention — i.e. to make people aware what they can do themselves to prevent fires from breaking out — is far more effective? And why/why not?

Does the Commission know which Member States have legislation in the field of standardisation of fire service operations or measurement of the impact of fire services' activities?

Which Member States have specific legislation or guidelines concerning response times and vehicle crewing?

What considerations are the legislation or guidelines concerned based on?

Does the Commission intend to introduce harmonised fire safety requirements for consumer products sold in the EU in order to improve fire safety in all European Member States? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(13 November 2013)

According to Article 6 of the TFEU, the Union competence in the field of civil protection is limited to carry out actions to support, coordinate or supplement actions of the Member States.

Based on this competence, the Commission developed already in 1999 the Community action programme in the field of civil protection ([1]). Within the programme, a report on the prevention of fires and other incidents ([2]) was published.

The Commission has no detailed information concerning Member States' rules regarding fire service operations, including fire department response times or vehicle crewing.

The Commission would like to point out that according to Directive 2001/95/EC on general product safety ([3]) consumer products must be safe when placed on the Union market. Member States' market surveillance authorities that have identified, among others, products posing a risk of fire need to take appropriate measures and notify them ([4]) to the Commission and other Member States through the rapid information exchange system (RAPEX), on measures taken to prevent or restrict the marketing or use of products posing a serious risk to the health and safety of consumers ([5]).

Beyond the existing health and safety requirements applicable to consumer products, the Commission is not considering at present the introduction of specific harmonised fire safety requirements for consumer products. It will however continue assessing the health and environmental effects of flame retardants and would like to refer to its answer to Written Question E-11339/2012 ([6]).

([1]) 1999/847/EC OJ L327/53.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/echo/civil_protection/civil/prote/pdfdocs/fire_prevention.pdf
([3]) OJ L 11, 15.1.2002, p. 4.
([4]) In accordance with Article 12 GPSD or Article 22 of Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 on accreditation and market surveillance, OJ L 218, 13.8.2008, p. 30.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/rapex/index_en.htm
([6]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-010754/13
till kommissionen (Vice-ordföranden / Höga representanten)
Olle Schmidt (ALDE)
(20 september 2013)

Angående: VP/HR – fallet Oswaldo Payá

Den kubanske politiske aktivisten Oswaldo Payá dog den 22 juli 2012. Enligt officiella rapporter omkom han i en bilolycka, men hans bror, Carlos Payá Sardinas, är övertygad om att han blev mördad. Oswaldo Payá var en stor förkämpe för demokrati, mänskliga rättigheter och yttrandefrihet i Kuba. Genom projektet Varela samlade han in underskrifter för yttrandefrihet och demokrati. Tusentals personer skrev på uppropet och utsatte sig därigenom för trakasserier från regimens sida. Han mottog Sacharovpriset 2002 och nominerades flera gånger till Nobels fredspris. Hans anseende skyddade honom från fängelse men inte från trakasserier. Det finns alltför många obesvarade frågor om omständigheterna kring Oswaldo Payás död. En internationell utredning av ”olyckan” är därför nödvändig.

— Kommer vice ordföranden/den höga representanten, Catherine Ashton, att diskutera Oswaldo Payás död nästa gång hon träffar företrädare för den kubanska regimen?

— Stöder vice ordföranden/den höga representanten, Catherine Ashton, kravet på en internationell utredning av Oswaldo Payás död, och kommer hon att göra allt i sin makt för att se till att en sådan utredning utförs?

Svar från den höga representanten/vice ordföranden Catherine Ashton på kommissionens vägnar
(25 oktober 2013)

EU följer människorättsaktivisternas situation på Kuba på nära håll och tar regelbundet upp därtill hörande frågor i sin politiska dialog med de kubanska myndigheterna på alla nivåer.

Krav på en internationell och oberoende utredning har överlämnats officiellt till FN:s råd för mänskliga rättigheter. Nu är det upp till FN:s råd för mänskliga rättigheter att avgöra hur relevant det är att inleda en utredning i ärendet. Den höga representanten/vice ordföranden upprepar sitt svar på fråga E-004347/2013 ([1]): EU och dess institutioner förfogar inte över den sortens mekanismer som krävs för att inleda en sådan utredning, men kommer även fortsättningsvis att bevaka situationen på nära håll.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010754/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Olle Schmidt (ALDE)
(20 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — The case of Oswaldo Payá

Cuban political activist Oswaldo Payá died on 22 July 2012. According to official reports he died in a car accident, but his brother Carlos Payá Sardinas is convinced that he was murdered. Oswaldo Payá was a great fighter for democracy, human rights and freedom of speech in Cuba. Through the Varela Project he collected signatures calling for freedom of speech and democracy. Thousands of people signed the petition, subjecting themselves to harassment by the regime. He received the Sakharov Price in 2002 and was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize several times. His fame protected him from imprisonment but not from harassment. Too many questions regarding the circumstances of Oswaldo Payá's death are left unanswered. An international investigation of the 'accident' is therefore necessary.

— Will the Vice-President/High Representative Catherine Ashton discuss Oswaldo Payá's death the next time she meets with representatives from the Cuban regime?

— Does the Vice-President/High Representative Catherine Ashton support the call for an international investigation of Oswaldo Payá's death, and will the Vice-President/High Representative Catherine Ashton do everything in her power to ensure that such an investigation is carried out?

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

The EU follows the situation of Human Rights Defenders in Cuba closely and regularly addresses related issues in its political dialogue with Cuban Authorities at all levels.

A demand for an international and independent investigation was officially submitted to the UN Human Rights Council. It is now up to the UN Human Rights Council to decide on the pertinence of launching an investigation into the matter. The HR/VP reiterates her reply to Question E-004347/2013 ([1]), that the EU and its institutions do not have mechanisms at their disposal to launch such an investigation but will continue to monitor closely the situation.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010756/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(20 September 2013)

Subject: Illegal hunting and trapping of birds in France

It has been brought to my attention that illegal hunting and trapping of the ortolan bunting bird species has been taking place recently in the French *département* of Landes. Volunteers in the region claim to have reported illegal activities to the police and yet no action has been taken.

Following previous correspondence on this issue, could the Commission look into national law enforcement practices in France relating to illegal trapping in order to ensure that adequate measures and penalties are in place?

Secondly, in its response to Written Question E-000347/2013 in March 2013, the Commission stated the following:

'Furthermore, acknowledging that illegal practices affecting bird populations occur in several countries in Europe, the Commission is developing, in consultation with Member States and stakeholders, a list of specific actions to address the problems, covering areas such as monitoring of illegal activities, information exchange and awareness-raising, prevention and enforcement improvements.'

Could the Commission please outline what progress has been made on this issue and what specific measures have been developed?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(6 November 2013)

Given persisting problems regarding illegal killing of the Ortolan Bunting in South-West France, the Commission identified a breach of Article 5 of Directive 2009/147/EC ([1]) (Birds Directive), and has initiated an infringement procedure against France in January 2013. The Commission is following up closely this case.

The Commission has undertaken several actions to prevent the illegal hunting and trapping of birds in collaboration with the Bern Convention, BirdLife International and the European Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation. It drafted a Roadmap towards eliminating illegal killing, trapping and trade of birds in the EU ([2]) further to consultations with Member States and stakeholders. In that context it has asked the EU Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law (IMPEL) to initiate a collaboration of enforcement officials across Member States on the specific issue of illegal killing of birds in the EU, it has organised information sessions for judges and prosecutors, it has gathered and exchanged good practices on measures to prevent poisoning, and it has funded several LIFE projects addressing the problem. Furthermore the Commission supports relevant international action under the Convention on Migratory Species and the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

([1]) OJ L20 of 26.1.2010.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/illegal_killing.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010757/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(20 September 2013)

Subject: Commission action regarding bus fares in Malta

In its September 2012 reply to Written Question E-007506/2012, which concerned discrimination between residents and non-residents in Malta regarding bus fares, the Commission stated that it was in contact with the Maltese authorities and was awaiting information regarding Malta's bus fare scheme.

Earlier this year, the Commission sent a letter of formal notice to Malta, citing discrimination on grounds of nationality.

I understand that the Commission is currently assessing the reply sent by Malta to this formal notice. Can the Commission indicate the status of this assessment, and how and when it expects to see the situation resolved?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(6 November 2013)

The Commission is committed to ensuring that national fare schemes in bus transport do not discriminate against non-resident Union citizens based on their nationality in violation of the relevant provisions of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and of Regulation (EU) No 181/2011 concerning the rights of passengers in bus and coach transport ([1]).

In this context, the Commission confirms that the infringement proceedings that have been initiated against Malta on 24 January 2013 are still ongoing. The reply submitted by the national authorities is currently under assesment by the competent services. Should evidence of a breach of EC law emerge, the Commission would then take any action deemed appropriate.

([1]) OJ L 55, 28.2.2011, p.1.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-010758/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(20 september 2013)

Angående: Tekniska standarder och upphandling

I sitt svar på den skriftliga frågan E-007029/2013 säger kommissionen att den behöver ytterligare uppgifter för att fastställa om en valideringstjänst är en tjänst inom kategori A eller B. Den särskilda tekniska standard som kommer att genomföras (SAML2) specificerades dock i frågan, liksom ett klagomål från svenska Konkurrensverket om den felaktiga klassificeringen av SAML2-standarden som en kategori B-tjänst (specifikt ”rättstjänst”), när den faktiskt visade många särdrag av en kategori A-tjänst (”teknisk tjänst”).

Det framgick också av den skriftliga frågan att den tekniska standarden hänförde sig till valideringstjänsten i fråga.

I vilka fall, förutom tillhandahållandet av en e-autentiseringstjänst, anser kommissionen att genomförandet av en särskild teknisk standard är en kategori B-tjänst snarare än en kategori A-tjänst?

Svar från Michel Barnier på kommissionens vägnar
(11 november 2013)

Kommissionen har förstått att den svenska regeringen överväger att upprätta en nationell myndighet för samordning av statliga och lokala förvaltningsmetoder och tjänster för elektronisk identifiering och signatur. Den svenska regeringens avsikt är att lansera samordningssystemet genom tilldelning av en tjänstekoncession eller koncessioner av myndigheten.

Som kommissionen angav i sitt svar på den skriftliga frågan E-007029/2013 är tanken att klassificeringen av tjänster i kategorierna A och B ska tillämpas i enlighet med direktiv 2004/18/EG på offentliga kontrakt avseende tjänster, inte på tjänstekoncessioner. Svaret på frågan huruvida sådana autentiseringstjänstekoncessioner ska ses som en kategori A-tjänst eller en kategori B-tjänst är därför irrelevant. Dessutom omfattar klassificeringen A/B olika kategorier av tjänster, men inte tekniska standarder såsom SAML2, vilka kan genomföras på flera olika typer av tjänster. Det är därför inte möjligt för kommissionen att göra en bedömning av framtida avtal utan att känna till alla detaljer.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010758/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(20 September 2013)

Subject: Technical standards and procurement

In its response to Written Question E-007029/2013 the Commission says it needs more information to determine if a validation service is an A- or a B-service. However, the particular technical standard which will be implemented (SAML2) was specified in the question, and a complaint by the Swedish Competition Authorities as to the wrongful classification of the SAML2 standard as a B-service (specifically 'legal service'), when in fact it showed many characteristics of A-services ('technical services'), was also specified.

It was also evident in the Written Question that the technical standard referred to the validation service at hand.

In which cases, other than the provision of an authentication service online, does the Commission consider that the implementation of a particular technical standard is a B-service rather than an A-service?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(11 November 2013)

The Commission understands that the Swedish Government is currently considering establishing a national authority for the coordination of state and local management practices and services for electronic identification and signature. The Swedish Government's intention would be to launch the coordination system through the award of a service concession or concessions awarded by the authority.

As the Commission indicated in its reply to Written Question E-007029/2013, however the classification of services into categories A and B in accordance with Directive 2004/18/EC is foreseen to be applied to public service contracts only, not to service concessions. Answering the question on the status of such authentication service concessions as either A or B services would therefore be irrelevant. Furthermore, the classification A/B addresses different categories of services but not technical standards such as SAML2, the implementation of which may take place in a variety of service contracts. Under such circumstances, it is not possible for the Commission to give a qualification to future contracts of which it does not know all the details.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010759/13
to the Commission
Stephen Hughes (S&D)
(20 September 2013)

Subject: Commission proposal for new rules to restrict air crews' Flight Time Limitations (FTL) (D028112/02) — safety enhancement clause/Recital 5

The current EU rules on flight time limitations (FTL) are subject to the principle of 'non-regression' or 'safety enhancement', allowing Member States to maintain national FTL provisions that are of a more protective nature.

In March 2013, the Commission shared with Parliament a paper entitled 'Questions and Answers on Air Crew Fatigue'. Question 4 asks: 'Are Member States allowed to apply more protective safety rules under the EASA proposal?' The answer is: 'Yes. According to […] harmonised aviation safety Regulations replace national rules … However, national specific deviations may be notified to the Commission or EASA in accordance with the prescribed procedures (Articles 14 and 22 of Regulation (EC) No 216/2008)'.

Correspondingly, Recital 5 of the new proposal for a regulation on the subject states that 'Member States may derogate or deviate from this regulation or the related certification specifications respectively, by applying provisions of a level of safety which is at least equivalent to the provisions of this regulation, in order to better address particular national considerations or operational practices'.

Can the Commission confirm that this means Member States may apply, and enforce on all their national operators, provisions of a more protective nature than those of the regulation, where they consider it necessary and provided that all provisions of the regulation are complied with, their level of safety is met or exceeded, and that a Member State's request has been treated in accordance with the required procedures?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(11 November 2013)

As regards Recital 5 of the draft Commission regulation, Member States may apply and enforce on their operators provisions of a more protective nature than those in the regulation, provided that the Member State's request has been processed in accordance with the required procedures and that it is ascertained that an equivalent level of safety is met or exceeded.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010760/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(20 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Arrest of Khalil Almarzooq

Khalil Almarzooq, political assistant to the Secretary-General of Bahrain's Al-Wefaq party and former deputy speaker of the parliament, was arrested two days ago (17 September 2013) on charges of inciting terrorism. Only limited and circumstantial evidence has been presented to support the charges. It is believed he will be held in Riffa Detention Centre for a minimum of 30 days.

The arrest followed a speech he made during an opposition rally in Saar on 7 September 2013. During the speech Mr Almarzooq urged opposition activists to refrain from violence. Al-Wefaq, Bahrain's main opposition group, has continually condemned violence and is a signatory of the Non-Violence Declaration.

Khalil Almarzooq is the first leading opposition figure from Al-Wefaq to be arrested since the opposition crackdown in March 2011. If Mr Almarzooq is not released and if further arrests follow, the moderate opposition may be weakened to such an extent that it is unable to advocate a peaceful approach and dialogue, and hopes for reconciliation will be damaged.

Yesterday Al-Wefaq boycotted national reconciliation talks in protest against the arrest.

The arrest also followed two responses from the international community to the situation in Bahrain –– the statement released by the European Parliament last week, which called for 'the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Bahrain', and the joint statement by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the human rights situation in Bahrain, which was signed by 47 countries.

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

2. Will the Vice-President/High Representative raise concerns about the case with the Bahraini authorities in order to guarantee respect for the fundamental right to a fair trial and an end to all repression of the opposition?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President follows the situation in Bahrain very closely and will continue to do so.

In a statement of 19 September ([1]), the EU expressed its concern over the arrest of Mr Al Marzooq and the subsequent decision of the opposition coalition to suspend its participation in the National Consensus Dialogue. The EU further urged the authorities to ensure that due legal process is fully respected. The HR/VP has consistently stressed that only significant and concrete confidence building steps, including the release of those arrested in the context of peaceful political activities, the respect for freedom of assembly and expression, and commitment to political reform and National Dialogue on both sides, have the potential to restore confidence leading up to genuine national reconciliation.

The EU will continue to advocate for constructive and inclusive dialogue that addresses the legitimate aspirations of all Bahrainis as the only way to promote peace and stability in the country.

([1]) Available at http://eeas.europa.eu/gulf_cooperation/index_en.htm (in the 'latest news' section), or directly at https://www.gov.uk/government/world-location-news/statement-by-the-eu-is-following-the-latest-developments-in-bahrain.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010761/13
à la Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(20 septembre 2013)

Objet: Protection des paysans contre la répression étatique en Colombie

Depuis plusieurs semaines, des milliers de paysans manifestent dans l'ensemble de la Colombie pour protester contre les politiques menées et les accords de libre-échange conclus, notamment avec les États-Unis, ainsi que pour revendiquer de meilleures conditions sociales et le respect du droit du travail. De nombreux autres secteurs se sont joints à ces réclamations: le secteur de la santé, des transports, des mineurs artisanaux et traditionnels, etc. Selon la résolution du Parlement européen du 13 juin relative à la conclusion de l'accord commercial entre l'Union européenne et ses États membres, d'une part, et la Colombie et le Pérou, d'autre part, le non-respect des Droits de l'homme et des principes démocratiques constituerait une «violation substantielle» de l'accord, ce qui, conformément au droit international public, pourrait donner lieu à l'adoption de mesures appropriées.

Or, depuis le début des manifestations, les paysans ont été stigmatisés par les autorités, accusés d'être au service des FARC. Les manifestants ont été victimes de violations de leur liberté d'expression, et d'agressions et menaces directes de la part des forces de sécurité. La répression a été violente, au moins quatre paysans sont tombés sous les balles de l'armée colombienne et des centaines de manifestants ont été incarcérés — plus de 500 selon les chiffres du bureau du procureur général, sans aucune information sur leur état de santé, tant physique que mentale, et la progression de leur situation judiciaire.

— La Commission est-elle consciente des graves violations des droits des paysans, des peuples autochtones et des syndicalistes commises depuis le début des manifestations? Que compte-t-elle faire face à ces violations flagrantes de la liberté d'expression et de manifestation et face à la détention arbitraire de plus de 500 personnes?

— Dans le plan d'action pour 2010-2014 soumis à l'Union européenne le 26 octobre 2012, le gouvernement colombien mettait en avant l'importance d'enquêter sur les crimes contre les civils ainsi que la protection des citoyens colombiens et des secteurs vulnérables, à savoir les paysans, les syndicalistes et les peuples autochtones. Comment la Commission compte-elle réagir face aux demandes des paysans exprimées depuis le début des manifestations et à la violente répression menée par l'État colombien et ses forces armées?

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

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante est informée de la récente vague de protestations sociales en Colombie à laquelle l'Honorable Parlementaire fait référence et des arrestations qui ont eu lieu dans le cadre de certaines de ces manifestations. La délégation de l'Union européenne en Colombie et les ambassades des États membres suivent la situation avec attention. Dans le cadre du dialogue sur les Droits de l'homme avec les autorités colombiennes, l'Union européenne a déjà indiqué à plusieurs reprises l'importance qu'elle attache au respect de la liberté d'expression, y compris le droit de manifester et de protester pacifiquement. De plus, la délégation de l'UE en Colombie continue de suivre la situation des défenseurs des Droits de l'homme et met en œuvre plusieurs projets d'aide en leur faveur.

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante suit également avec intérêt les débats entre les organisations d'agriculteurs et les autorités et l'annonce d'un certain nombre de mesures qui devraient contribuer à résoudre certaines des demandes formulées par les manifestants («Pacte agricole»). À cet égard, elle souhaiterait rappeler à l'Honorable Parlementaire que le soutien en faveur du développement rural constitue l'un des principaux éléments de l'aide de l'UE à la Colombie. Plus particulièrement, un programme de 40 millions d'euros à financer au titre de l'instrument de coopération au développement (ICD) permettra à l'UE de soutenir la mise en œuvre de la politique de développement rural en mettant l'accent sur la portée territoriale et une approche participative. Ce programme devrait commencer au début de 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010761/13
to the Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(20 September 2013)

Subject: Protecting farmers against state repression in Colombia

For several weeks, thousands of farmers have been protesting throughout Colombia against policies implemented by the country's government and the free trade agreements concluded with, among others, the United States. They have also been calling for better living standards and for labour laws to be observed. A number of other sectors, such as healthcare, transport and mining (both artisanal and traditional), have lent their backing to these demands. According to Parliament's Resolution of 13 June 2013 on the conclusion of the Trade Agreement between the European Union and Colombia and Peru, 'failure to respect human rights and democratic principles would constitute a "material breach" of the TA which, under public international law, could give rise to the adoption of appropriate measures'.

Since the beginning of the protests, the farmers have been the subject of a smear campaign by the authorities and accused of acting on behalf of FARC. Protesters have seen their freedom of expression violated and been subjected to assaults by and direct threats from the security forces. In a violent crackdown at least four farmers were shot dead by the Colombian Army and hundreds of protesters were jailed — more than 500 according to the Prosecutor-General's office. No information has been released about their state of health — either physical or mental — or moves to charge them or put them on trial.

— Is the Commission aware of the serious violations of the human rights of farmers, indigenous peoples and trade unionists that have been committed since the protests started? How does it intend to respond to these blatant violations of freedom of expression and the freedom to protest, as well as the arbitrary detention of more than 500 people?

— In its action plan for the period 2010-2014, which was submitted to the EU on 26 October 2012, the Colombian Government stressed the importance of investigating crimes committed against civilians and of protecting ordinary Colombians and vulnerable groups, such as farmers, trade unionists and indigenous peoples. How does the Commission plan to respond to the demands made by the farmers since the protests started and to the violent crackdown unleashed by the Colombian State and its armed forces?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the recent wave of social protests in Colombia to which the Honourable Member refers to and of the arrests that took place in the context of some of the demonstrations. The Delegation of the European Union in Colombia and Member States' Embassies are following the situation closely. In the framework of its dialogue on human rights with the Colombian authorities, the EU has already indicated on various occasions the importance it attaches to freedom of expression, including the right to demonstrate and protest peacefully. Moreover, the EU Delegation in Colombia continues to follow the situation of human rights defenders and runs several assistance projects supporting them.

The HR/VP has also been following with interest the discussions between farmers' organisations and the authorities and the announcement of a number of measures that should help answer some of the demands made by the protesters ('Agricultural Pact'). In this respect, they would like to remind the Honourable Member that support to rural development constitutes one of the main elements of EU assistance to Colombia. A EUR 40 million programme to be funded under the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) will in particular allow the EU to support the implementation of rural development policy with a territorial focus and a participatory approach. It should start early in 2014.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010762/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(20 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Roma, impianto AMA-Salaria: ulteriori informazioni circa la possibilità di delocalizzazione dell'impianto e tutela dell'ambiente e della salute pubblica

Premesso che, nella risposta all'interrogazione E-001393/2013 relativa all'impianto di AMA — Salaria dell'8 aprile 2013, la Commissione affermava di voler procedere con la richiesta alle autorità italiane di informazioni relative all'applicazione della direttiva VIA (2011/92/UE) nella realizzazione dell'impianto AMA e ai relativi provvedimenti adottati o previsti per garantire che i miasmi provenienti da tale impianto non siano causa di disagi, così come previsto dalla direttiva quadro sui rifiuti (2008/98/CE).

Considerando che, a tutt'oggi, tali miasmi provenienti dall'impianto AMA rimangono persistenti e continuano a causare enormi disagi, con possibili rischi per la salute dei residenti e dei lavoratori dell'area interessata, può la stessa Commissione far sapere:

— quali informazioni ha ricevuto dalle autorità italiane e quali conclusioni ha dedotto dalle informazioni stesse;

— se è a conoscenza di iniziative intraprese dalle istituzioni regionali e comunali competenti, in particolare se sia stata formalmente avviata la procedura per la delocalizzazione tramite il reperimento di una nuova area e dei fondi utili al trasferimento dello stesso;

— quali misure urgenti intende adottare per salvaguardare la salute dei residenti e dei lavoratori dell'area interessata;

— un quadro generale della situazione.

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(6 novembre 2013)

La Commissione ha invitato le autorità italiane a fornire informazioni riguardanti l'applicazione delle direttive 2011/92/UE ([1]) e 2008/98/CE ([2]) nella realizzazione dell'impianto di AMA Salaria.

Dopo aver analizzato le informazioni trasmesse dall'Italia nel maggio 2013, la Commissione ha chiesto alle autorità italiane di fornire ulteriori chiarimenti. La risposta delle autorità italiane è pervenuta il 16 ottobre 2013 ed è attualmente in corso di valutazione.

([1]) Direttiva 2011/92/UE concernente la valutazione dell'impatto ambientale di determinati progetti pubblici e privati (GU L 26 del 28.1.2012).
([2]) Direttiva 2008/98/CE relativa ai rifiuti (GU L 312 del 22.11.2008).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010762/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(20 September 2013)

Subject: AMA Salaria plant in Rome: latest information on the plant's relocation; protection of the environment and public health

In its answer to Written Question E-001393/2013 of 8 April 2013 regarding the AMA Salaria plant, the Commission said that it would ask the Italian authorities to provide information to demonstrate compliance with the EIA Directive (2011/92/EU) during the planning and construction of the plant and any measures taken or planned with a view to ensuring that unpleasant odours from the plant do not cause inconvenience, in keeping with the requirements of the Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC).

The persistent unpleasant odours from the AMA plant are still causing a great deal of discomfort and may be jeopardising the health of those living and working in the affected area.

— What information has the Commission received from the Italian authorities and what conclusions has it drawn?

— Does the Commission know whether any action has been taken by the regional or local authorities, and, in particular, whether steps have been taken to relocate the plant, by identifying an alternative site and earmarking the funds required?

— What urgent action does the Commission intend to take in order to protect the health of those living and working in the affected area?

— Please can the Commission provide a general overview of the situation.

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(6 November 2013)

The Commission has asked the Italian authorities to provide information regarding the application to the AMA Salaria plant of Directive 2011/92/EU ([1]) and Directive 2008/98/EC ([2]).

Following assessment of the information provided by Italy in May 2013, the Commission has asked the Italian authorities to submit further clarifications. The reply of the Italian authorities has been received on 16 October 2013 and is currently under assessment.

([1]) Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (OJ L 26, 28.1.2012).
([2]) Directive 2008/98/EC on waste (OJ L 312, 22.11.2008).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011052/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(27 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Scarsa adesione all'UE dell'opinione pubblica turca

Secondo un recente sondaggio pubblicato dalla stampa turca, i turchi sono sempre più tiepidi sull'ipotesi di una futura adesione all'UE, con un 44 % a favore rispetto al 48 % dell'anno scorso e il 73 % nel 2004. Gli europei, tuttavia, sono ancora più freddi, con solo un 20 % dei cittadini UE che vede con favore un possibile ingresso di Ankara, mentre il 33 % lo ritiene negativo.

Visto lo scetticismo da parte tanto dei cittadini turchi quanto di quelli europei in merito all'adesione della Turchia all'UE, può la Commissione europea specificare che cosa in realtà spinge l'Unione, a parte gli aspetti puramente economici, a ostinarsi affinché la Turchia entri a far parte dell'UE?

Non ritiene che debba essere rispettata l'opinione dei cittadini, in primis europei, principio sul quale si dice fondarsi l'UE?

Si apprende inoltre che il negoziato dovrebbe essere rilanciato a breve con l'apertura di un nuovo capitolo.

Può la Commissione specificare quale capitolo sarà aperto?

Risposta congiunta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(19 novembre 2013)

La Commissione è al corrente del sondaggio e segue da vicino le prospezioni dell'opinione pubblica turca sulle relazioni tra l'UE e la Turchia.

Le fluttuazioni nell'orientamento dei cittadini a favore o contro l'adesione di un determinato paese all'UE sono un elemento ricorrente del processo negoziale, come lo è stato anche per altri paesi che hanno aderito all'Unione in passato.

La Commissione prende invece atto dell'impegno strategico delle autorità turche verso l'adesione all'UE, come ribadito di recente dal presidente Gul, che ha affermato, in un'intervista del settembre 2013 a margine della 68ª Assemblea generale delle Nazioni Unite a New York, che l'Unione europea è «un orientamento strategico» per la Turchia ([1]). La Commissione riconosce inoltre che la legislazione dell'Unione europea è stata un punto di riferimento per la preparazione del recente pacchetto sulla democratizzazione, come affermato dal primo ministro Erdoğan e menzionato dalla Commissione nella relazione sui progressi della Turchia presentata il 16 ottobre 2013 ([2]).

Il 22 ottobre 2013 il Consiglio ha deciso di confermare la posizione comune dell'UE sull'apertura del capitolo 22 «Politica regionale e coordinamento degli strumenti strutturali» con la Turchia e di convocare il 5 novembre 2013 a Bruxelles una conferenza di adesione a livello ministeriale.

([1]) http://www.cfr.org/turkey/conversation-abdullah-gul/p31490.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010763/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(20 september 2013)

Betreft: Turken willen niet bij EU

Onder de Turkse bevolking neemt het enthousiasme voor toetreding tot de Europese Unie zienderogen af, zo blijkt uit onderzoek van „Transatlantic Trends". Slechts 44 % van de Turken wil dat het land toetreedt tot de EU. Vorig jaar was dat 48 % en in 2004 nog 73 % ([1]).

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het onderzoek van „Transatlantic Trends", waaruit blijkt dat slechts nog 44 % van de Turken — een minderheid dus! — wil dat het land toetreedt tot de EU? Hoe ervaart de Commissie dit?

2. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de wil van (de meerderheid van) het volk moet worden gerespecteerd en dienvolgens moet worden gehandeld? Is de Commissie er aldus toe bereid te concluderen dat Turkije níet tot de EU dient toe te treden en de toetredingsonderhandelingen moeten worden beëindigd? Zo neen, hoe serieus neemt de Commissie de wil van het Turkse volk dan?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(19 november 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van deze enquête en volgt de Turkse opiniepeilingen op het gebied van de betrekkingen tussen de EU en Turkije op de voet.

Schommelingen in de steun voor het EU-lidmaatschap van ieder land zijn een normaal verschijnsel dat de onderhandelingsprocessen in het verleden met landen die later tot de EU zijn toegetreden, ook kenmerkte.

De Commissie neemt echter nota van de strategische inzet van de Turkse autoriteiten voor de toetreding tot de EU, zoals onlangs andermaal door president Gül werd bevestigd, die in een interview in de marge van de 68e Algemene Vergadering van de Verenigde Naties in New York in september 2013 erkende dat de Europese Unie een „strategische oriëntatie" voor Turkije is ([2]). De Commissie neemt ook nota van premier Erdoğans vermelding van de EU-wetgeving als een referentiepunt om het recente democratiseringspakket voor te bereiden, wat de Commissie in haar op 16 oktober 2013 gepubliceerde voortgangsverslag opnam ([3]).

Op 22 oktober 2013 besloot de Raad het gemeenschappelijk standpunt van de EU over de opening van hoofdstuk 22 (regionaal beleid en de coördinatie van structuurinstrumenten) met Turkije te bevestigen, en op 5 november 2013 in Brussel een toetredingsconferentie op ministerieel niveau te beleggen.

([1]) http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2664/Nieuws/article/detail/3512641/2013/09/19/Steeds-minder-Turken-willen-EU-lidmaatschap.dhtml.
([2]) http://www.cfr.org/turkey/conversation-abdullah-gul/p31490.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/strategy_paper_2012_nl.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010763/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(20 September 2013)

Subject: Reluctance of the Turks to join the EU

Research by Transatlantic Trends shows that enthusiasm for joining the European Union is perceptibly dwindling among the people of Turkey. Only 44% of Turks wish their country to join the EU. Last year the corresponding figure was 48% and in 2004 73% ([1]).

1. Is the Commission aware of the research by Transatlantic Trends indicating that only 44% of Turks — a minority, therefore! — still wish their country to accede to the EU? What view does the Commission take of this?

2. Does the Commission agree that the will of the people (or of a majority of them) should be respected and that action should be taken accordingly? Will the Commission therefore conclude that Turkey should never join the EU and that the accession negotiations should be terminated? If not, how seriously does the Commission take the will of the Turkish people?

Question for written answer E-011052/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(27 September 2013)

Subject: Low level of public support for the EU in Turkey

According to a recent poll published in the Turkish press, the Turks are increasingly unenthusiastic about the possibility of acceding to the EU in the future, with 44% in favour compared with 48% last year and 73% in 2004. Europeans, however, are less enthusiastic still, with just 20% of EU citizens having a favourable opinion of Turkey's possible entry, whereas 33% have a negative view.

Given that the Turks are just as sceptical as the Europeans with regard to Turkey's accession to the EU, can the Commission specify what is actually driving the EU, apart from purely economic factors, to insist on Turkey joining the EU?

Does it not agree that the opinion of citizens, primarily Europeans, should be respected, as a supposed founding principle of the EU?

It appears that negotiations are to be resumed shortly, with the opening of a new chapter.

Can the Commission specify which chapter will be opened?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(19 November 2013)

The Commission is aware of the poll and follows Turkish public opinion surveys on EU-Turkey relations closely.

Fluctuations in the support for any country's EU membership are a regular feature in negotiation processes, as has been shown by other countries that have joined the EU in the past.

The Commission notes, however, the Turkish Authorities' strategic commitment to EU accession, as recently re-affirmed by President Gul, who acknowledged, in an interview on the margins of the 68th United Nations General Assembly in New York in September 2013, that the European Union is a 'strategic orientation' for Turkey ([2]). The Commission also notes Prime Minister Erdoğan's mention of EU legislation as a reference point for preparing the recent democratisation package, which was mentioned by the Commission in its Progress Report released on 16 October 2013 ([3]).

([1]) http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2664/Nieuws/article/detail/3512641/2013/09/19/Steeds-minder-Turken-willen-EU-lidmaatschap.dhtml
([2]) http://www.cfr.org/turkey/conversation-abdullah-gul/p31490
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

On 22 October 2013 the Council agreed to confirm the EU common position for the opening of Chapter 22 on regional policy and coordination of structural instruments with Turkey, and to convene an Accession Conference at Ministerial level on 5 November 2013 in Brussels.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-010764/13
an die Kommission
Gesine Meissner (ALDE)
(23. September 2013)

Betrifft: Unfairer Wettbewerb im Speditionsgewerbe durch Kraftfahrer aus EU-Drittstaaten

In vielen deutschen Zeitungsartikeln wurde in letzter Zeit über „philippinische Billig-Trucker" berichtet. Hintergrund sind lettische Transportunternehmen, die gezielt philippinische Fahrer anwerben, denen ein geringerer Lohn gezahlt wird als einheimischen lettischen Kraftfahrern. Damit bauen diese Unternehmen ihren Wettbewerbsvorteil durch geringe Lohnkosten weiter aus und können im Rahmen der Kabotage-Regelungen auf dem deutschen Markt noch niedrigere Preise anbieten als bisher. Deutsche Speditionsunternehmen befürchten daher eine weitere Verdrängung aus dem Markt, da sie aufgrund der in Deutschland üblichen Lohnkosten gegenüber osteuropäischen Unternehmen immer weniger konkurrenzfähig sind.

Ist diese Praxis, nach der lettische Transportunternehmen asiatische Fahrer zu günstigeren Bedingungen einstellen als einheimische Fahrer, um auf dem europäischen Markt konkurrenzfähiger zu sein, mit dem EU-Recht vereinbar? Hat die Kommission Vorschläge, wie das deutsche Speditionsgewerbe vor allzu großer „Billig-Konkurrenz" geschützt werden könnte?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(28. Oktober 2013)

Staatsangehörige von Nicht-EU-Ländern dürfen als Fahrer beschäftigt werden, sofern für sie eine Fahrerbescheinigung gemäß der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1072/2009 ([1]) ausgestellt wurde. Diese Fahrerbescheinigung wird nur Verkehrsunternehmen erteilt, die Fahrer nach Maßgabe des Rechts des Mitgliedstaats, in dem das Unternehmen niedergelassen ist, beschäftigen oder einsetzen. Die Voraussetzungen, unter denen Staatsangehörige von Nicht-EU-Ländern in einem Mitgliedstaat arbeiten können, sind in den jeweiligen nationalen Rechtsvorschriften festgelegt ([2]). Für die wirksame Durchsetzung der Rechtsvorschriften sind vorrangig die nationalen, in diesem Fall die lettischen Behörden verantwortlich ([3]). Um beurteilen zu können, ob die Beschäftigungsbedingungen dieser Fahrer mit dem EU-Recht im Einklang stehen, sind weitere Informationen erforderlich. Die Frau Abgeordnete wird gebeten, der Kommission alle weiteren sachdienlichen Angaben zu übermitteln.

Sind die entsprechenden Voraussetzungen erfüllt, kann einem Verkehrsunternehmer, der Staatsangehörige von Nicht-EU-Ländern als Fahrer im grenzüberschreitenden Güterverkehr beschäftigt, gemäß der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1072/2009 eine Fahrerbescheinigung erteilt werden. Diese Fahrer müssen außerdem weitere Anforderungen erfüllen, die sich aus dem EU Besitzstand im Güterkraftverkehrsbereich ergeben (diese betreffen Lenk- und Ruhezeiten, Fahrtenschreiber, Gewichte und Abmessungen der Fahrzeuge usw.), können aber dann grenzüberschreitende Beförderungen in anderen MS, einschließlich der Kabotage durchführen.

Philippinische Fahrer können dazu beitragen, den Fahrermangel in Lettland zu kompensieren. Berichten zufolge fehlten 2008 ([4]) EU-weit in diesem Sektor rund 75 000 Fahrer.

Die Zahl der Fahrer aus Nicht-EU-Ländern ist nach wie vor unbedeutend. Die Mitgliedstaaten teilten der Kommission mit, dass sie 2012 27 979 Fahrerbescheinigungen erteilt haben (davon 1 130 in Lettland). Ende 2021 belief sich die Gesamtzahl der Fahrerbescheinigungen auf 44 332 (4 020 in Lettland). Da insgesamt rund 4,5 Millionen Lastkraftwagenfahrer in der EU beschäftigt sind, beläuft sich der Anteil der aus Nicht-EU-Ländern stammenden Fahrer auf ungefähr 1 %.

([1]) Artikel 5 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1072/2009 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 21. Oktober 2009 über gemeinsame Regeln für den Zugang zum Markt des grenzüberschreitenden Güterkraftverkehrs, ABl. L 300 vom 14.11.2009.

([2]) Artikel 45 und 153 AEUV.

([3]) Weitere Informationen siehe Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-002254-13: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2013-002254 %2b0 %2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0 %2f%2fEN&language=DE

([4]) Mangel an qualifiziertem Personal im Straßengüterverkehr, Europäisches Parlament, 2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010764/13
to the Commission
Gesine Meissner (ALDE)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Unfair competition in the haulage sector from truckers from outside the EU

Many German newspapers have recently reported about 'low-cost Filipino truckers'. Latvian haulage companies specifically enlist Filipino drivers who they then pay lower wages than local Latvian drivers receive. These companies use the low wage costs to consolidate their competitive advantage and, under the cabotage rules, offer services on the German market at even lower prices than before. German hauliers thus fear that their market share will be squeezed even further, since they are becoming less and less competitive vis-à-vis East European firms as a result of higher average labour costs in Germany.

Are the actions of Latvian haulage companies who employ Asian drivers on more favourable terms than local drivers in order to boost their competitiveness in the EU compatible with EU legislation? What could be done in order to protect the German haulage sector from too much 'low-cost competition'?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(28 October 2013)

Nationals of non-EU countries may be employed as drivers subject to the issuing of a driver attestation in line with Regulation 1072/2009 ([1]). These may only be issued to road haulage undertakings employing or using drivers in accordance with the law of the Member State (MS) of registration of the undertaking. The conditions under which non-EU nationals can work in an EU MS are laid down in the laws of thatState ([2]). National authorities, here the Latvian authorities, have primary responsibility for enforcment ([3]). Further information on the employment conditions of these drivers would be necessary to assess the compatibility of their situation with EC law. The Honourable Member is invited to present any further relevant information to the Commission.

If the conditions are met, a driver attestation may be delivered to the road haulage undertaking employing a non-EU driver to carry out international transport according to Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009. Such drivers must also meet other requirements stemming from the EU road haulage acquis,(driving time and rest periods, tachograph, or weights and dimensions of road vehicle etc), but can then carry out international transport operations in other MS, including cabotage.

Filipino drivers may contribute to alleviating a driver shortage in Latvia. Across the EU it was reported in 2008 ([4]) that the sector suffered a shortage of around 75,000 drivers.

Employment of non-EU drivers remains marginal. MS informed the Commission that they issued 27,979 driver attestations during 2012, (1,130 in Latvia). The total number of driver attestations in circulation at the end of 2012 was 44,332 (4,020 in Latvia). Based on this data, as there are some 4.5 million lorry drivers in the EU, the share of non-EU drivers is around 1%.

([1]) Article 5 of Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 on common rules for access to the international road haulage market, OJ L 300, 14.11.2009.
([2]) Articles 45 and 153 of TFEU.
([3]) For more information, see reply to Written Question E-002254-13 http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2013-002254%2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fEN&language=EN
([4]) Shortage of Qualified Personnel in Road Freight Transport, European Parliament, 2009.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-010765/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(23 septembre 2013)

Objet: Liste des espèces exotiques envahissantes préoccupantes pour l'UE

La proposition de règlement relatif à la prévention et à la gestion de l'introduction et de la propagation des espèces exotiques envahissantes (COM(2013)0620), du 9 septembre 2013, s'articule autour d'une liste de 50 espèces exotiques envahissantes préoccupantes pour l'Union, qui sera établie en concertation avec les États membres sur la base d'évaluations des risques et de preuves scientifiques.

Afin d'éviter tout double emploi, il est indiqué à l'article 2 intitulé «champ d'application», que le présent règlement ne s'applique pas «aux organismes nuisibles aux végétaux figurant sur les listes dressées conformément à l'article 5, paragraphe 2, ou à l'article 32, paragraphe 3, ou soumis aux mesures prévues à l'article 29, paragraphe 1, du règlement relatif à la protection phytosanitaire (COM(2013) 267)».

1. Par lequel de ces deux règlements et par le biais de quelle liste la Commission européenne compte-t-elle couvrir la lutte contre le charançon rouge du palmier qui a colonisé l'Europe?

2. Le périmètre d'action et les cofinancements de l'Union liés à la lutte contre ce ravageur seront-ils équivalents dans le cadre de ces deux options règlementaires?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(25 octobre 2013)

Le charançon rouge des palmiers est un organisme nuisible qui entre déjà dans le champ d'application du régime phytosanitaire de l'UE ([1]). Le règlement proposé relatif aux espèces exotiques envahissantes ne s'appliquera pas aux organismes nuisibles aux végétaux, comme le charançon rouge des palmiers, qui sont soumis à des mesures spécifiques en vertu de la directive 2000/29/CE ([2]).

Contrairement au régime phytosanitaire de l'UE, le règlement proposé relatif aux espèces exotiques envahissantes n'inclut aucune disposition de cofinancement.

([1]) Décision 2007/365/CE.
([2]) En référence à certaines zones protégées, exposées à des dangers phytosanitaires particuliers dans l'UE, JO L 77 du 20.3.2002.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010765/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: List of invasive alien species of concern to the EU

The proposal for a regulation on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species (COM(2013)0620) of 9 September 2013 centres around a list of 50 invasive alien species of concern to the EU which will be drawn up in cooperation with the Member States on the basis of risk assessments and scientific evidence.

In order to avoid any duplication, Article 2 ('Scope') states that the regulation does not apply to 'pests of plants listed pursuant to Article 5(2) or Article 32(3) or subject to measures pursuant to Article 29(1) of Regulation (EU) No XXX/XXXX [on plant health — COM(2013) 267 final] '.

1. Which of these two regulations and which list does the Commission plan to use in order to combat the red palm weevil, which has colonised Europe?

2. Do the two regulations offer the same scope and the same EU co-financing for action to counter this pest?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(25 October 2013)

The red palm weevil is a pest that is already addressed through the EU plant health regime ([1]). The proposed regulation on invasive alien species will not apply to pests of plants which, like the red palm weevil, are subject to measures pursuant to Directive 2000/29/EC ([2])

Contrary to the EU plant health regime, the proposed regulation on invasive alien species does not include any co-financing provisions.

([1]) Decision 2007/365/EC.
([2]) As regards certain protected zones exposed to particular plant health risks in the Community. OJ L 77, 20.3.2002.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-010766/13
till kommissionen
Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL)
(23 september 2013)

Angående: Ojämlika krav på provfordon och körprov för A-behörigheter i EU

Möjligheten att ta körkort ska vara lika för alla, oavsett kön. En svensk undersökning visar att kvinnor satsar mer tid och resurser på körkortsutbildning vid trafikskola och privat övningskörning. Svensk statistik från körprov för MC 2004–2013 visar att kvinnor underkänns i betydligt större omfattning än män. Både antalet och andelen kvinnor som tar MC-körkort i Sverige har sjunkit sedan 2007. Många kvinnor avslutar körkortsutbildningen då de inte klarar av att genomföra körprov på de provfordon som krävs. Samtidigt visar olycksstatistik att det främst är män som dödas på motorcykel.

Under 2012 dök ett förslag upp från EU-kommissionen med nya skärpta krav på provfordon för A (175 kilo och 50 kW), utöver dem som redan finns i det tredje körkortsdirektivet . De nya kraven på provfordon kommer att medföra ännu större problem för kvinnor som är kortare än män. Svenska kvinnor är i genomsnitt 1,64 cm långa och män är i snitt 1,80.

Den nya regeln medför att många lägre motorcyklar med låg tyngdpunkt inte längre duger som provfordon då effekten är under 50 kW. Detta drabbar dem som är korta och får därmed problem att nå ner till marken, till styret och svänga med fullt styrutslag. Sverige hade tidigare viktkrav på motorcyklar (200 kilo) vilket slopats. Det har inte lett till fler MC-olyckor, tvärtom.

Det finns ingen statistisk undersökning som visar att liv kommer att räddas om man kör upp på en mer effektstark motorcykel som väger 175 kilo. Ingen har någonsin sett på frågan ur ett könsperspektiv. Ingen konsekvensanalys har genomförts av förslaget.

Var finns kommissionens beslutsunderlag och konsekvensanalys i frågan?

Vad avser kommissionen att göra åt könsskillnaden för att få A-behörighet?

Svar från Siim Kallas på kommissionens vägnar
(29 oktober 2013)

På grundval av kommissionens förslag beslöt Europaparlamentet och rådet 2006 att införa en gradvis tillgång till tunga motorcyklar, inbegripet de vars effekt överstiger 35 kW.

Eftersom provfordon bör vara representativa för den typ av fordon som man har rätt att köra inom en viss körkortskategori utarbetade kommissionen tillsammans med experter från medlemsstaterna kriterier för provfordon i fråga om sådana motorcyklar som parlamentsledamoten avser. Medlemsstaterna röstade för dessa ändringar, som sedan antogs och offentliggjordes 2012. ([1])

Dessa tekniska kriterier är objektiva och könsneutrala. Kommissionen känner inte till att motorcyklar i kategori A med en låg tyngdpunkt och en låg sittposition inte skulle kunna uppfylla dessa kriterier.

([1]) EUT L 321, 20.11.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010766/13
to the Commission
Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Unequal requirements for test vehicles and driving tests for A-class licences in the EU

Opportunities to obtain a driving licence should be the same for all, irrespective of gender. Research in Sweden shows that women devote more time and resources to training for driving tests, both with driving schools and in the form of private driving practice. Swedish statistics on motorcycle driving tests between 2004 and 2013 show that significantly more women than men are failed. Both the numbers and the proportion of women obtaining a motorcycle licence in Sweden have fallen since 2007. Many women abandon their driving training because they cannot manage to take their driving test on the required test vehicle. At the same time, accident statistics show that it is mainly men who are killed in motorcycling accidents.

In 2012, a Commission proposal emerged containing new, more stringent requirements for test vehicles for the A category (175 kg and 50 kW), over and above those already contained in the third Driving Licences Directive. The new requirements concerning test vehicles will create even greater problems for women who are shorter than men. On average, Swedish women are 1.64 m tall, while men are 1.80 m.

The new rule will mean that many lower motorcycles with a low centre of gravity are no longer suitable as test vehicles, as they have a power of less than 50 kW. This will create a problem for short people, who have difficulty in reaching the ground or the handlebars and in turning with a full lock. Sweden used to have a weight requirement for motorcycles (200 kg), which was abolished. It did not lead to more motorcycle accidents: on the contrary.

There has been no statistical research demonstrating that lives will be saved if people take their driving tests on more powerful motorcycles, weighing 175 kg. No one has ever considered the matter from a gender perspective. No impact analysis of the proposal has been performed.

Where can the basis for the Commission decision be found, and where is its impact analysis of the proposal?

What will the Commission do about gender differences affecting those who wish to obtain an A-class licence?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(29 October 2013)

On the basis of the Commission's proposal the European Parliament and the Council have decided in 2006 to introduce gradual access to heavy motorcycles, including those that exceed 35 kW.

Since testing vehicles should represent the type of vehicles that one would be entitled to drive under a specific driving licence category, the Commission, together with experts from the Member States elaborated on the criteria of testing vehicles of motorcycles, the honourable Member refered to. Member States voted in favour of these amendments, which were then adopted and published in 2012 ([1]).

These technical criteria are objective and gender-neutral. The Commission is not aware that motorcycles of category A with a low center of gravity and a low seating position could not fulfill these criteria.

([1]) OJ L 321, 20.11.2012.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010767/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Pacote duplo para Portugal

Na sua resposta à pergunta escrita E-008405/2013, sobre «Declarações da Comissão Europeia sobre um possível segundo programa para Portugal», a Comissão Europeia refere:

«Várias são as opções possíveis no que toca à fase pós-programa. Embora seja prematuro especular com qual seria o esquema mais adequado para Portugal, neste momento parece provável que Portugal possa solicitar algum tipo de apoio para facilitar o seu regresso aos mercados. Os instrumentos disponíveis são bem conhecidos. A versão mais leve consistiria numa LCCP concedida pelo MEE. Se Portugal for elegível para um programa TMD do BCE e quiser aproveitar essa oportunidade, terá de optar por uma LCCR pelo MEE. Ambos os tipos de programas implicam uma certa forma de condicionalidade que, no entanto, não seria muito diferente de uma mera supervisão pós-programa, que de qualquer forma será aplicável a Portugal em conformidade com o pacote duplo».

Atendendo a que, até ao presente momento, a troika nunca se referiu a um «pacote duplo», solicito à Comissão informações sobre o referido pacote e as suas implicações em termos de compromissos que eventualmente lhe estarão associados.

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(29 de novembro de 2013)

O pacote de dois atos legislativos («Two-Pack»), que entrou em vigor em 30 de maio de 2013, é aplicável a todos os Estados-Membros da área do euro em conformidade com o artigo 136.° do TFUE. O «Two-Pack») é composto por dois regulamentos, um dos quais (Regulamento (UE) n.° 472/2013) incide na supervisão económica e orçamental dos Estados-Membros afetados ou ameaçados por graves dificuldades no que diz respeito à sua estabilidade financeira, e por conseguinte, dos Estados-Membros que solicitam ou que recebem assistência financeira.

Este regulamento destina-se a alinhar os princípios que regem a concessão de assistência financeira aos Estados-Membros pelo âmbito do Tratado da UE e inclui três pilares principais: disposições relativas à aplicação de uma supervisão reforçada; disposições relativas aos casos de Estados-Membros sujeitos a um programa de ajustamento macroeconómico; e princípios de supervisão pós-programa, por forma a assegurar que os países que tenham estado sujeitos a um programa possam manter uma trajetória que lhes permita voltar a uma posição financeira e orçamental sustentável. O regulamento enumera, nomeadamente, vários cenários possíveis nos quais os Estados-Membros ficariam sujeitos a um desses tipos de «supervisão», os princípios que regem a concessão e a fiscalização da assistência financeira, bem como as condições associadas.

Entretanto, o Regulamento (UE) n.° 473/2013 estabelece disposições comuns para o acompanhamento e a avaliação dos projetos de planos de orçamento e para a correção do défice excessivo dos Estados-Membros da área do euro.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010767/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Two-pack for Portugal

In its response to Written Question E-008405/2013 on 'Statements by the European Commission on a possible second aid programme for Portugal', the Commission states:

'There are a number of options that can be envisaged for post-programme arrangements. Although it is premature to speculate which scheme will be the most suitable for Portugal, at the present stage it seems likely that Portugal may require some kind of backstop to facilitate its return to markets. The tools available are well known. The lightest version would be a PCCL by the ESM. If Portugal qualifies for an OMT programme by the ECB and wants to avail itself of this opportunity it would have to choose an ECCL by the ESM. Both types of programmes come with some form of conditionality which would, however, not be very different from post-programme surveillance that will apply to Portugal in any case in accordance with the provisions of the Two-Pack.'

Given that the troika has made no mention to date of a 'Two-Pack', could the Commission provide information on this pack and the commitments that might be associated with it?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(29 November 2013)

The 'Two-Pack' entered into force on 30th May 2013, and is applicable to all euro area Member States pursuant to Article 136 TFEU. The 'Two Pack' comprises two Regulations, one of which (EU No 472/2013) focuses on economic and budgetary surveillance of Member States experiencing or threatened with serious difficulties with respect to their financial stability and, thus, Member States requesting or receiving financial assistance.

That regulation intends to align principles used in providing financial assistance to Member States with the EU Treaty framework and comprises three critical pillars: provisions related to the application of enhanced surveillance; provisions related relevant to cases in which a Member State is under a macroeconomic adjustment programme; and principles of post-programme surveillance to ensure that countries which have been subject to a programme can maintain a path that brings them back to a sustainable financial and fiscal position. Among other elements, the regulation enumerates scenarios under which Member States would be placed under one of these types of 'surveillance', principles related to the provision and monitoring of financial assistance, and accompanying conditionality.

Meanwhile, Regulation EU No 473/2013 contains common provisions for monitoring and assessing draft budgetary plans and ensuring the correction of excessive deficit of the Member States in the euro area.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010768/13
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(23 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Οικονομική κατάσταση στην Κύπρο και τρόποι αντιμετώπισής της

Σε πρόσφατη συνέντευξη στα ΜΜΕ, ο πρόεδρος του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου Μάρτιν Σουλτς, μίλησε για την οικονομική κατάσταση στην Κύπρο, αναφέροντας μεταξύ άλλων:

«Η Κύπρος έχει κυριολεκτικά γονατίσει μετά την απόφαση του Eurogroup για κούρεμα των καταθέσεων και βρίσκεται σε δύσκολη διαπραγματευτική θέση λόγω των οικονομικών προβλημάτων … στην Κύπρο υπάρχει το εξής πρόβλημα: οι μικρομεσαίες επιχειρήσεις και οι ιδιώτες έχουν αυτήν τη στιγμή αδυναμία πρόσβασης σε δάνεια. Επομένως, οι επενδύσεις στη χώρα δεν είναι δυνατές, εκτός κι αν έρθουν από έξω … αυτό είναι καταστροφικό, γιατί οδηγεί σε πλήρη αδράνεια της οικονομίας. Θα πρέπει να συζητήσουμε με την Ευρωπαϊκή Τράπεζα Επενδύσεων γιατί δεν νομίζω ότι υπάρχει καμία άλλη χώρα που να χρειάζεται τόσο πολύ επενδύσεις όσο η Κύπρος».

Επιπρόσθετα, σύμφωνα με εκτιμήσεις της ΠΟΒΕΚ (Παγκύπρια Ομοσπονδία Βιοτεχνών και Επαγγελματιών Καταστηματαρχών), πλείστες επιχειρήσεις αντιμετωπίζουν ανυπέρβλητα χρηματοδοτικά και άλλα προβλήματα, με αποτέλεσμα να έχουν κλείσει άνω του 25% των μικρομεσαίων επιχειρήσεων το τελευταίο διάστημα, συμβάλλοντας σε παραπέρα αλματώδη αύξηση της ανεργίας.

Ερωτάται η Συμβούλιο:

1. Συμφωνεί με τις πιο πάνω εκτιμήσεις αλλά και τις ανησυχίες του Προέδρου του Κοινοβουλίου και της ΠΟΒΕΚ;

2. Οι αρνητικές αυτές εξελίξεις ήταν προβλέψιμες και σε ποιο βαθμό λήφθηκαν υπόψη στις αποφάσεις του Eurogroup για την Κύπρο;

3. Έχει η ΕΕ τρόπους να βοηθήσει να αποκατασταθεί η ομαλή ροή χρηματοδότησης στην κυπριακή οικονομία και ιδιαίτερα προς τις μικρομεσαίες επιχειρήσεις;

4. Τι προτίθεται να πράξει η ΕΕ, πέρα από τα όσα περιέχονται στο Μνημόνιο Συναντίληψης (MoU), για να αναστραφεί η καταστροφική αυτή πορεία για την Κύπρο και το λαό της;

Απάντηση
(2 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Στις 25 Μαρτίου 2013, η Ευρωομάδα εξέφρασε ικανοποίηση για τα σχέδια πολιτικής που παρουσίασαν οι κυπριακές αρχές και συμφώνησε με τα μέτρα για την αναδιάρθρωση του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα όπως αναφέρονται στο παράρτημα της δήλωσης της Ευρωομάδας της 25ης Μαρτίου 2013 ([1]). Στο πρόγραμμα αυτό εξετάζονται οι εξαιρετικές προκλήσεις που αντιμετωπίζει η Κύπρος προκειμένου να αποκατασταθεί η βιωσιμότητα του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα ώστε να αποκατασταθεί η βιώσιμη ανάπτυξη και τα υγιή δημόσια οικονομικά τα επόμενα έτη.

Στη δήλωσή της στις 13 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013, η ευρωομάδα εξέφρασε την ικανοποίησή της για το ότι οι κυπριακές αρχές επρόκειτο να συνεχίσουν να ελαφρύνουν σταδιακά τα διοικητικά μέτρα που είχαν τεθεί σε ισχύ για την μοναδική και εξαιρετική συγκυρία του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα της Κύπρου, και έκρινε ότι η περαιτέρω ελάφρυνση θα ευθυγραμμίζεται με το χάρτη πορείας των εργασιών της 8ης Αυγούστου 2013.

Σύμφωνα με την εκτελεστική απόφαση του Συμβουλίου 2013/463/ΕΕ της 13ης Σεπτεμβρίου 2013 για την έγκριση προγράμματος μακροοικονομικής σταθερότητας για την Κύπρο και την κατάργηση της απόφασης 2013/236/ΕΕ ([2]), η Κύπρος «συνεχίζει την ορθή εφαρμογή των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων και άλλων ταμείων της ΕΕ, τηρώντας τους δημοσιονομικούς στόχους του προγράμματος. Για να εξασφαλισθεί η αποτελεσματική χρήση των ταμείων της ΕΕ, η κυπριακή κυβέρνηση εξασφαλίζει ότι εξακολουθούν να είναι διαθέσιμα τα αναγκαία εθνικά κεφάλαια για την κάλυψη των εθνικών συνεισφορών, περιλαμβανομένων των μη επιλέξιμων δαπανών, στο πλαίσιο των ευρωπαϊκών διαρθρωτικών και επενδυτικών ταμείων (ΕΤΠΑ, ΕΚΤ, Ταμείο Συνοχής, ΕΓΤΑΑ και ΕΤΑ/ΕΤΘΑ) για τις περιόδους προγραμματισμού 2007-2013 και 2014-2020, λαμβάνοντας παράλληλα υπόψη τη διαθέσιμη χρηματοδότηση της Ευρωπαϊκής Τράπεζας Επενδύσεων (ΕΤΕπ)».

([1]) Οι δηλώσεις της Ευρωομάδας είναι διαθέσιμες στην ηλεκτρονική διεύθυνση: http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/eurogroup
([2]) ΕΕ L 250 της 20.9.2013, σ. 40.

Η ΕΤΕπ αξιολογεί, από κοινού με τις αρχές της Κύπρου, λύσεις προς υποστήριξη των επενδύσεων προτεραιότητας που θα συγχρηματοδοτηθούν από τα Ευρωπαϊκά διαρθρωτικά και επενδυτικά ταμεία τα επόμενα έτη.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010768/13
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Economic situation in Cyprus and ways of addressing it

In a recent press conference, European Parliament President Martin Schulz spoke of the economic situation in Cyprus and said, among other things:

'Cyprus has literally been brought to its knees by the Eurogroup bail-in decision and is in a difficult negotiating position as a result of its economic problems. The following problems exist in Cyprus: small and medium-sized enterprises and private individuals have no access to loans at the moment. Thus investment in the country is not possible, unless it comes from outside … this is catastrophic, because it causes the economy to come to a complete halt. We must talk with the European Investment Bank, because I do not think there is any other country that needs investments as badly as Cyprus'.

Furthermore, according to an assessment by the Cypriot Federation of Craftsmen and Retailers (POBEK), many businesses face insurmountable borrowing and other problems and, as a result, more than 25% of small and medium-sized enterprises have recently gone out of business, thereby making a further contribution to spiralling unemployment.

In view of the above, will the Council say:

1. Does it agree with the above assessment and the concerns of the President of the European Parliament and POBEK?

2. Were these negative developments foreseeable and to what extent were they taken into account in the Eurogroup decisions on Cyprus?

3. Does the EU have ways to help restore the flow of money into the Cypriot economy, especially to small and medium-sized businesses?

4. What does the EU intend to do, other than what is included in the memorandum of understanding (MoU), to reverse this catastrophic development for Cyprus and its people?

Reply
(2 December 2013)

On 25 March 2013, the Eurogroup welcomed the policy plans presented by the Cyprus authorities and agreed to the measures for restructuring the financial sector as specified in the annex to its statement of 25 March 2013 ([1]). The programme addresses the exceptional challenges that Cyprus is facing and restores the viability of the financial sector with the view of restoring sustainable growth and sound public finances over the coming years.

In its statement of 13 September 2013, the Eurogroup welcomed the fact that the Cyprus authorities would continue to gradually relax the administrative measures that had been put in place in view of the unique and exceptional situation of Cyprus' financial sector, and considered that further relaxation would be in line with the roadmap of 8 August 2013.

According to Council Implementing Decision 2013/463/EU of 13 September 2013 on approving the macroeconomic adjustment programme for Cyprus and repealing Decision 2013/236/EU ([2]), Cyprus 'shall preserve the good implementation of Structural and other EU Funds, in respect of the programme's budgetary targets. In order to ensure the effective implementation of EU funds, the Cypriot Government shall ensure that the necessary national funds remain available to cover national contributions, including non-eligible expenditure, under the European Structural and Investment Funds in the framework of the 2007-13 and 2014-20 programme periods, while taking into account available European Investment Bank (EIB) funding'.

The EIB is evaluating, jointly with the Cyprus authorities, solutions to support priority investments to be co-financed by European Structural and Investment Funds over the coming years.

([1]) Eurogroup statements can be found at http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/eurogroup
([2]) OJ L 250, 20.9.2013, p. 40.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010769/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(23 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Οικονομική κατάσταση στην Κύπρο και τρόποι αντιμετώπισής της

Σε πρόσφατη συνέντευξη στα ΜΜΕ, ο πρόεδρος του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου Μάρτιν Σουλτς, μίλησε για την οικονομική κατάσταση στην Κύπρο, αναφέροντας μεταξύ άλλων:

«Η Κύπρος έχει κυριολεκτικά γονατίσει μετά την απόφαση του Eurogroup για κούρεμα των καταθέσεων και βρίσκεται σε δύσκολη διαπραγματευτική θέση λόγω των οικονομικών προβλημάτων … στην Κύπρο υπάρχει το εξής πρόβλημα: οι μικρομεσαίες επιχειρήσεις και οι ιδιώτες έχουν αυτήν τη στιγμή αδυναμία πρόσβασης σε δάνεια. Επομένως, οι επενδύσεις στη χώρα δεν είναι δυνατές, εκτός κι αν έρθουν από έξω … αυτό είναι καταστροφικό, γιατί οδηγεί σε πλήρη αδράνεια της οικονομίας. Θα πρέπει να συζητήσουμε με την Ευρωπαϊκή Τράπεζα Επενδύσεων γιατί δεν νομίζω ότι υπάρχει καμία άλλη χώρα που να χρειάζεται τόσο πολύ επενδύσεις όσο η Κύπρος.»

Επιπρόσθετα, σύμφωνα με εκτιμήσεις της ΠΟΒΕΚ (Παγκύπρια Ομοσπονδία Βιοτεχνών και Επαγγελματιών Καταστηματαρχών), πλείστες επιχειρήσεις αντιμετωπίζουν ανυπέρβλητα χρηματοδοτικά και άλλα προβλήματα, με αποτέλεσμα να έχουν κλείσει άνω του 25% των μικρομεσαίων επιχειρήσεων το τελευταίο διάστημα, συμβάλλοντας σε παραπέρα αλματώδη αύξηση της ανεργίας.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Συμφωνεί με τις πιο πάνω εκτιμήσεις αλλά και τις ανησυχίες του Προέδρου του Κοινοβουλίου και της ΠΟΒΕΚ;

2. Οι αρνητικές αυτές εξελίξεις ήταν προβλέψιμες και σε ποιο βαθμό λήφθηκαν υπόψη στις αποφάσεις του Eurogroup για την Κύπρο;

3. Έχει η ΕΕ τρόπους να βοηθήσει να αποκατασταθεί η ομαλή ροή χρηματοδότησης στην κυπριακή οικονομία και ιδιαίτερα προς τις μικρομεσαίες επιχειρήσεις;

4. Τι προτίθεται να πράξει η ΕΕ, πέρα από τα όσα περιέχονται στο Μνημόνιο Συναντίληψης (MoU), για να αναστραφεί η καταστροφική αυτή πορεία για την Κύπρο και το λαό της;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη σχετικά με τη φθίνουσα οικονομική δραστηριότητα στην Κύπρο.

Προκειμένου να ανταποκριθούν στις οικονομικές προκλήσεις που αντιμετωπίζει η χώρα, οι κυπριακές αρχές έχουν προτείνει ένα πολυετές πρόγραμμα μεταρρυθμίσεων. Στόχοι του εν λόγω προγράμματος είναι η σταθεροποίηση του χρηματοπιστωτικού συστήματος και η επίτευξη δημοσιονομικής διατηρησιμότητας ώστε να τεθούν τα θεμέλια της οικονομικής ανάπτυξης.

Η Επιτροπή είναι στο πλευρό της Κύπρου και του κυπριακού λαού, παρέχοντας βοήθεια για την αποκατάσταση της χρηματοπιστωτικής σταθερότητας, της δημοσιονομικής διατηρησιμότητας, της ανάπτυξης της χώρας και της ευημερίας των πολιτών της. Τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία της ΕΕ (συμπεριλαμβανομένου του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Ταμείου, του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης και του Ταμείου Συνοχής) έχουν επίσης ενεργοποιηθεί για τον σκοπό αυτό.

Για την τρέχουσα περίοδο προγραμματισμού 2007-2013, χορηγήθηκε προσαύξηση της τάξεως του 10% με την οποία το ποσοστό συγχρηματοδότησης αυξάνεται από 85% σε 95%. Για την επόμενη περίοδο προγραμματισμού, οι τριμερείς συζητήσεις συνεχίζονται. Αναγνωρίζοντας την κρίσιμη κατάσταση στην Κύπρο, το Συμβούλιο της ΕΕ αποφάσισε να προβλέψει συμπληρωματικό ποσό 100 εκατ. ευρώ στον προϋπολογισμό του 2014. Αντίστοιχο ποσό θα περιλαμβάνεται στον προϋπολογισμό του 2015.

Η Κύπρος λαμβάνει επίσης στήριξη από την ΕΤΕπ ιδίως στους τομείς της ενέργειας, της ύδρευσης/αποχέτευσης και της χρηματοδότησης των ΜΜΕ. Το 2013 η ΕΤΕπ υπέγραψε δάνειο ύψους 100 εκατ. ευρώ για τη στήριξη διαφόρων προγραμμάτων που συγχρηματοδοτούνται από τα ταμεία της ΕΕ. Η τράπεζα ετοιμάζει επίσης την δρομολόγηση ενός προγράμματος χρηματοδοτικής διευκόλυνσης εμπορίου, ύψους 150 εκατ. ευρώ, που θα επικεντρώνεται στις ΜΜΕ και τις εταιρίες μεσαίας κεφαλαιοποίησης.

Στο πλαίσιο της επόμενης περιόδου προγραμματισμού, η ΕΤΕπ αξιολογεί, από κοινού με τις κυπριακές αρχές, λύσεις για τη στήριξη επενδύσεων προτεραιότητας που συγχρηματοδοτούνται από τα ταμεία της ΕΕ.

Η Επιτροπή έχει συγκροτήσει ομάδα στήριξης για την Κύπρο, η οποία συνεργάζεται στενά με τις κυπριακές αρχές και παρέχει τεχνική εμπειρογνωσία.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010769/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Economic situation in Cyprus and ways of addressing it

In a recent press conference, European Parliament President Martin Schulz spoke of the economic situation in Cyprus and said, among other things:

'Cyprus has literally been brought to its knees by the Eurogroup bail-in decision and is in a difficult negotiating position as a result of its economic problems. The following problems exist in Cyprus: small and medium-sized enterprises and private individuals have no access to loans at the moment. Thus investment in the country is not possible, unless it comes from outside … this is catastrophic, because it causes the economy to come to a complete halt. We must talk with the European Investment Bank, because I do not think there is any other country that needs investments as badly as Cyprus'.

Furthermore, according to an assessment by the Cypriot Federation of Craftsmen and Retailers (POBEK), many businesses face insurmountable borrowing and other problems and, as a result, more than 25% of small and medium-sized enterprises have recently gone out of business, thereby making a further contribution to spiralling unemployment.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it agree with the above assessment and the concerns of the President of the European Parliament and POBEK?

2. Were these negative developments foreseeable and to what extent were they taken into account in the Eurogroup decisions on Cyprus?

3. Does the EU have ways to help restore the flow of money into the Cypriot economy, especially to small and medium-sized businesses?

4. What does the EU intend to do, other than what is included in the memorandum of understanding (MoU), to reverse this catastrophic development for Cyprus and its people?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(12 November 2013)

The Commission is aware of the declining economic activity in Cyprus.

To address the economic challenges facing the country, the Cypriot authorities have put forward a multi-annual reform programme. Its goals are to stabilise the financial system and achieve fiscal sustainability to lay foundations for economic growth.

The Commission stands by Cyprus and the Cypriot people in helping to restore financial stability, fiscal sustainability and growth to the country and its people. The EU Structural Funds (including the European Social Fund, the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund) are also mobilised to this end.

For the current programming period 2007-2013, the 10% top-up was granted, raising the co-financing rate from 85% to 95%. For the next programming period, the trialogue discussions are still going on. Recognising the critical situation in Cyprus, the EU Council has decided to allocate on additional amount of EUR 100 million in 2014 budget. A similar amount would be included in 2015 budget.

Cyprus benefits also from the EIB support in particular in the sectors of energy, water/sewage and SMEs financing. In 2013 to date, the EIB signed a EUR 100 million loan to support a variety of schemes co-financed by EU Funds. The Bank is also working on the launch of a EUR 150 million Trade Finance Facility programme focused on SMEs and Mid-Caps.

In the context of the next programming period, the EIB is evaluating, jointly with the Cypriot authorities, solutions to support priority investments co-financed by EU Funds.

The Commission has set up a Support Group for Cyprus that works closely with the Cypriot authorities by providing technical expertise.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010770/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(23 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Comisión de investigación del accidente del vuelo JK5022 Spanair

En otro orden de cosas, el Reglamento (UE) n° 996/2010 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 20 de octubre de 2010, sobre investigación y prevención de accidentes e incidentes en la aviación civil y por el que se deroga la Directiva 94/56/CE dice lo siguiente en su artículo 4.1: «Cada Estado miembro garantizará la realización o supervisión sin interferencias externas, de investigaciones de seguridad por una autoridad nacional permanente encargada de las investigaciones de seguridad en la aviación civil, capaz de realizar de forma independiente una investigación completa sobre la seguridad, bien por cuenta propia o mediante acuerdos con otras autoridades encargadas de las investigaciones de seguridad.».

En su artículo 4.2 concluye: «La autoridad encargada de las investigaciones de seguridad será independiente desde el punto de vista funcional, especialmente de las autoridades aeronáuticas nacionales responsables en materia de navegabilidad, certificación, operaciones de vuelo, mantenimiento, concesión de licencias, control del tránsito aéreo o de la explotación de los aeródromos, y, en general, de cualquier otra parte o entidad cuyos intereses o misiones pudieran entrar en conflicto con la función que se haya confiado a la autoridad encargada de las investigaciones de seguridad, o que pudieran influir en su objetividad.».

Al hilo de este precepto, me gustaría saber lo siguiente:

1. ¿La Comisión va a adoptar o ha adoptado medidas para que la independencia de la que hablan los artículos citados respecto a dichas Comisiones de Investigación de Accidentes e Incidentes de Aviación Civil esté realmente garantizada?

2. ¿Ha analizado la Comisión si la Comisión de Investigación establecida para el vuelo JK5022 en el Estado español ha sido independiente?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de noviembre de 2013)

La independencia de las autoridades encargadas de la investigación de la seguridad en la aviación civil está garantizada por el Reglamento (UE) n° 996/2010 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 20 de octubre de 2010, sobre investigación y prevención de accidentes e incidentes en la aviación civil y por el que se deroga la Directiva 94/56/CE ([1]).

La Comisión ha examinado la legislación que regula en los Estados miembros las investigaciones de seguridad en caso de accidentes e incidentes en la aviación civil, particularmente las disposiciones sobre la independencia de la autoridad nacional permanente que debe encargarse de esas investigaciones.

En lo que atañe a la legislación española, el contenido del artículo 13, apartados 1 y 2, de la Ley 21/2003, de 7 de julio, no contradice lo dispuesto en la normativa de la UE.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32010R0996:EN:NOT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010770/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Commission of investigation into the Spanair flight JK5022 accident

In addition, Article 4.1 of Regulation (EU) No 996/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 October 2010 on the investigation and prevention of accidents and incidents in civil aviation and repealing Directive 94/56/EC states: 'Each Member State shall ensure that safety investigations are conducted or supervised, without external interference, by a permanent national civil aviation safety investigation authority capable of independently conducting a full safety investigation, either on its own or through agreements with other safety investigation authorities'.

Article 4.2 concludes: 'The safety investigation authority shall be functionally independent in particular of aviation authorities responsible for airworthiness, certification, flight operation, maintenance, licensing, air traffic control or aerodrome operation and, in general, of any other party or entity the interests or missions of which could conflict with the task entrusted to the safety investigation authority or influence its objectivity'.

Guided by this principle, I would like to know the following:

1. Will the Commission adopt, or has it adopted, measures to ensure that the independence of these civil aviation accident and incident investigation commissions, referred to in the abovementioned articles, is in fact guaranteed?

2. Has the Commission examined the independence of the investigation commission set up in Spain to look into flight JK5022?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(14 November 2013)

The independence of civil aviation safety investigation authorities is guaranteed by Regulation (EU) No 996/2010 ([1]) of 20 October 2010 on the investigation and prevention of accidents and incidents in civil aviation and repealing Directive 94/56/EC.

The Commission has examined the Member States' national legislation related to the safety investigation of accidents and incidents in civil aviation, in particular the provisions on the independence of the permanent national civil aviation safety investigation authority.

Regarding Spanish legislation, the content of Article 13 paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Act 21/2003, of 7th July does not contradict EU legislation.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32010R0996:EN:NOT

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010771/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(23 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Indemnizaciones por el accidente del vuelo JK5022 de Spanair

Cinco años después del accidente del vuelo JK5022, su asociación de afectados ha denunciado la falta de asunción de las responsabilidades indemnizatorias en el accidente por parte de la compañía aérea y su aseguradora, puesto que, a día de hoy, muchos de los afectados no han cobrado indemnizaciones de ningún tipo.

Según el artículo 10 del TCE, los Estados miembros deben adoptar todas las medidas generales o particulares apropiadas para asegurar el cumplimiento del Derecho comunitario y para eliminar las consecuencias ilícitas de una violación del mismo.

¿Podría indicar la Comisión si va a adoptar medidas contra el Estado español por no asegurar el cumplimiento del Derecho comunitario y, en concreto, legislar bajo el marco de lo preceptuado en el Reglamento (CE) n° 2027/97 del Consejo, de 9 de octubre de 1997, sobre la responsabilidad «ilimitada» de las compañías aéreas en caso de accidente, lo que hace que exista en este contexto un vacío legal en España?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de noviembre de 2013)

La Comisión está interesada en que se garantice que las personas afectadas por accidentes aéreos, como en el caso del vuelo JK5022, reciban las adecuadas indemnizaciones. El Reglamento (CE) n° 2927/97 del Consejo, de 9 de octubre de 1997, relativo a la responsabilidad de las compañías aéreas respecto al transporte aéreo de los pasajeros y su equipaje ([1]) establece el marco jurídico que permite exigir una indemnización por los daños y perjuicios derivados. Este Reglamento es directamente aplicable en todos los Estados miembros e incluye, en particular, el régimen de indemnizaciones establecido en el Convenio de Montreal ([2]) en caso de muerte o lesión corporal de los pasajeros como consecuencia de un accidente aéreo.

La Comisión no tiene competencias en lo que respecta a procedimientos judiciales o procedimientos de solución extrajudicial de conflictos relacionados con un accidente aéreo. En este contexto, los tribunales nacionales son competentes para evaluar las circunstancias específicas de cada caso teniendo en cuenta el régimen de responsabilidad antes citado. A este respecto, la forma en que se resuelva el conflicto en cuanto al fondo con arreglo a la legislación vigente, incluida la evaluación del nivel de responsabilidad de la compañía, no podrá constituir en sí misma una infracción del Convenio de Montreal y del Reglamento (CE) n° 2027/97 por parte de las autoridades españolas, ya que ambos prevén el mencionado examen caso por caso.

Sobre la base de estos elementos, la Comisión no considera que exista en este momento ningún incumplimiento por parte de las autoridades españolas de las disposiciones mencionadas por Su Señoría.

([1]) DO L 285 de 17.10.1997.
([2]) Convenio para la unificación de ciertas reglas para el transporte aéreo internacional, firmado en Montreal el 28 de mayo de 1999, incorporado al Derecho de la UE por medio del Reglamento (CE) n° 2027/97 del Consejo, de 9 de octubre de 1998, sobre la responsabilidad de las compañías aéreas en caso de accidente, DO L285/1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010771/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Indemnifications for the Spanair flight JK5022 accident

Five years after the flight JK5022 accident, the Association of Those Affected by Spanair Flight JK5022 has complained about the failure to accept compensatory liability for the accident by the airline and its insurer, since, to date, many of those affected have not received indemnification of any kind.

According to Article 10 of the Treaty Establishing the European Community (TEC), Member States shall take all appropriate measures, whether general or particular, to ensure fulfilment of Community law and to eliminate the unlawful consequences of a violation of this law.

Can the Commission state whether it will take measures against Spain for failing to ensure fulfilment of Community law and, more specifically for failing to legislate under the framework of the provisions in Regulation (EC) No 2027/97 of 9 October 1997 on 'unlimited' air carrier liability in the event of accidents, resulting in the existence of a legal vacuum in Spain in this context?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(7 November 2013)

The Commission is concerned about the need for an appropriate indemnisation of persons affected by an accident in air transport, such as flight JK5022. Regulation (EC) No 2927/97 of the Council of 9 October 1997 on air carrier liability in respect of the carriage of passengers and their baggage by air ([1]) provides the legal framework allowing them to claim compensation for the subsequent damages. The regulation is directly applicable in each Member State and includes notably the compensation rules laid down in the Montreal Convention ([2]) in case of death or bodily injury of passengers caused by an air transport accident.

The Commission has no competence with regard to judicial proceedings or out-of court settlements procedures linked to an air accident. Under this framework, national courts are competent to assess the merits of each case in light of the abovementioned liability regime. In this regard, the way the dispute may be settled in substance under the applicable legislation, including the assessment of the level of liability of the carrier, may not constitute in itself a breach of the Montreal Convention and Regulation (EC) No 2027/97 by the Spanish authorities, as they both allow for such case-by-case assessment.

Based on these elements, the Commission does not find at this stage any breach by the Spanish authorities of the provisions mentionned by the Honourable Member.

([1]) OJ L 285, 17.10.1997.
([2]) Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules For International Carriage by Air; signed in Montreal 28 May 1999, transposed in EC law by Council Regulation (EC) 2027/97 of 9 October 1998 on air carrier liability in the event of accidents, OJ L285/1.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010772/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(23 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Accidente del vuelo JK5022 Spanair

El 21 de julio de 2008, la Dirección General de Aviación Civil (DGAC), dependiente del Ministerio de Fomento del Reino de España, emitió la «Prórroga» del Certificado de Aeronavegabilidad y Licencia de Estación de la aeronave siniestrada correspondiente al vuelo JK5022 hasta el día 22 de agosto del mismo año, al parecer sin inspeccionar ni tener en cuenta el estado de la aeronave y los graves fallos en el sistema que se venían produciendo, como así advierten los documentos e informes y la ampliación remitida a esa Comisión de Investigación de Accidentes e Incidentes de Aviación Civil.

Al parecer, dicha Comisión concluyó que «la aeronave disponía del certificado de aeronavegabilidad número 4516, emitido el 4 de febrero de 2005, cuya validez expira el 22 de julio de 2008. La solicitud de renovación del certificado fue presentada con poca antelación a su fecha de vencimiento. Como, de acuerdo a los procedimientos de la DGAC, ese año correspondía hacer una renovación completa del certificado, no fue posible llevar a cabo la inspección antes de que finalizara la validez del certificado, estando prevista su realización para el 22 de agosto de 2008, motivo por el cual el certificado fue prorrogado hasta dicha fecha, aplicando la Instrucción circular 1119-B (IC 11-19B)».

Dicha instrucción debe de aparecer como un borrador y no está firmada por el órgano competente. Por lo tanto,

¿Podría mediar la Comisión para que el Reino de España y, en concreto, la DGAC, aportara la Instrucción Circular 1119-B y corroborar que dicha Instrucción estaba redactada conforme a la normativa europea en vigor en el momento del accidente?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010773/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(23 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Prórroga del certificado de aeronavegabilidad para la aeronave del vuelo JK5022 Spanair

El 21 de julio de 2008, la Dirección General de Aviación Civil (DGAC), dependiente del Ministerio de Fomento del Reino de España, emitió la «prórroga» del certificado de aeronavegabilidad y licencia de estación de la aeronave siniestrada correspondiente al vuelo JK5022 hasta el día 22 de agosto del mismo año, al parecer sin inspeccionar ni tener en cuenta el estado de la aeronave y los graves fallos en el sistema que se venían produciendo, como así advierten los documentos e informes y la ampliación remitida a la Comisión de Investigación de Accidentes e Incidentes de Aviación Civil.

Al parecer, dicha Comisión concluyó que «la aeronave disponía del certificado de aeronavegabilidad número 4516, emitido el 4 de febrero de 2005, cuya validez expira el 22 de julio de 2008. La solicitud de renovación del certificado fue presentada con poca antelación a su fecha de vencimiento. Como, de acuerdo a los procedimientos de la DGAC, ese año correspondía hacer una renovación completa del certificado, no fue posible llevar a cabo la inspección antes de que finalizara la validez del certificado, estando prevista su realización para el 22 de agosto de 2008, motivo por el cual el certificado fue prorrogado hasta dicha fecha, aplicando la Instrucción Circular 1119-B».

Teniendo en cuenta dicha conclusión y que, al parecer, el concepto de «prórroga» no aparece en la normativa europea de seguridad aérea,

¿Va a pedir explicaciones la Comisión al Reino de España (Dirección General de Aviación Civil) respecto al uso de este concepto de «prórroga», cuando dicho concepto no se encuentra en la normativa europea aplicable y, a todas luces, no casa con el principio general de seguridad aérea?

¿Por qué se recurre a él sin ninguna garantía de inspección? Ya que la Instrucción Circular 11-19B no recoge nada al respecto, ¿cuál es el protocolo de actuación para «prorrogar» un certificado de aeronavegabilidad y licencia de estación? ¿Qué requisitos han de darse para una «prórroga»?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(18 de noviembre de 2013)

El concepto de la validez de un certificado de aeronavegabilidad aparece en los puntos M.A.901 (Revisión de la aeronavegabilidad de aeronaves) y M.A.902 (Validez del certificado de revisión de aeronavegabilidad) del anexo I (parte M) del Reglamento (CE) n° 2042/2003 ([1]), sobre el mantenimiento de la aeronavegabilidad de las aeronaves y productos aeronáuticos, componentes y equipos y sobre la aprobación de las organizaciones y personal que participan en dichas tareas.

Tal como se autoriza en el artículo 7, apartado 3, del Reglamento (CE) n° 2042/2003, las autoridades españolas de aviación civil, antes de la prórroga del certificado de aeronavegabilidad de la aeronave implicada en el accidente, habían optado por establecer excepciones a las disposiciones de la subparte I del anexo I del citado Reglamento. Como consecuencia, la prórroga del certificado de aeronavegabilidad se regía por la normativa española.

En la medida en que España ha actuado dentro de los límites del artículo 7, apartado 3, este asunto compete a las autoridades nacionales responsables.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32003R2042:ES:NOT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010772/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Spanair flight JK5022 accident

On 21 July 2008, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGAC), which reports to Spain's Ministry of Public Works, issued an 'Extension' until 22 August of that year to the Certificate of Airworthiness and Aircraft Radio Licence for the aircraft involved in the JK5022 flight accident. Apparently this extension was given without inspecting, or taking into account, the aircraft's condition and serious failures that were occurring in the system, as warned of in the documents and reports, and the annex, sent to the Commission for the Investigation of Civil Aviation Accidents and Incidents (CIAIAC).

Apparently, this Commission concluded that 'the aircraft held Airworthiness Certificate Number 4516, issued on 4 February 2005 and expiring on 22 July 2008. The application to renew the certificate was submitted very shortly before its expiry date. In accordance with DGAC procedures, the certificate was due to be completely renewed that year, so it was not possible to carry out the inspection before the certificate expired. As this inspection was planned for 22 August 2008, the certificate was extended to this date, in application of Circular Instruction 1119-B (IC 11-19B)'.

This instruction must have appeared in draft form and is not signed by the competent body. Therefore,

Could the Commission intercede with the Kingdom of Spain and, more specifically, the DGAC, for them to furnish Circular Instruction 1119-B, and could it verify that the instruction was drawn up in accordance with the EU regulations in force at the time of the accident?

Question for written answer E-010773/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Extension to the airworthiness certificate for the aircraft used on Spanair flight JK5022

On 21 July 2008, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGAC), which reports to Spain's Ministry of Public Works, issued an 'Extension' until 22 August of that year to the Certificate of Airworthiness and Aircraft Radio Licence for the aircraft involved in the JK5022 flight accident. Apparently this extension was given without inspecting, or taking into account, the aircraft's condition and serious failures that were occurring in the system, as warned of in the documents and reports, and the annex, sent to the Commission for the Investigation of Civil Aviation Accidents and Incidents (CIAIAC).

Apparently, this Committee concluded that 'the aircraft held Airworthiness Certificate Number 4516, issued on 4 February 2005 and expiring on 22 July 2008. The application to renew the certificate was submitted very shortly before its expiry date. In accordance with DGAC procedures, the certificate was due to be completely renewed that year, so it was not possible to carry out the inspection before the certificate expired. As this inspection was planned for 22 August 2008, the certificate was extended to this date, in application of Circular Instruction 1119-B'.

Given this conclusion and that, apparently, the concept of an 'extension' does not appear in EU air safety regulations,

Is the Commission going to ask for explanations from the Kingdom of Spain (Directorate General of Civil Aviation) regarding the use of this concept of 'extension', given that this concept is not found in the applicable EU regulations and clearly does not fit with the general principle of air safety?

Why it is used without any inspection guarantee? Given that Circular Instruction 11-19B says nothing in this regard, what is the protocol of action for 'extending' a Certificate of Airworthiness and Aircraft Radio Licence? What requirements must be met for an 'extension' to be given?

Joint answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(18 November 2013)

The concept of validity of an airworthiness certificate appears in points M.A. 901 (Aircraft airworthiness review) and M.A. 902 (Validity of the airworthiness review certificate), of Annex I (Part-M) to Regulation (EC) No 2042/2003 ([1]) on continuing airworthiness of aircraft and aeronautical products, parts and appliances, and on the approval of organisations and personnel involved in these tasks.

As authorised by Article 7(3) of Regulation (EC) No 2042/2003, the Spanish civil aviation authorities had chosen, before the extension of the certificate of airworthiness of the aircraft involved in the accident, to derogate from the provisions of Annex I(l) to the aforementioned Regulation. As a consequence, the extension of the certificate of airworthiness was governed by the Spanish Regulations.

Insofar as Spain has acted within the limits of Article 7(3), it is a matter for the national authorities concerned.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32003R2042:EN:NOT

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010774/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(23 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Prórroga del certificado de aeronavegabilidad de la aeronave del vuelo JK5022 Spanair

El 21 de julio de 2008, la Dirección General de Aviación Civil (DGAC), dependiente del Ministerio de Fomento del Reino de España, emitió la «Prórroga» del Certificado de Aeronavegabilidad y Licencia de Estación de la aeronave siniestrada correspondiente al vuelo JK5022 hasta el día 22 de agosto del mismo año, al parecer sin inspeccionar ni tener en cuenta el estado de la aeronave y los graves fallos en el sistema que se venían produciendo, como así advierten los documentos e informes y la ampliación remitida a esa Comisión de Investigación de Accidentes e Incidentes de Aviación Civil.

Al parecer dicha Comisión concluyó que «la aeronave disponía del certificado de aeronavegabilidad número 4516, emitido el 4 de febrero de 2005, cuya validez expira el 22 de julio de 2008. La solicitud de renovación del certificado fue presentada con poca antelación a su fecha de vencimiento. Como, de acuerdo a los procedimientos de la DGAC, ese año correspondía hacer una renovación completa del certificado, no fue posible llevar a cabo la inspección antes de que finalizara la validez del certificado, estando prevista su realización para el 22 de agosto de 2008, motivo por el cual el certificado fue prorrogado hasta dicha fecha, aplicando la Instrucción circular 1119-B».

Teniendo en cuenta dicha conclusión y que al parecer el concepto de «prórroga» no aparece en la normativa europea de seguridad aérea,

¿tiene la Comisión previsto adoptar medidas en relación al incumplimiento absoluto por parte de la Autoridad española de no llevar a cabo las suficientes actividades de investigación sobre cada solicitante o titular de un certificado de aeronavegabilidad como para justificar la concesión, renovación, modificación, suspensión o revocación del certificado o autorización? O, en el caso de la no suspensión o revocación del certificado cuando haya pruebas de que no se ha cumplido alguna de las condiciones especificadas del apartado 21A.181 a) del Reglamento (CE) n° 1702/2003, ¿deberá la autoridad competente del Estado miembro de matrícula suspender o revocar el certificado de aeronavegabilidad?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(18 de noviembre de 2013)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a la respuesta dada a la pregunta escrita E-010772/2013 ([1]).

Mientras que las condiciones relativas a la duración y continuidad de la validez se recogen en el punto 21A.181, letra a), del Reglamento (CE) n° 1702/2003 ([2]), los procedimientos de ejecución se definen en el Reglamento (CE) n° 2042/2003 ([3]). Como se indica en la respuesta a la antes citada pregunta escrita, la prórroga del certificado de aeronavegabilidad de la aeronave implicada en el accidente se regía por la normativa española.

Por tanto, la Comisión no tiene intención de iniciar un procedimiento de infracción contra España.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/es/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32003R1702:ES:NOT
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32003R2042:ES:NOT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010774/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Extension to the airworthiness certificate for the aircraft used on Spanair flight JK5022

On 21 July 2008, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGAC), which reports to Spain's Ministry of Public Works, issued an 'Extension' until 22 August of that year to the Certificate of Airworthiness and Aircraft Radio Licence for the aircraft involved in the JK5022 flight accident. Apparently this extension was given without inspecting, or taking into account, the aircraft's condition and serious failures that were occurring in the system, as warned of in the documents and reports, and the annex, sent to the Commission for the Investigation of Civil Aviation Accidents and Incidents (CIAIAC).

Apparently, this Commission concluded that 'the aircraft held Airworthiness Certificate Number 4516, issued on 4 February 2005 and expiring on 22 July 2008. The application to renew the certificate was submitted very shortly before its expiry date. In accordance with DGAC procedures, the certificate was due to be completely renewed that year, so it was not possible to carry out the inspection before the certificate expired. As this inspection was planned for 22 August 2008, the certificate was extended to this date, in application of Circular Instruction 1119-B'.

Given this conclusion and that, apparently, the concept of an 'extension' does not appear in EU air safety regulations,

Does the Commission intend to take action regarding the complete failure of the Spanish Authority to carry out sufficient investigation into each applicant for, or holder of, an airworthiness certificate to justify the issue, renewal, amendment, suspension or revocation of the certificate or authorisation? Or, in the event of failure to suspend or revoke the certificate on evidence that any of the conditions specified in paragraph 21A.181(a) of Regulation (EC) No 1702/2003 have not been met, should the competent authority of the Member State that registers the aircraft suspend or revoke the airworthiness certificate?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(18 November 2013)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer in the Written Question E-010772/2013 ([1]).

While the conditions related to the duration and continued validity are specified in point 21A.181(a) of Regulation (EC) No 1702/2003 ([2]), the implementing procedures are defined in Regulation (EC) No 2042/2003 ([3]). As specified in the answer to the aforementioned written question, the extension of the airworthiness certificate of the aircraft involved in the accident was governed by Spanish regulations.

Therefore, the Commission does not intend to start an infringement procedure against Spain.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32003R1702:EN:NOT
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32003R2042:EN:NOT

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010775/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Cielo Único Europeo IV

La situación actual entre autoridades y proveedores en el Estado español es la siguiente:

— la autoridad de supervisión meteorológica es Ansmet, que depende de la Subsecretaría de Estado de Medio Ambiente y es la entidad que certifica a los proveedores meteorológicos;

— la autoridad meteorológica ante la OACI es la Agencia Estatal de Meteorología (AEMet), que también depende de la Subsecretaría de Estado de Medio Ambiente;

— el proveedor meteorológico exclusivo es la propia Agencia Estatal de Meteorología (AEMet), que, como se ha dicho, depende de la Subsecretaría de Estado de Medio Ambiente.

En referencia a las respuestas a las preguntas E-008966/2013, E-008967/2013 y E-008968/2013, ¿podría aclarar la Comisión las cuestiones siguientes?

— En la respuesta a la pregunta E-008966/2013 se habla de la separación completa de la autoridad de supervisión y de los proveedores sometidos a supervisión. Se entiende que la Comisión se refiere a Ansmet y a AEMet en su función de proveedor; ¿es eso correcto?

—¿En qué situación queda la autoridad meteorológica, que actualmente coincide con el proveedor exclusivo? Tiene que estar separada del proveedor; imaginamos que es así. ¿Debería ser el mismo organismo que la autoridad de supervisión?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010776/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Cielo único europeo V

En referencia a las preguntas E-008966/2013, E-008967/2013 y E-008968/2013, la Comisión destaca en las respuestas la importancia del tercer paquete legislativo SES2+. Entendiendo que en junio de 2013 se presentó este paquete en el Parlamento Europeo, ¿se dispone de una previsión de calendario de aprobación, de periodo de adaptación y de aplicación definitiva en los Estados miembros?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de noviembre de 2013)

La normativa sobre cielo único europeo distingue entre dos entidades distintas: los proveedores de servicios de navegación aérea y las autoridades nacionales de supervisión de los proveedores. En el caso de España, esta ha comunicado que, en lo relativo a los servicios meteorológicos, Ansmet es la autoridad de supervisión y AEMet es el proveedor de servicios. En lo que respecta a servicios distintos de la meteorología, la autoridad de supervisión es la AESA y el proveedor de servicios es AENA.

La reciente propuesta de la Comisión para la aplicación del cielo único europeo (CUE 2 +) exigiría una separación organizativa entre las dos entidades, como entendió correctamente Su Señoría. A tal fin, la autoridad de supervisión de servicios meteorológicos (Ansmet) tendría que estar separada en el aspecto organizativo de AEMet, a la que supervisa, pero podría integrarse en otra entidad estatal, como por ejemplo la autoridad supervisora de otros servicios de navegación aérea (AESA) o el Ministerio de Medio Ambiente.

Por último, en relación con la pregunta E-010776/2013, sobre el calendario de trabajo, los ponentes del Parlamento se han comprometido a trabajar con vistas a realizar una primera lectura en el próximo pleno del mes de marzo. En el Consejo, el calendario está en manos de la Presidencia pero la Comisión espera que los debates en el Grupo «Aviación» del Consejo se inicien antes de que acabe el año.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010775/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Single European Sky IV

The current situation between authorities and suppliers in Spain is as follows:

— the Meteorological Supervisory Authority is Ansmet, which reports to the State Sub-Secretariat for the Environment and is responsible for certifying meteorological suppliers;

— the meteorological authority serving the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) is the State Meteorology Agency (AEMet), which also reports to the State Sub-Secretariat for the Environment;

— the exclusive meteorological supplier is the State Meteorology Agency (AEMet) itself, which, as already stated, reports to the State Sub-Secretariat for the Environment.

With reference to the answers to Questions E-008966/2013, E-008967/2013 and E-008968/2013, could the Commission provide clarification on the following matters?

The answer to Question E-008966/2013 talks of full separation of the supervisory authority from the suppliers being supervised. The Commission is understood to refer to Ansmet and AEMet in their role as suppliers. Is that incorrect?

In what situation does the meteorological authority, which is currently the exclusive supplier, find itself? We imagine that it must be separated from the supplier. Should it be the same body as the supervisory authority?

Question for written answer E-010776/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Single European Sky V

In its answers to Questions E-008966/2013, E-008967/2013 and E-008968/2013, the Commission emphasises the importance of the third legislative package SES2+. Given that this package was presented in Parliament in June 2013, is there an estimated timetable for its adoption, its adaptation period and its final implementation in the Member States?

Joint answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(7 November 2013)

The Single European Sky regulations distinguish between two separate entities; the providers of Air Navigation Services and the National Supervisory Authorities overseeing the providers. In the case of Spain, Spain has reported that for meteorological services, ANS-MET is the supervisory authority and AEMet is the service provider. For services other than meteorology, the supervisory authority is AESA and the service provider is AENA.

The recent Commission proposal for the implementation of the Single European Sky (SES2+) would require an organisational separation between the two entities, as correctly understood by the Honourable Member. To this end the supervisory authority for meteorological services (ANS-MET) would need to be organisationally separate from AEMet, which it oversees, but could be part of another State entity, such as the supervisory authority for other air navigation services (AESA) or the Ministry of Environment.

Finally concerning Question E-010776/2013, on the timetable of work, the Parliament Rapporteurs have committed to work towards reaching a first reading by the next March Plenary. In the Council, the timing is in the hands of the Presidency but the Commission expects discussions in the Council Aviation Working Party to begin later this year.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010777/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(23 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Φέτα και Gorgonzola, θύματα της εμπορικής συμφωνίας με τον Καναδά

Το ελληνικό τυρί «φέτα», και το ιταλικό «gorgonzola» περιλαμβάνονται στη λίστα των Προϊόντων Ονομασίας Προέλευσης (ΠΟΠ), όπως αυτά ορίζονται στον Κανονισμό (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1107/96/ΕΚ.

Παρ' όλα αυτά, στο πλαίσιο της επικείμενης διμερούς εμπορικής συμφωνίας της ΕΕ με τον Καναδά, το Σώμα των Επιτρόπων αποφάσισε να δεχθεί να κάνουν χρήση των ονομασιών «φέτα» και «gorgonzola» οι καναδοί παραγωγοί, οι οποίοι επιπλέον θα έχουν τη δυνατότητα να προωθούν και να διακινούν τα τυριά αυτά και εντός της ΕΕ, κάνοντας χρήση αυτών των ονομασιών, χωρίς να υφίστανται μάλιστα τις υποχρεώσεις και τους περιορισμούς που υφίστανται οι παραγωγοί ΠΟΠ των συγκεκριμένων προϊόντων εντός της ΕΕ.

Με δεδομένα τα ανωτέρω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Επιβεβαιώνει τις ανωτέρω πληροφορίες; Ποια είναι τα οφέλη που προσδοκά η Επιτροπή ότι θα προκύψουν από τη «θυσία» των δύο αυτών προϊόντων; Συνάδει η πρακτική της στην επικείμενη συμφωνία με την κυβέρνηση του Καναδά με τα οριζόμενα στον Κανονισμό (ΕΚ) αριθ. 2081/92 του Συμβουλίου «για την προστασία των γεωγραφικών ενδείξεων και των ονομασιών προέλευσης των προϊόντων και των τροφίμων»;

2. Όσον αφορά στη «φέτα», οι Έλληνες παραγωγοί ζητούν να δεσμευθεί η Επιτροπή ότι δεν θα παραχωρήσει το δικαίωμα χρήσης της ονομασίας «φέτα» στους παραγωγούς τόσο του Καναδά όσο και οποιασδήποτε άλλης χώρας, εντός ή εκτός Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, καθώς και ότι θα απαγορευθεί η διακίνηση οποιουδήποτε τέτοιου προϊόντος εντός της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Πώς απαντάει η Επιτροπή;

Απάντηση του κ. De Gucht εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή αποδίδει μεγάλη σημασία στην προστασία του συστήματος των ευρωπαϊκών γεωγραφικών ενδείξεων (ΓΕ) σε ευρωπαϊκό και διεθνές επίπεδο. Έχει καταβάλει πολλές προσπάθειες για την επίτευξη του καλύτερου δυνατού αποτελέσματος στο πλαίσιο της συνολικής οικονομικής και εμπορικής συμφωνίας ΕΕ-Καναδά (ΣΟΕΣ) για την οποία επετεύχθη πολιτική συμφωνία στις 18 Οκτωβρίου 2013.

Για πρώτη φορά, ο Καναδάς δέχτηκε να προστατεύσει όλα τα είδη τροφίμων σε επίπεδο συγκρίσιμο με εκείνο του δικαίου της ΕΕ. Οι περισσότερες από τις 145 ΓΕ της ΕΕ που έχουν προτεραιότητα θα έχουν το υψηλότερο επίπεδο προστασίας ενώ στο μέλλον και άλλες ΓΕ της ΕΕ ενδέχεται να προστεθούν σε αυτόν τον κατάλογο.

Για λίγα ονόματα, συμπεριλαμβανομένων της φέτας και της Gorgonzola που έχουν χρησιμοποιηθεί ευρέως στον Καναδά για μεγάλη χρονική περίοδο και ανεξάρτητα από την καταγωγή τους, η λύση που βρέθηκε θα επιτρέψει στους καναδούς καταναλωτές να κάνουν διάκριση μεταξύ πρωτότυπων ΓΕ και άλλων τύπων προϊόντων που φέρουν ίδια ή παρόμοια ονόματα και θα έχει θετικές οικονομικές συνέπειες για τους παραγωγούς των ΓΕ της ΕΕ:

— Στην αγορά του Καναδά, μόνο οι υπάρχοντες χρήστες με αποδεδειγμένα προηγούμενα νόμιμα δικαιώματα θα μπορούν να εξακολουθήσουν να χρησιμοποιούν τις εν λόγω ονομασίες. Όλοι οι άλλοι χρήστες που δεν συμμορφώνονται με τις τεχνικές προδιαγραφές των ΓΕ της ΕΕ θα πρέπει να συνοδεύουν τα εν λόγω ονόματα από εκφράσεις όπως «μορφή», «τύπος», «απομιμήσεις» ή «είδος» και θα απαιτείται να έχουν σαφή και ορατή ένδειξη της πραγματικής καταγωγής.

— Όλοι οι κάτοχοι δικαιωμάτων ΓΕ της ΕΕ θα επωφεληθούν από τους διοικητικούς πόρους κατά των προϊόντων που παραπλανούν το κοινό χρησιμοποιώντας σύμβολα από τις χώρες της πρωτότυπης γεωγραφικής ένδειξης.

Η προστασία που χορηγείται στην αγορά της ΕΕ για τα συστήματα ποιότητας των γεωργικών προϊόντων στις ΓΕ της ΕΕ [1] και των τροφίμων δεν θα αποδυναμωθεί ως συνέπεια της ΣΟΕΣ. Προϊόντα που φέρουν τα ονόματα φέτα και Gorgonzola και δεν τηρούν τις σχετικές προδιαγραφές προϊόντων δεν θα μπορούν να διατεθούν στην αγορά της ΕΕ.

[1] Κανονισμός (ΕΕ) αριθ. 1151/2012, ΕΕ L 55 της 27.02.2013, σ. 27.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010777/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Feta and Gorgonzola, victims of the trade agreement with Canada

Greek feta and Italian gorgonzola are Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) products, as defined in Regulation (EC) No 1107/96/EC.

Nonetheless, the College of Commissioners has decided in the forthcoming bilateral trade agreement between the EU and Canada that Canadian producers will be allowed to use the names 'feta' and 'gorgonzola' and, furthermore, will be able to promote and market these cheeses within the EU under those names, without being subject to the obligations and restrictions which apply to PDO producers of those particular products within the EU.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Can it confirm the above information? What benefits does the Commission expect from the 'sacrifice' of these two products? It its approach in the forthcoming agreement with the Canadian government in keeping with the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 2081/92 of the Council on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agriculture products and foodstuffs?

2. As regards feta, Greek producers are calling for an undertaking from the Commission that it will not grant the right to use the name 'feta' to producers in Canada or in any other country inside or outside the European Union and that it will prevent the distribution of any such products inside the European Union? What does the Commission have to say?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(12 November 2013)

The Commission attaches great importance to the protection of European Geographical Indications (GIs) in the EU and internationally. It has made all efforts to achieve the best possible outcome in the context of the EU- Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) for which a political agreement was reached on 18 October 2013.

For the first time, Canada accepted to protect all types of food products at a level comparable to EC law. Most of the EU's 145 priority GIs will be protected at the highest level and, in future, other EU GIs might be added to this list.

For a few names, including Feta and Gorgonzola, that have been widely used in Canada for a long period and irrespective of their origin, the solution found will allow Canadian consumers to distinguish between original GIs and other types of products bearing same or similar names and will have a positive economic impact for producers of the EU GIs at stake:

— In the Canadian market, only existing users with proved legitimate prior rights will be able to continue using these names. All other users not in compliance with the EU GIs technical specifications will need to accompany these names by expressions such as 'style', 'type', 'imitation' or 'kind' and will be required to have a clear and visible indication of their actual origin.

— All EU GI right holders will benefit from administrative recourses against products which would be misleading the public by means of using symbols from the countries of the original GI.

The protection granted in the EU market to the EU GIs ([1]) quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs will not be weakened as an effect of CETA. Products bearing the names Feta and Gorgonzola that do not respect the relevant product specifications cannot be marketed in the EU.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012, OJ L 55, 27.2, 2013, p. 27.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010778/13
προς το Συμβούλιο
Sylvana Rapti (S&D), Marietta Giannakou (PPE), Niki Tzavela (EFD), Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE), Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE), Anni Podimata (S&D), Spyros Danellis (S&D), Dimitrios Droutsas (S&D), Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE), Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D), Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE), Chrysoula Paliadeli (S&D), Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE), Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D) και Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(23 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Άνοδος ναζιστικών φαινομένων στην Ευρώπη — δολοφονία νέου στην Ελλάδα

Στις 17.9.2013, ένα μέλος του νεοναζιστικού κόμματος «Χρυσή Αυγή» δολοφόνησε εν ψυχρώ έναν 34χρονο εξαιτίας των πολιτικών του πεποιθήσεων. Πρόκειται για το αποκορύφωμα σειράς βίαιων ενεργειών (όπως στο Μελιγαλά, στα Γιαννιτσά και στο Πέραμα) από μέλη της Χρυσής Αυγής που γνώρισε εντυπωσιακή άνοδο στο περιβάλλον της πρωτοφανούς οικονομικής κρίσης που πλήττει την Ελλάδα και αναπτύσσεται ραγδαία, καθώς το εφαρμοζόμενο πρόγραμμα δημοσιονομικής σταθερότητας — έκτος χρόνος ύφεσης και τέταρτος χρόνος σκληρής λιτότητας — έχει εξαντλήσει και τις τελευταίες αντοχές των Ελλήνων πολιτών.

Είναι προφανές ότι η ελληνική κυβέρνηση και οι αρμόδιες αρχές θα δράσουν άμεσα για την αντιμετώπιση τέτοιων φαινομένων στο πλαίσιο του συντάγματος και της εθνικής νομοθεσίας. Η εξάπλωση όμως φιλοναζιστικών, ρατσιστικών φορέων και κινήσεων δεν αφορά μόνο στην Ελλάδα. Έχει καταγραφεί ήδη σε προηγηθείσες εθνικές και ευρωπαϊκές εκλογές σε πολλά κράτη μέλη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και καταγράφεται εντονότερα στις μετρήσεις που γίνονται σε όλη την Ευρώπη.

Διαπιστώνεται καθημερινά ότι οι ομάδες αυτές επωφελούνται από τις πολιτικές δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη, κυρίως όμως σ' εκείνα όπου οι κοινωνικές επιπτώσεις των μέτρων που λαμβάνονται έρχονται σε αντίθεση με το κοινωνικό μοντέλο επί του οποίου δομήθηκε η ΕΕ και το οποίο η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή χαρακτηρίζει «αναγκαίο» για την επιτυχή εφαρμογή προγραμμάτων προσαρμογής και την έξοδο από την κρίση. Όσο τα προγράμματα λιτότητας συμπιέζουν το εισόδημα των πολιτών και περιθωριοποιούν, κοινωνικά και εργασιακά, μεγάλες ομάδες, κυρίως νέων ανθρώπων, τόσο βρίσκουν έδαφος εγκληματικές συμπεριφορές με άλλοθι τη φτώχεια και την παράνομη μετανάστευση.

Επειδή τέτοια φαινόμενα που προαναφέρθηκαν πιθανόν να επιδεινωθούν, και όχι μόνο στην Ελλάδα, ερωτώνται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή και το Συμβούλιο:

1. Συνειδητοποιούν ότι εξαντλούνται οι δημοκρατικές αντοχές των κοινωνιών, κυρίως σε κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ με προγράμματα προσαρμογής και πλήττονται καίρια οι αρχές και οι αξίες επί των οποίων οικοδομήθηκε η ΕΕ;

2. Θα συνυπολογίσουν τις κοινωνικές και πολιτικές παραμέτρους των προγραμμάτων προσαρμογής;

3. Στο βαθμό που τους αναλογεί, ποιες πολιτικές προτίθενται να εφαρμόσουν ώστε ν' αμβλυνθούν οι επιπτώσεις από την ύφεση και τη λιτότητα στις χώρες που εφαρμόζουν προγράμματα προσαρμογής, ν' αποφευχθεί η επιδείνωση φαινομένων βίας και διάρρηξης της κοινωνικής συνοχής, που τραυματίζουν βαρύτατα το ευρωπαϊκό εγχείρημα, κλονίζουν συθέμελα την εμπιστοσύνη των πολιτών στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση και επαναφέρουν στο προσκήνιο τη ναζιστική απειλή;

Απάντηση
(16 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Κατόπιν της επιδείνωσης της μακροοικονομικής και της δημοσιονομικής κατάστασης στην Ελλάδα το 2010, το Συμβούλιο εξέδωσε στις 10 Μαΐου 2010 την απόφαση 2010/320/ΕΕ η οποία απευθύνεται στην Ελλάδα, για την ενίσχυση της δημοσιονομικής επιτήρησης, και η οποία επιβάλλει στην Ελλάδα να λάβει μέτρα για τη μείωση του ελλείμματος που κρίνεται αναγκαία προκειμένου να αντιμετωπιστεί η κατάσταση του υπερβολικού ελλείμματος ([1]). Η απόφαση τροποποιήθηκε ορισμένες φορές και, εν συνεχεία, αναδιατυπώθηκε για λόγους σαφήνειας ως απόφαση του Συμβουλίου 2011/734/ΕΕ της 12ης Ιουλίου 2011 ([2]). Στις αποφάσεις αυτές αποτυπώνονται οι βασικοί όροι της χρηματοδοτικής ενίσχυσης που χορηγήθηκε αρχικά από το χρηματοδοτικό ταμείο για τη στήριξη της Ελλάδας και το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Χρηματοδοτικής Σταθερότητας (ΕΤΧΣ). Στις αποφάσεις περιγράφονται τα κύρια σημεία του οικονομικού προγράμματος που καλείται να εφαρμόσει η Ελλάδα.

([1]) ΕΕ L 145 της 11.6.2010, σ. 6.
([2]) ΕΕ L 296 της 15.11.2011, σ. 38. Απόφαση που τροποποιήθηκε από την απόφαση 2013/6/ΕΕ του Συμβουλίου της 4ης Δεκεμβρίου 2012 (ΕΕ L 4 της 9.1.2013, σ. 40).

Η εφαρμογή των συμφωνηθεισών μεταρρυθμίσεων είναι ευθύνη της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης και υπόκειται στους εθνικούς νόμους και διαδικασίες, μεταξύ των οποίων είναι η αξιολόγηση του αντικτύπου των μεταρρυθμίσεων και η εκτίμηση κόστους-οφέλους.

Η Ευρωομάδα εξέφρασε ικανοποίηση για τις προσπάθειες του ελληνικού λαού και συνεχάρη την ελληνική κυβέρνηση για τις συνεχιζόμενες προσπάθειές της να εφαρμόσει τις απαιτούμενες μεταρρυθμίσεις. Αυτές οι μεταρρυθμίσεις είναι απαραίτητες για να επιτευχθεί βιώσιμη ανάπτυξη και απασχόληση ([3]).

Η Ευρωομάδα δεσμεύεται να παρέχει τη δέουσα στήριξη στην Ελλάδα κατά τη διάρκεια του προγράμματος και μετά, μέχρις ότου ανακτήσει πρόσβαση στις αγορές, υπό τον όρον ότι η Ελλάδα θα συμμορφωθεί πλήρως με τις απαιτήσεις και τους στόχους του προγράμματος προσαρμογής ([4]).

([3]) Βλ. Δήλωση της Ευρωομάδας για την Ελλάδα στις 8 Ιουλίου 2013.

([4]) Βλ. Δήλωση της Ευρωομάδας για την Ελλάδα στις 27 Νοεμβρίου 2012. Οι δηλώσεις της Ευρωομάδας βρίσκονται στη διεύθυνση http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/newsroom/news/?group=statement&source=eurogroup&q=&dateFrom=&dateTo=

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010778/13
to the Council
Sylvana Rapti (S&D), Marietta Giannakou (PPE), Niki Tzavela (EFD), Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE), Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE), Anni Podimata (S&D), Spyros Danellis (S&D), Dimitrios Droutsas (S&D), Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE), Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D), Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE), Chrysoula Paliadeli (S&D), Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE), Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D) and Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Rise of Nazism in Europe — murder of a young man in Greece

On 17 September 2013, a member of the 'Golden Dawn' neo-Nazi party cold-bloodedly murdered a 34-year old man because of his political persuasions. This was the worst in a series of violent actions by Golden Dawn members (in Meligala, Giannitsa, Perama and elsewhere), which have increased exponentially against the backdrop of the unprecedented economic crisis which has damaged Greece and is spiralling out of control, bearing in mind that the stability programme — now in its sixth year of recession and fourth year of harsh austerity measures — has pushed the Greek people over the edge.

Obviously the Greek Government and the competent authorities will act immediately within the framework of the Constitution and national legislation in order to address these problems. However, the spread of neo-Nazi, racist parties and movements goes beyond Greece. They have already made their mark in national and European elections in numerous Member States of the European Union and, according to surveys throughout Europe, they are gaining support.

There is evidence on a daily basis that these groups are taking advantage of economic adjustment policies in all the Member States, especially where the social impact of the measures being applied conflicts with the social model on which the EU is founded, policies which the European Commission refers to as 'necessary' to the successful application of adjustment programmes and a way out of the crisis. The austerity programmes depressing people's income and pushing large groups, especially young people, to the margins of society and the job market are providing fertile ground for using poverty and illegal immigration as an excuse for criminal behaviour.

In view of the fact that the above problems may get worse, and not only in Greece, will the European Commission and the Council say:

1. Are they aware that society, especially in Member States with adjustment programmes, is at the end of its democratic tether and that the principles and values on which the EU are founded are being seriously damaged?

2. Will they take account of the social and political parameters of adjustment programmes?

3. Insofar as they are able, what policies do they propose to apply in order to mitigate the impact of the recession and austerity in countries under adjustment programmes, in order to prevent any worsening of the violence and breakdown of social cohesion which are seriously damaging the European endeavour, totally undermining public confidence in the European Union and bringing back the threat of Nazism?

Reply
(16 December 2013)

Following the deterioration of the macroeconomic and budgetary situation in Greece in 2010, on 10 May 2010 the Council issued Decision 2010/320/EU addressed to Greece with a view to reinforcing and deepening fiscal surveillance and giving notice to Greece to take measures for the deficit reduction judged necessary to remedy the situation of excessive deficit ([1]). This decision was amended several times and then recast in the interests of clarity by Council Decision 2011/734/EU of 12 July 2011 ([2]). These Decisions reflect the main conditions of the financial assistance initially provided by the Greek support facility and the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF). They outline the cornerstones of the economic programme to be implemented by Greece.

Implementation of the agreed reforms is the responsibility of the Greek authorities and is subject to national laws and procedures, including assessment of the impact of the reforms and cost-benefit evaluation.

([1]) OJ L 145, 11.6.2010, p. 6.
([2]) OJ L 296, 15.11.2011, p. 38. Decision last amended by Council Decision 2013/6/EU of 4 December 2012 (OJ L 4, 9.1.2013, p. 40).

The Eurogroup expressed appreciation for the efforts made by the Greek population and commended the Greek authorities on their continued commitment to implementing the required reforms. Such reforms are key to bringing about sustained growth and employment ([3]).

The Eurogroup is committed to providing adequate support to Greece during the lifetime of the programme and beyond until it has regained market access, provided that Greece fully complies with the requirements and objectives of the adjustment programme ([4]).

([3]) See Eurogroup Statement on Greece of 8 July 2013.

([4]) See Eurogroup Statement on Greece of 27 November 2012. Eurogroup statements can be read at http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/newsroom/news/?group=statement&source=eurogroup&q=&dateFrom=&dateTo=

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010779/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Sylvana Rapti (S&D), Marietta Giannakou (PPE), Niki Tzavela (EFD), Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE), Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE), Anni Podimata (S&D), Spyros Danellis (S&D), Dimitrios Droutsas (S&D), Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE), Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D), Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE), Chrysoula Paliadeli (S&D), Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE), Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D) και Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(23 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Άνοδος ναζιστικών φαινομένων στην Ευρώπη — δολοφονία νέου στην Ελλάδα

Στις 17.9.2013, ένα μέλος του νεοναζιστικού κόμματος «Χρυσή Αυγή» δολοφόνησε εν ψυχρώ έναν 34χρονο εξαιτίας των πολιτικών του πεποιθήσεων. Πρόκειται για το αποκορύφωμα σειράς βίαιων ενεργειών (όπως στο Μελιγαλά, στα Γιαννιτσά και στο Πέραμα) από μέλη της Χρυσής Αυγής που γνώρισε εντυπωσιακή άνοδο στο περιβάλλον της πρωτοφανούς οικονομικής κρίσης που πλήττει την Ελλάδα και αναπτύσσεται ραγδαία, καθώς το εφαρμοζόμενο πρόγραμμα δημοσιονομικής σταθερότητας — έκτος χρόνος ύφεσης και τέταρτος χρόνος σκληρής λιτότητας — έχει εξαντλήσει και τις τελευταίες αντοχές των Ελλήνων πολιτών.

Είναι προφανές ότι η ελληνική κυβέρνηση και οι αρμόδιες αρχές θα δράσουν άμεσα για την αντιμετώπιση τέτοιων φαινομένων στο πλαίσιο του συντάγματος και της εθνικής νομοθεσίας. Η εξάπλωση όμως φιλοναζιστικών, ρατσιστικών φορέων και κινήσεων δεν αφορά μόνο στην Ελλάδα. Έχει καταγραφεί ήδη σε προηγηθείσες εθνικές και ευρωπαϊκές εκλογές σε πολλά κράτη μέλη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και καταγράφεται εντονότερα στις μετρήσεις που γίνονται σε όλη την Ευρώπη.

Διαπιστώνεται καθημερινά ότι οι ομάδες αυτές επωφελούνται από τις πολιτικές δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη, κυρίως όμως σ' εκείνα όπου οι κοινωνικές επιπτώσεις των μέτρων που λαμβάνονται έρχονται σε αντίθεση με το κοινωνικό μοντέλο επί του οποίου δομήθηκε η ΕΕ και το οποίο η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή χαρακτηρίζει «αναγκαίο» για την επιτυχή εφαρμογή προγραμμάτων προσαρμογής και την έξοδο από την κρίση. Όσο τα προγράμματα λιτότητας συμπιέζουν το εισόδημα των πολιτών και περιθωριοποιούν, κοινωνικά και εργασιακά, μεγάλες ομάδες, κυρίως νέων ανθρώπων, τόσο βρίσκουν έδαφος εγκληματικές συμπεριφορές με άλλοθι τη φτώχεια και την παράνομη μετανάστευση.

Επειδή τέτοια φαινόμενα που προαναφέρθηκαν πιθανόν να επιδεινωθούν, και όχι μόνο στην Ελλάδα, ερωτώνται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή και το Συμβούλιο:

1. Συνειδητοποιούν ότι εξαντλούνται οι δημοκρατικές αντοχές των κοινωνιών, κυρίως σε κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ με προγράμματα προσαρμογής και πλήττονται καίρια οι αρχές και οι αξίες επί των οποίων οικοδομήθηκε η ΕΕ;

2. Θα συνυπολογίσουν τις κοινωνικές και πολιτικές παραμέτρους των προγραμμάτων προσαρμογής;

3. Στο βαθμό που τους αναλογεί, ποιες πολιτικές προτίθενται να εφαρμόσουν ώστε ν' αμβλυνθούν οι επιπτώσεις από την ύφεση και τη λιτότητα στις χώρες που εφαρμόζουν προγράμματα προσαρμογής, ν' αποφευχθεί η επιδείνωση φαινομένων βίας και διάρρηξης της κοινωνικής συνοχής, που τραυματίζουν βαρύτατα το ευρωπαϊκό εγχείρημα, κλονίζουν συθέμελα την εμπιστοσύνη των πολιτών στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση και επαναφέρουν στο προσκήνιο τη ναζιστική απειλή;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει στη δήλωσή της της 9ης Οκτωβρίου προς το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο σχετικά με την άνοδο του ακροδεξιού εξτρεμισμού στην Ευρώπη. Η Επιτροπή υπενθυμίζει ότι η άνοδος του εξτρεμισμού και του λαϊκισμού είναι σοβαρό ζήτημα και αποτελεί αντικείμενο κοινού προβληματισμού για την ΕΕ στο σύνολό της. Τροφοδοτεί τον ρατσισμό, τη ξενοφοβία, την ομοφοβία και όλες τις μορφές μισαλλοδοξίας. Θίγει τα δικαιώματα του ανθρώπου και απειλεί την ελεύθερη κυκλοφορία στην ΕΕ. Η Επιτροπή έχει ανέκαθεν καταδικάσει κάθε εκδήλωση ρατσισμού και ξενοφοβίας, καθώς και κάθε άλλη μορφή μισαλλοδοξίας ως ασυμβίβαστες με τις αξίες και τις αρχές στις οποίες θεμελιώνεται η Ένωση. Προτίθεται να δημοσιεύσει έκθεση σχετικά με την εφαρμογή της απόφασης πλαισίου 2008/913/ΔΕΥ για την καταπολέμηση του ρατσισμού και της ξενοφοβίας στα τέλη του 2013.

Στόχος των προγραμμάτων προσαρμογής είναι να δημιουργηθεί μια πιο σταθερή βάση για την ανάπτυξη και τη δημιουργία θέσεων εργασίας, που θα βασίζεται σε βιώσιμα δημόσια οικονομικά, σταθερό χρηματοπιστωτικό σύστημα και πιο ανταγωνιστική και δυναμική οικονομία. Τα προγράμματα θα πρέπει επίσης να κρίνονται λαμβανομένου υπόψη του ότι έχουν αποσοβήσει πολύ δριμύτερη προσαρμογή με καταστροφικές οικονομικές και κοινωνικές συνέπειες.

Τα προγράμματα έχουν σχεδιαστεί με ιδιαίτερο γνώμονα την ανάγκη να διασφαλιστεί δίκαιη μεταχείριση. Καταβάλλονται προσπάθειες προκειμένου να διασφαλιστεί ότι το βάρος της προσαρμογής θα το μοιραστεί εξίσου όλος ο πληθυσμός. Οι μεταρρυθμίσεις εφαρμόζονται σταδιακά και τα προγράμματα εστιάζονται ιδιαίτερα στην καταπολέμηση της φοροδιαφυγής και της διαφθοράς. Επίσης, περιλαμβάνουν μέτρα για την αντιμετώπιση της ανεργίας και της φτώχειας. Για παράδειγμα, το ελληνικό πρόγραμμα απαιτεί την κατάρτιση σχεδίου δράσης για την απασχόληση που θα περιλαμβάνει ένα πρόγραμμα δημοσίων έργων το οποίο με στόχο τους μακροχρόνια ανέργους, μέτρα για τη βελτίωση του δικτύου κοινωνικής ασφάλισης της Ελλάδας μέσω ενός καθεστώτος βοήθειας για τους μακροχρόνια ανέργους που απευθύνεται στους φτωχούς, καθώς και ένα καθεστώς ελάχιστου εισοδήματος που θα δημιουργηθεί σε πιλοτική βάση.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010779/13
to the Commission
Sylvana Rapti (S&D), Marietta Giannakou (PPE), Niki Tzavela (EFD), Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE), Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE), Anni Podimata (S&D), Spyros Danellis (S&D), Dimitrios Droutsas (S&D), Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE), Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D), Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE), Chrysoula Paliadeli (S&D), Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE), Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D) and Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Rise of Nazism in Europe — murder of a young man in Greece

On 17 September 2013, a member of the 'Golden Dawn' neo-Nazi party cold-bloodedly murdered a 34-year old man because of his political persuasions. This was the worst in a series of violent actions by Golden Dawn members (in Meligala, Giannitsa, Perama and elsewhere), which have increased exponentially against the backdrop of the unprecedented economic crisis which has damaged Greece and is spiralling out of control, bearing in mind that the stability programme — now in its sixth year of recession and fourth year of harsh austerity measures — has pushed the Greek people over the edge.

Obviously the Greek Government and the competent authorities will act immediately within the framework of the Constitution and national legislation in order to address these problems. However, the spread of neo-Nazi, racist parties and movements goes beyond Greece. They have already made their mark in national and European elections in numerous Member States of the European Union and, according to surveys throughout Europe, they are gaining support.

There is evidence on a daily basis that these groups are taking advantage of economic adjustment policies in all the Member States, especially where the social impact of the measures being applied conflicts with the social model on which the EU is founded, policies which the European Commission refers to as 'necessary' to the successful application of adjustment programmes and a way out of the crisis. The austerity programmes depressing people's income and pushing large groups, especially young people, to the margins of society and the job market are providing fertile ground for using poverty and illegal immigration as an excuse for criminal behaviour.

In view of the fact that the above problems may get worse, and not only in Greece, will the European Commission and the Council say:

1. Are they aware that society, especially in Member States with adjustment programmes, is at the end of its democratic tether and that the principles and values on which the EU are founded are being seriously damaged?

2. Will they take account of the social and political parameters of adjustment programmes?

3. Insofar as they are able, what policies do they propose to apply in order to mitigate the impact of the recession and austerity in countries under adjustment programmes, in order to prevent any worsening of the violence and breakdown of social cohesion which are seriously damaging the European endeavour, totally undermining public confidence in the European Union and bringing back the threat of Nazism?

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

The Commission refers to its statement of 9 October 2013 to the European Parliament about the rise of right-wing extremism in Europe. The Commission recalls that the rise of extremism and populism is a critical and common concern for the EU as a whole. It fuels racism, xenophobia, homophobia and all forms of intolerance. It affects human rights and it endangers the freedom of movement within the EU. The Commission has always condemned any manifestation of racism and xenophobia as well as any other form of intolerance, because they are incompatible with the values and principles on which the Union is founded. It plans to publish a report on the implementation of Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on racism and xenophobia at the end of 2013.

The objective of adjustment programmes is to build a more solid basis for growth and job creation, based on sustainable public finances, a stable financial system, and a more competitive and dynamic economy. The programmes should also be judged keeping in mind that they have prevented a much sharper adjustment with devastating economic and social consequences.

Programmes are designed keeping very much in mind the need to ensure fairness. Efforts are being made to ensure that the burden of the adjustment is shared equally across the population. Reforms are being applied progressively, and programmes have a strong focus on the fight against tax evasion and corruption. They also include measures to tackle unemployment and poverty. For example, the Greek programme requires an employment action plan including a public works scheme targeted to the long term unemployed, and measures to improve Greece's social safety net through an assistance scheme for the long term unemployed targeted to the poor and a pilot minimum income scheme.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010781/13
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(23 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Η ετοιμότητα του προέδρου Hollande να εξοπλίσει τους Σύρους αντάρτες

Ο Γάλλος πρόεδρος François Hollande αναφέρθηκε πρόσφατα στο Παρίσι στην ετοιμότητα της Γαλλίας να εξοπλίσει τους αντάρτες στη Συρία, διευκρινίζοντας ότι αυτό θα πρέπει να γίνει εντός «ελεγχόμενου πλαισίου».

Η πρόταση του προέδρου Hollande έρχεται σε μια στιγμή κατά την οποία η Γαλλία θεωρεί ότι «οι αντάρτες είναι εγκλωβισμένοι ανάμεσα στα στρατεύματα της κυβέρνησης του Bashar al-Assad από τη μία πλευρά και τους ριζοσπάστες ισλαμιστές από την άλλη».

Κατά τη διάρκεια συνέντευξης τύπου στην πρωτεύουσα του Μάλι, Μπαμάκο, ο πρόεδρος Hollande κατηγόρησε τη Ρωσία ότι αποστέλλει σε τακτική βάση όπλα στη Συρία. Επιπλέον, δήλωσε ότι η Γαλλία θα κάνει το ίδιο, αλλά σε ευρύτερο πλαίσιο και με τη συμμετοχή μιας σειράς χωρών, εξασφαλίζοντας παράλληλα ότι κάθε τέτοια προσπάθεια θα παραμείνει εντός ελεγχόμενου πλαισίου, ώστε ο διατιθέμενος οπλισμός να μην πέσει στα χέρια τζιχαντιστών.

Στην περίπτωση της Συρίας, η διπλωματία, η οποία αποτελεί μία από τις θεμελιώδεις αρχές της ΕΕ, φαίνεται να έχει εξαφανιστεί, καθώς οι προσπάθειες της κ. Ashton ήταν ιδιαίτερα ασαφείς.

Με βάση τα ανωτέρω, καλείται η Αντιπρόεδρος της Επιτροπής/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος της Ένωσης για Θέματα Εξωτερικής Πολιτικής να απαντήσει στα ακόλουθα:

1. Θα μπορούσε η ΑΠ/ΥΕ να εκφράσει τη γνώμη της σχετικά με τις πρόσφατες εξελίξεις στη Συρία και, συγκεκριμένα, σχετικά με τις προθέσεις του προέδρου Hollande;

2. Θα μπορούσε η ΑΠ/ΥΕ να ενημερώσει το Κοινοβούλιο σχετικά με τα περαιτέρω μέτρα που προτίθεται να λάβει προκειμένου να αντιμετωπίσει το πρόβλημα της Συρίας με ειρηνικό τρόπο, μέσω διπλωματικής δράσης, αποφεύγοντας έτσι περαιτέρω επιθέσεις και θανάτους αμάχων; Ποιες εναλλακτικές λύσεις προβλέπονται από την ΕΕ προκειμένου να αποφευχθεί η στρατιωτική δράση από την πλευρά των Ηνωμένων Πολιτειών και της Γαλλίας;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

1. Το εμπάργκο όπλων όσον αφορά τη Συρία έληξε στις 31 Μαΐου 2013. Ενδεχόμενες εξαγωγές όπλων στη Συρία είναι πλέον ζήτημα των εθνικών πολιτικών των κρατών μελών.

Στις 27 Μαΐου 2013, τα κράτη μέλη προέβησαν σε δήλωση του Συμβουλίου για τη Συρία, σύμφωνα με την οποία προτίθενται να ακολουθήσουν τις οικείες εθνικές πολιτικές με βάση αυστηρά κριτήρια, και μάλιστα ότι όπλα πρέπει να παρέχονται μόνο στον συριακό αντιπολιτευτικό συνασπισμό, για την προστασία των αμάχων, και με εγγυήσεις σχετικά με το ποιοι είναι θα είναι οι τελικοί χρήστες. Εναπόκειται στα κράτη μέλη να εξασφαλίζουν ότι πληρούνται τα κριτήρια αυτά σε περίπτωση πρόθεσης αποστολής όπλων στη Συρία.

Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, τα κράτη μέλη δήλωσαν επίσης, στις 27 Μαΐου 2013, ότι σε αυτό το στάδιο δεν θα εφοδιάσουν με όπλα τη Συρία. Επιπλέον, ορισμένα κράτη μέλη δήλωσαν διμερώς ότι θα συνεχίσουν να μην παραδίδουν καθόλου όπλα στη Συρία.

2. Η ΕΕ συνεχίζει να καλεί όλα τα μέρη που εμπλέκονται στη σύγκρουση να ανταποκριθούν θετικά στην έκκληση του Γενικού Γραμματέα των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για τη διενέργεια ειρηνευτικής διάσκεψης στη Γενεύη και να προσχωρήσουν δημοσίως σε μια αξιόπιστη πολιτική μετάβαση με βάση την πλήρη εφαρμογή του ανακοινωθέντος της Γενεύης. Προς τούτο, τα μέρη πρέπει να συμφωνήσουν κατά τη διάρκεια της διάσκεψης σε σαφή και μη αναστρέψιμα στάδια, καθώς και σε ένα σύντομο χρονοδιάγραμμα για την πολιτική μετάβαση. Η ΕΕ καλεί την αντιπολίτευση να συσπειρωθεί και να συμμετάσχει ενεργά στη διάσκεψη και ενθαρρύνει τον Εθνικό συνασπισμό των Συρίων επαναστατών και δυνάμεων της αντιπολίτευσης (SOC) να αναλάβει ηγετικό ρόλο κατά τις διαπραγματεύσεις.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010781/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — President Hollande ready to give weapons to Syrian rebels

French President François Hollande suggested recently in Paris that France is ready to arm rebels in Syria, suggesting that this should be done within a 'controlled framework'.

President Hollande's proposal comes at a time when France considers that 'rebels are trapped between the troops of the Bashar al-Assad government on the one hand, and radical Islamists on the other'.

During a press conference in Mali's capital Bamako, President Hollande accused Russia of sending weapons to Syrians on a regular basis. Moreover, he stated that France will do the same but in a broader sense by involving a number of countries and by making sure that any such effort will remain within a framework that can be controlled, so that weapons provided will not fall into the hands of jihadists.

In the case of Syria, diplomacy, which is one of the fundamental principles of the EU, seems to have disappeared, as efforts by Mrs Ashton have been very vague.

In the light of the above, the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs is invited to answer the following:

1. Could the VP/HR express her opinion on the recent developments in Syria and, specifically, on President Hollande's intentions?

2. Could the VP/HR inform Parliament what further steps she intends to take in order to tackle the Syrian problem in a peaceful way through diplomatic action, thus avoiding further attacks and killings of civilians? What alternative ways forward are foreseen by the EU in order to avoid military actions by the United States and France?

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

1. The EU arms embargo against Syria expired on 31 May 2013. Possible export of arms to Syria is now a matter of Member States' national policies.

Member States have declared in a Council Declaration on Syria on 27 May 2013 that they are to proceed in their national policies on the basis of strict criteria, notably that arms would be supplied only to the Syrian Opposition Coalition, for the protection of civilians, and with guarantees about who the end-users will be. It is for Member States to ensure that these criteria are fulfilled in case delivery of arms to Syria would be considered.

In this respect Member States have also declared on 27 May 2013 that they would not deliver arms to Syria at that stage. In addition, a number of Member States have bilaterally declared that they would continue not to deliver arms to Syria at all.

2. The EU continues urging all sides of the conflict to respond positively to the call made by the UN Secretary-General for a peace conference in Geneva and to adhere publicly to a credible political transition based on the full implementation of the Geneva communiqué. To this end, the parties will have to agree during the Conference on clear and irreversible steps and a short timeframe for the political transition. The EU calls on the opposition to come together and participate actively at the conference and encourages the National Coalition of the Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces (SOC) to take a leading role during negotiations.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-010782/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(23 september 2013)

Angående: Förordningen om den digitala inre marknaden: fastställda hinder

Kommissionen lade nyligen fram ett förslag till förordning om åtgärder för att fullborda den europeiska inre marknaden för elektronisk kommunikation och upprätta en uppkopplad kontinent. I avsnitt A i sammanfattningen av konsekvensbedömningen anges det att fragmenteringen av regelverket har fastställts som ett hinder för följande sektorsspecifika regler: auktorisation att verka enligt enhetliga regler, tillgång till viktiga produktionsfaktorer för verksamhet inom fast eller mobil kommunikation och regler om konsumentskydd.

Kan kommissionen uppge i exakt vilka rapporter eller källor dessa hinder har fastställts?

Kan kommissionen förklara varför man föredragit en förordning i stället för ett direktiv som metod för att ta itu med de hinder som påstås ha fastställts?

Svar från Neelie Kroes på kommissionens vägnar
(6 november 2013)

Detaljerad information om källorna finns att hämta i den fullständiga konsekvensbedömningen ([1]). Vad gäller auktorisation att verka enligt enhetliga regler har källor bland annat hämtats från ”Report on the impact of administrative requirements on the provision of transnational business electronic communications services” ([2]) från organet för tillsynsmyndigheter inom elektronisk kommunikation (Berec) samt slutsatser från Berecs undersökning ”Report on the public call for contributions on possible existing legal and administrative barriers with reference to the provision of electronic communications services for the business segment” ([3]). Undersökningen ”Cost of Non-Europe” ([4]) nämner dessutom bristen på enhetliga regler i allmänhet som ett stort hinder. Vad gäller tillgång till viktiga insatsvaror för fast eller mobil affärsverksamhet hänvisas till slutsatserna från rundabordssamtalet för verkställande direktörer i juli 2011, undersökningen ”Cost of Non-Europe” som nämnts ovan, en undersökning som utförts av WIK ([5]) och en rad bilaterala möten med berörda parter. Vad gäller konsumentskydd finns en stor mängd källor, därför hänvisas till konsekvensbedömningens underavdelningar 2.2 (Consultation and Expertise) och 4.2 (Single Market fragmentation affecting European consumers) samt rapportens bilaga II ([6]).

Man har föredragit en förordning, eftersom de förslagets syften inte skulle kunna uppnås i rimlig tid med hjälp av en fullständig översyn av de befintliga direktiven. Förslaget bemöter frågor som uppkommer i en snabbt föränderlig värld och det är viktigt att agera skyndsamt. Kommissionen föreslår en förordning eftersom en sådan avlägsnar hindren för ett fullbordande av den inre marknaden med hjälp av konkreta och direkt tillämpliga rättigheter och skyldigheter för leverantörer och slutanvändare, och en verkligt gemensam strategi för att undvika avvikande nationella lösningar.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/cf/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=2736
([2]) (BoR (11) 56, 8 december 2011), http://berec.europa.eu/eng/document_register/subject_matter/berec/download/0/120-berec-report-on-the-impact-of-administra_0.pdf
([3]) (BoR (11) 55, 8 december 2011), http://berec.europa.eu/eng/document_register/subject_matter/berec/download/0/120-berec-report-on-the-impact-of-administra_0.pdf
([4]) ”Steps towards a truly Internal Market for e-communications”, ECORYS, särskilt kapitel 5, http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/cf/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=2648
([5]) http://www.ectaportal.com/en/PRESS/ECTA-Press-Releases/2013/ECTA-INTUG-Untapped-potential-of-digital-single-market/
([6]) Bilaga II i konsekvensbedömningen innehåller de operativa rekommendationerna från den rådgivande europeiska konsumentgruppens (ECCG) möte den 11–12 juni 2013 (undergrupp för internettjänster).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010782/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Digital Single Market Regulation: identified obstacles

The Commission recently proposed a regulation laying down measures concerning the European single market for electronic communications and to achieve a 'Connected Continent'. In section A of the executive summary of the impact assessment it is stated that the fragmentation of regulatory frameworks has been identified as an obstacle for the following sector-specific rules: authorisation to operate under consistent rules, access to key inputs for fixed or mobile business, and rules on end-user protection.

Can the Commission point to the exact reports or sources where these obstacles have been identified?

Can the Commission explain why a regulation, rather than a directive, was chosen as the preferred method of dealing with these obstacles that it claims to have identified ?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(6 November 2013)

Detailed information on the sources of information can be found in the full Impact Assessment document ([1]). Concerning the authorisation to operate under consistent rules, among the sources are the BEREC 'Report on the impact of administrative requirements on the provision of transnational business electronic communications services' ([2]) along with the findings of the BEREC survey 'Report on the public call for contributions on possible existing legal and administrative barriers with reference to the provision of electronic communications services for the business segment' ([3]). In addition, the study on the 'Cost of non-Europe' ([4]) refers to the lack of consistency of rules in general as a major obstacle. With regards to access to key inputs for fixed or mobile business, the evidence includes the conclusions of the CEO Round Table of July 2011, the study on the 'Cost of non-Europe' cited above, a study by WIK ([5]) and a series of bilateral meetings with stakeholders. On end-user protection, as the number of sources is very large it is suggested to consult sub-chapters 2.2 (Consultation and Expertise) and 4.2 (Single Market fragmentation affecting European consumers) of the impact assessment report as well as to Annex II ([6]) of the report.

A Regulation was chosen because the objectives underpinning this proposal would not be achieved in a timely manner through a full review of the existing Directives. The proposal addresses issues in a fast changing world, and it is essential to act rapidly. The Commission proposes a regulation as it ensures the removal of single market barriers, with specific, directly-applicable rights and obligations for providers and end users, and a truly common approach to avoid divergent national solutions.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/cf/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=2736
([2]) (BoR (11) 56, 8 December 2011), http://berec.europa.eu/eng/document_register/subject_matter/berec/download/0/120-berec-report-on-the-impact-of-administra_0.pdf
([3]) BoR (11) 55, 08 December 2011, http://berec.europa.eu/files/doc/berec/bor/bor11_55_input_businessservices.pdf
([4]) 'Steps towards a truly Internal Market for e-communications', Ecorys, in particular Chapter 5. http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/cf/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=2648
([5]) http://www.ectaportal.com/en/PRESS/ECTA-Press-Releases/2013/ECTA-INTUG-Untapped-potential-of-digital-single-market/
([6]) Annex II of the Impact assessment includes the operational recommendations of the European Consumer Consultative Group (ECCG) meeting on 11-12 June 2013 (Sub-Group on the Provision of Internet Services).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010783/13
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Zero hour contracts

With the growing use in certain Member States of zero hour contracts, can the Commission inform us as to how this impacts on European health and safety rules? Furthermore, how do these contracts ensure the health and safety of EU workers?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(11 November 2013)

There are no rules at EU level specifically regulating 'zero-hour contracts'.

In principle, EC law does not preclude zero-hour contracts, since neither of the two most relevant labour law Directives (the Working Time Directive ([1]) and the Part-Time Work Directive ([2])) lays down a right to a minimum number of working hours. The Court of Justice confirmed this in its judgment in Case C-313/02 ([3]), in which it held a type of zero-hour contract to be compatible with the Part-Time Work Directive and EU gender equality rules.

Zero-hour contracts must, however, comply with EC law requirements regarding working conditions. In particular, zero-hour workers are entitled to paid annual leave on a proportional basis in accordance with Article 31(2) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and Article 7 of the Working Time Directive. Their health and safety at work must be guaranteed in accordance with EC law.

The Commission raised the issues of precarious work and zero-hour employment in a Green Paper ([4]), but there was insufficient support among the Member States for the Commission to propose new legislation at EU level to address these issues. The Labour law conference, organised by the Commission on 21 October addressed the segmentation of the labour market and touched upon zero-hour contracts ([5]).

The Commission services will continue to follow developments in the Member States involving this type of contract, including its impact in terms of workers' health and safety.

([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]) Council Directive 97/81/EC of 15 December 1997 concerning the framework Agreement on part-time work concluded by UNICE, CEEP and the ETUC, OJ L 14, 20.1.1998, p. 9.
([3]) Case C-313/02 Nicole Wippel v Peek & Cloppenburg GmbH & Co. KG [2004] ECR I-09483.
([4]) 'Modernising labour law to meet the challenges of the 21st century' (COM(2006) 708 final of 22 November 2006).
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=88&eventsId=898&furtherEvents=yes

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010784/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Events to mark 60th anniversary of the European Convention on Human Rights

Members of the Scottish Parliament recently supported a motion to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the coming into force of the European Convention on Human Rights. What arrangements were organised by the European Union to increase public awareness of this event?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(9 December 2013)

The Commission focuses on formally celebrating the key dates in the history of European Union integration such as Treaty ratifications or the Schuman Declaration. The European Convention of Human Rights, although of paramount importance for the EU, is an instrument of the Council of Europe and not of the European Union.

That being said, the Commission has many other ways to recognise the historical importance of the Convention, for example speeches or articles dedicated to the anniversary (see, for example, the article by Vice-President Reding in 'Vom Recht auf Menschenwürde, 60 Jahre Europäische Menschenrechtskonvention' — Herausgegeben von Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger ([1])).

It should also be kept in mind that the formal status of the Convention in the EU legal system may change in the foreseeable future. The EU is obliged to become a member of the Convention (see Article 6(2) TEU), and the process of accession is under way with an agreement on draft accession instruments having been reached at negotiators' level in April 2013.

([1]) ISBN 978-3-16-152628-2.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010786/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Commission involvement in Offshore Europe event in Aberdeen

Aberdeen recently hosted the Offshore Europe Conference and Exhibition, an event that hosts 1 500 exhibitors involved in the global energy industry.

Did the Commission have any involvement in this event, which is key to oil and gas companies in Scotland and across Europe?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(11 November 2013)

The Commission was indeed represented at this year's Offshore Europe event in Aberdeen, UK. The Commission's representative presented the recently adopted EU Directive 2013/30/EU aimed at improving the safety of offshore oil and gas operations during a panel session attended by the UK energy minister (Michael Fallon, MP) and representatives of regulators and industry.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010787/13
an die Kommission
Claude Moraes (S&D), Jan Philipp Albrecht (Verts/ALE), Dimitrios Droutsas (S&D), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE) und Brian Simpson (S&D)
(23. September 2013)

Betrifft: Ermittlungen der Artikel 29-Arbeitsgruppe im Zusammenhang mit dem neuen Ticketvertriebssystem des Internationalen Luftverkehrverbands (IATA)

Am 29. Mai 2013 äußerten die Verfasser dieser Schriftlichen Anfrage an die Kommission ihre Bedenken im Zusammenhang mit der vom Internationalen Luftverkehrsverband IATA angenommenen Resolution 787, laut der Vorkehrungen zur Entwicklung eines neuen Vertriebssystem für Flugtickets (new distribution capability — NDC) getroffen werden sollen und das möglicherweise Verstößen gegen die Persönlichkeits- und die Datenschutzrechte von EU-Bürgern Vorschub leistet.

In ihrer Antwort bestätigt die Kommission, sie habe in ihrem Schreiben an die IATA auf den geltenden Rechtsrahmen nach dem Wettbewerbsrecht, dem Datenschutzrecht und dem Flugverkehrsrecht hingewiesen und sei derzeit mit der Prüfung der Resolution befasst, um nachvollziehen zu können, worum es sich bei diesem neuen System NDC handelt und welche Auswirkungen es haben könnte.

Die Verfasser haben sich zudem an Kommissarin Reding gewandt, um die potenziellen Auswirkungen dieser Initiative der IATA auf den Datenschutz deutlich zu machen. In ihrer Antwort erläuterte Frau Reding, dass die Artikel 29-Arbeitsgruppe als unabhängiges Beratungsgremium der Kommission in dieser Angelegenheit fungiert, und fügte hinzu, dass die Arbeitsgruppe auf ihrer letzten Vollversammlung Ende Februar beschlossen habe, sich mit dieser Angelegenheit zu befassen und gründlich zu untersuchen, wie sie sich auf den Datenschutz auswirken werde. Anhand der Ergebnisse dieser Ermittlungen werde dann in angemessener Form über Mittel und Wege diskutiert werden können, wie die von uns geäußerten Bedenken der IATA vermittelt werden können.

Kann die Kommission Angaben dazu machen, wie weit die Untersuchung, mit der die Artikel 29-Arbeitsgruppe befasst ist, inzwischen gediehen ist und wie der diesbezügliche Zeitplan aussieht, und kann sie auch klipp und klar beantworten, ob das Ergebnis dieser Untersuchung und die daraus gezogenen Schlussfolgerungen dem Parlament mitgeteilt werden, sobald diese abgeschlossen ist?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(7. November 2013)

Die Datenschutzgruppe nach Artikel 29 untersucht weiterhin die datenschutzrechtlichen Aspekte, die mit der vom Internationalen Luftverkehrsverband (IATA) geplanten Entwicklung eines neuen Vertriebssystems für Flugtickets (NDC) verbunden sind.

Ob in dieser Sache weitere Schritte unternommen werden oder ob das Ergebnis und Schlussfolgerungen der Untersuchung dem Europäischen Parlament mitgeteilt werden, wird allein von der Artikel 29-Datenschutzgruppe entschieden, die die Kommission als unabhängiges Gremium berät.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010787/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Claude Moraes (S&D), Jan Philipp Albrecht (Verts/ALE), Dimitrios Droutsas (S&D), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE) και Brian Simpson (S&D)
(23 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Έρευνα της ομάδας εργασίας του άρθρου 29 στη Διεθνή Ένωση Αερομεταφορών (ΙΑΤΑ) και η νέα ικανότητα διανομής

Στις 29 Μαΐου 2013 οι συντάκτες της παρούσας γραπτής ερώτησης απηύθυναν επιστολή στην Επιτροπή με την οποία εξέφραζαν την ανησυχία τους σχετικά με το Ψήφισμα 787 της Διεθνούς Ένωσης Αεροπορικών Μεταφορών (ΙΑΤΑ) που περιλαμβάνει διατάξεις για την ανάπτυξη μιας νέας ικανότητας διανομής (ΝΙΔ) και σχετικά με την πιθανότητα να οδηγήσει σε παραβιάσεις των προσωπικών δικαιωμάτων και των δικαιωμάτων προστασίας των δεδομένων των πολιτών της ΕΕ.

Στην απάντησή της η Επιτροπή επιβεβαίωσε ότι έχει «απευθύνει επιστολή στην Διεθνή Ένωση Αεροπορικών Μεταφορών (ΙΑΤΑ) προκειμένου να υπενθυμίσει το ισχύον νομικό πλαίσιο σύμφωνα με την νομοθεσία περί ανταγωνισμού, τη νομοθεσία περί προστασίας των δεδομένων και την νομοθεσία περί αερομεταφορών» και ότι «σε αυτό το στάδιο αναλύει το ψήφισμα προκειμένου να κατανοήσει τη φύση και τις επιπτώσεις της ΝΙΔ».

Οι συντάκτες της ερώτησης απηύθυναν επίσης επιστολή στην επίτροπο Reding με στόχο να επισημάνουν τις πιθανές επιπτώσεις της πρωτοβουλίας της ΙΑΤΑ στην προστασία των δεδομένων. Στην απάντησή της, η επίτροπος Reding επεσήμανε ότι η ομάδα εργασίας του άρθρου 29 είναι ο ανεξάρτητος σύμβουλος της Επιτροπής όσον αφορά το θέμα αυτό, και προσέθεσε ότι η ομάδα εργασίας «αποφάσισε στην τελευταία συνεδρίαση της ολομέλειας των μελών της στα τέλη Φεβρουαρίου να εξετάσει το εν λόγω θέμα και τις επιπτώσεις του στην προστασία των δεδομένων. Τα αποτελέσματα της εν λόγω έρευνας θα αποτελέσουν την κατάλληλη βάση για συζήτηση όσον αφορά τον τρόπο με τον οποίο θα εκφράσουμε τις ανησυχίες μας στην ΙΑΤΑ».

Θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να παράσχει επικαιροποιημένα στοιχεία σχετικά με την έρευνα που διενήργησε η ομάδα του άρθρου 29 και το χρονοδιάγραμμα της έρευνας, και θα μπορούσε, εκτός αυτού, να διευκρινίσει εάν το αποτέλεσμα και τα συμπεράσματα της έρευνας αυτής θα κοινοποιηθούν στο Κοινοβούλιο όταν αυτή ολοκληρωθεί;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Η ομάδα του άρθρου 29 για την προστασία των προσώπων έναντι της επεξεργασίας δεδομένων προσωπικού χαρακτήρα, συνεχίζει να μελετά τις επιπτώσεις που θα μπορούσε να έχει στην προστασία των δεδομένων το σχέδιο της Διεθνούς Ένωσης Αεροπορικών Μεταφορών (ΙΑΤΑ) σχετικά με την ανάπτυξη μιας νέας ικανότητας διανομής (ΝΙΔ) για τα αεροπορικά εισιτήρια.

Εναπόκειται στην ομάδα εργασίας του άρθρου 29, ως ανεξάρτητης συμβουλευτικής ομάδας της Επιτροπής, να αποφασίσει για τυχόν περαιτέρω μέτρα που θα λάβει σχετικά με το θέμα αυτό, όπως και για το κατά πόσον τα αποτελέσματα και τα συμπεράσματα της έρευνας θα κοινοποιηθούν στο Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010787/13
aan de Commissie
Claude Moraes (S&D), Jan Philipp Albrecht (Verts/ALE), Dimitrios Droutsas (S&D), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE) en Brian Simpson (S&D)
(23 september 2013)

Betreft: Door de Groep artikel 29 ingesteld onderzoek naar de Internationale Luchtvaartorganisatie (IATA) en de nieuwe distributiecapaciteit

Op 29 mei 2013 hebben de indieners van deze schriftelijke vraag bij de Commissie uiting gegeven aan hun bezorgdheid omtrent het door de Internationale Luchtvaartorganisatie (IATA) aangenomen Besluit 787, dat voorziet in bepalingen ter ontwikkeling van nieuwe distributiecapaciteit (NDC), en omtrent de potentiële inbreuken die daarmee kunnen worden gepleegd op de persoonlijke en gegevensbeschermingsrechten van EU-burgers.

In haar antwoord heeft de Commissie bevestigd dat zij „de Internationale Luchtvaartorganisatie (IATA) schriftelijk heeft herinnerd aan het uit hoofde van de concurrentie-, de gegevensbeschermings- en de luchtvaartwetgeving in de EU geldende rechtsstelsel", en dat zij „het bewuste besluit momenteel analyseert om inzicht te krijgen in de aard en implicaties van de NDC".

De indieners van de vraag hebben ook commissaris Reding schriftelijk gewezen op de mogelijke implicaties van het IATA-initiatief in termen van gegevensbescherming. In haar antwoord heeft commissaris Reding uitgelegd dat de Groep artikel 29 fungeert als onafhankelijk adviseur van de Commissie over dit onderwerp, en voegde zij daaraan toe dat de Groep „op zijn laatste plenaire bijeenkomst eind februari heeft besloten deze kwestie nader te bestuderen en de gegevensbeschermingsimplicaties ervan te onderzoeken. De uitkomst van dit onderzoek vormt een geschikt uitgangspunt voor een discussie over de middelen en methoden om jegens de IATA uiting te geven aan onze bedenkingen daaromtrent".

Kan de Commissie een overzicht geven van de stand van zaken met betrekking tot het door de Groep artikel 29 ingestelde onderzoek en het daarbij gevolgde tijdschema, en kan zij nader aangeven of de resultaten en conclusies van dit onderzoek, zodra het is voltooid, ook aan het Parlement zullen worden meegedeeld?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(7 november 2013)

De Groep gegevensbescherming artikel 29 blijft verder onderzoek verrichten naar de gegevensbeschermingsimplicaties van de plannen van de Internationale Luchtvaartorganisatie (IATA) om een nieuwe distributiecapaciteit (NDC) voor vliegtickets te ontwikkelen.

De Groep gegevensbescherming artikel 29, een onafhankelijk adviesorgaan van de Commissie, beslist zelf welke verdere stappen zij over dit onderwerp zal ondernemen, met inbegrip van de vraag of de resultaten en conclusies van het onderzoek zullen worden gedeeld met het Europees Parlement.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010787/13
to the Commission
Claude Moraes (S&D), Jan Philipp Albrecht (Verts/ALE), Dimitrios Droutsas (S&D), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE) and Brian Simpson (S&D)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Article 29 Working Party investigation of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the new distribution capability

On 29 May 2013 the authors of this Written Question wrote to the Commission expressing concern about Resolution 787 adopted by the International Air Transport Association (IATA), which includes provisions to develop a new distribution capability (NDC), and the potential it has for infringements on the personal and data protection rights of EU citizens.

In its response, the Commission confirming that its '[has] written to the International Air Transport Association (IATA) to recall the EU applicable legal framework under competition law, data protection law and aviation law' and that it is 'currently analysing the Resolution to understand the nature and implications of the NDC'.

The authors also wrote to Commissioner Reding to highlight the possible implications of the IATA initiative in terms of data protection. In response, Commissioner Reding explained that the article 29 Working Party is the independent advisor to the Commission on this issue, adding that the Working Party 'decided at its last plenary in late February to take this issue up and investigate the data protection implications. The outcome of this investigation will be the appropriate basis for a discussion on the ways and means of addressing our concerns to IATA'.

Could the Commission provide an update on the investigation conducted by the article 29 Working Party and the timetable for the investigation, and can it clarify whether the outcome and conclusions of this investigation will be shared with Parliament as soon as it is completed?

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

The article 29 Data Protection Working Party is continuing to investigate the data protection implications of the International Air Transport Association's (IATA) plans to develop a new distribution capability (NDC) for flight tickets.

It is up to the article 29 Data Protection Working Party, being an independent advisory body to the Commission, to decide on any further steps it will take on this issue, including whether the outcome and conclusions of the investigation will be shared with the European Parliament.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010789/13
à la Commission
Michèle Striffler (PPE)
(23 septembre 2013)

Objet: Financement de la corrida par la PAC

La corrida est une pratique exclusivement répandue dans certaines régions européennes (Espagne, Portugal, Sud de la France) et qui nécessite l'élevage de taureaux uniquement destinés à cette activité.

De nombreux rapports et études font état d'un financement en provenance de la politique agricole commune (PAC) bénéficiant à des exploitations dont le seul but est l'élevage de taureaux de combat.

Or, un tel financement ne correspond absolument pas aux objectifs de la PAC tels que définis par l'article 39 du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne.

Aussi, la Commission compte-t-elle prendre des mesures à l'encontre des États membres qui détournent les subventions agricoles européennes pour financer des élevages de taureaux de combats destinés à la corrida?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(7 novembre 2013)

La Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à se reporter à la réponse commune aux questions écrites E-010205/2012 et E-010589/2012 posées respectivement par M. Dan Jørgensen et M. Raül Romeva i Rueda ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010789/13
to the Commission
Michèle Striffler (PPE)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: CAP funding for bullfighting

The practice of bullfighting is confined to a few parts of Europe, namely Spain, Portugal and southern France. The bulls involved are specially raised for the purpose of fighting.

Many reports and studies show that farms devoted exclusively to the breeding of fighting bulls receive funding under the common agricultural policy (CAP).

Providing funding for such purposes is completely at odds with the objectives of the CAP, as laid down in Article 39 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

Does the Commission, therefore, plan to take steps against Member States that misuse EU agricultural subsidies in order to fund the breeding of fighting bulls?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(7 November 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the joint answer to written questions E-010205/2012 by Mr Dan Jørgensen and E-010589/2012 by Mr Raül Romeva i Rueda ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010791/13
à la Commission
Jean-Pierre Audy (PPE)
(23 septembre 2013)

Objet: Représentation des États membres au Conseil européen

L'article 15 du traité sur l'Union européenne (traité UE) stipule, en ce qui concerne les dispositions relatives aux institutions, que: «*Le Conseil européen est composé des chefs d'État ou de gouvernement des États membres, ainsi que de son président et du président de la Commission*».

Pour sa part, l'article 10, paragraphe 2, alinéa 2, du même traité UE précise, en ce qui concerne les dispositions relatives aux principes démocratiques, que: «*Les États membres sont représentés au Conseil européen par leur chef d'État ou de gouvernement et au Conseil par leurs gouvernements, eux-mêmes démocratiquement responsables, soit devant leurs parlements nationaux, soit devant leurs citoyens*».

Le député soussigné a l'honneur de demander à qui de droit au sein de la Commission en sa qualité de gardienne des traités si, pour l'application des principes démocratiques prévus à l'article 10, paragraphe 2, alinéa 2, la bribe de phrase «*eux-mêmes démocratiquement responsables, soit devant leurs parlements nationaux, soit devant leurs citoyens*» s'applique seulement aux gouvernements qui représentent les États membres au Conseil ou s'applique également aux chefs d'État ou de gouvernement qui représentent les États membres au Conseil européen?

Réponse donnée par M. Barroso au nom de la Commission
(12 novembre 2013)

Il n'incombe pas à la Commission, mais à la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne de statuer sur l'interprétation des traités. L'expression «gardienne des traités» vise la tâche de la Commission de surveiller l'application du droit de l'Union, à laquelle se réfère l'article 17(1) TUE.

Pour ce qui concerne la signification de l'article 10, paragraphe 2, deuxième alinéa du TUE, la Commission note que, si les versions linguistiques des traités ne sont pas toutes grammaticalement identiques sur la question de savoir à qui la partie de phrase commençant par «eux-mêmes démocratiquement responsables» se réfère, il résulte d'un nombre important de versions que cette partie de phrase vise non seulement les gouvernements mais également les Chefs d'État ou de gouvernement siégeant au Conseil européen. La plupart des versions permettent cette lecture, ce qui semble bien correspondre à l'objectif de cette disposition et sa place dans le traité.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010791/13
to the Commission
Jean-Pierre Audy (PPE)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Representation of Member States in the European Council

With regard to provisions on the institutions, Article 15 of the Treaty on European Union (EU Treaty) states the following: 'The European Council shall consist of the Heads of State or Government of the Member States, together with its President and the President of the Commission'.

With regard to provisions on democratic principles, the second subparagraph of Article 10(2), of the same EU Treaty states the following: 'Member States are represented in the European Council by their Heads of State or Government and in the Council by their governments, themselves democratically accountable either to their national Parliaments, or to their citizens'.

The undersigned Member of the European Parliament has the honour of asking the Commission in its capacity as guardian of the treaties, whether, in terms of the application of the democratic principles provided for in the second subparagraph of Article 10(2), the phrase 'themselves democratically accountable either to their national Parliaments, or to their citizens' only applies to governments which represent Member States in the Council or whether it also applies to the Heads of State or Government which represent Member States in the European Council?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(12 November 2013)

It is the Court of Justice of the European Union, and not the Commission, that has jurisdiction to give rulings on the interpretation of the Treaties. The expression 'guardian of the Treaties' refers to the Commission's task of overseeing the application of Union law, as provided for in Article 17(1) TEU.

As for the meaning of the second subparagraph of Article 10(2) TEU, the Commission would observe that, although the language versions of the Treaties are not all grammatically identical on the question of to whom the clause beginning with 'themselves democratically accountable' refers, it is apparent from a significant number of versions that this clause refers not only to governments, but also to the Heads of State or Government in the European Council. Most versions allow this reading, which seems to correspond to the purpose of the provision and its place in the Treaty.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010793/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(23 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Aumento dei casi di lebbra in India

Secondo le stime dell'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità (OMS), in India sta tornando a diffondersi il morbo della lebbra: infatti, mentre nel 2005 i malati erano in rapporto di 1 a 10.000 persone, attualmente si è passati a 2 persone su 10.000.

Fonti locali come gli operatori dell'*ashram* e centro di riabilitazione «*Swarga Dwar*», fondato nel 1983 dal Pontificio istituto per le missioni estere, rilevano che ogni settimana arrivano due o tre persone contagiate bisognose di cure ed assistenza, un numero di nuovi casi decisamente superiore al passato.

Le cause di tale aumento sono da ravvisarsi soprattutto nell'ondata migratoria che dalle campagne si riversa nelle grandi città per cercare lavoro, unitamente alle condizioni di povertà e scarsa igiene nelle quali queste persone sono costrette a vivere.

Può la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

1. è a conoscenza dei fatti sopra descritti?

2. visto il *Country Strategy Paper* 2007-2013 con cui vengono stanziati circa 470 000 000 di euro, può indicare quale cifra è stata destinata al campo della salute e in particolare alla cura o prevenzione della lebbra?

3. come ritiene che il governo indiano abbia utilizzato tali risorse per far fronte alla diffusione di questo morbo sul suo territorio?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(13 novembre 2013)

1. La diffusione della lebbra in India è diminuita nel 2005 a meno di 1 caso su 10 000 persone, il che ha permesso al paese di dichiarare l'eliminazione della malattia. Quest'anno 36 distretti, ossia 9 distretti in più dell'anno scorso, hanno registrato più di 2 casi su 10 000 persone. Il più colpito è stato il distretto di Tapi, nello Stato occidentale di Gujarat, in cui si sono registrati nel mese di marzo 6,55 casi su 10 000 persone rispetto ai 4,03 casi su 10 000 persone dell'anno scorso.

2. I fondi stanziati nell'ambito del Documento di strategia nazionale 2007-2013 per l'India sono stati ridotti a 365 milioni, di cui 110 milioni destinati alla sanità. In quest'ambito, i settori a cui è destinata l'assistenza (tramite il sostegno al bilancio settoriale e il rafforzamento delle capacità generali) sono la salute riproduttiva e la salute dei bambini. La Commissione non ha programmi che riguardino specificamente la lebbra.

3. L'Unione europea continua a fornire sostegno indiretto alle autorità indiane nonché ai privati, alla società civile o ad organizzazioni religiose, tramite il Fondo globale. La delegazione dell'UE in India ha consigliato alle organizzazioni della società civile competenti, che hanno un'ottima tradizione di collaborazione con il Ministero della Sanità, di elaborare collettivamente una proposta «tubercolosi e lebbra» da presentare al Fondo globale. Combinare tubercolosi e lebbra, invece di proporre un intervento specifico per la lebbra, servirebbe ad aumentare le possibilità di ricevere finanziamenti dal Fondo globale. Inoltre, quasi tutte le organizzazioni della società civile che lavorano sulla lebbra si occupano anche di tubercolosi e, in entrambi i casi, collaborano molto strettamente con i servizi sanitari governativi.

Si invita l'onorevole parlamentare a fare riferimento anche alla risposta all'interrogazione E-006969/13 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010793/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Increase in the incidence of leprosy in India

According to World Health Organisation estimates, leprosy is starting to spread once again in India. In 2005, 1 in 10 000 of the population had the disease, whereas the number is now 2 in 10 000.

Local sources such as the Swarga Dwar ashram and rehabilitation centre, founded in 1983 by the Papal Institute for Foreign Missions, say that every week, two or three people who have contracted the illness come to them for treatment and help. This is a significant increase compared with previous years.

The main reasons for this increase seem to be the wave of migrants pouring into big cities from the countryside in search of work, coupled with the poverty and poor hygiene conditions in which these people have to live.

1. Is the Commission aware of these facts?

2. In the light of the Country Strategy Paper 2007-2013, which earmarked funds of approximately EUR 470 000 000, can the Commission state what sum was set aside for health, and in particular for the treatment or prevention of leprosy?

3. How does the Commission think the Indian Government has used these funds to tackle the spread of this disease in the country?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(13 November 2013)

1. India's leprosy prevalence dropped below 1 case for every 10,000 people in 2005, allowing the country to claim elimination. This year, 36 districts reported a prevalence of more than 2 cases per 10,000 people, nine more districts than last year. The worst-affected was Tapi, in the western state of Gujarat, where there were 6.55 cases per 10,000 people in March, compared to 4.03 per 10,000 people last year.

2. The funds allocated under the India Country Strategy Paper 2007-2013 were reduced to 365 million out of which 110 million was earmarked for health. The health related target areas are reproductive and child health (assistance given through sector budget support and general capacity building). The Commission has no programmes specifically targeting leprosy.

3. The EU continues to provide support indirectly to Indian authorities and to private, civil society or faith-based organisations, through the Global Fund. The EU Delegation in India has advised competent Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) which have a very good partnership record with the Ministry of Health, to work collectively towards a 'tuberculosis and leprosy' proposal to the Global Fund. The interest of combining tuberculosis with leprosy is to increase chances of being funded by the Global Fund compared to a standalone 'leprosy' intervention. Also, almost all CSOs working on leprosy work also on tuberculosis, and in both cases, they work very closely with government health services.

The Honourable Member is also referred to the answer to the Question E-006969/13. ([1])

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010794/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(23 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Gruppo Pai-Ilta (Vicenza): licenziati 110 lavoratori

Nell'agosto scorso il gruppo Ilta-Pai-Abm ha avviato la procedura per il licenziamento di 110 lavoratori. Nonostante il gruppo sia stato leader e punto di riferimento per tutto il settore avicolo sino al 2011, le aziende ad esso facenti capo sono state fortemente colpite dalla crisi finanziaria, che ha portato al tracollo del fatturato, al conseguente ricorso agli ammortizzatori sociali per il 2012 e, infine, all'avvio dei licenziamenti.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza dei fatti sopra descritti;

2. se ritiene che i lavoratori licenziati potranno usufruire del sostegno del Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione (FEG);

3. quali misure intende attuare per sostenere il comparto avicolo del Veneto e il tessuto sociale che da esso dipende?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(18 novembre 2013)

1. Pur non essendo a conoscenza delle circostanze menzionate dall'onorevole deputata, la Commissione è preoccupata per le conseguenze socioeconomiche che gli esuberi presso il Gruppo Ilta-Pai-Abm possono comportare.

2. Come l'onorevole deputata saprà, il criterio «crisi» del FEG è scaduto alla fine del 2011 e non può essere usato per richieste di sostegno presentate nel 2013. Per il periodo 2014-2020 i colegislatori hanno raggiunto recentemente un accordo preliminare per reintrodurre il criterio di crisi tra quelli stabiliti per poter fruire del sostegno del FEG. L'appoggio del Parlamento sarà essenziale nel processo legislativo per assicurare l'adozione finale di questo elemento. Si invita l'onorevole deputata a rivolgersi alla persona di contatto del FEG responsabile per l'Italia ([1]) per chiedere se è prevista la presentazione di una domanda di sostegno per i lavoratori in questione.

3. La Commissione non interviene direttamente e non sostiene direttamente gli eventuali progetti sociali condotti nelle regioni italiane. Di fatto, sulla base del principio di sussidiarietà, i programmi operativi cofinanziati dai fondi strutturali e, in questo caso dal FSE, sono attuati dagli Stati membri e dalle loro regioni. Le informazioni sulle opportunità di finanziamento vanno chieste all'autorità di gestione regionale del programma operativo del FSE in Veneto. La Commissione non interviene nella selezione, nel monitoraggio e nella valutazione dei progetti.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010794/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Pai-Ilta Group (Vicenza): 110 workers made redundant

In August, the Ilta-Pai-Abm Group began the process of making 110 workers redundant. Although the group was a major player and a benchmark in the poultry sector until 2011, its main companies were heavily hit by the financial crisis, leading to a huge drop in its turnover. The group was obliged to seek government aid in 2012 and has now had to make redundancies.

1. Is the Commission aware of these facts?

2. Does it believe that the workers made redundant will receive any support from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF)?

3. What measures does it intend to take to support the poultry sector in the Veneto region and the social infrastructure that relies on it?

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

1. Without being aware of all the circumstances to which the Honourable Member refers, the Commission is concerned about the social and economic consequences that the redundancies in the Ilta-Pai-Abm Group may bring with them.

2. As the Honourable Members know, the crisis criterion of the EGF lapsed at the end of 2011 and cannot be used for applications presented in 2013. For the period of 2014 to 2020, the co-legislators recently reached a preliminary agreement to reintroduce the crisis criterion as one of the criteria for potential EGF support. Parliament's support will be critical in the legislative process to ensure the final adoption of this element. The Honourable Member is advised to get in touch with the EGF Contact Person for Italy [1] to enquire whether an application is being planned for the workers concerned.

3. The Commission does not intervene directly nor supports directly any social project in Italian Regions. In fact, according to the subsidiarity principle, the operational programmes co-financed by the structural funds, and by the ESF in this case, are implemented by the Member States and their regions. Information on funding opportunities should be asked to the regional managing authority of the ESF operational programme in Veneto. The Commission does not intervene in the selection, monitoring and evaluation of projects.

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010795/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(23 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Licenziamento di 1 500 dipendenti da parte del gruppo Riva in seguito al sequestro cautelativo di beni da parte della magistratura: tutela per i lavoratori

Lo scorso 9 settembre 2013 la Procura di Taranto, nell'ambito delle indagini sul caso ILVA, ha disposto il sequestro cautelativo dei beni della società Riva Forni Elettrici per un ammontare pari a 916 milioni di euro.

L'azienda ha successivamente comunicato la decisione di sospendere le attività di sette stabilimenti, ossia Verona (429 dipendenti), Malegno, Sellero e Cerveno (65, 232 e 137 dipendenti), Caronno Pertusella (162 dipendenti), Lesegno (257 dipendenti) e Annone Brianza (41 dipendenti), e di due società, Muzzana Trasporti e Riva Energia. Infatti, secondo i portavoce della Riva, il sequestro preventivo «sottrae all'azienda ogni disponibilità degli impianti e determina il blocco delle attività bancarie, impedendo la normale prosecuzione operativa della società: ciò fa sì che non esistano più le normali condizioni operative ed economiche per la prosecuzione della normale attività».

Nella direttiva 2010/75/UE relativa alle emissioni industriali (prevenzione e riduzione integrate dell'inquinamento) viene sottolineata l'esigenza di tutelare l'applicazione del principio «chi inquina paga», e che l'impianto industriale di Verona, come quelli di Brescia, Varese, Cuneo e Lecco, ha sempre operato nel rispetto dell'ambiente e della sicurezza dei lavoratori. Preso atto che a fronte di questa misura cautelare circa 1 500 lavoratori e le rispettive famiglie si trovano senza lavoro, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. è a conoscenza dei fatti?

2. intende attivare il FEG per intervenire ed evitare la catastrofe sociale ed economica che colpirà i lavoratori?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(10 dicembre 2013)

La Commissione è pienamente consapevole delle circostanze cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare ed esprime la sua preoccupazione per le conseguenze economiche e sociali degli esuberi nel Gruppo Riva.

Nel quadro dell'attuale regolamento FEG sono ammessi agli aiuti solo i lavoratori in esubero per cause connesse alla globalizzazione; sembra che, nella fattispecie, la globalizzazione non abbia a che fare con gli esuberi. I co-legislatori hanno tuttavia raggiunto un accordo sulla proposta della Commissione per un nuovo regolamento FEG per il periodo 2014-2020, che comprende la possibilità di utilizzare ancora il criterio della crisi economica per mobilitare questo strumento. Se ciò sarà confermato al momento dell'adozione formale del progetto di regolamento, a decorrere dal gennaio 2014 l'Italia potrà invocare la crisi economica al momento di richiedere il sostegno del FEG per i lavoratori interessati.

Se l'onorevole parlamentare intende mettersi in comunicazione con la persona di contatto per il FEG in Italia per sapere se si prevede di presentare una domanda di sostegno per i lavoratori in esubero del Gruppo Riva, può trovare le informazioni necessarie sul sito web del FEG ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=it

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010795/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: 1 500 employees made redundant by the Riva Group following the precautionary seizure of assets by the courts: protection of workers

On 9 September 2013, the Taranto Public Prosecutor's Office, as part of its investigations into the ILVA steel works case, issued a seizure order on the assets of Riva Forni Elettrici, for the amount of EUR 916 million.

The company subsequently announced its decision to suspend operations in seven of its plants: Verona (429 employees), Malegno, Sellero and Cerveno (65, 232 and 137 employees respectively), Caronno Pertusella (162 employees), Lesegno (257 employees) and Annone Brianza (41 employees), and in the two companies Muzzana Trasporti and Riva Energia. According to Riva's spokespersons, the seizure order 'completely stops the company from using the plants and blocks any activity on its bank accounts, thus preventing it from operating as normal. This means that the operating and economic conditions for continuing work as normal no longer exist.'

Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on industrial emissions (integrated pollution prevention and control) stipulates the requirement to uphold the 'polluter pays' principle. The Verona factory has always complied with environmental and worker safety requirements, as have those of Brescia, Varese, Cuneo and Lecco. However, as a result of the court's precautionary measure, around 1 500 workers and their families are now jobless.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following questions:

1. Is it aware of these facts?

2. Will it activate the EGF in order to take action to prevent the social and economic disaster that is about to hit these workers?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(10 December 2013)

The Commission is aware of the circumstances to which the Honourable Member refers and is concerned about the economic and social consequences of the redundancies in the Riva Group.

Under the current EGF Regulation, only workers made redundant because of trade related globalisation are eligible for support, and it would seem here that globalisation is not the cause of the redundancies. However, co-legislators have reached an agreement on the Commission proposal on a new EGF regulation for 2014-2020 which includes the possibility to use again the economic crisis criterion to mobilise the EGF. If this is confirmed when the draft regulation is formally adopted, as from January 2014 Italy may be able to invoke the economic crisis when applying for EGF support for the workers concerned.

The Honourable Member may wish to communicate with the EGF Contact Person in Italy, should she wish to know whether an application is being planned in support of workers made redundant by Riva Group. The relevant contact details can be found on the EGF website ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=it

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010796/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(23 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Spose bambine in Bangladesh: un caso nella provincia di Padova

Una ragazza di 15 anni residente nella provincia di Padova, nata in Bangladesh, ma che ha vissuto in Italia fin dai primi mesi di vita, è stata vittima di abusi per oltre un anno: nel gennaio 2012, rientrata nel paese natale con la famiglia, è stata costretta a sposare un cugino di 35 anni e poi a vivere con lui nel nostro paese. Nell'aprile scorso, dopo aver denunciato la sua condizione di sposa bambina, le forze dell'ordine hanno interrotto i soprusi perpetrati ed affidato la ragazza a una comunità.

Può la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

1. è al corrente dei fatti descritti?

2. è a conoscenza di eventi di cronaca simili negli altri Stati membri?

3. visti documenti come il *Coordination Agreement* stipulato nel 2001 e il *Country Strategy Paper* 2007-2013 fra UE e Bangladesh, nei quali si fanno espliciti riferimenti al rispetto dei diritti dell'uomo, come valuta i fatti oggetto dell'interrogazione e il fenomeno delle spose bambine in questo paese?

4. come intende muoversi per persuadere le autorità del Bangladesh a fissare come soglia minima per contrarre matrimonio,l'età di 18 anni?

5. ha già sollevato la questione in passato e, in caso di risposta affermativa, con quale esito?

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

Sebbene la Commissione non abbia ricevuto informazioni particolari su questo caso specifico menzionato dall'onorevole parlamentare, la Commissione continua a porre la questione dei diritti dei minori al centro del dialogo periodico con il Bangladesh sul buon governo e sui diritti umani. L'UE ha ripetutamente sollevato con le autorità competenti il problema dei matrimoni forzati, che in Bangladesh sono vietati per legge.

Negli ultimi anni si è registrato un miglioramento della situazione in Bangladesh, ma vi sono ancora problemi a far rispettare la legge. Un dato incoraggiante è che sia stato istituito un piano di azione nazionale sui minori e che il Primo ministro stesso presieda il Consiglio nazionale per lo sviluppo delle donne e dei bambini responsabile del piano. Il Bangladesh è membro della convenzione delle Nazioni Unite sui diritti del fanciullo e di alcune delle più importanti convenzioni dell'OIL.

L'Unione europea e, a livello bilaterale, gli Stati membri hanno finanziato diversi progetti che riguardano i diritti dei minori in Bangladesh e, nel corso della programmazione del prossimo periodo di assistenza (2014-2020), sia il sistema giudiziario che i diritti delle donne e dei minori continueranno ad essere al centro dell'interesse.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010796/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Child brides in Bangladesh: a case in the province of Padua

A 15-year-old girl living in the province of Padua, who was born in Bangladesh but has lived in Italy since she was a few months old, has been the victim of abuse for over a year. In January 2012 she returned to her country of birth with her family and was forced to marry a 35-year-old cousin and then live with him in Italy. In April this year, after the girl reported her situation as a child bride, the police put an end to this abuse and placed her in local authority care.

1. Is the Commission aware of these facts?

2. Does it know of any reports of similar events in other Member States?

3. In the light of documents such as the Coordination Agreement signed in 2001 and the EU-Bangladesh Country Strategy Paper 2007-2013, which refer explicitly to respect for human rights, what is the Commission's assessment of the facts described above and the problem of child brides in that country?

4. What action does the Commission intend to take to persuade the Bangladeshi authorities to set the minimum legal age for marriage at 18?

5. Has the Commission already raised this issue in the past and if so, what was the outcome?

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

Although the Commission has no particular information about the specific case in Italy referred to by the Honourable Member, children's rights continue to be among the most important issues the EU raises in its regular dialogue with Bangladesh on governance and human rights. The EU has consistently raised questions such as underage marriage, which is illegal in Bangladesh, with the relevant authorities.

Some important progress has been made in recent years in Bangladesh, but enforcement of justice continues be a problem. It is positive that a National Plan of Action for Children has been drawn up and that the Prime Minister herself chairs the National Council for Women's and Children's Development which oversees it. Bangladesh is party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and to some of the most relevant ILO Conventions.

A number of projects funded by the EU and bilaterally by Member States have targeted children's rights in Bangladesh, and both the justice system and women's and children's rights are expected to continue to be addressed during programming under the next phase of assistance (2014-20).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010797/13
aan de Commissie
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(23 september 2013)

Betreft: Subsidiariteit in het geding!/Maritieme ruimtelijke ordening en geïntegreerd kustbeheer

In maart 2013 heeft de Europese Commissie een voorstel gedaan voor een richtlijn in het kader van geïntegreerd maritiem beleid en kustbeheer. Zij is van mening dat de EU een leidersrol moet spelen om marien en maritiem onderzoek en innovatie te versterken en de groei van de maritieme sectoren te bevorderen. Parlementen uit vele lidstaten hebben aangegeven dat het ontwerp niet strookt met het subsidiariteitsbeginsel. De Europese Commissie lijkt de bezwaren te negeren.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met de subsidiariteitsbezwaren die zijn ingediend namens de parlementen uit Polen, Zweden, Duitsland, Ierland, Roemenië, België, Finland, Litouwen en Nederland ([1])?

2. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie deze veelheid aan ingediende subsidiariteitsbezwaren en de daarin aangedragen argumenten?

3. Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat het negeren van de vele bezwaren de indruk wekt dat de vraagtekens die door verschillende parlementen bij de voorgestelde wetgeving worden geplaatst niet serieus worden genomen? Zo nee, waarom niet?

4. Ruimtelijke ordening valt onder de bevoegdheid van de lidstaten. Kan de Commissie aangeven wat haar beweegredenen zijn het voorstel er koste wat het kost toch doorheen te drukken?

5. Is de Commissie bereid het voorstel alsnog per direct in te trekken wegens strijdigheid met het Verdrag? Zo nee, waarom niet?

Antwoord van mevrouw Damanaki namens de Commissie
(25 november 2013)

De Commissie heeft het met redenen omkleed advies van de nationale parlementen bestudeerd en heeft aan de gesignaleerde problemen alle aandacht geschonken. Krachtens het Protocol nr. 2 bij het Verdrag van Lissabon heeft elk Parlement een antwoord ontvangen dat voor het publiek toegankelijk is gemaakt ([2]). Het aantal ontvangen bezwaren overschreed de drempel niet die in dit protocol is vastgesteld om de Commissie te verplichten haar voorstel te herzien of in te trekken.

Het doel van het voorstel is meer samenhang tussen de sectorale beleidsgebieden onder het VWEU, zoals visserij, vervoer, milieu en energie. De keuze van de rechtsgrond is vastgesteld in overeenstemming met de vereisten in de rechtspraak van het Europees Hof van Justitie ([3]).

De tenuitvoerlegging van de richtlijn zal een duurzame „blauwe groei" van de maritieme en kusteconomieën bevorderen, waarbij investeerders de rechtszekerheid verkrijgen van welke economische ontwikkeling mogelijk zal zijn en waar. Zo wordt een duurzaam gebruik van de zee- en kusthulpbronnen verzekerd. De uitvoering van de richtlijn zal voor exploitanten voor samenhang zorgen om maritieme activiteiten te ontwikkelen ten behoeve van de werkgelegenheid in kustgemeenschappen.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/935/935106/935106nl.pdf
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/935/935502/935502nl.pdf
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/935/935996/935996nl.pdf
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/936/936273/936273nl.pdf
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/936/936194/936194nl.pdf
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/936/936420/936420nl.pdf
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/936/936424/936424nl.pdf
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/936/936407/936407nl.pdf
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/936/936422/936422nl.pdf
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/936/936032/936032nl.pdf
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/936/936172/936172nl.pdf

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/relations/relations_other/npo/index_nl.htm

([3]) Arrest van het Hof van Justitie van 11 juni 1991, Zaak C-300/89, Jurispr., punten 13 en 17. Arrest van het Hof van Justitie van 30 januari 2001, Zaak C-36/98, Jurispr., punten 51 tot 53.

De bepalingen van de voorgestelde richtlijn zijn van procedurele aard en specificeren niet concreet wat de lidstaten in verband met maritieme activiteiten in hun wateren moeten doen. Er is geen specifieke verplichting voor de lidstaten om de gemaakte keuzes in hun plannen te bepalen. Het voorstel is derhalve in overeenstemming met het subsidiariteitsbeginsel.

De Commissie verheugt zich over de steun die haar voorstel in de verschillende commissies van het Europees Parlement heeft verkregen. Zij is niet voornemens haar voorstel in te trekken en kijkt uit naar de resultaten van het onderzoek door de medewetgevers.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010797/13
to the Commission
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: Subsidiarity at stake!/Maritime spatial planning and integrated coastal management

In March 2013 the European Commission proposed a Framework Directive on Maritime Spatial Planning and Integrated Coastal Management. The Commission is of the view that the EU should be playing a leading role in strengthening marine and maritime research and innovation and promoting growth in maritime sectors. The national parliaments in many Member States have declared the draft bill out of keeping with the principle of subsidiarity. The Commission, however, appears to be ignoring the objections raised.

1. Is the Commission aware of the subsidiarity objections raised on behalf of the parliaments of Poland, Sweden, Germany, Ireland, Romania, Belgium, Finland, Lithuania and the Netherlands? ([1])

2. What is the Commission's reaction to this large number of subsidiarity objections raised and the arguments put forward therein?

3. Does the Commission agree with the Dutch Party for Freedom (PVV) that the way in which all these objections are being ignored is giving rise to the impression that the question marks raised by various national parliaments with regard to the proposed legislation are not being taken seriously? If not, why not?

4. Spatial planning is the responsibility of the Member States. Can the Commission explain its motives for pushing through with the proposed legislation at all costs?

5. Is the Commission prepared to withdraw the proposed legislation with immediate effect, because it runs counter to the Treaty on European Union? If not, why not?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(25 November 2013)

The Commission has examined the Reasoned Opinion sent by National Parliaments and has given full consideration to the concerns expressed. As stipulated in the Protocol no.2 to the Lisbon Treaty, each Parliament has received an answer, made publicly available ([2]). The number of objections received did not surpass the threshold laid down in this Protocol for the Commission to be obliged to review or withdraw its proposal.

The objective of the proposal is to ensure better coherence between the sector policies of the TFEU, such as fisheries, transport, environment and energy. The choice of the legal bases has been determined in accordance with the requirements in the case-law of the European Court of Justice ([3]).

The implementation of the directive will boost sustainable 'blue growth' of maritime and coastal economies by giving investors the legal certainty of what economic development will be possible and where it may take place, thus ensuring sustainable use of marine and coastal resources. It will provide coherence for operators to develop maritime activities to the benefit of jobs in coastal communities.

The provisions of the proposed Directive are of procedural nature and do not set out concretely what the Member States must do in relation to maritime activities in their waters. There is no specific obligation to determine the choices made by Member States in their plans. The proposal therefore respects the subsidiarity principle.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/935/935106/935106nl.pdf
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/935/935502/935502nl.pdf
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/935/935996/935996nl.pdf
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/936/936273/936273nl.pdf
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/936/936194/936194nl.pdf
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/936/936420/936420nl.pdf
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/936/936424/936424nl.pdf
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/936/936407/936407nl.pdf
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/936/936422/936422nl.pdf
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/936/936032/936032nl.pdf
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/936/936172/936172nl.pdf

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/relations/relations_other/npo/

([3]) Judgment of the Court of Justice of 11 June 1991 in Case C-300/89, paragraphs 13 and 17. Judgment of the Court of Justice of 30 January 2001 in Case C-36/98, points 51-53.

The Commission welcomes the support its proposal has received in the various committees of the European Parliament. It does not intend to withdraw its proposal and looks forward to the outcome of the examination by the co-legislators.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010798/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Efeitos para a saúde das radiações eletromagnéticas

Os produtos eletrónicos, embora tornem a nossa vida mais confortável, geram diversos campos eletromagnéticos associados ao seu funcionamento, os quais não são isentos de causar problemas para a saúde.

A exposição contínua pode facilmente ultrapassar em milhões de vezes a intensidade dos campos naturais, como é o caso da radiação de microondas provenientes das antenas de telemóveis, WiFi, etc, em comparação com a radiação natural emitida pelo Sol.

Este eletromagnetismo artificial gera um fenómeno de poluição — o eletro-smog ou poluição eletromagnética.

1. Quais as medidas que a Comissão tem previstas para lidar com esta situação?

2. De que informações atualizadas dispõe sobre os efeitos da poluição eletromagnética na saúde humana?

3. Dispõe de informações atualizadas sobre a dimensão deste problema em cada um dos 28 Estados-Membros?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(15 de novembro de 2013)

Uma Recomendação do Conselho ([1]) de 1999 estabelece restrições e níveis de referência relativos à exposição da população aos campos eletromagnéticos (CEM), como um meio para estabelecer um quadro de proteção comum e contribuir para a coerência entre as abordagens nacionais. O último relatório sobre a aplicação ([2]) da Recomendação apresenta uma panorâmica das ações adotadas pelos Estados-Membros da UE a este respeito.

O Comité Científico dos Riscos para a Saúde Emergentes e Recentemente Identificados (Ccrseri), independente, tem um mandato permanente para avaliar os riscos resultantes da exposição a campos eletromagnéticos com base em novas tecnologias e novos dados científicos, bem como para verificar se as provas sustentam os limites de exposição estabelecidos na Recomendação do Conselho. De acordo com a sua revisão mais recente (2009) ([3]), três elementos de prova independentes (estudos epidemiológicos, *in vivo* e *in vitro*) mostram que a exposição aos campos eletromagnéticos de radiofrequência é pouco suscetível de conduzir a um aumento da incidência de cancro no ser humano. Está em curso uma nova revisão que se prevê estar concluída até ao final de 2013.

Além disso, a Comissão apoia ativamente a investigação neste domínio no sentido de apurar se a exposição às radiações provenientes de qualquer que seja a fonte constitui um risco para saúde.

No que diz respeito às medidas de execução, os artigos 168.° e 169.° do Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia não conferem competência à UE para legislar em matéria de proteção do público em geral contra os efeitos potenciais dos CEM e atribui a responsabilidade primária aos Estados-Membros. Todavia, foi estabelecida legislação específica no que se refere à exposição no local de trabalho ([4]).

([1]) Recomendação do Conselho, de 12 de julho de 1999, relativa à limitação da exposição da população aos campos eletromagnéticos (0 Hz — 300 GHz), JO L 199 de 30.7.1999, p. 59.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_risk/documents/risk_rd03_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_risk/committees/04_scenihr/docs/scenihr_o_022.pdf
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:179:0001:0021:PT:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010798/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 September 2013)

Subject: The effects of electromagnetic radiation on health

Although electronic products make our lives easier, their use generates electromagnetic fields which are not harmless to health.

The microwave radiation associated with continuous exposure to the antennae of mobile telephones, WiFi etc. can be millions of times more intense than the natural radiation emitted by the sun.

This artificial electromagnetism creates a form of pollution known as electro-smog, or electromagnetic pollution.

1. What steps has the Commission considered taking to tackle this situation?

2. What up-to-date information does it have on the effects of electromagnetic pollution on human health?

3. Does it have up-to-date information on the scale of this problem in each of the 28 Member States?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(15 November 2013)

A Council Recommendation ([1]) of 1999 sets up restrictions and reference levels for the exposure of the general public to electromagnetic fields (EMFs), as a means to establish a common protective framework and contribute to consistency between national approaches. The latest report on the implementation ([2]) of the recommendation provides an overview of actions taken by the EU Member States in this regard.

The independent Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR) has a standing mandate to evaluate the risks arising from exposure to electromagnetic fields based on new technologies and new scientific evidence and to check whether evidence supports the exposure limits set out in the Council Recommendation. According to its latest review in 2009 ([3]), three independent lines of evidence (epidemiological, *in vivo* and *in vitro* studies) show that exposure to radiofrequency EMF is unlikely to lead to an increase of cancer incidence in humans. A new review is ongoing and it is expected to be finalised by the end of 2013.

In addition the Commission actively supports research in this area with a view to discovering whether exposure to radiation from any source poses a risk to health.

Regarding implementing measures, Articles 168 and 169 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union do not confer the EU competence to legislate in the area of protection of the general public from the potential effects of EMF and leaves the primary responsibility with the Member States. Specific legislation has been established, however, in respect of exposure in the workplace. ([4])

([1]) Council Recommendation of 12 July 1999 on the limitation of exposure of the general public to electromagnetic fields (0 Hz to 300 GHz), OJ L 199/59, 30.7.1999.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_risk/documents/risk_rd03_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_risk/committees/04_scenihr/docs/scenihr_o_022.pdf
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:179:0001:0021:EN:PDF

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení P-010799/13
Komisi
Ivo Strejček (ECR)
(24. září 2013)

Předmět: Sledovací systém INDECT

Podle mnoha evropských médií má být koncem roku 2013 spuštěn sledovací systém INDECT. Obracím se v této souvislosti na Evropskou komisi s následujícími dotazy:

1. Kde se lze o detailech připravovaného projektu INDECT dozvědět?

2. Je tento systém připravován se souhlasem členských států Evropské unie?

3. V jaké fázi přípravy se projekt INDECT nachází a kdy je plánováno jeho spuštění?

4. Nelze považovat systém INDECT za projekt omezující základní lidská práva občanů Evropské unie?

5. Zveřejní Komise informace o projektu INDECT a vysvětlí občanům Evropské unie účel tohoto projektu?

Odpověď komisaře Tajaniho jménem Komise
(23. října 2013)

Komise by chtěla váženého pana poslance informovat o tom, že projekt INDECT byl ve skutečnosti zahájen dne 1. ledna 2009. Veškeré informace o projektu INDECT lze nalézt na internetových stránkách tohoto projektu: http://www.indect-project.eu/ a záložce s často kladenými otázkami (FAQ) na stránkách o projektu INDECT http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/security/indect/index_en.htm.

Další informace o projektu INDECT jsou obsaženy v těchto odpovědích na otázky k písemnému zodpovězení: E-6084/09, E-1004/10, E-1332/10, E-1385/10, E-2186/10, E-3190/10, E-3191/10, E-4739/10, E-6842/10, E-6912/10, E-7521/10, E-5080/12, E-5371/2012 a E-9778/12.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010799/13
to the Commission
Ivo Strejček (ECR)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: INDECT research project

According to many European media sources, the INDECT research project is to be launched by the end of 2013. In this connection, I should like to put the following questions to the Commission:

1. Where is it possible to find out more about the planned INDECT project?

2. Is the project being developed with the agreement of the Member States?

3. What stage have preparations for the INDECT project reached and when is the planned launch?

4. Should INDECT not be viewed as a project that restricts the basic human rights of EU citizens?

3. Will the Commission publish information on INDECT and explain the purpose of the project to EU citizens?

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

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that the INDECT project in fact started on 1 January 2009. All the relevant information on INDECT can be found on the website of the project: http://www.indect-project.eu/ and the Frequently Asked Questions site on INDECT http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/security/indect/index_en.htm

Further information on INDECT can be taken from the answers given to written questions E-6084/09, E-1004/10, E-1332/10, E-1385/10, E-2186/10, E-3190/10, E-3191/10, E-4739/10, E-6842/10, E-6912/10, E-7521/10, E-5080/12, E-5371/2012 and E-9778/12.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-010800/13
do Komisji
Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D)
(24 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Polityka transportowa w UE i na Ukrainie

Możliwy pozytywny wynik szczytu Partnerstwa Wschodniego w Wilnie pozwoliłby Ukrainie na stopniowe przyjęcie prawodawstwa UE, natomiast UE – na rozbudowanie europejskiej sieci transportowej na Ukrainę. Ukraina, jako wschodnia granica Unii Europejskiej, mogłaby ułatwić europejski ruch tranzytowy do krajów azjatyckich i Rosji, dlatego też należy wziąć pod uwagę możliwość rozbudowy sieci transportowej na Ukrainę. Istnieje również możliwość poprowadzenia kolei szerokotorowej do Katowic oraz kolei standardowej do granicy polsko-ukraińskiej.

1. Czy istnieje jakikolwiek związek pomiędzy projektami ukraińskimi i unijnymi dotyczącymi infrastruktury kolejowej i drogowej (w szczególności pomiędzy TEN-T PP6 a ukraińską siecią kolejową)?

2. Czy UE planuje wesprzeć finansowo projekty dotyczące infrastruktury kolejowej i drogowej na Ukrainie, które leżą w interesie UE?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Siima Kallasa w imieniu Komisji
(18 października 2013 r.)

Istnieje kilka połączeń drogowych i kolejowych przecinających granicę między państwami członkowskimi a Ukrainą. W ramach Partnerstwa Wschodniego zaplanowano stworzenie połączeń między przyszłą kolejową transeuropejską siecią transportową TEN-T, a zwłaszcza między siecią bazową TEN-T a ukraińską siecią kolejową.

Istniejące odcinki kolei szerokotorowej prowadzą z Ukrainy na terytorium UE, sięgając do Sławkowa k. Katowic w Polsce i Koszyc na Słowacji. Oprócz tego ważny węzeł kolejowy w Czopie jest połączony z koleją standardową UE w kierunku Czernej nad Cisą na Słowacji i Zahony na Węgrzech. Istnieją również połączenia kolejowe między Rumunią a Ukrainą.

Instrument „Łącząc Europę" (CEF) ([1]) zagwarantuje współfinansowanie w formie dotacji i instrumentów finansowych dla niektórych projektów zapewniających połączenie między siecią bazową TEN-T a sieciami transportowymi państw trzecich oraz dla połączeń transgranicznych między takimi państwami trzecimi a państwami członkowskimi. Jeśli Ukraina przedstawi takie projekty w ramach przyszłych zaproszeń do składania wniosków i jeśli projekty te będą spełniać wszystkie odpowiednie kryteria, to mogą one zostać uznane za kwalifikowalne.

([1]) COM(2011) 665 final/2.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010800/13
to the Commission
Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: EU/Ukrainian transport policy

One possible positive outcome of the Eastern Partnership summit in Vilnius would allow Ukraine to adopt EU legislation step by step, whilst the EU extends the European transport network towards Ukraine. Ukraine, as the eastern border of the European Union, could serve as a gateway to facilitate European transit traffic to Asian countries and Russia, so the possible extension of the transport network to Ukraine should be considered. There is also the possibility of a broad-gauge railway running to Katowice and a standard-gauge railway going to the Poland/Ukraine border.

1. Is there any connection between Ukrainian and EU rail and road transport infrastructure projects (especially between TEN-T PP6 and the Ukrainian railway network)?

2. Is the EU planning to provide financial support for rail and road infrastructure projects in Ukraine that are of EU interest?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(18 October 2013)

There are several road and rail connections crossing the border between EU Member States and Ukraine. Within the Eastern partnership, connections between the future Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) for rail, in particular the TEN-T core network, and the Ukrainian railway network have been agreed.

Existing broad gauge lines extend from Ukraine into EU territory as far as Slawkow near Katowice (Poland) and Kosice (Slovakia). Further, the important railway node of Cop is linked to the EU standard gauge towards Cierna nad Tisou (Slovakia) and Zahony (Hungary). Railway connections are also present between Romania and Ukraine.

The Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) ([1]) will be able to provide co-funding in forms of grants and financial instruments for certain projects ensuring the connection between the TEN-T core network and the transport networks of the third countries, and for cross-border points between such third countries and EU Member States. If Ukraine proposes such projects in a future call for proposal and if these projects fulfill all the relevant criteria, they may be declared eligible.

([1]) COM(2011) 0665 final/2.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. P-010801/13
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2013 m. rugsėjo 24 d.)

Tema: Nacionalinių energetikos srities projektų priskyrimas bendros svarbos projektams

Europos Parlamento ir Tarybos reglamente (ES) Nr. 347/2013 dėl transeuropinės energetikos infrastruktūros gairių vienu iš prioritetinių dujų koridorių numatytas Baltijos šalių energijos rinkos dujų sektoriaus jungčių planas (angl. BEMIP), kuriuo siekiama išspręsti trijų Baltijos valstybių ir Suomijos atskyrimo ir jų priklausomumo nuo vieno tiekėjo problemą, atitinkamai labiau įvairinti tiekimo šaltinius ir padidinti dujų tiekimo saugumą Baltijos jūros regione. Europos dujų perdavimo sistemos operatorių tinklo (angl. ENTSO-G) parengtame dešimties metų BEMIP dujų infrastruktūros regioninių investicijų plėtros plane 2013-2022 m. Klaipėdos suskystintų dujų terminalas yra įtrauktas į svarbių Baltijos regiono projektų sąrašą. Nurodoma, kad šis terminalas gali būti naudingas ne tik nacionaliniu lygmeniu, pvz., jis gali padėti įvairinti. gamtinių dujų tiekimo šaltinius, sumažinti priklausomybę nuo vienintelio išorės tiekėjo ir padidinti konkurencingumą užsitikrinant prieigą prie tarptautinių gamtinių dujų rinkų. Tačiau pabrėžiama ir šio projekto tarpvalstybinė nauda: šio terminalo buvimas sudarytų sąlygas nacionalinei bei regioninėms dujų rinkoms ateityje tiekti dujas ir į kaimynines šalis. Atsižvelgiant į tai, Klaipėdoje statomas SDT atitinka ES energetikos politikos tikslus ir prisidės prie viso Baltijos regiono energetinio saugumo didinimo.

Savo 2013 m. balandžio 17 d. pateiktame atsakyme į mano klausimą minėjote, kad, nors regioninis terminalas yra naudingiausias sprendimas žvelgiant iš ES perspektyvos, neatmetama ES paramos galimybė ir nacionalinio pobūdžio projektams, kurie atitinka ES politinius tikslus, ES *aquis* reikalavimus ir ES finansavimo priemonių reikalavimus. Rugsėjo 18 d. ITRE komitete lankėsi Energetikos direktorato generalinis direktorius, kuris pažymėjo, kad Baltijos regione ekonominiu požiūriu naudingiausias yra regioninis SDT, tačiau gali būti svarstomas ES finansavimo klausimas tam tikriems nacionalinio pobūdžio projektams, kurie atitiks tam tikrus paramos skyrimo kriterijus, tačiau nebuvo paminėti konkretūs principai, kaip tokie projektai bus atrenkami.

Komisija netrukus pateiks bendro intereso energetikos projektų sąrašą, todėl norėčiau sužinoti, kokiais kriterijais bus vadovaujamasi atrenkant į ES finansavimą galinčius pretenduoti nacionaliniu lygmeniu įgyvendinamus projektus, kurie jau netolimoje ateityje ir greičiau nei numatyti regioninio masto projektai sukurs pridėtinę vertę regioniniu ar net visos ES energijos rinkos mastu?

G. Oettingerio atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. spalio 21 d.)

ES finansavimo reikalavimus pagal Europos infrastruktūros tinklų priemonę (EITP) atitinka tie energetikos infrastruktūros (srities) projektai, kurie pagal Reglamentą dėl transeuropinės energetikos infrastruktūros gairių (toliau – Gairės) ([1]) priskiriami prie bendros svarbos projektų (BSP).

Kaip numatyta, 2013 m. spalio mėn. Europos Komisija patvirtins pirmąjį BSP sąrašą, sudarytą taikant BSP atrankos procesą pagal Gairių 4 straipsnyje pateiktus kriterijus. Valstybės narės teritorijoje įgyvendinami projektai turi daryti didelį tarpvalstybinį poveikį, kaip nurodyta IV priedo 1 punkte. Finansinės pagalbos sąlygos nurodytos Gairių 14 straipsnyje.

([1]) 2013 m. balandžio 17 d. Europos Parlamento ir Tarybos reglamentas (ES) Nr. 347/2013 dėl transeuropinės energetikos infrastruktūros gairių, kuriuo panaikinamas Sprendimas Nr. 1364/2006/EB ir kuriuo iš dalies keičiami reglamentai (EB) Nr. 713/2009, (EB) Nr. 714/2009 ir (EB) Nr. 715/2009 (OL L 115/39, 2013 4 25).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010801/13
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: The allocation of national energy projects to projects of common interest

Regulation (EU) No 347/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2013 on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure provides for the Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan in gas ('BEMIP Gas') as one of the priority gas corridors, which is aimed at ending the isolation of the three Baltic States and Finland and their dependency on a single supplier and increasing diversification and security of supplies in the Baltic Sea region. The 10-year BEMIP Gas Infrastructure Regional Investment Plan 2013-2022 drafted by the European Network of Transmission System Operators for Gas includes Klaipėda's liquefied natural gas terminal on the list of important projects in the Baltic region. It is indicated that this terminal may be beneficial not only at national level, for instance it may help to diversify sources of natural gas, reduce dependency on a single external supplier and increase competitiveness, ensuring access to international natural gas markets. However, this project's international benefits are also underlined: the existence of this terminal would create the conditions for national and regional gas markets to also supply gas to neighbouring countries in the future. Consequently, the LNG terminal being constructed in Klaipėda is in line with EU energy policy objectives and will help to increase the energy security of the entire Baltic region.

In the response that you gave on 17 April 2013 to my question you mentioned that, although a regional terminal is the most beneficial solution from an EU perspective, there is also a possibility for EU support for national projects which are in line with EU policy objectives, the EU *acquis* rules and the rules for EU funding instruments. On 18 September, the Director General of DG Energy attended the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy and highlighted that in the Baltic region a regional LNG terminal is most beneficial from an economic point of view, but the question of EU funding for certain national projects which meet certain award criteria may also be considered. However, there was no mention of specific principles for selecting such projects.

The Commission will soon present a list of energy projects of common interest and I would therefore like to know the criteria that will be used when selecting projects being implemented at national level which may be eligible for EU funding, which will create added value regionally or even across the entire EU energy market in the near future and sooner than planned regional projects.

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(21 October 2013)

Energy infrastructure projects are eligible for EU funding under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) if they are identified as projects of common interest (PCI) under the regulation on Guidelines for trans-European infrastructures (Guidelines) ([1]).

The adoption of the first PCI list by the EC — scheduled for October 2013 — is based on a PCI selection process and on criteria that are laid down in Art 4 of the Guidelines. Projects located on the territory of one Member State must have a significant cross-border impact as set out in Annex IV.1. Art 14 of the Guidelines sets the conditions for financial assistance.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 347/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2013 on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure and repealing Decision No 1364/2006/EC and amending Regulations (EC) No 713/2009, (EC) No 714/2009 and (EC) No 715/2009 (OJ L 115/39, 25.4.2013).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-010802/13
ao Conselho
Edite Estrela (S&D)
(24 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Revisão da Diretiva 92/85/CEE

Em 20 de outubro de 2010, o Parlamento aprovou por larga maioria a minha proposta de revisão da Diretiva 92/85/CEE.

Desde então várias presidências rotativas da UE se interessaram pelo assunto.

A proposta mereceu o apoio e mobilização da ETUC e de muitos sindicatos de diferentes Estados-Membros, de ONG e de diversas plataformas sociais.

Incompreensivelmente, o Conselho ainda não se pronunciou, formalmente, sobre o assunto, não obstante as diligências públicas (por ex. pergunta oral com debate) e informais do PE, manifestando abertura para o diálogo negocial, ainda que informal, e flexibilidade para se encontrarem soluções que, tendo em conta o atual contexto de crise, permitam obter um acordo que satisfaça as duas partes.

Acha o Conselho que é assim que se mobilizam os cidadãos europeus para as eleições de 2014?

Quando pensa o Conselho adotar uma posição sobre esta matéria?

Resposta
(25 de novembro de 2013)

Desde que o Parlamento Europeu adotou o seu parecer em outubro de 2010, não foi possível atingir a maioria qualificada necessária para a adoção de uma posição em primeira leitura pelo Conselho ([1]).

O Conselho não pode prever a duração ou o eventual resultado das negociações, nem especular sobre o seu impacto na mobilização dos cidadãos europeus para as próximas eleições europeias de 2014.

([1]) 17029/11.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010802/13
to the Council
Edite Estrela (S&D)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Revision of Directive 92/85/EEC

Parliament approved my proposal for the revision of Directive 92/85/EEC by a large majority on 20 October 2010.

Since then, various rotating presidencies of the EU have taken an interest in the matter.

The proposal received active support from the ETUC and from many individual trade unions in different Member States, as well as NGOs and social organisations.

Inexplicably, the Council has not yet taken a formal decision on the matter, in spite of public moves (in the form of an oral question with debate, for example) and informal approaches by the European Parliament, which has shown itself to be open to dialogue and negotiation, whether formal or informal, and to be prepared to take a flexible approach with a view to identifying solutions that, bearing in mind the current crisis, might lead to an agreement which would satisfy both sides.

Does the Council believe that this is the right way to mobilise European citizens for the 2014 elections?

When does the Council intend to take up a position on this subject?

Reply
(25 November 2013)

Since the European Parliament adopted its opinion in October 2010, it has not been possible to reach the requisite qualified majority for the adoption of a position at first reading by the Council ([1]).

The Council is not in a position to predict the duration of the negotiations or the possible outcome, nor to speculate on its impact on the mobilisation of European citizens in the forthcoming 2014 European elections.

([1]) 17029/11.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010803/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(24 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Implicaciones del Real Decreto-ley 9/2013 español para la inversión en energías renovables y el cumplimiento de compromisos comunitarios a este respecto

Como saben los servicios del Comisario de Energía europeo, en el marco de la reforma energética que está llevando a cabo el actual ejecutivo español ha sido aprobado recientemente el Real Decreto-ley 9/2013, de 12 de julio, por el que se adoptan medidas urgentes para garantizar la estabilidad financiera del sistema eléctrico. En virtud de este Decreto-ley, entre otras cosas, se elimina por completo la tarifa regulada para todas las instalaciones renovables del país y se recalcularán todos los ingresos que estas han obtenido hasta la fecha con el fin de establecer con arreglo a parámetros estándares (no sujetos a la realidad) un supuesto incentivo futuro por las inversiones realizadas.

Esta situación está provocando que las entidades crediticias nacionales e internacionales adopten disposiciones a los efectos de provisionar por varias decenas de millones de euros las más que probables quiebras de proyectos de energías renovables (solo en España y solo en energía fotovoltaica se encuentran expuestos 18 000 millones de euros), y asimismo que los más importantes fondos de inversión internacionales rehúyan los proyectos auspiciados por el Estado español.

¿Está de acuerdo la Comisión en que las medidas retroactivas introducidas por la nueva normativa española perjudican gravemente la confianza de los inversores españoles y comunitarios en proyectos de energías renovables?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de noviembre de 2013)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a las respuestas que dio a sus preguntas escritas E-009036/2013, E-009037/2013, E-009038/2013, E-009040/2013, E-009042/2013 y E-009044/2013. Estas respuestas siguen siendo válidas tras la aprobación del Real Decreto-ley 9/2013 de 12 de julio de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010803/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Implications of Spanish Royal Decree-Law 9/2013 for investment in renewable energy and adherence to EU renewable energy undertakings

As the European Energy Commissioner's staff know, Royal Decree-Law 9/2013 of 12 July 2013 was recently adopted as part of the energy reforms being implemented by the current Spanish executive. The law brings in urgent measures to ensure the financial stability of the electricity system. One of the results of the decree-law is the total removal of the fixed tariff for all renewable installations in the country; all the income received by these installations to date will be recalculated, with a view to establishing a supposed future incentive for investments in accordance with standardised parameters (not dependent on actual circumstances).

This situation is leading to national and international lending bodies making provision amounting to several tens of millions of euros to cover the highly probable bankruptcies of renewable energy projects (in Spain alone, and for photovoltaic energy alone, EUR 18 billion is at risk), and also to the largest international investment funds avoiding projects sponsored by the Spanish State.

Does the Commission agree that the retroactive measures brought in by the new Spanish law are seriously denting the confidence of Spanish and EU investors in renewable energy projects?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(7 November 2013)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its replies to written questions E-009036/2013, E-009037/2013, E-009038/2013, E-009040/2013, E-009042/2013, E-009044/2013 by the Honourable Member. These replies remain valid after the introduction of the Royal Decree-Law 9/2013 of 12 July 2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010804/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(24 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Igualdad de trato en quitas de preferentes

Tras la quita anunciada por el Fondo de Garantía de Depósitos, el descuento en las participaciones preferentes de CatalunyaBanc será del 66,55 %; en la deuda subordinada perpetua, del 48,35 %; y en la deuda subordinada con vencimiento, una media del 26,73 %.

Para los tenedores de Novacaixagalicia que acepten la oferta, la quita final será del 50,86 % en el caso de las preferentes; del 49,14 % para la deuda subordinada perpetua y de una media del 32,74 % para la deuda subordinada con vencimiento ([1]).

Es decir, que a pesar de ser ambas entidades nacionalizadas y estar bajo la tutela del FROB, existe una diferencia de trato notable respecto a sus clientes, especialmente en el caso de las preferentes, que es el más común.

Por otro lado, el Gobierno español prevé vender CatalunyaBanc antes de fin de año ([2]).

A la luz de lo anterior, y sin ánimo de aumentar la quita para los clientes compradores de preferentes de Novacaixagalicia, ¿cree la Comisión que la diferencia en el volumen de las quitas de las opciones preferentes representa un trato discriminatorio para los clientes de CatalunyaCaixa?

¿Considera la Comisión que el FROB debería incluir en el paquete de venta de CatalunyaCaixa el reembolso del dinero invertido en opciones preferentes para los clientes estafados?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de noviembre de 2013)

En las decisiones de ayuda estatal para los respectivos bancos ([3]) la Comisión ha emitido su dictamen sobre el nivel requerido de reparto de las cargas. Aparte de estos requisitos, corresponde a las autoridades españolas y a otras instancias adecuadas, como el Fondo de Garantía de Depósitos, hacer sus propias valoraciones sobre el grado de descuento requerido. En consecuencia, la Comisión no tiene nada que decir respecto al nivel de descuento aplicado.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20130610/54375527666/preferentistas-catalunyabanc-ncg-perderan-13-8-mas.html
([2]) http://www.eleconomista.es/banca-finanzas/noticias/5154860/09/13/El-Gobierno-se-plantea-de-nuevo-vender-a-trozos-CatalunyaBanc-.html
([3]) Véanse las Decisiones n° SA. 33735 y n° SA.33734 (http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/cases/244292/244292_1400504_213_2.pdf). (http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/cases/244293/244293_1400377_199_2.pdf).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010804/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Equal treatment regarding preferential shares

Following the reduction announced by the Deposit Guarantee Fund, the discount on preferred shares of Catalunya Banc will be 66.55%, the discount on perpetual subordinated debt 48.35%, and that on subordinated debt with a maturity date an average of 26.73%.

For Novacaixagalicia shareholders who accept the offer, the final discount will be 50.86% for preferred shares, 49.14% for perpetual subordinated debt and an average of 32.74% for subordinated debt with a maturity date ([1]).

This means that despite both entities being nationalised and under the protection of the Fund for Orderly Bank Restructuring (FROB), there is a significant difference in the treatment of their customers, particularly in the case of preferred shares, which are the most common form of holding.

Moreover, the Spanish Government plans to sell Catalunya Banc before the end of the year ([2]).

In view of the above, and without wishing to increase the discount for customers who bought Novacaixagalicia preferred shares, does the Commission believe that the difference in the size of the discounts on preferred options represents discrimination against the customers of CatalunyaCaixa?

Does the Commission think that the FROB ought to include in the package for selling CatalunyaCaixa a refund of the money invested in preferred options, to go to the customers who have been swindled?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(6 November 2013)

In the state aid decisions for the respective banks ([3]) the Commission has issued its opinion on the required level of burden sharing. Apart from those requirements, it is up to the Spanish authorities and other appropriate vehicles, such as the Deposit Guarantee Fund to make their proper assessment as to the degree of discount required. The Commission has therefore no opinion to express on the level of the applied discount.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20130610/54375527666/preferentistas-catalunyabanc-ncg-perderan-13-8-mas.html
([2]) http://www.eleconomista.es/banca-finanzas/noticias/5154860/09/13/El-Gobierno-se-plantea-de-nuevo-vender-a-trozos-CatalunyaBanc-.html
([3]) Please see decisions No SA. 33735 and No SA.33734
(http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/cases/244292/244292_1400504_213_2.pdf)
(http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/cases/244293/244293_1400377_199_2.pdf)

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010805/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(24 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Igualdad entre ciudadanos europeos

Desde el año 2009, el Estado español ha generado déficits públicos muy por encima del 3 % que le han obligado a hacer ajustes con la intención de cuadrar las cuentas.

Dentro de este marco, los recortes salariales a funcionarios han sido un instrumento más para intentar reducir los desequilibrios presupuestarios. Estos recortes no se han aplicado de forma uniforme entre las diferentes administraciones.

Así, por ejemplo, los funcionarios dependientes del Gobierno central siguen cobrando las dos pagas extraordinarias ([1]) en el año 2013 a pesar que esta administración tiene un objetivo de déficit notablemente mayor que las autonomías (un 3,8 %) y que ya ha sido incumplido ([2]). En cambio, los funcionarios de la Generalitat de Catalunya perderán en el año 2014 de nuevo una de las dos pagas extras ordinarias, a pesar de tener un déficit menor y mucho más ajustado a su objetivo. ([3])

¿Cree la Comisión que, en la aplicación de los recortes, todos los funcionarios del Estado español son tratados de modo igualitario de acuerdo con el artículo 9 del TUE?

¿No cree la Comisión que debería ser el Gobierno central el que acometiera nuevos ajustes para evitar el incumplimiento de su objetivo de déficit a final de 2013?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de noviembre de 2013)

El artículo 9 establece que «La Unión respetará en todas sus actividades el principio de la igualdad de sus ciudadanos, que se beneficiarán por igual de la atención de sus instituciones, órganos y organismos. Será ciudadano de la Unión toda persona que tenga la nacionalidad de un Estado miembro. La ciudadanía de la Unión se añade a la ciudadanía nacional sin sustituirla». No parece que existan implicaciones en relación con las medidas de saneamiento presupuestario adoptadas por las distintas administraciones en España.

La Comisión presentará su evaluación de la hacienda pública española a mediados de noviembre en el contexto de los correspondientes procedimientos de supervisión económica de la UE.

([1]) http://www.larazon.es/detalle_hemeroteca/noticias/LA_RAZON_490259/1238-el-gobierno-pagara-en-2013-a-los-funcionarios-las-dos-pagas-extras-pero-les-congelara-el-sueldo
([2]) http://www.libremercado.com/2013-08-30/el-deficit-del-gobierno-central-alcanza-el-438-del-pib-hasta-julio-1276498282/
([3]) http://www.324.cat/noticia/2174255/economia/Mas-Colell-avanca-nous-impostos-i-una-nova-retallada-de-la-paga-extra-als-funcionaris

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010805/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Equality between European citizens

Since 2009, Spain has generated public deficits that are considerably greater than 3%, and these have forced it to make adjustments to try to balance the accounts.

Within this framework, public-sector pay cuts have been one of the tools used to try to reduce the budgetary imbalances. These cuts have not been applied uniformly across the various administrations.

Thus, for instance, officials employed by central government are continuing to receive the two bonuses ([1]) in 2013, despite the fact that that administration has a deficit target significantly greater than the autonomous communities (3.8%), which it has not yet met ([2]). On the other hand, officials working for the Autonomous Government of Catalonia will again lose one of the two bonuses in 2014, despite the fact that their deficit is lower and much closer to its target. ([3])

Does the Commission believe that the cuts are being applied to all officials in Spain in an equal manner, in compliance with Article 9 of the Treaty on European Union?

Does the Commission not believe that the central government ought to undertake new adjustments to avoid missing its deficit target for the end of 2013?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(4 November 2013)

Art. 9 says that 'In all its activities, the Union shall observe the principle of the equality of its citizens, who shall receive equal attention from its institutions, bodies, offices and agencies. Every national of a Member State shall be a citizen of the Union. Citizenship of the Union shall be additional to and not replace national citizenship.' It does not seem to have implications regarding the budgetary consolidation measures taken by different administrations in Spain.

The Commission will present its assessment of Spain's public finances in mid-November in the context of the relevant EU economic surveillance procedures.

([1]) http://www.larazon.es/detalle_hemeroteca/noticias/LA_RAZON_490259/1238-el-gobierno-pagara-en-2013-a-los-funcionarios-las-dos-pagas-extras-pero-les-congelara-el-sueldo
([2]) http://www.libremercado.com/2013-08-30/el-deficit-del-gobierno-central-alcanza-el-438-del-pib-hasta-julio-1276498282/
([3]) http://www.324.cat/noticia/2174255/economia/Mas-Colell-avanca-nous-impostos-i-una-nova-retallada-de-la-paga-extra-als-funcionaris

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010806/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(24 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Violencia y situación de los derechos humanos en Honduras

Desde el golpe de Estado de 2009 que derrocó al legítimo presidente de Honduras Manuel Zelaya, los índices de violencia se han disparado, alcanzando una de las mayores tasas de homicidios por habitante del mundo.

Este marcado incremento de los asesinatos en el país centroamericano viene acompañado de un importante aumento del gasto asignado a funciones militares y policiales, llegando a alcanzar un 17 % del PIB del país y situándolo entre los 10 países con un mayor gasto en estas funciones. Sin embargo, ese enorme gasto no ha producido resultados puesto que son numerosos los casos de secuestros, desapariciones y asesinatos selectivos cuyas víctimas son opositores políticos, defensores de los derechos humanos, líderes campesinos, etc.

La Unión Europea ha financiado parte del Programa de Apoyo al Sector Seguridad en Honduras (PASS), un proyecto novedoso que pretendía conseguir un refuerzo institucional para mejorar la seguridad en el país. Sin embargo, dicho plan, al cual la UE ha aportado 9 millones de euros, no ha producido cambio alguno y ha destapado no solo la incompetencia e ineficiencia del sector de la seguridad, sino también la absoluta falta de voluntad política del Gobierno de Porfirio Lobo para mejorar la seguridad en el país.

En pleno proceso de ratificación del Acuerdo de Asociación entre la UE y Centroamérica, la Unión debe pronunciarse claramente sobre cómo evalúa la situación de violencia y protección de los derechos humanos en el país bajo el Gobierno golpista de Porfirio Lobo para poder justificar la pertinencia de un acuerdo que prevé la suspensión del mismo si no se respetan los derechos humanos.

A la luz de la información disponible sobre la situación de la violencia y los derechos humanos en Honduras, ¿considera la Comisión que las próximas elecciones que tendrán lugar en noviembre de 2013 gozan de un contexto adecuado que permita su celebración en total libertad?

¿Ha considerado la Comisión la posibilidad de suspender el Acuerdo de Asociación debido a que Honduras no respeta los derechos humanos?

¿Considera la Comisión la posibilidad de detener la cooperación en el marco del PASS en vista de los escasos resultados registrados en el ámbito de reducción de la violencia y protección de los derechos humanos?

Respuesta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(18 de noviembre de 2013)

Siguiendo la recomendación de una misión exploratoria, la AR/VP ha decidido desplegar una misión de observación electoral (MOE) de la UE en Honduras para las elecciones generales el 24 de noviembre de 2013. La MOE llevará a cabo un análisis exhaustivo del proceso electoral, teniendo en cuenta entre otras cosas los derechos humanos y los aspectos relacionados con la seguridad. La presencia de una MOE podría contribuir a reforzar la transparencia y la confianza en el proceso electoral. Poco después de la jornada electoral, la MOE publicará una declaración preliminar de sus conclusiones definitivas. En función de dichas conclusiones, el SEAE estará en mejores condiciones de hacer una evaluación del proceso electoral.

La parte relativa al comercio del Acuerdo de Asociación se ha aplicado de forma provisional desde el 1 de agosto de 2013 en Honduras. Uno de los objetivos del Acuerdo de Asociación UE-América Central es profundizar en el diálogo sobre los principios democráticos y los derechos humanos fundamentales. Aunque la UE realiza un estrecho seguimiento de su aplicación, no ha considerado la posibilidad de suspender el Acuerdo de Asociación.

El objetivo del programa PASS es establecer las bases de un enfoque sectorial de la seguridad y justicia. Uno de sus logros es la concepción y adopción de la Política Nacional de Seguridad y Justicia, el primer documento estratégico elaborado hasta la fecha por las tres principales instituciones del sector: la Secretaría de Seguridad, la Fiscalía General y el Poder Judicial. El Proyecto también ha sido ampliamente elogiado por sus resultados en la prevención de la violencia y la rehabilitación de presos. En el marco más amplio de la cooperación de la UE en materia de derechos humanos y justicia, la UE añadirá a este proyecto otro sobre derechos humanos dotado con 5 millones EUR y tiene previsto lanzar el año que viene un importante proyecto en el ámbito de la justicia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010806/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Violence and human rights situation in Honduras

Since the 2009 coup d'état which toppled Manuel Zelaya, the legitimate president of Honduras, levels of violence have rocketed, and the country now has one of the highest homicide rates per resident in the world.

This marked increase in killings in the Central American country is accompanied by a significant increase in the amounts spent on military and policing functions, at 17% of the country's GDP, placing it among the 10 countries with the highest expenditure on these functions. However, this enormous expenditure has produced no results, given that there are many cases of targeted kidnappings, disappearances and killings, whose victims are political opponents, human rights defenders, peasant farmers' leaders, etc.

The European Union has financed part of the Programme of Support to the Security Sector in Honduras (PASS), a novel project that aimed to strengthen the institutions in order to improve security in the country. However, the plan, to which the EU has contributed EUR 9 million, has not produced any change whatsoever, revealing not only the incompetence and ineffectiveness of the security sector but also the complete lack of political will on the part of Porfirio Lobo's government to improve security in the country.

As the ratification process for the Association Agreement between the EU and Central America continues, the Union must take a clear stance on how it sees the situation regarding violence and the protection of human rights in the country under the government of Porfirio Lobo, who seized power. It must be able to substantiate the appropriateness of this agreement, which provides for its own suspension if human rights are not respected.

In the light of the information available on violence and human rights in Honduras, does the Commission believe that the forthcoming elections in November 2013 can be totally free, in the context of the current situation?

Has the Commission considered the possibility of suspending the Association Agreement, on the grounds of the failure by Honduras to respect human rights?

Is the Commission considering the possibility of terminating cooperation within the framework of PASS in view of its weak performance in reducing violence and protecting human rights?

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

Following the recommendation of an Exploratory Mission, the HR/VP decided to deploy an EU Electoral Observation Mission (EOM) to Honduras for the general elections on 24 November 2013. The EOM will make a comprehensive analysis of the electoral process, taking into account among others the human rights and security aspects. The deployment of an EOM could contribute to strengthen the transparency and reinforce the confidence in the election process. Shortly after Election Day, the EOM will issue a preliminary statement of its final findings. According to the findings, the EEAS will be in better position to make an assessment of the electoral process.

The trade part of the Association Agreement has been applied provisionally since 1st of August 2013 with Honduras. One of the EU-CA Association Agreement's objectives is to deepen dialogue on democratic principles and fundamental human rights. While the EU is monitoring closely its application, it has not considered the possibility of suspending the Association Agreement.

The objective of the PASS Programme is to set the bases of a sector-wide approach to security and justice. One of its achievements is the design and adoption of the National Policy on Security and Justice, the first ever common policy document of the three main sector institutions: ministry of security, office of the attorney general and judiciary. The Project has also been praised for its results on prevention of violence and rehabilitation of convicts. Within the wider framework of EU cooperation on human rights and justice, the EU is complementing this project with a EUR 5 million project on human rights and is expected to launch next year a major project in the area of justice.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010807/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(24 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Aplicación de la Directiva 2007/65/CE en el Estado español

En su respuesta a la pregunta E-005298/2013, la Comisión Europea dijo que la Directiva AVMSD y su artículo 6 estaban correctamente transpuestos a la ley española. En la misma, dice que esto no excluye un eventual control de su aplicación ([1]).

El 18 de septiembre de 2013, el Premio Príncipe Asturias y economista Juan Velarde dijo en un programa en la televisión pública Telemadrid que «no descarta que Barcelona deba ser bombardeada por el auge del independentismo».

Sin ningún estupor, el economista dijo, en respuesta a la pregunta de la entrevistadora sobre si creía que se podría a llegar al extremo de bombardear Barcelona: «Esto ya lo veremos, no me atrevo a decir nada en este sentido». Esto dice el economista, quien destaca que «en los diarios de Azaña se dice que España debe bombardear periódicamente a Catalunya. Esto lo dijo Azaña en plena guerra civil».

Teniendo en cuenta que el artículo 6 de la Directiva 2007/65/CE afirma «Member States shall ensure by appropriate means that audiovisual media services provided by media service providers under their jurisdiction do not contain any incitement to hatred based on race, sex, religion or nationality» y a la luz de lo anterior:

1. ¿Está la Comisión al corriente de estas gravísimas declaraciones del economista y Premio Príncipe de Asturias en la televisión pública Telemadrid?

2. Dada la inacción del Gobierno del Reino de España ante reiteradas declaraciones públicas como las citadas y denunciadas a la Comisión, ¿qué acciones ha tomado la Comisión para que se cumpla la Directiva?

3. En caso de no tomar acción por parte de la Comisión, ¿puede un tercero afirmar que la Comisión está totalmente de acuerdo en que dichas afirmaciones no entran en contradicción con el Tratado de Lisboa y con el artículo 6 de la citada Directiva?

Respuesta de la Sra. Kroes en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de noviembre de 2013)

En lo que respecta a la primera pregunta de Su Señoría, la Comisión no había sido informada de las declaraciones mencionadas con anterioridad al planteamiento de la misma. La Comisión observa, a este respecto, que es fundamentalmente competencia de las autoridades reguladoras españolas garantizar la aplicación de la Directiva de servicios de comunicación audiovisual (AVMSD) ([2]), y examinar a fondo el cumplimiento de las medidas nacionales de transposición por parte de los organismos de radiodifusión.

Asimismo, en cuanto a la referencia que hace Su Señoría a la reiteración de declaraciones del tipo de las tratadas en el presente caso, la Comisión señala que no ha recibido ninguna queja sobre este asunto hasta el momento. Más concretamente, no se ha puesto en su conocimiento ninguna alegación relativa a la inacción de las autoridades españolas ante el problema descrito. Evidentemente, esto no excluye la posibilidad de realizar investigaciones si se llegaran a recibir tales observaciones.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20130918/54386740582/premio-principe-de-asturias-no-descarta-bombardeo-barcelona.html
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32010L0013:ES:NOT

Finalmente, está claro que terceras partes no deben deducir o atribuir posiciones a la Comisión en cuanto a su valoración de la conformidad con las disposiciones de la Directiva, y en particular su artículo 6, o con el Tratado de Lisboa, a raíz de una falta de toma de acción observada. Corresponde a la Comisión evaluar este cumplimiento por parte de los Estados miembros y, de conformidad con la jurisprudencia consolidada del Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea, esta goza de una amplia facultad discrecional a la hora de decidir si iniciar o no procedimientos de infracción contra un Estado miembro o recurrir al Tribunal, y cuándo hacerlo. Esto también excluye el derecho de los individuos a exigir que la Comisión adopte una posición determinada. En cualquier caso, la Comisión se reserva el derecho a acogerse a todas las vías de recurso apropiadas en su calidad de guardiana de los Tratados y del Derecho derivado de los mismos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010807/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Application of Directive 2007/65/EC in Spain

In its answer to Question E-005298/2013, the Commission said that the Audiovisual Media Services Directive and Article 6 thereof had been correctly transposed into Spanish law. The answer also states that this does not rule out a possible check on their application ([1]).

On 18 September 2013, Juan Velarde, Prince of Asturias Award winner and economist, said in a programme on Telemadrid, a public television channel, that he 'did not rule out the idea that Barcelona should be bombed for the rise of the independence movement'.

Without showing any surprise, in response to a question by the interviewer on whether he believed that action could go so far as to include bombing Barcelona, the economist said: 'Time will tell; I wouldn't dare say anything about that.' That was the economist's comment, and he pointed out that 'Azaña wrote in his diaries that Spain should periodically bomb Catalonia. Azaña said that right in the middle of the civil war.'

Article 6 of Directive 2007/65/EC states 'Member States shall ensure by appropriate means that audiovisual media services provided by media service providers under their jurisdiction do not contain any incitement to hatred based on race, sex, religion or nationality.' In the light of that, and the above information:

1. Is the Commission aware of the extremely serious statements by the economist and Prince of Asturias Award winner on the Telemadrid public television channel?

2. In view of the lack of action by the Spanish Government in the face of repeated public statements such as those quoted above, and complained of to the Commission, what action has it taken to ensure that the directive is complied with?

3. If the Commission does not take action, can a third party state that the Commission fully agrees that such statements do not infringe the Treaty of Lisbon or Article 6 of the abovementioned directive?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(15 November 2013)

As regards the Honourable Member's first question, the Commission had not, until submission of his question, been made aware of the statements referred to. The Commission observes in this regard that it is primarily the competence of the Spanish regulatory authorities to ensure implementation of the AVMSD ([2]), and scrutinise broadcasters' compliance with domestic transposition measures.

As far as the Honourable Member further refers to the repeat occurrence of statements such as the ones at issue in the present case, the Commission notes that it has not received any complaints on the subject matter thus far. In particular, no claims concerning failure by the Spanish authorities to address the problem described have been brought to its attention. This, of course, does not preclude the possibiliy of investigations if such observations were indeed to be received.

Finally, it is clear that third parties must not ascribe or infer positions regarding the Commission's assessment of compliance either with the provisions of Directive, and notably Article 6 thereof, or the Treaty of Lisbon from perceived inaction. It lies upon the Commission to assess this compliance of Member States and in accordance with the established case-law of the Court of Justice of the European Union it hereby enjoys wide discretionary power in deciding whether or not and when to commence infringement proceedings against a Member State and/or to refer a case to the Court. This also excludes the right of individuals to require the Commission to take specific position. In any case, the Commission reserves the right to invoke all appropriate legal remedies as the guardian of the Treaties and secondary legislation enacted in compliance therewith.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20130918/54386740582/premio-principe-de-asturias-no-descarta-bombardeo-barcelona.html
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32010L0013:EN:NOT

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010808/13
an die Kommission
Jens Geier (S&D) und Petra Kammerevert (S&D)
(24. September 2013)

Betrifft: Tätigkeit des Beraters von Kommissionsmitglied Kroes

Am 12. Dezember 2011 wurde Karl Theodor zu Guttenberg von Vizepräsidentin Kroes zu ihrem persönlichen Berater in Fragen der Internetfreiheit im Rahmen der „No disconnect"-Strategie benannt. Insbesondere solle er Erkenntnisse liefern und Handlungsempfehlungen dazu abgeben, wie Internet-Nutzern, Bloggern und Cyber-Aktivisten in autoritären Regimen eine Unterstützung durch die EU zugutekommen könne, und entsprechende Kontakte knüpfen. Nach fast zweijähriger Tätigkeit ist der Öffentlichkeit über seine Arbeit bislang wenig bekannt. Lediglich aus der Presse ist zu erfahren, dass er im Hintergrund arbeite.

1. Welche konkreten Erkenntnisse und Arbeitsergebnisse haben sich für die Kommission unmittelbar aus der bisherigen, oben dargestellten Beratertätigkeit durch den persönlichen Berater von Frau Kroes ergeben?

2. Inwieweit sind diese Ergebnisse in die weitere Arbeit der Kommission eingeflossen oder berücksichtigt worden? Wie haben die Ergebnisse insbesondere die „No-Disconnect"-Strategie beeinflusst?

3. Welche Kosten, einschließlich Reisekosten, sind bislang aus der Beratertätigkeit für den gesamten Zeitraum entstanden? Mit welchen Kosten wird zukünftig gerechnet?

4. Worin konkret bestehen die künftigen Aufgaben im Rahmen der Beratertätigkeit bis zum Ende dieses Mandatszeitraums?

Antwort von Frau Kroes im Namen der Kommission
(13. November 2013)

Die Kommission verweist die Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-005289/2013 zum selben Thema.

1. Herr zu Guttenberg war in Kontakt mit dem IKT-Sektor, politischen und nachrichtendienstlichen Kreisen, Vertretern der Wissenschaft, NRO, den Medien sowie einzelnen Internetaktivisten und hat in persönlichen Gesprächen sehr nützliche Hinweise gegeben, wie sich die Zusammenarbeit mit dem öffentlichen und privaten Sektor in den EU-Mitgliedstaaten und in Drittländern (insbesondere den USA) im Bereich der Internetfreiheit gestalten ließe.

2. Hierdurch wurde der Aufbau der beiden wichtigsten Säulen der „No-Disconnect-"Strategie — die weltweite Zusammenarbeit und das Verständnis des Geschehens vor Ort — unterstützt. Die Feststellungen von Herrn zu Guttenberg haben insbesondere dazu beigetragen, die ECSA-Plattform (European Capability for Situational Awareness — europäische Kapazität zur Lageerkundung) einzurichten, die zum Ziel hat, mittels sehr zeitnaher Informationen zur Internetzensur und –überwachung die EU-Entscheidungsprozesse zu verbessern.

3./4. Die Kommission hat Herrn zu Guttenberg seit seiner Ernennung zum Sachverständigen nur für eine sehr begrenzte Anzahl von Reisen die Kosten erstattet. Die Reisekostenerstattung erfolgte innerhalb des Rahmens, der mit dem Beschluss der Kommission vom 5. Dezember 2007 zur Regelung der Erstattung der Reisekosten für die Teilnahme externer Sachverständiger der Kommission an Sitzungen festgesetzt wurde; insgesamt beträgt die Höhe der Reisekostenerstattung etwa 20 000 EUR.

Es sind keine konkreten Aufgaben für Herrn zu Guttenberg geplant, so dass in dieser Hinsicht auch keine weiteren Reisekosten oder sonstigen Ausgaben zu erwarten sind.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010808/13
to the Commission
Jens Geier (S&D) and Petra Kammerevert (S&D)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Work of the adviser to Commissioner Kroes

On 12 December 2011, Vice-President Kroes appointed Karl Theodor zu Guttenberg as her personal adviser on matters relating to Internet freedom in the context of the 'No Disconnect Strategy'. In particular, he was to provide information and recommendations for action on how Internet users, bloggers and cyber activists in authoritarian regimes could be supported by the EU, and to establish the appropriate contacts. After nearly two years in this role, the general public so far knows very little about his work. All that can be gleaned from the press is that he is working in the background.

1. What tangible information and findings has the Commission obtained directly from the aforementioned advisory work carried out to date by the personal adviser to Ms Kroes?

2. To what extent have these findings been incorporated into or taken into account in the continuing work of the Commission? How have the findings influenced the 'No Disconnect Strategy' in particular?

3. To date, what costs, including travel costs, has the advisory work given rise to for the period as a whole? What future costs are expected to be incurred?

4. What specific future tasks will the advisory work entail up until the end of this mandate period?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(13 November 2013)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to the Written Question E-005289/2013 on the same subject.

1. Mr zu Guttenberg has been in contact with the ICT sector, the political and intelligence establishments, academia, NGOs, the media, as well individual Internet activists and has provided very useful face-to-face advice concerning possible cooperation mechanisms with the public and private sector, within EU Member States and third countries (in particular the USA) in the field of Internet freedom.

2. This has helped to build two main pillars of the No-Disconnect Strategy, namely global cooperation and understanding what is happening 'on the ground'. Mr zu Guttenberg's findings have in particular contributed in designing the European Capability for Situational Awareness (ECSA) platform, which is to augment the EU decision-making capabilities with reliable and near-real time information on cyber-censorship and Internet surveillance.

3 and 4. Only a very limited number of trips were refunded by the Commission, since Mr zu Guttenberg's appointment as an expert. The Commission has reimbursed his travels within the framework set by Commission's Decision of 5 December 2007 on Rules on the reimbursement of expenses incurred by people from outside the Commission invited to attend meetings in an expert capacity, the total sum of the reimbursed expenses being around EUR 20 000.

There are no specific tasks planned for Mr zu Guttenberg, and consequently, no further travel or other expenses are expected to be incurred in this respect.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010809/13
an die Kommission
Burkhard Balz (PPE)
(24. September 2013)

Betrifft: Rolle der Europäischen Investitionsbank (EIB) im Europäischen Verband langfristiger Investoren (European Association of Long-Term Investors — ELTI)

In der Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-008949/2013 zur Rolle der EIB in ELTI erläutert die Kommission lediglich das Verbandsziel der operationellen Zusammenarbeit zwischen langfristigen Investoren zur Umsetzung von EU-Zielen und Politiken. Sie geht jedoch nicht auf die ursprüngliche Frage nach möglichen Interessenkonflikten mit dem ebenfalls angekündigten Ziel des Verbandes, die gemeinsamen Interessen seiner Mitglieder gegenüber den EU-Institutionen zu vertreten, ein. Im Gegensatz zum Vorgänger, dem Club der Spezialinstitute des langfristigen Kredits (ISLTC) wird der ELTI aufgrund des Zieles der Interessenvertretung im Transparenz-Register eingetragen werden. Die konkrete Rolle, die die EIB in diesem Kontext im ELTI spielen soll, wird aus der bisherigen Antwort der Kommission nicht deutlich.

Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Nachfragen beantworten:

1. Worin besteht die genaue Rolle, die die EIB als assoziiertes Mitglied im ELTI spielen wird? Inwiefern unterscheidet sich diese von der Rolle der ordentlichen Mitglieder? Wie finanziert sich der ELTI? Welchen Beitrag zahlt die EIB?

2. Ist es unabdingbar für die EIB, Mitglied in einem im Transparenz-Register eingetragenen Verband zu sein, um eine langfristige Finanzierung durch den öffentlichen und privaten Sektor stärker zu mobilisieren?

3. Wie wird sich die EIB in der Interessenvertretung von Partikularinteressen im Rahmen des ELTI abgrenzen?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(28. November 2013)

Unserem Verständnis nach hat die EIB als assoziiertes Mitglied im ELTI einen Beobachterstatus inne und verfügt folglich über keinerlei Stimmrechte in den Beschlussfassungsorganen des Verbands. Der ELTI finanziert sich über die Jahresbeiträge der Mitglieder, und die EIB wird einen Beitrag entrichten, der dem der anderen Mitglieder entspricht.

Die EIB versteht ihre Beteiligung im ELTI als eine Möglichkeit für eine verstärkte Zusammenarbeit mit den Finanzinstituten der Mitgliedstaaten, die die gleichen ehrgeizigen Ziele wie die EIB verfolgen. Die Kommission räumt ein, dass eine solche Zusammenarbeit zwischen der EIB und den Instituten auf nationaler und regionaler Ebene zu möglichen Vorteilen wie einer verstärkten Kohärenz und dem Austausch bewährter Praktiken führen kann.

Die Aufnahme des ELTI im gemeinsamen Transparenzregister des Europäischen Parlaments und der Kommission wird die Transparenz in Bezug auf die Tätigkeiten des ELTI erhöhen und einen strukturierten und konstruktiven Informationsaustausch sowie entsprechende Konsultationen erleichtern.

Wir möchten den Herrn Abgeordneten bitten, auch direkt mit der EIB Kontakt aufzunehmen, um weitere Klarstellungen zu spezifischen Aspekten ihrer Involvierung im ELTI einzuholen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010809/13
to the Commission
Burkhard Balz (PPE)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Role of the European Investment Bank (EIB) in the European Association of Long-Term Investors (ELTI)

In its answer to Written Question E-008949/2013 concerning the role of the EIB in the ELTI, the Commission merely explains the Association's objective of operational cooperation among long-term investors for the implementation of EU objectives and policies. However, it does not answer the original question relating to possible conflicts of interest with the other declared objective of the Association of representing the shared interests of its members vis-à-vis the EU institutions. Unlike its predecessor, the Club of Institutions of the European Union Specialising in Long-Term Credit (ISLTC), the ELTI will be included in the transparency register on account of its objective of representing the interests of its members. The specific role within the ELTI that the EIB is to play in this context is not clear from the previous answer from the Commission.

Can the Commission answer the following additional questions:

1. What is the exact role that the EIB will play as an associate member of the ELTI? To what extent does this role differ from that of full members? How does the ELTI finance itself? What contribution does the EIB pay?

2. Is it really necessary for the EIB to be a member of an association that is included in the transparency register in order to better mobilise long-term funding by the public and private sectors?

3. In connection with the representation of interests, how will the EIB disassociate itself from individual interests within the ELTI?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(28 November 2013)

We understand that, as an associate member of ELTI, the EIB will have observer status and thus no voting rights in the decision making bodies of the association. ELTI will be financed through the annual membership fees and EIB will pay a fee equal to that of the other members.

The EIB sees its participation in ELTI as a channel for enhanced cooperation with financial institutions of the Member States who pursue the same promotional objectives as the EIB. The Commission recognises potential benefits, such as enhanced coherence and the exchange of best practices, in such cooperation between the EIB and institutions at Member State and regional level.

Inscription of ELTI in the common transparency register of the European Parliament and the Commission will serve the purpose of transparency regarding ELTI's activities and facilitate structured and constructive exchanges of information and consultations.

We would invite the Honourable Member to enquire also directly with the EIB for any further clarification on specific aspects of its involvement in ELTI.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010810/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Toussas (GUE/NGL)
(24 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Τεράστια καταστροφή από πυρκαγιά στον ιστορικό Ελαιώνα της Άμφισσας στην Ελλάδα

Η τεράστια καταστροφή στον ιστορικό Ελαιώνα της Άμφισσας από πυρκαγιά που κατέκαψε 4 000 στρέμματα με 50 000 περίπου ελαιόδεντρα έχει σοβαρότατες επιπτώσεις στο ήδη μειωμένο εισόδημα των ελαιοκαλλιεργητών της περιοχής, που βρίσκονται αντιμέτωποι με τη ραγδαία αύξηση του κόστους παραγωγής, την φοροεπιδρομή από την συγκυβέρνηση ΝΔ-ΠΑΣΟΚ και τις προηγούμενες κυβερνήσεις, συνολικότερα με την αντιλαϊκή ΚΑΠ της ΕΕ, που στόχο έχει να πετάξει έξω από τα κτήματα τους μικροκαλλιεργητές και να συγκεντρωθεί η καλλιέργεια σε λίγα χέρια μεγαλοκτηματιών.

Η περιοχή του Ελαιώνα που κάηκε δεν αποτελεί μόνο γεωργική γη και κύρια πηγή εισοδήματος της περιοχής, αλλά και το μοναδικό στην Ελλάδα κηρυγμένο Παραδοσιακό Ελαιώνα από την ΕΕ. Η περιοχή, που είναι το κεντρικότερο σημείο του παγκοσμίου φήμης δελφικού τοπίου, το 1981 είχε ήδη κηρυχτεί περιοχή με «μοναδικότητα ως αρχαιολογικού χώρου και ως φυσικού τοπίου τόσο στον ελληνικό όσο και στον διεθνή χώρο» (ΦΕΚ 551 Β'/1981), το 1987 κηρύχθηκε μνημείο παγκόσμιας πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς από την ΟΥΝΕΣΚΟ και το 1985 χαρακτηρίστηκε Ζώνη Α' (αδόμητη) προστασίας του αρχαιολογικού χώρου Δελφών από το Υπουργείο Πολιτισμού, ενώ απαγορεύεται οποιαδήποτε δόμηση και αλλαγή χρήσης γης.

Πώς τοποθετείται η Επιτροπή στα αιτήματα των αγροτών και των εργαζομένων κατοίκων της περιοχής για την άμεση και πλήρη καταγραφή των ζημιών και την άμεση αποζημίωση των πληγέντων για το σύνολο της καταστροφής και για το χρονικό διάστημα απώλειας του εισοδήματος, το πάγωμα των χρεών των πληγέντων στις τράπεζες και την εφορία και το πάγωμα των φόρων και των χαρατσιών; Πώς τοποθετείται επίσης στην αναγκαιότητα να παρθούν άμεσα μέτρα αντιπυρικής και αντιπλημμυρικής προστασίας και να στελεχωθεί άμεσα η Πυροσβεστική Υπηρεσία με προσωπικό σταθερής απασχόλησης, εφοδιασμένο με κατάλληλα και άρτια εξοπλισμένα μηχανήματα;

Απάντηση του κ. Ciolos εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(20 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Σύμφωνα με τις διατάξεις του άρθρου 20 στοιχείο β) σημείο vi) του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1698/2005 ([1]) του Συμβουλίου, μπορεί να παρέχεται στήριξη για την αποκατάσταση του γεωργικού παραγωγικού δυναμικού που έχει πληγεί από φυσικές καταστροφές και τη λήψη των κατάλληλων μέτρων πρόληψης. Στο ελληνικό Πρόγραμμα Αγροτικής Ανάπτυξης (ΠΑΑ) 2007-2013, η εν λόγω διάταξη αφορά το μέτρο 126 ([2]). Ωστόσο, το μέτρο αυτό καταργήθηκε κατόπιν αιτήματος των ελληνικών αρχών. Τα θέματα που έχουν σχέση με τη διαχείριση αυτού του προγράμματος εμπίπτουν στην αρμοδιότητα της Διαχειριστικής Αρχής του ΠΑΑ, η οποία στεγάζεται στο Υπουργείο Αγροτικής Ανάπτυξης και Τροφίμων.

Σύμφωνα με την αρχή της επιμερισμένης διαχείρισης, η λήψη μέτρων για την πρόληψη κινδύνων εμπίπτει στην αρμοδιότητα του κράτους μέλους. Το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης και το Ταμείο Συνοχής μπορούν επίσης να χρησιμοποιηθούν για την ενίσχυση μιας σειράς μέτρων στους τομείς της πρόληψης κινδύνων, λαμβανομένων υπόψη των κριτηρίων οριοθέτησης των αρμοδιοτήτων των εμπλεκόμενων ταμείων, όπως καθορίζονται στα επιχειρησιακά προγράμματα. Ενίσχυση για την αντιμετώπιση καταστροφών παρέχεται επίσης μέσω του Μηχανισμού Πολιτικής Προστασίας της ΕΕ και το Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης της ΕΕ. Οι αιτήσεις για οικονομική ενίσχυση από το Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης πρέπει να υποβάλλονται στην Επιτροπή από τις εθνικές αρχές της πληγείσας χώρας εντός 10 εβδομάδων από την ημερομηνία της πρώτης ζημίας. Ωστόσο, δεν καλύπτονται οι απώλειες εισοδήματος ιδιωτών. Η Επιτροπή δεν μπορεί να ενεργοποιήσει το Ταμείο με δική της πρωτοβουλία.

Η Ελλάδα δύναται να χορηγήσει κρατική ενίσχυση μέχρι το 100% για την αντιστάθμιση απωλειών που προκαλούνται από πυρκαγιές σύμφωνα με τις κοινοτικές κατευθυντήριες γραμμές για τις κρατικές ενισχύσεις στον τομέα της γεωργίας και δασοκομίας ([3]). Μπορεί επίσης να χορηγήσει ενισχύσεις *ήσσονος σημασίας* (οι οποίες δεν θεωρούνται ως κρατικές ενισχύσεις), σύμφωνα με τον κανονισμό (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1535/2007 της Επιτροπής ([4]).

([1]) ΕΕ L 277 της 21.10.2005.
([2]) «Αποκατάσταση του γεωργικού παραγωγικού δυναμικού που έχει πληγεί από φυσικές καταστροφές και εισαγωγή των κατάλληλων δράσεων πρόληψης».
([3]) ΕΕ C 319 της 27.12.2006.
([4]) ΕΕ L 337 της 21.12.2007.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010810/13
to the Commission
Georgios Toussas (GUE/NGL)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Major fire disaster in the historic Amfissa Olive Grove in Greece

The extensive fire in the historic Amfissa Olive Grove, which has completely burned 4000 hectares containing around 50 000 olive trees, is having a very serious impact on the already reduced incomes of olive growers in the region, who face a rapid increase in production costs and a tax onslaught from the coalition Government of New Democracy and PASOK and previous governments, together with the unpopular Common Agricultural Policy of the EU, the aim of which is to kick small-scale farmers off their farms so that cultivation can be concentrated in the hands of a few large-scale farmers.

The olive grove area that has been burned is not only agricultural farm land and the main source of income in the region, but also the only traditional olive grove in Greece listed as such by the EU. The area marks the most central point in the world famous Delphi landscape, which in 1981 was declared a 'unique archaeological site and natural site, not only within a Greek context but also in a global context' (Greek Official Journal 551 B/1981), and was also declared a Unesco World Heritage Site in 1987, and categorised by the Ministry of Culture in 1985 as Zone A (undeveloped) of the protected archaeological site of Delphi, where any construction or change of land use is prohibited.

What is the Commission's view regarding the requests of the region's farmers and employed inhabitants for a full record to be taken immediately of the damage and for immediate compensation for the people affected by the entire disaster and for their loss of income over the whole period, the freezing of the debts owed to the banks and tax authorities by the people affected, and the freezing of taxes and tax hikes. Also, what is its view regarding the need to adopt immediate measures for fire and flood protection, and to man the fire service immediately with permanent employees, provided with appropriate and well-equipped fire engines?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(20 November 2013)

According to the provisions of Article 20(b) (vi) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 ([1]) support may be granted for restoring agricultural production potential damaged by natural disasters and introducing appropriate prevention actions. In the Greek Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2007-2013 this provision was addressed by Measure 126 ([2]). However, this Measure has been removed at the request of the Greek authorities. Specific questions on the management of this Programme fall within the competence of the Managing Authority of the RDP located in the Greek Ministry of Rural Development and Food.

Under the shared management principle, the definition of measures regarding risk prevention falls within the responsibility of the Member State. The European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund may be used to support a variety of measures in the areas of risk prevention taking into account the demarcation criteria among the involved Funds as defined in the operational programmes. Disaster response assistance is also available through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and the EU Solidarity Fund. Applications for financial assistance from the EU Solidarity Fund should be presented to the Commission by the national authorities of the affected country within 10 weeks of the date of the first damage. Private damage may however not be compensated. The Commission may not activate the Fund upon its own initiative.

Greece may grant national aid up to 100% to compensate for losses caused by fires in accordance with the Community Guidelines for state aid in the agriculture and forestry sector ([3]). It may also grant *de minimis* aid (not considered as state aid) in accordance with Commission Regulation (EC) No 1535/2007 ([4]).

([1]) OJ L 277, 21.10.2005.
([2]) 'Restoring agricultural production potential damaged by natural disasters and introducing appropriate prevention actions'.
([3]) OJ C 319, 27.12.2006.
([4]) OJ L 337, 21.12.2007.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010811/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(24 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κλίνες εκτός λειτουργίας σε Μονάδες Εντατικής Θεραπείας (ΜΕΘ) ελληνικών νοσοκομείων

Η κατάσταση του τομέα παροχής δημόσιας υγείας στην Ελλάδα συνεχώς επιδεινώνεται λόγω των περικοπών της χρηματοδότησης και της μείωσης του προσωπικού.

Τεράστιο και πολύ άμεσο πρόβλημα αποτελεί το γεγονός ότι στην Ελλάδα 160 κλίνες σε Μονάδες Εντατικής Θεραπείας (ΜΕΘ) παραμένουν εκτός λειτουργίας, κυρίως λόγω έλλειψης προσωπικού. Το γεγονός αυτό, σε συνδυασμό με το γεγονός ότι ο συνολικός αριθμός κλινών σε ΜΕΘ που λειτουργούν σε όλη την Ελλάδα είναι μόλις 540, αριθμός που δεν επαρκεί για να καλύψει τις καθημερινές ανάγκες εντατικής θεραπείας στην χώρα, έχει ως αποτέλεσμα να χάνονται ή να κινδυνεύουν καθημερινά ανθρώπινες ζωές.

Υπάρχουν μάλιστα πληροφορίες ότι ο αριθμός των εκτός λειτουργίας κλινών ΜΕΘ θα αυξηθεί περαιτέρω λόγω νέων περικοπών στο προσωπικό.

Κατόπιν των ανωτέρω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει η Επιτροπή στοιχεία για των αριθμό κλινών σε μονάδες εντατικής θεραπείας στις χώρες της ΕΕ;

2. Μπορεί να δώσει η Επιτροπή ακριβή στοιχεία για προγράμματα που αφορούν δημιουργία, ενίσχυση ή εξοπλισμό ΜΕΘ σε ελληνικά νοσοκομεία και έχουν ενταχθεί στο ελληνικό ΕΣΠΑ 2007-2013; Ποιος είναι ο προϋπολογισμός τους και ποια τα ποσοστά απορρόφησης; Ποια από αυτά έχουν ολοκληρωθεί;

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

1. Η Επιτροπή δεν συλλέγει στοιχεία σχετικά με τον αριθμό των κλινών στις μονάδες εντατικής θεραπείας. Ωστόσο, η Eurostat συλλέγει στοιχεία σχετικά με τον αριθμό των νοσοκομειακών κλινών στα περισσότερα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ.

2. Σύμφωνα με την αρχή της επιμερισμένης διαχείρισης που διέπει την εφαρμογή της πολιτικής συνοχής, οι εθνικές και οι περιφερειακές αρχές είναι αρμόδιες για την επιλογή, υλοποίηση και παρακολούθηση των έργων που χρηματοδοτούνται από την ΕΕ, με την εξαίρεση των «μεγάλων έργων» (δηλαδή σχεδίων άνω των 50 εκατ. ευρώ). Ως εκ τούτου, οι πληροφορίες που έχει στη διάθεσή της η Επιτροπή δεν προσδιορίζουν τα ποσά που διατίθενται για τις μονάδες εντατικής θεραπείας στα ελληνικά νοσοκομεία.

Κατά την περίοδο 2007-2013, η συμμετοχή του δημοσίου (δηλαδή του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης και η εθνική συνεισφορά) που διατέθηκαν για υποδομές υγείας (θεματικός κωδικός 76) ανέρχεται σε 661 εκατ. ευρώ. Για αναλυτικότερες πληροφορίες σχετικά με την ενωσιακή χρηματοδοτική ενίσχυση των μονάδων εντατικής θεραπείας, ο αξιότιμος βουλευτής του Κοινοβουλίου μπορεί να επικοινωνήσει με την αρχή διαχείρισης των περιφερειακών προγραμμάτων, το ελληνικό Υπουργείο Ανάπτυξης.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010811/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Empty beds in intensive care units in Greek hospitals

Due to funding cuts and staff reductions, the situation in the Greek health sector continues to deteriorate.

An enormous and very immediate problem is the fact that 160 beds remain empty in intensive care units in Greece, mainly due to a lack of staff. This fact, together with the fact that there are just 540 beds in operation overall in intensive care units across the whole of Greece (an insufficient number to cover everyday intensive care needs in the country), results in many human lives being lost or put at risk on a daily basis.

Moreover, there are reports that the number of empty beds in intensive care units will further increase, due to fresh staff cuts.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does the Commission have any data on the number of intensive care unit beds in EU countries?

2. Can the Commission provide accurate data on programmes relating to the opening, supporting or equipping of intensive care units in Greek hospitals, and have those been included in the Greek National Strategic Reference Framework for 2007-2013? What is their budget and what are the absorption rates? Which ones have been completed?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(21 November 2013)

1. The Commission does not collect data on the number of intensive care units beds.

However, Eurostat collects data on the number of hospital beds for most of the EU Member States.

2. Under the shared management principle which governs the implementation of cohesion policy, national and regional authorities are responsible for the selection, implementation and monitoring of EU funded projects, with the exception of 'major projects' (i.e. projects over EUR 50 million). Therefore, the information available to the Commission does not specify the amounts allocated to intensive care units in Greek hospitals.

In the 2007-2013 period, the public contribution (i.e. European Regional Development Fund and national contribution) allocated to health infrastructure (thematic code 76) amounts to EUR 661 million. For more detailed information relating to the EU financial support to intensive care units, the Honourable Member could contact the managing authority of regional programmes, the Greek Ministry of Development.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010812/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(24 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Σοβαρά προβλήματα του κλάδου της ιχθυοκαλλιέργειας στην Ελλάδα

Ο κλάδος της ιχθυοκαλλιέργειας συμβάλλει με χιλιάδες θέσεις εργασίας στην ελληνική οικονομία και συμβάλλει ιδιαίτερα στην οικονομική και κοινωνική συνοχή απομακρυσμένων περιοχών της χώρας.

Παρά την σημασία του τομέα της ιχθυοκαλλιέργειας, ο Άξονας Προτεραιότητας 2 (Υδατοκαλλιέργεια, αλιεία εσωτερικών υδάτων, μεταποίηση και εμπορία) του Επιχειρησιακού Προγράμματος Αλιείας «ΕΠΑΛ 2007-2013» παρουσιάζει σημαντικές καθυστερήσεις στην απορρόφηση κονδυλίων και την υλοποίησή του.

Ως εκ τούτου, επενδύσεις στον τομέα της υδατοκαλλιέργειας, αλλά και δράσεις ενίσχυσης και προώθησης εξαγωγών των ελληνικών προϊόντων υδατοκαλλιέργειας δεν προχωρούν ικανοποιητικά με αποτέλεσμα, και σε συνδυασμό με την κρίση στην Ελλάδα, ο κλάδος να βρίσκεται σε πολύ δυσχερή οικονομική θέση.

Με δεδομένα τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια είναι η απορροφητικότητα κονδυλίων για τον Άξονα Προτεραιότητας 2 του ΕΠΑΛ ανά μέτρο μέχρι σήμερα; Ποιοι είναι οι λόγοι καθυστέρησης της απορρόφησης;

2. Τι μέτρα θα λάβει η Επιτροπή, σε συνεργασία με την ελληνική κυβέρνηση, για την βελτίωση της απορροφητικότητας του Άξονα 2 του ΕΠΑΛ;

3. Ποια είναι η απορροφητικότητα για τον αντίστοιχο άξονα ενίσχυσης της ιχθυοκαλλιέργειας των επιχειρησιακών προγραμμάτων της Ιταλίας και Ισπανίας;

Απάντηση της κ. Δαμανάκη εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(18 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

1. Το ποσοστό απορρόφησης του ελληνικού Επιχειρησιακού Προγράμματος Αλιείας 2007-2013 στο πλαίσιο του Άξονα Προτεραιότητας 2 (ΑΠ 2) ανέρχεται σε 27,37%. Πληροφορούμαστε ότι περισσότερα έργα που υποβάλλονται για χρηματοδότηση τόσο για το μέτρο 2.1 (υδατοκαλλιέργεια) όσο και για το μέτρο 2.3 (μεταποίηση αλιευτικών προϊόντων) αξιολογούνται επί του παρόντος από την αρμόδια ελληνική διαχειριστική αρχή του ΕΤΑ. Αναμένουμε την αξιολόγηση. Για τα έργα αυτά αναμένεται να χρησιμοποιηθούν περισσότερες πιστώσεις.

Οι λόγοι στους οποίους οφείλεται η καθυστέρηση στην ενεργοποίηση των προαναφερόμενων μέτρων και στην προκήρυξη της πρόσκλησης για την υποβολή ενδιαφέροντος συνδέονται με τις αρμοδιότητες των ελληνικών αρχών (διοικητικά προβλήματα, καθυστερήσεις στον χωροταξικό σχεδιασμό για τις υδατοκαλλιέργειες, γραφειοκρατία, καθυστερήσεις στην αξιολόγηση των προτάσεων χρηματοδότησης).

2. Η Επιτροπή συνεχίζει να στηρίζει τις ελληνικές αρχές παρέχοντας συμβουλές και κατευθύνσεις ιδίως όσον αφορά την ορθή εφαρμογή των προαναφερόμενων μέτρων για τη διασφάλιση της συμμόρφωσης με το εθνικό και ενωσιακό νομικό πλαίσιο. Στο πλαίσιο της νέας μας Κοινής Αλιευτικής Πολιτικής, όλα τα κράτη μέλη θα κληθούν να καταρτίσουν εθνικό σχέδιο για την βιώσιμη υδατοκαλλιέργεια με σκοπό τη διευκόλυνση των επενδύσεων.

3. Το ποσοστό απορρόφησης στο πλαίσιο του ΑΠ2 του ιταλικού και ισπανικού Επιχειρησιακού Προγράμματος Αλιείας 2007-2013 ανέρχεται προς το παρόν σε 41% και 35,91% αντιστοίχως.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010812/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Serious problems in the fish-farming sector in Greece

The fish-farming sector contributes to the Greek economy by providing thousands of jobs and in particular to the economic and social cohesion of remote regions of the country.

In spite of the importance of the fish-farming sector, Priority Axis 2 (Aquaculture, inland fishing, processing and marketing) of Operational Programme Fisheries 'OPF 2007-2013' shows major delays in the absorption of funds and implementation.

Investments in the aquaculture sector, as well as actions to strengthen and promote exports of Greek aquaculture products, are therefore not progressing satisfactorily, and, in combination with the crisis in Greece, this results in the sector finding itself in a very difficult financial position.

Given the above, will the Commission answer the following:

1. What is the absorption rate of funds relating to Priority Axis 2 of the OPF, asmeasured so far? What are the reasons for the delays in absorption?

2. What measures will the Commission take in cooperation with the Greek Governmentto improve the absorption rate for Axis 2 of the OPF?

3. What is the absorption rate for the corresponding support axis for fish farming in theoperational programmes in Italy and Spain?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(18 November 2013)

1. The absorption rate under Priority Axis 2 (PA 2) of the Greek EFF OP 2007-2013 amounts to 27.37%. We have been informed that more projects submitted for funding for both measures 2.1 (aquaculture) and measure 2.3 (processing of fisheries products) are currently under evaluation by the competent Greek EFF Managing Authority. We are waiting for the evaluation. These projects are expected to use up more allocations under these measures.

The reasons behind the delays in the activation of the aforementioned measures and the announcement of a call for expression of interest, are related to the competences of the Greek authorities (administrative problems, delays in spatial planning for aquaculture, red tape, delays in evaluation of the proposals for financing).

2. The Commission continuously supports the Greek national authorities by providing advice and guidance, in particular regarding the correct implementation of the abovementioned measures for ensuring compliance with national and EU legal framework. In the framework of our new Common Fisheries Policy a national Plan to sustainable aquaculture is going to be asked by the Commission from all Member States to facilitate the investment.

3. The absorption rate under PA2 of the Italian and the Spanish EFF OP 2007-2013 amounts, for the moment, to 41% and 35.91% accordingly.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010813/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(24 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Συζήτηση για την άρση της αναστολής πλειστηριασμών των κατοικιών δανειοληπτών στην Ελλάδα

Η συζήτηση για την άρση της αναστολής πλειστηριασμών των κατοικιών δανειοληπτών που αδυνατούν να αντεπεξέλθουν στις δανειακές τους υποχρεώσεις προκαλεί ιδιαίτερες ανησυχίες σε εκατοντάδες χιλιάδες νοικοκυριά στην Ελλάδα. Ο Έλληνας πρωθυπουργός, στις 22.8.2013, δήλωσε ότι «η πρώτη κατοικία των κοινωνικά αδύναμων πολιτών και όσων αποδεδειγμένα, εξ αιτίας της κρίσης, δεν μπορούν να εξυπηρετήσουν τα δάνειά τους, θα προστατευτεί απολύτως». Με δεδομένο ότι η προθεσμία που ορίζει ο νόμος 4128/2013 σχετικά με την αναστολή των πλειστηριασμών για απαιτήσεις μέχρι 200 000 ευρώ εκπνέει στις 31.12.2013,

ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Γίνονται συζητήσεις με την ελληνική κυβέρνηση σχετικά με αυτό το ζήτημα; Ποιες είναι οι προτάσεις με τις οποίες προσέρχεται η Επιτροπή, ως μέλος της τρόικα, στις σχετικές συζητήσεις, ως προς τα εισοδηματικά κριτήρια, το όριο των 200 000 ευρώ, κ.α.;

2. Συμφωνεί με τις εκτιμήσεις ότι τυχόν απελευθέρωση των πλειστηριασμών θα δημιουργήσει επιπλέον ανάγκες στις ελληνικές τράπεζες ύψους 8-10 δις ευρώ; Αν ναι τι θα προτείνει για την κάλυψη των επιπλέον αναγκών;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Ως αποτέλεσμα του δεύτερου ελέγχου στο πλαίσιο του δεύτερου προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα, που ολοκληρώθηκε τον Μάιο του 2013, και προκειμένου να βρεθεί μια εύλογη λύση για τα νοικοκυριά που βρίσκονται σε δυσχερή κατάσταση, δυνάμει της παραγράφου 3.7 του μνημονίου συμφωνίας (ΜΣ) απαιτήθηκε από τις ελληνικές αρχές να καταρτίσουν, σε διαβούλευση με το προσωπικό των ΕΕ/ΕΚΤ/ΔΝΤ, ένα νέο «Πρόγραμμα Διευκόλυνσης» για άτομα με χαμηλό εισόδημα που αντιμετωπίζουν μεγάλες οικονομικές δυσχέρειες, έτσι ώστε να διευκολυνθεί ο διακανονισμός του μη βιώσιμου χρέους των νοικοκυριών.

Οι ελληνικές αρχές έχουν ήδη θεσπίσει τις αναγκαίες κανονιστικές ρυθμίσεις ώστε να τεθεί σε εφαρμογή το εν λόγω «Πρόγραμμα Διευκόλυνσης», όπως συμφωνήθηκε στο ΜΣ/ΜΟΧΠ. Το πρόγραμμα αυτό λειτουργεί ως μηχανισμός ασφάλειας (back stop) για τα νοικοκυριά που δεν είναι σε θέση να εξυπηρετούν τις οφειλές τους λόγω της επιδείνωσης της μακροοικονομικής κατάστασης. Η σκοπιμότητα λήψης περαιτέρω μέτρων για τη διευκόλυνση του διακανονισμού του χρέους και οι επιπτώσεις τους για τις ελληνικές τράπεζες θα συζητηθούν με τις αρχές κατά την επόμενη αποστολή ελέγχου, τον Νοέμβριο του 2013. Η Επιτροπή, για να εφαρμοστεί το βέλτιστο πρότυπο αντιμετώπισης του προβλήματος, ζήτησε λεπτομερή στοιχεία από τις αρμόδιες ελληνικές αρχές σχετικά με τις παραμέτρους των ανεξόφλητων χρεών. Η Επιτροπή θα είναι σε θέση να διατυπώσει τη γνώμη της αφού λάβει τα αιτηθέντα στοιχεία.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010813/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Debate on reversing the suspension of auctions in respect of borrowers' homes in Greece

The debate on reversing the suspension of auctions in respect of the homes of borrowers who are unable to meet their loan obligations is causing particular concern in hundreds of thousands of households in Greece. The Greek prime minister stated on 22 August 2013 that 'the primary residences of socially vulnerable citizens and of those who have proved unable to service their debts due to the crisis will be fully protected'. Given that the deadline laid down by Act No 4128/2013 for the suspension of auctions in relation to claims of up to EUR 200 000 expires on 31 December 2013,

Will the Commission say:

1. Are any discussions being held with the Greek Government on this issue? What proposals has the Commission, as a member of the Troika, put forward in the relevant discussions in relation to income criteria, the EUR 200 000 threshold, etc.

2. Does it agree with estimates that any possible relaxation in respect of the auctions will create additional needs in Greek banks of EUR 8 to 10 billion? If so, how does it propose to cover the additional needs?

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

As a result of the second review in the context of the Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece, which finished in May 2013, and in order to find a sensible solution for households in distressed situations, paragraph 3.7 of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) required the Greek Authorities to introduce, in consultation with the EC/ECB/IMF staff, a new 'Facilitation Programme' targeted to low-income individuals in deep financial distress to facilitate the resolution of unsustainable household debt.

The Greek Authorities have already put in place necessary regulations for this 'Facilitation Programme' to be operational, as agreed in the MoU/MEFP. This programme works as a back-stop for households who are not able to serve their debts due to deterioration of macroeconomic situation. The desirability of further measures in order to facilitate debt resolution and their implications for Greek banks will be discussed with the authorities during the upcoming review mission in November 2013. In order to apply the best model to tackle the problem, the Commission has requested detailed data from the respective Greek Authorities on outstanding debt parameters. The Commission will be able to formulate its opinion upon receiving requested data.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010814/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(24 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Υποχρεωτική αναγραφή χώρας προέλευσης σε γαλακτοκομικά προϊόντα

Στον νέο Κανονισμό σχετικά με την παροχή πληροφοριών για τα τρόφιμα στους καταναλωτές ((ΕΕ) αριθ. 1169/2011), ο οποίος είναι ήδη σε ισχύ και θα τεθεί σε εφαρμογή την 13η Δεκεμβρίου 2014, αναφέρεται ότι «είναι αναγκαία η διερεύνηση της δυνατότητας να επεκταθεί η υποχρεωτική επισήμανση καταγωγής», μεταξύ άλλων προϊόντων, στο γάλα και τα γαλακτοκομικά προϊόντα. Αναφέρεται επίσης ότι, «καθώς το γάλα είναι ένα από τα προϊόντα για τα οποία η αναγραφή καταγωγής θεωρείται ως έχουσα ιδιαίτερο ενδιαφέρον, η έκθεση της Επιτροπής σχετικά με αυτό το προϊόν θα πρέπει να παρασχεθεί το συντομότερο δυνατόν», και ότι, έως τις 13 Δεκεμβρίου 2014, η Επιτροπή θα πρέπει να έχει «υποβάλει εκθέσεις στο Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο και στο Συμβούλιο σχετικά με την υποχρεωτική αναγραφή της χώρας καταγωγής ή του τόπου προέλευσης» για προϊόντα όπως το «γάλα» και το «γάλα ως συστατικό γαλακτοκομικών προϊόντων».

Σε αντίθεση με τα ανωτέρω όμως, η ελληνική κυβέρνηση, επικαλούμενη απόφαση της Επιτροπής, απέσυρε πρόσφατα αγορανομική διάταξη που ίσχυε από το 2009, η οποία προέβλεπε την υποχρεωτική αναγραφή στη συσκευασία της χώρας προέλευσης του γάλακτος σε όλα τα γαλακτοκομικά προϊόντα.

Δεδομένων των ανωτέρω, αλλά και της υποχρέωσης της Επιτροπής απέναντι στους Ευρωπαίους καταναλωτές, να διαμορφώσει επιτέλους το νομοθετικό πλαίσιο στο οποίο θα κατοχυρώνεται το αδιαμφισβήτητο δικαίωμά τους να γνωρίζουν την προέλευση των προϊόντων που αγοράζουν και ιδιαίτερα των ευαίσθητων προϊόντων, όπως το γάλα, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Με ποια πράξη επιβλήθηκε στην ελληνική κυβέρνηση η κατάργηση της υποχρεωτικής αναγραφής στη συσκευασία της χώρας προέλευσης του γάλακτος σε όλα τα γαλακτοκομικά προϊόντα; Ποιοι ήταν οι ουσιαστικοί λόγοι, εφ' όσον στον Κανονισμό (ΕΕ) αριθ. 1169/2011 αναγνωρίζεται ότι «το γάλα είναι ένα από τα προϊόντα για τα οποία η αναγραφή καταγωγής θεωρείται ως έχουσα ιδιαίτερο ενδιαφέρον»;

Υπήρχε η νομική δυνατότητα, με βάση την κοινοτική νομοθεσία, η Ελλάδα να αντιδράσει στην εν λόγω απόφαση και να μην προβεί στην κατάργηση της υποχρεωτικής αναγραφής μέχρι να εξαχθούν οριστικά συμπεράσματα για την υποχρεωτική επισήμανση της προέλευσης των γαλακτοκομικών προϊόντων;

Έχουν υποβληθεί μέχρι σήμερα από την Επιτροπή εκθέσεις στο ΕΚ και το Συμβούλιο σχετικές με αυτό το θέμα, όπως ορίζεται στο Άρθρο 26 παρ. 5 του Κανονισμού (ΕΕ) αριθ. 1169/2011; Αν ναι, ποιες;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(14 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Σύμφωνα με τους ισχύοντες κανόνες ([1]), η ένδειξη του τόπου καταγωγής ή προέλευσης είναι υποχρεωτική στις περιπτώσεις που η παράλειψη της ένδειξης αυτής ενδέχεται να παραπλανήσει τον καταναλωτή σχετικά με τον πραγματικό τόπο καταγωγής ή προέλευσης του τροφίμου.

Το 2009 οι ελληνικές αρχές κοινοποίησαν στην Επιτροπή το σχέδιο μέτρου στο οποίο αναφέρθηκε ο αξιότιμος κύριος βουλευτής. Εντούτοις, δεν παρείχαν καμία αιτιολόγηση που να επιτρέπει να συναχθεί το συμπέρασμα ότι η εισαγωγή, κατά γενικό κανόνα, της υποχρεωτικής επισήμανσης της προέλευσης της πρώτης ύλης (γάλακτος) ήταν σύμφωνη με την οδηγία 2000/13/ΕΚ. Παρά την αρνητική απόφαση της Επιτροπής ([2]), οι ελληνικές αρχές ενέκριναν το μέτρο. Η Επιτροπή είχε, ως εκ τούτου, ξεκινήσει προκαταρκτικές διαδικασίες επί παραβάσει κατά της Ελλάδας, λόγω της μη συμβατότητας με την οδηγία 2000/13/ΕΚ. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, η Επιτροπή θεωρεί ότι η Ελλάδα έχει πλέον προχωρήσει στην κατάργηση του εν λόγω μέτρου. Όταν ένα κράτος μέλος δεν συμμορφώνεται με τη νομοθεσία της Ένωσης, η Επιτροπή, ως θεματοφύλακας των Συνθηκών, θα χρειαστεί να εξετάσει το ενδεχόμενο να κινήσει διαδικασίες επί παραβάσει.

([1]) Άρθρο 3 παράγραφος 1 και 8 της οδηγίας 2000/13/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 20ής Μαρτίου 2000, για προσέγγιση των νομοθεσιών των κρατών μελών σχετικά με την επισήμανση, την παρουσίαση και τη διαφήμιση των τροφίμων, ΕΕ L 109 της 6.5.2000, σ. 29. Η εν λόγω οδηγία εφαρμόζεται έως τις 12 Δεκεμβρίου 2014.

([2]) Απόφαση της Επιτροπής 2010/147/ΕΕ, της 8ης Μαρτίου 2010 περί του σχεδίου διάταξης της Ελλάδας σχετικά με την αναγραφή ενδείξεων επί της συσκευασίας των πάσης φύσεως γαλακτοκομικών προϊόντων που υποδηλώνουν τη χώρα προέλευσης της πρώτης ύλης (γάλακτος) που χρησιμοποιήθηκε για την παρασκευή και διάθεση των προϊόντων αυτών στον τελικό καταναλωτή, καθώς και τις υποχρεώσεις των λιανοπωλητών για τον τρόπο τοποθέτησης των γαλακτοκομικών προϊόντων στα σημεία πώλησης των καταστημάτων τους, ΕΕ L 58 της 9.3.2010, σ. 20.

Ο κανονισμός (ΕΕ) αριθ. 1169/2011 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου σχετικά με την παροχή πληροφοριών για τα τρόφιμα στους καταναλωτές ([3]) ορίζει ότι η Επιτροπή θα υποβάλλει εκθέσεις στο Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο και το Συμβούλιο για τη διερεύνηση της δυνατότητας να επεκταθεί μέχρι τις 13 Δεκεμβρίου 2014, η υποχρεωτική επισήμανση καταγωγής όσον αφορά το γάλα και το γάλα ως συστατικό γαλακτοκομικών προϊόντων για την αντιμετώπιση, μεταξύ άλλων, της ανάγκης ενημέρωσης του καταναλωτή και της σκοπιμότητας παροχής υποχρεωτικής επισήμανσης της προέλευσης. Ανάλογα με το αποτέλεσμα των εκθέσεων, η Επιτροπή μπορεί να υποβάλει προτάσεις τροποποίησης των σχετικών διατάξεων της Ένωσης.

([3]) ΕΕ L 304 της 22.11.2011, σ. 18. Η εν λόγω απόφαση καταργεί και αντικαθιστά την οδηγία 2000/13/ΕΚ από τις 13 Δεκεμβρίου 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010814/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Mandatory country of origin labelling on dairy products

The new Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, which is already in force and will be effective from 13 December 2014, states that 'There is a need to explore the possibility to extend mandatory origin labelling' to milk and dairy products, among others. It is also proposed that 'Milk being one of the products for which an indication of origin is considered of particular interest, the Commission report on this product should be made available as soon as possible', and that, by 13 December 2014, the Commission 'shall submit reports to the European Parliament and the Council regarding the mandatory indication of the country of origin or place of provenance' for products such as 'milk' and 'milk as an ingredient in dairy products'.

In contrast to the above, however, the Greek Government, citing a Commission decision, recently withdrew a market regulation in force since 2009 which provided for the mandatory indication of the country of origin of the milk in all dairy products on the packaging.

Given the above, and given the Commission's obligation towards European consumers finally to draft a legislative framework enshrining their undisputed right to know the origin of the products they buy, and in particular sensitive products such as milk, will the Commission say:

Which act imposed the abolition of mandatory indications of the country of origin of the milk in all dairy products on the packaging on the Greek Government? What were the main reasons for this, given that regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 recognises that milk is 'one of the products for which an indication of origin is considered of particular interest'?

Was it legally possible for Greece, on the basis of Community legislation, to reject the act in question and not to abolish mandatory indications until final conclusions had been reached on mandatory labelling of the origin of dairy products?

Have any Commission reports been submitted to the European Parliament and the Council on this matter, as stated in Article 26(5) of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011? If so, which reports?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 November 2013)

Under existing rules ([1]), the indication of place of origin or provenance is mandatory where failure to give such a particular indication might mislead the consumer as to the true origin or provenance of the food.

In 2009, the Greek authorities notified to the Commission the draft measure mentioned by the Honourable Member. However, they did not provide any justification allowing to conclude that the introduction, as a general rule, of the mandatory origin labelling for the raw material (milk) was in accordance with Directive 2000/13/EC. Despite a negative Commission Decision ([2]), the Greek authorities adopted the measure. The Commission had accordingly launched pre-infringement proceedings against Greece, given the incompatibility with Directive 2000/13/EC. In that context, it is the Commission's understanding that Greece has now proceeded to the abolition of this measure. Where a Member State does not comply with Union law, the Commission, as the guardian of the Treaties, would need to consider launching infringement proceedings.

([1]) Article 3(1)(8) of Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 March 2000 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs, OJ L 109, 6.5.2000, p. 29. This directive remains applicable until 12 December 2014.

([2]) Commission Decision 2010/147/EU of 8 March 2010 concerning the draft Decree from Greece on the display of information of all manner of dairy products indicating the country of origin of the raw material (milk) used for the manufacture and sale of such products to the final consumer, and the obligations of retail sellers on how to display dairy products at points of sales within their stores, OJ L 58, 9.3.2010, p. 20.

Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and the Council on the provision of food information to consumers ([3]) requires the Commission to submit reports to the European Parliament and the Council exploring the possibility to extend mandatory origin labelling with respect to milk and milk used as an ingredient in dairy products by 13 December 2014, addressing, amongst others, the need for the consumer to be informed and the feasibility of providing the mandatory origin labelling. Depending on the outcome of the reports, the Commission may submit proposals to modify the relevant Union provisions.

([3]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18. It repeals and replaces Directive 2000/13/C as of 13 December 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010815/13
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Stray animal disposal practices in Romania

I have been contacted by numerous London constituents with regard to the alleged Romanian policy concerning the extermination of Romania's stray dogs, and I understand the large numbers of strays is a significant problem in that country.

Can the Commission confirm whether it has any jurisdiction in the disposal of stray animals under the animal welfare provisions of the EU *acquis* and, if so, can it intervene in any way to ensure that, if this policy is to be implemented, it is done in the most humanely way possible in Romania or in any other Member State for that matter?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(6 November 2013)

The Commission would like to refer to its reply to questions E-007161/2011, E-009002/2011 and E-002062/2012 ([1]) which addresses the issue of stray dogs and dog population management.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010816/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Charles Tannock (ECR) e Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(24 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Uccisione di Sushmita Banerjee

L'uccisione in Afghanistan di Sushmita Banerjee, prominente attivista per i diritti delle donne, desta grande preoccupazione e rappresenta una tragedia personale per gli amici e la famiglia della donna. Il gruppo talebano dissidente *Suicide Group of the Islamic Movement of Afghanistan* ha rivendicato la responsabilità dell'omicidio, indicandone le ragioni sul sito di notizie americano *The Daily Beast*.

Banerjee, cittadina indiana sposata con un uomo di affari afghano, ha trascorso diversi anni in Afghanistan vivendo con il marito sotto il regime talebano. Fuggita dal matrimonio e tornata in India, Banerjee diviene una nota promotrice dei diritti delle donne e una famosa autrice: nel suo primo libro racconta la situazione vissuta in Afghanistan.

La sua morte è avvenuta poco dopo il ritorno della donna in Afghanistan quest'anno. L'omicidio, perpetrato da un gruppo terrorista collegato ai talebani, è stato paragonato al tentativo di assassinio di Malala Yousafzai, in cui la ragazza ha quasi perso la vita.

1. Quali provvedimenti intende adottare l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente a nome dell'UE per proteggere i diritti delle donne in Afghanistan, alla luce delle continue minacce dei talebani contro le attiviste donne?

2. Quali misure intende adottare l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente per proteggere donne come Sushmita Banerjee e le altre centinaia di donne che stanno ora alzando la voce contro le restrizioni dei loro diritti, pur sapendo di correre dei rischi?

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

L'AR/VP è a conoscenza dell'uccisione di Sushmita Banerjee, un ennesimo attacco a donne che rivestono cariche pubbliche o ad attiviste per i diritti umani in Afghanistan. Il rafforzamento dei diritti politici, economici e sociali delle donne richiede un cambiamento culturale. Sebbene la fine del conflitto sia indispensabile per il conseguimento di tale obiettivo, l'UE ha concentrato l'attenzione sull'attuazione dei quadri esistenti, come ad esempio la legge sulla lotta contro la violenza nei confronti delle donne (legge EWAV) e il piano d'azione nazionale per le donne, oltre che sul rafforzamento della polizia civile e dello Stato di diritto in generale. L'AR/VP ha sempre sostenuto la necessità di riformare radicalmente il sistema giudiziario.

L'UE finanzia inoltre un'ampia gamma di progetti e attività di sensibilizzazione per garantire i diritti delle donne afghane, tra cui rientrano l'assistenza legale, la consulenza e la mediazione per donne e ragazze vittime di violenza domestica, il sostegno alle organizzazioni della società civile e alle comunità locali a livello provinciale nell'attuazione della legge EWAV e della risoluzione 1325 del Consiglio di sicurezza delle Nazioni Unite e il finanziamento di attività di comunicazione in 15 province.

La missione di polizia dell'UE (EUPOL Afghanistan) ha appoggiato l'unità di supporto familiare del Ministero dell'interno, l'unità competente per la violenza contro le donne dell'Ufficio del procuratore generale e altri enti interessati attraverso corsi di formazione in tecniche di indagine penale, tecniche di interrogatorio rispettose delle vittime e conduzione di esami medico-legali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010816/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Charles Tannock (ECR) and Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Murder of Sushmita Banerjee

The murder of Sushmita Banerjee, the prominent women's right activist, in Afghanistan is an incident of great concern and a personal tragedy for her friends and family. The Taliban breakaway group, Suicide Group of the Islamic Movement of Afghanistan, has claimed responsibility for the murder and outlined its reasons in the American publication, *The Daily Beast*.

An Indian national, Banerjee married an Afghan businessman and spent a number of years living with him under the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. After fleeing the marriage and escaping back to India, Banerjee rose to fame as a promoter of women's rights and as an author — her first book details the conditions she experienced in Afghanistan.

Her death comes just a short time after her return to Afghanistan earlier this year. Her murder by a terrorist group with links to the Taliban has been likened to the assassination attempt on Malala Yousafzai, which very nearly killed her.

1. What action is the Vice-President/High Representative taking on behalf of the EU to protect the rights of women in Afghanistan in the light of the continued threats from the Taliban towards women activists?

2. What is the VP/HR doing to protect women like Sushmita Banerjee and the hundreds of others who are now speaking out against the restrictions on their rights, despite knowing that they are putting themselves at risk?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the murder of Sushmita Banerjee, another tragic case among many attacks on women holding public office and on human rights activists in Afghanistan. Cultural change is necessary to improve women's political, economic and social rights. While an end to the conflict is indispensable for this, the EU has focused on the implementation of existing frameworks, such as the Elimination of Violence Against Women Law and the National Action Plan for Women, and on the strengthening of civilian policing and the rule of law generally. The HR/VP has consistently advocated a far-going reform of the judicial system.

The EU also funds a wide range of projects and awareness raising actities to support the rights of Afghan women, such as the provision of legal support, counselling and mediation for women and girls affected by family violence; enabling civil society organisations and local communities at provincial level to follow up on the EVAW Law and UNSCR 1325; and the funding of media activities in the field in 15 provinces.

The EU police mission, EUPOL AFGHANISTAN, has supported the Ministry of the Interior's Family Response Units, the Attorney General's Office Violence against Women Unit and other relevant actors through training in criminal investigation techniques, victim-sensitive interviewing and medical forensic examination.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-010818/13
till kommissionen
Cecilia Wikström (ALDE)
(24 september 2013)

Angående: Avslöjanden om den svenska polisens olagliga registrering av romer

Det har avslöjats att den svenska polisen har ett dataregister över romer som bor i Sverige. Registret innehåller 4 029 namn och syftar till att beskriva familjerelationer. De flesta som registrerats har inte tidigare dömts för något brott. I registret finns också namn på omkring 1 000 barn, som registrerats endast för att de har romska föräldrar. Det finns 52 tvååringar i registret.

Enligt svensk lagstiftning är det olagligt att upprätta register baserade på etnicitet. Det finns också anledning att tro att ett sådant register strider mot EU-stadgan om de grundläggande rättigheterna (artikel 3 om människans rätt till integritet, artikel 7 om respekt för privatlivet och familjelivet, artikel 8 om skydd av personuppgifter, artikel 21 om icke-diskriminering och artikel 24 om barnets rättigheter) och mot fördraget om Europeiska unionen, artiklarna 2, 6 och 7.

Kommer kommissionen att övervaka situationen i Sverige beträffande polisens register över romer?

Kan och kommer kommissionen att inleda en egen utredning för att fastställa huruvida registret strider mot EU:s lagstiftning och grundläggande rättigheter?

Kommer kommissionen att vidta åtgärder om utredningen visar att den svenska polisen bryter mot fördraget och EU-stadgan om de grundläggande rättigheterna?

Svar från Viviane Reding på kommissionens vägnar
(25 november 2013)

Rapporteringar i svensk press antyder att register över romer, däribland många minderåriga, har upprättas av den svenska polisen för ändamål som inte enbart har samband med brottslig verksamhet.

Kommissionen har fått utförligare information från den nationella romska kontaktpunkten i Sverige som bekräftar att justitie- och näringsdepartementen har ett nära samarbete med flera myndigheter som håller på att inleda utredningar kring detta.

Enligt den information som finns tillgänglig innefattar registren behandling av personuppgifter. Behandling av personuppgifter som utförs av behöriga statliga myndigheter inom straffrättens område omfattas inte av dataskyddsdirektivet ([1]).

När det gäller behandling av personuppgifter för ändamål som inte berör straffrätten, utan att det påverkar kommissionens roll som fördragens väktare, ingår övervakningen och genomförandet av dataskyddslagstiftningen inom behörighetsområdet för berörda tillsynsmyndigheter och domstolar som arbetar med dataskydd.

Kommissionen kommer att fortsätta att övervaka situationen, särskilt när det gäller eventuella åtgärder som behöriga svenska myndigheter vidtar för att säkerställa att dataskyddsreglerna efterföljs.

([1]) Europaparlamentets och rådets direktiv 95/46/EG av den 24 oktober 1995 om skydd för enskilda personer med avseende på behandling av personuppgifter och om det fria flödet av sådana uppgifter (EGT L 281, 23.11.1995, s. 31–50).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010818/13
to the Commission
Cecilia Wikström (ALDE)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Swedish police revealed to have illegal data register of Roma people

It has been revealed that the Swedish police has a data register over Roma people living in Sweden. The register contains 4 029 names and aims at identifying family relations. Most people on the list have not been convicted of any crime. The list also contains names of around 1 000 children for the sole reason that they have Roma parents. There are 52 two-year olds in the register.

According to Swedish law it is illegal to create a register based on ethnicity. There is also reason to believe such a register is in breach of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (Article 3 on right to the integrity of the person, Article 7 on respect for private and family life, Article 8 on protection of personal data, Article 21 on non-discrimination and Article 24 on the rights of the child), as well as the Treaty on European Union, Articles 2, 6 and 7.

Will the Commission monitor the situation in Sweden regarding the police register of Roma people?

Could, and will, the Commission launch its own investigation to find out if the register is in breach of EC law and fundamental rights?

If investigations prove that the Swedish police is in breach of the Treaty and of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, will the Commission take action?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(25 November 2013)

Some information reported by the press suggests that registers of Roma people, including many minors, have been set up by the Swedish police for purposes that were not only related to criminal activities.

The Commission received more information from the National Roma Contact Point in Sweden, confirming that the Ministries of Justice and Employment are working closely with several authorities who are initiating investigations about this case.

According to the available information, the register involves the processing of personal data. Processing of personal data by competent State authorities in areas of criminal law does not fall within the scope of the Data Protection Directive ([1]).

With regard to the processing of personal data for purposes other than those which concern criminal law, without prejudice to the competence of the Commission as guardian of the Treaties, the supervision and enforcement of data protection legislation falls within the competence of the data protection supervisory authorities and courts.

The Commission will continue to monitor the situation in particular with regard to any steps that might be taken by the competent Swedish authorities to ensure compliance with the data protection rules.

([1]) Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, OJ L 281, 23.11.1995, p. 31-50.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010819/13
do Komisji
Paweł Zalewski (PPE)
(24 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Ewentualne wyłączenie z trzeciego pakietu energetycznego

Mając na uwadze, że grupa robocza prowadząca dyskusję na temat warunków eksploatacji Gazociągu Północnego (grupa ta powstała w grudniu 2012 r. przy współudziale przedstawicieli Komisji) zakończyła już pracę i sporządziła dokument zawierający zalecenia, pragnę zapytać, czy prawdą jest, że gazociąg OPAL stanowiący część projektu Nord Stream ma zostać wyłączony z trzeciego pakietu energetycznego.

Jeżeli tak, na jakiej podstawie podjęto taką decyzję (zwłaszcza że celem trzeciego pakietu jest ochrona UE przed praktykami monopolistycznymi)?

Jeżeli nie, czy Komisja może ujawnić najważniejsze wnioski wspomnianej wyżej grupy roboczej oraz czy może poinformować, kiedy mają się zakończyć rozmowy dotyczące zasad eksploatacji gazociągu OPAL oraz kiedy zostaną przedstawione ich wyniki?

Czy w tym kontekście Komisja bierze pod uwagę jakiekolwiek wyjątki w związku z regulacjami zawartymi w trzecim pakiecie lub czy rozważa możliwość wyłączenia zeń jakiejkolwiek części Gazociągu Północnego lub Południowego?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Günthera Oettingera w imieniu Komisji
(14 listopada 2013 r.)

1) Nie, gazociąg OPAL funkcjonuje i będzie funkcjonował zgodnie z przepisami UE. Ramy prawne regulujące funkcjonowanie gazociągu OPAL podlegają decyzji o zwolnieniu wydanej przez niemiecki organ regulacji energetyki (Bundesnetzagentur) w 2009 r.

2) Przegląd obowiązującej decyzji o zwolnieniu jest obecnie przedmiotem procedury prawnej niemieckiego organu regulacji energetyki na podstawie zaleceń grupy roboczej OPAL. Jej uprawnienia były ograniczone do analizy rozwiązań technicznych związanych z funkcjonowaniem gazociągu OPAL z należytym uwzględnieniem ram prawnych mających zastosowanie w tym zakresie. Grupa robocza przedstawiła swoje zalecenia w połowie września.

3) Jeśli ta procedura doprowadzi do zmiany decyzji o zwolnieniu z 2009 r., to będzie ona podlegała zatwierdzeniu przez Komisję zgodnie z art. 36 dyrektywy w sprawie gazu ([1]). Jeśli i kiedy Komisja zostanie powiadomiona przez niemiecki organ regulacji energetyki o wyniku procedury, informacja ta zostanie opublikowana na stronie internetowej Komisji.

4) Wszystkie gazociągi na terenie UE muszą funkcjonować zgodnie z zasadami ustanowionymi w trzecim pakiecie. Aby umożliwić szczególnie ryzykowne i realizowane poza ramami regulacyjnymi inwestycje w infrastrukturę energetyczną, wykonawcy projektów mogą złożyć wniosek o zwolnienie z obowiązku przestrzegania niektórych przepisów, w tym zasad dostępu stron trzecich, regulowanych taryf i rozdziału własnościowego. Artykuł 36 ust. 1 dyrektywy w sprawie gazu określa warunki, jakie muszą spełniać zwalniane z tych zasad projekty. Gazociągi OPAL i Gazela są objęte decyzjami o zwolnieniu. Jeśli chodzi o projekt South Stream, dotychczas nie złożono wniosku o zwolnienie.

([1]) Dyrektywa Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady 2009/73/WE z dnia 13 lipca 2009 r. dotycząca wspólnych zasad rynku wewnętrznego gazu ziemnego i uchylająca dyrektywę 2003/55/WE (Dz.U. L 211 z 14.08.2009).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010819/13
to the Commission
Paweł Zalewski (PPE)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Possible exclusion from the Third Energy Package

Since the Working Group discussing the Nord Stream exploitation conditions (formed in December 2012 with the participation of representatives of the Commission) has already finished its work and drafted a recommendation paper, I would like to ask if it is true that the OPAL part of Nord Stream is supposed to be excluded from the Third Energy Package?

If so, what is the basis for such a decision (taking into consideration that the purpose of the Third Package has been to defend the EU from monopoly practices)?

If not, can the Commission reveal the key conclusions of the aforementioned Working Group, and can it say when the talks on the OPAL exploitation principles are supposed to be concluded and their effects presented?

In this context, is the Commission considering any exceptions to / exclusions from the Third Package regulations for any part of the Nord Stream or South Stream?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(14 November 2013)

1) No, the OPAL pipeline is and will remain to be operated in line with EC law. The legal framework for the operation of the OPAL pipeline is governed by an exemption decision issued by the German energy regulator (Bundesnetzagentur) in 2009.

2) The review of the existing exemption decision is currently subject to a legal procedure of the German regulator, based on the recommendations of the OPAL working group. Its mandate was limited to exploring technical solutions regarding operation of the OPAL pipeline with due respect to the applicable legal framework. The Working Group delivered its recommendations in mid-September.

3) If this procedure leads to a change of the 2009 exemption decision, it will be subject to approval by the Commission under Article 36 of the Gas Directive ([1]). If and when the Commission receives a notification from the German regulator, the information will be published on the Commission's website.

4) All the pipelines on the EU territory have to comply with the Third Package rules. To allow investments in energy infrastructure that are particularly risky and that would not be built under the regulatory framework, project developers can request exemptions from certain rules, including regulated third party access, regulated tariffs and ownership unbundling. Article 36.1 of the Gas Directive defines the conditions that such exempted projects need to meet. The OPAL and Gazelle pipelines are covered by exemption decisions. As regards South Stream, no exemption request has been submitted so far.

([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, OJ L 211, 14.8.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010820/13
to the Commission
Phil Prendergast (S&D)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: EU funding for international youth initiatives across Member States

Could the Commission indicate which EU funding opportunities are available for youth-led, cross-border initiatives such as the upcoming first international forum of the European Youth Parliament, to be held in Cork, Ireland, in November, which will focus on technology and innovation?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(22 November 2013)

In general, cross-border youth initiatives may be supported by the European programme for young people: these activities are covered by the current Youth in Action programme (2007-2013), but as of 2014 it will be possible for them to be funded by the Erasmus+ programme.

The conditions for submitting projects under the Erasmus+ programme, particularly in relation to submission deadlines, are currently being drawn up. The conditions which applied under the Youth in Action programme are described in the Guide for that programme, which may be consulted at the following address:
http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/programme-guide_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010821/13
to the Commission
Phil Prendergast (S&D)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Shannon water abstraction scale

Given the sheer scale of the Dublin Water Supply Project — Dublin Region and its potential environmental impact on the Shannon wetlands, which includes four special areas of conservation as defined under Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, and five special protection areas as defined under Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds, could the Commission comment on the appropriateness of following up on plans underpinned by population growth, business expansion and daily water demand projections made prior to the current economic recession?

Question for written answer E-010822/13
to the Commission
Phil Prendergast (S&D)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Shannon water abstraction and supply leakage

The Shannon River Basin Management Plan, developed to implement Directive 2000/60/EC, establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, recommends that, in order to lessen abstraction pressures on lake ecology, measures to reduce abstraction demand be put in place as far as possible, including through water economy measures such as leakage reduction, relocation by considering alternative sources and remediation measures such as additional storage.

In the context of a leakage rate of 30% in the Dublin water supply system, amounting to a daily loss of more than 175 million litres of water, compounded by a daily customer-side leakage of at least 37 million litres per day, roughly equating to the intended abstraction from the River Shannon in Ireland, could the Commission indicate whether it considers the aforementioned measures to have been adequately explored in the Dublin Water Supply Project — Dublin Region?

Does the Commission consider the Dublin Water Supply Project — Dublin Region to be in compliance with the aforementioned directive?

Question for written answer E-010823/13
to the Commission
Phil Prendergast (S&D)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Shannon water abstraction and alternatives

In the context of a leakage rate of 30% in the Dublin water supply system, amounting to a daily loss of more than 175 million litres of water, compounded by a daily customer-side leakage of at least 37 million litres per day, roughly equating to the intended abstraction from the River Shannon in Ireland, could the Commission indicate whether it considers the Dublin Water Supply Project — Dublin Region to be in compliance with Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, particularly as regards the full exploration of alternatives to water abstraction from the River Shannon, pursuant to Article 5, paragraph 3(d)?

Could the Commission further clarify whether it deems that an appropriate assessment, pursuant to Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, has been conducted on all available options?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(15 November 2013)

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) ([1]) does not make explicit requirements on the water quantity measures which Member States need to apply to achieve good status. In 2007, the Commission prepared a communication on water scarcity and droughts in the European Union ([2]), which proposed prioritising water efficiency over increased water supply. A Commission review of this policy in 2012 ([3]) identified measures which could improve water management in Europe. These include developing a framework to assess the sustainable levels of leakage in water utilities ([4]). This and other measures of relevance to reducing leakages ([5]) are currently being implemented jointly with Member States and stakeholders.

It is only in the context of an appropriate assessment determining that a development will affect the integrity of a Natura 2000 site that the other procedural safeguards, set out in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive ([6]), need to be applied. These include an evaluation of alternative solutions and a demonstration of imperative reasons of overriding public interest. It is for the competent authorities to determine the relevant periods for such evaluations and demonstrate their pertinence. With regard to the EIA Directive ([7]), this does not require a full exploration of alternatives but an outline of the main alternatives studied by the developer. As indicated in its response to Written Question E-003700/2013 ([8]) the Commission has not received any evidence to show that the Irish authorities are not fully aware of or complying with these legal obligations.

([1]) OJ L 327 of 22.12.2000.
([2]) COM(2007) 414 final.
([3]) COM(2012) 673 final.
([4]) i.e. the leakage levels where it would cost more (in operational, environmental and social terms) to reduce leakage further compared to other means of making the same water available.
([5]) better implementation of incentive and transparent water pricing, development of water efficiency targets for water stressed areas, establishing a level playing field for water re-use across the EU and improving irrigation efficiency.
([6]) Council Directive 92/43//EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([7]) Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, OJ L 26/1, 28.1.2012.
([8]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010824/13
to the Commission
Phil Prendergast (S&D)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Gelmini reform and discrimination against foreign-language teachers in Italy

Further to the Commission's reply to Written Question E-004135/2013 on 14 June 2013, could the Commission indicate whether the Italian authorities replied to its request for further clarification by 25 June for the purposes of assessing the compatibility with EC law and jurisprudence of the legislation brought in by the 'Gelmini reform'?

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

The Italian authorities have replied to the request for information to which the Honorable Member refers. As for the Commission's assessment of the Gelmini reform, please refer to the reply to Written Question E-11051/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010825/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Air pollution in Bath

It has been brought to my attention that air pollution (including emissions of nitrogen dioxide) in Bath has been above acceptable EU levels for some time.

Current statistics give a figure of over 400 cars per hour, including coaches, in the Circus area.

There is a strong concern that the issue of air quality in Bath, specifically along the A4, is not being dealt with adequately by the UK Government at Member State level.

Is the Commission in contact with the UK Government regarding this issue and has any commitment been made to address it?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 November 2013)

In accordance with Directive 2008/50/EC ([1]), Member States have to ensure that the limit values for the protection of human health are complied with throughout their zones and agglomerations, subject to the exceptions laid down in Article 22 (postponement of attainment deadlines). The limit values for nitrogen dioxide are binding since 1 January 2010 and the exceptions are subject to conditions, which are assessed by the Commission under the procedure laid down in the directive.

As regards the limit values for nitrogen dioxide, the United Kingdom Government notified its intention to postpone the deadline in a number of zones including Bath (which is included in zone 0030, South-East). By decision of 25 June 2012, the Commission raised objections as regards certain zones including the one of Bath, because the conditions for a postponement were not met. As a result, the UK authorities are under the obligation to ensure that the limit values are complied with in Bath.

([1]) OJ L152, 11/06/2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010826/13
to the Commission
Sajjad Karim (ECR)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Portuguese coastal property law

It has been brought to my attention that the Portuguese Government plans retroactively to repossess private properties situated along its coastline and return ownership to the state.

The applicable ruling, under Law No 54/2005, dates back to 1864 and includes all properties on land located within 50 metres from the sea or within 30 metres of a riverbank. The owners of property within these 'Domínio Público Hídrico' areas must now prove, before 1 January 2014, that their property has been in private ownership for at least 150 years.

Property owners, which include a number of my constituents, say that it is extremely difficult to demonstrate ownership of the land in question as records dating back over a century are scarce.

I would therefore like to ask the Commission whether it is aware of the enforcement of this law by the Portuguese Government and whether it feels that this law is compatible with the right to private property, as laid down in Article 17 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights?

In addition, and given that the Portuguese government's actions appear to be in contravention of EC laws governing legal certainty and the prohibition of retroactive laws, I would ask the Commission what action it could take to prevent the enforcement of this law which could adversely affect thousands of EU citizens?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(21 November 2013)

As a matter of principle, the Commission's powers regarding acts and omissions by Member States are limited to overseeing the application of Union law, under the control of the Court of Justice. Regarding more particularly the fundamental rights issues raised, the Commission recalls that, according to Article 51 (1) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, the provisions of the Charter are addressed to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law.

On the basis of the information provided by the Honourable Member, it does not appear that the Member State concerned did act in the course of implementation of Union law. In particular, according to Article 345 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the provisions of the Treaty shall in no way prejudice the rules in Member States governing the system of property ownership.

In the matter referred to by the Honourable Member, it would thus appear that it is for the concerned Member State to ensure that its obligations regarding fundamental rights — as resulting from international agreements and from their internal legislation — are respected. However, in order to allow for a thorough assessment of the details of the case, the property owners concerned might consider filing a complaint to the European Commission services.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010827/13
à la Commission
Philippe de Villiers (EFD)
(24 septembre 2013)

Objet: Instrument d'aide de préadhésion (IAP) — Bosnie-Herzégovine

L'instrument d'aide de préadhésion (IAP) destiné à la Bosnie-Herzégovine, pays candidat potentiel appartenant aux Balkans occidentaux, aurait dû s'élever à 108,8 millions d'euros pour 2013, mais a été modifié.

En effet, 5 millions d'euros destinés aux agriculteurs ont été purement et simplement annulés. 9 millions d'euros ont été suspendus et restent conditionnés au choix du niveau de gouvernement qui sera en charge de la gestion des fonds européens.

1. Dans ce cas, comment la Commission a-t-elle pu s'assurer que les 94,8 millions d'euros déjà distribués ont été utilisés par le niveau de gouvernement adéquat et dépensés correctement, sans risque de corruption?

2. La situation de l'agriculture est catastrophique en Bosnie-Herzégovine parce qu'elle ne peut entrer dans une compétition loyale avec les importations à bas coûts de l'Union européenne. Dans ce cas, dans quelle mesure les fonds européens ont-ils eu un impact positif sur le développement régional et la compétitivité de l'agriculture du pays?

Réponse donnée par M. Füle au nom de la Commission
(22 novembre 2013)

Sur les 108,8 millions d'euros de fonds IAP alloués à titre indicatif à la Bosnie-Herzégovine pour 2013, 16,4 millions d'euros ont déjà été engagés dans le cadre du programme multi bénéficiaires en faveur des réfugiés et des personnes déplacées à l'intérieur du pays, de l'éducation et de la société civile et 5,3 millions d'euros ont été engagés pour les programmes de coopération transfrontalière.

Le montant de 5,1 millions d'euros prévu pour des projets dans les domaines de l'agriculture et du développement rural s'inscrivait dans le cadre des programmes de l'instrument d'aide de préadhésion pour 2008 et 2010. Ces projets ont été annulés lors de la dernière réunion du comité de suivi de l'IAP, étant donné qu'il n'était pas possible d'engager ces fonds dans le respect des règlements financiers de l'Union européenne.

La mise en œuvre de projets de l'IAP en Bosnie-Herzégovine est gérée par la délégation de l'UE, qui signe les contrats et effectue les paiements.

L'UE a aidé la Bosnie-Herzégovine à aligner ses politiques en matière d'agriculture et de développement rural sur les exigences de l'UE. Elle s'est aussi attachée à améliorer les systèmes d'information agricole et a financé des analyses sectorielles dans les secteurs de la viande, des produits laitiers, des fruits et des légumes, notamment de la filière vitivinicole, de la sylviculture, de l'aquaculture et de la pêche. Ces mesures sont une contribution importante à l'élaboration d'un cadre stratégique de développement rural fondé sur des données probantes en Bosnie-Herzégovine.

L'UE a également fourni une aide substantielle en vue de la mise en place d'un système de sécurité des denrées alimentaires et des aliments pour animaux fonctionnel et conforme aux normes européennes, dans la perspective d'une augmentation des échanges de produits agricoles avec l'UE. Cette aide comprend l'assistance technique et des investissements dans des laboratoires et dans l'organisation d'inspections, des programmes de formation pour les entreprises du secteur agroalimentaire concernant l'application des normes d'hygiène alimentaire, la mise en œuvre de mesures de surveillance et d'éradication des maladies animales et une assistance technique pour améliorer la gestion des sous-produits animaux.

De plus amples informations à propos de l'aide apportée par l'UE à la Bosnie-Herzégovine au titre de l'IAP sont disponibles sur le site web de la Commission ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/instruments/funding-by-country/bosnia-herzegovina/index_fr.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010827/13
to the Commission
Philippe de Villiers (EFD)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) — Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) allocated to Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is a potential candidate country in the western Balkans, should have amounted to EUR 108.8 million for 2013, but was modified.

Indeed, EUR 5 million earmarked for farmers were simply cancelled. Funds of EUR 9 million have been suspended and still depend on a choice being made over which level of government is to manage EU funds.

1. How, in this case, was the Commission able to make sure that the EUR 94.8 million already allocated were used by the appropriate level of government and spent properly, without the possibility of corruption?

2. The situation of Bosnia and Herzegovina's agricultural sector is disastrous because it cannot compete fairly against cheap EU imports. In this case, to what extent has EU funding had a positive impact on the country's regional development and agricultural competitiveness?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(22 November 2013)

Of the EUR 108.8 million IPA funds indicatively foreseen for BiH ([1]) for 2013, EUR 16.4 million have already been committed via the Multi-Beneficiary Programme to support refugees and internally displaced people, education and civil society; EUR 5.3 million have been committed for Cross-Border Cooperation Programmes.

The EUR 5.1 million for agriculture and rural development projects were part of the IPA 2008 and IPA 2010 programmes. These projects were cancelled at the last IPA Monitoring Committee since it was impossible to commit these funds in a manner that is compatible with the EU Financial Regulations.

The implementation of IPA projects in BiH is managed by the EU Delegation which signs contracts and makes payments.

The EU has supported BiH to align its agriculture and rural development policies with EU requirements. It also focused on improvements of agriculture information systems and financed sector reviews in the areas of meat, dairy, fruits and vegetables including wine, forestry and aquaculture/fishery. These measures are an important contribution to the development of an evidence-based rural development strategic framework in BiH.

The EU has also provided substantial assistance to BiH in building a functioning EU-compliant food and feed safety system in view of potentially increased trade in agricultural products with the EU. This support includes technical assistance and investments in laboratories and inspections, training programmes for food businesses in implementation of food hygiene standards, implementation of animal disease control and eradication measures, and technical assistance to improve management of animal by-products.

Details on EU assistance to BiH under the IPA can be found on the Commission website ([2]).

([1]) Bosnia and Herzegovina.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/instruments/funding-by-country/bosnia-herzegovina/index_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010828/13
à la Commission
Philippe de Villiers (EFD)
(24 septembre 2013)

Objet: Production textile au Bangladesh — Conditions de travail

Le Bangladesh est le deuxième exportateur de vêtements au monde en raison de la modicité des salaires et d'une main-d'œuvre abondante. Ce secteur-clé de l'économie, qui génère 29 milliards de dollars par an, représentait l'an dernier 80 % des exportations du pays.

Les États membres importent beaucoup de produits fabriqués au Bangladesh dans des conditions parfois dramatiques, comme nous l'avons vu lors de l'effondrement d'une usine textile près de Dacca, le 24 avril 2013. Cette catastrophe a fait 1 129 morts et près de 2 500 blessés; les ouvriers des «ateliers de la misère» ont débrayé. Ce pays est dans une situation de pauvreté extrême: son indice de développement humain le place au 140e rang. Les ouvriers survivants ont dû reprendre leur travail sans que les conditions ne se soient réellement améliorées.

La Commission dispose-t-elle de données quant aux dangers encourus par l'ensemble des travailleurs bangladais de l'industrie textile et comment réagit-elle devant le quasi-esclavage créé dans bien des régions du monde par la mondialisation sauvage?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(18 novembre 2013)

L'UE travaille en étroite collaboration avec l'Organisation internationale du travail (OIT) et ses partenaires afin de promouvoir l'Agenda pour le travail décent dans le monde entier.

Les principaux défis auxquels sont confrontés les travailleurs du secteur de la confection au Bangladesh ont trait aux normes du travail et à la santé et la sécurité au travail, notamment la sécurité des usines. Pour s'attaquer à ces défis, les représentants de la Commission, du gouvernement du Bangladesh et de l'OIT ont lancé, en juillet de cette année, l'initiative conjointe «Restons engagés: pacte de durabilité pour l'amélioration constante des droits du travail et de la sécurité des usines dans l'industrie de la confection et de la bonneterie au Bangladesh ([1])». Le pacte présente des engagements dans trois domaines: 1) le respect des droits du travail; 2) l'intégrité structurelle des bâtiments et la sécurité et la santé au travail; 3) le comportement responsable des entreprises.

La Commission ne dispose pas de données sur les conditions de santé et de sécurité dans les différentes usines de confection au Bangladesh. Ces données doivent être collectées par l'administration bangladaise à l'occasion d'inspections dans les usines. Le renforcement de ces inspections est également prévu par la convention sur la sécurité des bâtiments et la protection contre les incendies ainsi que par l'Alliance américaine pour la sécurité des travailleurs au Bangladesh. L'OIT coordonne actuellement les efforts consentis par toutes les parties prenantes dans ce domaine.

([1]) Voir: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/july/tradoc_151601.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010828/13
to the Commission
Philippe de Villiers (EFD)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Textile production in Bangladesh — Working conditions

Bangladesh is the world's second biggest exporter of clothing due to low wages and a labour-intensive approach. This key economic sector, which generates USD 29 billion annually, accounted for 80% of the country's exports last year.

Member States import many products manufactured in Bangladesh in sometimes horrendous conditions, as the collapse of the textile factory near Dacca on 24 April 2013 has shown us. This disaster killed 1 129 persons and injured almost 2 500, which led the workers of the 'workshops of misery' to go on strike. This country's situation is one of extreme poverty. It ranks 140th in the Human Development Index. The surviving workers were obliged to go back to work without any real improvements having been made to conditions.

Does the Commission have any data on the dangers to which all Bangladeshi textile industry workers are exposed and what is its reaction in relation to the quasi-slavery that has developed in many regions of the world because of unfettered globalisation?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(18 November 2013)

The EU works closely with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and with its partners to promote the decent work agenda world wide.

The key challenges faced by workers from the Ready-Made-Garment (RMG) sector in Bangladesh are related to labour standards and health and safety at work, including factory safety. In order to address them, the representatives of the Commission, the Government of Bangladesh and the ILO launched in July this year the joint initiative 'Staying engaged: A Sustainability Compact for continuous improvements in labour rights and factory safety in the Ready-Made Garment and Knitwear Industry in Bangladesh' ([1]). The Compact outlines commitments in three areas: 1) Respect for labour rights; 2) Structural integrity of buildings and occupational safety and health; and 3) Responsible business conduct.

The Commission does not have data on health and safety conditions in the individual RMG factories in Bangladesh. Such data would be collected by the Government of Bangladesh in the course of factory inspections. Strengthening factory inspections is also an element covered under the Accord on Fire and Building Safety and the US Alliance for Bangladesh Workers Safety. The ILO is coordinating efforts by all stakeholders in this area.

([1]) See: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/july/tradoc_151601.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010830/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(24 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Digestato da impianti di produzione di biogas, suo uso tal quale. Richiesta di valutare la necessità di registrare la sostanza ai sensi dell'articolo 6 del Regolamento (CE) n. 1907/2006

Con la legge di conversione 7 agosto 2012 — n. 134 del decreto-legge 22 giugno 2012, n. 83, recante: «Misure urgenti per la crescita del Paese», il digestato ottenuto in impianti aziendali o interaziendali dalla digestione anaerobica, eventualmente associata anche ad altri trattamenti di tipo fisico-meccanico, di effluenti di allevamento o residui di origine vegetale o residui delle trasformazioni o delle valorizzazioni delle produzioni vegetali effettuate dall'agro-industria, conferiti come sottoprodotti, anche se miscelati fra loro, e utilizzato ai fini agronomici, è considerato sottoprodotto.

Anche la Corte di Cassazione Penale, Terza sezione, con la sentenza n. 33588 del 31.8.2012, assimila, ai sensi del DM 7 aprile 2006 «Criteri e norme tecniche generali per la disciplina regionale dell'utilizzazione agronomica degli effluenti di allevamento, di cui all'articolo 38 del decreto legislativo 11 maggio 1999, n. 152», il digestato agli effluenti animali.

Anche se l'effluente zootecnico non rientra tra i rifiuti organici biodegradabili, secondo quanto riportato a pag. 5 del Libro verde sulla gestione dei rifiuti organici biodegradabili nell'Unione europea, COM(2008)0811, dicembre 2008, «salvo diversa indicazione, nel presente documento il termine "compost" indica sia il compost prodotto direttamente dai rifiuti organici biodegradabili sia il digestato sottoposto a compostaggio», intendendo con ciò che la prassi comune sia quella di inviare il digestato a impianti di compostaggio e non l'utilizzo tal quale.

Ai sensi dell'articolo 2, paragrafo 2, del regolamento REACH, le disposizioni del regolamento per sostanze, miscele ed articoli non sono applicabili ai rifiuti quali definiti nella direttiva 2006/12/CE, mentre sono esentate dalle sole disposizioni dei titoli II (registrazione delle sostanze), V (utilizzatori a valle) e VI (valutazione): a) le sostanze di cui all'allegato IV, b) le sostanze di cui all'allegato V.

L'allegato V del REACH, al punto 12, esclude dai suddetti obblighi il compost ed il biogas, ma in nessun punto compare il digestato.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione chiarire, ai sensi del diritto comunitario, se il digestato rientra tra le sostanze per le quali si applica l'articolo 6, «Obbligo generale di registrazione delle sostanze in quanto tali o in quanto componenti di miscele», del regolamento (CE) n. 1907/2006 (REACH)?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(13 dicembre 2013)

I digestati derivanti dalla produzione di biogas sono considerati «rifiuti prodotti» e rientrano pertanto nell'ambito di applicazione della normativa sui rifiuti. I digestati sono dunque esenti dagli obblighi di cui all'articolo 6 di REACH, in particolare quelli relativi alla registrazione. Si arriva a queste conclusione associando l'articolo 2, paragrafo 2, e l'articolo 3 del regolamento REACH. ([1]) L'articolo 3 contiene la definizione delle sostanze, delle miscele e degli articoli che rientrano nel campo d'applicazione del regolamento. L'articolo 2, paragrafo 2, elenca le sostanze alle quali il regolamento REACH non si applica: «*I rifiuti quali definiti nella direttiva 2006/12/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio non sono considerati né sostanze, né preparati, né articoli a norma dell'articolo 3 del presente regolamento*».

Il Centro comune di ricerca sta lavorando sui criteri volti a stabilire quando un rifiuto cessa di essere tale per i rifiuti biodegradabili sottoposti a trattamento biologico, e il digestato rientra in questa categoria di rifiuti. Questo lavoro preparatorio potrà portare in futuro all'elaborazione di un regolamento specifico che definirà le circostanze in cui un digestato cessa di essere un rifiuto e può essere considerato una sostanza che rientra nell'ambito di applicazione del regolamento REACH.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1907/2006 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio concernente la registrazione, la valutazione, l'autorizzazione e la restrizione delle sostanze chimiche (REACH), GU L 396, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010830/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Biogas plant digestate used neat: request to assess whether the substance should be registered under Article 6 of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006

Under Law No 134 of 7 August 2012 converting Decree-Law No 83 of 22 June 2012 introducing 'urgent measures for national growth', digestate from individually or jointly operated on-farm anaerobic digestion plants which is used for agricultural purposes is classed as a by-product. This also applies if the anaerobic digestion is combined with other physical or mechanical processing of livestock manure, crop residues or residues obtained by farms from the by-products of industrial crop processing and reuse, used alone or in combination.

In its judgment No 33588 of 31 August 2012, the Court of Cassation (Third Criminal Chamber) also equated digestate with livestock manure under the terms of the Ministerial Decree of 7 April 2006 on 'General criteria and technical standards for regional regulation of the use of the livestock manure for agronomic purposes, mentioned in Article 38 of Legislative Decree No 152 of 11 May 1999'.

Even though livestock manure is not classed as bio-waste, according to page 5 of the Green Paper 'On the management of bio-waste in the European Union', COM(2008) 0811, December 2008, 'if not stated otherwise, the term "compost" in this document refers both to compost directly produced from bio-waste as well as composted digestate'. This suggests that the usual practice is to send digestate to composting plants, as opposed to using it neat.

Under Article 2(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 (the REACH Regulation), the regulation's provisions on 'substances, preparations and articles' do not apply to waste as defined in Directive 2006/12/EC, whereas the substances mentioned in Annex IV and those mentioned in Annex V are only exempt from the provisions of Titles II (Registration of Substances), V (Downstream Users) and VI (Evaluation).

Annex V, point 12 of the REACH Regulation exempts compost and biogas from the abovementioned obligations; however there is no mention of digestate in the annex.

Under EC law, does Article 6 ('General obligation to register substances on their own or in preparations') of the REACH Regulation apply to digestate?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(13 December 2013)

Digestates originating from the production of biogas are considered generated waste and therefore fall within the scope of the waste legislation. Digestates are, consequently, exempt from the obligations set out in Article 6 of REACH; notably that of registration. This results from a combination of Articles Art 2(2) and 3 of the REACH Regulation ([1]). Article 3 contains the definition of the substances, mixtures and articles that fall within the scope of the regulation. Article 2 (2) lists the substances to which the REACH Regulation does not apply. It states that 'Waste as defined in Directive 2006/12/EC of the European Parliament and the Council is not a substance, mixture or article within the meaning of Article 3 of this regulation'.

The Joint Research Centre is currently working on End-of-Waste Criteria for Biodegradable Waste Subject to Biological Treatment, and this includes digestate. This preparatory work may lead in future to a specific regulation defining the circumstances under which digestate would cease to be waste and would be considered a substance falling under the scope of REACH.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and the Council concerning Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), OJ L 396, p. 1.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-010831/13
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2013 m. rugsėjo 24 d.)

Tema: Dėl Direktyvoje 2008/118/EB dėl bendros akcizų tvarkos nustatyto akcizais neapmokestintų prekių parduotuvių, veikiančių prie ES išorinių sienų, veiklos galiojimo laiko

Remiantis Direktyvos 2008/118/EB dėl bendros akcizų tvarkos, kuria panaikinama Direktyva 92/12/EEB, 14 straipsnio 4 punktu valstybėms narėms, kurių neapmokestintų prekių parduotuvės veikia kitose vietose nei oro ar jūrų uostai, sudaryta galimybė iki 2017 m. sausio 1 d. atleisti nuo akcizo mokesčio akcizais apmokestinamas prekes, kuriomis prekiaujama šiose parduotuvėse ir kurias asmeniniame bagaže išsiveža keliautojai, vykstantys į trečiąją teritoriją arba trečiąją valstybę. Direktyvoje nenumatyta galimybė pratęsti atleidimo nuo akcizo po nurodytos datos, t. y. po 2017 m. sausio 1 d.

Šios direktyvos nuostatos itin svarbios išorines sienas su trečiosiomis valstybėmis turinčioms valstybėms narėms. Minėtoji ekonominė veikla naudinga ir ES gamintojams, kurių prekėmis prekiaujama tokiose parduotuvėse. Be to, kuriamos darbo vietos ir užtikrinamos įplaukos į biudžetą.

Tokio pobūdžio ekonominė veikla turėtų būti reglamentuojama vienodomis sąlygomis, todėl norėčiau sužinoti, kodėl išimtis minėtojoje direktyvoje nustatyta tik parduotuvėms, esančioms prie ES išorinių sienų, tačiau nenustatytas oro ar jūrų uostuose veikiančių parduotuvių veiklos galiojimo laikas?

A. Šemetos atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. spalio 31 d.)

Tarybos direktyvos 2008/118/EB 14 straipsnyje teigiama, kad neapmokestinamų prekių parduotuvių tiekiamos akcizais apmokestinamos prekės gali būti atleistos nuo akcizo mokesčio tik tais atvejais, kai jas asmeniniame bagaže išveža keliautojai, vykstantys į trečiąją teritoriją arba trečiąją valstybę oru ar jūra. Dėl šios taisyklės valstybės narės susitarė vieningai, siekdamos išvengti slėpimo ir piktnaudžiavimo šioje srityje.

Kadangi sausuma keliaujama dažniau ir laisviau negu laivu ar lėktuvu, rizika, kad sausuma vykstantys asmenys nesilaikys akcizais ir importo mokesčiais neapmokestinamų prekių kvotų, yra daug didesnė, vadinasi, valstybių narių muitinėms tenkanti kontrolės našta taip pat yra daug sunkesnė.

Todėl pagal Direktyvą prekiauti akcizais neapmokestinamomis prekėmis prie sausumos sienų nėra leidžiama, kaip jau ir buvo daugumoje valstybių narių. Tačiau siekiant, kad prekyba galėtų prisitaikyti prie naujų aplinkybių, iki 2017 m. sausio 1 d nustatytas pereinamasis laikotarpis, per kurį valstybės narės, kuriose 2008 m. liepos 1 d. jau buvo neapmokestinamų prekių parduotuvių prie sausumos sienų, galėtų sudaryti sąlygas tokioms parduotuvėms tęsti veiklą pagal esamą tvarką.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010831/13
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: On the period of operation of tax-free shops on the EU's external borders set out in Directive 2008/118/EC concerning the general arrangements for excise duty

According to Article 14(4) of Directive 2008/118/EC concerning the general arrangements for excise duty and repealing Directive 92/12/EEC, Member States which have tax-free shops situated in places other than within an airport or port may exempt from excise duty excise goods supplied by such shops and carried away in the personal luggage of travellers to a third territory or a third country. The directive does not provide for the possibility of extending the period of exemption from excise duty, i.e. beyond 1 January 2017.

The provisions of this directive are particularly important for Member States which have external borders with third countries. The aforementioned economic activity also benefits EU manufacturers whose goods are sold in such shops. Moreover, jobs are created and revenue is ensured.

Such economic activity should be governed by uniform conditions, and I would therefore like to know why the exception in the abovementioned Directive applies only to shops on the EU's external borders, but no limit is established for the exemption for shops in airports or ports?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(31 October 2013)

Article 14 of Council Directive 2008/118/EC states that excise goods supplied by tax-free shops may be exempted from the payment of excise duty only when they are carried away in the personal luggage of travellers to a third territory or to a third country taking a flight or a sea-crossing. This rule was agreed by the unanimity of the Member States with a view to avoiding evasion and abuse in this area.

Since persons travel more frequently and more freely over land as compared to persons travelling by boat or aircraft, the risk of non-respect of the duty and tax free import allowances by the traveller and consequently the control burden for Member State customs authorities is substantially higher in the case of travel over land.

Therefore under the directive excise duty-free sales at land borders are not allowed, as was already the case in most Member States. However, in order for the trade to adapt to the new situation a transitional period until 1 January 2017 has been provided for during which Member States which already had tax-free shops at land borders on 1 July 2008 may allow such shops to continue to operate under the existing arrangements.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010832/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(24 september 2013)

Betreft: „Turkije zal nooit toetreden"

Egemen Bağış, de Turkse minister van Europese Zaken en toetredingsonderhandelaar, heeft gezegd: „Turkije zal waarschijnlijk nooit toetreden tot de Europese Unie door vooroordelen en een negatieve houding bij bestaande leden" ([1]). Turkije ziet meer in een constructie zoals Noorwegen met de EU heeft: geen lid van de EU, maar wel toegang tot de Europese markt.

De PVV verzoekt de Commissie

— Bağış gelijk te geven: inderdaad, Turkije zal waarschijnlijk nooit toetreden tot de Europese Unie.

— Bağış ongelijk te geven: nee, er is geen sprake van vooroordelen, maar van gegronde redenen.

— Bağış gelijk te geven: klopt, EU-lidstaten staan negatief tegenover een Turks lidmaatschap, en wel vanwege de ondemocratische, on-Europese, dictatoriale, islamiserende, arrogante houding van Turkije.

— de toetredingsonderhandelingen definitief te beëindigen.

— de EU-geldstromen naar Turkije stop te zetten en alle in het kader van de onderhandelingen verstrekte gelden terug te vorderen.

— Turkije verder veel succes te wensen.

Is de Commissie daartoe bereid? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(19 november 2013)

De EU en Turkije blijven zich ten volle inzetten in de toetredingsonderhandelingen op basis van het onderhandelingskader van 2005 en zoals onlangs opnieuw is bevestigd in het besluit van de Raad om een nieuw onderhandelingshoofdstuk te openen, namelijk hoofdstuk 22 inzake regionaal beleid en de coördinatie van de structuurinstrumenten. De EU heeft in het bijzonder nota genomen van de Turkse inzet voor het toetredingsproces, zoals is erkend in verschillende recente verklaringen naar aanleiding van de publicatie door de Commissie van het voortgangsverslag van 2013 over Turkije. Het betreft verklaringen van onder anderen premier Erdoğan, EU-minister Bağış en minister van Buitenlandse Zaken Davutoğlu. De Commissie verwijst zowel naar haar voortgangsverslag als naar de conclusies over Turkije in het op 16 oktober 2013 vastgestelde uitbreidingspakket voor 2013 inzake haar diepgaande evaluatie van de vorderingen in Turkije om te voldoen aan de criteria voor het EU-lidmaatschap.

([1]) http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/turkey/10325218/Turkey-will-probably-never-be-EU-member.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010832/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: 'Turkey will never join'

Egemen Bağış, Turkey's EU Affairs Minister and chief EU negotiator, has stated that 'Turkey will probably never become a member of the European Union because of stiff opposition and "prejudiced" attitudes from current members.' ([1]) Turkey would, he said, probably end up with a similar status to Norway in relation to the EU, which is not a member but has access to the single market.

The Dutch Party for Freedom (PVV) would like to ask the Commission:

— to admit that Bağış is right: it is true that Turkey will probably never become a member of the European Union;

— to reject Bağış's claims: no, it is not because of prejudiced attitudes but for well-founded reasons;

— to admit that Bağış is right: yes, it is true that Turkey's accession faces stiff opposition from Member States, but that is down to Turkey's undemocratic, un-European, dictatorial, Islamifying, arrogant attitude;

— to call an end to the accession negotiations, once and for all;

— to stop EU financial aid to Turkey and to demand the return of all funds provided as part of the negotiations;

— to wish Turkey every success in the future.

Is the Commission prepared to do so? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(19 November 2013)

The EU and Turkey remain fully committed to the negotiating process on the basis of the 2005 negotiating framework and as reaffirmed recently with the decision by the Council to open a new chapter in the negotiations, namely Chapter 22 on Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments. The EU has in particular noted Turkey's commitment to the accession process, as acknowledged in various recent statements following the publication of the Commission's 2013 Progress Report on Turkey by notably Prime Minister Erdoğan, EU Minister Bağis and Minister of Foreign Affairs Davutoğlu. The Commission refers to its progress report as well as conclusions on Turkey in the 2013 Enlargement package adopted on 16 October 2013 for its in-depth assessment of progress in Turkey towards meeting the criteria for EU Membership.

([1]) http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/turkey/10325218/Turkey-will-probably-never-be-EU-member.html

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010833/13
aan de Commissie
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(24 september 2013)

Betreft: Aanbevelingen nationale hervormingsprogramma 2013 België — pensioenen

Eerder dit jaar formuleerde de Europese Commissie aanbevelingen over het nationale hervormingsprogramma 2013 van België. De tweede aanbeveling handelt over de pensioenshervormingen.

De Commissie raadde aan om de vervroegde uittredingsregelingen af te schaffen en de sociale zekerheidsstelsels te hervormen.

1. Welke beste praktijken kan de Commissie aanbevelen aan België als voorbeeld voor een duurzaam en kostenefficiënt sociaal zekerheidsstelsel?

2. Welke concrete maartregelen acht de Commissie nodig om de kloof tussen werkelijke en de wettelijke pensioenleeftijd te dichten?

3. Is het volgens de Commissie aangewezen om de effectieve pensioenleeftijd te verhogen?

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(18 november 2013)

1) De Commissie beoordeelt de prestatie van pensioenstelsels in de lidstaten aan de hand van drie hoofdpunten: (1) het vermogen uitkeringen te leveren die toereikend zijn voor het voorkomen van armoede en het vervangen van het inkomen, (2) de budgettaire en financiële duurzaamheid en (3) het effect op de arbeidsparticipatiecijfers tijdens en aan het einde van de loopbaan. De recente relatieve scores van nationale pensioenstelsels worden vermeld in het Thematische Document betreffende pensioenen voor Europa 2020 ([1]). Het Witboek van de Commissie betreffende pensioenen ([2]) zet uiteen hoe adequate, veilige en duurzame pensioenen kunnen worden bereikt, en het pakket sociale investeringen ([3]) biedt een leidraad voor het aanpassen van stelsels voor sociale bescherming aan de uitdagingen van ouder worden in tijden van beperkte overheidsbudgetten.

2) De ervaring toont dat een gecombineerde aanpak van sterkere economische stimulansen op het gebied van belasting/uitkeringen bij pensioenen en van een beter leeftijdsmanagement op de arbeidsplaats en de arbeidsmarkten effectief kan zijn. Hervormingen die de mogelijkheid tot vervroegde uittreding beperken en tegelijkertijd de financiële nadelen en respectievelijke voordelen van pensionering vóór en na de pensioengerechtigde leeftijd versterken, zouden hierbij een belangrijke rol spelen. Maar dergelijke hervormingen moeten worden ondersteund door beleid voor actief ouder worden ([4]) en door samenwerking met sociale partners om werk en opleiding te reorganiseren, om het voor vrouwen en mannen mogelijk en aantrekkelijk te maken tot op latere leeftijd te blijven werken.

3) Een cruciale doelstelling voor pensioenhervormingen is pensioenpraktijken meer in lijn te brengen met wat noodzakelijk is om de adequaatheid en duurzaamheid van pensioensregelingen te garanderen. Aangezien de meerderheid van de Belgische bevolking vóór de wettelijke pensioenleeftijd met pensioen gaat, kan het een prioriteit zijn om het huidge verschil tussen de feitelijke en de wettelijke pensioenleeftijd te verkleinen. Om duurzaamheid en adequaatheid op de lange termijn te garanderen zou het echter ook noodzakelijk zijn om de pensioengerechtigde leeftijd te verhogen, en te koppelen aan de stijging van de levensverwachting.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/themes/04_pensions.pdf
([2]) COM(2012) 55 definitief: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=7341&langId=nl
([3]) COM(2013) 83: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en .
([4]) Zie voor de richtsnoeren voor actief ouder worden op: http://europa.eu/ey2012/ey2012main.jsp?langId=nl & catId=970&newsId=1743&.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010833/13
to the Commission
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Recommendations — Belgian 2013 National Reform Programme — Pensions

Earlier this year the European Commission compiled recommendations on Belgium's 2013 National Reform Programme. The second recommendation relates to pension reforms.

The Commission recommended doing away with early retirement schemes and reforming social security systems.

1. What best practices can the Commission recommend to Belgium, as a model for a sustainable and cost-effective social security system?

2. What specific measures does the Commission feel are required to close the gap between the effective and statutory retirement age?

3. Does the Commission feel it is right to raise the effective retirement age?

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

1. The Commission assesses the performance of pension systems in Member States along three axes: (1) The ability to provide adequate benefits in terms of poverty avoidance and income replacement (2) The fiscal and financial sustainability and (3) The impact on employment rates along and at the end of working careers. The recent relative scores of national pension systems are set out in the Thematic Fiche on Pensions for Europe 2020 ([1]). The White Paper on Pensions ([2]) sets out how adequate, safe and sustainable pensions can be achieved and the Social Investment Package ([3]) provides guidance on how to adapt social protection systems to the challenges of ageing in times of limited public budgets.

2. Experience shows that a combined approach of stronger economic incentives in the tax/benefit context of retirement and of better age management in work places and labour markets can be effective. Reforms restricting access to early exit routes while raising the economic punishments and rewards of retiring before and after the pensionable age would be important. But such reforms would need to be underpinned by active ageing policies ([4]) and collaboration with the social partners to reorganise work and training to enable and encourage women and men to work to higher ages.

3. One key aim of pension reforms is to change retirement practices so they become more in line with what is necessary to ensure the adequacy and sustainability of pension provision. Given that a majority of Belgians retire before the statutory retirement age closing the existing gap between the effective and the pensionable age can be a priority. Yet, to ensure long term sustainability and adequacy it would also be necessary to raise the pensionable age and link it to gains in life expectancy.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/themes/04_pensions.pdf
([2]) COM(2012) 55 final: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=7341&langId=en
([3]) COM(2013) 83: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en
([4]) See The Guiding Principles on Active Ageing at: http://europa.eu/ey2012/ey2012main.jsp?langId=en&catId=970&newsId=1743&

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010834/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(24 september 2013)

Betreft: Turkse pianist Say opnieuw veroordeeld wegens „beledigen islam"

Op 7 juni 2013 schreef de Commissie in haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-004250/2013: „[De Turkse pianist Fazıl Say] heeft na zijn veroordeling tot een voorwaardelijke gevangenisstraf van tien maanden [wegens het vermeend „beledigen van de islam"], om heroverweging verzocht. De zaak is teruggewezen naar de oorspronkelijke rechter in Istanboel, die daarover nog geen uitspraak heeft gedaan. De Commissie wacht op de beslissing van de rechter. Zij verwacht van Turkije de volledige eerbiediging van de vrijheid van meningsuiting overeenkomstig het Europees Verdrag voor de rechten van de mens en de rechtspraak van het Europees Hof voor de rechten van de mens."

Op 20 september 2013 heeft de rechter in Istanboel Fazıl Say opnieuw tot een gevangenisstraf van tien maanden voorwaardelijk veroordeeld — formeel wegens „het beledigen van de religieuze gevoelens van delen van de bevolking" door enkele verzen van de dichter Omar Khayyam op Twitter te plaatsen. Deze verzen zouden de islam beledigen. ([1])

1. Hoe ervaart de Commissie — tegen haar eigen verwachting in dat Turkije de vrijheid van meningsuiting volledig zou eerbiedigen! — de tweede veroordeling van Fazıl Say tot een gevangenisstraf van tien maanden voorwaardelijk wegens het vermeend „beledigen van de islam"? Is zij thans in de Turkse rechtspraak teleurgesteld? Zo ja, ten eerste: waarom nu pas? — en ten tweede: welke gevolgen heeft dit voor de toetredingsonderhandelingen tussen de EU en Turkije? Zo neen, hoe kan de Commissie de veroordeling van Fazıl Say — die nota bene in schril contrast staat tot haar eigen verwachting resp. hoop! — dan (impliciet) verdedigen?

2. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat Turkije een enorme misstap begaat door Say voor het uiten van zijn mening te veroordelen en dat het land hiermee aantoont almaar verder af te glijden? Zo neen, hoe ziet de Commissie de veroordeling van Say dan wel?

3. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat er van de verwachte, door de EU voorgestelde hervormingen in Turkije — vooral wat betreft de eerbiediging van de vrijheid van meningsuiting — niets terecht is gekomen? Zo neen, welke positieve ontwikkelingen wat betreft de eerbiediging van de vrijheid van meningsuiting in Turkije ziet de Commissie dan wel?

4. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat Turkije bewijst nooit tot de EU te willen en kunnen toetreden? Is zij derhalve ertoe bereid de toetredingsonderhandelingen tussen de EU en Turkije direct definitief te beëindigen? Zo neen, hoe verantwoordt zij dan haar impliciete houding dat de almaar verslechterende situatie in Turkije, in het kader van de toetredingsonderhandelingen, zonder gevolgen zou kunnen en mogen blijven?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(19 november 2013)

De Commissie heeft met bezorgdheid vernomen dat de in april uitgesproken voorwaardelijke gevangenisstraf wegens godslastering tegen Fazil Say, een voormalige culturele ambassadeur van de EU, is bevestigd.

De Commissie zal de zaak nauwlettend blijven opvolgen en onderstreept dat het van groot belang is dat Turkije de vrijheid van meningsuiting en van religie of overtuiging volledig eerbiedigt in overeenstemming met de Europese normen.

In haar op 16 oktober gepubliceerd voortgangsverslag van 2013 over Turkije heeft de Commissie een volledige evaluatie van de vooruitgang en de groeiende bezorgdheid in Turkije gepresenteerd wat betreft de eerbiediging van de vrijheid van meningsuiting.

([1]) http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-pianist-fazil-say-sentenced-to-10-months-in-prison-for-blasphemy-in-retrial.aspx?pageID=238&nID=54824&NewsCatID=341.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010834/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Turkish pianist Fazıl Say's conviction for 'insulting Islam' upheld

On 7 June 2013 the Commission wrote in its reply to Written Question E-004250/2013: '[Turkish pianist Fazil Say,] after having received a 10-month suspended prison sentence [for allegedly "insulting Islam"], has requested a retrial. The case was sent back to the first court in Istanbul, which has yet to decide on the matter. The Commission awaits the decision of the court. It expects Turkey to fully respect freedom of expression in line with the European Convention on Human Rights and the case law of the European Court of Human Rights.'

On 20 September 2013, the court in Istanbul upheld the suspended sentence of ten months' imprisonment handed down to Mr Say — officially in connection with 'insulting religious beliefs held by a section of society' for tweeting certain verses by the poet Omar Khayyam. The verses in question allegedly insult Islam. ([1])

1.What is the Commission's reaction — despite its expectation that Turkey would fully respect freedom of speech(!) — to Mr Say's suspended sentence of ten months' imprisonment for allegedly 'insulting Islam' being upheld? Has the Commission now lost its illusions with regard to the Turkish justice system? If so, firstly: why has it taken until now? — and secondly: what consequences will this have for the accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey? If not, how can the Commission (implicitly) defend Mr Say's conviction, which (it should be noted) is in stark contrast to the finding the Commission was anticipating or hoping for(!)?

2.Does the Commission share the view that Turkey is committing a huge mistake by convicting Mr Say for expressing his opinion and that Turkey is proving that it is slipping further and further backwards? If not, how does the Commission view Mr Say's conviction?

3.Does the Commission share the view that nothing has come of the expected reforms in Turkey, proposed by the EU (especially as regards respect for freedom of speech)? If not, what positive developments does the Commission see as regards respect for freedom of speech in Turkey?

4.Does the Commission share the view that Turkey is proving that it does not want and will never be able to accede to the EU? Is the Commission therefore prepared to immediately end the accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey, once and for all? If not, how does the Commission justify its implicit position that the constantly deteriorating situation in Turkey does not have and can continue to be without any consequences with respect to the accession negotiations?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(19 November 2013)

The Commission has learned with concern that the suspended jail sentence for blasphemy handed down in April against Fazil Say, a former EU cultural ambassador, has been confirmed.

The Commission will continue to follow the case closely and underlines the importance for Turkey to fully respect freedom of expression and freedom of religion or belief in line with European standards.

In its 2013 Progress Report on Turkey published on 16 October the Commission gave its full assessment on progress and continuing concerns in Turkey as regards respect for freedom of expression.

([1]) http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-pianist-fazil-say-sentenced-to-10-months-in-prison-for-blasphemy-in-retrial.aspx?pageID=238&nID=54824&NewsCatID=341

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010835/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(24 september 2013)

Betreft: Boete voor kritische tv-stations Turkije (vervolgvraag II)

Op 20 september 2013 heeft de heer Füle namens de Commissie antwoord gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-009521/2013. Daarin schrijft hij onder andere: „In het onderhandelingskader uit 2005 waarbinnen de toetredingsonderhandelingen met Turkije plaatsvinden, zijn de voorwaarden vastgesteld voor opschorting van de onderhandelingen. De Commissie is niet van mening dat aan deze voorwaarden wordt voldaan."

1. Waarop is de mening van de Commissie gestoeld dat niet aan de voorwaarden voor opschorting van de toetredingsonderhandelingen zou worden voldaan? Hoezeer dient de situatie in Turkije verder te verslechteren voordat, naar mening van de Commissie, wél aan deze voorwaarden wordt voldaan?

2. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie het aan banden leggen van vermeend „kritische" tv-stations resp. het stelselmatig inperken van de vrijheid van meningsuiting door de Turkse autoriteiten? Waarom is de Commissie van mening dat dit géén reden tot opschorting / beëindiging van de toetredingsonderhandelingen zou zijn? Welke concrete, meetbare criteria hanteert de Commissie in dezen?

3. Kan de Commissie concreet „het Turkije" kenschetsen dat aan de voorwaarden voldoet voor opschorting/beëindigen van de toetredingsonderhandelingen? Zo neen, impliceert de Commissie daarmee dat de gestelde voorwaarden louter loze bewoordingen zijn, aangezien zij de almaar verslechterende situatie in Turkije immer afdoet als „niet aan de voorwaarden voldoend"?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(22 november 2013)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op vraag E-007264/2013 ([1]) van het geachte Parlementslid over dezelfde kwestie. Voorts verwijst zij het geachte Parlementslid naar de gedetailleerde bevindingen inzake de vrijheid van meningsuiting, ook inzake de kwestie waarnaar in de vraag wordt verwezen, en meer over het algemeen inzake de naleving door Turkije van de politieke criteria voor het EU-lidmaatschap in het op 16 oktober 2013 gepubliceerde voortgangsverslag over Turkije van 2013 ([2]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-007264&language=NL
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/strategy_paper_2012_nl.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010835/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Fines for critical TV stations in Turkey (follow-up question II)

On 20 September 2013, Mr Füle replied to Written Question E-009521/2013 on behalf of the Commission. In his reply, Mr Füle stated that 'The 2005 Negotiating Framework governing accession negotiations with Turkey defines the conditions for a suspension of the negotiations. The Commission does not consider that these conditions are met.'

1.On what basis has the Commission arrived at the view that the conditions for a suspension of the accession negotiations have not been met? How much further does the situation in Turkey need to deteriorate before, in the Commission's view, these conditions are met?

2.What is the Commission's reaction to the restrictions imposed on supposedly 'critical' TV stations or the systematic curtailment of freedom of expression by the Turkish authorities? Why does the Commission feel that this does not constitute grounds for suspension/termination of the accession negotiations? What specific, measurable criteria is the Commission applying in this matter?

3.Can the Commission define in specific terms exactly 'what sort of Turkey' would satisfy the conditions for suspension/termination of the accession negotiations? If not, is the Commission therefore implying that the conditions imposed are merely empty words, bearing in mind that the Commission always dismisses the constantly deteriorating situation in Turkey as 'not satisfying the conditions'?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(22 November 2013)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to previous Question E-007264/2013 ([1]) by the Honourable Member on the same issue. Furthermore, it refers the Honourable Member to the detailed findings on freedom of expression, including on the issue referred to in the question, and more in general on compliance by Turkey with the political criteria for EU Membership in the 2013 Progress Report on Turkey published on 16 October 2013 ([2]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010836/13
do Komisji
Piotr Borys (PPE)
(24 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Funkcjonowanie Eurodesku w ramach programu Erasmus+

W maju bieżącego roku Komisja Europejska uruchomiła nową wersję Europejskiego Portalu Młodzieżowego, powierzając jego administrację sieci Eurodesk. Decyzja taka, choć merytorycznie w pełni uzasadniona, może znacznie ograniczyć możliwości kontynuowania wielu z dotychczasowych działań prowadzonych przez Eurodesk w obszarze europejskiej informacji młodzieżowej, takich jak prowadzenie bazy programów grantowych, udzielanie i rozpowszechnianie informacji, wydawanie publikacji, prowadzenie lekcji i warsztatów, organizowanie wydarzeń informacyjnych, czy współpraca z innymi podmiotami w ramach krajowych sieci Eurodesku.

W świetle powyższych faktów pragnę zapytać:

1. Czy w związku z planami rozbudowy Portalu i zwiększającymi się obciążeniami dla jego administratorów Komisja zamierza zwiększyć wysokość nakładów finansowych przeznaczonych na funkcjonowanie Eurodesku w ramach programu Erasmus+ do poziomu umożliwiającego kontynuację pozostałych działań informacyjnych prowadzonych przez krajowe sieci Eurodesku?

2. Czy w związku z faktem, iż Europejski Portal Młodzieżowy jest inicjatywą Komisji Europejskiej i ma charakter przede wszystkim europejski Komisja rozważa możliwość adekwatnej, odzwierciedlającej nowy zakres realizowanych zadań, zmiany w sposobie finansowania Eurodesku, polegającej na rezygnacji z wymogu współfinansowania budżetu Eurodesku z funduszy krajowych i/lub zmianie jego dotychczasowej struktury poprzez zwiększenie wkładu pochodzącego ze źródeł UE (dotychczas 53 %) i zmniejszenie wkładu krajowego (dotychczas 47 %)?

3. Czy biorąc pod uwagę doświadczenie w obszarze informacji europejskiej, znajomość potrzeb informacyjnych młodzieży i sieciową strukturę Komisja planuje zachęcić inne sieci i podmioty informacyjne UE, w szczególności Europe Direct, do zacieśnienia współpracy z krajowymi sieciami Eurodesku, zwłaszcza przy realizacji projektów i kampanii informacyjnych związanych z wydarzeniami europejskimi o szczególnym znaczeniu, takimi jak wybory do Parlamentu UE?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Androullę Vassiliou w imieniu Komisji
(25 listopada 2013 r.)

Eurodesk jest odpowiedzialny za zarządzanie treścią Europejskiego Portalu Młodzieżowego od 2004 r., co było jednym z powodów, dla których Komisja zaproponowała włączenie Eurodesku do grona wyznaczonych beneficjentów przyszłego programu Erasmus+. Przebudowę portalu przewidziano w odnowionych ramach współpracy na rzecz młodzieży. Stanowi ona odpowiedź na nową rzeczywistość w zakresie korzystania młodzieży z Internetu i mediów społecznych; usługi informacyjne dla młodzieży powinny się do tej rzeczywistości odpowiednio dostosować.

1. Niezależnie od tych nowych zamiarów, Komisja jest zdania, że część nowych ogólnoeuropejskiej informacji zamieszczanych na portalu powinna być powiązana z istniejącymi materiałami dostępnymi w krajowych jednostkach Eurodesku, co przyczyniłoby się do pewnego wzrostu wydajności. Komisja planuje zwiększenie finansowania dla Eurodesku w 2014 r.

2. Zasada współfinansowania jest wymogiem ustanowionym w rozporządzeniu finansowym. Komisja przewiduje, że odsetek krajowego wkładu wyniesie 40 %.

3. Komisja zachęca do współpracy z innymi sieciami informacji, tam gdzie jest to właściwe i możliwe. Zachęcała np. pracowników Europe Direct do nawiązania kontaktu z ich lokalnymi jednostkami Eurodesku w celu wymiany informacji, promowania usług oraz informowania młodych osób o usługach zawartych w przebudowanym Europejskim Portalu Młodzieżowym.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010836/13
to the Commission
Piotr Borys (PPE)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Functioning of Eurodesk under the Erasmus+ programme

In May 2013, the Commission launched a new version of the European Youth Portal and charged the Eurodesk network with administering it. Such a decision — although it can be fully justified in objective terms — threatens to diminish many of Eurodesk's existing actions in the area of European youth information, such as maintaining a database of grant programmes, distributing information, publishing publications, giving lectures and workshops, organising information sessions, and cooperating with other agencies through Eurodesk national networks.

In light of these facts, I should like to put the following questions to the Commission:

1. Given the plans to expand the Portal and the consequent increase in the administrators' responsibilities, does the Commission intend to increase the funding allocated for Eurodesk activities under the Erasmus+ programme to a level that would enable the national Eurodesk networks to continue with their other information activities?

2. Given that the European Youth Portal is a Commission initiative and has an overwhelmingly European character, is the Commission considering making appropriate changes that reflect the new range of tasks to the way Eurodesk is funded? This would specifically entail removing the requirement for Eurodesk's budget to be co-financed from national funds and/or changing its current structure by increasing the EU contribution (currently 53%) and reducing the national contribution (currently 47%).

3. Given Eurodesk's experience with providing information on the EU, its knowledge of young people's information needs and its network structure, does the Commission plan to encourage other networks and EU information agencies — in particular, Europe Direct — to engage in closer cooperation with national Eurodesk networks, with specific reference to carrying out information projects and campaigns relating to major European events, such as elections to the European Parliament?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(25 November 2013)

Eurodesk has been in charge of managing the content of the European Youth Portal since 2004, which is part of the reasons why the Commission has proposed to include Eurodesk among the designated beneficiaries of the future Erasmus+ Programme. The redevelopment of the Portal was foreseen under the renewed framework for cooperation in the youth field. It responds to the new realities of young people's online activities and their use of social media; youth information services need to adapt accordingly.

1. Alongside these new ambitions for the Portal, the Commission is of the view that part of the new European-level information to be displayed on the Portal is related to existing material available at the national Eurodesk units; thus, some efficiency gains should emerge. The Commission plans to increase its funding for Eurodesk in 2014.

2. The principle of co-funding is a requirement of the Financial Regulation. The Commission foresees the national contribution to amount to 40%.

3. The Commission encourages cooperation with other information networks, where appropriate and possible. For example, it has encouraged Europe Direct staff to make contact with their local Eurodesk units to share information, promote their services and inform young people about the services covered within the redeveloped European Youth Portal.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010837/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(24 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Negación de permiso para el sobrevuelo del territorio de los EE.UU. por Nicolás Maduro

El Gobierno de los EE.UU. ha negado el permiso para el sobrevuelo del espacio aéreo de Puerto Rico al avión presidencial de Nicolás Maduro. El Presidente de Venezuela debía sobrevolar dicho espacio aéreo mientras realizaba un viaje hacia la República Popular China.

Dicho gesto, parecido al escándalo ocurrido en Europa con el avión presidencial de Evo Morales durante el pasado mes de julio, supone un nuevo golpe diplomático que muestra la actitud injerencista e imperialista que los Estados Unidos de América tienen con los países que forman parte de la Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de América (ALBA).

El gesto de negar el paso por su espacio aéreo al legítimamente elegido Presidente de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela supone una afrenta dirigida a la totalidad del país sudamericano y a todos sus aliados. Los EE.UU. están implementando una política exterior extremadamente agresiva hacia este país, política absolutamente injustificada y basada en las ansias imperialistas que no han podido llevar a la práctica en Venezuela.

Este tipo de afrentas debe ser condenado por la comunidad internacional, puesto que atentan contra las bases de la política y las relaciones internacionales. Pese a que cualquier Estado se reserve su derecho a permitir el sobrevuelo de su espacio aéreo, el negárselo a un presidente legítimo es un ataque a su soberanía. Los Estados deben guardar un espíritu de cooperación política, con el objetivo de respetar un orden internacional basado en el diálogo que, en este caso, los EE.UU. han pisoteado, mostrando el agresivo carácter de la política internacional que llevan a cabo.

¿Conoce la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante los citados hechos?

¿Considera legítima la actitud de los EE.UU. con respecto a un presidente democrático y legítimamente electo como es Nicolás Maduro?

¿Considera la necesidad de congelar las negociaciones sobre el Acuerdo de Libre Comercio UE-EE.UU. hasta que dicho país presente sus disculpas y respete a la comunidad internacional? ¿Piensa presionar al Gobierno de los EE.UU. para que pida disculpas por el trato dado al legítimo Presidente de Venezuela para mejorar el clima diplomático entre los dos países?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de noviembre de 2013)

El Convenio de Chicago sobre Aviación Civil Internacional, de 1944, establece que «todo Estado tiene soberanía plena y exclusiva en el espacio aéreo situado sobre su territorio» y que «ninguna aeronave de Estado de un Estado contratante podrá volar sobre el territorio de otro Estado o aterrizar en el mismo sin haber obtenido autorización para ello, por acuerdo especial o de otro modo, y de conformidad con las condiciones de la autorización».

En el caso preciso que menciona Su Señoría, los artículos de prensa posteriores indican que la autorización solicitada por el Presidente de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela fue finalmente concedida por las autoridades de los Estados Unidos y que el avión en cuestión no era una aeronave de Estado. Por tanto, no requería un salvoconducto diplomático.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010837/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Refusal of permission for Nicolás Maduro to fly over US territory

The US Government refused permission for Nicolás Maduro's presidential plane to fly through Puerto Rican airspace. The President of Venezuela was supposed to fly through its airspace when travelling to the People's Republic of China.

Along the same lines as the scandal in Europe involving Evo Morales's presidential plane last July, this gesture is another diplomatic insult that demonstrates the interfering, imperialist attitude of the United States of America towards the countries forming part of the Bolivarian Alliance of the Peoples of America (ALBA).

Refusing the legitimately elected President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela passage through its airspace amounts to an insult to the South American country as a whole and all its allies. The United States is adopting an extremely aggressive foreign policy towards the country; this policy is totally unjustified, and is based on imperialist desires that the USA has not been able to fulfil in Venezuela.

Affronts of this sort must be condemned by the international community, because they threaten the foundations of international politics and relations. Although any State may reserve the right to grant permission for a plane to fly through its airspace, denying passage to a legitimate president is an attack on the country's sovereignty. States must maintain a spirit of political cooperation, with the aim of respecting an international order based on dialogue. In this case, the United States has trampled over such dialogue, revealing the aggressive nature of its international policy.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of these facts?

Does she consider the US attitude towards a democratic and legitimately elected president, such as Nicolás Maduro, to be lawful?

Is she looking at the need to freeze the negotiations on the EU-US Free Trade Agreement until the Unites States apologises and shows respect for the international community? Does she intend to put pressure on the US Government to apologise for the way it has treated the legitimate president of Venezuela, in order to improve the diplomatic climate between the two countries?

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

The Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation of 1944 stipulates that 'every State has complete and exclusive sovereignty over the airspace above its territory' and that 'No state aircraft of a contracting State shall fly over the territory of another State or land thereon without authorisation by special agreement or otherwise, and in accordance with the terms thereof'.

In the specific case raised by the Honourable Member, later press reports indicate that the authorisation requested by the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela was eventually granted by the US authorities and that the plane in question was not a State aircraft, and therefore did not require a diplomatic clearance.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010838/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(24 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Persecución de personas de la comunidad Ahmadía en Arabia Saudí

Resulta de sobra conocida la actitud del Gobierno de Arabia Saudí respecto a los derechos humanos aun cuando sus violaciones sistemáticas no se correspondan al trato de aliado que recibe por parte de la Unión Europea.

Recientemente han sido detenidos Sultán Hamid Marzouk Al-Anzi y Faleh Sudi Awad Al-Anzi, ciudadanos nacidos en dicho país y cuyo único delito consiste en ser miembros de la comunidad musulmana Ahmadía. Dichos ciudadanos fueron detenidos y acusados del delito de apostasía, puesto que la conversión religiosa es considerada delito en Arabia Saudí. Ante estos hechos la comunidad internacional continúa manteniendo su característico silencio criminal, puesto que Arabia Saudí evidencia la doble moral en la aplicación de los derechos humanos de la que participa la Unión Europea.

La comunidad Ahmadía es un movimiento religioso dentro del Islam que apuesta por la extensión pacífica y aboga por el diálogo en lugar de la guerra santa. Dicho movimiento está siendo perseguido en numerosos países islámicos donde los movimientos extremistas y fundamentalistas del Islam se han hecho fuertes, en muchas ocasiones gracias al apoyo prestado por Arabia Saudí. Mientras las potencias occidentales bombardean y ocupan países de Oriente Próximo con la excusa del terrorismo, Arabia Saudí, el principal bastión de los movimientos más radicales del fundamentalismo islámico y del terrorismo, es considerado un aliado.

¿Conoce la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante las citadas detenciones, contrarias al respeto de los derechos humanos?

¿Piensa condenar públicamente al Gobierno de Arabia Saudí por este tipo de detenciones de carácter religioso?

¿Piensa exigir a Arabia Saudí que derogue todo el articulado de su legislación contrario al respeto de los derechos humanos en el ámbito de la libertad religiosa?

¿Piensa detener las relaciones a través del Consejo de Cooperación del Golfo hasta que Arabia Saudí se comprometa a respetar los derechos humanos?

Respuesta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de noviembre de 2013)

La alta representante y vicepresidenta está perfectamente al corriente de la cuestión planteada en relación con Arabia Saudí.

La libertad de religión y creencias es una de las grandes prioridades de la política de derechos humanos de la UE, un derecho humano inalienable y un pilar fundamental de la sociedad.

La Delegación de la UE y las misiones diplomáticas de la UE en Riad están muy atentas a la situación de los derechos humanos, incluida la libertad de religión y creencias, como parte de sus informes periódicos y sus contactos diplomáticos con las autoridades locales. El Consejo de Asuntos Exteriores de la UE aprobó unas Directrices de la UE sobre promoción y protección de la libertad de religión o creencias ([1]), de 27 de julio de 2013, que constituye un nuevo punto de referencia para su actividad.

La alta representante y vicepresidenta ha utilizado toda la gama de oportunidades e instrumentos disponibles, incluidas declaraciones y gestiones diplomáticas, a fin de mejorar los derechos humanos y las libertades fundamentales, en sus contactos con los funcionarios de Arabia Saudí, a nivel bilateral y multilateral.

Las relaciones con el Consejo de Cooperación del Golfo constituyen una oportunidad adicional para transmitir mensajes importantes en materia de derechos humanos. Las intervenciones de la UE durante la reunión ministerial UE-CCG de 30 de junio de 2013, celebrada en Manama, hicieron hincapié en la importancia fundamental de los derechos humanos en sus relaciones con socios terceros y reflejaron las preocupaciones de la UE sobre la situación de los derechos humanos en los países del Golfo.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/ES/foraff/137585.pdf

En el marco del examen periódico universal (EPU) de las Naciones Unidas, la Unión Europea, en coordinación con los Estados miembros, está examinando atentamente el historial de Arabia Saudí en lo que se refiere a las recomendaciones del EPU. La alta representante y vicepresidenta cambia impresiones al respecto con el Parlamento Europeo.

La UE seguirá ocupándose de los derechos humanos con sus interlocutores de Arabia Saudí, recurriendo plenamente a las oportunidades que se le presenten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010838/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Persecution of individuals in the Ahmadiyya community in Saudi Arabia

The attitude of the Saudi Arabian Government to human rights is well known, although the way the European Union treats it as an ally is at odds with its systematic violation of these rights.

Recently, Sultan Hamid Marzouk Al-Anzi and Faleh Sudi Awad Al-Anzi, citizens born in Saudi Arabia whose only crime was to be members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community, were arrested. They were held and charged with the crime of apostasy, since religious conversion is considered to be a crime in Saudi Arabia. Against this background, the international community continues to maintain its usual criminal silence, since Saudi Arabia is adopting the same double standards in the observance of human rights as the European Union.

The Ahmadiyya community is a religious movement within Islam that is committed to peaceful expansion and calls for dialogue instead of holy war. The movement is persecuted in many Islamic countries where the extremist and fundamentalist Islamic movements have become strong, in many cases thanks to support provided by Saudi Arabia. While the Western powers bomb and occupy countries in the Middle East on the pretext of terrorism, Saudi Arabia, the main stronghold of the most radical Islamic fundamentalist and terrorist movements, is seen as an ally.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the abovementioned arrests, which infringe respect for human rights?

Does she intend to publicly condemn the Saudi Arabian Government for religious arrests of this kind?

Does she intend to demand that Saudi Arabia abolish all provisions in its legislation that are in conflict with respect for human rights in the sphere of religious freedom?

Does she intend to suspend relations within the Gulf Cooperation Council until Saudi Arabia undertakes to respect human rights?

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

The HR/VP is well aware of the issue raised with regard to Saudi Arabia.

Freedom of religion and belief is a high priority of the EU's human rights policy, an inalienable human right and an essential pillar of society.

The EU Delegation and EU diplomatic missions in Riyadh are closely following the human rights situation, including freedom of religion and belief, as part of their regular reporting and diplomatic outreach towards local authorities. The EU Foreign Affairs Council adopted Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief ([1]) on 27 July 2013, which constitutes an additional reference point for their action.

The HR/VP has been using the full range of opportunities and instruments available, including statements and diplomatic demarches, to raise human rights and fundamental freedoms in their contacts with Saudi officials, at bilateral and multilateral level.

Relations with the Gulf Cooperation Council are an additional opportunity to convey important messages on human rights. EU interventions during the EU-GCC Ministerial meeting of 30 June 2013 in Manama emphasised the central importance of Human Rights in its relations with third partners and reflected EU concerns at the Human Rights situation in Gulf countries.

In the context of the UN Universal Periodic Review, the EU in coordination with Member States is closely reviewing Saudi Arabia's record with regard to the UPR recommendations. The HR/VP regularly exchanges views with the European Parliament on that matter.

The EU will continue to raise human rights cases with its Saudi interlocutors, making full use of the opportunities at its disposal.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/137585.pdf

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-010839/13
Komisi
Ivo Strejček (ECR)
(24. září 2013)

Předmět: Podpora obnovitelných zdrojů

V poslední době i původně nadšení podporovatelé tzv. zelené energie přiznávají, že kvůli přehnaným nákladům na obnovitelné zdroje jsou náklady elektrické energie již na neúnosné úrovni a evropský průmysl tak přestává být ve světě konkurenceschopný. Pokládám proto Evropské komisi tyto otázky:

1. Přehodnotí Komise svou strategii a přestane zvyšovat výdaje Evropské unie na obnovitelné zdroje?

2. Jaké řešení bude Komise navrhovat pro snížení energetických nákladů?

3. Bude Komise podporovat zastavení devastačního efektu na hospodářství v evropských státech tím, že zruší politiku veřejné finanční podpory pro obnovitelné zdroje energie a ponechá právo rozhodnout o uplatňování této politiky na národní úrovni v členských státech Evropské unie?

Odpověď pana Oettingera jménem Komise
(25. listopadu 2013)

1. Výdaje EU v oblasti obnovitelných zdrojů energie plynou zejména na výzkum a vývoj. Finanční prostředky poskytnuté EU na technologií pro obnovitelné zdroje energie zahrnovaly přibližně 786 mil. EUR v rámci Sedmého rámcového programu pro výzkum (7. RP) na období 2007–2013, 340 mil. EUR z programu evropské hospodářské obnovy (EERP) a 6 200 mil. EUR v rámci půjček od Evropské investiční banky (EIB) v letech 2005 až 2013. Kromě toho bylo v programovém období 2007–2013 na obnovitelné zdroje energie přiděleno přibližně 4,5 miliardy EUR v rámci politiky soudržnosti EU.

Pro období 2014–2020 je Komise nadále odhodlána podporovat rozvoj nákladově efektivních obnovitelných zdrojů energie v rámci programu Horizont 2020. O přesných částkách bude ještě rozhodnuto.

2. a 3. Komise dne 5. listopadu vydala pokyny k režimu podpory pro obnovitelné zdroje energie s cílem zajistit, aby členské státy prováděly rozvoj obnovitelných zdrojů energie tím nákladově nejefektivnějším způsobem tak, že integrují výrobu energie z obnovitelných zdrojů do trhu s energií a zajistí stabilitu a důvěryhodnost režimů podpory. Pokyny Komise pomohou členským státům navrhnout režimy podpory tak, aby udržely náklady pod kontrolou a zabránily poskytování nadměrných náhrad, a to díky transparentnosti nákladů na energii a nepoužívání podpory s jedinou „univerzální“ sazbou. Závazné vnitrostátní cíle v oblasti obnovitelných zdrojů energie pro rok 2020 byly schváleny všemi členskými státy přijetím směrnice o obnovitelných zdrojích energie v roce 2009. Tato směrnice uvádí, že režimy podpory jsou vnitrostátní záležitostí. V souvislosti s přípravou rámce pro klima a energetiku do roku 2030 probíhá další analýza za účelem posouzení dopadu budoucích politik z hlediska konkurenceschopnosti. Připravuje se rovněž zpráva Radě, která má posoudit prvky ovlivňující náklady na energii a její ceny v EU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010839/13
to the Commission
Ivo Strejček (ECR)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Support for renewable energy sources

Recently, even those who were originally enthusiastic supporters of 'green energy' have started to admit that the excessive cost of renewable energy sources have resulted in electric energy prices that are intolerably high and which are causing European industry to lose its global competitiveness.

1. Will the Commission reassess its strategy and stop increasing EU expenditure on renewable energy sources?

2. How does it propose to reduce energy costs?

3. Will it support putting an end to the devastating damage to EU Member States' economies by abolishing the policy of providing support from public finances for renewable energy sources and leaving the right to decide on the application of such a policy at the Member State level?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(25 November 2013)

1. EU expenditure on renewables is mainly given for research and development. EU funding (in millions of EUR) spent on renewable energy technology included around 786 under the EU's 7th Framework Programme for Research (FP7) for the period 2007-2013, 340 from the European Economic and Recovery Programme (EEPR), and 6200 in loans from the European Investment Bank (EIB) from 2005 to 2013. In addition in the 2007-2013 programming period of EU cohesion policy about EUR 4.5 billion have been allocated to renewable energy.

For the period 2014-2020 the Commission remains committed to supporting the development of cost-effective RES under Horizon 2020. The exact amounts remain to be decided.

2 and 3. The Commission issued on 5 November guidance on renewables' support schemes to ensure that Member States' development of renewable energy is done in the most cost-effective way by integrating renewable energy production in the energy market, and making support schemes stable and credible. The Commission guidance will help Member States to design their support schemes in way to keep costs under control and avoid over compensation by making the costs of energy transparent and avoid 'one tariff fits all' support. The binding national 2020 renewable energy targets were agreed by all Member States with the adoption of the Renewable Energy Directive in 2009. The same directive notes that support schemes are a national responsibility. In the context of the preparation of the 2030 framework for climate and energy, further analysis is ongoing in order to assess the impact of future polices in terms of competitiveness. A report to the Council to assess the drivers of costs and prices of energy in the EU is also being prepared.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010841/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: State aid to Dublin Bus and Irish Bus

A 2007 item in the Official Journal ([1]) states as follows:

'In the event the Memoranda of Understanding and contract concerning the school transport scheme have not been preceded by a public tendering procedure, the Commission invites the Irish authorities to provide a justification.'

1. What justification was provided by the Irish authorities?

2. Did the Irish authorities inform the Commission that the school transport scheme was operated under contract by Bus Éireann (Irish Bus) for the Department of Education?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(13 November 2013)

The sentence referred to in the Official Journal is from investigation C 31/2007 (ex NN 17/07) — 'State aid to Córas Iompair Éireann Bus Companies (Dublin Bus and Irish Bus)' ([2]), paragraph 82.

As this is still an ongoing investigation, the Commission cannot divulge any information supplied by the Irish authorities in the context of the investigation.

([1]) OJ C 217, 15.9.2007, p. 44.
([2]) OJ C 217, 15.9.2007, p. 54.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010843/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(24 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Roma, zona di Falcognana: ulteriori informazioni circa l'apertura di una nuova discarica

Con la risposta all'interrogazione E-009479/2013 la Commissione ha sottolineato che ad oggi non è arrivata alcuna richiesta di autorizzazione per l'ampliamento e la trasformazione del sito in località Falcognana, ribadendo, inoltre, che gli Stati membri hanno l'obbligo, prima del rilascio delle autorizzazioni per i progetti di impianti di smaltimento di rifiuti, di prevedere una valutazione di impatto ambientale (VIA), con relativa consultazione dei cittadini.

Anche il ministro della Cultura italiana ha ribadito che l'area interessata è di notevole interesse pubblico e presenta numerosi vincoli rispetto ai quali sono necessarie specifiche autorizzazioni.

Eppure, il ministro dell'Ambiente italiano, nei giorni scorsi, di concerto con il Presidente della Regione Lazio e il Sindaco di Roma, ha ribadito la volontà di firmare il decreto per smaltire 300 tonnellate di rifiuti nella discarica di Falcognana, senza specificare se siano state esperite tutte le procedure preliminari, come previsto dall'Allegato I della direttiva 2011/92/UE.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione:

1) far sapere se è stata avviata la nuova procedura VIA dalle autorità italiane preposte e qual è stato l'esito della stessa;

2) comunicare come intende procedere nel caso in cui riceva prove certe di un'eventuale violazione della normativa UE in materia ambientale;

3) fornire un quadro generale della situazione.

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011261/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE) e Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(3 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Roma, zona di Falcognana: ulteriori informazioni circa l'apertura di una nuova discarica con conseguente conferimento di nuove tipologie di rifiuti

In seguito all'interrogazione sulla realizzazione di un impianto di rifiuti in località Falcognana (Comune di Roma) E-009479/2013, è stato messo in luce come alla Commissione europea non sia pervenuta alcuna richiesta di autorizzazione per l'ampliamento e la trasformazione del sito di Falcognana.

Inoltre, il ministro dell'Ambiente italiano ha fatto sapere, il 1° ottobre, che sono in corso ulteriori approfondimenti e verifiche da parte delle autorità competenti, dal momento che a oggi non risultano essere state richieste le autorizzazioni previste per i nuovi codici CER (Catalogo europeo dei rifiuti). Infatti, la discarica di Falcognana prevede solo alcune tipologie di rifiuti pericolosi e non, con singoli codici CER che di volta in volta sono stati autorizzati dalla regione Lazio per il quantitativo giornaliero e quello annuo massimo autorizzato, ma a oggi non risulta che tale richiesta sia stata fatta alle autorità competenti italiane.

Infine, sempre il 1° ottobre, l'Italia è stata deferita davanti alla Corte di giustizia (Causa C-323/13) per la discarica di Malagrotta, in quanto la regione Lazio è venuta meno agli obblighi imposti dalla direttiva 1999/31/CE, che impone agli Stati membri di provvedere affinché solo i rifiuti trattati vengano collocati in discarica.

Premesso che tale sito di Falcognana dovrebbe in parte sostituire il sito di Malagrotta, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. in che modo sta monitorando la situazione per quanto riguarda il rispetto della normativa in materia di gestione dei rifiuti e di valutazione ambientale;

2. quali informazioni ha ricevuto rispetto all'ampliamento del sito e al tipo di trattamento dei rifiuti stessi prima di essere conferiti in discarica;

3. quali misure e azioni possono essere messe in campo per tutelare il patrimonio paesaggistico e culturale dell'area coinvolta, soggetta a numerosi vincoli così come affermato dal ministro dei Beni culturali;

4. se è consapevole della totale esclusione dei cittadini delle zone interessate dalle procedure decisionali, considerato che non sono stati né coinvolti né informati su tempistiche, procedure e documenti relativi all'eventuale ampliamento del sito?

Risposta congiunta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione

(14 novembre 2013)

Si invitano gli onorevoli deputati a far riferimento alle risposte della Commissione alle interrogazioni scritte P-010858/2013 e P-011136/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010843/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Latest information on the opening of a new landfill site in the Falcoghana district of Rome

In its answer to Written Question E-009479/2013, the Commission said that no authorisation request had yet been lodged for the expansion and conversion of the Falcoghana site, and reiterated that Member States are required to carry out an environmental impact assessment (EIA), involving appropriate public consultation, before they can be given the go-ahead for projects concerning waste disposal plants.

The Italian Ministry of Culture has also stressed that the area in question is of significant public interest. The nature of many of the features in the area means that specific authorisation needs to be sought before development projects can proceed.

In the past few days, however, Italy's Environment Ministry, in concert with the President of the Lazio Region and the Mayor of Rome, has reiterated its intention to sign a decree authorising the disposal of 300 tonnes of waste at the Falcoghana site, without specifying whether all the preliminary procedures provided for in Annex I to Directive 2011/92/EU have been carried out.

1. Can the Commission indicate whether the new EIA procedure has been launched by therelevant Italian authorities and, if so, what the result was?

2. What will it do if it receives concrete evidence that Italy has breached EU environmentallaw?

3. Can it give an overview of the situation?

Question for written answer E-011261/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE) and Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Falcognana area of Rome: additional information on the opening of a new landfill site and the consequent dumping of new types of waste

Following Question E-009479/2013 on the creation of a waste disposal plant in Falcognana (Municipality of Rome), it emerged that the Commission has not received any application for permission to enlarge and convert the Falcognana site.

Furthermore, on 1 October the Italian Minister for the Environment stated that the competent authorities are carrying out further investigations and checks since to date no application has been made for the permits envisaged for the new European Waste Catalogue (EWC) codes. The Falcognana landfill only provides for certain types of hazardous and non-hazardous waste, with individual EWC codes authorised by the Lazio regional government as and when required for the maximum allowed daily and yearly amounts, but to date no application has been made to the competent Italian authorities.

Lastly, again on 1 October, Italy was referred to the Court of Justice (Case C-323/13) over the Malagrotta landfill, since the Lazio regional government has failed to comply with the obligations laid down in Directive 1999/31/EC requiring Member States to ensure that only waste that has been subject to treatment is landfilled.

Given that the Falcognana site is intended to partly replace the Malagrotta site, can the Commission state:

1. how it is monitoring the situation in terms of compliance with legislation on waste management and environmental assessment;

2. what information it has received regarding enlargement of the site and the type of treatment the waste is subject to before it is landfilled;

3. what measures and actions can be implemented to protect the landscape and cultural heritage of the area concerned, which is subject to various constraints as affirmed by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage;

4. whether it is aware that citizens from the areas affected by the decision-making procedures have been totally excluded, considering that they have been neither involved nor informed of the time frame, procedures and documents regarding the possible enlargement of the site?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(14 November 2013)

The Honourable Members are referred to the Commission's replies to Written Questions P-010858/2013 and P-011136/2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010844/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(24 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Relações da UE com os N11

Considerando que:

— O Brasil, a Rússia, a Índia e a China foram denominados, em 2003, pela Goldman Sachs, como países BRIC em resultado do seu célere desenvolvimento económico e enorme potencial económico, tendo a União Europeia aberto as suas relações externas, nomeadamente em termos de cooperação, de diálogo político e de relações comerciais, a estas economias emergentes ao longo dos últimos anos;

— Em 2005, a Goldman Sachs identificou os países sucessores dos BRIC, enquanto novas economias emergentes, e classificou-os num grupo denominado de N11 («Next 11»), composto pelo Bangladesh, Egito, Indonésia, Irão, Coreia do Sul, México, Nigéria, Paquistão, Filipinas, Turquia e Vietname;

— Os países do N11 partilham características comuns com o rápido crescimento das suas populações, uma elevada capacidade industrial e um forte potencial económico, que apontam para um mercado em expansão, em termos de consumidores e de oportunidades de negócio a nível internacional;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Pretende a União desenvolver uma estratégia comum para as suas relações futuras com as novas economias emergentes, ou manter uma abordagem de base essencialmente bilateral, tal como com os BRIC?

2. Nas suas atuais relações bilaterais com cada um dos onze países referidos, qual a que apresenta um estado mais avançado de cooperação económica e de intensidade de trocas comerciais? E qual o N11 que está mais distanciado ao nível de diálogo económico e político da ação externa da União?

3. O facto de um dos N11 ser um país candidato à adesão à União, tem algum efeito na tomada em consideração de uma eventual abordagem estratégica única para o conjunto destes países?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010857/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(24 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Relações da UE com o N11

Considerando que:

— O Brasil, a Rússia, a Índia e a China foram denominados, em 2003, pela Goldman Sachs, como países BRIC em resultado do seu célere desenvolvimento económico e enorme potencial económico, tendo a União Europeia aberto as suas relações externas, nomeadamente em termos de cooperação, de diálogo político e de relações comerciais, a estas economias emergentes ao longo dos últimos anos;

— Em 2005, a Goldman Sachs identificou os países sucessores dos BRIC, enquanto novas economias emergentes, e classificou-os num grupo denominado de N11 («Next 11»), composto pelo Bangladesh, Egito, Indonésia, Irão, Coreia do Sul, México, Nigéria, Paquistão, Filipinas, Turquia e Vietname;

— Os países do N11 partilham características comuns com o rápido crescimento das suas populações, uma elevada capacidade industrial e um forte potencial económico, que apontam para um mercado em expansão, em termos de consumidores e de oportunidades de negócio a nível internacional;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Tem a União Europeia uma estratégia única definida para o futuro das suas relações externas com os países emergentes do N11?

2. Como vê a evolução das suas relações com o Bangladesh, o Egipto, a Indonésia, o Irão, a Coreia do Sul, o México, a Nigéria, o Paquistão, as Filipinas, a Turquia e o Vietname, enquanto países do N11?

Resposta conjunta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(13 de novembro de 2013)

A UE mantém contactos estreitos com os 11 países. Contudo, como estes países são, em numerosos aspetos, muito diferentes entre si, a sua diversidade reflete-se igualmente na natureza das nossas relações. Além disso, alguns destes países são vizinhos próximos e/ou parceiros de longa data da UE, o que traz como consequência uma agenda bilateral mais desenvolvida. Em relação aos outros, a cooperação pode ser menos desenvolvida neste momento, mas está também a aprofundar-se, passo a passo. Por último, mas não menos importante, as relações regem-se pela atual agenda política bilateral e multilateral.

Embora seja difícil medir (e mais ainda classificar) a qualidade global de relações dinâmicas e, em muitos casos, vibrantes, o facto de um destes países ser candidato à adesão à União Europeia, tem obviamente um impacto significativo. Com efeito, entre estes países, dá-se o caso de a Turquia ser o principal parceiro comercial da UE, seguida da República da Coreia.

A UE está empenhada em continuar a reforçar a sua parceria com esses países no futuro.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010844/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: EU relations with the N11

Brazil, Russia, India and China were designated as BRIC countries by Goldman Sachs in 2003 in the light of their rapid economic development and huge economic potential, and the European Union has opened up its external relations to these emerging economies over the past few years, particularly in terms of cooperation, political dialogue and trade relations.

In 2005, Goldman Sachs identified 11 new emerging economies as BRICs successor countries and categorised them in a group known as N11 ('Next 11'), which comprises Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Korea, Turkey and Vietnam.

The N11 countries share common characteristics such as rapid population growth, high industrial capacity and strong economic potential, which point to an expanding market in terms of both consumers and international business opportunities.

1. Will the European Union develop a common strategy for its future relations with the newemerging economies, or will it stick to an essentially bilateral approach as in the case ofthe BRIC countries?

2. In the framework of the EU's current bilateral relations with each of the 11 countrieslisted above, which country is at the most advanced stage in terms of economiccooperation and trade intensity? Which N11 country is the most distant in terms ofeconomic and political dialogue in the context of the EU's external action?

3. Does the fact that one of the N11 is a candidate country for accession to the Union playany role when considering a possible single strategic approach to these countries?

Question for written answer E-010857/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: EU relations with the N11

Brazil, Russia, India and China were designated as BRIC countries by Goldman Sachs in 2003 in the light of their rapid economic development and huge economic potential, and the European Union has opened up its external relations to these emerging economies over the past few years, particularly in terms of cooperation, political dialogue and trade relations.

In 2005, Goldman Sachs identified 11 new emerging economies as BRICs successor countries and categorised them in a group known as N11 ('Next 11'), which comprises Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Korea, Turkey and Vietnam.

The N11 countries share common characteristics such as rapid population growth, high industrial capacity and strong economic potential, which point to an expanding market in terms of both consumers and international business opportunities.

1. Has the European Union defined a single strategy for its future external relations with the N11 emerging countries?

2. How does the Commission see the future development of its relations with Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, South Korea, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Turkey and Vietnam as N11 countries?

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(13 November 2013)

The EU maintains close contacts with all 11 countries. However, as these countries are in many respects very different among themselves, their diversity is also reflected in the nature of our relationships. Moreover, some of these countries are immediate neighbours and/or long standing partners of the EU, which results in a more developed bilateral agenda. With regard to others, cooperation may be less developed at present but it is also expanding step by step. Last but not least, the relationships are governed by the current bilateral and multilateral political agenda.

While it is difficult to measure (let alone rank) the overall quality of dynamic, and in many cases vibrant relationships, the fact that one of these countries is a candidate for EU accession has obviously a significant impact. As a matter of fact, among these countries Turkey happens to be the biggest trading partners of the EU, followed by the Republic of Korea.

The EU is committed to further strengthening its partnership with these countries in the future.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010845/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(24 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Concretização do mercado único digital europeu

Considerando que:

— O mercado único digital da União Europeia é uma necessidade nos tempos atuais, em termos de mobilidade, de comunicação e de competitividade, para as empresas europeias e para os cidadãos europeus;

— A realização do mercado único deve servir para fomentar a competitividade no interior da União Europeia, mas também face aos seus concorrentes no mundo, tais como os Estados Unidos e a China;

— A Comissão Europeia apresentou recentemente, a 11 de setembro, um pacote legislativo com vista à realização de um mercado único europeu de telecomunicações digitais, cujo enfoque está em reduzir os encargos dos consumidores, simplificar a burocracia das empresas e promover um conjunto de direitos para os utilizadores e fornecedores dos serviços.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Qual o horizonte temporal previsto para que a União Europeia se torne, tal como previsto nas suas propostas legislativas, um líder global na área digital?

2. Quais os incentivos que a Comissão vê como necessários para que as empresas europeias se dediquem a este setor e se tornem mais competitivas?

3. Quais os vetores essenciais de tal reforma, para que se consiga alcançar o objetivo de ligar o continente europeu ao mundo?

Resposta dada por Neelie Kroes em nome da Comissão
(18 de novembro de 2013)

A Europa tem de voltar a ser um líder na cena mundial, com fortes intervenientes no domínio digital, redes de primeira classe e uma população qualificada nas tecnologias digitais. Para isso, precisa de um verdadeiro mercado único no setor das telecomunicações. A Comissão apresentou uma proposta concreta para eliminar os principais entraves a que a Europa se torne um verdadeiro «continente conectado» o mais rapidamente possível. A Comissão gostaria que as novas regras entrassem em vigor até ao final da atual legislatura, a fim de poderem começar a produzir efeitos para a economia europeia a partir de 2014.

A proposta tem por objetivo permitir que os operadores prestem serviços transfronteiriços na Europa e que os cidadãos e as empresas tenham acesso a esses serviços sem restrições transfronteiras nem custos injustificados. Um nível elevado de coerência regulamentar e os *inputs* adequados no domínio digital (atribuição coordenada de frequências, produtos de acesso fixo normalizados) criarão as condições para o acesso, a expansão e os investimentos nas futuras redes. As regras de neutralidade da Internet irão promover a sua abertura enquanto meio para atingir os mercados de massas e criar novos serviços e aplicações, bem como para desenvolver serviços especializados de alta qualidade.

Em consequência, os prestadores de serviços de telecomunicações poderão obter economias de escala em toda a Europa, crescer e fazer novas ofertas inovadoras, permitindo assim que os consumidores gozem de mais possibilidades de escolha. Todas as empresas beneficiarão de um mercado europeu das telecomunicações mais dinâmico e competitivo. Outros setores, como a indústria automóvel, o setor da logística ou o setor da energia beneficiarão de uma maior conectividade e de ganhos de produtividade, por exemplo, através de aplicações em nuvem omnipresentes, objetos conectados e prestação de serviços integrados para empresas multilocais que operam em vários Estados-Membros.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010845/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Implementation of the European digital single market

The European digital single market is a modern necessity for the mobility, communication and competitiveness of European businesses and individual citizens.

Creation of the single market should serve as an impulse to competitiveness both within the EU and vis-à-vis Europe's main international competitors, such as the United States and China.

On 11 September 2013, the Commission presented a legislative package for the creation of the European single market in digital telecommunications, which seeks to reduce the burden on consumers, simplify bureaucracy for businesses and promote a series of rights for users and suppliers of services.

1. What is the expected time-frame for the EU becoming a world leader in the digital field, as posited in the Commission's legislative proposals?

2. What incentives does the Commission see as being needed to encourage European businesses to focus on this sector and become more competitive?

3. What are the key elements which will enable this reform to achieve its goal of connecting Europe to the rest of the world?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(18 November 2013)

Europe must regain lead in the global arena, with strong digital players, first-class networks, and a digitally skilled population. For this to happen, Europe needs a true Single Market in Telecoms. The Commission delivered a concrete proposal to remove major bottlenecks hindering Europe from becoming a truly Connected Continent as quickly as possible. The Commission would like to see the new rules in place before the end of the current legislature so that they can start producing effects for Europe's economy as of 2014.

The proposal aims at allowing operators to deliver cross-border services in Europe and citizens and businesses to access such services without cross-border restrictions or unjustified costs. A high-level of regulatory consistency and the right digital inputs (coordinated spectrum assignment, standardised fixed access products) will create the conditions for entry and expansion and for investments in future networks. The net neutrality rules will promote the open Internet as a means of reaching mass markets and developing new services and applications, as well as scope to develop high-quality specialised services.

As a result, telecoms providers will be able to derive economies of scale across Europe and grow, and to provide new innovative offers, allowing thus consumers to benefit from enhanced choice. All businesses will benefit from a more dynamic and competitve European telecoms market. Other sectors like the automotive industry, the logistics sector or the energy sector will benefit from enhanced connectivity and productivity gains through e.g. ubiquitous cloud applications, connected objects and integrated service provision for multi-site companies operating in several Member States.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010846/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(24 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Discriminação por parte de entidade a emigrante português

Tive conhecimento de uma situação de discriminação de um cidadão português, empregado há 8 anos com contrato fixo e residência nas Canárias, no que respeita à atribuição de crédito por parte da Santander Consumer Finance, entidade de financiamento de crédito espanhola, a qual exige aos cidadãos europeus a apresentação de passaporte.

Outras duas entidades financeiras, Oney e Cetelem, recusaram crédito sem qualquer explicação concreta, tendo referido que se tratava de segredo bancário.

Assim pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem a Comissão Europeia conhecimento da exigência da apresentação de passaporte a cidadãos oriundos de Estados-Membros da EU para a atribuição de crédito bancário, por parte de entidades bancárias, nomeadamente da Santander Consumer Finance? Não considera que esta atitude configura uma situação discriminatória?

2. Não considera que a recusa da concessão de crédito deve ser acompanhada de uma explicação concreta e objetiva?

Resposta dada pelo Comissário Michel Barnier em nome da Comissão
(25 de novembro de 2013)

Os factos, tal como descritos, não fornecem elementos de prova suficientes para determinar a existência de uma prática discriminatória. Os serviços da Comissão analisarão em maior pormenor a questão, na condição de serem apresentadas informações complementares. Uma situação de discriminação pode advir potencialmente da imposição de um requisito apenas aos cidadãos estrangeiros e não aos clientes que sejam nacionais do país em que o banco opera.

Exigir a um cliente a apresentação de um documento de identificação pessoal pode ser legítimo, por exemplo, em consequência das obrigações no domínio da luta contra o branqueamento de capitais impostas às instituições financeiras pela Diretiva 2005/60/CE. O artigo 7.º dessa diretiva exige que os bancos apliquem medidas de vigilância da clientela «a) quando estabeleçam relações de negócio» ou «d) quando haja dúvidas quanto à veracidade ou adequação dos dados de identificação dos clientes previamente obtidos». O artigo 8.o especifica que as medidas de vigilância da clientela englobam «a) identificar o cliente e verificar a respetiva identidade, com base em documentos, dados ou informações obtidos junto de fonte independente e credível», o que inclui os documentos oficiais apresentados pelo cliente.

Além disso, a decisão de conceder (ou não) um empréstimo incumbe ao mutuante, que é a entidade responsável por avaliar os riscos e os custos inerentes à concessão desse crédito. A proposta de Diretiva relativa aos contratos de crédito para imóveis de habitação, apresentada pela Comissão ([1]), prevê que os mutuantes devem informar o consumidor dos «motivos da rejeição». Tal foi, todavia, alterado pelos colegisladores durante as negociações, tendo passado a ser «informações sobre a rejeição» e, se for caso disso, informações sobre o resultado da consulta e indicações quanto à base de dados consultada.

([1]) COM(2011) 142.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010846/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Discrimination by a credit institution against a Portuguese emigrant

A Portuguese citizen who for eight years has been in permanent employment in the Canary Islands, where he lives, has been discriminated against in connection with a loan that he was seeking to obtain from Santander Consumer Finance, a Spanish credit institution, which in such cases requires European citizens to produce their passport.

He has also been refused credit by two other financial institutions, Oney and Cetelem, which, without giving any clear-cut explanation, have merely invoked banking secrecy.

1. Is the Commission aware that citizens from Member States wishing to take out a bank loan have to produce their passport because of the requirement imposed by banks, Santander Consumer Finance included? Does it not consider this attitude to amount to discrimination?

2. Does it not consider that whenever credit is refused, the institution concerned should be obliged to provide a clear-cut objective explanation?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(25 November 2013)

The facts as described do not provide sufficient evidence to determine a discriminatory practice. The Commission services will look furher into the matter, provided that more information is submitted. Discrimination could potentially arise if a requirement is imposed only on non-nationals and not on customers who are nationals of the country where the bank is operating.

Requiring a customer to present some personal identification document can be legitimate, as for instance a consequence of anti-money laundering obligations imposed on financial institutions by Directive 2005/60/EC. Article 7 of that directive obliges banks to apply customer due diligence measures '(a) when establishing a business relationship' or '(d) when there are doubts about the veracity or adequacy of previously obtained customer identification data'. Article 8 specifies that customer due diligence measures comprise '(a) identifying the customer and verifying the customer's identity on the basis of documents, data or information obtained from a reliable and independent source' which includes official documents provided by the customer.

Moreover, the decision (or not) to grant a loan remains a decision of the lender, who is responsible to assess the risks and costs he would be exposed to. The Commission proposal for a Mortgage Credit Directive ([1]) provided that creditors must inform the consumer of the 'reasons for rejection'. This has however been modified by co-legislators during negotiations, into 'information of the rejection' and where applicable, information about the result of the consultation and the particulars of the database consulted.

([1]) COM(2011) 142.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-010858/13
alla Commissione
Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(24 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Nuova discarica a Falcognana quale sito sostitutivo della discarica di Malagraotta

Le autorità italiane, rappresentate dal Commissario per l'emergenza rifiuti a Roma Goffredo Sottile, hanno preso la decisione definitiva di istituire una nuova discarica a Falcognana (RM) quale sito sostitutivo della discarica di Malagrotta.

Nell'area sono presenti diversi centri abitati, un santuario, una scuola, numerose aziende agricole e un campus biomedico.

Dato l'allarme della popolazione locale, organizzata in diversi comitati cittadini, a cui l'interrogante associa i suoi forti dubbi sul rispetto della normativa UE in materia, può la Commissione eseguire una verifica del rispetto della direttiva 85/337/CEE, ed in particolare sulla procedura V.I.A. per la valutazione d'impatto ambientale e la procedura V.A.S. di valutazione ambientale strategica?

In secondo luogo, può la Commissione verificare il rispetto della direttiva 1999/31/CE?

L'Italia ha subito una condanna per il mancato rispetto di tale direttiva in relazione alla discarica di Malagrotta, in quanto i rifiuti ivi depositati non erano adeguatamente trattati e tale procedura non rispettava i requisiti minimi richiesti dalla direttiva.

A causa dell'imminente chiusura di Malagrotta, si teme che nel sito di Falcognana vengano depositati gli stessi rifiuti, seguendo la stessa procedura già precedentemente sanzionata dall'UE, con gravi rischi per la salute della popolazione locale e dell'ambiente.

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(28 ottobre 2013)

Per quanto riguarda la gestione dei rifiuti nel Lazio, nel giugno 2013 la Commissione ha adito la Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea nell'ambito della procedura di infrazione 2011/4021 in quanto dalle informazioni disponibili risulta che la Regione Lazio non dispone di capacità sufficiente per il trattamento meccanico-biologico (TMB). I rifiuti ammassati in alcune discariche del Lazio, fra cui Malagrotta, non sono pertanto sottoposti a un trattamento adeguato prima di essere collocati in discarica, in violazione delle direttive 1999/31/CE ([1]) e 2008/98/CE ([2]). La procedura di infrazione 2011/4021 è volta precisamente ad assicurare che il Lazio sia dotato della necessaria capacità di TMB, in modo che i rifiuti ammassati in tutte le discariche della regione siano adeguatamente trattati.

La scelta della localizzazione degli impianti di smaltimento dei rifiuti spetta alle autorità nazionali competenti. Pertanto, a meno che esistano prove che un determinato impianto è stato autorizzato in violazione delle pertinenti disposizioni dell'UE in materia di gestione dei rifiuti, valutazione ambientale e autorizzazione, la Commissione non può interferire con le decisioni delle autorità nazionali.

Con riguardo in particolare all'intenzione delle autorità italiane di costruire una discarica a Falcognana, la Commissione non dispone di prove da cui risulti che il progetto sia stato autorizzato in violazione della direttiva 2011/92/UE ([3]) o di altre pertinenti disposizioni dell'UE. Se tali prove dovessero diventare disponibili, la Commissione prenderà contatto con le autorità italiane.

([1]) Direttiva 1999/31/CE relativa alle discariche di rifiuti (GU L 182 del 16.7.1999, pag. 1).
([2]) Direttiva 2008/98/CE relativa ai rifiuti (GU L 312 del 22.11.2008, pag. 3).
([3]) Direttiva 2011/92/UE concernente la valutazione d'impatto ambientale di determinati progetti pubblici e privati (GU L 26 del 28.1.2012, pag. 1). Questa direttiva ha sostituito la direttiva 85/337/CEE.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010858/13
to the Commission
Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: New landfill site at Falcognana to replace the Malagrotta site

Goffredo Sottile, the Commissioner in charge of managing Rome's waste crisis, has stated on behalf of the Italian authorities that a final decision has been taken to establish a new landfill site at Falcognana, to replace the Malagrotta site.

The area contains a sanctuary, a school, many farms, a biomedical campus and a number of residential developments.

In view of the concerns expressed by local people, who have set up a number of residents' committees and whose deep scepticism regarding compliance with EU legislation in this area I share, could the Commission verify whether Directive 85/337/EC, and, in particular, the environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment procedures, have been complied with?

Could the Commission also verify whether Directive 1999/31/EC is being complied with?

Italy has been found guilty of failing to comply with that directive at the Malagrotta landfill site, in that the waste dumped there was not being processed properly in keeping with the minimum requirements laid down in the directive.

In view of the imminent closure of the Malagrotta site, there are fears that waste currently sent to it may in future be dumped at the Falcognana site, using the same methods which have already led to the imposition of penalties by the EU, giving rise to significant risks to the environment and the health of local people.

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(28 October 2013)

As concerns waste management in Lazio, in June 2013 the Commission applied to the EU Court in the framework of infringement procedure 2011/4021, because information available indicates that the Lazio Region does not have sufficient capacity for mechanic-biological treatment (MBT). Therefore, waste landfilled in some Lazio landfills, including Malagrotta, is not subjected to an adequate treatment before being landfilled, which constitutes a breach of Directive 1999/31/EC ([1]) and Directive 2008/98/EC ([2]). Infringement procedure 2011/4021 is precisely aimed at ensuring that Lazio is equipped with the necessary MBT capacity, so that the waste landfilled in all the Lazio landfills is adequately treated.

As regards the location of waste management installations, it is for the competent national authorities to choose where to build them. Therefore, unless there is evidence that a given installation has been authorised in breach of relevant EU provisions on waste management, environmental assessment and permits, the Commission cannot interfere with the national authorities' decisions.

As concerns in particular the Italian authorities' intention to build a landfill in Falcognana, the Commission has no evidence that the project has been finally authorised in breach of Directive 2011/92/EU ([3]) or of other relevant EU provisions. Should such evidence become available, the Commission will contact the Italian authorities.

([1]) Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste (Official Journal L 182, 16.7.1999).
([2]) Directive 2008/98/EC on waste (Official Journal L 312, 22.11.2008).
([3]) Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (Official Journal L 026, 28.1.2012, p. 1). This directive has replaced Directive 85/337/EC.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-010859/13
till kommissionen
Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE)
(24 september 2013)

Angående: Polisens registrering av människor och etnisk profilering

I varje land har polisen väldigt stor frihet att utveckla spaningsregister. Vilka EU-regler eller artiklar i fördraget anser ni kan användas för att även i sådana register skydda människor mot etnisk profilering eller annan diskriminerande behandling?

Om ni anser att det inte finns några regler som kan begränsa polismyndigheternas behandling av registerdata, avser ni ta några initiativ på det området?

Svar från Viviane Reding på kommissionens vägnar
(20 november 2013)

Kommissionen noterar att de nationella polisdatabaser i alla medlemsstater måste uppfylla alla krav som följer av unionens lagstiftning i den utsträckning som EU-lagstiftningen reglerar inrättande, drift och förvaltning av sådana polisdatabaser. Alla unionens styrmedel följer principerna i stadgan om de grundläggande rättigheterna, inbegripet förbudet mot diskriminering på grund av etniskt ursprung (artikel 21.1).

Direktiv 2000/43/EG[1] om jämlikhet mellan raser förbjuder diskriminering på grund av ras eller etniskt ursprung på endast ett visst antal områden, bl.a. sysselsättning, utbildning, social trygghet, hälsovård och tillgång till och tillhandahållande av varor och tjänster, inklusive bostäder. Direktivet gäller både den offentliga och den privata sektorn, men myndighetsutövning för ändamål som rör kontroll av efterlevnaden eller brottsförebyggande faller utanför direktivets räckvidd ([1]). Kommissionens reformpaket avseende uppgiftsskyddet i EU av den 25 januari 2012 innehåller ett förslag till direktiv som reglerar de krav på uppgiftsskydd som gäller för polismyndigheter. I detta direktiv föreskrivs harmoniserade krav på uppgiftsskydd för alla polisiära handläggningsärenden som som faller inom dess räckvidd och ett förbud mot profilering enbart på grundval av känsliga personuppgifter, exempelvis sådana som avslöjar en persons etniska ursprung.

([1]) Rådets direktiv 2000/43/EG av den 29 juni 2000 om genomförandet av principen om likabehandling av personer oavsett deras ras eller etniska ursprung.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010859/13
to the Commission
Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Storage of personal data and ethnic profiling by the police

In every country the police has a very wide discretion to compile search databases. In the Commission's opinion, what EU legislation or Treaty articles may be used to protect people against ethnic profiling or other discriminatory treatment, including in such databases?

If the Commission does not believe that any rules exist to restrict the police authorities' treatment of data stored in such databases, does it intend to take any initiatives in this area?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(20 November 2013)

The Commission notes that the national police databases in all Member States have to fulfil all requirements enshrined in Union legislation insofar as Union law regulates the establishment, operation and governance of such police databases. The respective Union instruments comply with the principles of the Charter of Fundamental Rights including the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of ethnic origin (Article 21(1).

Directive 2000/43/EC (1) on Racial Equality, prohibits discrimination on the basis of racial or ethnic origin only in a number of specified areas including employment, education, social security, healthcare and access to and supply of goods and services, including housing. The directive applies to both public and private sector, but the exercise of public authority for the purpose of law enforcement or crime prevention falls outside the scope of the directive ([1]). The Commission's EU data protection reform package of 25 January 2012 includes a proposal for a directive regulating the data protection requirements for police authorities. This directive will provide for harmonised data protection requirements for all police processing activities falling within its scope and includes a provision prohibiting the profiling solely on the basis of sensitive personal data such as those revealing the ethnic origin of an individual.

([1]) Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-010860/13
Komisi
Ivo Strejček (ECR)
(24. září 2013)

Předmět: Společná zemědělská politika – razantnější úprava degresivity přímých plateb je pro Českou republiku nevýhodná

Podle dostupných informací připravil poslanec Evropského parlamentu L. M. Capoulas Santos návrh, který v rámci reformy společné zemědělské politiky směřuje k razantnější úpravě nastavení tzv. degresivity přímých plateb, a svůj návrh chce prosazovat i v rámci trialogů ohledně budoucí podoby reformované společné zemědělské politiky 2014+. Navrhovaná změna je pro Českou republiku poškozující úpravou.

Pokládám proto Komisi tyto otázky:

1. Bude Komise trvat na již dohodnuté úrovni degresivity z trialogu dne 26. 6. 2013 spočívající v krácení podpor přesahujících 150 tis. € na jeden subjekt v příslušném roce o 5 %?

2. Je si Komise vědoma skutečnosti, že členské země již implementují dohodnuté elementy SZP do národního legislativního rámce a je zde vážné riziko, že nerespektování závěrů v této věci ze dne 26. 6. 2013 by vedlo k fatálnímu zpoždění implementace celé reformy?

Odpověď od pana Cioloşe jménem Komise
(14. listopadu 2013)

Politická dohoda ze dne 26. června 2013 o reformě SZP nezahrnovala části předpisů, které se týkaly víceletého finančního rámce, přičemž Evropský parlament, Rada a Evropská komise dospěly k dohodě ohledně těchto bodů až při příležitosti trojstranného jednání dne 24. září 2013.

Pokud jde o snížení plateb, bylo dosaženo dohody o povinném snížení plateb. V praxi to znamená, že část částky základní platby, která překročí 150 000 EUR, bude snížena alespoň o 5 %. Členské státy, které uplatňují „přerozdělovací platby“ a které přidělují k tomuto účelu nejméně 5 % svého národního finančního rámce, se mohou rozhodnout, že tento mechanismus snížení základní platby nebudou uplatňovat. Aby se zohlednila zaměstnanost, mohou být před výpočtem od výše základní platby odečteny mzdové náklady.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010860/13
to the Commission
Ivo Strejček (ECR)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Common agricultural policy — a more drastic adjustment of degressive direct payments is detrimental to the Czech Republic

Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos MEP has reportedly prepared a proposal in the framework of the reform of the common agricultural policy for a more rate of adjustment of so-called degressive direct payments and is seeking to push this proposal through in the trilogues on the future shape of the reformed CAP 2014+. The proposed change is detrimental to the interests of the Czech Republic.

I therefore wish to ask the Commission the following questions:

1. Will the Commission insist on the level of degressivity previously agreed in the trilogue of 26 June 2013, i.e. a 5% cut in aid in excess of EUR 150 000 per operator in a given year?

2. Is the Commission aware that Member States are already transposing the agreed changes to the CAP into their national legislation and that there is a serious risk that failure to respect the conclusions of 26 June 2013 on this matter could lead to fatal delays in implementing the entire reform?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(14 November 2013)

The political agreement of 26 June 2013 on the CAP reform did not include parts of the legislation which were related to the Multiannual Financial Framework, and it is only at the occasion of the trilogue of 24 September 2013 that an agreement has been found between the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission on those points.

As regards the reduction of the payments, the agreement has been reached on compulsory reduction of the payments. In practice, this means that the part of the amount of a basic payment that exceeds EUR 150 000 will be reduced by at least 5%. Member States which apply the 'redistributive payment' and which allocate at least 5% of their national envelope for this purpose can decide not to apply this mechanism of reduction of the basic payment. In order to take account of employment, salary costs may be deducted from the amount of basic payment before the calculation is made.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-010861/13
Komisi
Ivo Strejček (ECR)
(24. září 2013)

Předmět: Elektronický systém sledování zboží (EMCS) jako boj proti daňovým únikům

V posledních letech bylo do České republiky dovezeno několik miliónů litrů formového, mazacího nebo základového oleje pod různými obchodními názvy. Po smíchání s minerálními oleji je pak používán jako pohonná hmota. Uvedené produkty nejsou součástí elektronického sledování při dopravě a jsou zneužívány k daňovým podvodům. Podle dostupných informací uvedená situace pokračuje i nadále.

Situaci by pomohlo vyřešit zařazení těchto typů oleje do systému elektronického sledování zboží (EMCS). Pokládám proto Komisi tyto otázky:

1. Zabývala se tímto problémem Komise v době, kdy boj s daňovými úniky je prioritou?

2. V jakém stavu jsou jednání o zařazení energetických produktů zneužitelných k daňovým podvodům, neboť je lze přimíchat do minerálních olejů v takovém poměru, aby byl výsledný produkt vhodný k použití jako pohonná hmota?

Odpověď A. Šemety jménem Komise
(8. listopadu 2013)

1. Komise si je vědoma tohoto problému, který byl několikrát projednán Výborem pro spotřební daně. Dva členské státy podle čl. 20 odst. 2 směrnice Rady 2003/96/ES předložily formální žádost o vypracování rozhodnutí Komise, které by rozšířilo používání ustanovení o sledování a pohybu ve směrnici Rady 2008/118/ES rovněž na mazací oleje zařazené do kódů KN 2710 19 99 a 2710 19 91, aby bylo možné zabránit nežádoucímu používání některých mazacích olejů jako pohonných hmot. Tuto otázku rovněž zkoumala skupina odborníků sestavená útvary Komise. Poslední diskuse však ukázaly, že v současné době mnoho členských států nevidí potřebu rozšíření oblasti působnosti ustanovení o sledování a pohybu směrnice 2008/118/ES o maziva. Vzhledem k nedostatečné podpoře členských států Komise nepředložila návrh na rozhodnutí Komise podle čl. 20 odst. 2 směrnice 2003/96/ES.

2. V současnosti neexistuje mezi členskými státy shoda o opatřeních, která mají být přijata v boji proti daňovým podvodům s mazacími oleji, a znovuobnovení této problematiky na pořad jednání Výboru pro spotřební daně se momentálně neplánuje. Toto téma však může být rovněž zmíněno v rámci jednání Rady o návrhu na revizi směrnice o zdanění energie (KOM(2011) 169).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010861/13
to the Commission
Ivo Strejček (ECR)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: EMCS electronic monitoring system as a means of fighting fiscal fraud

In recent years, several million litres of moulding, lubricating or base oil have been imported into the Czech Republic under a variety of trade names. Mixed with mineral oils, it is then used as a fuel for transport. The products in question are not subject to computerised monitoring in the transport sector and are widely abused for tax evasion purposes. Available information shows that this situation persists to this day.

The problem could be resolved by including these types of oils in the Excise Movement and Control System (EMCS). I therefore wish to ask the Commission the following questions:

1. Has the Commission looked into this problem, given that the fight against fiscal fraud is a priority?

2. What is the state of progress of talks on including energy products subject to abuse for tax evasion purposes by being mixed with mineral oils to such an extent that the resulting product is suitable for use as a transport fuel?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(8 November 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the problem, which has been discussed several times by the Committee on Excise Duty. Two Member States introduced formal requests under Article 20(2) of Council Directive 2003/96/EC to establish a Commission Decision extending the application of the control and movement provisions of Council Directive 2008/118/EC to lubricating oils classified in CN codes 2710 19 99 and 2710 19 91, in order to tackle the misuse of some lubricating oils as motor fuel. The issue was also studied by an expert group organised by the Commission Services. The latest discussions showed, however, that currently many Member States do not see the need for the extension of the scope of the control and movement provisions of Directive 2008/118/EC to lubricants. Given the insufficient support from the Member States, the Commission did not proceed with a proposal for a Commission Decision under Article 20(2) of Directive 2003/96/EC.

2. For the moment there is no consensus among Member States on the measures that need to be taken to fight fiscal fraud with lubricating oils and it is currently not planned to put the issue again on the agenda of the Committee on Excise Duty. The topic might however also be touched upon in the context of the Council negotiations on the proposal for revision of the Energy Taxation Directive [COM(2011)169].

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-010862/13
Komisi
Edvard Kožušník (ECR)
(24. září 2013)

Předmět: Revize nařízení Evropského parlamentu a Rady (EU) č. 913/2010 o evropské železniční síti pro konkurenceschopnou nákladní dopravu

Na základě nařízení Evropského parlamentu a Rady (EU) č. 913/2010 o evropské železniční síti pro konkurenceschopnou nákladní dopravu byly definovány hlavní trasy koridorů pro nákladní dopravu. V rámci hledání shody v legislativním procesu se tehdy nepodařilo prosadit, aby koridor č. 7 Bucharest-ConstantaPrague-Vienna/Bratislava-Budapest Vidin-Sofia-Thessaloniki-Athens byl protažen do severoněmeckých přístavních měst.

Ačkoliv se v souvislosti s probíhajícím legislativním procesem k nařízení o hlavních směrech Unie pro rozvoj transevropské dopravní sítě hovoří o překryvu těchto koridorů, s ohledem na právní jistotu jsem toho názoru, že by mělo dojít i k revizi nařízení Evropského parlamentu a Rady (EU) č. 913/2010 o evropské železniční síti pro konkurenceschopnou nákladní dopravu.

Táži se Vás proto, zda s ohledem na právní jistotu a logickou návaznost sítě nákladních koridorů plánuje Komise revizi nařízení Evropského parlamentu a Rady (EU) č. 913/2010 o evropské železniční síti pro konkurenceschopnou nákladní dopravu tak, aby začátek koridoru pro nákladní dopravu č. 7 nebyl v Praze, nýbrž v severoněmeckých přístavních městech Hamburg – Rostock, případně alternativně došlo k prodloužení stávajícího koridoru pro nákladní dopravu č. 8 až do Prahy?

Odpověď pana Kallase jménem Komise
(5. listopadu 2013)

Nařízení (EU) č. 913/2010 Evropského parlamentu a Rady o evropské železniční síti pro konkurenceschopnou nákladní dopravu ([1]) ve své příloze definuje celkem 9 koridorů pro nákladní dopravu včetně koridoru pro železniční nákladní dopravu 7 z Prahy do Konstanty, respektive z Prahy do Atén.

Komise si je vědoma potřeb trhu, který vyžaduje prodloužení koridoru pro železniční nákladní dopravu 7 do přístavních měst severního Německa. Evropský koordinátor prioritního projektu TEN-T 22 (Atény–Sofie/Konstanta–Budapešť–Vídeň–Praha–Norimberk/Drážďany) rovněž podpořil prodloužení prioritního projektu do severních německých přístavů v souladu s dopravními profily.

Ve svém návrhu nařízení Evropského parlamentu a Rady o hlavních směrech Unie pro rozvoj transevropské dopravní sítě ([2]) Komise navrhla pro realizaci hlavní sítě vytvořit koridory hlavní sítě.

Aby se zabránilo překrývání, Evropský parlament navrhl zkoordinovat tyto koridory hlavní sítě s koridory pro železniční nákladní dopravu. Zněním návrhu, které bylo dohodnuto během jednání a má být schváleno zákonodárci, se mění příloha nařízení (EU) č. 913/2010 a zajišťuje se zeměpisná koordinace mezi koridory pro železniční nákladní dopravu a koridory hlavní sítě.

Ve znění pozměněném návrhem budou koridory pro železniční nákladní dopravu představovat železniční rozměr multimodálních koridorů hlavní sítě. Koridor pro železniční nákladní dopravu 7 se stane koridorem „Východ / východní Středomoří“ a bude prodloužen z Prahy do Bremerhavenu, Wilhelmshavenu, Rostocku a Hamburku.

([1]) Úř. věst. L 276, 20.10.2010.
([2]) KOM(2011) 650 v konečném znění.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010862/13
to the Commission
Edvard Kožušník (ECR)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Revision of Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning a European rail network for competitive freight

On the basis of Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning a European rail network for competitive freight the main routes for rail freight corridors (RFCs) have been defined. An extension of RFC 7- — Bucharest-Constanta, Prague-Vienna/Bratislava-Budapest, Vidin-Sofia-Thessaloniki-Athens — to the port cities of northern Germany has so far failed to find acceptance in the talks to secure agreement in the legislative process.

Although in the context of the current legislative process regarding the regulation on Community guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network there is talk of an overlap between these corridors, I believe that in the interest of legal certainty a revision of Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning a European rail network for competitive freight is also necessary.

My question is therefore as follows: is the Commission, with a view to establishing legal certainty and the logical continuity of the network of freight corridors, planning a revision of Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning a European rail network for competitive freight so as to ensure that the start of RFC 7 is not in Prague, but in the port cities of Hamburg and Rostock in northern Germany, or alternatively that the existing RFC 8 is extended as far as Prague?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning a European rail network for competitive freight ([1]) defines in its Annex a total of 9 rail freight corridors, including the rail freight corridor 7 from Prague to respectively Constanta and Athens.

The Commission is aware of the market needs requiring an extension of rail freight corridor 7 to the port cities of Northern Germany. The European Coordinator for the TEN-T Priority Project 22 (Athina-Sofia/Constanta-Budapest-Wien-Praha-Nürnberg/Dresden) also advocated for an extension of the Priority Project to the Northern Ports of Germany, in line with traffic patterns.

In its Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network ([2]), the Commission has proposed the establishment of Core Network Corridors to implement the Core Network.

To avoid any overlap, the European Parliament proposed to align these core network corridors with the rail freight corridors. The text of the proposal as agreed during the negotiations and to be approved by the co-Legislators amends the annex to Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 and ensures a geographical alignment between the Rail Freight Corridors and the Core Network Corridors.

The Rail Freight Corridors as amended by the proposal will constitute the rail dimension of the multimodal Core Network Corridors. Rail Freight Corridor 7 will become the 'Orient/East Med' corridor and will be extended from Prague to Bremerhaven, Wilhelmshaven, Rostock and Hamburg.

([1]) OJ L 276, 20.10.2010.
([2]) COM(2011) 650 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010863/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(24 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ανταγωνιστικότητα, διαφάνεια και προοπτικές στον ευρωπαϊκό κλάδο γούνας

Σύμφωνα με στοιχεία ([1]) του European Fur Information Center, η Ευρώπη παράγει το 52% των προϊόντων γούνας στον κόσμο, παρέχοντας 60 000 θέσεις εργασίας στο πλαίσιο 4 300 εκτροφείων γούνας, έναντι του 38% που κατέχει η Ρωσία, και η Ασία και παρουσιάζει ιδιαίτερα υψηλή αύξηση (168,8%) στην αξία παραγωγής, για την περίοδο 2009-2012, έναντι βασικών προϊόντων διατροφής όπως το γάλα, το κρέας και το ελαιόλαδο. Οι τιμές της γούνας στην ευρωπαϊκή αγορά έχουν τριπλασιασθεί και η λιανική αγορά στην Ευρώπη ανήλθε στα 2,8 δις ευρώ. Είναι αξιοσημείωτο ότι η πώληση προϊόντων γούνας αυξάνεται σημαντικά σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο (13 δις δολ. το 2007 και 15,7 δις το 2011), όπως επίσης και ότι η έρευνα του ευρωβαρόμετρου ([2]) κατέστησε σαφές πως οι καταναλωτές ενδιαφέρονται πλέον για τα πρότυπα διαχείρισης των ζωϊκών αποθεμάτων (animal welfare standards), την πληρέστερη παροχή πληροφοριών για την εκτροφή τους αλλά και θεωρούν πως υφίστανται σημαντικά περιθώρια βελτιώσεων και συντονισμού μεταξύ των παραγωγών, των κτηνιατρικών υπηρεσιών, των εθνικών αρχών και της κοινωνίας των πολιτών. Για το λόγο αυτό, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς αξιολογεί τα παραπάνω δεδομένα;

2. Ποια η στρατηγική της για την υποστήριξη και την ενίσχυση της ανταγωνιστικότητας του τομέα αυτού;

3. Διαθέτει εκτιμήσεις για τις προοπτικές ενίσχυσης και εξωστρέφειας του κλάδου;

4. Πώς αξιολογεί το επίπεδο συμμόρφωσης των ευρωπαϊκών επιχειρήσεων στο πεδίο των συνθηκών διαβίωσης των ζωϊκών αποθεμάτων και την παροχή πληροφοριών στο καταναλωτικό κοινό;

Απάντηση του κ. Tajani εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Τα τελευταία χρόνια ο ευρωπαϊκός τομέας γούνας αναπτύχθηκε σημαντικά. Τόσο η παραγωγή όσο και οι πωλήσεις γουνοδερμάτων αυξήθηκαν, ακολουθώντας μια αυξημένη ζήτηση στις παραδοσιακές αγορές (Ευρώπη και ΗΠΑ) καθώς και στις αναδυόμενες οικονομίες (π.χ. Ρωσία, Κίνα). Η τάση αυτή αναμένεται να συνεχιστεί κατά τα επόμενα έτη.

Η Επιτροπή θεωρεί τη βιομηχανία γούνας μέρος της αξιακής αλυσίδας της μόδας. Τον Σεπτέμβριο του 2012 εκδόθηκαν δύο έγγραφα εργασίας των υπηρεσιών της Επιτροπής: το ένα για την ανταγωνιστικότητα των κλάδων παραγωγής της μόδας ([3]) και το άλλο για τους κλάδους παραγωγής των ειδών πολυτελείας ([4]). Με βάση τα εν λόγω έγγραφα, έχει τεθεί σε εφαρμογή μια στρατηγική για αυτούς τους κλάδους παραγωγής που βασίζεται σε τέσσερις κύριους τομείς: (1) επένδυση στη γνώση, τις δεξιότητες, τη δημιουργικότητα και την καινοτομία, (2) προστασία των δημιουργικών προσπαθειών των εταιριών της μόδας με την ταυτόχρονη ενίσχυση της ψηφιακής αγοράς, (3) διασφάλιση ισότιμων όρων ανταγωνισμού στο διεθνές εμπόριο και (4) διασφάλιση του πλαισίου συνθηκών που είναι απαραίτητο για τη βιώσιμη ανάπτυξη.

Η δραστηριότητα της εκτροφής γουνοφόρων ζώων διέπεται από την οδηγία 98/58/ΕΚ του Συμβουλίου ([5]) και τη σύσταση που αφορά τα γουνοφόρα ζώα ([6]), η οποία εγκρίθηκε από το Συμβούλιο της Ευρώπης στις 22 Ιουνίου 1999 και αποτελεί τμήμα της νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ. Πρόσφατοι επιτόπιοι έλεγχοι που διενεργήθηκαν από το Γραφείο Τροφίμων και Κτηνιατρικών Θεμάτων σε ορισμένα κράτη μέλη, δείχνουν ότι τα κράτη συμμορφώνονται με τους ισχύοντες κανόνες. Επιπλέον, ο κλάδος παραγωγής γούνας έχει θέσει σε εφαρμογή προγράμματα εθελοντισμού, όπως το πρόγραμμα WelFur και η σήμανση Διασφάλισης της Προέλευσης που αποσκοπούν στο να διασφαλίσουν ότι τηρούνται τα απαραίτητα πρότυπα καλής διαβίωσης των ζώων σε επίπεδο γεωργικής εκμετάλλευσης.

([1]) Fur in Europe: an insigh into a much discussed industry
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_270_en.pdf
([3]) Έγγραφο εργασίας των υπηρεσιών της Επιτροπής (2012) 284 τελικό/2.
([4]) Έγγραφο εργασίας των υπηρεσιών της Επιτροπής (2012) 286 τελικό.
([5]) ΕΕ L 221 της 8.8.98, σ. 23.
([6]) http://www.coe.int/t/e/legal_affairs/legal_co-operation/biological_safety_and_use_of_animals/farming/Rec%20fur%20animals%20E%201999.asp#TopOfPage

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010863/13
to the Commission
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Competitiveness, transparency and future prospects in the European fur industry

According to the European Fur Information Centre, ([1]) 52% of fur products worldwide are manufactured in Europe (compared with 38% in Russia and Asia), providing 60 000 jobs on 4300 fur farms. Production value has risen dramatically (168.8%) over the period 2009-2012 compared with basic food commodities such as milk, meat and olive oil and fur prices on European markets have tripled, with retail sales in Europe totalling EUR 2.8 bn. At the same time, fur sales are increasing substantially on world markets (from USD 13 bn. in 2007 to USD 15.7 bn. in 2011). According to Eurobarometer's surveys ([2]), consumers are unmistakeably showing greater concern for animal welfare standards and seeking more information regarding breeding conditions and are of the opinion that there is still a substantial margin for improvement and for greater cooperation between producers, veterinary services, national authorities and civil society.

In view of this:

1. What is the Commission's opinion regarding the facts set out above?

2. What strategy is it adopting to support and strengthen competitiveness in this sector?

3. Can it say what the prospects are for consolidation and growth in this sector?

4. What is its assessment of compliance by European producers with animal welfare standards and consumer information requirements?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(7 November 2013)

In the past couple of years the European fur sector grew significantly: both the production and the sales of fur skins increased following a growing demand both in the traditional markets (Europe and the US) as well as in the emerging economies (e.g. Russia, China). This trend is expected to continue in the coming years.

The Commission considers the fur industry as part of the fashion value chain. In September 2012 two Staff Working Documents were published: one on the competitiveness of the fashion industries ([3]) and another one on the high-end industries ([4]). On the basis of these documents a strategy for these industries has been put in place. It is based on four key areas: (1) Investing in knowledge, skills, creativity and innovation; (2) Protecting the creative efforts of fashion companies while fostering the digital market; (3) Ensuring a level playing-field in international trade and (4) Assuring the framework conditions necessary for sustainable growth.

The activity of fur farming is regulated by Council Directive 98/58/EC ([5]) and the recommendation concerning fur animals ([6]) adopted by the Council of Europe on 22 June 1999, which constitutes part of EC law. Recent on-farm audits performed by the Food and Veterinary Office in certain Member States show that they comply with the existing rules. Furthermore, the fur industry has put in place voluntary programmes, such as WelFur and the Origin Assured label which aim at ensuring that adequate animal welfare standards are respected at farm level.

([1]) Fur in Europe: an insight into a much discussed industry.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_270_en.pdf
([3]) SWD(2012) 284 final/2.
([4]) SWD(2012) 286 final.
([5]) OJ L 221, 8.8.98, p 23.
([6]) http://www.coe.int/t/e/legal_affairs/legal_cooperation/biological_safety_and_use_of_animals/farming/Rec%20fur%20animals%20E%201999.asp#TopOfPage

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-010864/13
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(24 ta' Settembru 2013)

Suġġett: L-impjieg taż-żgħażagħ

B'riferenza għall-Mistoqsija Parlamentari Nru E-008447/2013 u fil-kuntest tal-prijorità miżjuda biex jitħeġġeġ l-Impjieg taż-Żgħażagħ, u minħabba t-theddida li tintilef ġenerazzjoni fil-kriżi li għaddejja bħalissa:

1. Tista' l-Kummissjoni tagħti indikazzjoni ta' meta se jiġi ppubblikat l-istudju mistenni "Working with Young People — the Value of Youth Work"?

2. Tista' l-Kummissjoni tagħti dettalji preliminari tal-istudju li għandu l-għan li jikseb fehim aktar profond tar-rwol u l-valur tax-xogħol taż-żgħażagħ madwar l-Unjoni Ewropea, u tenfasizza r-rwol speċifiku tal-istudju għaż-żgħażagħ b'anqas opportunitajiet?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Vassiliou f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(21 ta' Novembru 2013)

Il-Kummissjoni se tippubblika l-istudju "Naħdmu maż-żgħażagħ — il-valur tal-ħidma taż-żgħażagħ" matul ix-xahar ta' Novembru 2013.

Il-motivazzjoni ewlenija għat-twettiq ta' dan l-istudju kienet biex jintwera li l-ħidma taż-żgħażagħ tikkontribwixxi għal aspetti differenti ta' ħajjet iż-żgħażagħ u li tirrappreżenta varjetà rikka ta' attivitajiet li jappoġġaw iż-żgħażagħ fl-iżvilupp tagħhom.

L-istudju juri l-attivitajiet ta' ħidma taż-żgħażagħ fl-UE kollha, jeżamina l-valur ta' forom differenti tal-ħidma taż-żgħażagħ, jesplora stejjer ta' suċċess u jidentifika l-fatturi kritiċi għas-suċċess li jixprunaw ix-xogħol effettiv taż-żgħażagħ. Il-Kummissjoni se tikkomunika l-istudju lill-Onorevoli Membru hekk kif dan jiġi rilaxxat.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010864/13
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Youth work

With reference to Written Question E-008447/2013 and in the context of the increased priority given to encouraging youth work, due to the threat of losing a generation to the ongoing crisis:

1. Can the Commission give a time frame of when the anticipated study 'Working with young people — the value of youth work' will be published?

2. Can the Commission give preliminary details of the study, which aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the role and value of youth work across the European Union, highlighting its specific role for young people with fewer opportunities?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(21 November 2013)

The Commission will release the study 'Working with young people — the value of youth work' during the course of November 2013.

The main motivation for conducting this study was to show that youth work contributes to different aspects of young people's lives and that it represents a rich variety of activities supporting young people in their development.

The study depicts youth work activities across the EU, examines the value of different forms of youth work, explores success stories and identifies the critical success factors that underpin effective youth work. The Commission will communicate the study to the Honourable Member as soon as it is released.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-010865/13
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(24 ta' Settembru 2013)

Suġġett: Il-qgħad fost dawk 'il fuq minn 40 sena

Fil-ġlieda li għaddejja kontra r-rati tal-qgħad fl-UE, huwa kruċjali li l-Kummissjoni twettaq sforzi mmirati. Iż-żgħażagħ huma wieħed minn dawn il-gruppi fil-mira, u għalihom ingħata bidu għal għadd ta' programmi, jew attwalment qed jinbdew. Fl-istess ħin, madankollu, il-persuni 'il fuq minn 40 sena huma mhedda li jitħallew barra. Is-sitwazzjoni tagħhom hija partikulari billi sikwit ikollhom familja x'jieħdu ħsieb u, ladarba jispiċċaw qiegħda, għandhom anqas ċans li jerġgħu jsibu ruħhom lura fis-suq tax-xogħol.

Minkejja programmi lokali mmirati għal dan il-grupp, ma jidher li qed isseħħ l-ebda azzjoni kkoordinata Ewropea li tindirizza speċifikament dan il-grupp fil-mira. Bħalma attwalment f'xi każijiet qed issir ir-riferenza għaż-żgħażagħ bħala l-"ġenerazzjoni l-mitlufa", l-istess jista' jiġri lil dawk 'il fuq minn 40 sena.

Fid-dawl ta' dak li ntqal hawn fuq,

1. Tista' l-Kummissjoni tiddefinixxi l-programmi attwali u maħsuba li għandhom l-għan li jindirizzaw il-qgħad fost il-persuni 'l fuq minn 40 sena?

2. Kif se tiżgura l-Kummissjoni li l-qgħad fost il-persuni 'l fuq minn 40 sena jiġi inidirizzat speċifikament fi ħdan il-qafas tad-deċiżjonijiet dwar il-baġits li ġejjin?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Andor f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(19 ta' Novembru 2013)

Il-Kummissjoni taqsam it-tħassib li l-kriżi attwali għandha konsegwenzi drammatiċi għal ħafna miċ-ċittadini tagħna.

Biex tintensifika l-pass tal-ħolqien tal-impjiegi, il-Kummissjoni qed issegwi l-aġenda stabbilita fil-Pakkett dwar l-Impjiegi adottat f'April 2012, billi tappoġġa miżuri effettivi li jistimulaw id-domanda għax-xogħol u jinvestu fil-ħiliet ta' formazzjoni u l-faċilitajiet ta' tqabbil tal-impjiegi. Il-lista ta' miżuri proposti tinkludi reviżjoni intensifikata u gwida tal-karrieri, l-intensifikar tal-miżuri mmirati lejn is-suq tax-xogħol attiv, titjieb tal-aċċess għat-tagħlim tul il-ħajja u l-promozzjoni ta' prattiki ta' xogħol flessibbli — li kollha huma rilevanti għan-nies ta' età 'l fuq minn 40 sena.

It-tieni nett, ir-Rakkomandazzjonijiet Speċifiċi għall-Pajjiżi, adottati mill-Kunsill f'Lulju 2013 huma tal-parir li jkun hemm miżuri ta' appoġġ ferm akbar għal dawk qiegħda, partikolarment għal dawk li ilhom qiegħda għal żmien twil, biex jgħinuhom jiksbu l-ħiliet jew il-gwida meħtieġa biex jakkwistaw impjiegi ġodda, it-tbegħid tat-taxxi mix-xogħol, ir-riforma tal-liġi tax-xogħol biex ikun aktar faċli għall-impjegaturi li jassumu staff ġdid, u t-titjib tal-effettività u l-effiċjenza tas-servizzi tal-impjieg pubbliku u l-promozzjoni tal-istrateġiji għal anzjani attivi.

It-tielet nett, il-Fond Soċjali Ewropew bil-finanzjament ta' EUR 10 biljun fis-sena jtejjeb il-prospetti ta' impjiegi għal individwi li qed jiffaċċjaw ostakli għax-xogħol, u l-Fond Ewropew għall-Globalizzazzjoni jgħin lill-ħaddiema biex isibu impjiegi ġodda meta jkunu tilfu l-impjieg tagħhom bħala riżultat tat-tibdil fil-mudelli globali tal-kummerċ, li proporzjon kbir minnhom huma dawk ta' aktar minn 40 sena.

Fl-aħħar nett, il-Kummissjoni tirreferi lill-Onorevoli Membru għall-Komunikazzjoni riċenti tagħha li turi modi biex tissaħħaħ id-dimensjoni soċjali tal-Unjoni Ekonomika u Monetarja ([1]).

([1]) COM (2013) 690, It-tisħiħ tad-dimensjoni soċjali tal-Unjoni Ekonomika u Monetarja, Brussell, 2.10.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010865/13
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Unemployment among people over the age of 40

In the ongoing fight against unemployment rates in the EU, it is crucial that the Commission come up with targeted efforts. One group which has been the subject of such efforts is young people, with several programmes having already been initiated in their favour. At the same time, however, people over the age of 40 are at risk of being overlooked by such efforts. Their situation is quite particular, as they often have families to take care of and, once unemployed, they are less likely to find their way back into the jobs market.

Despite programmes at a local level aimed at people over the age of 40, no coordinated European action appears to be in place to target this group in particular. Just as young people are currently being referred to in some cases as a 'lost generation', the same risks happening to people over the age of 40.

In light of the above,

1. Can the Commission define current and anticipated programmes aimed at tackling unemployment among people over the age of 40?

2. How is the Commission ensuring that unemployment among people over the age of 40 is being specifically dealt with within the framework of decisions on upcoming budgets?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(19 November 2013)

The Commission shares the concerns that the current crisis has dramatic consequences for many of our citizens.

To intensify the pace of job creation, the Commission is pursuing the agenda set out in the Employment Package adopted in April 2012, by supporting effective measures to stimulate job demand and invest in skills formation and job-matching facilities. The list of proposed measures includes intensified careers review and guidance, stepping up targeted active labour market measures, improving access to lifelong-learning and promotion of flexible working practices — all of which are relevant to people above the age of 40.

Secondly, the Country Specific Recommendations adopted by the Council in July 2013 advise much stronger support measures for the unemployed, notably the long-term unemployed, to help them get the skills or guidance needed to get new jobs, shifting taxes away from labour, reforming labour law to make it easier for employers to take on new staff, improving the effectiveness and efficiency of public employment services and promoting active ageing strategies.

Thirdly, the European Social Fund with a financing of EUR 10 billion per year enhances job prospects for individuals facing obstacles to work, and the European Globalisation Fund helps workers to find new jobs when they have lost their jobs as a result of changing global trade patterns, a large proportion of which are people over the age of 40.

Finally, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its recent Communication portraying the ways to strengthen the social dimension of the Economic and Monetary Union ([1]).

([1]) COM(2013) 690, Strengthening the social dimension of the Economic and Monetary Union, Brussels, 2.10.2012.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-010866/13
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(24 ta' Settembru 2013)

Suġġett: Għanijiet li jirrigwardaw il-faqar

Kif bihsiebha l-Kummissjoni toħroġ 20 miljun ruħ barra mill-faqar u mill-esklużjoni soċjali sal-2020?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur László Andor f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(18 ta' Novembru 2013)

Bħala parti mill-istrateġija Ewropa 2020, l-Istati Membri qed jimpenjaw ruħhom li jnaqqsu l-għadd ta' nies li jgħixu fil-faqar jew li qegħdin f'riskju ta' faqar u esklużjoni soċjali b'mill-inqas 20 miljun ruħ sal-2020. Filwaqt li l-isforzi tal-Kummissjoni biex tippromwovi t-tkabbir, l-impjiegi u b'mod partikulari l-impjieg taż-żgħażagħ jikkontribwixxu biex jonqos il-faqar, il-pjattaforma Ewropea kontra l-faqar u l-esklużjoni soċjali ([1]) u l-pakkett ta' investiment soċjali li ġie adottat dan l-aħħar ([2]) jipprovdu appoġġ lill-Istati Membri apposta għal dan il-għan, sabiex dawn jilħqu l-mira għat-tnaqqis tal-faqar. Fost affarijiet oħra, il-pakkett ta' investiment soċjali msemmi fih Rakkomandazzjoni tal-Kummissjoni dwar "l-investiment fit-tfal: niksru ċ-ċiklu tal-iżvantaġġ" ([3]), dokument ta' ħidma tal-persunal tal-Kummissjoni dwar kif għandha tiġi indirizzata l-problema tal-persuni mingħajr dar ([4]) u rapport dwar l-implimentazzjoni mill-Istati Membri tar-rakkomandazzjoni tal-2008 dwar l-inklużjoni attiva ta' nies eskluži mis-suq tax-xogħol ([5]).

Fis-Semestru Ewropew, ingħatat attenzjoni speċifika lill-politika soċjali u lill-ġlieda kontra l-faqar u l-esklużjoni soċjali fir-rakkomandazzjonijiet speċifiċi għall-pajjiżi.

Fl-aħħar nett, il-proposti għall-qafas finanzjarju multiannwali li jmiss jagħtu importanza kbira lill-appoġġ għall-impjiegi u għall-politika soċjali (pereżempju, l-FSE ([6]) għandu sehem akbar u hemm ammont speċifiku fih li huwa previst għall-inklużjoni soċjali). Azzjoni speċifika tikkonsisti fil-Fond il-ġdid għal Għajnuna Ewropea għall-Persuni l-Aktar fil-Bżonn, li jindirizza n-nuqqas ta' ikel, in-nuqqas ta' dar u t-tiċħid materjali tat-tfal.

([1]) "Il-Pjattaforma Ewropea kontra l-Faqar u l-Esklużjoni Soċjali: Qafas Ewropew għall-koeżjoni soċjali u territorjali" (COM(2010) 758 finali).
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=mt&newsId=1807&moreDocuments=yes&tableName=news
([3]) C(2013) 778 finali, 20.2.2013.
([4]) SWD(2013)42, 20.2.2013.
([5]) SWD(2013)39, 20.2.2013.
([6]) Il-Fond Soċjali Ewropew.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010866/13
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Poverty targets

How does the Commission plan to lift 20 million people out of poverty and social exclusion by 2020?

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

The commitment to have at least at least 20 million fewer people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion by 2020 is made by EU Member States as part of the Europe 2020 strategy. While the Commission's efforts to promote growth, employment and in particular youth employment contribute to reducing poverty, dedicated support to Member States in achieving the target to reduce poverty is provided through the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion ([1]) as well as by the recently adopted Social Investment Package ([2]). The latter contains, among others, a Commission recommendation on 'investing in children — breaking the cycle of disadvantage' ([3]), a staff working document on confronting homelessness ([4]) and a report on the implementation by Member States of the 2008 recommendation on active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market ([5]).

Within the European Semester, specific attention has been paid to social policy and the fight against poverty and social exclusion in the country specific recommendations.

Finally, the proposals for the next multi-annual financial framework give an important place to support to employment and social policy (e.g. a greater share for the ESF ([6]) as well as a specific amount inside the ESF foreseen for social inclusion). A specific action consists of the new Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived addressing food deprivation, homelessness and material deprivation of children.

([1]) 'The European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion: A European framework for social and territorial cohesion' (COM(2010) 758 final).
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en&newsId=1807&moreDocuments=yes&tableName=news
([3]) C(2013)778 final, 20.2.2013.
([4]) SWD(2013)42, 20.2.2013.
([5]) SWD(2013)39, 20.2.2013.
([6]) European Social Fund.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010867/13
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(24 septembre 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Représailles d'Israël après la publication des lignes directrices de l'Union sur les colonies

Depuis la publication des lignes directrices de l'Union interdisant le financement de projets israéliens dans les territoires situés au-delà des lignes de 1967 — la Cisjordanie, le plateau du Golan et Jérusalem-Est —, les représailles d'Israël contre les projets européens sur les territoires occupés et leur population n'ont cessé d'être rapportés tant par la presse que par des diplomates européens et des responsables d'ONG sur le terrain.

Avec ces lignes directrices, la Commission s'engage à ce que toutes les entreprises, institutions ou fondations situées dans les colonies israéliennes considérées comme illégales en vertu du droit international ne puissent plus bénéficier de subventions, de bourses, de prix et de prêts financiers de la part de l'Union à partir du 1er janvier 2014. Cette mesure garantit la conformité des financements européens octroyés à Israël avec l'obligation prévue par le droit international de ne pas reconnaître la souveraineté d'Israël sur les territoires occupés et de garantir le respect des conventions de Genève.

Les habitants de Gaza, qui, depuis le 15 août, ont vu le poste égyptien de Rafah réduire considérablement leurs mouvements, se retrouvent isolés de l'extérieur avec tous les manques que cela implique pour satisfaire les besoins les plus élémentaires de toute une population qui est sur le point de vivre une crise humanitaire de grande ampleur. Le seul point de passage est celui d'Erez, à l'extrémité nord de la bande de Gaza, avec un accès très limité réservé aux cas médicaux sérieux ou à quelques entrepreneurs palestiniens.

La réaction d'Israël aux lignes directrices de l'Union a été d'ordonner à l'armée israélienne de geler plusieurs projets financés par l'Union européenne en Cisjordanie, dont un programme d'entraînement de la police. Ce gel a des conséquences directes sur le bien-être de la population palestinienne en influant sur des services tels que le traitement des déchets et des eaux usées, pour lesquels les Européens construisent des infrastructures, qu'ils équipent.

En outre, l'armée a cessé d'émettre des permis d'entrée dans Gaza pour les membres de l'Union et des ONG en charge de l'aide humanitaire, ce qui empêche de suivre les projets, d'inspecter les installations et, aussi, de savoir ce qu'est réellement en train de subir une population privée de toute aide et contact extérieurs.

1. La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante est-elle informée de la «fermeture» du poste d'Erez au personnel et aux représentants de l'Union ainsi qu'aux représentants des ONG?

2. Quelles mesures ont été prises vis-à-vis d'Israël dans ce nouveau cas de violation des Droits de l'homme et vis-à vis de la population palestinienne, et notamment de Gaza, pour palier les besoins urgents qui augmentent de jour en jour?

Réponse donnée par Mme Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(21 novembre 2013)

L'UE est parfaitement au courant de la situation à Gaza évoquée par l'Honorable Parlementaire. Le blocus continu de Gaza, associé au récent durcissement intervenu au point de passage de Rafah et encore aggravé par la fermeture de près de 300 tunnels entre Gaza et la frontière égyptienne, est source de préoccupation.

Par l'intermédiaire de son mécanisme Pegase ([1]), l'UE met des ressources d'une importance capitale à la disposition de la population de Gaza, notamment pour le versement d'allocations sociales aux familles palestiniennes vulnérables. En outre, l'UE soutient la société civile palestinienne et vient en aide, en tant que principal bailleur de fonds de l'UNRWA ([2]), aux réfugiés, qui représentent 70 % de la population.

L'UE coopère actuellement avec les autorités israéliennes pour résoudre le problème de l'accès des fonctionnaires de l'UE à Gaza et de l'octroi de permis d'entrée aux agents locaux et contractuels venant de Cisjordanie. Il convient de noter que seules les ONG ([3]) mettant en œuvre les activités spécifiques de l'UE se sont vu interdire l'accès à Gaza. L'UE espère retrouver rapidement un accès régulier et sans restrictions; la récente visite (en octobre 2013) à Gaza du représentant de l'UE établi à Jérusalem-Est est un signe positif en ce sens.

([1]) Mécanisme Palestino-Européen de Gestion de l'Aide Socio-Économique.
([2]) Office de secours et de travaux des Nations unies.
([3]) Organisations non gouvernementales.

L'UE attache une grande importance à l'accès et continuera d'insister sur le libre acheminement de l'aide humanitaire. Elle apporte une aide humanitaire sous la forme de services de santé et d'aide psycho-sociale d'urgence, de subventions en espèces et d'actions de préparation aux situations d'urgence. La moitié du budget humanitaire de la Commission en faveur de la Palestine est consacrée à Gaza. L'UE a réclamé à plusieurs reprises l'ouverture immédiate, durable et sans conditions de points de passage pour l'aide humanitaire, les biens et les personnes, depuis et vers Gaza. Elle continuera d'utiliser toutes les possibilités offertes par le dialogue instauré à différents niveaux, dans le cadre de l'accord d'association UE-Israël, pour évoquer des sujets de préoccupation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010867/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Israeli reprisals following the publication of EU guidelines concerning Israeli settlements

Since the EU published guidelines prohibiting the funding of Israeli projects located in territories beyond that country's 1967 borders, i.e. the West Bank, the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem, a steady stream of reports have emerged — in the press and from European diplomats and senior officials of NGOs working on the ground — of Israeli reprisals against European projects in the occupied territories and people living there.

The guidelines are intended to ensure that, as of 1 January 2014, no company, institution or foundation based in Israeli settlements regarded as illegal under international law will be eligible to receive subsidies, grants, prizes or loans from the EU. They have been drawn up so that EU funding is granted to Israel in a manner consistent with the international legal obligations not to recognise that country's claim to sovereignty over the occupied territories and to uphold the Geneva Conventions.

Since 15 August 2013, tighter controls imposed at the Rafah crossing on the border with Egypt have made it much more difficult for local people to leave Gaza. An entire population finds thus itself cut off from the outside world, deprived of basic necessities and facing an imminent, massive humanitarian crisis. The only crossing available is at Erez, at the northern end of the Gaza Strip, and it is open only to persons requiring medical treatment and a select number of Palestinian businesspeople.

Israel's reaction to the publication of the EU guidelines has been to order its army to block several EU-funded initiatives in the West Bank, including a police training programme. This policy is having a direct impact on the well-being of the Palestinian people, affecting services such as the treatment of household waste and waste water, for which the necessary infrastructure is provided by the EU.

What is more, the Israeli Defence Force has stopped issuing entry permits for the Gaza Strip to EU officials or representatives of humanitarian organisations, thereby preventing them from monitoring projects, from inspecting installations and from witnessing at first hand the hardship that is being inflicted on the Palestinians, who are cut off from all assistance from and all contact with the outside world.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware that the Erez crossing has been 'closed' to staff and representatives of the European Union and representatives of NGOs?

2. What action has been taken vis-à-vis Israel in response to this latest human rights violation, and vis-à-vis the Palestinians, particularly those in Gaza, in an effort to meet their immediate needs, which are becoming more pressing every day?

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

The EU is well aware of the situation in Gaza referred to by the Honourable Member. The continued Gaza blockade coupled with the recent tightening of the Rafah crossing and further exacerbated by the closure of almost 300 tunnels between the Gazan and the Egyptian border, is a cause for concern.

Through its PEGASE ([1]) mechanism, the EU directs crucial resources to the population of Gaza, including the provision of social allowances to vulnerable Palestinian families. Additionally, the EU supports Palestinian civil society and, as UNRWA's ([2]) main donor, also supports the refugees, who make up 70% of the population.

The EU is currently working with the Israeli authorities to resolve the issue regarding entry into Gaza for EU officials as well as permits for local and contract staff from the West Bank. It is to be noted that only NGOs ([3]) implementing specific EU business have been prevented access to Gaza. The EU expects to soon regain regular unhindered access, and a positive sign has been the recent visit to Gaza by the EU Representative in East Jerusalem in October 2013.

([1]) Mécanisme Palestino-Européen de Gestion de l'Aide Socio-Economique.
([2]) United Nations Relief and Works Agency.
([3]) Non-governmental organisations.

The EU attaches great importance to access, and will continue to insist on the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian assistance. EU humanitarian assistance consists of emergency health and psycho-social services, cash grants and emergency preparedness. Half the Commission's humanitarian budget for Palestine is dedicated to Gaza.The EU has repeatedly called for an immediate, sustained and unconditional opening of crossings for the flow of humanitarian aid, commercial goods and persons to and from Gaza. The EU will continue to use all opportunities afforded by the dialogue that takes place at different levels within the framework of the EU-Israel Association Agreement to raise issues of concern.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010868/13
do Komisji
Joanna Katarzyna Skrzydlewska (PPE)
(24 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wystąpienie holenderskiego ministra pracy i polityki społecznej w dniu 10.9.2013

Holenderski minister pracy i polityki społecznej Lodewijk Asscher zapowiedział, iż zbada wpływ emigracji zarobkowej na lokalny rynek pracy, by przekonać w ten sposób Komisję Europejską do walki z napływem taniej siły roboczej z Europy Wschodniej, szczególnie chodzi o emigrantów z Bułgarii, Rumunii i Polski. Minister twierdzi, że emigranci pracują dłużej niż pozwalają na to przepisy, są zatrudniani przez wątpliwe agencje pracy i za stawki, które określił mianem „płacowego dumpingu". Na łamach holenderskich mediów minister Asscher zapowiedział, że wspólnie z Danią i Wielką Brytanią będzie problem nagłaśniał aż coś się zmieni.

Takie zachowanie holenderskiego ministra godzi w przyjętą w Maastricht Wspólnotową Kartę podstawowych praw socjalnych, która określa prawa przysługujące wszystkim pracownikom w Unii, czyli m.in.: prawo swobodnego poruszania się, prawo do godziwej zapłaty, lepszych warunków pracy i ochrony socjalnej. Karta obowiązuje wszystkie kraje Unii Europejskie, zatem także i Holandię.

To nie pierwsze wystąpienie przedstawiciela holenderskiego rządu godzące w prawa obywateli Unii Europejskiej. W styczniu 2012 r. na łamach prasy holenderski minister spraw socjalnych i zatrudnienia udzielił wywiadu, w którym podważył zasadę równego traktowania obywateli Unii Europejskiej. W związku z powyższym chciałabym zapytać czy:

— Komisja podjęła działania mające na celu wyjaśnienie obecnej sytuacji? Jeśli tak, to jakie?

— Jeśli Komisja nie podjęła żadnych działań, to kiedy i w jaki sposób zamierza przeciwdziałać tego rodzaju wystąpieniom reprezentanta holenderskiego rządu, noszącym znamiona dyskryminacji obywateli Unii pochodzących z Europy Wschodniej?

— Czy Komisja zamierza rozpocząć procedurę zmierzającą do pociągnięcia do odpowiedzialności za naruszanie przez holenderski rząd przepisów, obowiązujących we wszystkich państwach członkowskich?

— Jakie inne środki nacisku ma zamiar zastosować Komisja wobec holenderskiego rządu, by podobne akty nierównego traktowania obywateli Unii się nie powtórzyły?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(18 listopada 2013 r.)

Komisja odsyła Szanownego Pana Posła do odpowiedzi udzielonych na pytania E-009848, E009726/2013 oraz E-009936/2013 ([1]) w podobnej sprawie.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/pl/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010868/13
to the Commission
Joanna Katarzyna Skrzydlewska (PPE)
(24 September 2013)

Subject: Speech by the Dutch Minister of Social Affairs and Employment, 10.9.2013

The Dutch Minister of Social Affairs and Employment Lodewijk Asscher has announced that he will investigate the impact of economic migration on the local job market in an effort to persuade the Commission to fight the influx of cheap labour from Eastern Europe and in particular from Bulgaria, Romania and Poland. The Minister has stated that immigrants work for longer than the regulations permit and that they are employed by dubious employment agencies and for rates which he described as 'wage dumping'. The Minister told the Dutch press that, in common with Denmark and Great Britain, the problem will get worse before anything changes.

The stance taken by Minister Asscher goes against what was adopted in the Community Charter of Fundamental Social Rights of the Maastricht Treaty, which laid down rights to which all workers in the EU are entitled, for example the right of free movement and the right to a decent income, better working conditions and social protection. The Charter applies to every Member State, and therefore also to Holland.

This is not the first time a member of the Dutch government has spoken against the rights of EU citizens. In January 2012 the Dutch Minister of Social Affairs and Employment gave a press interview in which he called into question the principle of equal treatment for EU citizens.

— Has the Commission taken steps to clarify the current situation? If so, what action has it taken?

— If the Commission has not taken any action, when and how does it intend to prevent a repetition of the kind of speech made by the Dutch Minister, which smacks of discrimination against people from Member States in Eastern Europe?

— Does the Commission intend to initiate a procedure to hold the Dutch government liable for violating the rules which are binding in all Member States?

— In what other ways does the Commission intend to put pressure on the Dutch government to ensure that this kind of unequal treatment of EU citizens is not repeated?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to the replies given to Questions E-009848, E009726/2013 and E-009936/2013 ([1]) on a similar matter.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-010869/13
an die Kommission
Petra Kammerevert (S&D)
(25. September 2013)

Betrifft: Verzicht der Kommission auf Anhörung der Betroffenen vor Verabschiedung des Vorschlags für eine Verordnung KOM(2013)0627

Gemäß Artikel 11 Absatz 3 EUV soll die Kommission umfangreiche Anhörungen Betroffener durchführen, „um die Kohärenz und die Transparenz des Handelns der Union zu gewährleisten". Am 11. September 2013 verabschiedete die Kommission einen Vorschlag für eine Verordnung über Maßnahmen zum europäischen Binnenmarkt der elektronischen Kommunikation und zur Verwirklichung eines vernetzten Kontinents (KOM(2013)0627). Dem Vorschlag, der einen einheitlichen Binnenmarkt der elektronischen Kommunikation zum Ziel hat und damit den Rechtszustand in der EU erheblich verändern dürfte, ging keine Anhörung der Betroffenen voraus.

1. Warum wurde auf eine Anhörung der Betroffenen gemäß Artikel 11 Absatz 3 EUV verzichtet?

2. Wie steht dieses Vorgehen im Einklang mit der Mitteilung der Kommission über eine Partnerschaft für die Kommunikation über Europa (COM(2007)0568) und der Vereinbarung „Europa partnerschaftlich kommunizieren" (2009/C 13/02, ABl. EU vom 20.1.2009)?

3. Warum wurde darüber hinaus darauf verzichtet, während der Ausarbeitung des Vorschlags mit der EU-Behörde für Regulierungsfragen im Telekommunikationssektor (BEREC) zusammenzuarbeiten?

Antwort von Frau Kroes im Namen der Kommission
(23. Oktober 2013)

Nachdem der Frühjahrsgipfel des Europäischen Rates die Vorlage konkreter Vorschläge bis Oktober 2013 gefordert hatte, führte die Kommission Konsultationen mit den interessierten Kreisen durch, bevor sie ihren Vorschlag für den europäischen Binnenmarkt der elektronischen Kommunikation im Hinblick auf die Schaffung eines vernetzten Kontinents vorlegte. Trotz der engen zeitlichen Vorgaben suchte die Kommission in Übereinstimmung mit der vereinbarten „Partnerschaft für die Kommunikation über Europa" das Gespräch mit den einschlägigen externen Beteiligten, um ihnen die Möglichkeit zu geben, ihr Recht auf Meinungsäußerung auszuüben und sich aktiv an der öffentlichen Diskussion zu beteiligen, und um den auf dem Markt erreichten Stand einzuschätzen und Ideen zu sammeln, wie die Bedingungen für die Schaffung eines Telekommunikationsbinnenmarkts verbessert werden können.

Im Rahmen des Konsultationsprozesses organisierte die Kommission mehrere konsultative Veranstaltungen, an denen Vertreter der Branche, der Verbraucher und der Zivilgesellschaft teilnahmen (eine Präsentation vor der Europäischen beratenden Verbrauchergruppe, in der nationale Verbraucherverbände und das BEUC zusammentreffen, am 11./12. Juni 2013, eine öffentliche Informationsveranstaltung am 17. Juni 2013 in Brüssel und eine Diskussion auf der „Digital Agenda Assembly" (Versammlung zur digitalen Agenda) und auf dem Digital-Champions-Treffen vom 18.-20. Juni 2013 in Dublin). Darüber hinaus stützt sich der Vorschlag auf die Arbeit des Gremiums europäischer Regulierungsstellen für elektronische Kommunikation (GEREK), zum Beispiel in Bezug auf den Anbieterwechsel seitens der Verbraucher, das Verkehrsmanagement und die verwaltungsmäßigen Anforderungen an die grenzüberschreitende Dienstleistungserbringung, wie auch auf die Arbeit der Gruppe für Frequenzpolitik (RSPG), z. B. zur gemeinsamen Frequenz- und Infrastrukturnutzung und zu den strategischen Herausforderungen in Bezug auf die Frequenznachfrage.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010869/13
to the Commission
Petra Kammerevert (S&D)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: Commission's decision not to consult those concerned before adopting its proposal for a regulation COM(2013) 627

In accordance with Article 11(3) of the EU Treaty, the Commission is required to carry out broad consultations with parties concerned 'in order to ensure that the Union's actions are coherent and transparent'. On 11 September 2013 the Commission adopted a proposal for a regulation laying down measures concerning the European single market for electronic communications and to achieve a Connected Continent (COM(2013) 627). The proposal, which is aimed at achieving a single market for electronic communications and which is therefore likely to bring about significant changes to the legal situation in the EU, was drawn up without consulting parties concerned.

1. Why did the Commission decide not to carry out consultations with parties concerned inaccordance with Article 11(3) of the EU Treaty?

2. How does this way of proceeding tally with the Commission communication'Communicating Europe in Partnership' (COM(2007) 568) and the 'CommunicatingEurope in Partnership' agreement (OJ 2009/C 13/02, 20.1.2009)?

3. Why did the Commission also decide not to work with the EU's Body of EuropeanRegulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC) when drawing up its proposal?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(23 October 2013)

Following the Spring European Council's call for concrete proposals by October 2013, the Commission carried out consultations with parties concerned before the adoption of its proposal concerning the European single market for electronic communications to achieve a Connected Continent. Despite the clear time constraints, in line with the 'Communicating Europe in Partnership' agreement, the Commission engaged with relevant external stakeholders in order to enable them to exercise their right to express their views and to participate actively in the public debate, in order to assess the state of the market and how to improve conditions for establishing a Telecoms Single Market.

In the consultation process the Commission organised several consultative events attended by stakeholders representing the industry, consumers and civil society (a presentation at the European Consumer Consultative Group, bringing together national consumer organisations and BEUC on 11-12 June 2013; a public information meeting in Brussels on 17 June 2013; and a discussion at the Digital Agenda Assembly and the Digital Champions' meeting in Dublin on 18-20 June 2013). In addition to that, the proposal draws upon the work of the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC), for example with regard to consumer switching, traffic management and the administrative requirements of cross-border provision of services, and/or that of the Radio Spectrum Policy Group (RSPG) for example on spectrum and infrastructure sharing and on the strategic challenges of spectrum demand.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-010870/13
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(25 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Rapporti Telefónica-banche spagnole

La compagnia spagnola di telecomunicazioni Telefónica ha da poco raggiunto un accordo che le permette di fatto di entrare in controllo, attraverso la holding Telco, di Telecom Italia, principale operatore italiano del settore.

Telefónica risulta essere una delle compagnie di comunicazione più indebitate al mondo (decine di miliardi di euro), e nei fatti sorgono molti dubbi circa la possibilità reale che questa acquisizione possa portare benefici, investimenti ed occupazione.

Può la Commissione indicare se Telefónica intrattiene relazioni finanziarie, dirette o indirette, e di quale tipo, con gli istituti di credito spagnoli oggetto di intervento del Meccanismo europeo di stabilità (MES) o beneficiari del Piano di rifinanziamento a lungo termine della BCE?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(15 ottobre 2013)

La Commissione non esamina i singoli prestiti concessi da banche spagnole alle imprese.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010870/13
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: Links between Telefónica and Spanish banks

The Spanish telecommunications company Telefónica recently reached an agreement to take a controlling stake in Telco, the holding company of the main Italian telecomms operator, Telecom Italia.

The transaction will make Telefónica one of the most leveraged telecommunications companies in the world, with debts amounting to tens of billions of euros, prompting speculation as to whether the purchase will in fact generate profits, investment and jobs.

Can the Commission say whether Telefónica has direct or indirect links with Spanish credit institutions which are in receipt of support under the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) or the ECB's long-term refinancing plan, and can it say what form those links take?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(15 October 2013)

The Commission does not review individual loans granted by Spanish banks to undertakings.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-010871/13
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D)
(25 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Accelerarea procedurilor pentru sprijinul persoanelor și zonelor afectate de inundații

Din cauza inundațiilor produse în această lună în județul Galați, nouă persoane, printre care și o fetiță de opt ani, și-au pierdut viața, peste 6 091 de persoane au fost evacuate, 1 735 de locuințe au fost inundate, 35 fiind distruse complet, 11 drumuri județene și 463 de poduri și podețe au fost afectate de inundații, precum și 3 042 de hectare de teren agricol. În lunile mai și iunie au avut loc în sudul și estul Germaniei și statele vecine inundații care au generat pierderi de mai mult de 12 miliarde de euro.

Din păcate, procedurile prin care persoanele și regiunile afectate de inundații primesc sprijin comunitar sunt îndelungate, uneori fiind necesare între 11 și 18 luni pentru ca cei afectați să beneficieze de sprijinul comunitar.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia dacă are în vedere accelerarea procedurilor prin care Comisia poate sprijini, din fonduri europene, refacerea zonelor afectate de inundații?

Răspuns dat de dl Hahn în numele Comisiei
(23 octombrie 2013)

La 25 iulie 2013, Comisia a prezentat o propunere de modificare a Fondului de solidaritate al UE, care are ca scop simplificarea normelor existente, astfel încât ajutorul să poată fi plătit mai repede. De exemplu, Comisia propune reducerea duratei procedurilor administrative, prin fuzionarea celor două etape privind aprobarea și punerea în aplicare într-un singur acord, pentru ca fondul să fie mai rapid și mai eficient. Cu toate acestea, așa cum a confirmat cadrul financiar multianual 2014-2020, creditele bugetare necesare pentru a efectua plăți din acest fond vor fi prelevate tot în afara cadrului bugetar normal al UE, ceea ce necesită aprobarea unui buget rectificativ de către Parlamentul European și Consiliu, de la caz la caz.

Pe lângă sprijinul acordat în cadrul Fondului de solidaritate pentru intervenții de urgență și de reabilitare, Comisia promovează măsuri de prevenire a inundațiilor în mai multe bazine hidrografice, în paralel cu pregătirea unei cartografieri a riscului de inundații și această prioritate va fi menținută și în perioada următoare.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010871/13
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: Speeding up the procedures for supporting people and areas hit by floods

Nine people, including an eight-year-old girl, died in the floods that hit Galaţi county this month. A total of 6 091 people were evacuated, 1 735 homes were flooded, of which 35 were completely destroyed, and 11 county roads and 463 bridges and footbridges were damaged by the floods, along with 3 042 hectares of farmland. Southern and eastern Germany and neighbouring countries were also affected by floods in May and June 2013, causing losses amounting to more than EUR 12 billion.

Regrettably, the procedures through which people and regions affected by floods can receive Community support are lengthy, and it can take between 11 and 18 months for such support to reach those affected.

Is the Commission planning to speed up the procedures through which the Commission can provide European funding to support the restoration of areas hit by floods?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(23 October 2013)

On 25 July 2013, the Commission presented a proposal amending the EU Solidarity Fund which aims to simplify the existing rules so that aid can be paid out more rapidly than is currently the case. For instance, the Commission proposes to shorten administrative procedures by merging two stages of approval and implementation into one agreement to make the Fund quicker and more effective. However, as confirmed by the 2014-2020 Multi annual Financial Framework, budget appropriations necessary to make payments from the Fund will continue to be raised outside the normal EU budget which necessitates the approval of an amending budget by the European Parliament and Council on a case by case basis.

In addition to the support granted under the Solidarity Fund for emergency and rehabilitation operations, the Commission is promoting flood prevention measures in several river basins, in parallel with the preparation of flood risk mapping and this priority will continue to be supported in the next period.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010872/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(25 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ενίσχυση απασχόλησης των νέων από την Ευρωπαϊκή Τράπεζα Επενδύσεων

Σε πρόσφατη παρέμβασή του από το βήμα της ολομέλειας του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου, ο Επίτροπος κ. Άντορ σημείωσε πως σε ορισμένα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ — ιδίως στην Γερμανία — η ΕΤΕπ με ιδιαίτερη επιτυχία συμμετέχει στη στήριξη, μέσω ευνοϊκού δανεισμού, μικρομεσαίων επιχειρήσεων που προσλαμβάνουν νέους.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Σε ποια κράτη μέλη εφαρμόζεται το συγκεκριμένο μέτρο; Ποιο το ευνοϊκό επιτόκιο της ΕΤΕπ προς τις μικρομεσαίες επιχειρήσεις;

— Αναμένεται να επεκταθεί το μέτρο στο σύνολο των κρατών μελών και ιδίως σε εκείνα τα κράτη μέλη που πλήττονται από υψηλή ανεργία;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Συμπληρωματικά ως προς την πρωτοβουλία της Επιτροπής για την απασχόληση των νέων, ο όμιλος ΕΤΕπ έχει δρομολογήσει πρόγραμμα με στόχο την αύξηση της απασχόλησης για τους νέους σε ολόκληρη την ΕΕ, με τίτλο «Δεξιότητες και θέσεις εργασίας — επενδύσεις για τη νεολαία». Το πρόγραμμα εστιάζεται στη βελτίωση της πρόσβασης των ΜΜΕ σε χρηματοδότηση και, ταυτόχρονα, στη σύνδεση της χρηματοδότησης του ΕΤΕπ με την απασχόληση των νέων («Θέσεις εργασίας για τους νέους»), καθώς και στη βελτίωση της απασχολησιμότητας των νέων μέσω της εστίασης σε σχέδια που επικεντρώνονται στην εκπαίδευση, την επαγγελματική κατάρτιση και τη χρηματοδότηση σπουδαστών («Επενδύσεις σε δεξιότητες»). Το πρόγραμμα εστιάζεται σε όλα τα 28 κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ, και όλα είναι επιλέξιμα για στήριξη.

Από την έναρξη της πρωτοβουλίας του Ιουλίου 2013, πάνω από 2 δις ευρώ των δανείων των ΜΜΕ που υποστηρίζονται από τον όμιλο ΕΤΕπ χορηγήθηκαν σε ΜΜΕ σε περιφέρειες της ΕΕ όπου η ανεργία των νέων είναι μεγαλύτερη του 25%, και υπήρξαν πολλές εγκρίσεις δανείων για επενδύσεις στον τομέα της επαγγελματικής εκπαίδευσης και κατάρτισης.

Η ΕΤΕπ μπορεί να συγκεντρώνει κεφάλαια σε συμφέρουσες τιμές. Τα οφέλη που πραγματοποιούνται μετακυλίονται στους πελάτες του, οι οποίοι πληρώνουν μικρό μόνο περιθώριο κέρδους ώστε να καλυφθούν οι δαπάνες της ΕΤΕπ και, ανάλογα με την περίπτωση, ένα περιθώριο κινδύνου. Στην περίπτωση των ΜΜΕ ή των μεσαίου μεγέθους επιχειρήσεων, τις οποίες η ΕΤΕπ κατά κανόνα στηρίζει μέσω ενδιάμεσων χρηματοπιστωτικών οργανισμών, η ΕΤΕπ εξασφαλίζει ότι τα οφέλη μεταβιβάζονται από τους ενδιάμεσους χρηματοδοτικούς οργανισμούς στον τελικό δικαιούχο, για παράδειγμα με τη μορφή μειώσεων των επιτοκίων ή μεγαλύτερων χρονικών διαστημάτων ισχύος.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010872/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: Support for youth employment from the European Investment Bank

In a recent intervention during the plenary session of the European Parliament, Commissioner Antor remarked that in certain EU Member States — particularly Germany — the EIB implements favourable lending with considerable success to strengthen small and medium-sized enterprises that hire young people.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— In which Member States is the specific measure being implemented? What is the EIB's favourable interest rate for small and medium-sized enterprises?

— Is the measure to be extended to all Member States, in particular those that are affected by high unemployment?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(26 November 2013)

In complement to the Commission's Youth Employment Initiative, the EIB Group has launched a 'Skills and Jobs — Investing for Youth' programme to boost jobs for young people across the EU. The programme focuses on improving access to finance for SMEs and at the same time linking the EIB financing to the employment of young people ('Jobs for Youth'), as well as on enhancing the employability of young people by targeting projects focused on education, vocational training and student finance ('Investment in Skills'). The programme's focus is on all 28 EU Member States, and all qualify for support.

Since the launch of the initiative in July 2013, more than EUR 2bn of SME-loans supported by EIB were granted to SMEs in regions within the EU where youth unemployment is higher than 25%, and there have been several loan approvals for investments in vocational education and training facilities.

The EIB can raise funds at advantageous rates. The benefits thus incurred are passed on to its clients, which pay only a small mark-up to cover the EIB's costs and, if applicable, a risk margin. In the case of SMEs or medium-sized enterprises, which the EIB typically supports via financial intermediaries, the EIB ensures that benefits are passed by the intermediary financing institutions to the final beneficiary, for example in the form of interest rate reductions or longer tenors.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010873/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(25 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Επιδημική έξαρση του ιού HIV στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με νέα στοιχεία του ΚΕΕΛΠΝΟ, στην Ελλάδα συνεχίζει να βρίσκεται σε επιδημική έξαρση ο ιός HIV στον πληθυσμό των εξαρτημένων ατόμων. Ο νέος τρόπος μετάδοσης του ιού οφείλεται κυρίως στην κοινή χρήση σύριγγας. Παράλληλα, σε έγγραφο του, το Υπουργείο Υγείας παρατηρεί ότι «σε ένα περιβάλλον οικονομικής και κοινωνικής κρίσης με πολύ υψηλά ποσοστά ανεργίας, οι χρήστες ουσιών, ήδη άνεργοι στην πλειονότητά τους, χάνουν το κίνητρό τους για θεραπεία» και ακόμη ότι «καθώς η ελπίδα για μια καλύτερη ζωή και το κίνητρο για θεραπεία μειώνονται, ενισχύεται η τάση των εξαρτημένων να μη λαμβάνουν στοιχειώδη μέτρα προστασίας της υγείας τους».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Είναι εφικτή η περαιτέρω ενίσχυση στην Ελλάδα με κοινοτικούς πόρους του προγράμματος «Αριστοτέλης», το οποίο αφορά την διανομή βελονών και συριγγών (NSP) σε χρήστες;

— Είναι δυνατή η κινητοποίηση κοινοτικών πόρων, ειδικά για καμπάνιες ενημέρωσης των χρηστών και για την υποστήριξη προγραμμάτων αποκατάστασης, προκειμένου να αντιμετωπιστεί η δραματική αυτή αύξηση των κρουσμάτων του ιού HIV;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη σχετικά με τη διάδοση της επιδημίας HIV/AIDS μεταξύ των χρηστών ενδοφλέβιων ναρκωτικών στην Αθήνα. Η Επιτροπή έχει στηρίξει πάνω από 140 σχέδια που στοχεύουν στην καταπολέμηση του HIV/AIDS με περίπου 22 εκατομμύρια ευρώ στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος υγείας της ΕΕ. Τα εν λόγω σχέδια υπήρξαν καθοριστικά για την ανάπτυξη συνεργασίας μεταξύ οργανώσεων που δραστηριοποιούνται στον τομέα του HIV/AIDS ανά την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, συμπεριλαμβανομένων και δραστηριοτήτων που σχετίζονται με την πρόληψη του HIV/AIDS μεταξύ χρηστών ενδοφλέβιων ναρκωτικών.

Οι στόχοι του προγράμματος Αριστοτέλης είναι η προφύλαξη από τον HIV των χρηστών ενδοφλέβιων ναρκωτικών στην μητροπολιτική περιφέρεια της Αθήνας, η συμβολή στη μείωση της συχνότητας εμφάνισης κρουσμάτων HIV μεταξύ των χρηστών ενδοφλέβιων ναρκωτικών με την παροχή δέσμης μέτρων για την πρόληψη, θεραπείας και φροντίδας του ΠΟΥ/UNAIDS. Οι οροθετικοί συμμετέχοντες λαμβάνουν αντιϊική αγωγή στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος, το οποίο επίσης ενθαρρύνει τη συμμετοχή μεταναστών χρηστών ενδοφλέβιων ναρκωτικών μέσω πολιτισμικών διαμεσολαβητών που είναι γνώστες των γλωσσών των εν λόγω μεταναστών. Το πρόγραμμα Αριστοτέλης, εντούτοις, δεν στηρίζει την προμήθεια αναλώσιμων ιατρικών ειδών όπως βελόνες και σύριγγες.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010873/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: HIV epidemic in Greece

According to new data from the Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, there is an HIV epidemic among the population of drug addicts in Greece. The new form of virus transmission is mainly due to needle sharing. At the same time, the Ministry of Health notes in a paper that 'in an environment of economic and social crisis, with very high unemployment rates, substance abusers, the majority of whom are already unemployed, lose the motivation for treatment' and also that 'as the hope of a better life and the motivation for treatment decline, the tendency of addicts not to take basic measures to protect their health is increased'.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Is it possible to provide more Community funds to Greece under the 'Aristotelis' programme for the distribution of needles and syringes (NSP) to drug users?

— Can Community funds be mobilised, in particular, for information campaigns targeting users and to support rehabilitation programmes, in order to deal with this dramatic upsurge in cases of HIV?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(21 November 2013)

The Commission is aware of the epidemic of HIV/AIDS amongst injecting drug users in Athens. The Commission has supported more than 40 projects aimed at fighting HIV/AIDS with approximately 22 million euro under the EU Health Programme. These projects have been instrumental in developing cooperation between organisations active in the field of HIV/AIDS across the European Union, including activities related to the prevention of HIV/AIDS in injecting drug users.

The Aristotle programme objectives are to screen for anti-HIV injecting drug users in the Athens metropolitan area, to help decrease the incidence of HIV among injecting drug users to provide the WHO/ UNAIDS prevention, treatment and care package. Seropositive participants receive antiviral treatment under the programme, which also encourages the participation of migrant Injecting Drug Users via cultural mediators who are fluent in their languages. The Aristotle programme does not however support the acquisition of consumable medical supplies such as needles and syringes.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010874/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(25 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ψυχότροπες ουσίες

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή πρότεινε πρόσφατα να ενισχυθεί η ικανότητα της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης να αντιμετωπίζει τις νέες ψυχότροπες ουσίες οι οποίες χρησιμοποιούνται εναλλακτικά προς τα παράνομα ναρκωτικά, όπως η κοκαΐνη και η ουσία «έκσταση». Σύμφωνα με τους κανόνες που προτείνει η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή σήμερα, οι επιβλαβείς ψυχότροπες ουσίες θα αποσυρθούν γρήγορα από την αγορά, χωρίς να θίγονται οι διάφορες νόμιμες βιομηχανικές και εμπορικές τους χρήσεις.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Διαθέτει στοιχεία αναφορικά με τον αριθμό των σχετικών ουσιών που διακινούνται στην ΕΕ;

— Καθώς οι ουσίες είναι ολοένα και περισσότερο διαθέσιμες μέσω του διαδικτύου και κυκλοφορούν ταχύτατα μεταξύ των χωρών της ΕΕ, ποιες οι ενέργειες της ΕΕ για την καταπολέμηση της ηλεκτρονικής αγοράς ψυχοτρόπων ουσιών;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη σχετικά με την εμφάνιση και την πώληση όλο και περισσότερων νέων ψυχοτρόπων ουσιών στην εσωτερική αγορά της ΕΕ και μάλιστα και μέσω του Διαδικτύου. Από το 2005 τα κράτη μέλη έχουν κοινοποιήσει πάνω από 300 νέες ψυχότροπες ουσίες μέσω του μηχανισμού ταχείας ανταλλαγής πληροφοριών, τον οποίο διαχειρίζεται Ευρωπαϊκό Κέντρο Παρακολούθησης Ναρκωτικών και Τοξικομανίας (ΕΚΠΝΤ) και η Ευρωπόλ. Ο ρυθμός κοινοποίησης νέων ψυχοτρόπων ουσιών έχει αυξηθεί κατά τα τελευταία χρόνια με πάνω από μία ουσία να κοινοποιείται κάθε εβδομάδα.

Η Επιτροπή αναγνωρίζει τη σημασία του Διαδικτύου ως διαύλου διανομής νέων ψυχοτρόπων ουσιών. Η τελευταία μελέτη αποτύπωσης του ΕΚΠΝΤ εντόπισε 690 ηλεκτρονικά καταστήματα πώλησης νέων ψυχοτρόπων ουσιών το 2012.

Σύμφωνα με την πρόταση κανονισμού για τις νέες ψυχότροπες ουσίες ([1]), που ενέκρινε η Επιτροπή στις 17 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013, οι ουσίες που δημιουργούν κινδύνους για την υγεία, την κοινωνία και την ασφάλεια θα υπάγονται σε περιοριστικά μέτρα εμπορίας και θα αποσύρονται από όλους τους διαύλους διανομής περιλαμβανομένου και του Διαδικτύου. Επιπλέον, ο κανονισμός προβλέπει ότι το Διαδίκτυο θα χρησιμοποιείται για τη διάδοση πληροφοριών σχετικά με τους κινδύνους που δημιουργούν για την υγεία, την κοινωνία και την ασφάλεια οι νέες ψυχότροπες ουσίες, καθώς και πληροφοριών για τις υπηρεσίες πρόληψης.

([1]) Πρόταση κανονισμού του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου για τις νέες ψυχότροπες ουσίες (COM(2013)619).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010874/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: Psychotropic substances

The European Commission recently proposed an increase in the European Union's ability to deal with new psychotropic substances that are used as an alternative to illegal drugs such as cocaine and ecstasy. According to the rules proposed by the European Commission today, harmful psychotropic substances will soon be withdrawn from the market without affecting their various legitimate industrial and commercial uses.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Does it have any data on the number of relevant substances in circulation in the EU?

— As these substances are increasingly available on the Internet and they circulate very rapidly between EU countries, what actions is the EU taking to combat the marketing of psychotropic substances on line?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(21 November 2013)

The Commission is aware of the increasing emergence and sale of new psychoactive substances in the EU internal market, including over the Internet. Since 2005, Member States have notified more than 300 new psychoactive substances through the mechanism for rapid exchange of information managed by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) and Europol. The pace of notification of new psychoactive substances has accelerated in recent years, with more than one substance notified each week.

The Commission acknowledges the importance of the Internet as a distribution channel for new psychoactive substances. The EMCDDA's latest snapshot survey identified 690 online shops selling new psychoactive substances in 2012.

Under the proposal for a regulation on new psychoactive substances ([1]) adopted by the Commission on 17 September 2013, substances posing health, social and safety risks would be subjected to market restriction and withdrawn from all distribution channels, including the Internet. In addition, the proposal for a regulation points out that the Internet should be used for disseminating information on the health, social and safety risks that new psychoactive pose, and for prevention services.

([1]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on new psychoactive substances (COM(2013)619).

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010875/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(25 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Μείωση διοικητικού φόρτου για την αξιοποίηση ευρωπαϊκών κονδυλίων

Με πρόσφατη ανακοίνωσή τους, οι ελεγκτές της ΕΕ καλούν την Επιτροπή και τα κράτη μέλη να εντείνουν τις προσπάθειές τους για τη μείωση του διοικητικού φόρτου και τη διασφάλιση της πραγματοποίησης των πληρωμών των έργων που συγχρηματοδοτούνται από τα κοινοτικά ταμεία εντός εύλογου χρονοδιαγράμματος.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει για τον χρόνο που, κατά μέσο όρο απαιτείται σήμερα για την αποδέσμευση κονδυλίων από τα ευρωπαϊκά ταμεία;

— Καθώς λόγω της οικονομικής κρίσης απαιτείται η άρση των χρονοβόρων διαδικασιών προκειμένου να αυξηθεί η οικονομική αποδοτικότητα των κονδυλίων, και δεδομένου ότι και στο παρελθόν έχει ζητηθεί η συμβολή της Επιτροπής, ποιες είναι οι πλέον πρόσφατες πρωτοβουλίες της προς αυτήν την κατεύθυνση;

Απάντηση του κ. Lewandowski εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή έχει δεσμευθεί ([1]) να βελτιώσει την εκτέλεση του προϋπολογισμού για τους δικαιούχους μέσω της απλούστευσης των κανόνων σε όλα τα προγράμματα δαπανών.

Η αποδέσμευση κονδυλίων της ΕΕ προς τους δικαιούχους εξαρτάται από το είδος της διαχείρισης και ποικίλλει ανάλογα με τους ειδικούς ενωσιακούς και εθνικούς κανόνες.

Όσον αφορά την άμεση διαχείριση, ο νέος δημοσιονομικός κανονισμός, που εφαρμόζεται από την 1/1/2013, επιτρέπει ήδη στους δικαιούχους πόρων της ΕΕ να ακολουθούν ευκολότερους και σαφέστερους κανόνες και απλούστερες διαδικασίες.

Συγκεκριμένα ([2]), προβλέπονται πλέον συντομότερες προθεσμίες πληρωμής και οι δικαιούχοι μπορούν να λάβουν τα ποσά που δικαιούνται εντός 30, 60 ή 90 ημερών ανάλογα με το πόσο απαιτητικός είναι ο έλεγχος των αποτελεσμάτων που επιτυγχάνονται βάσει των συμβατικών υποχρεώσεων. Σε περίπτωση υπέρβασης των προθεσμιών πληρωμής οι δικαιούχοι μπορούν να απαιτήσουν τόκους υπερημερίας.

Για κονδύλια που υπάγονται σε επιμερισμένη διαχείριση, στην πολιτική συνοχής, το νομικό πλαίσιο έχει τροποποιηθεί ώστε να συμπεριλάβει μέτρα απλούστευσης. Για την επόμενη περίοδο, θα προστεθούν ορισμένα νέα μέτρα. Συνήθως η Επιτροπή πραγματοποιεί τις πληρωμές εντός 2 μηνών από την παραλαβή μιας έγκυρης αίτησης πληρωμής. Η προθεσμία αυτή μπορεί να είναι μεγαλύτερη, σε περίπτωση

α) έλλειψης χρηματοδότησης στον προϋπολογισμό της ΕΕ, ή

β) διακοπής/αναστολής των πληρωμών προς το κράτος μέλος.

Για την επόμενη περίοδο θα προστεθούν ορισμένα νέα μέτρα απλούστευσης ([3]).

Όσον αφορά το ΕΓΤΑΑ ([4]), τα κράτη μέλη επίσης πληρώνουν πρώτα τους δικαιούχους και μετά ζητούν από την Επιτροπή το τμήμα που αναλογεί στην ΕΕ (που συνήθως καταβάλλεται εντός 45 ημερών). Συνεπώς, τυχόν καθυστερήσεις στην πληρωμή των δικαιούχων οφείλονται μόνο στις περιφερειακές και τις εθνικές αρχές.

([1]) COM(2012)42, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0042:FIN:EN:PDF
([2]) Περισσότερες πληροφορίες για τα νέα μέτρα που θεσπίζονται με τον δημοσιονομικό κανονισμό υπάρχουν στον δικτυακό τόπο Europa στη διεύθυνση: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-501_en.htm
([3]) Αυτά περιλαμβάνουν δεσμευτική προθεσμία πληρωμής των κρατών μελών προς τους δικαιούχους, το αργότερο εντός 90 ημερών από την ημερομηνία υποβολής της αίτησης πληρωμής από τον δικαιούχο.
([4]) Ευρωπαϊκό Γεωργικό Ταμείο Αγροτικής Ανάπτυξης.

Η μείωση του διοικητικού φόρτου στο σύνολό της αποτελεί διαρκή επιδίωξη. Η Επιτροπή δεσμεύτηκε ([3]) να ενισχύσει διάφορα εργαλεία έξυπνης νομοθεσίας που διαθέτει και ξεκίνησε την εφαρμογή του προγράμματος ελέγχου της καταλληλότητας και της αποτελεσματικότητας της νομοθεσίας (REFIT).

([3]) COM(2012)746.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010875/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: Reduction of the administrative burden relating to the use of European funds

In a recent announcement, EU auditors called on the Commission and the Member States to intensify their efforts to reduce the administrative burden and secure the implementation of payments for projects co-financed by Community funds within a reasonable timeframe.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Is it able to inform me as to the amount of time currently required on average for therelease of resources from European funds?

— As the removal of these lengthy procedures is required in order to enhance the economic efficiency of funding in the economic crisis and given that the Commission's assistance has been requested in the past, what additional initiatives has it undertaken recently in this direction?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(29 November 2013)

The Commission is committed ([1]) to improving budget delivery to beneficiaries by simplifying rules in all spending programmes.

The release of EU funds to beneficiaries depends on types of management and varies depending on specific EU and national rules.

As regards direct management, the new Financial Regulation, which applies from 1/1/2013, already enables EU fund beneficiaries to follow easier, clearer rules and simpler procedures.

In particular ([2]), there are now shorter payment deadlines, and beneficiaries are entitled to receive money within 30, 60 or 90 days depending on how demanding it is to test delivered results against contractual obligations. Overrunning payment deadlines creates an entitlement to late-payment interest for beneficiaries.

Concerning funds under shared management, in cohesion policy, the legal framework has been amended to include simplification measures. For the next period some new measures will be added. The Commission normally makes payments within 2 months of receiving an acceptable payment claim. This can be longer if there is

(a) a lack of funding in the EU budget, or

(b) an interruption/suspension of payments to the Member State.

For the next period some new simplification will be added. ([3])

As for EAFRD ([4]), Member States also first pay the beneficiaries and then claim the EU part from the Commission (which is normally paid within 45 days). Therefore, any delays in payment to beneficiaries can only be attributed to the regional and national authorities.

The reduction of administrative burdens as a whole is an ongoing concern. The Commission committed ([5]) to strengthening its various smart regulation tools and launched the Regulatory Fitness and Performance Programme (REFIT).

([1]) COM(2012) 42, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0042:FIN:EN:PDF
([2]) More information on new measures introduced to Financial Regulation is available on Europa Website: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-501_en.htm
([3]) These include a mandatory deadline for payment by the Member States to beneficiaries, which is no later than 90 days from the date of submission of payment claim by the beneficiary.
([4]) European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.
([5]) COM(2012) 746.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010876/13
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(25 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Οικονομική κρίση και διασφάλιση της πρώτης οικογενειακής κατοικίας

Στην Κύπρο, όπως και σε άλλες χώρες του Ευρωπαϊκού Νότου, που τελούν κάτω από τα λεγόμενα Μνημόνια Συναντίληψης (MoU), επικρατεί μεγάλη αγωνία και κοινωνικός αναβρασμός, λόγω του διαφαινόμενου κινδύνου χιλιάδες οικογένειες να χάσουν την πρώτη οικογενειακή τους κατοικία.

Λόγω της επικρατούσας οικονομικής κρίσης και της κατακόρυφης αύξησης της ανεργίας, πολλές οικογένειες αδυνατούν να ανταποκριθούν στην αποπληρωμή των στεγαστικών τους δανείων προς τις τράπεζες, οι οποίες με βάση τις πρόνοιες του Μνημονίου πιθανόν να αρχίσουν σύντομα εξώσεις και πωλήσεις κατοικιών για να εισπράξουν τα οφειλόμενα.

Το θέμα μπορεί να λάβει ανεξέλεγκτες διαστάσεις, αφού οι πολίτες που έχασαν τις καταθέσεις τους λόγω του κουρέματος, το οποίο έγινε με σκοπό να στηριχτούν και να κεφαλαιοποιηθούν οι τράπεζες, κινδυνεύουν τώρα να χάσουν και την κατοικία τους από αυτές τις ίδιες τράπεζες.

Με την παρέμβασή μου αυτή θέλω να κρούσω τον κώδωνα του κινδύνου για το τι μπορεί να επακολουθήσει, αν δεν τεθεί άμεσα τέρμα στην απαράδεκτη αυτή κατάσταση.

Ερωτάται συνεπώς το Συμβούλιο:

1. Θεωρεί ότι οι πρόνοιες του Μνημονίου για επίσπευση της δυνατότητας εκποίησης κατοικιών είναι οικονομικά αναγκαίες και κοινωνικά αποδεκτές σε μια χώρα που αντιμετωπίζει μια πρωτοφανή οικονομική κρίση;

2. Αυτές οι πολιτικές συνάδουν με τις ευρωπαϊκές διακηρύξεις περί κοινωνικού κράτους και στήριξης των αναξιοπαθούντων λόγω της κρίσης πολιτών;

3. Υπάρχουν οποιεσδήποτε ενδείξεις ότι τέτοιες πολιτικές, οι οποίες οδηγούν σε εξαθλίωση μεγάλες μάζες του πληθυσμού, έχουν έστω και την παραμικρή πιθανότητα να συμβάλουν στην ανάκαμψη της οικονομίας;

4. Τι προτίθεται να πράξει το Συμβούλιο, ώστε να τεθεί άμεσα τέρμα στην απαράδεκτη αυτή κατάσταση, η οποία εγκυμονεί σοβαρούς κινδύνους κοινωνικής έκρηξης και ενίσχυσης του διογκούμενου αντιευρωπαϊκού αισθήματος ανάμεσα στους πολίτες;

Απάντηση
(16 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Στις 25 Μαρτίου 2013, η Ευρωομάδα εξέφρασε ικανοποίηση για τις προτάσεις που παρουσίασαν οι κυπριακές αρχές και συμφώνησε με τα μέτρα για την αναδιάρθρωση του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα όπως αναφέρονται στο παράρτημα της δήλωσης της Ευρωομάδας της 25ης Μαρτίου 2013 ([1]). Τα μέτρα αυτά θέτουν τη βάση για την αποκατάσταση της βιωσιμότητας του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, διασφαλίζουν όλες τις καταθέσεις κάτω των 100 000 ευρώ, σύμφωνα με τις αρχές της ΕΕ.

Η εκτελεστική απόφαση 2013/463/ΕΕ του Συμβουλίου της 13ης Σεπτεμβρίου 2013 για την έγκριση προγράμματος μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Κύπρο και την κατάργηση της απόφασης 2013/236/ΕΕ ([2]), ορίζει τα στοιχεία ενός τριετούς προγράμματος μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής που αποσκοπεί στην αποκατάσταση της ευρωστίας του τραπεζικού τομέα της Κύπρου, στη συνέχιση της διαδικασίας δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης και τη στήριξη της ανταγωνιστικότητας και της βιώσιμης και ισόρροπης ανάπτυξης.

Όπως ορίζεται στο άρθρο 2 παράγραφος 2 της απόφασης 2013/463/ΕΕ, η Κύπρος συνεχίζει να εφαρμόζει τη διαδικασία δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης, σύμφωνα με τις υποχρεώσεις της στο πλαίσιο της διαδικασίας υπερβολικού ελλείμματος, με υψηλής- ποιότητας μόνιμα μέτρα, μεριμνώντας παράλληλα για την ελαχιστοποίηση των επιπτώσεων στις ευάλωτες κοινωνικές ομάδες.

([1]) Οι δηλώσεις της Ευρωομάδας είναι διαθέσιμες στην ηλεκτρονική διεύθυνση: http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/eurogroup
([2]) ΕΕ L 250 της 20.9.2013, σ. 40.

Το άρθρο 2 παράγραφος 10 της απόφασης 2013/463/ΕΕ ορίζει ότι η Κύπρος καταρτίζει αναλυτικές προτάσεις πολιτικής όσον αφορά την αντιμετώπιση των ελλείψεων που εντοπίστηκαν στις οικείες πολιτικές ενεργοποίησης. Η Κύπρος λαμβάνει άμεσα μέτρα για να δημιουργηθούν ευκαιρίες για τους νέους και να βελτιωθούν οι προοπτικές απασχολησιμότητάς τους, σύμφωνα με τους στόχους της σύστασης του Συμβουλίου για τη θέσπιση εγγυήσεων για τη νεολαία.

Σύμφωνα με τις απαιτήσεις του MOU (Μνημονίου Συμφωνίας), οι κυπριακές αρχές θέσπισαν πλαίσιο για τη διαχείριση ληξιπρόθεσμων οφειλών καθώς και κώδικα δεοντολογίας όσον αφορά την αντιμετώπιση δανειοληπτών σε δυσχερή κατάσταση. Τα χρηματοπιστωτικά ιδρύματα υποχρεούνται να συμμορφώνονται με το ανωτέρω.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010876/13
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: The economic crisis and safeguarding family homes

In Cyprus, as in other countries in southern Europe that are subject to the so-called Memoranda of Understanding (MoU), high levels of anxiety and social tension are prevalent due to the emerging risk faced by thousands of families of losing their primary family residence.

Due to the prevailing economic crisis and the sharp rise in unemployment, many families are unable to keep up with their mortgage payments to the banks, which, under the provisions of the Memorandum, are likely to start initiating repossessions and sales of properties soon in order to recover the money they are owed.

The issue may spiral out of control, as citizens who lost their savings in the haircut that was implemented in order to support and capitalise the banks now risk losing their homes to the banks as well.

I would like, through my intervention, to sound an alarm bell over the possible consequences of failing to respond quickly and put an end to this unacceptable state of affairs.

Will the Council therefore answer the following:

1. Does it consider that the Memorandum provisions on accelerating the option of selling homes are economically necessary and socially acceptable in a country that is facing an unprecedented economic crisis?

2. Do these policies comply with European declarations concerning the welfare state and support for citizens suffering unfairly due to the crisis?

3. Are there any indications that such policies — which reduce huge numbers of the population to poverty — have even the slightest chance of contributing to economic recovery?

4. What does the Council intend to do to bring an immediate end to this unacceptable situation, which poses serious risks of social upheaval, and reinforces a rising anti-European sentiment among citizens?

Reply
(16 December 2013)

On 25 March 2013, the Eurogroup welcomed the proposals presented by the Cyprus authorities and agreed to the measures for restructuring the financial sector, as specified in the annex to its statement of 25 March 2013 ([1]). These measures form the basis for restoring the viability of the financial sector. In particular, they safeguard all deposits below EUR 100 000 in accordance with EU principles.

Council Implementing Decision 2013/463/EU of 13 September 2013 on approving the macroeconomic adjustment programme for Cyprus and repealing Decision 2013/236/EU ([2]) sets out the elements of a three-year macroeconomic adjustment programme aimed at restoring the soundness of Cyprus' banking industry, continuing the process of fiscal consolidation and supporting competitiveness and sustainable and balanced growth.

As stipulated in Article 2(2) of Decision 2013/463/EU, Cyprus shall pursue fiscal consolidation consistent with its obligations under the excessive deficit procedure by means of high-quality permanent measures while minimising the impact on vulnerable groups.

Article 2(10) of Decision 2013/463/EU provides that Cyprus shall prepare detailed policy proposals with regard to addressing identified shortcomings in its activation policies. Cyprus shall take swift action to create opportunities for young people and improve their employability prospects, in line with the objectives of the Council Recommendation on Establishing a Youth Guarantee.

([1]) Eurogroup statements can be found at http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/eurogroup
([2]) OJ L 250, 20.9.2013, p. 40.

In line with the requirements of the MoU, the Cypriot authorities have introduced a framework for arrears management and a Code of Conduct for dealing with troubled borrowers. Financial institutions are obliged to comply with this.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010877/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(25 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Οικονομική κρίση και διασφάλιση της πρώτης οικογενειακής κατοικίας

Στην Κύπρο, όπως και σε άλλες χώρες του Ευρωπαϊκού Νότου, που τελούν κάτω από τα λεγόμενα Μνημόνια Συναντίληψης (MoU), επικρατεί μεγάλη αγωνία και κοινωνικός αναβρασμός, λόγω του διαφαινόμενου κινδύνου χιλιάδες οικογένειες να χάσουν την πρώτη οικογενειακή τους κατοικία.

Λόγω της επικρατούσας οικονομικής κρίσης και της κατακόρυφης αύξησης της ανεργίας, πολλές οικογένειες αδυνατούν να ανταποκριθούν στην αποπληρωμή των στεγαστικών τους δανείων προς τις τράπεζες, οι οποίες με βάση τις πρόνοιες του Μνημονίου πιθανόν να αρχίσουν σύντομα εξώσεις και πωλήσεις κατοικιών για να εισπράξουν τα οφειλόμενα.

Το θέμα μπορεί να λάβει ανεξέλεγκτες διαστάσεις, αφού οι πολίτες που έχασαν τις καταθέσεις τους λόγω του κουρέματος, το οποίο έγινε με σκοπό να στηριχτούν και να κεφαλαιοποιηθούν οι τράπεζες, κινδυνεύουν τώρα να χάσουν και την κατοικία τους, από αυτές τις ίδιες τράπεζες.

Με την παρέμβασή μου αυτή θέλω να κρούσω τον κώδωνα του κινδύνου για το τι μπορεί να επακολουθήσει αν δεν τεθεί άμεσα τέρμα στην απαράδεκτη αυτή κατάσταση.

Ερωτάται συνεπώς η Επιτροπή:

1. Θεωρεί ότι οι πρόνοιες του Μνημονίου για επίσπευση της δυνατότητας εκποίησης κατοικιών είναι οικονομικά αναγκαίες και κοινωνικά αποδεκτές σε μια χώρα που αντιμετωπίζει μια πρωτοφανή οικονομική κρίση;

2. Αυτές οι πολιτικές συνάδουν με τις ευρωπαϊκές διακηρύξεις περί κοινωνικού κράτους και στήριξης των αναξιοπαθούντων λόγω της κρίσης πολιτών;

3. Υπάρχουν οποιεσδήποτε ενδείξεις ότι τέτοιες πολιτικές, οι οποίες οδηγούν σε εξαθλίωση μεγάλες μάζες του πληθυσμού, έχουν έστω και την παραμικρή πιθανότητα να συμβάλουν στην ανάκαμψη της οικονομίας;

4. Η ΕΕ, ως μέλος της τρόικας, τι προτίθεται να πράξει ώστε να τεθεί άμεσα τέρμα στην απαράδεκτη αυτή κατάσταση, η οποία εγκυμονεί σοβαρούς κινδύνους κοινωνικής έκρηξης και ενίσχυσης του διογκούμενου αντιευρωπαϊκού αισθήματος ανάμεσα στους πολίτες;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(25 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή έχει επίγνωση των προβλημάτων που ανέκυψαν από την τρέχουσα κρίση όσον αφορά τη φτώχεια και την κοινωνική συνοχή. Είναι απαραίτητο να εξασφαλιστεί επαρκής στήριξη για τις πιο ευάλωτες ομάδες της κοινωνίας. Όσον αφορά το νομοθετικό πλαίσιο για την κατάσχεση και πώληση κατοικιών ως εγγυήσεις για δάνειο, το άρθρο 1.6 του μνημονίου συμφωνίας προβλέπει μεγαλύτερο χρονικό διάστημα για τη νομική ή τη διοικητική διαδικασία σε περίπτωση πρώτης κατοικίας.

Η Επιτροπή έχει δεσμευτεί να βοηθήσει την Κύπρο να αποκαταστήσει χρηματοπιστωτική σταθερότητα, δημοσιονομική διατηρησιμότητα και ανάπτυξη. Τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία της ΕΕ θα κινητοποιηθούν γι' αυτόν τον σκοπό.

Για την τρέχουσα περίοδο προγραμματισμού, χορηγήθηκε προσαύξηση της τάξεως του 10% με την οποία το ποσοστό συγχρηματοδότησης αυξάνεται σε 95%. Αναγνωρίζοντας την κρίσιμη κατάσταση στην Κύπρο, το Συμβούλιο της ΕΕ αποφάσισε να προβλέψει συμπληρωματικό ποσό 100 εκατ. ευρώ στον προϋπολογισμό του 2014. Αντίστοιχο ποσό θα περιλαμβάνεται στον προϋπολογισμό του 2015.

Η Κύπρος λαμβάνει στήριξη από την ΕΤΕπ στους τομείς της ενέργειας, των υδάτων και της χρηματοδότησης των ΜΜΕ. Μέχρι σήμερα, η ΕΤΕπ έχει υπογράψει δάνειο 100 εκατ. ευρώ για τη στήριξη προγραμμάτων που συγχρηματοδοτούνται από τα ταμεία της ΕΕ, και ετοιμάζει την έναρξη ενός προγράμματος χρηματοδοτικής διευκόλυνσης εμπορίου ύψους 150 εκατ. ευρώ, που θα επικεντρώνεται στις ΜΜΕ και τις εταιρείες μεσαίας κεφαλαιοποίησης. Στο πλαίσιο της επόμενης περιόδου προγραμματισμού και σε συνεργασία με τις κυπριακές αρχές, η ΕΤΕπ αξιολογεί πιθανές λύσεις για τη στήριξη των επενδύσεων προτεραιότητας που συγχρηματοδοτούνται από τα ταμεία της ΕΕ.

Η ομάδα στήριξης της Επιτροπής για την Κύπρο παρέχει τεχνική εμπειρογνωμοσύνη στις κυπριακές αρχές.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010877/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: The economic crisis and safeguarding family homes

In Cyprus, as in other countries in southern Europe that are subject to the so-called Memoranda of Understanding (MoU), high levels of anxiety and social tension are prevalent due to the emerging risk faced by thousands of families of losing their primary family residence.

Due to the prevailing economic crisis and the sharp rise in unemployment, many families are unable to keep up with their mortgage payments to the banks, which, under the provisions of the Memorandum, are likely to start initiating repossessions and sales of properties soon in order to recover the money they are owed.

The issue may spiral out of control, as citizens who lost their savings in the haircut that was implemented in order to support and capitalise the banks now risk losing their homes to the banks as well.

I would like, through my intervention, to sound an alarm bell over the possible consequences of failing to respond quickly and put an end to this unacceptable state of affairs.

Will the Commission therefore say:

1. Does it consider that the Memorandum provisions on accelerating the option of sellinghomes are economically necessary and socially acceptable in a country that is facing anunprecedented economic crisis?

2. Do these policies comply with European declarations concerning the welfare state andsupport for citizens suffering unfairly due to the crisis?

3. Are there any indications that such policies — which reduce huge numbers of thepopulation to poverty — have even the slightest chance of contributing to economicrecovery?

4. What does the EU, as a member of the troika, intend to do to bring an immediate end tothis unacceptable situation, which poses serious risks of social upheaval, and reinforces arising anti-European sentiment among citizens?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(25 November 2013)

The Commission is aware of the challenges posed by the current crisis for poverty and social cohesion. It is essential to ensure adequate support for the most vulnerable groups of society. With respect to the legislative framework on seizure and sale of loan collateral, the article 1.6 of the memorandum of understanding envisages a longer time-span for legal or administrative proceeding in the case of primary residences.

The Commission is committed to helping Cyprus to restore financial stability, fiscal sustainability and growth. The EU Structural Funds are mobilised to this end.

For the current programming period, the 10% top-up was granted, raising the co-financing rate to 95%. Recognising the critical situation in Cyprus, the EU Council has decided to allocate on additional amount of EUR 100m in 2014 budget. A similar amount would be included in 2015 budget.

Cyprus benefits from the EIB support in the areas of energy, water and SMEs financing. To date, the EIB has signed a EUR 100m loan to support schemes co-financed by EU Funds, and is preparing a launch of a EUR 150m Trade Finance Facility programme focused on SMEs and Mid-Caps. In the context of the next programming period and in cooperation with the Cypriot authorities, EIB is evaluating solutions to support priority investments co-financed by EU Funds.

The Commission's Support Group for Cyprus provides technical expertise to the Cypriot authorities.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010878/13
do Komisji
Jacek Saryusz-Wolski (PPE)
(25 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Reakcja UE w odpowiedzi na naciski Rosji na kraje Partnerstwa Wschodniego negocjujące układy o stowarzyszeniu

W swojej rezolucji z dnia 12 września 2013 r. Parlament ostro skrytykował Rosję za wywieranie nacisków na kraje Partnerstwa Wschodniego w przededniu szczytu Partnerstwa Wschodniego w Wilnie. Wezwał też Komisję do podjęcia działań w obronie partnerów Unii, a także w celu wyrażenia jednoznacznego poparcia dla wszystkich krajów Partnerstwa Wschodniego oraz do zaplanowania konkretnych i skutecznych środków pomocy dla tych krajów.

Unia Europejska musi jednak zdawać sobie sprawę, że działania podejmowane przez Rosję w stosunku do krajów Partnerstwa Wschodniego stanowią również próbę osłabienia strategii politycznych UE zawartych w układach o stowarzyszeniu. Powinniśmy bronić suwerennych wyborów dokonywanych przez UE w odniesieniu do stowarzyszonych krajów partnerskich, a także europejskiej polityki sąsiedztwa, demonstrując tym samym znaczenie Unii jako globalnego podmiotu. Najskuteczniejszym sposobem przeciwdziałania presji wywieranej przez Rosję na kraje Partnerstwa Wschodniego byłoby zatem zareagowanie w ten sam sposób.

W związku z powyższym oraz w kontekście starań UE zmierzających do sformułowania odpowiedzi na presję wywieraną przez Rosję na kraje Partnerstwa Wschodniego, której celem jest osłabienie wielu strategii politycznych UE, jakie kroki Komisja rozważa w odniesieniu do:

1. środków skierowanych do Rosji, takich jak: a) zintensyfikowanie działań mających zagwarantować, że rosyjskie przedsiębiorstwa i ich spółki zależne prowadzące działalność na obszarze UE będą w pełni przestrzegać prawa rynku wewnętrznego i unijnych przepisów dotyczących konkurencji, zwłaszcza w sektorze energetycznym oraz w związku z trwającym dochodzeniem w sprawie szkodliwych z punktu widzenia konkurencji praktyk Gazpromu na rynkach europejskich; b) wprowadzenie ograniczeń handlowych na wybrane rosyjskie produkty, które odpowiadałyby ograniczeniom wprowadzonym przez Rosję w stosunku do krajów Partnerstwa Wschodniego, takich jak Ukraina i Mołdowa; c) wprowadzenie ograniczeń wizowych takich jak ograniczenia nałożone przez Rosję na mołdawskich pracowników migrujących; oraz d) wszelkie inne środki;

2. środków skierowanych do krajów Partnerstwa Wschodniego, z którymi UE prowadzi negocjacje w sprawie układów o stowarzyszeniu, takich jak: a) szybka liberalizacja systemu wizowego; b) dążenie do jednostronnego umożliwienia otwartego handlu i ustępstw w stosunku do krajów Partnerstwa Wschodniego, z którymi toczą się negocjacje w sprawie układów o stowarzyszeniu; c) zaoferowanie tym krajom pomocy finansowej (w tym przyspieszenie udzielania tej pomocy w obszarach o strategicznym znaczeniu); d) przyspieszenie integracji energetycznej z tymi krajami, np. poprzez zwiększenie dostaw gazu w ramach przepływu w kierunku przeciwnym do głównego i dzięki nowym gazociągom międzysystemowym; oraz e) wszelkie inne środki?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Štefana Füleg w imieniu Komisji
(26 listopada 2013 r.)

1. Wszystkie przedsiębiorstwa, które prowadzą działalność na terenie UE, w tym w sektorze energetycznym, muszą przestrzegać unijnych przepisów dotyczących rynku wewnętrznego i konkurencji. Komisja i organ ds. konkurencji dbają o to, by zasady te były przestrzegane. Przynależność państwowa nie jest czynnikiem branym pod uwagę przy prowadzeniu dochodzeń oraz egzekwowaniu stosowania reguł konkurencji. Dochodzenie antymonopolowe prowadzone w sprawie Gazpromu nie dotyczy Rosji.

UE uważnie śledzi wprowadzane przez Rosję środki w zakresie handlu. Sprzeciw wobec środków dyskryminacyjnych był jasno komunikowany w kontaktach z Rosją.

Dnia 10 października UE złożyła wniosek o ustanowienie panelu ds. rozstrzygania sporów WTO w odniesieniu do legalności „opłaty recyklingowej", którą Rosja obarcza pojazdy importowane.

Nałożenie na Rosję ograniczeń wizowych wymagałoby decyzji Rady; obecnie nie jest to brane pod uwagę.

2. UE podkreśliła, że wywieranie nacisku na naszych wschodnich partnerów, związane z ich decyzją w sprawie podpisania układów o stowarzyszeniu, jest nie do przyjęcia. W przypadkach nieuzasadnionych nacisków UE stanie w obronie swoich partnerów, także na forach wielostronnych.

UE przeanalizowała wszystkie możliwości wsparcia: środki handlowe, wsparcie finansowe, zapewnienie dalszych możliwości odwracania przepływu gazu. Procedury zniesienia kwot na wino z Mołdawii są w trakcie realizacji. Pomoc finansowa UE jest w coraz większym stopniu przeznaczana na wsparcie we wdrażaniu układu o stowarzyszeniu/umowy DCFTA. Rozwijana jest pomoc dla sektorów wrażliwych (np. pomoc techniczna) i przedsiębiorstw (np. włączenie w programy dotyczące MŚP). Ważne jest, aby partnerzy zadbali o zgodność z normami UE, również w odniesieniu do liberalizacji reżimu wizowego. Jeśli chodzi o dialog w sprawie wiz z Ukrainą, Mołdawią i Gruzją, dnia 15 listopada 2013 r Komisja wydała zaktualizowane sprawozdania z realizacji planów działania.

W obliczu nacisków zewnętrznych najbardziej trwałym rozwiązaniem jest szybkie tymczasowe zastosowanie układu o stowarzyszeniu/umowy DCFTA.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010878/13
to the Commission
Jacek Saryusz-Wolski (PPE)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: EU response to Russian pressure on Eastern Partnership countries negotiating Association Agreements

In its resolution of 12 September 2013, Parliament strongly criticised the pressure that Russia has been exerting on the Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries in the run-up to the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius. It called on the Commission to take action in defence of the Union's partners, to send out strong messages of support for all EaP countries and to devise concrete, effective measures to back those countries.

The European Union must, however, be mindful of the fact that Russia's actions vis-à-vis EaP countries are also an attempt to undermine EU policies as enshrined in the Association Agreements. We should defend the EU's sovereign choice of associated partner countries, along with its European Neighbourhood Policy, in order to demonstrate the Union's weight as a global actor. The most effective means of counterbalancing Russian pressure on the EaP would therefore be to respond in kind.

In the light of the above, and in the context of the EU's efforts to formulate a response to the pressure exerted by Russia on EaP countries, which is intended to undermine multiple EU policies, what steps is the Commission considering taking, with regard to:

1. measures aimed at Russia, such as: (a) stepping up efforts to ensure that Russian companies and their subsidiaries operating on EU territory comply fully with internal market law and EU competition law, especially in the energy sector and in the light of the ongoing investigation into Gazprom's uncompetitive behaviour in European markets; (b) introducing trade restrictions on selected Russian products to mirror the restrictions introduced by Russia vis-à-vis EaP countries such as Ukraine and Moldova; (c) introducing visa restrictions mirroring those which Russia has imposed on EaP (Moldovan) migrant workers; and (d) any other measures;

2. measures aimed at EaP countries with which the EU is negotiating Association Agreements (EaP-AA countries), such as: (a) fast-tracking visa liberalisation; (b) pursuing unilateral trade opening and concessions in respect of EaP-AA countries; (c) offering financial assistance to EaP-AA countries (including accelerating and front-loading assistance in sensitive areas); (d) accelerating energy integration with EaP-AA countries, e.g. by boosting gas deliveries through reverse flows and new interconnectors; and (e) any other measures?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(26 November 2013)

1. All companies operating in the EU, including in the energy sector, must comply with EU internal market and competition rules. The Commission and the competition authority ensure respect for these rules. Nationality is not a factor when investigating and enforcing competition rules. The Gazprom anti-trust investigation is not about Russia.

The EU monitors Russia's trade measures closely. Clear messages against discriminatory measures have been passed in contacts with Russia.

On 10 October, the EU requested establishing a dispute settlement panel at the WTO on the legality of the 'recycling fee' that Russia imposes on imported vehicles.

Imposing visa restrictions against Russia would require a Council decision; this is not currently under discussion.

2. The EU has emphasised that exerting pressure on our Eastern Partners, linked to their decision to sign Association Agreements, is unacceptable. In cases of undue pressure, the EU will stand by its partners, including at multilateral levels.

The EU has examined all support possibilities: trade measures; financial support; further reversing gas flows. Procedures to lift Moldovan wine quotas are ongoing. EU financial assistance increasingly targets AA/DCFTA implementation Support is being developed for sensitive sectors (e.g. technical assistance) and business (e.g. inclusion in SME programmes). It is important that partners ensure compliance with EU standards, also concerning visa liberalisation. Regarding visa dialogues with Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, the Commission issued updated reports on the implementation of Action Plans on 15 November 2013.

When facing external pressure, the most sustainable solution is the speedy provisional application of AA/DCFTAs.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010881/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(25 septembre 2013)

Objet: Arthrite psoriasique

«Stelara» est le premier d'une nouvelle classe de produits biologiques désormais mise à la disposition des patients souffrant d'une arthrite psoriasique active, maladie auto-immune chronique caractérisée par une sensibilité et un gonflement articulaire, une inflammation des tissus péri-articulaires et le psoriasis. Cette maladie affecte environ 4,2 millions de personnes à travers l'Europe et il n'existe actuellement aucun remède.

Janssen-Cilag International NV a annoncé aujourd'hui que la Commission avait approuvé l'utilisation de «Stelara» (ustekinumab), seul ou en combinaison avec le méthotrexate, pour le traitement de l'arthrite psoriasique active chez les patients adultes lorsque la réponse à un précédent traitement par agents rhumatismaux modificateurs de la maladie (ARMM) non biologiques a été inadéquate.

1. Qu'est-ce qui a motivé précisément l'avis de la Commission?

2. Des statistiques européennes existent-elles sur le nombre de patients victimes de ces maux?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(8 novembre 2013)

La Commission a accordé en premier lieu, le 16 janvier 2009, une autorisation de mise sur le marché de Stelara pour le traitement du psoriasis en plaques, en vertu du règlement (CE) n° 726/2004, soit au moyen de la procédure centralisée ([1]).

Le 25 juillet 2013, le comité des médicaments à usage humain (CMUH) de l'Agence européenne des médicaments a adopté un avis positif ([2]) recommandant une modification des termes de l'autorisation de mise sur le marché, à savoir une nouvelle indication pour l'*arthrite psoriasique*, lorsque la réponse à un précédent traitement par des médicaments dits «antirhumatismaux modificateurs de la maladie» a été inadéquate. Le CMUH a constaté le nombre limité de traitements à la disposition de la population concernée de patients. Les études portant sur l'arthrite psoriasique ont montré que Stelara était plus efficace qu'un placebo. Le CMUH est parvenu à la conclusion que les avantages de Stelara, dans l'indication susmentionnée, étaient supérieurs aux risques. La Commission a arrêté sa décision concernant l'extension des indications de Stelara à l'arthrite psoriasique en tenant compte de l'avis scientifique du CMUH, après avoir consulté les États membres durant le processus décisionnel. Le rapport européen public d'évaluation sur l'évaluation scientifique de Stelara est disponible sur le site web de l'Agence ([3]).

La Commission ne dispose pas de données sur la prévalence et l'incidence de l'arthrite psoriasique en Europe. Selon les estimations indiquées dans les lignes directrices du CMUH sur l'arthrite psoriasique ([4]), la prévalence de cette maladie s'établit entre 0,1 % et 1 % de la population; dans le projet de recherche de l'Union européenne sur l'arthrite, elle est estimée à 0,15 % ([5]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/documents/community-register/html/h494.htm
([2]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/medicines/human/medicines/000958/smops/Positive/human_smop_000560.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac058001d127
([3]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/EPAR_-_Summary_for_the_public/human/000958/WC500058509.pdf
([4]) Guideline on clinical investigation of medicinal products for the treatment of psoriatic arthritis (Lignes directrices relatives à la recherche clinique sur les médicaments destinés au traitement de l'arthrite psoriasique) (CHMP/EWP/438/04): http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Scientific_guideline/2009/09/WC500003413.pdf
([5]) FP-7 PACAD Psoriatic Arthritis and Coronary Artery Disease (7e PC — Arthrite psoriasique et maladies coronariennes): http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/101462_fr.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010881/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: Psoriatic arthritis

STELARA is the first in a new class of biologics now available for patients living with active psoriatic arthritis, a chronic autoimmune disease characterised by joint swelling and tenderness, periarticular tissue inflammation and psoriasis. The disease affects approximately 4.2 million people across Europe, and there is currently no cure.

Janssen-Cilag International NV announced today that the Commission has approved the use of STELARA (ustekinumab), alone or in combination with methotrexate, for the treatment of active psoriatic arthritis in adult patients when the response to previous non-biological disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drug (DMARD) therapy has been inadequate.

1. What were the specific reasons for the Commission's opinion?

2. Are there any European statistics on the number of patients living with these diseases?

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

The Commission granted an initial marketing authorisation for Stelara for the treatment of plaque psoriasis on 16 January 2009 under Regulation (EC) No 726/2004, i.e. via the centralised procedure ([1]).

On 25 July 2013, the European Medicines Agency's Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) adopted a positive opinion ([2]) recommending a variation to the terms of the marketing authorisation for Stelara, namely a new indication in psoriatic arthritis when the condition has not responded to other treatments called disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs. The CHMP noted the limited treatments available in the patient population as mentioned. Studies in psoriatic arthritis showed that Stelara was more effective than placebo. The CHMP concluded that the Stelara's benefits in the indication in question are greater than its risks. The Commission decision regarding the extension of Stelara's indications to psoriatic arthritis was adopted in accordance with the scientific opinion of the CHMP and after the consultation of the Member States during the decision-making process. The European Public Assessment Report on the scientific evaluation of Stelara is available on the website of the Agency ([3]).

The Commission does not dispose of the prevalence and incidence data on psoriatic arthritis at the European level. The CHMP guideline on psoriatic arthritis ([4]) estimates the prevalence of the disease between 0.1% and 1% of the population, while the EU arthritis research project provides for an estimate of 0.15% ([5]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/documents/community-register/html/h494.htm
([2]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/medicines/human/medicines/000958/smops/Positive/human_smop_000560.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac058001d127
([3]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/EPAR_-_Summary_for_the_public/human/000958/WC500058509.pdf
([4]) Guideline on clinical investigation of medicinal products for the treatment of psoriatic arthritis (CHMP/EWP/438/04) http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Scientific_guideline/2009/09/WC500003413.pdf
([5]) FP-7 PACAD Psoriatic Arthritis and Coronary Artery Disease http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/101462_en.html; FP-7 PACAD Psoriatic Arthritis and Coronary Artery Disease http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/101462_en.html

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010882/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(25 septembre 2013)

Objet: Stratégie européenne des forêts

Plus de 40 % de la superficie de l'Union européenne est constituée de forêts, qui abritent plus de biodiversité que tout autre écosystème. De nombreuses communautés et industries, comme le papier et la bioénergie, dépendent des forêts. Les étendues boisées jouent également un rôle important dans la limitation des émissions mondiales de carbone.

L'exécutif européen appelle à une sylviculture durable, c'est-à-dire une utilisation des zones forestières qui préserve la biodiversité, la productivité, la capacité de régénération, la vitalité et le potentiel de remplir des fonctions écologiques, économiques et sociales, et qui ne nuit pas aux autres écosystèmes.

Les effets du changement climatique, notamment la hausse des températures et des sécheresses en Europe méridionale, sont déjà notables sur les forêts de l'Union, selon la Commission. La pollution et la déforestation qu'entraînent la construction d'infrastructures et les activités industrielles ont également un impact sur l'équilibre des zones forestières.

Les forêts représentent des écosystèmes essentiels, ainsi qu'une source de richesse et d'emploi dans des régions rurales, si elles sont bien gérées. La sylviculture durable est un pilier indispensable du développement rural, car elle garantit la protection des forêts. Il s'agit de l'un des principes de la nouvelle stratégie forestière.

La Cour des comptes européenne a toutefois exprimé son désaccord avec la stratégie de l'Union visant à améliorer la «valeur économique» des forêts. «Des États membres ont utilisé cette aide pour soutenir des opérations qui ne correspondent pas aux objectifs du programme et qu'il serait plus approprié de financer dans le cadre d'autres dispositifs, avec des conditions d'éligibilité ainsi que des taux de financement différents, ces derniers étant généralement plus bas», indique la Cour dans un communiqué le 19 septembre.

Cette dernière constate que seuls quelques-uns des projets examinés ont amélioré de manière significative la valeur économique des forêts, en augmentant la valeur du terrain grâce à la construction de routes et à l'ouverture de chemins forestiers, par exemple.

Elle relève également des cas où l'aide publique est excessive au regard des besoins. La Cour recommande à la Commission de mieux définir sa méthode visant à améliorer la valeur économique des forêts lors de sa révision des règles actuelles.

Quelle est la réponse de la Commission aux différents points soulevés par la Cour des comptes, présentés ci-dessus?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(14 novembre 2013)

La Commission reconnaît l'importance des forêts et de leur gestion. Toutefois, la Commission considère que la Cour des comptes européenne (CCE) a exprimé, dans son rapport spécial, son avis sur la mesure relative à la sylviculture intitulée «Amélioration de la valeur économique des forêts» recevant le soutien financier du Fonds européen agricole pour le développement rural (Feader) ([1]), et non son point de vue sur la stratégie forestière de l'Union européenne adoptée le 20 septembre 2013. Les forêts font partie intégrante de la politique de développement rural qui est aussi le principal instrument financier de la mise en œuvre de la stratégie forestière de l'Union européenne.

Au sujet du rapport de la CCE susmentionné, la Commission souligne que certains aspects de la mesure susnommée relative à la sylviculture auraient pu être expliqués de manière plus claire. De plus, sa mise en œuvre, sous la responsabilité des États membres, pourrait être améliorée. La Commission note que la mesure en question n'a pas été appliquée correctement seulement dans certains cas cités par la Cour et non dans tous.

La Commission considère que, lorsque la mesure d'amélioration de la valeur économique des forêts était la mesure appropriée, la valeur économique des forêts a effectivement augmenté.

([1]) RS 08/2013 «Le soutien du Fonds européen agricole pour le développement rural à l'amélioration de la valeur économique des forêts».

La Commission fait actuellement le nécessaire pour améliorer l'élaboration et la mise en œuvre de cette mesure pour la prochaine période de programmation 2014-2020.

La Commission a étudié, avec le Conseil et le Parlement européen, dans quelle mesure la relation souhaitée entre les investissements dans des équipements et l'augmentation de la valeur économique des forêts pourrait être clarifiée dans les textes législatifs concernés. En conséquence, les dispositions ont été révisées et la Commission sera attentive à la question des plans de gestion des forêts lors des négociations des futurs programmes de développement rural.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010882/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: The EU's forest strategy

Over 40% of the surface area of the EU is covered by forests, which are home to more biodiversity than any other ecosystem. Many communities and industries, such as the paper and bioenergy industries, depend on forests. Woodland also plays an important role in curbing global carbon emissions.

The Commission is calling for sustainable forestry, which means using forest areas in a way that preserves their biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality and the potential to fulfil ecological, economic and social functions, and which does not harm other ecosystems.

According to the Commission, climate change is already having significant effects on the EU's forests, particularly rising temperatures and droughts in southern Europe. The pollution and deforestation involved in the construction of infrastructure and industrial activities also have an effect on the balance of forest areas.

Forests are vital ecosystems, as well as a source of wealth and jobs in rural regions, if they are well managed. Sustainable forestry is key to rural development, as it guarantees the protection of forests. It is one of the principles of the new forest strategy.

The European Court of Auditors (ECA) has nonetheless stated that it disagrees with the EU's strategy to improve the 'economic value' of forests. On 19 September 2013, the Court said 'Member States used the measure to support operations which did not correspond to the programme's goals and which would be more appropriately financed by other measures with different eligibility requirements and aid financing rates, usually lower'.

The ECA has found that only a few of the audited projects significantly improved the economic value of forests by improving the value of the land, by building forest tracks and roads, for example.

It also reveals cases of disproportionately high public support. The ECA recommends that the Commission better define its method to improve the economic value of forests when it revises the current rules.

What does the Commission have to say in response to the various points raised by the European Court of Auditors?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(14 November 2013)

The Commission agrees with the importance of forests and forest management. However, the Commission considers that the European Court of Auditors (ECA) expressed its opinion on a concrete forestry measure 'Improvement of the economic value of forests' as supported through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) ([1]) in its Special Report and not on the EU Forest Strategy that was adopted on 20 September 2013. Forests form an integral part of the Rural Development Policy that is also the main financial instrument for implementing the EU Forest Strategy.

As regards the abovementioned ECA report, the Commission points out that some aspects of the abovementioned forestry measure could have been explained more clearly. In addition, the implementation, which is under the responsibility of the Member States, could be improved. The Commission takes note that the measure in question was used incorrectly in some but not all cases cited by the Court.

The Commission considers that where measure 'Improvement of the economic value of forests' was the correct measure to use, the economic value of forests was indeed increased.

The Commission is currently engaged in the necessary efforts to ensure better design and implementation of this forestry measure during the next Programming period 2014-2020.

([1]) SR 08/2013 'Support for the Improvement of the economic value of forests from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development'.

The Commission has investigated with the Council and the European Parliament to what extent the desired relationship between investments in equipment and improvements to the economic value of forests could be clarified in the relevant legal acts. Consequently, the provisions have been reviewed and the Commission is paying the necessary attention to the issue of forest management plans in the negotiation of future Rural Development Programmes.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010883/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(25 septembre 2013)

Objet: Protection des minorités et de leur culture

La Commission a été saisie, à un mois d'intervalle, de deux projets de consultation par signature, qui ont pour but de demander l'avis des citoyens sur, d'une part, l'absorption et la mise en minorité administratives des entités historiques et, d'autre part, la protection des langues et des cultures minoritaires.

Le premier projet d'initiative citoyenne européenne a été présenté par le Conseil national des Sicules. Ceux-ci, au nombre d'environ 700 000, parlent le hongrois et vivent dans le centre de la Roumanie.

La seconde initiative citoyenne européenne a été présentée par l'Union fédéraliste des communautés ethniques européennes (UFCE, plus connue sous le sigle anglais FUEN (Federal Union of European Nationalities)). Elle regroupe plus de 100 groupes politiques s'intéressant au sort de 40 millions de personnes. L'Institut culturel de Bretagne est le promoteur officiel de la pétition au niveau local.

Bien que se référant aux articles des traités européens qui donnent mission à l'Union européenne de maintenir la diversité culturelle, les deux projets soumis à la Commission ont été rejetés les 8 août et 17 septembre sur la base d'arguments juridiques similaires: la demande de pétition à l'échelle européenne ne contrevenait pas manifestement aux buts de l'Union européenne, mais cette dernière n'aurait aucun moyen d'obtenir des États qu'ils se conforment aux objectifs de la diversité culturelle.

1. Comment, dès lors, la Commission se situe-t-elle sur la question des minorités nationales qui se revendiquent comme étant des ponts entre les cultures et se disent victimes de discrimination, tout en prônant la compréhension mutuelle et les solutions pacifiques?

2. Quand on rapproche cette réponse de la Commission du vote du Parlement européen intervenu le 11 septembre 2013 pour demander que les institutions européennes protègent les langues en danger, peut-on supposer que la Commission tende à coller aux positions des États, spécialement les plus grands d'entre eux, alors que les députés européens sont plus attachés à voir se concrétiser les objectifs de l'Union européenne?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(2 décembre 2013)

Conformément à l'article 2 du TFUE, le respect des droits des personnes appartenant à des minorités constitue l'une des valeurs fondatrices de l'Union européenne. Les articles 21 et 22 de la Charte des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne interdisent toute discrimination fondée sur l'appartenance à une minorité nationale et prévoient le respect par l'Union européenne de la diversité culturelle, religieuse et linguistique.

La Commission ne dispose pas de compétences générales en ce qui concerne les personnes appartenant à des minorités.

L'enregistrement des deux initiatives citoyennes proposées a été refusé sur la base de considérations juridiques tenant au fait qu'elles ne relèvent manifestement pas des attributions de la Commission en vertu desquelles elle peut présenter une proposition d'acte juridique de l'Union.

La Commission n'a aucune compétence en matière d'utilisation des langues régionales et minoritaires, qui relève de la responsabilité des États membres. Ces derniers doivent recourir à tous les instruments juridiques disponibles afin de garantir que les droits fondamentaux des minorités nationales vivant sur leur territoire soient efficacement protégés conformément à l'ordre constitutionnel de ces États membres et aux obligations découlant du droit international, y compris les instruments pertinents du Conseil de l'Europe.

La Commission encourage la diversité linguistique et reconnaît l'importance de la protection des langues européennes menacées de disparition. Elle assure la promotion de l'enseignement des langues et elle soutient et complète les politiques éducatives nationales visant à la réalisation de cet objectif.

Le respect et la promotion de la diversité culturelle sont l'un des objectifs de l'agenda européen de la culture, et l'un des principaux objectifs des programmes de financement de l'UE dans le domaine de la culture. Néanmoins, le mandat confié à l'UE dans ce domaine est clairement limité par le traité et toute initiative législative à cet égard ne relèverait manifestement pas des compétences de la Commission.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010883/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: Protection of minorities and their culture

Two draft petitions have been referred to the Commission, one month apart, with the aim of consulting the public on the administrative absorption and relegation of historical entities, on the one hand, and the protection of minority languages and cultures, on the other.

The first European citizens' initiative was submitted by the National Székely Council. The Székely, of whom there are around 700 000, speak Hungarian and live in central Romania.

The second European citizens' initiative was submitted by the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN), which is made up of over 100 political groups looking after the interests of 40 million people. The Cultural Institute of Brittany is the official local sponsor of the petition.

Despite referring to the articles of the European treaties that assign the EU the task of maintaining cultural diversity, the two drafts submitted to the Commission were rejected on 8 August and 17 September 2013 on similar legal grounds: requesting a petition at European level was clearly not at odds with the EU's aims, but the EU had no way of ensuring that the Member States would comply with the goals of cultural diversity.

1. What stance, then, does the Commission take on the issue of national minorities that claim to be bridges between cultures and claim to be victims of discrimination, while it advocates mutual understanding and peaceful solutions?

2. When the Commission's response is compared with Parliament's vote on 11 September 2013 to call on the European institutions to protect endangered languages, can it be assumed that the Commission is inclined to align itself with the Member States, particularly the largest Member States, while the members of Parliament are keener to see the EU's goals achieved?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(2 December 2013)

According to Article 2 TFEU, the respect for the rights of persons belonging to minorities constitutes one of the founding values of the EU. Articles 21 and 22 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU prohibit discrimination based on membership of a national minority and provide for the respect by the Union of cultural, religious and linguistic diversity.

The Commission has no general powers as regards people belonging to minorities.

The registration of the two proposed citizens' initiatives was refused on legal considerations, namely, on the fact that they fall manifestly outside the framework of the Commission's powers to submit a proposal for a legal act of the Union.

The Commission has no competence over the use of regional or minority languages, which fall under the responsibility of the Member States. They have to use all legal instruments available in order to guarantee that fundamental rights of national minorities living on their territories are effectively protected in accordance with their constitutional order and obligations under international law, including the relevant instruments of the Council of Europe.

The Commission supports linguistic diversity and recognises the importance of protecting endangered European languages. It promotes the teaching of languages and supports and complements national educational policies aimed at reaching this objective.

The respect and promotion of cultural diversity is one of the objectives of the European Agenda for Culture, and a key aim of EU funding programmes in the field of culture. Nevertheless, the mandate given to the EU in this field is clearly limited by the Treaty and any legislative initiative on this topic would clearly fall out of the scope of competence of the Commission.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010884/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(25 septembre 2013)

Objet: Libor et Euribor

1. La Commission examine l'élaboration de nouvelles règles concernant le Libor et l'Euribor. Qu'en est-il, quelles sont ces règles, quels sont leurs objectifs?

2. La Commission s'est-elle aussi penchée sur les indices de référence des matières premières?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(13 novembre 2013)

Le 18 septembre 2013, la Commission a proposé un projet de règlement concernant les indices utilisés comme indices de référence dans le cadre d'instruments et de contrats financiers ([1]). La proposition prévoit des règles de bonne gouvernance pour assurer une gestion adéquate des conflits d'intérêts, une meilleure transparence et la représentativité des indices de référence. Elle établit également un cadre réglementaire pour la surveillance des indices de référence, et notamment la possibilité d'arrêter des mesures et des sanctions administratives en cas de non-respect des obligations. La proposition vise à faire en sorte que les indices de référence soient solides, précis et fiables et protègent ainsi les investisseurs, à assurer l'allocation efficace des capitaux et à restaurer la confiance des marchés qui dépendent d'indices de référence. Les indices de référence de taux d'intérêt comme Euribor et LIBOR sont inclus dans le champ d'application de la proposition, de même que les indices de référence de matière première servant de référence pour certains instruments financiers et fonds d'investissements.

La proposition de la Commission va à présent faire l'objet de négociations au Parlement européen et au Conseil selon la procédure législative ordinaire.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/securities/benchmarks/index_fr.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010884/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: Libor and Euribor

1. The Commission is considering drawing up new rules on Libor and Euribor. What is the state of play, what are these rules, what are their objectives?

2. Has the Commission also looked into commodity benchmarks?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(13 November 2013)

On 18 September 2013 the Commission proposed a draft Regulation on indices used as benchmarks in financial instruments and financial contracts ([1]). The proposal lays down rules on good governance for managing conflicts of interest, enhancing transparency and ensuring the representativeness of benchmarks. It also establishes a regulatory framework for the supervision of benchmarks, including the possibility to adopt administrative measures and sanctions for failure to comply with its requirements. The proposal aims to ensure benchmarks are robust, accurate and reliable and so protect investors, ensure the efficient allocation of capital and restore confidence in markets that depend on benchmarks. Interest rate benchmarks such a Euribor and LIBOR are included within the scope of this proposal. Commodity benchmarks that are used to reference certain financial instruments or investment funds are also within the scope of the rules.

The Commission proposal will now be negotiated in the European Parliament and the Council under the ordinary legislative procedures.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/securities/benchmarks/index_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010885/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(25 septembre 2013)

Objet: Réduire l'empreinte de CO_2 avec les bioplastiques

Aujourd'hui, la grande majorité des plastiques est toujours fabriquée à base de combustibles fossiles non renouvelables, en particulier du pétrole. Suite aux préoccupations grandissantes concernant l'impact environnemental et le changement climatique, certains chercheurs ont commencé à rechercher des alternatives.

1. Où en sont les travaux de la Commission à ce sujet?

2. La Commission dispose-t-elle de chiffres sur le nombre de plastiques actuellement recyclables?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(19 novembre 2013)

1. En 2010, la Commission a réalisé une étude sur les déchets plastiques dans l'environnement, qui examinait tous les aspects de l'utilisation actuelle des bioplastiques, y compris leur empreinte écologique (voir: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/studies/pdf/plastics.pdf). Une large consultation publique, qui a notamment permis d'examiner l'utilisation des bioplastiques, a été menée sur la base du livre vert sur les déchets plastiques dans l'environnement. Des conclusions de nature stratégique seront notamment tirées dans le cadre de l'initiative de la Commission sur l'efficacité des ressources et les déchets, prévue pour 2014.

2. En principe, il est techniquement possible de recycler tous les types de plastiques. Le taux global de recyclage de ces matières avoisine 24,1 % dans l'Union. Hormis les données recueillies dans le cadre de l'étude susmentionnée, la Commission ne dispose pas de chiffres précis sur les types de matières plastiques actuellement recyclées. Les matières plastiques les plus couramment recyclées sont les suivantes: PET, PEHD, PP, PEBD et PVC.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010885/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: Reducing CO_2 footprint with bio-plastics

Today, the vast majority of plastics are still made using non-renewable fossil fuels, especially petroleum. With concerns about environmental impact and climate change increasing, some researchers have begun to look for alternatives.

1. What progress has the Commission made in its work on this issue?

2. Does the Commission have any figures on how many types of plastic can currently be recycled?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(19 November 2013)

1. In 2010 the Commission carried out a study on plastic waste in the environment in which all aspects of the current use of bio-plastics, including its environmental footprint, were assessed

(see: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/studies/pdf/plastics.pdf).

A broad public consultation has been conducted on the basis of the Green Paper on Plastic Waste in the Environment, in the context of which the use of bio plastics was also addressed. Policy conclusions on the response to the Green Paper will *inter alia* be drawn in the context of the Commission's planned Resource efficiency and waste initiative for 2014.

2. In principle it is technically possible to recycle all types of plastics. The overall plastics recycling rate in the EU stands at around 24,1%. The Commission does not have exact figures on the types of plastic currently recycled apart from what can be found in the study quoted above. The most commonly recycled plastics are PET, HDPE, PP, LDPE and PVC.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010886/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(25 septembre 2013)

Objet: Pêche: Mauritanie/UE

La commission mixte mauritano-européenne de pêche, instituée pour la mise en œuvre du protocole de pêche entre les deux parties, a débuté une réunion mardi à Nouakchott.

1. Comment la Commission analyse-t-elle la mise en application d'un protocole de pêche signé le 31 juillet 2012, et non encore ratifié par le Parlement européen?

2. Cet instrument juridique, d'une validité de trois ans renouvelables, doit rapporter annuellement 114 millions d'euros à la Mauritanie. Le dernier protocole Mauritanie/UE comporte d'importantes innovations relatives à l'aménagement et à la protection de la ressource halieutique par rapport aux accords précédents, en réservant exclusivement le poulpe à la flotte nationale. Cependant, cette disposition est fortement combattue par les professionnels européens de la pêche, notamment les Espagnols (60 % de la flotte européenne pêchant dans les eaux mauritaniennes). Que répond la Commission aux pêcheurs espagnols?

3. Comment la Commission évalue-t-elle la coopération entre la Mauritanie et l'UE dans le secteur de la pêche?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Damanaki au nom de la Commission
(19 novembre 2013)

Le 8 octobre 2013, le Parlement européen a voté en faveur du protocole à l'accord de partenariat de pêche entre l'UE et la Mauritanie. D'importantes flottes européennes bénéficient actuellement de ce protocole, en particulier celles qui pratiquent la pêche des thonidés, petits pélagiques et poissons à nageoires démersaux.

En ce qui concerne les céphalopodes, la Mauritanie a décidé de réserver cette activité de pêche à sa flotte nationale. Toutefois, lors de la réunion de la commission mixte des 17 et 18 septembre 2013, l'UE a convenu avec la Mauritanie de continuer à travailler au niveau scientifique et de tester un nouveau modèle de gestion dans le cadre d'une campagne expérimentale fondée sur des travaux scientifiques menés par l'institut scientifique espagnol IEO, en vue d'obtenir des informations actualisées sur le statut des stocks de céphalopodes. En outre, il convient de noter que d'importantes flottes espagnoles bénéficient actuellement de cet accord pour plusieurs pêcheries (démersaux, thonidés et bientôt crevettes).

Durant et après les négociations, l'UE et la Mauritanie ont entretenu un dialogue constructif afin de rendre le protocole attrayant, et en conformité avec les principes fondamentaux de l'Union européenne en matière de durabilité, d'équité et de rapport qualité/prix. De bons résultats ont été obtenus au cours des derniers mois. Lors de la réunion de la commission mixte des 17 et 18 septembre, des accords ont été trouvés sur une modification des zones pour les catégories de pêche crevettes et pélagiques, une réduction des redevances et une augmentation des taux de captures accessoires pour les crevettes. Ces améliorations sont conformes aux demandes du secteur et assurent la préservation des ressources de pêche mauritaniennes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010886/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: Fisheries: Mauritania/EU

On Tuesday 17 September 2013, the Mauritania-EU joint committee on fisheries, set up to implement the fisheries protocol between the two parties, opened a meeting in Nouakchott.

1. What view does the Commission take of the implementation of a fisheries protocol that was signed on 31 July 2012, but has still not been ratified by Parliament?

2. This legal instrument, which is valid for three years and can be renewed, should bring in EUR 114 million for Mauritania every year. Compared with previous agreements, the latest Mauritania/EU protocol includes significant innovations in terms of the management and protection of fisheries resources, keeping octopuses exclusively for the national fleet. However, this measure is strongly opposed by the European fishing industry, particularly in Spain (60% of the European fleet fishes in Mauritanian waters). What is the Commission's response to Spanish fishermen?

3. What is the Commission's assessment of cooperation between Mauritania and the EU in the fisheries sector?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(19 November 2013)

On 8 October 2013, the European Parliament voted in favour of the Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the EU and Mauritania. Important European fleets are currently benefitting from this Protocol, especially those fishing for tunas, small pelagics and demersal finfish.

Regarding the cephalopods, Mauritania has decided to keep this fishery for its national fleet. However, at the Joint Committee of 17-18 September 2013, the EU agreed with Mauritania to continue working at a scientific level and to test a new management model through an experimental campaign based on scientific works carried by the IEO (Spanish scientific institute), in order to obtain updated information on the status of the cephalopods stocks. Moreover, it is worth noting that important Spanish fleets are currently benefitting from this agreement for several fisheries (demersals, tunas and soon shrimps).

Throughout and after negotiations, the EU and Mauritania have kept a constructive dialogue in order to make the Protocol attractive and in line with the EU's basic principles of sustainability, fairness and value for money. Good results were achieved during the last months. At the Joint Committee meeting of 17 and 18 September, agreements were found on a modification of zones for shrimps and pelagic fishing categories, a reduction of fees and an increase of by-catch rates for shrimps. These improvements are in line with the requests of the industry, while ensuring the preservation of Mauritanian fish resources.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010887/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(25 septembre 2013)

Objet: Merkel conteste l'Union bancaire de l'UE

Angela Merkel pose ses conditions à la mise en place de l'Union bancaire, le grand projet du moment à Bruxelles pour assainir enfin le secteur, placé courant 2014 sous la supervision de la Banque centrale européenne (BCE).

L'Allemagne conteste les propositions consistant à placer la Commission européenne au cœur du futur dispositif intégré de traitement des crises bancaires. Pour elle, il n'est pas question de transférer à une autorité européenne le pouvoir de démanteler ou de recapitaliser un établissement en difficulté tant que ce sont des fonds nationaux qui financent l'opération.

1. Quelle est la réaction de la Commission à ces propos et à cette vision antagoniste à la sienne?

2. Le ministre des finances du gouvernement sortant, Wolfgang Schäuble, exige un changement de traité pour poser les fondations de ce dispositif. Qu'en dit la Commission?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(29 novembre 2013)

1. Le 10 juillet 2013, la Commission a proposé la création d'un mécanisme de résolution unique. Selon cette proposition, un Conseil de résolution unique serait chargé de recommander des mesures de résolution à adopter par la Commission pour les banques des États membres participant au mécanisme de surveillance unique. Les moyens financiers nécessaires proviendraient, en premier lieu, des actionnaires et créanciers des banques concernées et, si ces moyens sont insuffisants, d'un Fonds de résolution unique financé par les contributions du secteur bancaire. La Commission est convaincue que sa proposition est la réponse adéquate aux défis auxquels l'Europe et ses banques sont confrontées, mais elle est naturellement ouverte à la discussion et prête à soutenir les améliorations apportées à la proposition dans le cadre du processus législatif au Parlement européen et au Conseil. À la lecture des conclusions du Conseil européen des 24 et 25 octobre 2013, la Commission croit comprendre que tous les États membres sont résolus à s'engager sur un calendrier permettant un accord sur la proposition avant la fin de la législature, tout comme le sont le Parlement européen et la Commission.

2. La proposition législative présentée par la Commission en juillet 2013 se fonde sur le traité actuel et est en parfaite conformité avec les exigences qui y sont fixées. La Commission ne considère donc pas qu'une modification du traité soit nécessaire pour poser les fondations du mécanisme de résolution unique.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010887/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: Merkel challenging EU banking union

Angela Merkel is setting out her conditions for establishing banking union, the grand project of the moment in Brussels to clean up the sector at last, scheduled to happen in 2014 under the supervision of the European Central Bank (ECB).

Germany is disputing the proposals to put the Commission at the centre of the future integrated system to deal with banking crises. According to Germany, it is out of the question to grant a European authority the power to dismantle or recapitalise a bank in difficulty when the operation is financed by national funds.

1. What is the Commission's response to these comments and this vision which clashes with its own?

2. The outgoing Federal Minister for Finance, Wolfgang Schäuble, is calling for a treaty change to lay the foundations for this system. What does the Commission have to say about that?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(29 November 2013)

1. On 10 July 2013, the Commission has proposed a Single Resolution Mechanism. According to its proposal, a Single Resolution Board would be responsible to recommend resolution action for adoption by the Commission, in relation to banks in Member States participating in the Single Supervisory Mechanism. The necessary financial means would be sourced in the first place from the bank's shareholders and creditors and, if this is insufficient, from a Single Resolution Fund financed by contributions from the banking sector. The Commission is convinced that its proposal is the right response to the challenges faced by Europe and its banks, but is of course open to discussion and to support improvements of the proposal in the legislative process within the European Parliament and the Council. Following the European Council conclusions of 24/25 October 2013, the Commission understands that all Member States are committed to a timetable allowing for agreement on the proposal before the end of the legislature, as are the European Parliament and the Commission.

2. The Commission's legislative proposal of July 2013 is based on the existing Treaty, and is in full compliance with the requirements set out therein. The Commission therefore does not consider a Treaty change necessary to lay the foundations for the SRM.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010888/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(25 septembre 2013)

Objet: Visa/Mastercard: Commissions interbancaires réduites

À partir du 1er novembre, les commissions interbancaires de paiement et de retrait vont être réduites pour les cartes Visa et MasterCard.

Les émetteurs de cartes de paiement Mastercard et Visa vont appliquer une «baisse significative» des principales commissions qu'ils facturent sur les paiements ou les retraits en distributeurs de billets.

Cette baisse, qui entrera en vigueur le 1er novembre 2013, concerne les cartes portant uniquement le logo Mastercard ou Visa, émises principalement par des groupes de grande distribution: un marché qui représente environ 5 % des cartes bancaires émises en France et entre 10 et 20 millions d'euros par an. En 2011, l'autorité de la concurrence avait déjà obtenu des engagements de baisses similaires du GIE carte bancaire, qui regroupe la grande majorité des acteurs financiers en France.

Concrètement, les commissions facturées aux commerçants pour les paiements devraient revenir à 0,28 % du montant contre 0,55 %, en moyenne, auparavant chez Mastercard et 0,50 % chez Visa. Pour les retraits DAB, elles passeraient à 0,55 euro par opération, contre 0,60 euro et 0,75 euro respectivement auparavant.

Pour mémoire, les commissions interbancaires de paiement sont versées par la banque du commerçant à la banque du porteur de la carte à chaque paiement. Les commissions interbancaires de retrait sont versées à chaque retrait par la banque du porteur de carte à la banque gestionnaire du distributeur de billets.

1. Ces nouveaux taux sont-ils ainsi en ligne avec les ambitions de la Commission?

2. Sur quelle base la Commission avait-elle fait ses estimations?

3. Quelle somme cela représente-t-il?

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission
(18 novembre 2013)

La Commission et les autorités nationales de la concurrence traitent la question des commissions d'interchange depuis plus de vingt ans.

Outre l'application des règles antitrust à Visa et à MasterCard, la Commission a proposé en juillet 2013 un règlement sur les commissions interbancaires pour les paiements par carte. Ce règlement prévoit des plafonds de 0,2 % et 0,3 % par opération sur les commissions d'interchange applicables aux cartes de débit et de crédit consommateurs, respectivement, ainsi qu'une période de transition de deux ans pour les opérations nationales par opposition aux opérations transfrontalières. Cette proposition ne s'applique cependant pas aux commissions d'interchange perçues lors d'un retrait dans un distributeur automatique.

Ces plafonds tiennent également compte des niveaux proposés par des systèmes de cartes (Visa Europe, MasterCard et Groupement des Cartes Bancaires) dans le cadre de procédures visant à faire appliquer les règles de concurrence et jugés par les autorités de concurrence suffisants pour mettre un terme aux procédures. Les accords en matière de concurrence s'appuient sur ce que l'on appelle le «test d'indifférence du marchand», ou «test du touriste», issu de la littérature économique. Ce test permet de déterminer le niveau de commissions auquel un commerçant bénéficie d'un avantage net sur les opérations si un consommateur utilise une carte de paiement plutôt qu'un autre moyen de paiement (en liquide). Ces plafonds sont des valeurs maximales et il est possible de fixer des commissions d'interchange moins élevées.

Comme l'indique plus précisément l'analyse d'impact, les économies directes qu'engendreraient ces plafonds sont estimées à 6 milliards d'euros. Le règlement sur les commissions d'interchange apportera un bénéfice aux utilisateurs de services de paiement, en particulier aux commerçants et aux consommateurs. À l'heure actuelle, des commissions d'interchange élevées sont dissimulées dans les prix de détail et sont payées, au final, par les consommateurs. La proposition portera également sur le problème de la fragmentation du marché des cartes dans l'UE et garantira des conditions de concurrence plus équitables entre Visa, MasterCard, les systèmes nationaux et les systèmes à venir.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010888/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: Visa/MasterCard: lower interbank fees

From 1 November 2013, interbank fees for payments and withdrawals will be cut for Visa and MasterCard cards.

Issuers of MasterCard and Visa payment cards are set to apply a significant reduction to the main fees that they charge for payments or withdrawals from cash machines.

This reduction, which will enter into force on 1 November 2013, concerns cards with only the MasterCard or Visa logo on them, which are issued mainly by retail groups. This market accounts for around 5% of bank cards issued in France and between EUR 10 and 20 million per year. In 2011, the competition authority secured commitments from the CB bank card group, which represents the vast majority of financial operators in France, to make similar cuts.

Specifically, the fees charged to merchants for payments should come down to 0.28% of the total amount, compared with an average of 0.55% previously for MasterCard and 0.50% for Visa. For cash machine withdrawals, the fees would fall to EUR 0.55 per transaction, compared with, respectively, EUR 0.60% and 0.75% previously.

Interbank payment fees are paid by the merchant's bank to the cardholder's bank each time a payment is made. Interbank withdrawal fees are paid by the cardholder's bank to the bank that operates the cash machine, each time a withdrawal is made.

1. Are these new rates in line with the Commission's aims?

2. On what grounds did the Commission make its estimates?

3. How much does that equate to?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(18 November 2013)

The Commission and National Competition Authorities have been dealing with interchange fees for more than twenty years.

In addition to its antitrust enforcement against Visa and MasterCard, the Commission proposed in July 2013 a regulation on inter-bank fees for card payments including caps of 0.2% and 0.3% per transaction for interchange fees applicable to consumer debit and credit cards respectively, with a transition period of two years for domestic as opposed to cross-border transactions. ATM interchange fees are however not covered by this proposal.

The cap levels take into account the levels proposed by schemes (Visa Europe, MasterCard, Groupement Cartes Bancaires) in competition proceedings and accepted by the competition authorities as not requiring further action. The competition settlements are based on the so-called 'Merchant Indifference Test' developed in economic literature. This identifies the fee level where a merchant receives net transactional benefits from a customer's use of a payment card compared to non-card (cash) payments. These caps are maxima and lower interchange fees can be set.

As further detailed in the impact assessment, direct savings from the caps have been estimated at EUR 6 billion. The interchange fees regulation will benefit payment service users, notably merchants as well as consumers. Today, high interchange fees are hidden in the retail prices and ultimately paid by consumers. The proposal will also address the issue of the fragmentation of the cards market in the EU and ensure a better level playing field between Visa, MasterCard, the domestic schemes and new schemes.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010889/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(25 septembre 2013)

Objet: Monte Paschi

Banca Monte dei Paschi di Siena, troisième banque italienne et plus vieille banque du monde en activité, fondée en 1472, s'est retrouvée au bord de la faillite à la suite de la crise de la dette dans la zone euro. Elle est par ailleurs empêtrée dans des scandales financiers liés au rachat de sa concurrente Antonveneta en 2008 et à des opérations sur dérivés intervenues entre 2006 et 2009.

La banque a dû durcir son plan de restructuration qui comprend désormais une augmentation de capital de 2,5 milliards d'euros en 2014 — soit plus de deux fois le montant initialement prévu par ses dirigeants.

Monte dei Paschi a encaissé des pertes totales de près de huit milliards d'euros au cours des deux dernières années, et la plupart des analystes financiers ne s'attendent pas à ce que l'établissement arrive à redresser ses comptes avant 2015.

Sans compter le plan de sauvetage, son ratio core Tier 1 tomberait à 6,5 %, nettement en-dessous du minimum de 9 % imposé par l'Autorité bancaire européenne, selon les estimations des analystes.

1. Que compte faire la Commission?

2. Que conseille la Commission aux épargnants et aux investisseurs liés à cette banque?

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission
(18 novembre 2013)

En 2012, le gouvernement italien a octroyé une aide d'État d'un montant de 3,9 milliards d'euros à Monti dei Paschi di Siena (MPS). Les autorités italiennes ont notifié cette aide à la Commission. Celle-ci doit par conséquent déterminer la conformité de l'aide d'État avec la législation de l'UE sur la base de ses règles temporaires relatives aux aides d'État octroyées en vue de la restructuration d'établissements financiers pendant la crise.

À cet égard, la Commission a temporairement autorisé la recapitalisation de MPS en tant que mesure de sauvetage, sous réserve de la présentation d'un plan de restructuration et de la renotification de l'aide d'État en tant qu'aide à la restructuration. Afin de garantir la compatibilité de l'aide à la restructuration avec le marché intérieur, les autorités nationales — le ministère italien de l'économie et des finances et la Banque d'Italie — doivent entre autres s'assurer que MPS retrouve sa viabilité au terme de la période de cinq ans sur la base de laquelle est établi son plan de restructuration.

Rétablir la viabilité de MPS implique non seulement que la banque parvienne à un rendement acceptable de ses fonds propres mais également qu'elle adopte un modèle commercial moins risqué et qu'elle dispose de réserves suffisantes de fonds propres conformes aux exigences en la matière. Les autorités italiennes ont récemment présenté un plan de ce type à la Commission, qui est actuellement en cours d'évaluation. Il est toutefois notoire que les réserves de fonds propres sont nettement supérieures au ratio estimé de 6,5 % mentionné pour les fonds propres de base (Core Tier 1).

En ce qui concerne les déposants et les investisseurs, la Commission ne dispose d'aucun élément donnant à penser que la directive relative aux systèmes de garantie des dépôts (directive 94/19/CE) ou la directive relative aux systèmes d'indemnisation des investisseurs (directive 97/9/CE) n'ont pas été respectées.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010889/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: Monte Paschi

Banca Monte dei Paschi di Siena, founded in 1472, is Italy's third-largest bank and the world's oldest bank still in operation. The bank is on the brink of bankruptcy as a result of the euro area debt crisis. It is also embroiled in financial scandals relating to the buyout of its competitor Antonveneta in 2008 and derivatives operations between 2006 and 2009.

The bank has had to come up with a tougher restructuring plan, which now includes an EUR 2.5 billion capital increase in 2014, more than double the amount initially envisaged by the bank's directors.

Monte dei Paschi has racked up total losses of almost EUR 8 billion over the last two years and most financial analysts do not expect the bank to be able to get back in the black before 2015.

According to analysts estimates, without the rescue plan the bank's core Tier 1 ratio would fall to 6.5%, well below the minimum of 9% imposed by the European Banking Authority.

1. What does the Commission plan to do?

2. What advice would the Commission give to savers and investors involved with this bank?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(18 November 2013)

In 2012, the Italian Government provided EUR 3.9 billion in state aid to Monti dei Paschi di Siena (MPS). The Italian authorities notified this to the Commission. The Commission therefore has to assess the compliance of the state aid with EC laws on the basis of its temporary state aid rules for the restructuring of financial institutions during the crisis.

In this regard, the Commission has temporarily authorised the recapitalisation of MPS as a rescue measure on the basis of a commitment to provide a restructuring plan and to re-notify the state aid as restructuring aid. In order to ensure the compatibility of the restructuring aid with the internal market, the national authorities — the Italian Ministry of Economy and Finance and the Bank of Italy — have to ensure *inter alia* that MPS, on the basis of a five-year restructuring plan, will restore the bank's viability at the end of this period.

Restoring MPS's viability implies not only that the bank should achieve an acceptable return on equity but also that the bank's business model be less risky and the bank be equipped with sufficient regulatory capital buffers. The Italian authorities have submitted such a plan to the Commission recently, and it is currently being assessed. However it is well known that the capital buffer is well above the estimated Core Tier 1 figure of 6.5% mentioned.

With regard to depositors and investors, the Commission has no element to believe that EU Directives on deposit guarantee schemes (Directive 94/19/EC) or investor compensation schemes (Directive 97/9/EC) have been breached.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010890/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(25 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: O papel da UE em relação aos países parceiros da Primavera Árabe

Considerando o seguinte:

Desde 18 de dezembro de 2010, uma série de acontecimentos, tais como ondas revolucionárias, manifestações e protestos, tem vindo a ocorrer no Médio Oriente e no Norte de África, tendo tais acontecimentos políticos e sociais sido denominados a «Primavera Árabe»;

Tais revoluções ocorrem em países terceiros que possuem relações privilegiadas com a União, quer em razão da sua importância política e económica, decorrente do estatuto de candidato, como é o caso da Turquia, ou do estatuto de parceiro privilegiado, ao abrigo da Política Europeia de Vizinhança, quer em razão da importância geográfica e estratégica de alguns, nomeadamente em termos de aprovisionamento energético;

A União Europeia quer assumir o papel de ator global; por outro lado, o rescaldo da Primavera Árabe reclama uma tomada de posição da União, bem como uma estratégia renovada face aos países do Norte de África e do Médio Oriente e adaptada aos acontecimentos recentes nessas regiões;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Considera que a sua perspetiva do papel da União nos países da Primavera Árabe mudou após as ondas revolucionárias ocorridas?

2. Não considera que a União deveria definir melhor a sua estratégia e o seu papel nas relações com os países da Primavera Árabe, tendo em conta a conjuntura atual da região e a importância de alguns destes países se afirmarem como parceiros da União?

3. Não lhe parece que o reforço das relações da União Europeia com os países desta região é essencial para a afirmação da União como ator mundial e para a sua promoção como «soft power» à escala global?

Resposta dada por Štefan Füle em nome da Comissão
(15 de novembro de 2013)

A Comissão está de acordo com o Senhor Deputado no sentido em que os acontecimentos dramáticos ocorridos no Médio Oriente e no Norte de África requerem uma resposta europeia ambiciosa e coerente. Em março e em maio de 2011, a AR/VP e a Comissão Europeia propuseram uma resposta ambiciosa que figura em duas comunicações conjuntas distintas ([1]). Esta abordagem global consiste em quatro vertentes: diálogo político com as novas lideranças democraticamente eleitas; assistência financeira através de uma verba global de mais de 4 mil milhões de euros (foram adicionados cerca de mil milhões de euros à verba inicialmente prevista de 3,5 mil milhões de euros); apoio para satisfazer as novas necessidades expressas pelos membros da sociedade civil emergente; programas de reforma da segurança através de novas missões da PCSD, como aconteceu na Líbia, por exemplo.

De acordo com as comunicações conjuntas acima referidas, a UE está a analisar os problemas de cada parceiro com base nas suas necessidades e especificidades, adaptando a sua resposta igualmente com base no princípio de «mais por mais».

Na medida em que os problemas regionais requerem soluções regionais, a UE decidiu também iniciar uma diálogo renovado com os intervenientes regionais: a reunião ministerial UE-Liga Árabe, de novembro de 2012, ou o relançamento da União para o Mediterrâneo, copresidida pela UE e a Jordânia desde a primavera de 2012, são bons exemplos desta nova abordagem regional.

([1]) «Uma parceria para a democracia e a prosperidade partilhada com o sul do mediterrâneo» COM(2011) 200 final de 8.3.2011 e «Uma nova estratégia para uma vizinhança em mutação» COM(2011) 303 de 25.5.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010890/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: EU relations with partner countries affected by the Arab Spring

Since 18 December 2010, a wave of political and social unrest baptised the 'Arab Spring' has been unfurling in the Middle East and North Africa in the form of insurgency, demonstrations and protests.

These upheavals are taking place in third countries enjoying special relations with the EU by virtue of their political and economic significance as applicants for membership, as in the case of Turkey, their status as privileged partners under European Neighbourhood Policy or, in certain cases, their geographic and strategic importance, particularly in terms of energy supply.

The European Union is seeking to carve out for itself a role on the international stage, and the aftermath of the Arab Spring demands a clear stance and a fresh EU strategy in response to recent events in the countries of North Africa and the Middle East.

In view of this:

1. Has the wave of uprisings in any way altered the Commission's views concerning the EU's role in relation to countries affected by the Arab Spring?

2. In this respect, does the Commission not consider it necessary to clarify its strategy and role, in the light of current developments in the region and the importance of confirming the status of a number of countries affected as EU partners?

3. In the Commission's view, is it not essential for the EU to forge closer relations with the countries of this region so as to affirm its status as a global player and 'soft power'?

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

The Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that the dramatic events across the Middle East and North Africa necessitate an ambitious and coherent European answer. In March 2011 and May 2011, the HRVP and the European Commission have proposed an ambitious response, contained in two separate joint communications ([1]). This comprehensive approach has four axes: political engagement with the new elected democratic leaderships; financial assistance through a global envelope exceeding EUR 4 billion (nearly EUR 1 billion was added to the originally planned envelope of EUR 3.5 billion) ; support to the new needs expressed by the emerging civil society actors; and security reform programs through new CSDP missions like in Libya for instance.

In line with the above joint communications, the EU is dealing with each partner on the basis of the partner's own needs and specifities and the EU is tailoring its response also based on the principle of 'more for more'.

As regional challenges call for regional solutions, the EU has also decided to initiate a revisited dialogue with regional actors: the EU-League of Arab State ministerial meeting in November 2012 or the relaunching of the Union for Mediterranean co-chaired by the EU and Jordan since Spring 2012 are good examples of this new European regional approach.

([1]) 'A partnership for democracy and shared prosperity with the southern Mediterranean' COM(2011) 200 final of 8.3.2011 and 'A new response to a changing Neighbourhood' COM(2011) 303 of 25.5.2011.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010891/13
do Komisji
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE)
(25 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Opłata za zdjęcie SIM-locka

Na jednolitym rynku wciąż spotykamy wiele różnorodnych barier. Jedną z takich nieuzasadnionych trudności jest zabezpieczenie SIM-lock i opłata za jego zdjęcie. SIM-lock to blokada stosowana w telefonach kupowanych w sieci sprzedaży danego operatora. Zabezpieczenie powoduje, że telefon nie będzie współpracował z kartami SIM należącymi do konkurencyjnych operatorów. Za zdjęcie tej blokady z kolei operator pobiera opłatę. Pobieranie opłaty utrudnia abonentowi skorzystanie z prawa do zmiany dostawcy usług i zniechęca go do skorzystania z konkurencyjnych ofert.

Chciałabym w związku z tym zapytać Komisję, czy badała już ten problem i czy według niej zabezpieczenie SIM-lock i opłata za jego zdjęcie stanowi nieuzasadnioną barierę na jednolitym rynku? Czy Komisja przewiduje wprowadzenie środków uniemożliwiających nakładanie tego typu opłat?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wiceprzewodniczącą Neelie Kroes w imieniu Komisji
(7 listopada 2013 r.)

Wniosek Komisji w sprawie rozporządzenia ustanawiającego środki dotyczące europejskiego jednolitego rynku łączności elektronicznej i mające na celu zapewnienie łączności na całym kontynencie ([1]) służy zapewnieniu wysokiego poziomu ochrony konsumentów w sektorze łączności elektronicznej. Wniosek ten zawiera szereg przepisów dotyczących urządzeń końcowych oraz ułatwień dla konsumentów, którzy chcą zmienić dostawcę.

W szczególności umowy zawierane z klientami powinny określać wszelkie ograniczenia nałożone przez dostawcę w zakresie korzystania z dofinansowanych urządzeń, na przykład w postaci blokowania kart SIM, a także wszelkie opłaty należne w związku z rozwiązaniem umowy przed uzgodnionym terminem jej wygaśnięcia.

Wniosek zawiera również środki ochrony konsumentów dotyczące innych urządzeń końcowych. W szczególności dostawcy są zobowiązani publikować przejrzyste, porównywalne, właściwe i aktualne informacje o wszelkich ograniczeniach nałożonych przez siebie w zakresie korzystania z dostarczonych urządzeń końcowych, w tym informacje o odblokowaniu urządzeń końcowych oraz o wszelkich opłatach związanych z wcześniejszym rozwiązaniem umowy (art. 25). Ponadto wszelkie ograniczenia dotyczące korzystania z urządzeń końcowych w innych sieciach muszą zostać nieodpłatnie zniesione przez dostawcę z chwilą rozwiązania umowy (art. 28).

([1]) COM(2013) 0627 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010891/13
to the Commission
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: Charge for removing a SIM lock

There remains a wide variety of barriers in the single market. One such unnecessary obstacle is the SIM locking of phones and the fee charged to remove it. A SIM lock is a lock applied to a phone bought from a specific operator. It prevents the phone working with SIM cards belonging to a competing operator. Operators charge a fee to remove the SIM lock. This fee makes it harder for subscribers to exercise their right to change service provider and discourages them from taking advantage of competing offers.

Has the Commission already looked into this problem? Does it believe that SIM locking and the payment charged for removing a SIM lock constitute an unjustified barrier in the single market? Is the Commission planning to bring in measures to prevent such charges being imposed?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(7 November 2013)

The Commission proposal for a regulation laying down measures concerning the European single market for electronic communications and to achieve a Connected Continent ([1]) aims at ensuring a high level of consumer protection in the electronic communications sector. The proposal contains a number of provisions related to terminal equipment, and also to facilitating consumers who wish to switch providers.

In particular, contracts should specify any restrictions imposed by the provider on the use of subsidised equipment, for example by way of 'SIM-locking', and any charges due on termination of the contract prior to the agreed expiry date.

The proposal also contains consumer protection measures regarding other terminal equipment. In particular, providers shall publish transparent, comparable, adequate and up-to-date information on any restrictions imposed by the provider on the use of terminal equipment supplied, including information on unlocking the terminal equipment and any charges when the contract is early terminated (Article 25). Furthermore, any restriction on the usage of terminal equipment on other networks shall be lifted, free of charge, by the provider once the contract is terminated (Article 28).

([1]) COM(2013) 627 final.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010892/13
do Komisji
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE)
(25 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Sklepy internetowe a zapewnienie odpowiedniej informacji dla klientów

Zakupy przez Internet są coraz powszechniejsze, a niestety sprzedawcy internetowi dopuszczają się nadużyć ze szkodą dla konsumentów. Najczęstszym przewinieniem wirtualnych sprzedawców jest nieumieszczanie na swoich stronach internetowych podstawowych informacji związanych z transakcjami, jak na przykład tych dotyczących oferowanych produktów i warunków, na jakich są dokonywane transakcje kupna-sprzedaży. Zgodnie z dyrektywą 2011/83/UE w sprawie praw konsumentów, konsumentom przysługują wyjątkowe uprawnienia do zwrotu zakupionego towaru. Nie muszą przy tym nawet podawać przyczyny. Tymczasem nie są oni informowani o takim przywileju albo jest on im ograniczany.

Na stronach wielu sklepów brakuje danych kontaktowych przedsiębiorcy, informacji o kosztach i terminie dostawy czy dotyczących miejsca i sposobu składania reklamacji. Konsumenci mają tym samym ograniczone prawo do wymiany towaru bądź zwrotu poniesionych kosztów.

W związku z powyższym chciałabym zapytać: czy Komisja jest świadoma tych praktyk i czy zamierza podjąć działania, aby zapewnić łatwiejszy dostęp konsumentom do podstawowych informacji dotyczących transakcji przez Internet?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Viviane Reding w imieniu Komisji
(25 listopada 2013 r.)

Komisja jest świadoma faktu, że informacje dla konsumentów wymagane na mocy przepisów prawnych UE, w szczególności dyrektywa 97/7/WE o sprzedaży na odległość (DSD) i dyrektywa 2005/29/WE o nieuczciwych praktykach handlowych, nie zawsze są należycie realizowane przez internetowe przedsiębiorstwa handlowe. Dyrektywa 2011/83/WE w sprawie praw konsumentów dotycząca wymogów kapitałowych (CRD), o której mowa w pytaniu, musi być transponowana do krajowych ustawodawstw państw członkowskich do dnia 13 grudnia 2013 r. i stosowana od dnia 13 czerwca 2014 r. Dyrektywa w sprawie praw konsumentów (CRD) zwiększa ochronę konsumentów w odniesieniu do prawa odstąpienia od sprzedaży na odległość poprzez środki takie jak ustanowienie jednolitego 14-dniowego okresu odstąpienia (w miejsce obecnych minimum 7 dni roboczych w ramach DSD), nałożenie obowiązku na przedsiębiorstwa handlowe w zakresie informowania konsumentów o przysługującym im prawie za pomocą modelu formularza odstąpienia i przedłużenie okresu takiego odstąpienia o 12 miesięcy jeżeli przedsiębiorca nie przedstawi wymaganych informacji o prawie do odstąpienia.

Wymogi w zakresie informowania konsumentów są egzekwowane przez właściwe krajowe organy wykonawcze państw członkowskich. Organy te powinny być informowane w pierwszej kolejności w przypadku jakichkolwiek naruszeń. Komisja odgrywa również aktywną koordynującą rolę w celu ułatwienia egzekwowania prawa w sprawach o charakterze transgranicznym. Na przykład w 2012 r. krajowe organy ds. egzekwowania praw konsumentów przy koordynacji Komisji, skontrolowały 330 stron internetowych sprzedających treści cyfrowe (gry cyfrowe, książki, nagrania wideo, muzykę). Ta „akcja" wykazała, że duża liczba przedsiębiorstw handlowych nie udzieliła wystarczających informacji na temat prawa do odstąpienia oraz swoich danych, w szczególności adresów e-mail. Z powodu działań następczych organów kontroli w państwach członkowskich, rok później, ponad 80 % skontrolowanych stron spełniło wymogi prawne UE w zakresie ochrony konsumentów ([1]).

([1]) Zob. IP/13/937 z 14.10.2013 (http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-937_en.htm).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010892/13
to the Commission
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: Internet shops and ensuring customers are properly informed

Internet shopping is becoming more and more widespread. Sadly, however, Internet sellers commit abuses which infringe customers' rights. The most common offence committed by Internet retailers is failing to put on their websites such basic information about transactions as details of the products available and the terms of sale. In accordance with Directive 2011/83/EU on consumer rights, consumers have the right to return products without giving their reasons for doing so. Yet they are either not informed about this or barriers are put in their way.

The websites of many shops fail to give any information on how to contact the company, the shipping costs and times, and where and how to make a complaint. This restricts consumers' rights to exchange goods or obtain refunds.

Is the Commission aware of these practices, and does it intend to take action to ensure that consumers have easier access to basic information on Internet transactions?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(25 November 2013)

The Commission is aware of the fact that consumer information required under EC law, in particular the Distance Selling Directive 97/7/EC (DSD) and the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive 2005/29/EC, is not always duly provided by online traders. The Consumer Rights Directive 2011/83/EC (CRD), which is referred to in the question, has to be transposed into national laws of Member States by 13 December 2013 and applied from 13 June 2014. The CRD enhances consumer protection regarding the right of withdrawal in distance sales by measures such as instituting a uniform withdrawal period of 14 days (instead of the current minimum 7 working days under the DSD), requiring traders to inform consumers of this right by means of a model withdrawal form and extending the withdrawal period by 12 months where the trader does not provide the required information on the right of withdrawal.

The consumer information requirements are enforced by the competent national enforcement bodies of the Member States. These bodies should be informed in the first place of any infringements. The Commission plays an active coordinating role to facilitate enforcement in cross-border cases. For instance, in 2012, national consumer enforcement authorities, with the coordination of the Commission, checked 330 websites selling digital content (digital games, books, videos and music). This 'sweep' showed that a high number of traders provided insufficient information about the right of withdrawal and the trader's identity, in particular their email address. Due to the follow-up intervention by the enforcement authorities in the Member States, a year later more than 80% of the websites checked were reported to be in line with EU consumer legislation ([1]).

([1]) See IP/13/937 of 14/10/2013 (http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-937_en.htm).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010893/13
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: Pre-accession funding for Turkey

Mr Egemen Bagis, Turkey's Minister for European Union Affairs, is quoted as (*saying* that) his country had to 'accept that its long-cherished goal of joining the EU was likely to end in disappointment' (*Sunday Telegraph* headed 'Turkey admits it may never join EU' published on 22 September 2013). Mr Bagis went on to say that 'we will be at European standards, very closely aligned, but not as a member'.

In the light of the above, does the Commission have any plans to reconsider pre-accession funding for Turkey?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(30 October 2013)

The Commission recalls that both the Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan and the Member States have recently underlined their commitment to the accession negotiations between Turkey and the EU and the importance for the EU to remain the benchmark for reforms in Turkey. Against this background, the Commission remains fully committed to the negotiations in line with the Negotiating Framework. Funding through the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) is in the EU's, as well as in Turkey's interest.

Projects funded through IPA are designed to support Turkey's efforts of alignment with EU standards, for example through strengthening democratic institutions, improving human rights standards, improved border management or regional development. IPA support to Turkey is beneficial for the EU's own stability and security, while promoting reform efforts in Turkey. The Commission reports in its annual Progress Report in detail to Parliament on the state of play of the accession negotiations with Turkey. The Commission also has an annual report on IPA.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010894/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(25 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Propuesta de la CELAC sobre desarme nuclear mundial

El próximo 26 de septiembre tendrá lugar en Nueva York una reunión de alto nivel de las Naciones Unidas sobre la paz y el desarme nuclear en la que el bloque regional de la CELAC presentará la propuesta de eliminar totalmente las armas nucleares.

América Latina y el Caribe forman la única región en el mundo que ha sido declarada Zona Libre de Armas Nucleares (ZLAN) y con su ejemplo pretenden extender su modelo al resto del mundo para tratar de reducir los riesgos a los que se enfrenta la humanidad debido a la existencia de este tipo de armamento. El Tratado de No Proliferación ha demostrado ser una herramienta insuficiente que solo sirve para mantener la ventaja militar de las potencias nucleares sobre el resto del mundo y, ante esta situación, la CELAC propone avanzar hacia la eliminación de las armas de destrucción masiva en el mundo.

Frente a la vergonzosa posición estadounidense, compartida plenamente por las potencias nucleares europeas, de exigir la destrucción de las armas de destrucción masiva en los países enemigos en función de sus intereses imperialistas, la CELAC realiza una propuesta seria, legitimada por el hecho de no disponer de este tipo de armamento, para que, de una vez, se retome el proyecto de eliminación de las armas nucleares como forma de supresión de los riesgos y asegurar un futuro a la humanidad.

En la actualidad existen más de dos mil armas nucleares que podrían ser usadas de inmediato y tan solo la detonación de cien de estas podría provocar la extinción de la especie. Ante este gravísimo riesgo, la Unión Europea debe adoptar una posición común que apoye la propuesta de una manera clara para desbloquear las negociaciones orientadas a la destrucción total del armamento nuclear en el mundo.

¿Considera la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante necesario eliminar las armas nucleares en el mundo?

¿Considera necesario que la Unión Europea adopte una posición común ante esta oportunidad de impulsar el desarme nuclear?

¿Tiene intención de impulsar entre los Estados miembros de la Unión la propuesta de desarme que presentará la CELAC?

Respuesta de la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de noviembre de 2013)

La UE aprovecha todas las oportunidades que se le presentan para reafirmar su compromiso en la búsqueda de un mundo más seguro para todos y en conseguir las condiciones necesarias para un mundo sin armas nucleares, con arreglo a los objetivos del Tratado sobre la no proliferación de las armas nucleares (TNP).

Constantemente ponemos de relieve la necesidad de seguir reduciendo los arsenales de armas nucleares a escala mundial, teniendo en cuenta los principios de irreversibilidad, verificabilidad y transparencia que orientan todas las medidas en materia de desarme nuclear y control de armamentos como contribución al establecimiento y el respaldo de la paz, la seguridad y la estabilidad mundiales. En consecuencia, me congratulo ante el hecho de que algunos Estados poseedores de armas nucleares, especialmente los miembros de la UE Francia y Reino Unido, hayan aumentado la transparencia en lo que respecta a las armas nucleares en su poder, y pido a los demás que sigan su ejemplo. Si todos los Estados que poseen armas nucleares trabajan enérgicamente en este sentido nuestro mundo será más seguro.

La UE se felicita por los esfuerzos del P5 para reconfirmar el principio de irreversibilidad respecto al desarme nuclear y el control de armas y, sobre la base de la Decisión 2010/212/PESC del Consejo, seguirá abogando por nuevos avances en el proceso de desarme nuclear. La UE ha acogido con satisfacción el nuevo acuerdo START y no ha dejado de pedir reducciones adicionales.

Todos estos asuntos se reflejaban en la Declaración de la UE emitida en la reunión del Grupo de Alto Nivel sobre Desarme Nuclear que tuvo lugar el 26 de septiembre de 2013 en Nueva York durante la Semana Ministerial de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas. La Declaración también hacía hincapié en el compromiso renovado de la UE de prestar un mayor apoyo a las zonas libres de armamento nuclear (incluida la de la región de América Latina y el Caribe) y al Tratado de Prohibición Completa de los Ensayos Nucleares (TPCEN), a la vez que explicaba los desafíos en materia de proliferación que plantean la República Popular Democrática de Corea, Irán y Siria.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010894/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — CELAC proposal on global nuclear disarmament

On 26 September 2013 a high-level United Nations meeting on peace and nuclear disarmament will be held in New York. At the meeting the CELAC regional bloc will present a proposal for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

Latin America and the Caribbean together form the world's only region to have been declared a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (NWFZ). They are seeking, by example, to extend their model to the rest of the world in an attempt to reduce the risks to humanity from the existence of these weapons. The Non-Proliferation Treaty has proven to be an inadequate tool which serves only to maintain the military advantage of the nuclear powers over the rest of the world. Given this situation, CELAC proposes moving towards the worldwide elimination of weapons of mass destruction.

Faced with the shameful position of the United States, which is fully shared by Europe's nuclear powers, of demanding the destruction of weapons of mass destruction in enemy countries based on their imperialist interests, CELAC is making a serious proposal, legitimised by the fact that it does not possess these weapons, to resume the disarmament process in order to eliminate the risks and ensure that humanity has a future.

Currently there are more than two thousand nuclear weapons that could be used immediately. The detonation of just a hundred of them could mean the end of mankind. Given this grave risk, the EU should adopt a common stance in clear support of the proposal for a resumption of negotiations aimed at achieving the complete destruction of nuclear weapons throughout the world.

Does the Vice-President/High Representative believe there is a need to eliminate nuclear weapons in the world?

Does the Vice-President/High Representative believe the EU should adopt a common stance on this opportunity to promote nuclear disarmament?

Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to promote the CELAC disarmament proposal among the Member States?

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

The EU uses all relevant opportunities to reaffirm its commitment to seeking a safer world for all and to creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, in accordance with the goals of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

We consistently underline the need to continue the overall reduction of global stockpiles of nuclear weapons, taking into account the principles of irreversibility, verifiability and transparency to guide all measures in the field of nuclear disarmament and arms control as a contribution to establishing and upholding international peace, security and stability. I therefore welcome the increased transparency shown by some nuclear weapon States, in particular the EU Member States France and the UK, on the nuclear weapons they possess and I call on others to do likewise. If these efforts are pursued vigorously by all Nuclear Weapon States, our world will become safer.

The EU has welcomed P5 efforts to reconfirm the principle of irreversibility with regard to nuclear disarmament and arms control, and — based on Council Decision 2010/212/CFSP — will continue to advocate for further progress in the nuclear disarmament process. The EU has welcomed the new START Agreement, and has consistently encouraged further reductions.

All these issues were reflected in the EU statement delivered at the High-Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament held on 26 September 2013 in New York, during the UNGA Ministerial Week. That statement also highlighted the EU's renewed commitment to offer strong support for nuclear weapon free zones (including the one in the region of Latin America and Caribbean) and the CTBT, while outlining the proliferation challenges posed by DPRK, Iran and Syria.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. P-010896/13
Komisijai
Justas Vincas Paleckis (S&D)
(2013 m. rugsėjo 25 d.)

Tema: Dėl naftos ir gamtinių dujų kainų sąsajų mažinimo

Energetikos politika – svarbus ES ekonomikos stimuliavimo instrumentas. ES negali pasigirti dideliais iškastinės energijos šaltiniais, o prognozės rodo, kad iki 2035 metų gamtinių dujų ir naftos importas Sąjungoje išaugs beveik dvigubai. Sudėtingą padėtį patvirtina faktas, kad 2012 metais gamtinių dujų kaina JAV buvo keturis kartus mažesnė nei ES. Skirtumas tarp ES valstybių piliečių mokamų kainų už energiją yra neteisingai didelis. Jo sumažinimui tiek ES, tiek ES valstybių lygmeniu dedamos pastangos. Gegužės mėnesio Europos Vadovų Tarybos aukščiausiojo lygio susitikime ES institucijų ir ES valstybių vadovai nutarė, kad šie skirtumai sumažės, jei vidaus energetikos rinka taps visiškai integruota, toliau bus investuojama į energijos taupymą, infrastruktūrą, atsinaujinančią energetiką ir inovacijas, diversifikuojamas energijos importas. Artėjant šildymo sezonui daugelio ES valstybių gyventojams aktualus gamtinių dujų kainų klausimas. Gamtinių dujų kaina didele dalimi priklauso ir nuo kitų konkuruojančių energijos šaltinių, pvz., naftos, kainų tarptautinėje rinkoje. Todėl minėto aukščiausiojo lygio susitikimo išvadose teigiama, kad gamtinių dujų kainą ES vartotojams sumažintų naftos kainų įtakos gamtinių dujų kainoms mažinimas.

Kokių priemonių ketina imtis Europos Komisija siekiant riboti naftos kainos įtaką gamtinių dujų kainai?

Komisijos nario G. Oettingerio atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. spalio 22 d.)

Kaip primena gerbiamas Parlamento narys, gamtinių dujų kainų JAV ir Europoje skirtumas toliau kelia susirūpinimą ne tik dėl to, kad nuo jo priklauso mūsų įmonių konkurencingumas, bet ir dėl išlaidų naštos namų ūkiams. Nors su nafta susietų sutarčių dėl dujų dalis Europoje sumažėjo maždaug 50 proc., daug ilgalaikių dujų tiekimo sutarčių, visų pirma Rytų Europoje, vis dar grindžiamos naftos kaina. Nors anksčiau nafta pakeisdavo dujas, todėl buvo patikima alternatyva, užtikrinanti saugumą tiek gavybos sektoriui, tiek dujų vartotojams, dabar šis ryšys yra akivaizdžiai nutrūkęs ir šių dviejų prekių pasiūlos ir paklausos pamatai yra skirtingi.

Taigi sukurti veikiančią dujų vidaus rinką, įskaitant prekybos suskystintomis dujomis centrus visoje Europoje, išlieka vienas iš svarbiausių prioritetų siekiant užtikrinti, kad kainos tinkamai atspindėtų tikrąją dujų vertę ir būtų prieinamos Europos namų ūkiams ir įmonėms. Tam reikia ne tik administracinių taisyklių, pavyzdžiui, tinklo kodeksų, bet ir investicijų į infrastruktūrą siekiant įvairinti tiekimo šaltinius ir maršrutus bei didinti ES energijos tiekimo saugumą. Sukūrus energijos vidaus rinką kainos nebūtinai bus mažesnės. Tačiau užtikrinus konkurenciją visais vertės grandinės lygmenimis, bus užtikrinta sąnaudas geriausiai atspindinti ir efektyviausia kaina.

Galiausiai ES labai svarbu, kad pasaulinė gamtinių dujų rinka būtų skaidri ir gerai veikianti.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010896/13
to the Commission
Justas Vincas Paleckis (S&D)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: On reducing the links between oil and natural gas prices

Energy policy is an important instrument for stimulating the EU economy. The EU cannot boast of large fossil fuel resources, and forecasts indicate that by 2035 natural gas and oil imports in the Union will have almost doubled. The complex situation is confirmed by the fact that in 2012 the price for natural gas in the US was almost a quarter of that in the EU. The difference in the prices paid for energy by citizens of EU Member States is unfairly great. Efforts are being made at both EU and Member State level to reduce it. At the European Council summit in May the heads of the European institutions and EU Member States decided that these differences will be reduced if the internal market in energy becomes fully integrated, there is further investment in energy saving, infrastructure, renewable energy and innovations, and there is diversification of energy imports. The issue of reducing natural gas prices is relevant for the residents of many EU Member States as the heating season approaches. To a large degree the price of natural gas also depends on other competing sources of energy, such as oil, and prices in the international market. The conclusions of the aforementioned summit therefore state that reducing the influence of oil prices on natural gas prices would reduce the price of natural gas for EU consumers.

What measures does the Commission intend to take to limit the influence of the price of oil on the price of natural gas?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(22 October 2013)

As the Honourable Member points out, the gap in the price of natural gas between the US and Europe remains a source of concern not only in relation to the level of competitiveness or our businesses but also about the resulting cost burden on households. While the share of oil-indexed gas contracts in Europe has decreased to its current level of about 50% of volumes, many long term gas supply contracts — notably in Eastern Europe — are still based on the price of oil. While historically oil was a substitute to gas and thus a reliable proxy offering security to both producers and consumers of gas, today this link is clearly cut and the supply and demand fundamentals of the two commodities have diverged.

Hence, creating a functioning internal gas market — including liquid trading hubs — that covers all of Europe remains the single most important priority in order to ensure that prices adequately reflect the true value of gas and ensure affordability for Europe's households and businesses. This requires not only administrative rules such as network codes, but also investments in infrastructure in order to diversify supply sources and routes and strengthen the EU's security of supply. Completing the internal energy market is not a guarantee for lower prices. However, by ensuring competition across all levels of the value chain, it will guarantee that the most cost-reflective and efficient price is formed.

Finally, the EU has a strong interest in a transparent and functioning global natural gas market.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010897/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(25 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Condizioni delle minoranze religiose nel Pakistan

Il 22 settembre scorso si è verificato un attacco terroristico in Pakistan. Al termine della funzione domenicale, due kamikaze si sono fatti esplodere nei pressi della chiesa protestante di Ognissanti a Kohati Gate, a Peshawar, capitale della provincia di Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a nord del Paese in un momento in cui erano presenti tra le 600 e le 700 persone.

I due terroristi erano estremisti islamici e avevano addosso oltre otto chili di esplosivo. Nell'attacco hanno perso la vita più di 100 persone e i feriti, tra i quali alcuni molto gravi, sono stati più di 130.

Il Pakistan ha 180 milioni di abitanti e gli orientamenti religiosi sono particolarmente eterogenei. Gli attacchi verso le minoranze religiose sono molto frequenti e, a causa della mancanza di politiche adeguate, parte della popolazione vive in uno stato di insicurezza e paura.

Poiché quest'ultimo episodio di violenza ha una gravità maggiore per il numero elevato di vittime innocenti e stante il ruolo di attore globale che l'UE intende svolgere può la VP/HR riferire:

— se è al corrente dei ripetuti attacchi di violenza che avvengono negli ultimi mesi nel Paese;

— se ha intenzione di intraprendere un'azione di monitoraggio per spronare e sostenere il governo pakistano affinché possa intraprendere azioni più adeguate di protezione verso queste minoranze?

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

L'AR/VP è al corrente dei ripetuti attentati contro i cristiani e altre minoranze religiose in Pakistan. Dopo l'attentato del 22 settembre ha rilasciato una dichiarazione molto chiara. La questione della vulnerabilità di tutte le minoranze religiose in Pakistan è al centro delle preoccupazioni dell'UE che ha affrontato la questione nel dialogo che ha tenuto con il governo del Pakistan. La Commissione continua a sostenere gli sforzi che il Pakistan sta facendo per far fronte alla minaccia del terrorismo. Il Consiglio Affari esteri del giugno 2013 ha espresso preoccupazione per i ripetuti attentati terroristici in Pakistan e ha ribadito l'indiscutibile impegno dell'UE a cooperare con il Pakistan nella lotta contro le due forme di terrorismo che affliggono il paese, gli attentati all'interno e quelli all'esterno dei suoi confini, e ha garantito il suo sostegno al fine di assicurare i colpevoli alla giustizia. L'argomento continuerà ad essere affrontato con le autorità pakistane.

Nel prossimo anno l'UE prevede di rafforzare le proprie attività a sostegno della sicurezza e della lotta contro il terrorismo in Pakistan. L'attuale sostegno consiste, tra l'altro, in programma finalizzati a consolidare la certezza del diritto, migliorare la qualità dei servizi di polizia e l'accesso alla giustizia per le categorie vulnerabili attraverso progetti di sviluppo delle capacità nelle istituzioni federali e provinciali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010897/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Situation of religious minorities in Pakistan

A terrorist attack took place in Pakistan on 22 September 2013. After Sunday service, with 600-700 people present, two suicide bombers blew themselves up outside the Anglican All Saints Church in Kohati Gate, Peshawar, capital of the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the north of the country.

The two terrorists were Muslim extremists carrying over eight kilos of explosives. More than 100 people lost their lives in the attack, and over 130 people were injured, some seriously.

One hundred and eighty million people live in Pakistan, and the religions practised are particularly diverse. Attacks on religious minorities are very frequent and, owing to a lack of appropriate policies, a section of the population is living in a state of insecurity and fear.

Since this latest violence is all the more serious owing to the high number of innocent victims, and given that the EU plans to play a global role:

— Is the VP/HR aware of the repeated attacks which have been happening in the country in recent months?

— Does she plan to initiate monitoring to encourage and support the Pakistani Government so that it can take more appropriate action to protect these minorities?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the repeated attacks against Christians and other religious minorities in Pakistan. She issued a very clear statement after the attack on 22 September. The vulnerable situation of all minorities in Pakistan is at the forefront of human rights concerns raised by the EU in dialogue with the Government of Pakistan. We are continuing to support Pakistan in its efforts to tackle the threat from terrorism. The June 2013 Foreign Affairs Council noted with concern the continuing terrorist attacks in Pakistan, and reiterated the EU's unequivocal commitment to working with Pakistan to address the shared threat from terrorism both inside and outside its borders, including bringing perpetrators to justice. We will continue to raise these issues with the Pakistani authorities.

EU activities in support of security and counter-terrorism in Pakistan will be reinforced during the coming year. Current support includes programmes aimed at the strengthening of rule of law, improving the quality of law enforcement and access to justice for vulnerable groups through capacity-building projects in the federal and provincial institutions.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010898/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(25 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Randagismo e tutela degli animali domestici: il caso romeno

In questi ultimi giorni l'opinione pubblica ha dimostrato particolari sensibilità sul tema della cosiddetta «legge ammazza cani» approvata dal parlamento rumeno, la quale obbliga l'uccisione di cani randagi dopo 14 giorni dall'accalappiamento.

Considerato che la Romania non ha rispettato la Convenzione europea per la protezione degli animali da compagnia, in particolare i seguenti articoli:

— art. 11: Uccisione

— art. 12: Riduzione del numero di animali randagi

— art. 13: Eccezioni per quanto concerna la cattura, il mantenimento e l'uccisione;

considerato quanto affermato dalla dichiarazione scritta 26/2011 sulla gestione della popolazione canina nell"UE;

considerato che la legge romena sembra essere (per ora) sospesa, in seguito al ricorso presentato il 16 settembre alla Corte Costituzionale da un gruppo di senatori;

può la Commissione riferire se sia intenzionata ad avviare un dibattito per l'attuazione concreta di una normativa comune che possa imporre agli Stati membri una maggior tutela per gli animali da compagnia, prestando particolare attenzione e chiarezza anche alla situazione dei randagi?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(11 novembre 2013)

La Commissione rinvia alla propria risposta alle interrogazioni E-009002/2011 e E-002062/2012 ([1]) che affrontano le questioni del randagismo e della gestione della popolazione canina.

La convenzione europea per la protezione degli animali da compagnia esula dal diritto dell'UE. Il modo in cui gli Stati membri applicano la legislazione nazionale in materia rimane di loro esclusiva competenza.

Tuttavia, nel quadro della strategia dell'UE per la protezione e il benessere degli animali 2012-2015, la Commissione ha deciso di condurre uno studio sul benessere di cani e gatti oggetto di pratiche commerciali, al fine di valutare se tali preoccupazioni riflettano la situazione generale nell'UE. I risultati dello studio saranno disponibili entro la fine del 2014.

Inoltre, al fine di raccogliere informazioni in materia, la Commissione ha organizzato la prima Conferenza europea sul benessere di cani e gatti ([2]) che si è tenuta a Bruxelles il 28 ottobre 2013.

La Commissione ritiene che una migliore attuazione della legislazione vigente negli ordinamenti giuridici degli Stati membri interessati e una maggiore sensibilizzazione di tutti i soggetti impegnati nella protezione degli animali da compagnia siano le premesse per compiere ulteriori progressi in questo campo.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/information_sources/ahw_events_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010898/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: Stray animals and protection of pet animals in Romania

Over the past few days, the public has proved to be particularly sensitive to the issue of the 'dog-killing law' adopted by the Romanian parliament, which requires stray dogs to be killed 14 days after their capture.

Romania has not complied with the European Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals, and in particular the following articles:

— Article 11: Killing

— Article 12: Reduction of numbers

— Article 13: Exceptions for capture, keeping and killing.

Written declaration 26/2011 on dog population management in the European Union should also be borne in mind.

The Romanian law appears (for the time being) to have been suspended following the appeal lodged by a group of senators on 16 September before the Constitutional Court.

Does the Commission intend to launch a debate on the practical implementation of common rules requiring the Member States to afford greater protection to pets, clarifying and paying particular attention to the situation of stray animals?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 November 2013)

The Commission would like to refer to its reply to questions E-009002/2011 and E-002062/2012 ([1]) which address the issue of stray dogs and dog population management.

The European Convention for the protection of pet animals is not part of the EU legislation. The way Member States implement national legislation on these matters remains under their sole competence.

However, within the framework of the EU strategy for the protection and welfare of animals 2012-2015, the Commission decided to perform a study on the welfare of dogs and cats involved in commercial practices, aiming at evaluating if these concerns reflect a general situation in the EU. The results of the study will be available by the end of 2014.

In addition, the Commission organised the first European Conference on 'The welfare of dogs and cats' ([2]) to collect information on this issue, in Brussels on 28 October 2013.

The Commission considers that progress on this issue can be better achieved by improved enforcement of the current legislation in the Member States concerned, and by increased awareness of all actors involved in the protection of pet animals.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/information_sources/ahw_events_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010899/13
to the Commission
Phil Prendergast (S&D)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: Aviation insurance funding for third parties

In line with Article 14 of the Motor Insurance Directive 2009/103/EC, does the Commission intend to put forward legislation requiring Member States to guarantee the existence of insurance funding covering property loss or personal injury of air travellers and/or affected third parties in instances where aircraft operators' aviation insurance policies are repudiated as a result of breaches of aviation regulations?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(11 November 2013)

Article 50 of the Montreal Convention ([1]) which is reflected in Regulation (EC) 785/2004 on insurance requirements for air carriers and aircraft operators ([2]) provides for a minimum insurance cover in situations where an air carrier or aircraft operator is liable in respect of passengers, baggage, cargo and third parties. The insurance shall cover each and every flight with the exception of flights taken by state aircraft, model aircraft, foot-launched flying machines, captive balloons, kites, parachutes and aircraft with less than 500kg of MTOM ([3]) if not used for commercial purposes, or if those are used for local flight instruction within the borders of a Member State. In all such latter instances, the Member States are responsible for the establishment of the rules. Enforcement of the regulation also lies under the competence of the Member States.

The regulation does not provide for the establishment of a fund similar to the one for motorists.

The reasons are twofold:

Firstly, civil and criminal law in each Member State addresses these situations.

Secondly, the cost of establishing such fund would not be proportionate with the occurrence of such situations.

Thus, the Commission has the view that such an amendment of the current regulation is not necessary.

([1]) Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules Relating to International Carriage by Air, agreed at Montreal on 28 May 1999.
([2]) OJ L 138, 30.4.2004, p. 1-6.
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:138:0001:0006:EN:PDF
([3]) MTOM: Maximum Take-Off Mass.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010900/13
to the Commission
Phil Prendergast (S&D)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: False online reviews

Is the Commission aware of the practice of commissioning false reviews on the Internet, whereby providers of goods and services pay other companies, such as reputation management and search engine optimisation firms, to generate and post online reviews with positive feedback on companies, products and services, posing as individual consumers?

What action does the Commission intend to take to curb this misleading practice?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(4 December 2013)

The Commission is aware of the general problem of online fake reviews.

The Honourable Member should know that there is already Union legislation which protects consumers against misleading advertising.

Directive 2005/29/EC ([1]) requires traders not to mislead consumers on a wide range of elements including the motives of a commercial practice. Furthermore, the directive prohibits (in all circumstances) the practice of falsely representing oneself as a consumer (Annex I n. 22).

Member States are responsible for setting up adequate and effective means to combat unfair commercial practices. However experience has shown a need for improving coordinated enforcement, in particular where a recurring problem arises in different Member States. In line with the Commission's Consumer Agenda ([2]), the report on the application of Directive 2005/29/EC ([3]) adopted on 14 March 2013 identifies key areas for actions, including the online sector such as customer review tools and price comparison websites ([4]), where enforcement should be stepped up.

In this connection, the Commission is reviewing the current Guidance on the application of Directive 2005/29/EC ([5]) to address emerging challenges in enforcement, including fake reviews, endorsements and testimonials.

In addition, participants to the Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Comparison Tools recommended ([6]) that comparison tools operators should ensure the authenticity of the user reviews and ratings they feature. As a follow-up, the Commission is launching a study on the business models and influence on consumers of comparison tools in the EU, including on the user reviews they feature. The findings, expected by July 2014, will also inform a decision on the way forward.

([1]) OJ L 149, 11.6.2005.
([2]) COM(2012) 225.
([3]) COM(2013) 139.
([4]) COM(2013) 139, Section 3.4.2 Customer Review Tools and Price Comparison Websites, p. 22-24.
([5]) Guidance on the application /implementation of Directive 2005/29/EC on Unfair Commercial Practices (SEC(2009) 1666, Commission Staff Working Document) 3 December 2009 — http://wcmcom-eceuropa-eu-wip.wcm3vue.cec.eu.int:8080/justice/consumer-marketing/unfair-trade/unfairpractices/index_en.htm
([6]) Report from the Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Comparison Tools: http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/documents/consumer-summit-2013-msdct-report_en.pdf

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010901/13
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D)
(25 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Deficitul de apă și inundațiile din Europa impun dezvoltarea unei strategii privind accesul la apă potabilă

Organizația pentru Cooperare și Dezvoltare Economică (OCDE) a lansat recent două noi rapoarte legate de securitatea privind apa și apa și schimbările climatice. Conform acestor rapoarte, Europa este vulnerabilă la deficitul de apă, secete și inundații, sectorul energetic putând fi cel mai afectat. OECD estimează că, până în 2050, mai mult de 40% din populația lumii va trăi în condiții de stres sever de apă și aproape 20% ar putea fi expusă la inundații. De asemenea, valoarea economică a activelor cu risc de inundații este estimată să ajungă la aproximativ 45 de miliarde de dolari până în 2050.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia dacă are în vedere dezvoltarea unei strategii europene și a unei foi de parcurs privind securitatea în ceea ce privește accesul la apă potabilă pe termen mediu și lung.

Răspuns dat de dl Potočnik în numele Comisiei
(13 noiembrie 2013)

De la comunicarea din anul 2007 privind deficitul de apă și seceta în Uniunea Europeană ([1]), care promova o ierarhizare a apei, conform căreia gestionarea cererii de apă, în vederea creșterii eficienței utilizării apei, ar trebui să fie prima măsură întreprinsă, au fost întreprinse eforturi semnificative în întreaga UE pentru punerea în aplicare a acestei politici. În anul 2012, o revizuire efectuată în contextul planului de salvgardare a resurselor de apă ale Europei ([2]) a arătat faptul că există un mare potențial pentru eficientizarea utilizării apei în toate sectoarele principale consumatoare de apă (agricultură, industrie, rețele de distribuție, construcții și producție de energie) și a identificat măsuri care ar putea îmbunătăți gestionarea apei în Europa.

Măsurile includ punerea în aplicare mai bună a stimulentelor pentru utilizarea eficientă a apei și stabilirea transparentă a prețurilor în domeniul apei [articolul 9 din Directiva-cadru privind apa (DCA) ([3])], introducerea contorizării apei și stabilirea de obiective în materie de eficiență a utilizării apei în zonele expuse stresului hidric, utilizarea unor dispozitive mai eficiente în domeniul apei, crearea de condiții echitabile în ceea ce privește reutilizarea apei în întreaga UE, îmbunătățirea eficienței irigațiilor într-o manieră coerentă cu obiectivele Directivei-cadru privind apa și reducerea pierderilor din rețelele de distribuție a apei.

Comisia consideră că aceste măsuri vor contribui la asigurarea accesului la apă potabilă sigură și lucrează în prezent împreună cu statele membre și părțile interesate la punerea în aplicare a acestor măsuri în cadrul strategiei comune de implementare a Directivei-cadru privind apa.

([1]) COM(2007) 414 final.
([2]) COM(2012) 673 final.
([3]) JO L 327, 22.12.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010901/13
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: Water shortages and floods in Europe demand the development of a strategy for access to drinking water

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) recently launched two new reports on water security and water and climate change. According to these reports, Europe is vulnerable to water shortages, droughts and flooding, with the energy sector potentially being most affected. The OECD estimates that over 40% of the world's population will live under conditions of severe water stress by 2050 and almost 20% could be exposed to flooding. Furthermore, the economic value of assets at risk of flooding is estimated to reach approximately 45 billion dollars by 2050.

I would like to ask the Commission whether it intends to develop a European strategy and security roadmap concerning access to drinking water in the medium and long terms.

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(13 November 2013)

Since a 2007 Communication on water scarcity and droughts in the European Union ([1]), which advocated a water hierarchy under which water demand management — to increase water efficiency — should be the first course of action, major efforts have been undertaken across the EU to implement this policy. In 2012 a review in the context of the 'Blueprint to safeguard Europe's Water Resources' ([2]) showed large potential for water efficiency in all the main water-using sectors (agriculture, industry, distribution networks, buildings and energy production) and identified measures which could improve water management in Europe.

The measures include better implementation of incentives for efficient water use and transparent water pricing (Article 9 of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) ([3])), development of water accounts and water efficiency targets for water stressed areas, fostering the use of more efficient water devices, establishing a level playing field for water re-use accross the EU, improving irrigation efficiency in ways that are consistent with the WFD objectives and reducing leakage from water distribution networks.

The Commission believes that these measures will contribute to ensuring access to safe drinking water and is currently working jointly with Member States and stakeholders on the implementation of these measures in the framework of the Common Implementation Strategy of the WFD.

([1]) COM(2007) 414 final.
([2]) COM(2012) 673 final.
([3]) OJ L 327 of 22.12.2000.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010902/13
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D)
(25 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Obiectivele de Dezvoltare ale Mileniului

Raportul Națiunilor Unite privind realizarea Obiectivelor de Dezvoltare ale Mileniului (ODM) subliniază faptul că, deși s-au făcut progrese importante în realizarea obiectivelor stabilite, sunt încă necesare acțiuni accelerate pentru atingerea obiectivelor stabilite pentru 2015. Conform raportului mai sus menționat, 870 de milioane de oameni (unul din opt oameni din întreaga lume) rămân flămânzi (nu consumă suficiente alimente pentru asigurarea minimului necesar de energie) și, la nivel global, unul din șase copii este subponderal, iar unul din patru copii este pipernicit. De asemenea, ca urmare a situației economice mondiale și a crizei financiare, s-au pierdut 67 de milioane de locuri de muncă, rata ocupării forței de muncă a scăzut de la 61,3% în 2007 la 60,3% în 2012, iar decalajul între bărbați și femei privind rata de ocupare în 2012 era de 24.8%. Conform aceluiași raport, 57 de milioane de copii de vârsta școlii primare au părăsit școala și 123 de milioane de tineri (în vârstă de 14-24 ani) nu sunt capabili să citească și să scrie, dintre care 61% sunt femei.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia dacă în perioada următoare are în vedere acțiuni pentru a contribui la îndeplinirea obiectivelor ODM pentru anul 2015 și dacă pregătește propuneri pentru cadrul de dezvoltare aferent perioadei de după 2015.

Răspuns dat de dl Piebalgs în numele Comisiei
(14 noiembrie 2013)

Uniunea Europeană s-a angajat să sprijine realizarea Obiectivelor de dezvoltare ale mileniului (ODM) încă de la început și a avut o contribuție semnificativă în acest sens. Datorită sprijinului acordat de UE în perioada 2004-2012, 46,5 milioane de persoane au beneficiat de asistență prin intermediul transferurilor sociale pentru siguranță alimentară, 8,8 milioane de persoane au beneficiat de asistență legată de ocuparea unui loc de muncă și 13,7 milioane de elevi noi s-au înscris în învățământul primar. Publicația recentă intitulată „EU Contribution to the MDGs” ([1]) („Contribuția UE la realizarea ODM-urilor”) oferă o imagine mai cuprinzătoare asupra acestor aspecte.

Comisia își menține angajamentul ferm de a depune toate eforturile în vederea accelerării progreselor până la termenul de realizare a ODM-urilor stabilit pentru 2015, motiv pentru care a adoptat, în 2011, „Agenda schimbării” ([2]). S-a acordat atenție în principal sporirii impactului și a eficienței politicii de dezvoltare a UE, mai ales prin concentrarea resurselor UE în domeniile în care acestea sunt cel mai necesare și au cel mai mare impact asupra reducerii sărăciei.

În plus, prin intermediul inițiativei ODM în valoare de 1 miliard EUR, care a fost recunoscută de Secretarul General al ONU ([3]), UE a vizat ODM-urile în care progresele prezintă cele mai mari întârzieri, sprijinind aproape 70 de acțiuni în 46 de țări.

În ceea ce privește perioada ulterioară anului 2015, Comisia a adoptat o comunicare ([4]) în cadrul căreia este prezentată viziunea UE privind un cadru unic, global și universal pentru perioada post-2015, care ne-ar permite să abordăm provocările interconectate legate de eradicarea sărăciei și de dezvoltarea durabilă. Consiliul a aprobat această viziune în iunie 2013.

Comisia salută documentul final adoptat în urma evenimentului special al ONU ([5]) care prezintă orientări clare privind evoluția către summitul din 2015.

În colaborare cu SEAE, Comisia va continua să contribuie în mod activ la procesul de schițare a agendei post-2015 și își exprimă interesul pentru continuarea dialogului cu Parlamentul European.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/mdg-brochure-2013_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development-policies/documents/agenda_for_change_ro.pdf
([3]) http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/A%20Life%20of%20Dignity%20for%20All.pdf
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0092:FIN:RO:PDF
([5]) http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Outcome%20documentMDG.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010902/13
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: Millennium Development Goals

The United Nations report on the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) highlights the fact that, although significant progress has been made towards achieving the goals set, quicker action is required if they are to be met by 2015. According to this report, 870 million people, one in eight of the world's population, are going hungry (not consuming sufficient food to meet the minimum energy requirement), one in six children worldwide is underweight and one in four children has stunted growth. Furthermore, as a result of the global economic situation and the financial crisis, 67 million people have lost their jobs and the employment rate has decreased from 61.3% in 2007 to 60.3% in 2012. The gap between men and women in terms of the employment rate in 2012 was 24.8%. The same report states that 57 million children of primary school age have left school and 123 million young people (aged between 14 and 24 years) are unable to read and write, 61% of which are women and girls.

I would like to ask the Commission if it envisages any future action to help ensure that the MDGs are met by the year 2015, and if it is drawing up proposals for the development framework for the period after 2015.

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(14 November 2013)

The European Union is committed to helping achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) since their inception and has already made a significant contribution. Thanks to EU support provided between 2004 and 2012, 46.5 million people were assisted through social transfers for food security; 8.8 million people benefited from employment-related assistance; and 13.7 million new pupils were enrolled in primary education. The recent publication 'EU Contribution to the MDGs' ([1]) provides a more comprehensive picture.

The Commission remains firmly committed to making every effort to accelerate progress by the 2015 MDGs deadline, which is why it adopted the 'Agenda for Change' ([2]) in 2011. The primary concern has been to increase the impact and effectiveness of EU development policy, notably by focusing EU resources where these are needed the most and have the most impact in terms of poverty reduction.

In addition, through its EUR 1 billion MDG initiative — which has been acknowledged by the UN Secretary General ([3]) — the EU has been targeting the most off-track MDGs, supporting nearly 70 actions in 46 countries.

As for post-2015, the Commission adopted a communication ([4]), laying out an EU vision for a single, overarching and universal post-2015 framework which would enable us to tackle the intertwined challenges of poverty eradication and sustainable development. This vision was endorsed by the Council in June 2013.

The Commission welcomes the UN Special Event Outcome Document, ([5]) which provides clear guidance on the process towards a 2015 Summit.

The Commission in cooperation with the EEAS will continue to actively contribute to the process of shaping the post-2015 agenda, and look forward to continuing the dialogue with the European Parliament.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/mdg-brochure-2013_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development-policies/documents/agenda_for_change_en.pdf
([3]) http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/A%20Life%20of%20Dignity%20for%20All.pdf
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/2013-02-22_communication_a_decent_life_for_all_post_2015_en.pdf
([5]) http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Outcome%20documentMDG.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010903/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(25 September 2013)

Subject: Animal health law

In the context of the proposal for a regulation on animal health, could the Commission advise me as to which countries are the most problematic? Was an impact assessment study carried out on the effect of the proposal in the UK?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(7 November 2013)

The Commission proposal for a regulation on animal health intends to provide to all Member States, and the EU as a whole, with a legal tool to improve their animal health situation. The proposal does not score Member States on the basis of the number, or the scale, of the animal health problems that they are facing.

An Impact Asssessment with an EU-wide scope was carried out to assess the impact of the animal health proposal. Several examples of the main problems that Member States and the EU as a whole faced in the last decades are mentioned there. The impacts of different policy options in relation to those issues are assessed. Thus, the impact assessment does not focus on any particular individual Member State.