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 353/01)

Treść Strona

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000897/14
a la Comisión
Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D)
(29 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Objetivos de la UE en materia de energía y fracking

Además de los nuevos objetivos en materia de energía y cambio climático de la UE propuestos recientemente, la Comisión ha hecho públicas unas meras recomendaciones (sin valor vinculante alguno) a los Estados miembros sobre la explotación del gas pizarra mediante la fracturación hidráulica (*fracking*).

En este escenario, y tras observar que dichos objetivos ambientales carecen de ambición suficiente, esta diputada quisiera saber si la Comisión está renunciando a objetivos potentes en el ámbito de las energías renovables en detrimento de impulsar el *fracking* como fuente de energía.

En este sentido, ¿no cree la Comisión que la extracción de estos hidrocarburos mediante *fracking* puede afectar negativamente a nuestra huella de carbono, comprometiendo incluso los objetivos energéticos y climáticos de la UE?

¿Está pensando la Comisión en rebajar los actuales compromisos internacionales en el futuro con el fin de poder favorecer el *fracking*?

¿Estima la Comisión que es necesario que se realicen estudios de impacto ambiental para todo el ciclo de vida de los pozos, y estos deberían realizarse antes de iniciar cualquier actividad de exploración o construcción?

¿Ha valorado en conciencia los múltiples e inevitables impactos que puede tener esta técnica sobre el medio ambiente, el clima y la salud de la población?

¿No cree que se ha plegado a los intereses de las empresas gasísticas?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de marzo de 2014)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a la respuesta que dio a la pregunta escrita P-000597/2014 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+P-2014-000597+0+DOC+XML+V0//ES

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000897/14
to the Commission
Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D)
(29 January 2014)

Subject: EU energy and fracking goals

In addition to the new energy and climate change goals proposed recently by the EU, the Commission has issued the Member States with a number of recommendations (which are in no way binding) relating to the extraction of shale gas through hydraulic fracturing (otherwise known as 'fracking').

In light of the above, and having noted that the aforementioned environmental objectives are somewhat devoid of ambition, this deputy would like to know if the Commission has decided against formulating strong renewable energy goals at the expense of promoting fracking as an energy source.

If that is the case, does the Commission not think that extracting hydrocarbons through fracking might be detrimental to our carbon footprint, and even jeopardise the EU's energy and climate goals?

Is the Commission thinking of toning down present international agreements in the future in order to pave the way for fracking?

Does the Commission think that environmental impact studies need to be carried out over the full life cycle of wells, and that this should be done prior to starting any exploration or construction activities?

Has it taken into account the countless, inevitable repercussions that this procedure could have for the environment, the climate and people's health?

Does it not believe that it has bowed to the interests of gas companies?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question P-000597/2014 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+P-2014-000597+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000901/14
alla Commissione
Erminia Mazzoni (PPE)
(29 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: La disciplina delle guide turistiche in Italia

La figura della guida turistica è disciplinata dalla direttiva 2005/36/CE sul riconoscimento delle qualifiche professionali e l'Italia applica tale direttiva, tutelando il diritto alla libera circolazione delle guide turistiche, nel rispetto del principio di sussidiarietà vigente in materia di professioni e beni culturali. La Commissione europea ha aperto una procedura di pre-infrazione EU PILOT n. 4277/12/MARK, basata sulla violazione da parte dell'Italia della direttiva servizi 2006/123/CE, laddove la disciplina italiana prevedeva che l'abilitazione all'esercizio della professione di guida turistica avesse validità solo nella regione di rilascio. Il Parlamento italiano al fine di conformarsi alle indicazioni della CE contenute nella procedura di pre-infrazione ha emanato la legge europea n. 97 del 6/8/2013, estendendo, all'articolo 3, la validità dell'abilitazione alla professione di guida turistica a tutto il territorio nazionale e riconoscendo l'efficacia della qualifica professionale conseguita da un cittadino dell'Unione europea in un altro Stato membro su tutto il territorio nazionale italiano (c.1). La nuova disciplina, ex art. 3 della legge 97/2013, permette alle guide turistiche abilitate in un altro Stato membro di esercitare la professione sul territorio italiano senza che sia necessaria alcuna autorizzazione o abilitazione aggiuntiva rilasciata dalle autorità italiane (c. 2). La stessa direttiva servizi, all'art. 10, prevede deroghe ai regimi autorizzatori e all'esercizio dell'attività su tutto il territorio per motivi imperativi di interesse generale, quali la conservazione del patrimonio nazionale storico-artistico. Il patrimonio culturale italiano è particolarmente ricco, infatti conta almeno 200.000 beni censiti che coprono epoche storiche e artistiche differenti e, pertanto, l'illustrazione di qualità ne necessita una conoscenza approfondita in un ambito territoriale limitato (provinciale o regionale) e quindi la guida turistica è normalmente specializzata nell'illustrazione e interpretazione di un patrimonio culturale limitato e non va confusa con l'accompagnatore turistico che assiste il gruppo nel corso di un viaggio.

Può la Commissione europea precisare quanto segue:

1) perché nell'ambito della procedura EU PILOT n. 4277/12/MARK ha applicato la direttiva servizi alla disciplina delle qualifiche professionali di guida turistica in Italia, le quali rientrano già nel campo di applicazione della direttiva 2005/36/CE?

2) Non ritiene che la disciplina della guida turistica sia strettamente legata alla promozione e alla conservazione del patrimonio nazionale e non si debba quindi ammettere la deroga prevista dall'art. 10 della direttiva servizi?

3) Vuole tenere conto della specificità delle guide turistiche rispetto agli accompagnatori turistici nell'ambito di applicazione della direttiva servizi 2006/123/CE?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(20 marzo 2014)

Per quanto riguarda l'accesso alla professione, le guide turistiche rientrano nell'ambito di applicazione della direttiva 2005/36/CE, mentre le questioni relative all'esercizio della professione sono disciplinate dalla direttiva 2006/123/CE (direttiva sui servizi). La procedura di preinfrazione alla quale fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare (EU PILOT n. 4277/12/MARKT) non riguarda la direttiva 2005/36/CE, ma piuttosto l'articolo 10, paragrafo 4, della direttiva sui servizi, il quale stabilisce che «L'autorizzazione permette al prestatore di accedere all'attività di servizi o di esercitarla su tutto il territorio nazionale […]». Tale articolo sancisce inoltre che una limitazione dell'autorizzazione a determinate parti del territorio è consentita solo per motivi imperativi.

Sulla base delle informazioni disponibili, alla Commissione non risulta che la promozione e la conservazione del patrimonio nazionale possano di per sé essere considerate un motivo imperativo tale da giustificare una restrizione dell'esercizio di alcune attività. La promozione del patrimonio nazionale può essere garantita indipendentemente dal luogo dal quale proviene il prestatore del servizio, in quanto ciò che conta è la sua conoscenza di un certo territorio e della sua cultura.

La direttiva 2006/123/CE (direttiva sui servizi) si applica indistintamente alle guide turistiche e agli accompagnatori turistici.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000901/14
to the Commission
Erminia Mazzoni (PPE)
(29 January 2014)

Subject: Rules governing tourist guides in Italy

The profession of tourist guide is governed by Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications and Italy applies that directive by protecting the right to free movement of tourist guides, in keeping with the principle of subsidiarity in force in relation to professions and cultural assets. The Commission has initiated pre-infringement procedure EU PILOT No 4277/12/MARK, in response to a breach by Italy of the Services Directive, 2006/123/EC, namely the stipulation under Italian law that accreditation to exercise the profession of tourist guide is valid only in the region of issue. With a view to addressing the points raised by the Commission in the pre-infringement procedure, the Italian Parliament passed European Law No 97 of 6 August 2013, Article 3 of which extends the validity of the accreditation to exercise the profession of tourist guide to cover the whole national territory of Italy and stipulates that professional qualifications obtained by EU citizens in another Member State are likewise recognised throughout its national territory (c.1). The new rules, set out in Article 3 of Law No 97/2013, allow tourist guides accredited in another Member State to exercise their profession in Italy without being required to obtain any additional authorisation or accreditation from the Italian authorities (c.2). Article 10 of the Services Directive provides for exemptions from the authorisation schemes and from the rule stipulating that it must be possible to exercise the activity throughout the national territory of a country for overriding reasons relating to the public interest, such as the conservation of national historical and artistic heritage. Italy has a particularly rich cultural heritage, including almost 200 000 listed properties from different historical and artistic periods, and to work properly, therefore, a tourist guide requires a deep knowledge of that heritage in a limited geographical area (provincial or regional). Tourist guides thus normally specialise in the interpretation of a specific aspect of cultural heritage, and their profession is not to be confused with that of a tour manager who accompanies a group throughout their trip.

1. Why under procedure EU PILOT No 4277/12/MARK has the Commission applied the Services Directive to the rules governing the professional qualifications of tourist guides in Italy, which already fall within the scope of Directive 2005/36/EC?

2. Does it consider that the rules governing the profession of tourist guide is a matter closely linked to the promotion and conservation of national heritage and that therefore the exemption provided for in Article 10 of the Services Directive should apply?

3. Will it take account of the differences between the professions of tourist guide and tour manager when applying the Services Directive, 2006/123/EC?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2014)

Tourist guides fall into the scope of application of Directive 2005/36/EC as far as the access to the profession is concerned. The issues concerning the exercise of the profession fall within the scope of of Directive 2006/123/EC (the Services Directive). The Pre-infringement procedure to which the Honourable Member is referring (EU PILOT No 4277/12/MARKT) does not concern Directive 2005/36/EC but rather art 10.4 of the Services Directive which establishes that 'the authorisation shall enable the provider to have access to the service activity, or to exercise that activity, throughout the national territory…'. Art. 10.4 goes on to state that a limitation of the authorisation to certain parts of the territory is allowed when justified by overriding reasons.

Based on the information available, it would not appear to the Commission that promotion and conservation of national heritage can as such be considered an overriding reason, justifying a restriction to the exercise of certain activities. It would appear that the promotion of national heritage can be ensured independently from the question of where the provider of the service comes from, the important issue being the knowledge that the provider of the service has of a certain territory and its culture.

The Services Directive, 2006/123/EC applies in the same way to tourist guides and tour managers.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000965/14
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(30 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Introducción de razas no autóctonas en la producción de la D.O. Roncal

El 29 de septiembre de 2012, el Diario Oficial de la Unión Europea publicó el documento C-294 relativo a la Denominación de Origen Protegida Roncal. Esta D.O., existente en la Comunidad Foral de Navarra (España), fue modificada con arreglo al artículo 6, apartado 2, del Reglamento (CE) n° 510/2006 del Consejo, permitiendo la introducción de la leche de la oveja de raza foránea «Assaf».

En el pliego de condiciones que justifica y defiende dicha modificación, más concretamente en la letra E (Obtención del producto), se manifiesta que:

«La base de la alimentación en las explotaciones que producen leche para la elaboración del queso es el pastoreo que se desarrolla exclusivamente en la zona de producción».

La citada modificación tiene la oposición de amplios sectores de la sociedad española, así como sindicatos agrarios, a los que las autoridades españolas hacen caso omiso. También un sindicato agrario francés ha presentado una declaración de oposición a la modificación de la D.O. Roncal, sobre la cual, los Gobiernos español y francés no han conseguido alcanzar un acuerdo y la Comisión ha afirmado recientemente estar analizando la declaración de oposición.

¿Dispone la Comisión de una decisión definitiva sobre las declaraciones de España y Francia sobre la introducción de la raza Assaf en la Denominación de Origen Protegida Roncal?

¿Dispone de medios propios la Comisión para contrastar la veracidad de las informaciones que desde los Estados miembros se trasladan en un proceso de modificación, como lo es el que afecta a la Denominación de Origen Protegida Roncal?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de marzo de 2014)

El 29 de septiembre de 2012, la Comisión publicó ([1]) a efectos de una posible oposición la solicitud de modificación de la denominación de origen protegida «Roncal» que había sido presentada por las autoridades españolas y registrada en el marco del Reglamento (UE) n° 1151/2012 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 21 de noviembre de 2012, sobre los regímenes de calidad de los productos agrícolas y alimenticios ([2]).

La Comisión tiene conocimiento de la oposición que ha suscitado en España esa modificación y señala que las autoridades españolas competentes deberían haberla resuelto en el marco del procedimiento de oposición nacional antes de presentar la solicitud de modificación a la Comisión.

Sin embargo, al no haberse alcanzado ningún acuerdo en este problema entre las autoridades españolas y francesas, la Comisión se encuentra analizando en estos momentos la información y los argumentos presentados por unas y otras autoridades y ha pedido a España una serie de aclaraciones. Esto impide por el momento pronunciarse sobre el fondo de los argumentos aducidos por la oposición, así como adelantar la fecha en la que pueda adoptarse la decisión final.

En lo que atañe a la exactitud de la información enviada por los Estados miembros, el artículo 49, apartado 2, párrafo segundo, del Reglamento (UE) n° 1151/2012 obliga a aquellos a que, siempre que reciban de una agrupación una solicitud de modificación, procedan a examinarla con los medios que sean adecuados para comprobar que esté justificada y cumpla las condiciones del régimen al que corresponda, ya sea el de las denominaciones de origen o el de las indicaciones geográficas. La Comisión, al realizar el examen inicial de las solicitudes de modificación recibidas, se basa en los documentos que le remite el Estado miembro interesado tras la comprobación a la que le obliga la disposición arriba citada. No obstante, está facultada, en caso necesario, para proponer una revisión sustancial de la modificación o para rechazarla.

([1]) DO C 294 de 29.9.2012.
([2]) DO L 343 de 14.12.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000965/14
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: Introduction of non-indigenous species to the 'Roncal' protected designation of origin

On 29 September 2012, the *Official Journal of the European Union* published document C294 on the Roncal protected designation of origin (PDO). This PDO, which is in force in the Autonomous Community of Navarre (Spain), was amended pursuant to Article 6(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 to permit the inclusion of milk from ewes of the Assaf breed, which comes from outside the area.

The product specification justifying and supporting said amendment states under the heading 'production method' that 'the animals that produce milk for making the cheese graze exclusively in the production area'.

This amendment is opposed by a broad swathe of Spanish society and by agricultural unions, a fact which has been ignored by the Spanish authorities. A French agricultural union has also declared its objection to the amendment to the Roncal PDO.

The Spanish and French governments have been unable to reach an agreement on the matter and the Commission recently stated that it was examining the statements of objection.

Has the Commission reached a final decision on the Spanish and French declarations on the inclusion of the Assaf breed in the Roncal PDO?

Does the Commission have adequate means to check the accuracy of information sent by Member States in an amendment procedure, such as that concerning the Roncal protected designation of origin?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

An amendment application for the protected designation of origin 'Roncal' registered in the framework of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs ([1]), presented by the Spanish authorities, has been published by the Commission for opposition on 29.9.2012 ([2]).

The Commission is aware of the oppositions raised within Spain. Such oppositions had to be handled by the responsible Spanish authorities in the framework of the national opposition procedure preceding the submission of the amendment application to the Commission.

No agreement was reached on the matter between the French and Spanish authorities. The Commission is currently analysing the information and views provided by the French and Spanish authorities and has requested clarifications from the Spanish authorities. It is therefore, at this stage, not possible to make a pronouncement on the substance of the arguments raised in the opposition, nor on the date by when a final decision will be taken.

With respect to the accuracy of information sent by Member States, the second sub-paragraph of Article 49 (2) of Regulation (EU) 1151/2012 obliges Member States to scrutinise an application for amendments submitted by a group by appropriate means in order to check that it is justified and meets the conditions of the scheme for designations of origin or geographical indications, respectively. The Commission bases its initial scrutiny of an amendment application on the documents thus checked by the Member State. However, the Commission is empowered, if necessary, to seek a substantial revision of the amendment, or reject it.

([1]) OJ L 343, 14.12.2012.
([2]) OJ C 294, 29.9.2012.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000968/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(30 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Strategie francesi antiterrorismo in Africa del Nord

Nel gennaio del 2013, il governo francese ha avviato l'operazione Serval al fine di allontanare i jihadisti dal Mali settentrionale. Gli estremisti islamici si sono successivamente diffusi in diverse zone della regione del Sahel e, di conseguenza, i militari francesi hanno dovuto riorganizzare le loro basi. I soldati francesi si posizioneranno a Goa (Mali), Niamey (Niger) e Njamena (Ciad). Il ministro francese della Difesa Jean-Yves Le Drian ha affermato: «Vogliamo essere più reattivi, più disponibili nonché avere un comandante delle forze (…). Questa è una missione di lungo termine. Assicurerà la presenza di diverse basi in tutta la regione. Nel complesso, vi saranno 3 000 soldati operanti nella zona in pianta stabile».

Gli Stati Uniti stanno fornendo un appoggio alla Francia mettendo a sua disposizione aerei cisterna, aerei da carico, aeromobili di intelligence e velivoli senza pilota. Nel sud della Libia, là dove i jihadisti sono attivi, Washington desidera addestrare fino a 8 000 soldati libici allo scopo di accrescere la sicurezza del paese. Le Drian sostiene che la Francia «si è assunta la responsabilità di colmare il vuoto di sicurezza in un continente che potrebbe altrimenti diventare un crocevia per la tratta e il terrorismo».

1. Quali azioni intende l'UE intraprendere al fine di coordinare in modo efficace gli sforzi miranti a sostenere la Francia nell'ambito della sua missione, consistente nello stanare l'attività dei militanti nella regione del Sahel?

2. Dispone l'UE di piani intesi a coadiuvare l'addestramento dei soldati in paesi quali Libia e Mali?

3. Come valuta il rischio che i militanti della regione del Sahel possano sferrare attacchi rivolti all'Europa?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(20 marzo 2014)

Nel gennaio 2013 un numero limitato di Stati membri dell'UE ha fornito un supporto diretto all'operazione francese Serval. A livello collettivo, l'UE ha notevolmente rafforzato il proprio impegno per sostenere le azioni di lotta al terrorismo.

A integrazione del sostegno dell'UE alle missioni di stabilizzazione in Mali guidate in un primo tempo dall'Africa e successivamente dall'ONU, nonché ai pertinenti programmi di cooperazione riguardanti la sicurezza, la governance, la lotta al terrorismo e il contrasto della radicalizzazione, dal luglio 2012 sono state realizzate le seguenti missioni PSDC: i) una missione UE di formazione e consulenza in campo militare (EUTM Mali), volta a ristrutturare le forze di difesa nel paese; ii) EUCAP SAHEL (civile), il cui obiettivo è rafforzare lo Stato di diritto e il coordinamento regionale/internazionale in Niger; iii) EUBAM Libya (civile), che sostiene la gestione integrata delle frontiere (polizia di frontiera, dogane, autorità competenti in materia di immigrazione), ma non fornisce una formazione militare. Prossimamente è prevista un'altra missione civile a sostegno delle forze di sicurezza interna (polizia, gendarmeria, guardia nazionale) in Mali.

Vista la natura del terrorismo mondiale, si sta cercando di collegare le dimensioni esterna ed interna delle azioni UE volte a contrastare questo fenomeno. Gli sviluppi in termini politici e di sicurezza che possono sfociare in minacce terroristiche vengono esaminati regolarmente dal Consiglio onde coordinare meglio le risposte degli Stati membri. Nel 2011 la Commissione europea ha creato la rete dell'UE per la sensibilizzazione in materia di radicalizzazione (RAN), con l'obiettivo di promuovere le migliori pratiche e i metodi volti ad attenuare i rischi, e continuerà a lavorare in tal senso conformemente alla comunicazione del gennaio 2014 sulla prevenzione della radicalizzazione che porta al terrorismo e all'estremismo violento (COM(2013) 941).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000968/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — French counter-terrorism strategies in North Africa

In January 2013 the French Government launched Operation Serval to dislodge jihadists from northern Mali. Islamic extremists then spread to various parts of the Sahel region, and as a result, the French military had to reorganise its bases. French soldiers will be positioned in Goa (Mali), Niamey (Niger) and Njamena (Chad). French Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian has said: 'We want to be more reactive, more available and have one commander for the force (…) This is a long-term mission. It will cover the whole region with several bases. In all, there will be 3 000 soldiers in that zone permanently.'

The US is supporting France by providing aerial refuelling tankers, cargo aircraft, intelligence and unmanned drone aircraft. In southern Libya, where jihadists are active, Washington wants to train up to 8 000 Libyan soldiers to boost security in the country. Le Drian says France has 'assumed the responsibility of filling a "security vacuum"' in a continent that 'could otherwise become a crossroads of trafficking and terrorism.'

1. What steps is the EU taking to effectively coordinate its efforts to support France in its mission to flush out militant activity in the Sahel region?

2. Does the EU have plans to help train soldiers in countries such as Libya or Mali?

3. What is the assessment of the threat regarding the potential for militants based in the Sahel to launch attacks on Europe?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2014)

In January 2013, a limited number of EU Member States provided direct support to French Operation Serval. The EU collectively enhanced considerably its level of engagement in support of counter-terrorism efforts.

In complement to the EU support to the African led and then the UN stabilisation missions in Mali as well as relevant cooperation programs in the field of security sector, governance, counter-terrorism and counter-radicalization, the following CSDP missions were deployed since July 2012: (i) a EU military training and advisory mission (EUTM Mali) with the objective to restructure the defence forces there; (ii) EUCAP SAHEL (civilian) in order to help strengthen the rule of law and regional and international coordination in Niger (iii) EUBAM Libya (civilian) to support Integrated Border Management (border police, customs, immigration authorities) but not military training specifically. An additional civilian mission should be deployed soon in order to support internal security forces (police, gendarmerie, National Guard) in Mali.

Given the nature of global terrorism, efforts are being made in order to link up the external and internal dimensions of EU counter-terrorism efforts. Political and security developments which may translate into terrorist threat are reviewed regularly by the Council with the objective to better coordinate Member States' respective responses. In 2011, the European Commission launched a Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) in order to promote best practices and methods to mitigate the risk and it will continue its endeavours along the lines of the January 2014 Communication on preventing radicalisation to terrorism and violent extremism (COM(2013) 941).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000969/14
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: Declining numbers of farmers

The Commission's medium-term outlook for markets and prices predicts that EU producers of cereals, dairy and meat products will benefit from continued high prices, driven by strong world demand, over the next decade. For instance, annual exports of cheese and skimmed milk powder are to reach 1 million tonnes and 637 000 tonnes by 2023, an increase of 52% and 69% respectively compared with 2010.

However, the projected rise in overall farm income comes as a result of the shrinking number of farmers across the EU, which compensates for a drop in factor income (basic farm revenue). Given that farming is a crucial component of the EU economy, what strategies does the Commission have in place to both maintain and increase the number of farmers within the EU so that we are best placed to meet future food challenges, such as feeding a growing world population with less land?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(14 March 2014)

The developments in world demand for cereals, dairy and meat should have a positive impact on prices. As a result, agricultural income in nominal terms is expected to rise over the medium term, while factor income in real terms per worker is projected to increase by more than 18%. This is also the result of the exit of farmers from agriculture (by about -2.8% per year since 2005) but this evolution has not been accompanied by a similar decrease in utilised area, the latter having remained rather constant. This process resulted over time as well in an increased farm size.

To address existing and expected food security and territorial balance challenges, the common agricultural policy (CAP) has been reformed and is being gradually implemented since January 2014, with full implementation as of January 2015. The reformed CAP aims at improving the productivity and competitiveness of EU agriculture while addressing environmental and climate concerns, which should ensure a sustainable production potential over the long term also as regards those employed in agriculture. Farmers' incomes will continue to be supported by direct payments, but in a more targeted and equitable manner.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000970/14
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: Illegal waste dumping

In Northern Ireland, work has begun to repatriate thousands of tonnes of illegally deposited waste from County Fermanagh to the Republic of Ireland. Approximately 4 000 tonnes of waste have been removed from a site close to Fivemiletown in South Tyrone, and a further 4 000 tonnes from ground near Omagh. A recent report suggests that clearing the 100 illegal waste-dumping sites in Northern Ireland could cost the taxpayer more than GBP 250 million.

This problem is not unique to my constituency. Across Europe, Europol has warned of an increase in illegal waste dumping, stating that the 'low risk — high profit' margins involved have made it one of the fastest-growing areas of organised crime. Criminals are exploiting the high costs associated with legal waste management to make substantial profits from illegal trafficking and disposal activities, circumventing environmental legislation.

Given the worrying signs that illegal waste dumping is on the increase, does the Commission have any strategies in place to tackle cross-border elements of this crime? Moreover, does the Commission plan to act on Europol's recommendations, namely the exchange of best practice between national experts through the 'EnviCrimeNet,' and the adoption of a multi-agency approach during waste transport control operations and visits to suspected illegal waste disposal sites?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

Directive 2008/99/EC ([1]) on the protection of the environment through criminal law requires the Member States to provide dissuasive criminal sanctions for the most serious environmental offences, including illegal dumping and shipments of waste.

The Waste Shipment Regulation ([2]) lays down requirements for shipments of waste both within the EU and between the EU and third countries, in order to protect the environment. The Commission recently proposed revision of the regulation to require Member States to establish risk-based inspection planning to target the most problematic and high-risk waste streams and to give national inspectors additional powers to better control and prevent illegal waste shipments. This proposal is now under consideration by the co-legislators (EP rapporteur Staes) and will be subject to a plenary vote in the near future.

The Commission is also continuing the already established cooperation with professional networks such as EnviCrimeNet.

The most effective way to reduce poor and illegal treatment of waste is to establish separate collection systems which render waste streams valuable and therefore encourage recyclates to be put back into productive use. The Commission will present in the near future a legislative initiative on resource efficiency and waste. The initiative will build on progress in the implementation of the Roadmap to Resource Efficient Europe and set out the key building blocks needed to unlock EU economic potential to be more productive whilst using fewer resources and advancing towards a circular economy.

([1]) OJ L 328, 6.12.2008.
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000971/14
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: Organic sector controls

It has been reported that the Commission plans to introduce stricter controls for the European organic sector in order to stamp out fraud and remove derogations to production rules that risk watering down standards. As the sector is thought to be worth some EUR 21 billion, exemptions such as the tethering of animals risk leading to unfair competition and overly complex legislation.

Nevertheless, the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements has argued that existing legislation provides a 'solid basis for organic production and consumer confidence'. They argue that the introduction of new proposals would lead to legal uncertainty and disruption to operators who are continuing to implement current legislation.

While there appears to be some merit in introducing stricter controls for the organic sector, does the Commission have any strategies in place to ensure that there will be as little disruption as possible to local operators implementing current legislation and to allow the sector to continue to flourish?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(18 March 2014)

The Commission is preparing a proposal for the revision of the political and legislative framework for organic farming which is scheduled to be adopted in March 2014.

In recent years the organic market has been characterised by unprecedented development. However, the applicable organic production rules are not adapted to this evolution. They comprise numerous exceptions and are complex. Furthermore, the organic control system and trade regime need to be reinforced and adapted to better address the evolving needs and to prevent cases of malpractice and fraud that have occurred in the past.

The Commission wishes to provide a sound basis for the sustainable development of the organic sector. Rules related to organic production, controls and trade of organic products are being reviewed with the objective of enhancing the credibility of the sector in line with consumers' expectations and the evolution of the organic market.

The Commission is not able to provide, at this stage, information on the proposal. However, it should be noted that it is a normal practice, in case of new legislation bringing significant changes on operators, that appropriate measures are foreseen to ensure a smooth transition.

The Commission will present the proposal for the revision of the political and legislative framework for organic farming to the European Parliament after adoption and will reply to any query.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000972/14
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: Botanical food supplements

The status of plant materials in food supplements, and more specifically the use of over 2 000 botanical health claims, appears to be compromised by two pieces of legislation. Directive 2004/24/EC amending, as regards traditional herbal medicinal products, Directive 2001/83/EC on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, on the one hand, and Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods, on the other, treat the scientific assessment of botanicals in two completely different ways. The regulation does not recognise the empirical evidence of a long 'tradition of use of botanicals for health-related effects' yet this is precisely the justification put forward in the directive for allowing food supplements with botanical health claims.

The implication of the contradiction between the directive and the regulation is that health claims for botanicals could be rejected, with many food supplement products disappearing from store shelves if it is prohibited to state the purpose and benefits of the product. The impact on local SMEs, the main driver of the food supplement industry, could be devastating if the uncertain status quo is maintained.

In light of this worrying possibility, does the Commission have any plans to rectify the apparent contradiction between the directive and the regulation by recognising the peculiarity of botanicals and reviewing current legislation?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 March 2014)

The Commission is fully aware of the importance of the issue regarding health claims for botanicals. Indeed, while 'traditional use' may be used for substantiating an indication for botanical substances marketed as traditional herbal medicinal products (THMPs) with indications relating to a health effect, such evidence was not sufficient for the scientific substantiation of a health claim used in food, including food supplements.

In that context, the Commission, taking into account positions expressed by different stakeholders, launched a reflection exercise concerning the approach to be taken with regards to the evaluation of health claims for botanicals, together with the Member States.

While this reflection is on-going, the consideration of health claims for botanicals which were submitted has been put 'on-hold'. Health claims for botanicals that have been put 'on-hold' may still be used by operators subject to national provisions.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000974/14
alla Commissione
Guido Milana (S&D)
(30 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Deroga al regolamento (CE) n. 1967/2006 — Vongola Venus

Il regolamento (CE) n. 1967/2006 stabilisce di fatto una tolleranza zero dalla cattura alla commercializzazione.

In particolare, la taglia massima della vongola (Venus spp.), stabilita a 25 mm di diametro già dal regolamento (CE) n. 1626/94 (ma anche dalla legge italiana 963/65), è all'origine di problemi (e ammende) significativi, oltre all'aggiunta di punti nella licenza delle imprese di pesca, considerati i grandi numeri pescati e lavorati. Il sistema di cattura (ferro in acqua con 11 mm di luce tra i tondini, e vibrovaglio a bordo con griglie forate a 21 mm di diametro) non consente di selezionare totalmente il prodotto per taglia minima, ed è tecnicamente impossibile evitare la presenza di qualche esemplare sotto taglia nelle partite poste in vendita. Occorre tenere presente che esiste in natura una certa variabilità morfologica dei molluschi bivalvi che, anche a uguale diametro massimo, possono presentare forme (altezza o spessore) diverse in ragione di una diversa velocità di crescita o per la granulometria del substrato.

Peraltro essendo una specie oggetto di gestione attiva là dove viene pescata intensamente come in Adriatico e medio-basso Tirreno — con semine e rotazione delle zone di prelievo, fermi periodici e quantitativi massimi giornalieri, etc. —, la taglia minima per la vongola non sembra essere una misura essenziale per salvaguardare lo stock, almeno laddove questo viene gestito. Il bando dei rigetti che dal 2019 interesserà tutte le specie con taglia minima non comporterà probabilmente l'obbligo di sbarco dei molluschi bivalvi sotto taglia, in quanto specie ad alto tasso di sopravvivenza se rigettato in mare.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione prevedere l'introduzione di una deroga al margine di tolleranza del 5 % alla taglia minima laddove lo stock è oggetto di gestione attiva?

Risposta di Maria Damanaki a nome della Commissione
(27 marzo 2014)

La Commissione desidera rammentare che, in conformità delle disposizioni del regolamento (UE) n. 1380/2013, all'obbligo di sbarco si applicano esenzioni «de minimis» qualora sia scientificamente dimostrato che è molto difficile conseguire aumenti di selettività o per evitare costi sproporzionati di trasformazione delle catture accidentali. Per quanto riguarda il caso specifico, vale a dire la cattura di vongole sotto taglia mediante draghe idrauliche italiane, queste condizioni non sono per il momento soddisfatte. Come già raccomandato nel 2010 dal comitato scientifico, tecnico ed economico per la pesca (CSTEP), il problema va affrontato migliorando la selettività delle draghe e i sistemi di cernita a bordo. Secondo l'opinione della Commissione, questo è l'approccio più appropriato da seguire, anche alla luce del fatto che la taglia minima per la vongola istituita dal regolamento (CE) n. 1967/2006 è una taglia minima di cattura.

Le misure di mercato e le organizzazioni di produttori dovrebbero altresì contribuire a favorire l'approvvigionamento di prodotti ittici pescati nel rispetto delle vigenti misure di conservazione. Vongole di taglia più grande hanno prezzi più elevati sul mercato.

Mediante una maggiore selettività e pratiche di pesca che favoriscano lo sfruttamento di esemplari più grandi, i pescatori trarrebbero maggiori vantaggi socioeconomici dalla loro attività ed eviterebbero conseguenze negative per il mancato rispetto delle misure in vigore. Ciò contribuirebbe altresì a rafforzare la sostenibilità ambientale ed economica della pesca.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000974/14
to the Commission
Guido Milana (S&D)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: Exemption from Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 — Venus clam

Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 establishes a de facto zero tolerance from catch to market.

Regulation (EC) No 1626/94 (and also Italian Law 963/65) stipulates a maximum clam (Venus spp.) diameter of at least 25 mm, which, in view of the large quantities of clams being fished and processed, is creating difficulties compounded by the imposition of substantial fines and additional points on fishing licences. The method used to catch clams (immersed metal grating with 11 mm grid space and on-board vibrating screens with 21 mm mesh) makes it technically impossible to select clams in accordance with minimum size requirements or avoid the inclusion of undersized clams on sales counters. It must also be borne in mind that bivalve molluscs, even up to the same maximum diameter may naturally vary (in length and thickness) depending on growth rates and substrate granulometry.

In view of the active management of intensive clam fishing grounds in the Adriatic and the middle and lower Tyrrhenian sea for example, involving planting, fishing ground rotation, regular fishing moratoria and, maximum daily quotas, minimum clam size does not appear to be a major conservation issue, at least as far as managed stocks are concerned. The discard ban, which will, from 2019, apply to all species subject to minimum size requirements, is unlikely to require the unloading of undersize bivalve molluscs, which have a high survival rate if discarded into the sea.

In view of this, will the Commission consider introducing an exemption from the 5% maximum size tolerance margin in cases where stocks are being actively managed?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2014)

The Commission would like to recall that in accordance with the provisions of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 any possible *de minimis* exemption to the landing obligation shall apply where scientific evidence indicates that increases in selectivity are very difficult to achieve or to avoid disproportionate costs of handling unwanted catches. As regards the specific case of undersized clams caught by the Italian hydraulic dredges, for the time being these conditions are not fulfilled. Back in 2010 the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) already recommended tackling the problem through the improvement of selectivity of the dredge and of the sorting mechanisms on board. In the Commission's view this is the most appropriate approach, also in light of the fact that the minimum size for clams established by Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 is a minimum catching size.

Market measures and the producers' organisations should also contribute to encourage the supply of fish products caught in line with the conservation measures in force. Bigger clams have higher prices in the market.

Through increased selectivity and fishing practices that favour the exploitation of bigger specimens, fishermen would thus reap more socioeconomic benefits from their activity, and avoid negative consequences for not respecting the measures in force. This would also increase the overall environmental and economic sustainability of this fishing activity.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000975/14
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(30 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Interruzione della linea TEN Genova-Ventimiglia

Da circa due settimane la linea TEN Genova-Ventimiglia è bloccata a causa di un incidente ferroviario causato da una frana che ha determinato il fermo del convoglio 606 Milano-Ventimiglia nel territorio del comune di Andora.

Tale incidente, dati i costi e le difficoltà burocratiche che si interpongono alla rimozione del convoglio, ha creato e continuerà a creare gravissime conseguenze per il trasporto di persone e merci attraverso una linea di grande importanza internazionale. Oltre ai danni economici e al disagio, sono ravvisabili anche enormi danni, dato il rilevantissimo ruolo turistico della zona interessata (Riviera Ligure-Sanremo).

La Commissione può far sapere:

1. se, essendo questa tratta, attualmente a binario unico, inserita nel TEN, non ritiene importante e necessario il suo pronto ripristino, nonché il raddoppio della linea fermo dal 2008;

2. quali urgenti interventi intende effettuare in merito a quanto sopra?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(11 marzo 2014)

L'importanza annessa dall'UE alla linea ferroviaria Genova-Ventimiglia è dimostrata dal fatto che la tratta fa parte della rete centrale TEN-T. Gli interventi di riqualificazione della linea, compreso il suo raddoppio, possono quindi beneficiare del contributo finanziario dell'UE attraverso il meccanismo per collegare l'Europa.

Spetta alle autorità italiane presentare proposte di progetti. Il primo invito a presentare proposte per beneficiare di un cofinanziamento tramite il suddetto meccanismo sarà lanciato nell'autunno 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000975/14
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: Disruption of the TEN Genoa-Ventimiglia line

For about two weeks, the TEN Genoa-Ventimiglia line has been blocked due to a train accident caused by a landslide which resulted in the 606 train from Milan to Ventimiglia being halted near the town of Andora.

Due to the high costs and bureaucratic wrangling involved in the removal of the carriages, this accident has given rise to ongoing problems for passengers and the transport of goods on a line of great international importance. In addition to the economic consequences and disruption, the accident is feared to have significant repercussions owing to the extreme importance of tourism in the affected area (the Italian Riviera, around Sanremo).

1. Does the Commission not consider it important and necessary to get this section of railway, a part of the TEN, which is currently a single track, open again and indeed to restart work, suspended since 2008, on doubling the line?

2. What urgent action does the Commission intend to take regarding the above?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(11 March 2014)

The importance from a EU perspective of the Genova-Ventimiglia railway section is reflected by the fact that the section is part of the TEN-T core network. Upgrading works on this line, including the doubling of the line, are thus eligibile for EU financial support from the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF).

It is up to the Italian authorities to come forward with project proposals. The first call for projects proposals to receives co-funding from the CEF will open in the fall 2014.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000976/14
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(30 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Cambogia: lotta allo sfruttamento sessuale dei bambini

La Cambogia è meta turistica per il sesso, soprattutto con minori, a loro volta oggetto di un vero e proprio ignobile «commercio», che negli ultimi anni ha registrato un incremento nella produzione di materiale pedo-pornografico. In contesti dove il tasso di indigenza è estremamente alto (il 26 % della popolazione è sotto il livello di povertà stimato in 1,25 dollari al giorno), la prostituzione rappresenta un mezzo per sopravvivere.

La Cambogia è uno dei paesi chiave per la lotta contro lo sfruttamento sessuale di bambini e adolescenti. La popolazione è di oltre 14 milioni di abitanti, l'età media è di circa 22 anni, l'aspettativa di vita di 62 anni. La mortalità infantile entro il primo anno è di 65 decessi per 1000 nati vivi, mentre quella entro il quinto anno è di 88 decessi per 1000 nati vivi. Si stima che siano 20 mila i minori fatti prostituire e che il turismo sessuale sia per il 30 % straniero e per il 70 % locale.

Già da diversi anni molte ONLUS hanno instaurato progetti di prevenzione dallo sfruttamento sessuale, con l'obiettivo di garantire un percorso scolastico a bambini le cui famiglie non hanno le possibilità economiche di mandarli a scuola e di fornire loro beni di prima necessità come cibo, vestiario, cure mediche e un aiuto economico alle famiglie.

L'Unione europea è il principale donatore di aiuti alla Cambogia.

Fra gli obiettivi dichiarati nel documento di cooperazione «Documento di strategia 2007-2013» rientrano il sostegno al piano di sviluppo e il sostegno all'istruzione di base e i fondi stanziati dall'Unione europea a favore di vari progetti di cooperazione hanno raggiunto nel 2010 i 206,5 milioni di EUR.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione indicare se intende rivedere le stime per i fondi destinati alla cooperazione internazionale e, in particolare, alla Cambogia?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(18 marzo 2014)

Lo sfruttamento sessuale di donne e bambini e la tratta di esseri umani continuano a destare viva preoccupazione in Cambogia.

L'Unione europea solleva periodicamente tali questioni nell'ambito del dialogo politico con il governo. Il prossimo dialogo ad alto livello tra l'UE e la Cambogia sulle questioni relative ai diritti umani si svolgerà a marzo 2014 nel quadro dell'imminente Comitato misto UE-Cambogia che si terrà a Bruxelles.

L'UE sostiene gli sforzi delle organizzazioni della società civile in Cambogia volti a combattere ed eliminare tutte le forme di violazione dei diritti umani, tra cui lo sfruttamento sessuale dei bambini. L'onorevole deputato troverà esempi di progetti nell'allegato della presente risposta.

Nell'ambito delle discussioni in corso in materia di programmazione riguardanti la cooperazione dell'UE con i paesi asiatici per il periodo 2014-20, l'UE sta attualmente rivedendo le sue assegnazioni nazionali bilaterali e i settori principali di sostegno a tutti i paesi, compresa la Cambogia. Sta inoltre programmando una strategia di sostegno regionale e preparando programmi tematici per il periodo 2014-20, tra cui lo strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani, dal quale la Cambogia riceverà sostegno.

La Cambogia è stata menzionata altresì nel documento mirato all'azione sul rafforzamento della dimensione esterna della tratta degli esseri umani in quanto paese di particolare importanza per la cooperazione nel Sud-Est asiatico.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000976/14
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: Cambodia: combating the sexual exploitation of children

Cambodia is a destination for sex tourism, especially targeted at children, who are the subject of an utterly despicable 'trade' that has seen an increase in the production of child pornography in recent years. Prostitution represents a means of survival in situations where the poverty level is extremely high (26% of the population is below the poverty line estimated at USD 1.25 per day).

Cambodia is one of the key countries in the fight against the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents. The population is over 14 million, the average age is about 22 and average life expectancy is 62 years of age. The infant mortality rate within the first year is 65 deaths per 1 000 live births, while the rate by the fifth year is 88 deaths per 1 000 live births. It is estimated that 20 000 children have been forced into prostitution and 30% of those involved in sex tourism are foreign and 70% are local.

For several years, many NGOs have been setting up projects to prevent sexual exploitation, with the aim of guaranteeing an education for children whose families do not have the financial resources to send them to school and providing the families with basic necessities such as food, clothing, medical care and financial assistance.

The European Union is the main donor of aid to Cambodia.

The stated goals of the cooperation paper entitled 'Strategy Paper for the period 2007-2013' include support for the development plan and support for basic education. The funds allocated by the European Union to various cooperation projects amounted to EUR 206.5 million in 2010.

In light of the above, can the Commission indicate whether it intends to revise the estimates for funds allocated to international cooperation and to Cambodia in particular?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(18 March 2014)

The sexual exploitation of women and children and human trafficking continue to be major causes of concern in Cambodia.

The EU raises these issues in its regular policy dialogue with the government. The next high-level dialogue between the EU and Cambodia on human rights issues will take place in the context of the upcoming EU-Cambodia Joint Committee in Brussels, in March 2014.

The EU provides support to civil society organisations in Cambodia in their efforts to combat and eliminate all forms of human rights violations, including the sexual exploitation of children. The Honourable Member will find examples of projects in the annex to this reply.

In the context of the ongoing programming discussions on the EU's cooperation with Asian countries for 2014-20, the EU is currently reviewing its bilateral country allocations and focal areas of support to all countries, including Cambodia. It is also programming regional support and preparing thematic programmes for 2014-20 including the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) from which Cambodia will also receive support.

Cambodia has also been mentioned in the Action Oriented Paper on strengthening the external dimension of trafficking in human beings as a country of particular importance for cooperation in the South East Asian region.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000977/14
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(30 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Condizione dei lavoratori immigrati nei paesi del Consiglio di cooperazione del Golfo

I lavoratori immigrati costituiscono una delle risorse alla base della ricchezza dei paesi del Consiglio di cooperazione del Golfo (Arabia Saudita, Bahrein, Emirati arabi uniti, Kuwait, Oman e Qatar). Provengono quasi tutti dall'Asia, in particolare da India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Indonesia e Filippine. I paesi del Consiglio di cooperazione del Golfo sono nazioni desertiche che possiedono giacimenti petroliferi di grandi entità dove sono state costruite città e infrastrutture grazie al lavoro della manodopera sottopagata, priva di diritti e legata indissolubilmente al proprio datore di lavoro da un contratto denominato «Kafala». Un ufficio di collocamento nel paese d'origine individua un datore di lavoro che è disposto a sponsorizzare il lavoratore immigrato. Nel momento in cui quest'ultimo arriva nel paese di destinazione, si vede sequestrato il passaporto, ha il divieto di cambiare lavoro senza il consenso del datore di lavoro, viene sottoposto a orari impossibili, senza alcun riposo settimanale, è costretto ad accettare uno stipendio misero, spesso trattenuto dal «padrone» a tempo indeterminato. Teoricamente, si tratterebbe invece di un lavoro come «collaboratore domestico», in cambio del quale si dovrebbero ricevere vitto e alloggio e uno stipendio sufficiente per mantenere la famiglia nel paese d'origine. Inoltre gli immigrati sono frequentemente vittime di violenze e abusi: dalle percosse alle bruciature di sigaretta, fino ad arrivare all'olio bollente versato sul corpo e alle amputazioni, mentre le domestiche immigrate che osano ribellarsi vanno incontro ad un destino che può andare dallo stupro, al carcere e persino alla decapitazione, in quanto violano le clausole del contratto.

Considerato che:

— le vittime di violenze spesso impazziscono e arrivano a togliersi la vita, al punto che sono innumerevoli i casi di suicidi;

— le ultime stime parlano complessivamente di quasi 18 milioni di lavoratori che sono immigrati nei paesi del Consiglio di cooperazione del Golfo, su una popolazione totale di circa 42 milioni;

— nella Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea si sancisce con forza che «ogni individuo ha diritto alla propria integrità fisica e psichica»;

può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. è a conoscenza delle condizioni a cui sono sottoposti gli immigrati in questi paesi?

2. Considera opportuno esercitare pressioni sui governi dei paesi del Consiglio di cooperazione del Golfo affinché rispettino i diritti e la dignità dei lavoratori migranti?

3. Ritiene che la Kafala dovrebbe essere riformata per consentire ai lavoratori di cambiare lavoro o tornare nel proprio paese anche senza permesso del datore di lavoro?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(26 marzo 2014)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è al corrente del problema dei diritti dei lavoratori immigrati nella regione del Golfo. Le delegazioni dell'UE ad Abu Dhabi, negli Emirati arabi uniti e a Riyadh, in Arabia Saudita e le missioni diplomatiche dell'UE nel Golfo seguono da vicino la situazione dei diritti umani, compresa la situazione dei diritti dei lavoratori immigrati.

L'UE segue tali questioni in particolare nell'ambito dell'Organizzazione internazionale del lavoro (OIL). L'UE sostiene l'agenda per il lavoro dignitoso e la ratifica e l'attuazione effettiva delle convenzioni dell'OIL, in particolare per quanto concerne le norme fondamentali del lavoro, e collabora con l'OIL a questo proposito.

Il rispetto della dignità umana è al centro dei valori dell'UE. L'UE esorta costantemente i partner del Consiglio di cooperazione del Golfo ad adottare una normativa e misure di contrasto più rigorose onde migliorare la situazione dei lavoratori migranti, che nonostante i progressi registrati negli ultimi anni, richiede ancora miglioramenti, conformemente alle norme internazionali sul lavoro (in particolare con le convenzioni OIL n. 111 concernente la discriminazione in materia di impiego professionale, n. 81 sull'ispezione del lavoro e n. 189 sul lavoro dignitoso per i lavoratori domestici) e in collaborazione con i paesi di origine dei lavoratori stranieri, in particolar modo per quanto riguarda l'attuazione della normativa esistente. L'UE sta attualmente finanziando un progetto di ricerca attuato dall'OIL per promuovere condizioni di lavoro dignitose per i lavoratori domestici immigrati, affrontando i problemi che li espongono ai rischi di sfruttamento e abusi e analizzando cinque principali corridoi di migrazione, compresa la migrazione dal Nepal verso gli Emirati Arabi Uniti.

L'UE ritiene che il sistema della Kafala sia insostenibile e continuerà a promuovere la sua abolizione nella sua forma attuale, anche per consentire ai lavoratori di cambiare datore di lavoro e ritornare nei loro paesi di origine.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000977/14
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: Conditions suffered by immigrant workers in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states

Immigrant workers are one of the pillars underpinning the wealth of the GCC states (Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman and Qatar). They nearly all come from Asia, particularly from India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Indonesia and the Philippines. The GCC states are desert nations with vast oil reserves where cities and infrastructure have been built by labourers who are underpaid, stripped of their rights and beholden to their employer by a contract under the 'Kafala' system. An employment agency in the country of origin locates an employer who is willing to sponsor the immigrant worker. When the worker arrives in the destination country, his passport is confiscated, he is prohibited from changing jobs without the consent of his employer and he is forced to work impossibly long hours, without any weekly rest day, on a pitiful wage, which is often held back by the 'boss' indefinitely. In theory, the employee is supposed to be a 'domestic worker', and as such should receive room and board and a salary sufficient to maintain a family back home. Furthermore, immigrants are often the victims of violence and abuse: beatings, cigarette burns, even boiling oil poured on the body and amputations, while immigrants working as domestics who dare to rebel risk rape, prison and even beheading, for violating the terms of their contract.

Considering that:

— victims of violence often suffer a breakdown and take their own life, to the point that there are countless cases of suicide;

— latest estimates point to a total of nearly 18 million workers who have immigrated to the Gulf Cooperation Council states, out of a total population of about 42 million;

— the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union emphatically states that 'everyone has the right to respect for his or her physical and mental integrity';

1. Is the Commission aware of the conditions to which immigrants are subjected in these countries?

2. Does the Commission consider that it is time to put pressure on the governments of the GCC states to ensure respect for the rights and dignity of migrant workers?

3. Does the Commission believe that the Kafala system should be reformed to enable workers to change jobs or return home, even without their employer's permission?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2014)

The HR/VP is well aware of the issue of migrant workers' rights in the Gulf region. The EU Delegations in Abu Dhabi, UAE and Riyadh, KSA and EU diplomatic missions in the Gulf are closely following the human rights situation, including the situation of migrant workers' rights.

The EU follows these issues notably under the framework of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The EU supports the Decent Work Agenda and the ratification and effective implementation of ILO Conventions, in particular with regard to core labour standards, and cooperates with the ILO in this respect.

The respect of human dignity is at the core of EU values. The EU consistently advocates for more decisive legislation and enforcement measures to be taken by our Gulf partners in order to improve the situation of migrant workers which, in spite of some progress in recent years, still deserves improvements in accordance with international labour standards (in particular ILO conventions No 111 concerning discrimination in employment, No 81 concerning labour inspection, and No 189 on decent work for domestic workers) and in collaboration with the countries of origin of foreign workers — in particular as regards implementation of existing legislation. The EU is currently funding a research project implemented by the ILO to promote decent work for migrant domestic workers by addressing challenges making them vulnerable to the risks of exploitation and abuse and by analysing five main migration corridors, including migration from Nepal to the UAE.

The EU considers that the kafala system is unsustainable and will continue to advocate for its abolition in its current form, including by enabling workers to change employers and to return in their home countries.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000978/14
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(30 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Eolico offshore, sviluppi tecnologici e problemi normativi

Secondo il nuovo rapporto della European Wind Energy Association (EWEA) l'Unione europea, nel tratto che va dal Portogallo alla Finlandia, potrebbe produrre quattro volte l'energia necessaria al suo fabbisogno totale installando turbine eoliche offshore galleggianti. Questo tipo di energia presenta diversi vantaggi rispetto alla produzione di energia eolica terrestre: gli impianti di produzione in mare sono più grandi di quelli sulla terraferma, i venti sono più forti e stabili in mare rispetto alla terraferma e le turbine eoliche in mare destano meno la preoccupazione dei vicini.

Al momento, in Europa sono stati installati 5 GW di capacità eolica offshore, 3,3 dei quali nelle acque britanniche. L'EWEA stima addirittura che, se l'Europa investisse in questi sistemi, entro il 2030 potrebbero essere installati 150 GW.

Nonostante i dati in crescita, l'industria nota un forte rallentamento nella concessione di nuovi finanziamenti, uno solo dei quali è andato in porto nel 2013. La lobby sottolinea che la causa di questo ristagno va cercata nell'incertezza del quadro legislativo europeo e sollecita pertanto la fissazione di obiettivi obbligatori per il 2030. L'elettricità proveniente dall'energia eolica rappresenta circa il 4 % della produzione totale di elettricità basata su energie pulite nell'Unione europea, ma la sua rilevanza tende ad aumentare dal momento che l'energia eolica rappresenta, insieme al gas naturale, la tecnologia produttiva a crescita più rapida, raggiungendo in alcuni Stati membri livelli pari a circa il 20 %.

Considerato quanto sopra, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. quali azioni intende intraprendere per incentivare gli operatori dei sistemi di trasmissione e i regolatori dell'energia a rafforzare la loro collaborazione al fine di istituire condizioni normative più favorevoli per gli investimenti nelle reti transnazionali offshore?

2. Quali azioni intende intraprendere per facilitare la cooperazione regionale in materia di pianificazione della rete elettrica e di pianificazione dei siti d'insediamento dell'energia eolica offshore?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2014)

1. La recente comunicazione della Commissione dal titolo «Quadro per le politiche dell'energia e del clima per il periodo dal 2020 al 2030» propone un quadro per lo sviluppo delle energie rinnovabili fino al 2030, con l'obiettivo vincolante per l'UE di portare ad almeno il 27 % la quota di questo tipo di energia. Gli Stati membri saranno liberi di decidere il modo in cui raggiungere tale obiettivo, con la cognizione che l'energia eolica offshore nei mari settentrionali offre un'importante opportunità in tal senso.

Nell'ambito del regolamento TEN-E sono stati individuati, in diversi corridoi prioritari, vari progetti di interesse comune, ossia progetti che apportano notevoli benefici transfrontalieri. Questi progetti potranno avvalersi di procedure accelerate per il rilascio delle autorizzazioni, di una normativa favorevole e di sovvenzioni a titolo del meccanismo per collegare l'Europa. Si tratta di condizioni vantaggiose che offriranno un forte incentivo ad adottare una prospettiva regionale per lo sviluppo dei progetti. La rete offshore nei mari settentrionali (Northern Seas Offshore Grid) è uno dei suddetti corridoi prioritari nell'ambito del regolamento TEN-E.

2. Dal momento che i progetti di interesse comune sono, per definizione, progetti a cui partecipano soggetti provenienti da più di uno Stato membro, la loro attuazione richiede una comune attenzione agli aspetti inerenti la pianificazione, la regolamentazione e gli incentivi.

Questi aspetti sono presi in considerazione dall'iniziativa della rete offshore dei paesi dei mari settentrionali (North Seas Countries Offshore Grid Initiative — NSCOGI). Istituita nel 2010, questa iniziativa riunisce i rappresentanti di governi, autorità di regolamentazione, gestori dei sistemi di trasmissione e Commissione ed è intesa a promuovere lo sviluppo coordinato di reti terrestri e offshore, nonché a ricercare soluzioni per gli ostacoli che si frappongono al loro sviluppo sul piano delle norme e dei regolamenti, del mercato, della pianificazione, delle autorizzazioni e della tecnica.

La Commissione europea, inoltre, ha fatto eseguire di recente uno studio per valutare i vantaggi derivanti dallo sviluppo di una rete magliata nei mari settentrionali in base a diversi scenari di capacità di produzione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000978/14
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: Offshore wind energy, technological advances and regulative problems

According to the new report from the European Wind Energy Association (EWEA), the European Union could, in the section between Portugal and Finland, produce four times its total energy requirement by installing floating offshore wind turbines. This type of energy offers a number of advantages compared with onshore wind energy production: offshore production installations are larger than onshore installations, winds are stronger and steadier offshore than onshore and offshore wind turbines raise less local concern.

Currently, 5 GW of offshore wind capacity has been installed in Europe, 3.3 in British waters. The EWEA in fact estimates that, if Europe were to invest in these systems, 150 GW could be installed by 2030.

In spite of the rising figures, the industry is recording a sharp decline in the number of new funding concessions, only one of which was successful in 2013. The lobby is drawing attention to the fact that the cause of this stagnation is to be sought in uncertainty in the European legislative framework and therefore calls for the setting of mandatory targets to be achieved by 2030. Electricity derived from wind energy represents around 4% of total electricity production based on clean energy in the European Union, although its incidence is increasing because, in conjunction with natural gas, wind energy represents the fastest-growing production technology, in some Member States attaining growth levels of around 20%.

In consideration of the above, the Commission is asked:

1. What action it intends to take to provide incentives for transmission system operators and energy regulators to strengthen their collaborative links with a view to establishing regulative conditions more conducive to investment in offshore transnational networks?

2. What action it intends to take to facilitate regional cooperation in terms of electricity network planning and planning of sites for the installation of offshore wind energy?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

1. The recent Communication 'A policy framework for climate and energy in the period from 2020 to 2030' proposes a framework for the development of renewable energy until 2030. It includes a binding EU target of at least 27% renewable energy. Member States will be free to decide the path to follow towards this target, offshore wind in the Northern Seas offers an important potential to contribute to it.

Under the TEN-E regulation projects of common interest (PCI's) have been identified on a number of priority corridors. PCI's are projects providing significant cross-border benefits. These PCI's will benefit from accelerated permitting procedures, a favourable regulatory regime and may apply for grants under the Connecting Europe Facility. Such benefits will provide a strong incentive to adopt a regional perspective for their development. The Northern Seas Offshore Grid is such a priority corridor under the TEN-E regulation.

2. As the PCI's are by their nature projects involving actors from more than one Member State, their implementation will require joint attention to issues of planning, regulation and incentivisation.

These issues are also addressed by the North Sea Countries Offshore Grid Development Initiative (NSCOGI). NSCOGI was established in 2010 and brings together representatives of governments, regulators and TSO's and of the Commission to promote the coordinated development of the onshore and offshore grids, and to address barriers to grid development including regulatory, legal, market, planning, authorisation and technical issues.

The European Commission furthermore recently commissioned a study to assess the benefits of the development of a meshed grid in the Northern Seas for different scenarios of generation capacity.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000979/14
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(30 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Prolungate carestie in Somalia

Solo tre anni fa, circa 3,7 milioni di cittadini somali — poco meno della metà della popolazione, che in tutto conta circa 10 milioni di abitanti — hanno dovuto affrontare la carestia in due regioni meridionali del paese, il Bakool meridionale e il Basso Shabelle, colpite dalla peggior siccità degli ultimi cinquant'anni. Nell'arco di pochi mesi hanno perso la vita decine di migliaia di persone, soprattutto bambine e bambini, donne e anziani, tutti vittime di una tragedia umanitaria che ha coinvolto circa 12 milioni di persone, comprese altre comunità della vicina Eritrea.

Gli effetti di queste carestie continuano a persistere e a mietere vittime in un paese allo stremo delle forze. L'Unione europea è impegnata in Somalia con misure di assistenza ad ampio raggio che includono programmi di sviluppo, diplomazia attiva, missioni a sostegno dello Stato di diritto e della sicurezza e assistenza umanitaria. La priorità è data al mantenimento di una situazione di pace nella quale i diritti umani possano essere rispettati e possano svilupparsi le istituzioni democratiche.

Questi programmi di cooperazione e assistenza sono costati 1,6 miliardi di USD dal 2008 al 2013; a questi importi andranno ad aggiungersi ulteriori contributi stanziati al vertice dello scorso settembre a Bruxelles.

Considerati:

— gli scarsi successi conseguiti negli ultimi cinque anni di intervento umanitario nel paese e

— i frequenti casi di malfunzionamento della struttura assistenziale, con casi di corruzione che hanno portato la Norvegia, lo scorso settembre, a pagare direttamente i propri dipendenti per evitare rischiosi passaggi intermedi,

si chiede alla Commissione

se ritiene possibile e auspicabile una revisione dei programmi di cooperazione ed assistenza nella regione, attraverso l'istituzione di un processo di audit e di controllo, al fine di ottenere migliori riultati con le missioni?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(1º aprile 2014)

Poiché la sicurezza e lo sviluppo sono strettamente collegati in Somalia, l'UE segue un approccio globale nei confronti di questo paese utilizzando tutte le risorse di cui dispone a livello politico e di sviluppo unitamente a missioni della politica di sicurezza e di difesa comune (PSDC). Il sostegno globale dell'UE ha avuto un impatto determinante in Somalia, che dal 2012 ha visto l'elezione di un governo, una forte diminuzione dell'influenza di Al-Shabaab e la riduzione a livelli minimi del tasso di successo degli atti di pirateria. L'UE è il principale donatore di aiuti allo sviluppo a favore della Somalia e ha già ottenuto notevoli risultati (scolarizzazione di 40 000 bambini, fornitura di acqua potabile a circa 700 000 persone, sostegno a 70 000 persone che si dedicano all'allevamento, ecc.). I progetti di sviluppo dell'UE non riguardano solo l'efficacia della governance, ma anche il settore dell'istruzione e lo sviluppo economico in senso lato. Va osservato che l'insicurezza alimentare nella Somalia meridionale è una conseguenza diretta del conflitto armato, che limita l'accesso agli aiuti umanitari e ostacola la distribuzione urgente di cibo in caso di prolungata siccità.

L'UE continuerà a garantire che il sostegno sia coordinato con quello degli altri donatori internazionali e venga erogato in funzione delle necessità del paese. Il «patto per la Somalia» approvato alla conferenza di Bruxelles del 16 settembre 2013 ha modificato la struttura degli aiuti destinati alla Somalia, istituendo una nuova serie di meccanismi di finanziamento e di strutture di coordinamento degli aiuti in base a un quadro di responsabilità reciproca per i donatori e il governo. Oltre a questa nuova struttura, che può portare a un aumento coordinato dei livelli di controllo e di monitoraggio, l'UE eroga i suoi aiuti allo sviluppo secondo procedure e sistemi chiari e trasparenti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000979/14
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: Prolonged famine in Somalia

Just three years ago, some 3.7 million Somali citizens — a little less than half the total population of about 10 million — were faced with famine in two of the country's southern regions, southern Bakool and Lower Shabelle, which were hit by the worst drought in fifty years. In just a few months, tens of thousands of people died, mainly women, children and the elderly — all victims of a humanitarian tragedy that affected around 12 million people, including communities in neighbouring Eritrea.

The effects of the famine continue to be felt, with people still dying as a result, in a country that is stretched to its limits. The European Union is engaged in Somalia, providing broad-ranging assistance that includes development programmes, active diplomacy, and missions to promote the rule of law, security and humanitarian aid. Priority has been given to maintaining a peace in which human rights can be respected and democratic institutions can be developed.

These aid and cooperation programmes cost 1.6 billion US dollars between 2008 and 2013; and further contributions set aside at the summit held in Brussels last September are to be added to these sums.

In view of:

— the limited success of humanitarian intervention in Somalia over the past five years;

— the frequent malfunctioning of the aid system, with cases of corruption that last September led Norway to start paying its workers directly to avoid the use of risky intermediate stages,

I ask the Commission:

whether it considers it possible and desirable to review aid and cooperation programmes in the region by setting up a control and audit procedure, so that the various missions might achieve better results?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(1 April 2014)

Security and development go hand in hand in Somalia and the EU takes a Comprehensive Approach to Somalia using all its capabilities, political, developmental and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions. The comprehensive 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. The EU is the biggest donor in development aid to Somalia and already achieved considerable results -getting 40 000 children into school, providing safe water for some 700 000 people and helping 70 000 people to produce livestock, to name but a few. The EU development projects are specifically targeting not only effective governance, but also the education sector and economic development at large. It is to be noted that food insecurity in the South of Somalia is directly linked to the armed conflict that limits the access of humanitarian aid and emergency distribution of food during a protracted drought.

The EU will continue to ensure that this support is fully coherent with other international donors and in line with Somali needs. The Somali Compact which was endorsed at the Brussels Conference on 16 September 2013 has agreed to a new aid architecture for Somalia; a new set of financing mechanisms and aid coordination structures through a mutual accountability framework for donors and government. Apart from this new aid structure which has the potential of increasing levels of control and monitoring in a coordinated way, the EU is implementing its development aid on the basis of clear and transparent procedures and systems.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000981/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(30 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Sottrazione internazionale di minori — Applicazione della normativa europea e internazionale

L'Ufficio del Mediatore del Parlamento europeo per i casi di sottrazione internazionale di minori ha ricevuto una richiesta riguardante un caso che coinvolge tre Paesi.

In base alle informazioni a disposizione, un cittadino italiano e una cittadina francese hanno contratto matrimonio in Francia nel settembre 2011, fissando la propria residenza in Marocco per esigenze lavorative.

Nel marzo 2013 nasce un bambino (in Francia, per accordo dei genitori) e dopo un mese e mezzo la madre rientra in Marocco, dove però resta solo pochi giorni prima di andare in Francia definitivamente col bimbo senza il consenso del padre.

Il padre segnala al commissariato di polizia di Tolosa la sottrazione di minore e in seguito presenta istanza di restituzione del minore ex Convenzione dell'Aia del 1980 presso l'Autorità centrale di Rabat (2/01/2014), che la trasmette all'omologa di Parigi (9/01/2014).

Il padre del bambino ha lasciato il Marocco e vive da circa sei mesi in Italia.

Alla luce di quanto sopra esposto, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. se può chiarire il concetto di residenza abituale del minore nel caso descritto, anche alla luce della giurisprudenza;

2. se la richiesta di rientro del minore, cittadino anche italiano, può essere trasferita in Italia e se il padre può essere assistito dalle Autorità italiane competenti;

3. qual è la legislazione applicabile in caso di separazione/divorzio nel caso di specie, alla luce del Reg. n. 1259/2010 del Consiglio relativo all'attuazione di una cooperazione rafforzata nel settore della legge applicabile al divorzio e alla separazione personale.

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(25 marzo 2014)

Laddove il conflitto tra i genitori sia contemporaneo alla nascita del figlio, come sembra risultare in questo caso dalla descrizione dei fatti, non vi è residenza abituale. Sostenere che la residenza abituale del minore deriva da quella della madre sarebbe in contrasto con la Convenzione del 1980, in quanto attribuirebbe un vantaggio al genitore che ha sottratto il figlio e stabilirebbe una presunzione inammissibile, secondo la quale la residenza abituale del figlio è il luogo dove si trova la madre. È comunque comunemente riconosciuto che di solito il minore non ha residenza abituale finché non abita in un paese in modo relativamente stabile. Spetterà all'autorità giurisdizionale adita accertare la residenza abituale del minore.

Il padre dovrebbe consultare le autorità centrali italiane per verificare la possibilità di trasferire il caso dal Marocco all'Italia. Va sottolineato che, poiché il minore e la madre si trovano in Francia e il padre in Italia, in questa circostanza si applica il regolamento Bruxelles II bis ([1]).

Dal momento che sia la Francia che l'Italia sono Stati partecipanti al regolamento Roma III ([2]), in mancanza di una scelta ad opera delle parti dovrebbe applicarsi l'articolo 8, lettera d), del regolamento, quindi il divorzio e la separazione personale dovrebbero essere disciplinati dalla legge dello Stato in cui è adita l'autorità giurisdizionale.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 2201/2003 del Consiglio, relativo alla competenza, al riconoscimento e all'esecuzione delle decisioni in materia matrimoniale e in materia di responsabilità genitoriale («regolamento Bruxelles II bis»).

([2]) Regolamento (UE) n. 1259/2010 del Consiglio, del 20 dicembre 2010, relativo all'attuazione di una cooperazione rafforzata nel settore della legge applicabile al divorzio e alla separazione personale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000981/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: International child abduction — Application of European and international law

The office of the European Parliament Mediator for International Child Abduction has received a request concerning a case of abduction involving three countries.

According to the information available, the couple (an Italian man and a French woman) were married in France in September 2011 and decided to live in Morocco for work-related reasons.

The woman gave birth to a child in France (as agreed by both parents) in March 2013, returning to Morocco six weeks later. However, she remained there for only a few days before returning permanently to France with the child without the father's consent.

The father informed the police in Toulouse that his child had been abducted before submitting an application for the child's return, as required under the 1980 Hague Convention, to the central authority in Rabat (2.1.2014), which forwarded the file to its counterpart in Paris (9.1.2014).

The child's father has now left Morocco and has been living in Italy for about six months.

In view of this:

1. Could the Commission clarify the concept of habitual residence of the child in the circumstances described according to the relevant case law?

2. Can it say whether the application for the return of the child, also an Italian national, can be transferred to Italy and whether the father is entitled to assistance from the Italian authorities?

3. Can it say what separation/divorce legislation is applicable in this case under Council Regulation (EU) No 1259/2010 implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of the law applicable to divorce and legal separation?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2014)

Where the conflict between parents is contemporaneous with the birth of the child, as it seems from the description of the facts, no habitual residence may ever come into existence. To say that the child's habitual residence derived from his mother would be inconsistent with the 1980 Convention, for it would reward an abducting parent and create an impermissible presumption that the child's habitual residence is where the mother happens to be. However, it is commonly recognised that the child will normally have no habitual residence until living in a country on a footing of some stability. It will be for the court seized to ascertain the habitual residence of the child.

The father should seek the advice of the Italian Central Authorities in order to verify the possibility to transfer the case from Morocco to Italy. It should be highlighted that, given that the child and the mother are in France and the father in Italy, Regulation Brussels IIa ([1]) is applicable in this case.

As both France and Italy are participating States to the Rome III Regulation ([2]), in the absence of a choice by the parties, Article 8(d) of the regulation should be applicable, meaning that divorce and legal separation should be subject to the law of the State where the court is seized.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 2201/2003 concerning jurisdiction and the recognition and enforcement of judgments in matrimonial matters and the matters of parental responsibility (the Brussels IIa regulation).
([2]) Council Regulation (EU) No 1259/2010 of 20 December 2010 implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of the law applicable to divorce and legal separation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000983/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(30 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Aumento della disparità sociale nei paesi in via di sviluppo

In un recente rapporto del Programma di sviluppo delle Nazioni Unite (UNDP) si afferma che le disuguaglianze di reddito nei paesi in via di sviluppo siano aumentate dell'11 % tra il 1990 e il 2010. Nello specifico, il rapporto sostiene che oltre il 75 % della popolazione dei paesi in via di sviluppo risieda in società dove la disuguaglianza sociale è aumentata negli ultimi venti anni.

L'inclusione sociale è uno dei temi più ricorrenti degli ultimi anni in Europa, nonché un obiettivo prioritario per garantire il benessere dei cittadini europei. Tuttavia pare che l'azione esterna di lotta alla povertà e le politiche di sostegno ai paesi sottosviluppati non abbiano tenuto conto di questo elemento o per lo meno abbiano fallito nel correggerlo.

Alla luce di ciò, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. se la riduzione della forbice nei redditi delle popolazione dei paesi in via di sviluppo sia tenuta debitamente in conto nell'elaborazione di strategie di aiuto allo sviluppo;

2. se, relativamente ai paesi in cui l'azione europea di aiuto allo sviluppo si concentra maggiormente, ha registrato dati diversi da quelli presentati nel rapporto dell'UNDP?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(24 marzo 2014)

La riduzione delle disuguaglianze è indissolubilmente collegata alla lotta contro la povertà portata avanti dall'UE. Il *Programma di cambiamento* ([1]) sottolinea l'esigenza di indirizzare la cooperazione in via prioritaria al sostegno della crescita inclusiva e sostenibile a favore dello sviluppo umano, dei diritti umani, della democrazia e di altri elementi di buongoverno. Sollecita un'impostazione più generale nei confronti dello sviluppo umano, che promuova l'accesso ai servizi sanitari e all'istruzione di qualità e il miglioramento della protezione sociale a sostegno di una crescita inclusiva, «caratterizzata dalla capacità delle popolazioni di partecipare alla creazione di benessere e di posti di lavoro e al tempo stesso di beneficiarne». Non meno del 20 % dell'aiuto allo sviluppo dell'UE sarà dedicato all'inclusione sociale e allo sviluppo umano.

L'inclusione sociale è una priorità presente in tutti i programmi geografici e tematici dello Strumento di cooperazione allo sviluppo per il 2014-2020. Il programma su Beni pubblici e sfide globali porterà avanti con particolare determinazione la lotta alle disuguaglianze, sotto la voce «Sviluppo umano, compresi lavoro dignitoso, giustizia sociale e cultura».

In seno al Gruppo di lavoro delle Nazioni Unite sugli obiettivi di sviluppo sostenibile, l'UE sostiene che il quadro di riferimento post 2015 debba «ambire a fermare, anzi a invertire l'attuale tendenza all'aumento delle disuguaglianze determinate dal reddito e da altri fattori e riconoscere che la lotta alle disuguaglianze, all'emarginazione e alla discriminazione è indispensabile per eliminare la povertà e promuovere lo sviluppo sostenibile» ([2]). Il programma promuove anche condizioni di vita minime per tutti e l'accesso universale ai benefici della crescita e dello sviluppo sostenibili ([3]).

La Commissione non elabora dati propri sulla disuguaglianza di reddito o sulla povertà, ma utilizza quelli forniti da altre istituzioni (quali l'UNDP e la Banca mondiale) ai fini dell'esame, della formulazione e della valutazione dei programmi finanziati dall'UE.

([1]) COM(2011) 637 definitivo.
([2]) Spunti d'intervento a nome dell'Unione europea e dei suoi Stati membri pronunciati dal commissario Andris Piebalgs — Gruppo di lavoro delle Nazioni Unite: http://www.eu-un.europa.eu/articles/en/article_14560_en.htm
([3]) UE e Stati membri — Spunti d'intervento su «Occupazione e lavoro dignitoso per tutti, protezione sociale, gioventù, istruzione e cultura» — Gruppo di lavoro delle Nazioni Unite: http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/3654eu.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000983/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: Increasing social inequality in developing countries

A recent report by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) states that the income inequality in developing countries increased by 11% between 1990 and 2010. Specifically, the report claims that more than 75% of people in developing countries live in societies where social inequality has increased over the last twenty years.

Social inclusion is one of the most recurrent themes in recent years in Europe, as well as a priority for ensuring the welfare of European citizens. It nevertheless seems that external action to fight poverty and policies to support underdeveloped countries have not taken account of this aspect, or at least have failed to correct it.

In the light of this, can the Commission clarify:

1. whether due consideration is given to the reduction of the income gap of populations in developing countries when drawing up development aid strategies;

2. whether it has recorded data other than those presented in the UNDP report for countries that are a particular focus for European development aid?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

Reducing inequalities is inextricably linked to the EU's fight against poverty. The *Agenda for Change* ([1]) emphasises the need to concentrate cooperation in support of inclusive and sustainable growth for human development, human rights, democracy and other elements of good governance. It calls for a more comprehensive approach to human development, supporting increased access to quality health and education and enhanced social protection in support of inclusive growth characterised by 'people's ability to participate in and benefit from wealth and job creation'. At least 20% of EU aid will be devoted to social inclusion and human development.

Social inclusion is a priority included in all the geographical and thematic programmes of the Development Cooperation Instrument for 2014-2020. The Global Public Goods and Challenges programme will particularly work on the fight against inequalities under the area 'Human development, including decent work, social justice and culture'.

At the UN Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, the EU is arguing that the post-2015 framework must 'have the ambition of halting, indeed reversing, the existing trends of increasing income and other inequalities, and must acknowledge that tackling inequalities, marginalisation and discrimination is indispensable for effective poverty eradication and sustainable development' ([2]). It is also promoting basic living standards for everyone and the sharing of the benefits of sustainable growth and development by all ([3]).

The Commission does not produce data on income inequality or poverty but uses data produced by other institutions (eg. UNDP, World Bank), which is indeed analysed during the appraisal, formulation and evaluation of EU funded programmes.

([1]) COM(2011) 637 final.
([2]) Speaking points on behalf of the European Union and its Member States delivered by Commissioner Andris Piebalgs — UN OWG on SDGs: http://www.eu-un.europa.eu/articles/en/article_14560_en.htm
([3]) EU and its MS — Speaking Points on 'Employment and decent work for all, social protection, youth, education and culture' UN OWG on SDGs: http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/3654eu.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000984/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(30 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Spesa per comunicazioni istituzionali della Commissione

Un noto giornale internazionale ha pubblicato il 25 gennaio un articolo riguardo ai metodi comunicativi della Commissione, in cui si sostiene che, attraverso le unità incaricate della comunicazione esterna, questa sia entrata in contatto con dei produttori per finanziare lautamente film basati su precise istruzioni editoriali con lo scopo di inviarli a tv locali e altri canali televisivi, aggirando del tutto i mezzi di comunicazione indipendenti. Il giornale afferma inoltre che saranno spesi solo durante le elezioni circa 5 milioni di euro a scopo informativo.

Alla luce di quanto esposto, può la Commissione:

1. dare la propria versione riguardo a quanto esposto nell'articolo;

2. riferire in merito alle strategie di comunicazione con i cittadini e ai relativi costi;

3. precisare quale sarà la sua strategia di comunicazione in occasione delle elezioni e i relativi costi?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2014)

L'articolo del 25 gennaio menzionato dall'Onorevole deputato è inesatto sul piano fattuale: la Commissione non spende 5 milioni di euro sui media sociali durante i preparativi delle elezioni del Parlamento europeo.

La DG Comunicazione della Commissione produce una relazione annuale d'attività in tema di comunicazione con i cittadini, compresi il programma «L'Europa per i cittadini», i dialoghi con i cittadini e le attività con le rappresentanze e le reti in tutta l'UE. ([1])

Senza trascendere il proprio ruolo istituzionale la Commissione intende sostenere la strategia di comunicazione del Parlamento europeo in vista delle elezioni attraverso le reti e i canali di comunicazione già esistenti: Europe Direct, Europa, profili di media sociali, ecc.

([1]) http://www.cc.cec/dgintranet/comm/communication_services/external_communication/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000984/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: The Commission's expenditure on institutional communication

On 25 January a well-known international newspaper published an article on the Commission's communication methods, which asserts that, via the units responsible for external communication, the Commission has made contact with producers to provide lavish funding for films based on precise editorial instructions with the intention of sending them to local TV stations and other television channels, bypassing the independent communication media entirely. The newspaper also asserts that, during the elections alone, some 5 million euro will be spent for information purposes.

In the light of the above, can the Commission:

1. give its own version of the content of the article;

2. report on its strategies for communication with citizens and the associated costs;

3. indicate its communication strategy during the elections and the associated costs?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

The article of 25 January the Honourable Member refers to is factually incorrect: the Commission is not spending EUR 5 million on social media during the run up to European Parliament elections.

The Commission's DG Communication produces an annual activity report on communication with citizens including the Europe for Citizens programme, Citizens' Dialogues and activities with Representations and networks across the EU. ([1])

While keeping within its institutional role, the Commission aims to support the European Parliament's communication strategy for the elections through established networks and communication channels: Europe Direct, Europa, social media accounts, etc.

([1]) http://www.cc.cec/dgintranet/comm/communication_services/external_communication/index_en.htm

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000985/14
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(30 januari 2014)

Betreft: Verdeling kosten hernieuwbare energie

Steun aan hernieuwbare energie is nodig, zeker zolang nucleaire en fossiele energie nog steeds (en meer) ondersteund worden. Uiteraard stelt zich dan de vraag wie deze ondersteuning moet betalen. Uit de praktijk blijkt dat de meeste lidstaten deze kosten onevenredig verdelen onder de verschillende doelgroepen en dat de steun aan hernieuwbare energie steeds meer betaald wordt door de gezinnen.

Energie-intensieve industrieën worden, op basis van het argument van koolstoflekkage („carbon leakage"), vaak quasi volledig vrijgesteld van de kosten voor steun aan hernieuwbare energie.

Hoewel uit studies reeds gebleken is dat het risico op koolstoflekkage zeer beperkt is, valt dit standpunt nog te verdedigen in een internationale context. Dit is echter niet langer het geval wanneer deze vrijstellingen zó doorgedreven zijn dat er concurrentie ontstaat tussen landen binnen de EU (lidstaten worden gedwongen om dezelfde tegemoetkomingen te doen als hun buurlanden om het wegvloeien van hun industrie te voorkomen).

Dan ontstaat er immers (het risico op) concurrentievervalsing, zoals blijkt uit het onderzoek van de Commissie zelf aangaande de situatie in Duitsland, waar de energie-intensieve industrie volgens studies slecht instaat voor 0,3 % van de kosten voor hernieuwbare energie.

1. Hoe zal de Commissie zorgen dat vrijstellingen niet leiden tot concurrentievervalsing, of hoe zal zij bestaande problemen oplossen, en aldus een gelijk speelveld creëren dat concurrentie tussen de verschillende lidstaten uitsluit?

2. Plant de Commissie verdere acties om ervoor te zorgen dat de kosten van hernieuwbare energie op een billijke manier verdeeld worden tussen de verschillende groepen van gebruikers (gezinnen, kmo's, energie-intensieve industrie, …)?

a) Zal zij hierbij rekening houden met de beperkte draagkracht van voornamelijk de gezinnen en het feit dat steeds meer gezinnen in energiearmoede verkeren?

b) Zullen ook de principes van „de vervuiler betaalt" mee in acht genomen worden, zoals bijvoorbeeld het geval is in de kaderrichtlijn water (Richtlijn 2000/60/EG)?

3. Welke acties zullen dit zijn?

Antwoord van de heer Oettinger namens de Commissie
(14 maart 2014)

1. De Commissie beschikt over rechtsinstrumenten om een gelijk speelveld op de gehele interne EU-markt te waarborgen en verstoringen van de markt als gevolg van vrijstellingen aan te pakken ([1]). De Commissie herziet momenteel haar richtsnoeren betreffende staatssteun op het gebied van milieu en energie, waarbij tevens rekening wordt gehouden met de door het geachte Parlementslid naar voren gebrachte kwestie.

2. Steunregelingen voor hernieuwbare energie behelzen in de verschillende EU-lidstaten uiteenlopende instrumenten (terugleveringstarieven, premiebetalingen voor teruglevering, groene certificaten, investeringssteun, belastingen en heffingen etc. ([2])). De Commissie heeft richtsnoeren over goede werkwijzen opgesteld en bevordert de dialoog tussen nationale betrokkenen om grensoverschrijdende concurrentieverstoringen te voorkomen en de kostenefficiënte levering van hernieuwbare energie tot stand te brengen teneinde de kosten voor de consument te drukken.

2a. De Commissie erkent dat energiearmoede een ernstig probleem is en benadrukt dat de lidstaten alle desbetreffende bepalingen van de Europese wetgeving ([3]) snel ten uitvoer dienen te leggen. Een door de Commissie in 2012 opgerichte deskundigengroep heeft onlangs een leidraad gepubliceerd ([4]) die erop is gericht de lidstaten te steunen bij het naleven van hun wettelijke verplichtingen betreffende kwetsbare afnemers en energiearmoede.

([1]) In het kader daarvan onderzoekt de Commissie momenteel of de Duitse Wet op de hernieuwbare energie in overeenstemming is met de staatssteunregels.
([2]) Meer informatie is beschikbaar in het werkdocument van de diensten van de Commissie „European Commission guidance for the design of renewables support schemes" op http://ec.europa.eu/energy/gas_electricity/doc/com_2013_public_intervention_swd04_en.pdf
([3]) Artikel 3 van Richtlijn 2009/72/EG, PB L 211, 14.8.2009 en artikel 3 van Richtlijn 2009/73/EG, PB L 211, 14.8.2009.
([4]) Leidraad van de werkgroep inzake kwetsbare afnemers, gepubliceerd op 6 januari 2014: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/gas_electricity/doc/forum_citizen_energy/20140106_vulnerable_consumer_report.pdf

2b. Bij alle ontwikkelingen inzake energie, hetzij uit hernieuwbare bronnen, fossiele brandstoffen of andere bronnen, dient rekening te worden gehouden met externe milieueffecten en dient het EU-acquis op milieugebied te worden nageleefd. Doordat de lidstaten de 20-20-20-doelstellingen in de praktijk omzetten, wordt schonere energieopwekking ondersteund, waardoor de luchtkwaliteit stijgt.

3. In het kader van een beoordeling van de werking van de Europese retailmarkten en de discussies die momenteel worden gevoerd over het klimaat- en energiebeleid van de EU voor 2030, zullen er zo nodig initiatieven worden ontwikkeld om problemen op het gebied van distributie en billijkheid aan te pakken.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000985/14
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(30 January 2014)

Subject: Sharing the costs of renewable energy

Support for renewable energy is essential, especially while nuclear energy and fossil fuels continue to receive support at a greater level. Of course, this then leads to the question of who should pay for this support. In practice, it appears that most Member States distribute these costs disproportionately among the various target groups and that the support for renewable energy is increasingly paid for by households.

Frequently, energy-intensive industries are effectively completely exempt from paying the costs of supporting renewable energy, on the basis of the 'carbon leakage' argument.

Although studies have shown that the risk of carbon leakage is minimal, this point of view is nevertheless justifiable in an international context. However, that is no longer the case when these exemptions are imposed in such a way that competition arises between countries within the EU (Member States are forced to make the same concessions as their neighbouring countries in order to prevent industry from moving elsewhere).

This then leads to (the risk of) unfair competition, as can be seen from the study undertaken by the Commission itself into the situation in Germany, where energy-intensive industries are responsible for only 0.3% of the costs of renewable energy.

1. How will the Commission ensure that the exemptions do not lead to unfair competition, or how will it solve the existing problems, and thus create a level playing field which rules out competition between the various Member States?

2. Is the Commission planning any further initiatives to ensure that the costs of renewable energy are shared fairly between the various groups of consumers (households, SMEs, energy-intensive industries, etc.)?

(a) Will the Commission take into account the limited capacity of above all households and the fact that an increasing number of households are facing energy poverty?

(b) Will 'the polluter pays' principle also be taken into account, as it is for example in the Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC)?

3. If so, what form will these initiatives take?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(14 March 2014)

1. The Commission has the legal instruments to ensure a level playing field in the whole EU internal market and to tackle market distortions arising from exemptions ([1]). The Commission is revising its Environment and Energy State Aid Guidelines, also seeking to address the issue raised by the Honourable Member.

2. Renewable energy support schemes involve a number of different instruments (feed-in tariffs, feed-in premiums, green certificates, investment supports, taxes and levies, etc.) ([2]) across EU member states. The Commission has produced best practice guidance and is promoting dialogue between national actors in order to prevent cross-border distortions in economic competition and the cost effective delivery of renewable energy, to minimise the cost to consumers.

(a) The Commission recognises energy poverty as a serious concern and stresses that Member States should rapidly implement all the relevant provisions in European energy legislation. ([3]) An expert group, set up by the Commission in 2012, has recently published a guidance document ([4]) with the aim of assisting Member States to meet their legislative obligations on vulnerable customers and energy poverty.

([1]) In this context, the Commission is currently examining the compliance of the German EEG with state aid rules.
([2]) More information can be found in the Commission Staff Working Document 'European Commission guidance for the design of renewables support schemes': http://ec.europa.eu/energy/gas_electricity/doc/com_2013_public_intervention_swd04_en.pdf
([3]) Article 3 of Directive 2009/72/EC, OJ L 211, 14.8.2009 and of Directive 2009/73/EC, OJ L 211, 14.8.2009.
([4]) Vulnerable Consumer Working Group Guidance Document, published 6 January 2014: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/gas_electricity/doc/forum_citizen_energy/20140106_vulnerable_consumer_report.pdf

(b) All developments of energy — be it renewable, fossil fuel or other — should take into account environmental externalities and must comply with the Union's environmental *acquis*. The way Member States meet their 20-20-20 targets should also contribute to better air quality by supporting cleaner energy generation.

3. In the context of an assessment of the functioning of Europe's retail markets and the on-going discussions of the EU's 2030 climate and energy policy, initiatives to address distributional and equity considerations will be prepared as appropriate.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení P-000986/14
Komisi
Oldřich Vlasák (ECR)
(31. ledna 2014)

Předmět: Interpelace ve věci nástroje pro propojení Evropy

Pro účely spolufinancování dopravní infrastruktury z prostředků EU bude v podmínkách České republiky nutné v nadcházejícím programovém období 2014-2020 přiřadit dopravní projekty k operačnímu programu Doprava či k nástroji pro propojení Evropy („CEF"). V souvislosti s nástrojem pro propojení Evropy si dovoluji požádat Evropskou komisi o zodpovězení následujících dotazů:

1. Bude Komise ve vztahu k jednotlivým dopravním projektům uplatňovat pro přidělování prostředků z nástroje pro propojení Evropy jakákoliv další pravidla než ta, která jsou uvedena v nařízení (EU) č. 1315/2013 nebo nařízení (EU) č. 1316/2013? Příkladem by mohla být pravidla na rozdělení daných prostředků mezi jednotlivé druhy dopravní infrastruktury (silnice, železnice…).

2. Pokud ano, jaká pravidla to budou a o jakou konkrétní legislativu EU se Komise při zavádění těchto dodatečných pravidel bude opírat?

3. Podle definice obsažené ve článku 3 nařízení (EU) č. 1315/2013 je „městským uzlem" městská oblast, ve které se dopravní infrastruktura transevropské dopravní sítě, jako jsou přístavy včetně terminálů osobní dopravy, letiště, železniční stanice, logistická centra a nákladní terminály umístěné v městské oblasti a jejím okolí, napojuje na jiné části této infrastruktury a na infrastrukturu regionální a místní dopravy". Existují pro účely nařízení (EU) č. 1316/2013 v České republice další městské uzly než ty, které jsou explicitně uvedeny v příloze II nařízení (EU) č. 1315/2013? Pokud ano, které městské uzly to jsou?

Odpověď Siima Kallase jménem Komise
(21. února 2014)

1 a 2. Prostředky pro dopravu z Nástroje pro propojení Evropy se budou přidělovat v souladu s ustanoveními nařízení (EU) č. 1315/2013 ([1]) a ustanoveními nařízení (EU) č. 1316/2013 ([2]).

Podle čl. 21 odst. 3 nařízení (EU) č. 1316/2013 přijala Komise akt v přenesené pravomoci ([3]) týkající se priorit financování dopravy, které budou zohledněny v pracovních programech po dobu trvání Nástroje pro propojení Evropy.

Sdělení „Budování hlavní dopravní sítě: Koridory hlavní sítě a Nástroj pro propojení Evropy" ([4]) poskytuje informace o potenciálním rozpočtu a nástrojích souběžně s aktem v přenesené pravomoci, jichž bude možné v novém rámci využít.

Jak je uvedeno v obecných cílech v článku 3, je cílem Nástroje pro propojení Evropy umožnit Unii dosáhnout cílů udržitelného rozvoje, a to prostřednictvím podpory ekologičtějších způsobů dopravy. Proto je nástroj pro propojení Evropy, včetně 11,3 miliardy EUR převedené do Nástroje pro propojení Evropy z Fondu soudržnosti, zaměřen na železnici, vnitrozemské vodní cesty, zavádění nových technologií a telematických aplikací. Projekty týkající se silniční sítě TEN-T budou moci využívat Nástroje pro propojení Evropy ve formě inovativních finančních nástrojů a jsou rovněž způsobilé pro jiné nástroje EU, jako jsou např. evropské strukturální a investiční fondy. Příspěvek Nástroje pro propojení Evropy na projekty silniční infrastruktury ve formě grantů bude i nadále omezený. Tato skutečnost se odráží v podílu projektů v oblasti silniční dopravy v části I přílohy I nařízení o Nástroji pro propojení Evropy.

3. Pokud jde o městské uzly, příloha II nařízení (EU) č. 1315/2013 obsahuje seznam městských uzlů hlavní sítě. Existují další městské uzly, které lze určit na základě definice v čl. 3 písm. p) a které určují například přeshraniční úseky, jak jsou definovány v čl. 3 písm. m) uvedeného nařízení.

([1]) Úř. věst. L 348, 20.12.2013.
([2]) Úř. věst. L 348, 20.12.2013.
([3]) Nařízení Komise v přenesené pravomoci (EU) C(2013)9690 ze dne 7. ledna 2014, kterým se mění příloha I nařízení Evropského parlamentu a Rady (EU) č. 1316/2013, kterým se vytváří Nástroj pro propojení Evropy, http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&t=PDF&f=ST%205162%202014%20INIT
([4]) COM(2013)940, přijaté Komisí dne 7.1.2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000986/14
to the Commission
Oldřich Vlasák (ECR)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Question on the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)

In order to secure co-financing for transport infrastructure from EU funds, the Czech Republic will have to assign transport projects to the operational programme for transport or to the CEF in the upcoming programming period of 2014-2020. I should like to put the following questions regarding the CEF to the Commission:

1. Will the Commission apply any rules on the allocation of CEF funds in respect of specific transport projects other than those laid down in Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 or Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013? An example could be rules on the distribution of funds between individual types of transport infrastructure (motorways, rail, etc.).

2. If so, what would these rules be? What specific EU legislation would the Commission take as the basis for implementing these additional rules?

3. According to the definition set out in Article 3 of Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013, an'urban node' means 'an urban area where the transport infrastructure of the trans- European transport network, such as ports including passenger terminals, airports, railwaystations, logistic platforms and freight terminals located in and around an urban area, isconnected with other parts of that infrastructure and with the infrastructure for regionaland local traffic'. For the purposes of Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013, are there any urbannodes other than those explicitly set out in Appendix II to Regulation(EU) No 1315/2013? If so, what are these urban nodes?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2014)

1 and 2. The CEF funds for transport will be allocated in accordance with the provisions of the regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 ([1]) and the regulation (EU) No 1316/2013 ([2]).

Pursuant to Art. 21(3) of the regulation (EU) No 1316/2013, the Commission adopted a delegated act ([3]) detailing the transport funding priorities to be reflected in the work programmes for the duration of the CEF.

In parallel with the delegated act, the communication 'Building the Transport Core Network: Core Network Corridors and Connecting Europe Facility' ([4]), provides information on the potential budget and instruments available under the new framework.

As specified in its general objectives in Article 3, the CEF is an instrument aiming at enabling the Union to achieve its sustainable development targets, by promoting cleaner modes of transport. Therefore, the focus of the CEF, including for the EUR 11.3bn transferred from the Cohesion Fund to the CEF, will be on rail, inland waterways, the deployment of new technologies and telematic applications. Projects on the TEN-T road network can benefit from the CEF in the form of innovative financial instruments, and are also eligible to other EU instruments such as the European Structural and Investment Funds. The CEF contribution to road infrastructure projects in the form of grants will remain limited. This is reflected in the proportion of road projects in Part I of Annex I to the CEF Regulation.

3. As regards urban nodes, Annex II to Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 contains the list of the urban nodes of the core network. There are other urban nodes that can be identified on the basis of the definition in Article 3(p) and which determine for instance the cross border sections, as defined in Article 3(m) of the regulation.

([1]) OJ L 348, 20/12/2013.
([2]) OJ L 348, 20/12/2013.
([3]) Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) C(2013)9690 of 7.1.2014 amending Annex I to Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Connecting Europe Facility, http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&t=PDF&f=ST%205162%202014%20INIT
([4]) COM(2013) 940, adopted by the Commission on 7.1.2014.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор P-000987/14
до Комисията
Svetoslav Hristov Malinov (PPE)
(31 януари 2014 г.)

Относно: Липса на оценка на въздействието върху околната среда на общия устройствен план на община Царево, България

През 2008 г. Министерството на регионалното развитие на България прие генералния устройствен план на община Царево, който предвижда урбанизация и разрушаване на повече от 25 % от защитените местообитания в зоната в близост до крайбрежието на природния парк Странджа. Странджа е обявена за територия от „Натура 2000“ съгласно Директива 92/43/ЕИО на Съвета от 21 май 1992 г. относно опазването на естествените местообитания и на дивата флора и фауна (Директива за местообитанията) и Директива 2009/147/ЕО на Европейския парламент и на Съвета от 30 ноември 2009 г. относно опазването на дивите птици (Директива за птиците). Там се намира най-големият комплекс широколистни гори в Европа, застрашени дюни с уникална средиземноморска и понтийска растителност и местообитания на редица реликтови и застрашени видове.

През 2010 г. Комисията откри процедура за нарушение № 2009/4424, след като установи, че стратегическата оценка на въздействието върху околната среда на устройствения план е непълна. В резултат на това българският министър на околната среда анулира оценката на въздействието върху околната среда и процедурата за нарушение беше прекратена. Въпреки това на 15 януари 2014 г. Върховният административен съд на България одобри генералния устройствен план на община Царево. Въпреки че Съдът призна, че липсата на одобрена стратегическа оценка на въздействието върху околната среда на генералния устройствен план представлява сериозно нарушение на процедурните правила, установени от българското законодателство за изготвянето на такива планове, той отхвърли жалбите относно плана като недопустими.

В светлината на изложеното по-горе как Комисията ще гарантира изпълнението на задълженията на България по Директива 2001/42/ЕО на Европейския парламент и на Съвета от 27 юни 2001 г. относно оценката на въздействието на някои планове и програми върху околната среда и по Директивата за местообитанията, по-специално що се отнася до правната разпоредба, че всеки устройствен план може да бъде одобрен и изпълнен само след приемането на оценките на въздействието върху околната среда, предвидени в горепосочените директиви?

Отговор, даден от г-н Поточник от името на Комисията
(28 февруари 2014 г.)

На Комисията са известни фактите, изложени от уважаемия член на Парламента, и вече е изпратила запитване до българската администрация относно актуалната фактическа ситуация след последното съдебно решение и относно изпълнението на директиви 92/43/ЕИО ([1]) и 2001/42/ЕО ([2]).

След като получи необходимата информация, Комисията ще вземе решение за по-нататъшни действия по целесъобразност.

([1]) Директива 92/43/ЕИО на Съвета от 21 май 1992 г. за опазване на естествените местообитания и на дивата флора и фауна, ОВ L 206, 22.7.1992 г.
([2]) Директива 2001/42/ЕО на Европейския парламент и на Съвета от 27 юни 2001 г. относно оценката на последиците на някои планове и програми върху околната среда, ОВ L 197, 21.7.2001 г.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000987/14
to the Commission
Svetoslav Hristov Malinov (PPE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Lack of an environmental assessment of the general spatial plan for the municipality of Tsarevo, Bulgaria

In 2008 the Bulgarian Ministry of Regional Development adopted the master spatial plan for the municipality of Tsarevo, which provides for urbanisation and the destruction of more than 25% of the protected habitats in the area near the coast of the Strandzha Nature Park. Strandzha has been declared a Natura 2000 site under Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive) and Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (the Birds Directive). The site is home to the largest deciduous forest complex in Europe, endangered dunes with unique Mediterranean and Pontic-Euxinic vegetation, and the habitats of a number of relict and endangered species.

In 2010 the Commission opened Infringement Procedure 2009/4424, having found that the strategic environmental assessment of the spatial plan was incomplete. As a result, the Bulgarian Minister for the Environment rescinded the environmental assessment and the infringement procedure was closed. However, on 15 January 2014 the Supreme Administrative Court of Bulgaria enforced the master spatial plan for the municipality of Tsarevo. Although the Court acknowledged that the lack of an approved strategic environmental assessment of the master spatial plan constitutes a serious breach of the procedural rules laid down by Bulgarian legislation for the drawing-up of such plans, the Court dismissed the complaints against the plan as inadmissible.

In light of the above, how will the Commission ensure the fulfilment of Bulgaria's obligations under Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment) and under the Habitats Directive, in particular as regards the legal stipulation that any spatial plan may be approved and applied only after the adoption of the environmental assessments provided for in the aforementioned directives?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2014)

The Commission is aware of the facts presented by the Honourable Member and has sent a request to the Bulgarian administration for un update on the factual situation after the last court decision and on the implementation of Directives 92/43/EEC ([1]) and 2001/42/EC ([2]).

After receiving the necessary information, the Commission will decide on further steps, as appropriate.

([1]) 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.
([2]) Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, OJ L 197, 21.7.2001.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000988/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(31 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Reglamento (UE) n° 473/2013

En referencia a la respuesta a la pregunta E-012574/2013, el Sr. Rehn contestó en nombre de la Comisión que esta «controla el cumplimiento del "two pack" por parte de los Estados miembros. Aunque España no estableció el organismo independiente previsto en el artículo 5 del Reglamento (UE) n° 473/2013 dentro del plazo de 31 de octubre de 2013, la Comisión ha constatado que una ley orgánica por la que se crea un organismo independiente en España se publicó en el *Boletín Oficial del Estado* el 15 de noviembre de 2013 y que el Consejo de Ministros debería adoptar el decreto por el que se establecen sus estatutos para el 31 de diciembre de 2013».

¿Le consta a la Comisión si el Consejo de Ministros español adoptó, antes del 31 de diciembre de 2013, el decreto por el que se establecen los estatutos de dicho organismo independiente creado por ley orgánica?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de marzo de 2014)

A la Comisión le consta que el Consejo de Ministros español no adoptó los estatutos de la institución presupuestaria independiente de España antes del 31 de diciembre de 2013. La Comisión es consciente de que se está trabajando para que se adopten lo antes posible.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000988/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Regulation (EU) No 473/2013

With respect to the answer to Question E-012574/2013, Mr Rehn replied on behalf of the Commission to the effect that it 'is monitoring Member States' compliance with the Two Pack. Although Spain did not put in place the independent body provided for in Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 473/2013 by the deadline of 31 October 2013, the Commission has taken note that an organic law establishing an independent body in Spain was published in the Spanish Official Journal on 15 November 2013 and that the decree establishing its statutes should be adopted by the Council of Ministers by 31 December 2013.'

Does the Commission know whether the Spanish Council of Ministers adopted, by 31 December 2013, the decree establishing the statutes of the aforesaid independent body created by organic law?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(17 March 2014)

The Commission knows that the statutes of Spain's Independent Fiscal Institution had not been adopted by the Spanish Council of Ministers by 31 December 2013. The Commission is aware that work is ongoing to have these adopted within the shortest delay.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000989/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(31 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Incumplimiento de la legislación de la UE sobre renovables y reforma energética en España: peajes al autoconsumo II

En referencia a la pregunta E-011350/2013, el Sr. Oettinger contestó en nombre de la Comisión:

«La Comisión envió un dictamen motivado a España por no haberle comunicado la plena transposición de la Directiva sobre las energías renovables (Directiva 2009/28/CE ([1])). Los Estados miembros tenían que transponer esta Directiva antes del 5 de diciembre de 2010. Sin embargo, España todavía no ha comunicado a la Comisión todas las medidas de transposición necesarias para incorporar plenamente la Directiva a su legislación nacional. Si España no cumple su obligación jurídica en un plazo de dos meses, la Comisión podría tomar la decisión de llevar el caso ante el Tribunal de Justicia.»

Como ya han pasado los dos meses, ¿puede informar la Comisión si España le ha comunicado las medidas de transposición para incorporar plenamente la Directiva 2009/28/CE a su legislación nacional?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de marzo de 2014)

El 26 de septiembre de 2013 la Comisión envió efectivamente a España un dictamen motivado por no haber comunicado todas las medidas de transposición pertinentes con arreglo a la Directiva sobre las energías renovables. España ha contestado a la carta de la Comisión notificando medidas legislativas adicionales; la contestación y la legislación notificada están ahora siendo analizadas por los servicios de la Comisión.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=Oj:L:2009:140:0016:0062:es:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000989/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Failure to comply with EU legislation on renewable energy and energy reform in Spain: tolls on own consumption II

In respect of Question E-011350/2013, Mr Oettinger responded in the following manner on behalf of the Commission:

'The Commission sent a reasoned opinion to Spain for not informing the Commission about the full transposition of the Renewables Directive (Directive 2009/28/EC ([1])). Member States had to transpose this directive by 5 December 2010. However, Spain has not yet informed the Commission of all the necessary transposition measures for fully incorporating the directive into national legislation. If Spain does not comply with its legal obligation within two months, the Commission may decide to refer the case to the Court of Justice.'

As the two months have now passed, can the Commission say if Spain has informed it of the transposition measures for fully incorporating Directive 2009/28/EC into national legislation?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2014)

The Commission has indeed sent on 26 September 2013 reasoned opinion letters to Spain for failing to notify all transposition measures under the Renewable Energy Directive. Spain has replied to the Commission's letter and notified additional legal measures; the reply and the notified legislation are currently under the assessment of the Commission services.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=Oj:L:2009:140:0016:0062:es:PDF

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000993/14
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(31 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Να απελευθερωθούνε τώρα οι αγωνιστές της «Marcha Patriotica»

Η Κοινοβουλευτική ομάδα του ΚΚΕ στο Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο καταγγέλλει την κυβέρνηση της Κολομβίας, για τη σύλληψη και φυλάκιση, με χαλκευμένες κατηγορίες των αγωνιστών μελών του κινήματος «Marcha Patriotica» (MP) Huber BALLESTEROS και Francisco Javier TOLOSA, την άγρια επιχείρηση κλιμάκωσης της κρατικής βίας, που είναι σε εξέλιξη κατά του λαού της Κολομβίας. Όπως κατήγγειλαν, στις 22 του Γενάρη 2014, οι εκπρόσωποι του κινήματος «Marcha Patriotica» και του Κομμουνιστικού Κόμματος Κολομβίας, περισσότερα από 29 μέλη και στελέχη του MP έχουν δολοφονηθεί τα τελευταία 2 χρόνια για τις πολιτικές θέσεις και τη δράση τους στο πλευρό της εργατικής τάξης, των φτωχών αγροτών και των φοιτητών. Καθημερινά κλιμακώνονται οι δολοφονικές επιθέσεις, οι απειλές και οι προβοκάτσιες σε βάρος των αγωνιστών του εργατικού-λαϊκού κινήματος. Οι πρόσφατες αποκαλύψεις για τις δολοφονικές επιθέσεις των ΗΠΑ και της CIA στην Κολομβία επαναφέρουν στη μνήμη του λαού το πογκρόμ της άρχουσας τάξης της Κολομβίας και των ιμπεριαλιστών των ΗΠΑ σε βάρος της Πατριωτικής Ενότητας, τη δεκαετία του 70 και 80, που είχε στοιχίσει τη ζωή σε δεκάδες χιλιάδες κομμουνιστές και λαϊκούς αγωνιστές. Οι ευθύνες του πρόεδρου Juan Manuel Santos και της κυβέρνησης της Κολομβίας είναι τεράστιες. Τεράστιες είναι επίσης και οι ευθύνες της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, γιατί η κλιμάκωση των δολοφονικών επιθέσεων των κατασταλτικών μηχανισμών κατά των λαϊκών αγωνιστών στη Κολομβία εξελίσσεται με ιδιαίτερη σφοδρότητα μετά την υιοθέτηση της νέας συμφωνίας ΕΕ-Κολομβίας.

Η Ευρωκοινοβουλευτική Ομάδα του ΚΚΕ εκφράζει την συμπαράσταση της στον ηρωικό αγώνα του κινήματος «Marcha Patriotica», στον αγωνιζόμενο λαό της Κολομβίας και ζητά την άμεση αποφυλάκιση των μελών του κινήματος «Marcha Patriotica» (MP), Huber BALLESTEROS και Francisco Javier TOLOSA, καθώς και όλων των πολιτικών κρατουμένων.

Ερωτάται η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος για την Εξωτερική Πολιτική της ΕΕ και αντιπρόεδρος της Επιτροπής:

Καταδικάζει την κλιμακούμενη κρατική καταστολή και την παραβίαση των λαϊκών ελευθεριών στην Κολομβία;

Συμφωνεί με την απαίτηση του εργατικού-λαϊκού κινήματος για την αποφυλάκιση των H. BALLESTEROS και F.J. TOLOSA και όλων των πολιτικών κρατουμένων;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(25 Μαρτίου 2014)

Η ΥΕ/ΑΠ ευχαριστεί τον κ. βουλευτή του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου για την ερώτηση. Η ΥΕ/ΑΠ παρακολουθεί εκ του σύνεγγυς τις πολιτικές εξελίξεις στην Κολομβία και ιδίως τα θέματα που σχετίζονται με τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα.

Η ΕΕ και η Κολομβία έχουν αρχίσει διάλογο για τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα στο πλαίσιο του οποίου εξετάζονται όλα τα θέματα σχετικά με τα δικαιώματα και τις ελευθερίες του ατόμου. Επιπλέον, η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, σε τοπικό επίπεδο, στηρίζει τους υπερασπιστές των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων, περιλαμβανομένων συνδικαλιστών, μέσω προγραμμάτων συνεργασίας και τακτικών επαφών με οργανώσεις ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων.

Για τη συγκεκριμένη περίπτωση που αναφέρεται στην παρούσα ερώτηση, η ΥΕ/ΑΠ παρατηρεί ότι η δικαστική διαδικασία δεν έχει ολοκληρωθεί και, υπό το πρίσμα των εξελίξεων, θα εκτιμήσει κατά πόσον είναι σκόπιμο να θίξει το θέμα στις επαφές της με τις αρχές της Κολομβίας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000993/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Release the 'Marcha Patriotica' militants now!

The European Parliament delegation of the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) condemns the Colombian government for the arrest and imprisonment on trumped-up charges of Huber BALLESTEROS and Francisco Javier TOLOSA, militants and members of the 'Marcha Patriotica' (MP) movement, and the savage attempt to ramp up state violence against the people of Colombia. As representatives of the 'Marcha Patriotica' movement and the Communist Party of Colombia denounced on January 22 of 2014, more than 29 members and cadres of 'MP' have been murdered over the last two years for their political stance and their action in support of the working class, poor farmers and students. Daily, the assaults, the threats and provocations against militants of the labour and working class movement are escalating. The recent revelations of the murderous attacks by the US and of the CIA in Colombia recall the pogroms carried out by the ruling class of Colombia and US imperialists against the Patriotic Unity in the 1970s and 80s, which cost the lives of tens of thousands of communists and activists. President Juan Manuel Santos and the Colombian government bear a heavy share of responsibility for the above, as does the European Union, since the murderous attacks of the repressive mechanisms against popular militants in Colombia have increased in intensity since the adoption of the new EU — Colombia Agreement.

The European Parliament delegation of the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) expresses its support for the heroic struggle of the 'Marcha Patriotica' movement and the embattled people of Colombia and calls for the immediate release of Huber BALLESTEROS and Francisco Javier TOLOSA, members of the 'Marcha Patriotica' (MP) movement, and of all political prisoners.

Will the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Vice-President of the Commission condemn the escalating state repression and the violation of the people's freedoms in Colombia?

Does she endorse the demand made by the labour and working class movement for the release of H. BALLESTEROS and F. J. TOLOSA and of all political prisoners?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2014)

The HR/VP thank the honourable member of the EP for this question. She follows closely the political developments in Colombia and in particular the issues related to human rights.

The EU and Colombia have established a dialogue on human rights in whose framework all issues concerning human rights and freedoms are addressed. Moreover, the European Union, at local level, is supporting human rights defenders, including trade unionists, through cooperation programmes and regular contacts with human rights organisations.

In the specific case mentioned in the present question, the HR/VP notes that a judicial procedure is pending and, in the light of the developments, will assess whether to raise the case with the Colombian authorities.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000994/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(31 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: Il-ġlied tal-barrin

F'rapport ippubblikat f'Jannar tal-2013 intitolat "Toros & Taxes", huwa allegat li l-prattika tal-ġlied tal-barrin hija ffinanzjata direttament jew indirettament mill-baġit tal-UE.

Il-Kummissjoni hija konxja li l-fondi tal-UE qed jintużaw għal din il-prattika?

Il-Kummissjoni taqbel li l-fondi għandhom ikunu allokati għal din il-prattika barbara?

Jekk le, x'azzjoni lesta li tikkonsidra li tieħu l-Kummissjoni?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Cioloș f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(26 ta' Marzu 2014)

Bir-riforma tal-PAK fl-2003, l-appoġġ dirett m'għadx għandu x'jaqsam mal-produzzjoni, u qed jingħata għal kull ettaru eliġibbli lil bdiewa li jkollhom drittijiet għal pagament. Għaldaqstant, il-bdiewa jistgħu jagħmlu kwalunkwe attività ekonomika legali, inkluża t-trobbija tal-annimali.

Fil-politika għall-Iżvilupp Rurali m'hemm ebda appoġġ speċifiku għal attivitajiet relatati mal-ġlied tal-barrin. Il-bdiewa f'dan is-settur jistgħu jirċievu appoġġ minn ċerti miżuri tal-Iżvilupp Rurali (il-modernizzazzjoni tal-irziezet, skemi agroambjentali, fost l-oħrajn). Il-proġetti ffinanzjati b'dawn il-miżuri jridu jkunu konformi mal-liġi tal-Unjoni u nazzjonali applikabbli.

L-Artikolu 13 tat-Trattat dwar il-Funzjonament tal-Unjoni Ewropea (it-TFUE) fuq il-politika tal-Unjoni għall-benesseri tal-annimali jiddikjara li "fil-formulazzjoni u l-implimentazzjoni tal-politiki tal-Unjoni dwar l-agrikoltura u s-sajd, it-trasport, is-suq intern, ir-riċerka u l-iżvilupp teknoloġiku u tal-ispazju, l-Unjoni u l-Istati Membri għandhom jagħtu konsiderazzjoni sħiħa tal-ħtiġijiet tal-benesseri tal-annimali bħala esseri sensibbli, waqt li jirrispettaw id-dispożizzjonijiet leġiżlattivi jew amministrattivi u d-drawwiet tal-Istati Membri li għandhom x'jaqsmu partikolarment mar-riti reliġjużi, tradizzjonijiet kulturali u l-wirt reġjonali". Importanti li jkun innotat li l-Artikolu 13 tat-TFUE jqis b'mod espliċitu li "d-drawwiet tal-Istati Membri li għandhom x'jaqsmu partikolarment mar-riti reliġjużi, tradizzjonijiet kulturali u l-wirt reġjonali" joħolqu limitazzjoni għall-prinċipju tal-benesseri tal-annimali, bħalma nkiteb fl-Artikolu stess. Għalhekk, dawn il-prattiki jibqgħu biss fil-kompetenza tal-Istati Membri kkonċernati.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000994/14
to the Commission
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Bullfighting

In a report published in January 2013 entitled 'Toros & Taxes', it is claimed that the practice of bullfighting is funded either directly or indirectly by the EU budget.

Is the Commission aware that EU funds are being used for this practice?

Does the Commission agree that funding should be allocated to this barbaric practice?

If not, what action would the Commission consider taking?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2014)

As from the 2003 CAP reform, direct support has been decoupled from production and is granted per eligible hectare to farmers holding payment entitlements. Consequently, farmers are free to undertake any legal economic activity, including animal breeding.

Under the Rural Development policy there is also no specific support for bullfighting-related activities. Farmers in this sector may receive support under certain measures of Rural Development (farm modernisation, agri-environment schemes, etc.). Projects financed under these measures have to comply with applicable Union and national law.

Article 13 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) on the Union policy on animal welfare states that 'in formulating and implementing the Union's agriculture, fisheries, transport, internal market, research, and technological development and space policies, the Union and Member States shall, since animals are sentient beings, pay full regard to the welfare requirements of animals, while respecting the legislative or administrative provisions and customs of the Member States relating in particular to cultural traditions and regional heritage'. It is important to note that Article 13 of TFEU recognises explicitly that 'customs of the Member States relating in particular to cultural traditions and regional heritage' constitute the limitation to the principle of animal welfare as enunciated thereby. Therefore, such practices remain under the sole competence of the Member States concerned.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000995/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(31 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: Ir-rati tad-dijabete f'Ċipru u f'Malta

Studji reċenti kkonfermaw li Ċipru u Malta għandhom l-ogħla inċidenza ta' dijabete fir-reġjun kollu tal-Mediterran.

Minħabba l-problemi li huma normalment assoċjati mad-djabete, il-Kummissjoni se tappoġġja aktar studji u programmi f'dan il-qasam, partikolarment fir-rigward tal-prevenzjoni tad-dijabete?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Borg f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(18 ta' Marzu 2014)

Il-Kummissjoni taf li Ċipru u Malta huma fost l-Istati Membri li għandhom rati għoljin tad-dijabete.

Il-Kummissjoni tindirizza d-dijabete bħala prijorità, billi tieħu azzjoni fuq il-fatturi ewlenin ta' riskju, bħan-nuqqas ta' attività fiżika u l-obeżità, u billi trawwem il-kooperazzjoni tal-Istati Membri b'rabta mal-prevenzjoni u l-kura tad-dijabete.

Il-Kummissjoni qed tappoġġa lill-Istati Membri fl-isforzi tagħhom biex jindirizzaw id-dijabete billi, permezz tal-Programm tagħha dwar is-Saħħa, tikkofinanzja azzjoni konġunta dwar il-kura tal-mard kroniku u l-promozzjoni tat-tixjiħ f'saħħtu tul iċ-ċiklu tal-ħajja. Wieħed mill-pakketti tax-xogħol ta' din l-azzjoni konġunta għandu bħala l-għan tiegħu l-identifikazzjoni tal-ostakli għall-prevenzjoni, għall-iskrinjar u għall-kura tad-dijabete.

Barra minn hekk, il-Kummissjoni sejħet għal samit tal-UE dwar il-mard kroniku, li se jsir f'April tal-2014, sabiex jiġu analizzati l-azzjonijiet li ttieħdu s'issa u sabiex jiġu identifikati l-oqsma ta' valur miżjud għall-interventi fil-ġejjieni mmirati lejn l-indirizzar tal-piż tal-mard kroniku, fosthom id-dijabete.

L-Istrateġija għall-Ewropa dwar kwistjonijiet ta' saħħa marbuta man-Nutriment, il-Piż Żejjed u l-Obeżità ([1]), li ġiet ippubblikata fl-2007, tippromwovi dieta bbilanċjata u stil ta' ħajja attiv għal kulħadd. L-Istrateġija tħeġġeġ sħubiji orjentati lejn l-azzjoni li jinvolvu lill-Istati Membri (il-Grupp ta' Livell Għoli għan-Nutrizzjoni u l-Attività Fiżika ([2])) u lis-soċjetà ċivili (il-Pjattaforma tal-UE dwar id-dieta, l-attività fiżika u s-saħħa ([3])). Fl-24 ta' Frar 2014, il-Grupp ta' Livell Għoli ([4]) approva Pjan ta' Azzjoni mmexxi mill-Istati Membri dwar l-Obeżità fit-Tfal ([5]).

([1]) COM(2007) 279.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_mt.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_mt.htm
([4]) Il-membri Olandiżi u Żvediżi tal-Grupp ta' Livell Għoli għarrfu lill-partijiet l-oħra li huma ma setgħux jieħdu sehem f'din l-inizjattiva minħabba thassib dwar is-sussidjarjetà.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/childhoodobesity_actionplan_2014_2020_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000995/14
to the Commission
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Diabetes rates in Cyprus and Malta

Recent studies have confirmed that Cyprus and Malta have the highest incidence of diabetes in the whole Mediterranean region.

Given the problems normally associated with diabetes, would the Commission support further studies and programmes in this area, particularly with regard to the prevention of diabetes?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(18 March 2014)

The Commission is aware that Cyprus and Malta are among the Member States with a high incidence of diabetes.

The Commission addresses diabetes as a matter of priority, by taking action on key risk factors, such as the lack of physical activity and obesity and by fostering Member States' cooperation on the prevention and treatment of diabetes.

The Commission is supporting Member States in their efforts to address diabetes by co-financing through the Health Programme a joint action on addressing chronic diseases and promoting healthy ageing across the life cycle. One work package of this joint action is dedicated to identifying the barriers to prevention, screening and treatment of diabetes.

In addition, the Commission is convening an EU summit on chronic diseases in April 2014 to analyse action to date and to identify areas of added value for future interventions to tackle the burden of chronic diseases, including diabetes.

The 2007 Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related Health Issues ([1]) promotes a balanced diet and active lifestyles for all. The strategy encourages action-oriented partnerships involving the Member States (High Level Group for Nutrition and Physical Activity ([2])) and civil society (EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health ([3])). On 24 February 2014, the High Level Group ([4]) endorsed a Member States-led Action Plan on Childhood Obesity ([5]).

([1]) COM(2007) 279.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_en.htm
([4]) The Dutch and Swedish members of the High Level Group informed that based on subsidiarity concerns they could not join in the initiative.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/childhoodobesity_actionplan_2014_2020_en.pdf

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000996/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(31 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: Ġbid ta' fondi mill-HSBC

Skont rapporti riċenti fil-midja Maltija, l-HSBC Malta plc qed jobbliga lill-klijenti li jirtiraw somom kbar ta' flus mill-kontijiet personali tagħhom jagħtu spjegazzjoni għal dan qabel ma jippermetti li jinġibdu dawn il-flus. F'ċerti każi, saqsa wkoll għal evidenza dokumentata tal-użu intenzjonat.

Fid-dawl tal-fatt li l-politika tal-HSBC li jitlob tali spjegazzjoni hija applikata anki meta ma jkunx hemm prova ta' attivitajiet illeċiti, il-Kummissjoni hija mitluba tirrispondi li ġej:

Tikkunsidra din it-talba, speċjalment meta ma jkunx hemm suspett raġonevoli ta' attività illeċita, bħala waħda legali?

Jekk jidhrilha li dawn l-azzjonijiet huma llegali, x'passi ser tieħu biex tinforza l-konformità?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barnier f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(20 ta' Marzu 2014)

Skont id-Direttiva 2005/60/KE dwar il-prevenzjoni tal-użu tas-sistema finanzjarja għall-iskop tal-ħasil tal-flus u l-finanzjament tat-terroriżmu ("it-3et Direttiva AML"), l-istituzzjonijiet finanzjarji huma meħtieġa li jwettqu monitoraġġ kontinwu tar-relazzjonijiet ta' negozju mal-klijenti tagħhom. Tali monitoraġġ kontinwu għandu jinkludi skrutinju ta' transazzjonijiet li saru tul il-perkors ta' dik ir-relazzjoni biex jiżgura li t-transazzjonijiet li qed isiru huma konsistenti mal-għarfien tal-bank dwar il-klijent, in-negozju u l-profil tar-riskju.

It-3et Direttiva AML ma tinkludix lista ta' "sinjali ta' periklu" jew kwalunkwe dispożizzjonijiet li jitrattaw speċifikament ġbid ta' flus kontanti. Huwa f'idejn il-leġiżlazzjoni implimentattiva nazzjonali, jew anke l-istituzzjonijiet finanzjarji fil-politiki kummerċjali tagħhom, biex jiżviluppaw iktar kif għandu jitwettaq monitoraġġ kontinwu. Hemm gwida minn diversi awtoritajiet superviżorji li tiddikjara li l-ġbid ta' ammonti kbar minn kont jista' jitqies bħala sinjal potenzjali ta' twissija, tal-anqas f'ċerti ċirkostanzi. Għalhekk, ma tidhirx li mhijiex raġonevoli għal istituzzjoni finanzjarja li titlob aktar informazzjoni jekk klijent irid jiġbed somom kbar ta' flus. Talba bħal din, madankollu, mhux bilfors timplika li jkun hemm suspett ta' ħasil tal-flus jew ta' finanzjament tat-terroriżmu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000996/14
to the Commission
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Withdrawing funds from HSBC

According to recent reports in the Maltese media, HSBC Malta plc is obliging clients who withdraw large sums of money from their personal accounts for an explanation before allowing such a withdrawal to take place. In some instances, it has also asked for documented evidence of the intended use.

In light of the fact that HSBC's policy of requesting such an explanation is applied even when there is no proof whatsoever of illicit activities, the Commission is asked to answer the following:

Does it consider such a request, especially when there is no reasonable suspicion of illicit activity, to be legal?

If it deems such actions to be illegal, what steps will it be taking to enforce compliance?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2014)

Pursuant to the directive 2005/60/EC on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering and terrorist financing (the '3rd AML Directive'), financial institutions are required to conduct ongoing monitoring of the business relationships with their customers. Such ongoing monitoring should include scrutiny of transactions undertaken throughout the course of that relationship to ensure that the transactions being conducted are consistent with the bank's knowledge of the customer, the business and risk profile.

The 3rd AML Directive does not include a list of 'red flags' or any provisions specifically dealing with cash withdrawals. It is for the national implementing legislation, or even the financial institutions in their business policies, to further develop how to conduct ongoing monitoring. There is guidance by various supervisory authorities stating that withdrawals of large amounts from an account could be considered as a potential warning sign, at least under certain circumstances. Thus, it would not appear unreasonable for a financial institution to request more information if a customer wants to withdraw large sums of money. Such a request does not, however, necessarily imply that there is a suspicion of money laundering or terrorist financing.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000997/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(31 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: L-aċċess għall-internet

Data pubblikata riċentement mill-Eurostat turi li hemm diskrepanza mifruxa fl-UE rigward l-aċċess għall-internet, u l-użu tiegħu. L-istess data turi li 21 % tal-popolazjoni tal-UE qatt ma użat l-internet.

Il-Kummissjoni tikkunsidra l-aċċessibbilità għall-internet bħala fattur li għandu jittejjeb?

Jekk iva, x'tip ta' programmi tikkunsidra sabiex iżżid din l-aċċessibbilità?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Kroes f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(18 ta' Marzu 2014)

Hija prijorità ewlenija tal-Kummissjoni Ewropea li aktar ċittadini jkun jista' jkollhom aċċess għall-internet u jkunu jistgħu jużawh.

L-Aġenda Diġitali għall-Ewropa tidentifika diversi għanijiet u azzjonijiet li jtejbu l-aċċess għall-internet u l-użu ta' servizzi li jinsabu fuq l-internet. Dawn jinkludu attivitajiet fil-livell nazzjonali u Ewropew li jvarjaw mill-investimenti fl-infrastruttura meħtieġa sal-appoġġ u l-għoti ta' gwida liċ-ċittadini biex jużaw l-internet. B'mod partikulari, is-sitt u s-seba' pilastri tal-Aġenda Diġitali ("It-titjib tal-kompetenza, il-ħiliet u l-inklużjoni diġitali" u "Il-benefiċċji li joħorġu mill-ICT għas-soċjetà tal-UE" rispettivament) jindirizzaw b'mod speċifiku l-ostakli għall-aċċess għall-internet u għall-użu tiegħu. Għad-dettalji u għall-progress li sar f'dawn l-aħħar snin, jekk jogħġbok ikkonsulta t-Tabella ta' Valutazzjoni tal-Aġenda Diġitali ([1]).

Barra minn hekk, il-Kummissjoni pproponiet Direttiva dwar l-aċċessibbiltà tas-siti elettroniċi tal-entitajiet tas-settur pubbliku. Fil-25 ta' Frar 2014, waqt is-sessjoni plenarja, il-Parlament Ewropew adotta t-test kif ivvutat mill-Kumitat tiegħu għas-Suq Intern u l-Ħarsien tal-Konsumaturi ([2]). Il-Kunsill għadu qed jiddiskuti din il-proposta.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/scoreboard
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2014-0158+0+DOC+XML+V0//MT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000997/14
to the Commission
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Internet access

Data recently published by Eurostat show that there is a widespread discrepancy in the EU with regard to access to, and use of, the Internet. The same data suggest that 21% of the EU's population has never used the Internet.

Does the Commission consider accessibility to the Internet to be something that has to be improved?

If so, what kind of programmes would it consider with a view to increasing such accessibility?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(18 March 2014)

Enabling more citizens to access and use the Internet is a key priority for the European Commission.

The Digital Agenda for Europe identifies several objectives and actions to improve access to the web and use of Internet-based services. These comprise activities at national and European level, ranging from investments in the required infrastructure to supporting and guiding citizens to go online. In particular Pillars 6 (Enhancing digital literacy, skills and inclusion) and 7 (ICT-enabled benefits for EU society) of the Digital Agenda specifically tackle barriers to Internet access and use. For details and progress over the past years, please consult the Digital Agenda Scoreboard ([1]).

Moreover, the Commission has made a proposal for a directive on the accessibility of public sector bodies websites. On 25 February 2014, during its plenary session, the European Parliament adopted the text as voted by its IMCO Committee ([2]). The discussions on the proposal continue in the Council.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/scoreboard
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&language=EN&reference=P7-TA-2014-0158

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001003/14
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(31 januari 2014)

Betreft: Mishandeling jegens windhonden

Op 15 juli 2013 werd schriftelijke verklaring nr. 2013/0006, die een onmiddellijke halt wilde toeroepen aan de mishandeling van windhonden (greyhounds) in Europa, afgesloten. Er zijn immers talloze voorbeelden en getuigenissen te vinden over gruwelijke mishandelingen die deze dieren worden aangedaan. Dit vaak omdat zij hun „opdrachten" — de honden worden in de EU ingezet voor hondenrennen en de jacht — niet naar wens uitvoeren. De regels aangaande het kweken, houden, verhandelen en vervoeren van windhonden verschillen sterk per lidstaat en worden ook niet steeds correct toegepast. Vooral in Spanje is de situatie schrijnend.

De Parlementsleden ontvingen afgelopen jaar honderden mails van bezorgde burgers die hen aanmaanden om de schriftelijke verklaring te onderteken en zo een einde te maken aan deze wantoestanden.

Helaas mochten hun inspanningen niet baten: aangezien slechts 221 Parlementsleden hun handtekening plaatsten, wordt dit onderwerp niet op de agenda van de Commissie geplaatst.

De mishandeling van windhonden blijft dus voortduren. De protestacties gelukkig ook. Op zaterdag 1 februari 2014 vindt overigens de Wereld Galgo Dag plaats.

1. Welke acties heeft de Commissie reeds ondernomen om ervoor te zorgen dat er een einde komt aan deze mishandelingen?

2. Welke bijkomende acties kan en zal zij ondernemen?

3. Hoe zal de Commissie ervoor zorgen dat de wetgeving inzake dierenwelzijn overal correct wordt toegepast?

4. Heeft de Commissie de lidstaten, en met name Spanje, hierover reeds op het matje geroepen? Op welke manier?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(5 maart 2014)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoorden op de schriftelijke vragen E-010625/2010 en E-009212/2011 over hetzelfde onderwerp ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001003/14
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Mistreatment of greyhounds

On 15 July 2013 Written Declaration 2013/0006, on putting an immediate stop to the torture and mistreatment of greyhounds in Europe, was opened for signature. Innumerable examples and reports may be found of cruelty and mistreatment towards these animals, often meted out on the grounds that they are not doing their 'jobs' satisfactorily — greyhounds are used in the EU for racing and hunting. The rules on breeding, keeping, buying and selling, and transporting greyhounds vary considerably from one Member State to another, and are not always correctly enforced. The situation is particularly bad in Spain.

In the past year, Members have received hundreds of e-mails from concerned citizens urging them to sign the Written Declaration and put an end to this lamentable state of affairs.

Unfortunately their efforts did not bear fruit. As only 221 MEPs signed the Declaration, the matter was not placed on the Commission's agenda.

So the mistreatment of greyhounds is still going on. Fortunately, so are the protests. World Galgo ([1]) Day is being held on Saturday 1 February 2014.

1. What measures has the Commission taken so far to ensure that an end is put to this mistreatment?

2. What additional measures can and will it take?

3. How will the Commission ensure that legislation on animal welfare is properly enforced everywhere?

4. Has the Commission yet called the Member States, and Spain in particular, to account for this state of affairs? If so, how?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2014)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-010625/2010 and E-009212/2011 on the same issue ([2]).

([1]) Translator's note: 'greyhound' in Spanish.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-001011/14
aan de Commissie
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)
(31 januari 2014)

Betreft: Erkenning van de negatieve gevolgen van allergische aandoeningen

Meer dan 150 miljoen EU-burgers hebben te lijden onder chronische allergische aandoeningen waarvan de helft niet wordt gediagnosticeerd vanwege een gebrek aan kennis en een tekort aan medisch specialisten. Meer dan 100 miljoen European lijden aan allergische rhinitis en 70 miljoen Europeanen aan astma, de meest voorkomende niet-overdraagbare ziekte bij kinderen en de belangrijkste oorzaak van eerstehulpbezoeken en ziekenhuisopnamen van kinderen. Meer dan 17 miljoen Europeanen lijden aan voedselallergieën of ernstige allergieën, waardoor zij het risico lopen op acute aanvallen of anafylaxie die levensbedreigend kunnen zijn. Allergieën vormen een onderschatte oorzaak van ongezond oud worden en hebben ernstige gevolgen voor sociale, professionele en onderwijsprestaties, met name bij kinderen, en leiden aldus tot sociale en economische ongelijkheden.

1. Is de Commissie bereid om op dit gebied de samenwerking en coördinatie tussen de lidstaten aan te moedigen?

2. Is de Commissie bereid om het volgende te bevorderen:

a) nationale allergieprogramma's ter vermindering van de negatieve gevolgen van de ziekte en ongelijkheden op gezondheidsgebied;

b) opleidingen met betrekking tot allergieën en multidisciplinaire zorgplannen ter verbetering van het ziektebeheer;

c) het gebruik van preventieve en tolerantiebevorderende methoden voor de behandeling van allergieën;

d) wetenschappelijk onderzoek naar directe en indirecte risicofactoren voor allergieën, met inbegrip van vervuiling?

3. Welk soort maatregelen is de Commissie bereid te nemen om deze kwesties aan te pakken?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(3 maart 2014)

De Commissie moedigt samenwerking en coördinatie tussen de lidstaten op het gebied van chronische ziekten in het algemeen aan via de cofinanciering van een gezamenlijk optreden ter bestrijding van obstakels voor de preventie, screening en behandeling ervan.

Daarnaast bereidt de Commissie een EU-top over chronische ziekten voor om de tot dusver genomen maatregelen te analyseren en acties met een duidelijke toegevoegde waarde voor de EU te identificeren. Verder steunt de Commissie EU-maatregelen ter bevordering van gezondere eetgewoonten en levensstijlen (zie de EU-strategie voor aan voeding, overgewicht en obesitas gerelateerde gezondheidskwesties ([1])).

Bij de herziening van de wetgeving inzake de etikettering van levensmiddelen werd speciale aandacht besteed aan informatie over de aanwezigheid van ingrediënten die allergieën of overgevoeligheid veroorzaken. Krachtens Verordening (EU) nr. 1169/2011 ([2]) is de verplichte etikettering van allergenen uitgebreid naar alle niet-verpakte voedingsmiddelen. De verordening bepaalt ook dat de aanwezigheid van allergenen op niet-geclassificeerde mengsels moet worden vermeld.

Dankzij de REACH-verordening ([3]) kunnen sommige allergenen worden geïdentificeerd als zeer zorgwekkende stoffen die moeten worden goedgekeurd, en waarvan de risico's van het gebruik of de aanwezigheid in producten moeten worden bestreden via beperking, zoals ook gebeurt voor, bijvoorbeeld, dimethylfumaraat ([4]). Daarnaast moeten er relevante etiketteringsystemen voor de aanwezigheid van allergenen in textiel worden overwogen, en moeten alternatieven voor deze stoffen worden ontwikkeld. De Commissie onderzoekt ook methoden voor het testen van allergenen in afgewerkte textielproducten.

Via het 7e kaderprogramma voor onderzoek heeft de Commissie meer dan 79,5 miljoen euro geïnvesteerd in onderzoek naar allergieën en atopische ziekten. Via Horizon 2020 ([5]) zullen er verdere mogelijkheden voor de ondersteuning van dit onderzoeksgebied worden geboden ([6]).

([1]) COM(2007)0279.
([2]) PB L 304 van 22.11.2011, blz. 18.
([3]) Verordening (EG) nr. 1907/2006 van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 18 december 2006 inzake de registratie en beoordeling van chemische stoffen.
([4]) Verordening (EU) nr. 412/2012 van de Commissie van 15 mei 2012.
([5]) COM(2011) 808 definitief, COM(2011) 811 definitief.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001011/14
to the Commission
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Recognition of the burden of allergic diseases

More than 150 million EU citizens suffer from chronic allergic diseases, of whom half are undiagnosed owing to a lack of awareness and a shortage of medical specialists. More than 100 million Europeans suffer from allergic rhinitis and 70 million from asthma, the most common non-communicable diseases in children and the main cause of children's emergency room visits and hospital admissions. More than 17 million Europeans suffer from food allergies or severe allergies, running a risk of acute attacks or anaphylaxis with life-threatening implications. Allergies are an underestimated cause of unhealthy ageing and have a severe impact on social, professional and educational performance, especially in children, thereby leading to socioeconomic inequalities.

1. Would the Commission be prepared to encourage cooperation and coordination between Member States in this field?

2. Is the Commission prepared to promote:

a) national allergy programmes to reduce the disease burden and health inequalities;

b) training in allergies and multidisciplinary care plans to improve disease management;

c) the use of preventive and tolerance-inducing approaches to allergy treatment;

d) scientific research into direct and indirect allergy risk factors, including pollution?

3. What kind of action is the Commission prepared to take to address these issues?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 March 2014)

The Commission is encouraging cooperation and coordination between Member States in the area of chronic diseases in general by co-financing a joint action addressing barriers to their prevention, screening and treatment.

In addition, the Commission is convening an EU summit on chronic diseases to analyse action to date, and to identify actions with clear EU added value. The Commission is further promoting EU action to support choosing healthier diets and lifestyles as set out in the strategy on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity related Health issues ([1]).

In the context of the revision of the legislation on food labelling, particular attention was given to the information on the presence of ingredients causing allergies or intolerances. Under Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 ([2]), the mandatory labelling of allergens was extended to cover all non-prepacked foodstuffs. The regulation includes an obligation for non-classified mixtures to indicate the presence of allergens.

The REACH Regulation ([3]) allows the identification of some allergens as substances of very high concern and subjects them to authorisation or to address risks from their use or presence in products via a restriction as for example for dimethylfumarate ([4]). Furthermore, meaningful labelling schemes for the presence of allergens in textiles should be investigated, and alternatives to these substances developed. The Commission is also exploring methodologies to test for allergens in finished textile products.

Through the 7th Framework Programme for Research, the Commission has invested over EUR 79.5 million in research on allergies and atopic diseases. Horizon 2020 ([5]) will provide further opportunities to support this area of research ([6]).

([1]) COM(2007) 279.
([2]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.
([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.
([4]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 412/2012 of 15 May 2012
([5]) COM(2011) 808 final, COM(2011) 811 final.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001012/14
alla Commissione
Marco Scurria (PPE), Carlo Fidanza (PPE) e Magdi Cristiano Allam (EFD)
(31 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Illegittimità del Fiscal Compact

Il 2 marzo 2012 gli Stati membri dell'Unione europea (25) hanno firmato il Trattato sulla stabilità, sul coordinamento e sulla governance nell'Unione economica e monetaria, noto come fiscal compact.

L'articolo 3, paragrafo 1, lettera a), rappresenta il cuore del Fiscal Compact e afferma che «la posizione di bilancio della pubblica amministrazione di una parte contraente è in pareggio o in avanzo». I paesi devono garantire una convergenza rapida verso questo obiettivo e i tempi di questa convergenza saranno definiti dalla Commissione. Gli Stati membri non possono discostarsi da questi obiettivi o dal loro percorso di aggiustamento se non in circostanze eccezionali. Se si individuano forti divergenze viene avviato automaticamente un meccanismo di correzione.

L'articolo 2, paragrafo 1, del Trattato dispone testualmente che «Le parti contraenti applicano e interpretano il presente trattato conformemente ai trattati su cui si fonda l'Unione europea». Il concetto è ribadito nel successivo paragrafo 2: «Il presente trattato si applica nella misura in cui è compatibile con i trattati su cui si fonda l'Unione europea e con il diritto dell'Unione europea», e anche l'articolo 3 sopracitato precisa che il vincolo della lettera a) vige «fatti salvi (gli) obblighi ai sensi del diritto dell'Unione europea».

Per «pareggio di bilancio», obiettivo primo del Fiscal Compact, s'intende che l'indebitamento annuale della Pubblica amministrazione debba essere pari allo zero per cento (articolo 3), mentre i trattati su cui si fonda l'Unione europea (articolo 2), il Trattato di Maastricht, articolo 104 C e protocollo n. 5, e anche il trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea di Lisbona nell'articolo 126 (ex 104) fissano invece al 3 % il limite dell'indebitamento annuale.

Pertanto quanto disposto dal Fiscal Compact riguardo al pareggio del bilancio non è conforme ai trattati su cui si fonda l'UE.

Non ritiene la Commissione che imporre la parità di bilancio in virtù di quanto disposto dal Fiscal Compact significhi violare il trattato istitutivo dell'UE e insieme l'articolo 126 del trattato di Lisbona?

Non giudica la Commissione che l'applicazione del Trattato sia illegittima poiché non conforme e non compatibile con i precedenti trattati?

Quali misure intende adottare la Commissione per superare l'incongruenza sopra esposta al fine di armonizzare quanto previsto dai trattati?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(17 marzo 2014)

L'articolo 3 del Trattato sulla stabilità, sul coordinamento e sulla governance nell'Unione economica e monetaria (UEM) richiede alle parti contraenti di adottare la regola del pareggio di bilancio nel loro ordinamento giuridico nazionale. Questa regola è soddisfatta quando il saldo annuale dell'amministrazione pubblica in termini strutturali (cioè corretto per il ciclo e al netto di misure una tantum) «è pari all'obiettivo di medio termine specifico per il paese, quale definito nel patto di stabilità e crescita rivisto, con il limite inferiore di un disavanzo strutturale dello 0,5 % del prodotto interno lordo».

Il patto di stabilità e crescita comprende due parti: la prima, il cosiddetto braccio correttivo (regolamento n. 1467/97), dà attuazione alla procedura per i disavanzi eccessivi per garantire la correzione dei disavanzi eccessivi; un disavanzo è ritenuto eccessivo rispetto al valore di riferimento del 3 % del PIL. L'altra parte, il cosiddetto braccio preventivo (regolamento n. 1466/97), mira a promuovere l'equilibrio delle finanze pubbliche e a prevenire l'emergere di disavanzi eccessivi. Elemento essenziale del braccio preventivo è l'obiettivo a medio termine specifico per paese, che corrisponde alla posizione di bilancio che gli Stati membri dovrebbero conseguire e mantenere nell'arco del ciclo, con il limite inferiore di un disavanzo strutturale dell'1 % del PIL.

Il limite inferiore dello 0,5 % del PIL è compreso nell'intervallo consentito dal regolamento (CE) n. 1466/97. Inoltre, sia il Fiscal Compact che il patto di stabilità e crescita richiedono il raggiungimento dell'obiettivo a medio termine, che corrisponde alla regola del pareggio di bilancio in termini strutturali. Questo mira a evitare che, in circostanze normali, i disavanzi nominali superino il limite del 3 % del PIL.

Da ultimo, si può osservare che, a norma dell'articolo 16 del Trattato sulla stabilità, sul coordinamento e sulla governance, entro cinque anni dalla sua entrata in vigore sono adottate le misure necessarie per incorporarne il contenuto nell'ordinamento giuridico dell'Unione europea.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001012/14
to the Commission
Marco Scurria (PPE), Carlo Fidanza (PPE) and Magdi Cristiano Allam (EFD)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Unlawful nature of the Fiscal Compact

On 2 March 2012 the European Union Member States (25) signed the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union, known as the Fiscal Compact.

Article 3(1)(a) is the core of the Fiscal Compact and states that 'the budgetary position of the general government of a Contracting Party shall be balanced or in surplus'. Countries shall ensure rapid convergence towards this objective and the time-frame for such convergence will be defined by the Commission. Member States may only deviate from these objectives or their adjustment path in exceptional circumstances. In the event of significant observed deviations, a correction mechanism shall be triggered automatically.

Article 2(1) of the Treaty is worded as follows: 'This Treaty shall be applied and interpreted by the Contracting Parties in conformity with the Treaties on which the European Union is founded'. This concept is reiterated in paragraph 2: 'This Treaty shall apply insofar as it is compatible with the Treaties on which the European Union is founded and with European Union law' and the abovementioned Article 3 also states that the constraint imposed in section (a) shall be 'without prejudice to their obligations under European Union law'.

Under the 'balanced budget' rule, the primary objective of the Fiscal Compact, it is understood that the annual debt of the general government must be equivalent to zero percent (Article 3), although the Treaties on which the European Union is founded (Article 2), Article 104 C and Protocol No 5 of the Maastricht Treaty, and Article 126 (formerly 104) of the Lisbon Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union define the annual debt limit as 3%.

Therefore, the provisions of the Fiscal Compact with regard to the balanced budget rule are not in conformity with the Treaties on which the EU is founded.

Does the Commission not consider that the imposition of the balanced budget rule, as provided for in the Fiscal Compact, constitutes a breach of the Treaty instituting the EU and also Article 126 of the Lisbon Treaty?

Does the Commission not find the application of the Treaty to be unlawful because not in conformity and not compatible with previous Treaties?

What measures does the Commission intend to take to remedy this inconsistency, explained above, in the interests of harmonisation of the provisions of the different Treaties?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(17 March 2014)

Article 3 of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in EMU requests Contracting Parties to adopt a balanced-budget rule in their national legal order. This rule is satisfied when the annual balance of the general government, in structural terms (that is, corrected from cyclical effects and one-off operations), is 'at its country-specific medium-term objective, as defined in the revised Stability and Growth Pact, with a lower limit of a structural deficit of 0,5% of GDP.'

The Stability and Growth Pact (SGP) comprises two arms: one, the corrective arm (Regulation 1467/97), implements the excessive deficit procedure (EDP) to ensure the correction of excessive deficits; a deficit is considered excessive against the reference value of 3% of GDP. The other arm, the preventive arm (Regulation 1466/97), aims at promoting sound public finances and preventing the emergence of excessive deficits. At the core of the preventive arm is the country-specific medium-term objective, which corresponds to the budgetary position that Member States should achieve and maintain over the cycle, with a lower limit of a structural deficit of 1% of GDP.

The lower limit of 0,5% of GDP is within the range permitted by Regulation 1466/97. Moreover, both the Fiscal Compact and the SGP require achievement of the medium-term objective, which corresponds to balanced-budget rule in structural terms. This aims at avoiding that headline deficits breach the 3% of GDP limit under normal circumstances.

Finally, it can be noted that according to article 16 of TSCG, within five years of its entry into force, steps shall be taken with the aim of incorporating the substance of the TSCG into the legal framework of the European Union.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001013/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(31 ianuarie 2014)

Subiect: Imunizarea în UE

În aproximativ jumătate din statele UE nu există sisteme naționale de vaccinare obligatorii pentru nou-născuți și copii. Mai mult, se constată din ce în ce mai multe cazuri de părinți care refuză să își vaccineze copiii și adevărate campanii anti-imunizare duse în special pe mijloacele media online.

Este general acceptat și demonstrat faptul că există o serie de afecțiuni care pot fi combătute încă de la naștere prin vaccinare (ex: poliomielita).

Recent, în Siria au fost depistate cazuri de poliomielită — boală care a fost eradicată în Europa încă din 1999. În contextul conflictelor din regiune, Europa se confruntă cu un val masiv de imigranți din această zonă, existând așadar riscul reactivării virusului poliomielitic în UE. Mai mult, Organizația Mondială a Sănătății a tras un semnal de alarmă privind riscul răspândirii acestei boli în țări din Europa.

A efectuat Comisia un studiu asupra acestei ipoteze care, în caz de confirmare, ar putea avea un impact devastator asupra sănătății publice de la nivelul UE? Care sunt măsurile proactive pe care Comisia le poate întreprinde în acest sens?

Întrucât politica de sănătate este un atribut exclusiv al statelor membre, sistemele naționale de vaccinare intrând, așadar, în competența acestora, are Comisia în vedere furnizarea unor recomandări pentru statele membre, care să cuprindă un sistem minim oportun de vaccinare gratuită în statele membre, dar și nevoia consolidării informării pe acest subiect?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(13 martie 2014)

În temeiul Deciziei nr. 1082/2013/UE [1] privind amenințările transfrontaliere grave pentru sănătate, Comisia și reprezentanții statelor membre în Comitetul pentru securitate sanitară urmăresc îndeaproape situația privind poliomielita în Siria și evaluează periodic riscul răspândirii virusului în Uniunea Europeană. Centrul European de Prevenire și Control al Bolilor (ECDC) și Organizația Mondială a Sănătății (OMS) sprijină UE în acest demers, oferind expertiză științifică.

Potrivit celor mai recente evaluări de risc [2] efectuate de ECDC, este necesar ca țările cu o acoperire vaccinală sub 90% să își intensifice eforturile de imunizare a populației, în baza calendarului lor național.

Comisia și membrii Comitetului pentru securitate sanitară se reunesc periodic pentru a comunica informații actualizate despre situația privind poliomielita, printre care: cotele naționale de acoperire vaccinală, monitorizarea răspândirii virusului și capacitatea laboratoarelor de a-l identifica, recomandările pentru călătorii care se deplasează în țări afectate, acoperirea vaccinală în rândul refugiaților și imigranților originari din țări în care virusul poliomielitic este endemic și care sosesc pe teritoriul UE, precum și planurile de pregătire pentru vaccinarea antipolio în cazul în care va fi nevoie să se răspundă la o posibilă situație de urgență.

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[1] http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:293:0001:0015:RO:PDF
[2] http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/poliomyelitis-risk-assessment-update-10-December— 2013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001013/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Immunisation in the EU

Around half of the EU Member States have no national scheme for the compulsory vaccination of newborn babies and children. Moreover, there are increasing numbers of cases where parents refuse to have their children vaccinated, and there are some instances of veritable anti-immunisation campaigns being conducted, in online media in particular.

It is generally accepted and has been proven that a series of diseases can be combated through vaccination from birth onwards (e.g. polio).

A number of cases of polio were recently detected in Syria. This disease was eradicated in Europe in 1999, but the conflicts in Syria are leading to a mass influx of immigrants from this region to Europe, and there is a risk that the polio virus could re-emerge in the EU. The World Health Organisation has also warned that there is a risk of polio spreading to European countries.

Has the Commission carried out a study into this possibility, which could have a devastating impact on public health in the EU? What proactive measures can the Commission take in this context?

Given that health policy falls within the Member States' exclusive competence, and national vaccination schemes are therefore also a matter for the Member States, would the Commission consider issuing recommendations to the Member States, which would include an appropriate minimum free vaccination scheme in the Member States and address the need to step up information on this subject?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2014)

In the framework of Decision 1082/2013/EU ([1]) on serious cross-border threats to health, the Commission and the representatives of the Member States in the Health Security Committee follow the polio situation in Syria closely and regularly assess the risk of its spreading to the European Union. The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) support this work with their scientific expertise.

According to the latest risk assessment ([2]) of the ECDC, countries with overall national vaccination coverage below 90% should increase efforts to improve vaccination coverage under their national schedule.

The Commission and the Health Security Committee members meet regularly to share updated information on the polio situation, including: national coverage rates for polio vaccination, surveillance and laboratory capability to detect the polio virus, recommendations to travellers to polio affected countries, vaccination status of refugees and migrants arriving from polio-endemic countries into the EU and preparedness plans of polio vaccination in case of need to respond to a possible future emergency situation.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:293:0001:0015:EN:PDF
([2]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/poliomyelitis-risk-assessment-update-10-December- 2013.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001017/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(31 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per la salvaguardia e la tutela del territorio nella provincia di Lucca, a seguito dei disastri ambientali

Nelle ultime settimane l'intera provincia di Lucca è stata soggetta a forti ondate di maltempo. Innumerevoli disagi si sono registrati nella Mediavalle del Serchio, in Alta Versilia e nella Piana di Lucca. La stima iniziale effettuata dalla Provincia di Lucca, relativa ai dati forniti dai Comuni colpiti dal disastro ambientale, ammonta ad oltre 56 milioni di euro.

Successivamente all'imponente nubifragio, il Presidente della Provincia ha inviato alla Regione Toscana la richiesta di riconoscimento di stato di emergenza regionale, a seguito dei sopralluoghi effettuati nelle zone colpite. Le risorse economiche stanziate, a fronte dei continui e impressionanti cambiamenti climatici, potrebbero essere utilizzate solamente per la prevenzione e la difesa del suolo, e non sarebbero utili per la riparazione dei danni e la messa in sicurezza del territorio.

Numerose criticità sono state segnalate anche dai Comuni versiliesi di Camaiore, Stazzema, Massarosa, Seravezza e Pietrasanta, a cui si aggiungono disagi relativi alla strada provinciale di Valfegana, tuttora interrotta a causa di un cedimento, così come la provinciale di Molazzana anch'essa interdetta al transito per una frana.

Conclusosi il primo censimento dei danni, risultano ancora evacuate 54 persone nell'intero territorio provinciale.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione:

1. far sapere se è possibile attivare il Fondo di solidarietà dell'Unione europea, nato proprio con l'intento di aiutare concretamente le regioni europee colpite da calamità naturali;

2. far sapere se possono essere attivati i programmi e finanziamenti relativi al Meccanismo europeo di Protezione Civile;

3. indicare quali misure possono essere utilizzate per prevenire le emergenze nei territori a elevato rischio idrogeologico;

4. fornire un quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(31 marzo 2014)

1. Il Fondo di solidarietà (FSUE) può essere mobilitato solo dietro domanda dello Stato membro colpito, da presentare entro 10 settimane dalla data del primo danno provocato dalla catastrofe. Sino a oggi, il governo italiano non ha segnalato l'intenzione di presentare una domanda. Il fatto che la catastrofe corrisponda ai requisiti necessari per ottenere gli aiuti può essere valutato unicamente sulla base di una solida valutazione del danno e delle sue conseguenze sulle condizioni di vita e sull'economia. L'aiuto del FSUE può essere utilizzato per le operazioni di emergenza destinate ad assistere la popolazione colpita, le sistemazioni temporanee, la riparazione delle infrastrutture danneggiate, la protezione del patrimonio culturale e il risanamento delle zone colpite. I danni privati non sono ammissibili per gli aiuti del FSUE.

2. Qualunque paese all'interno o all'esterno dell'UE colpito da una grave catastrofe può presentare una richiesta di assistenza europea attraverso il Centro di coordinamento della risposta alle emergenze, che è il cuore operativo dell'UCPM ([1]), accessibile 24 ore su 24. Nel caso delle recenti piogge torrenziali, le autorità italiane non hanno richiesto l'assistenza dell'UCPM.

La Commissione pubblicherà quanto prima il suo invito annuale a presentare proposte e i bandi di gara ([2]) .

3. La priorità II (Ambiente) del programma Toscana 2007-2013, cofinanziato dal FESRF ([3]), prevede finanziamenti per questo tipo di rischio. La Commissione suggerisce che l'on. parlamentare si metta direttamente in contatto con la competente autorità di gestione. La Commissione sta sviluppando con gli Stati membri una serie di iniziative nel settore della prevenzione dei rischi di catastrofe ([4]).

([1]) Meccanismo di protezione civile dell'Unione europea.
([2]) Invito annuale a presentare proposte e bandi di gara per i progetti di prevenzione e preparazione del settore della protezione civile, le esercitazioni e lo scambio di programmi di esperti: http://ec.europa.eu/echo/funding/opportunities/calls/2013_call_prevprep_cp_marine_pol_en.htm
([3]) Fondo europeo per lo sviluppo regionale.
([4]) In particolare valutazione dei rischi e pianificazione della gestione dei rischi, scambio di buone prassi, revisioni fra pari e standard per la raccolta dei dati. La nuova normativa relativa al meccanismo di protezione civile dell'Unione europea rafforza le azioni di prevenzione con disposizioni concernenti la valutazione dei rischi e la pianificazione della gestione dei rischi.

4. Alcuni esempi di investimenti cofinanziati dalla politica di coesione in Italia nel periodo 2007-2013 possono essere consultati sul sito: www.opencoesione.gov.it. Analoghe informazioni a livello europeo sono disponibili sul sito: ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/projects/stories/index_en.cfm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001017/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Possible funding for conservation and protection in the Province of Lucca following environmental disasters

In recent weeks, the entire Province of Lucca has been subject to adverse weather episodes. Numerous cases of hardship have been recorded in Mediavalle del Serchio, Alta Versilia and the Plain of Lucca. The initial estimate formulated by the Province of Lucca, based on data supplied by the Municipalities affected by environmental disaster, amounts to over EUR 56 million.

After a major downpour, the President of the Province submitted a request to the Tuscany Region for the acknowledgement of a state of regional emergency following inspections of the zones affected. The economic resources appropriated in the face of continuous and substantial climatic changes can only be used for prevention and soil conservation, and not for repair of the damage or to make the area safe.

Several critical issues have also been reported by the Versilian Municipalities of Camaiore, Stazzema, Massarosa, Seravezza and Pietrasanta, compounded by problems on the Valfegana provincial road, still blocked as a result of subsidence, and the Molazzana provincial road, also blocked due to a landslide.

On completion of the initial survey of damage, 54 people continue to be evacuated throughout the Province as a whole.

In full consideration of the above, can the Commission:

1. tell us whether it is possible to activate the European Union Solidarity Fund, created with the specific intention of providing concrete aid to European regions affected by natural disasters;

2. tell us whether programmes and funding relating to the European Civil Protection Mechanism can be activated;

3. indicate what measures can be applied to prevent emergencies in areas at high hydrogeological risk;

4. provide an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 2014)

1. The Solidarity Fund (EUSF) can only be mobilised following an application from the affected Member State, to be submitted within 10 weeks of the date of the first damage caused by the disaster. To date, the Italian Government has not signalled its intention to submit an application. Whether the disaster could qualify for aid could only be assessed on the basis of a solid assessment of the damage and of its consequences on living conditions and the economy. Aid from the EUSF could be used for emergency operations to assist the affected population, temporary accommodation, the repair of damaged infrastructure, protection of the cultural heritage and cleaning-up of the affected areas. Private damage is not eligible for EUSF aid.

2. Any country inside or outside the EU affected by a major disaster can make a request for European assistance through the Emergency Response Coordination Centre which is the operational heart of the UCPM ([1]), accessible 24 hours a day. In the case of the recent heavy rains, the Italian authorities did not request assistance from the UCPM.

The Commission will publish soon its annual call for proposals and tenders ([2]) .

3. Priority II (Environment) of the 2007-2013 Tuscany programme co-financed by the ERDF ([3]) provides support to address this type of risk. The Commission suggests that the Honourable Member contact the relevant managing authority directly. The Commission is developing with Member States a number of initiatives in disaster risk prevention ([4]).

4. Examples of the investments co-financed by cohesion policy in Italy in 2007-2013 are available at: www.opencoesione.gov.it
Similar information at EU level is available at: ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/projects/stories/index_en.cfm

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([1]) Union Civil Protection Mechanism.
([2]) Annual call for proposals and tenders for civil protection prevention and preparedness projects, exercises, and exchange of experts programme: http://ec.europa.eu/echo/funding/opportunities/calls/2013_call_prevprep_cp_marine_pol_en.htm
([3]) European Regional Development Fund.
([4]) In particular risk assessment and risk management planning, exchange of good practices, peer reviews, and data collection standards. The new Union Civil Protection Mechanism legislation strengthens the prevention actions with provisions relating to risk assessment and risk management planning.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-001019/14
za Komisijo
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(31. januar 2014)

Zadeva: Evropske prestolnice kulture

Evropske prestolnice kulture je program EU, ki ima na izbrana mesta pozitivne kulturne, družbene in gospodarske vplive in vpliva na podobo mest. Cilji programa so tako ohranjati in spodbujati raznovrstnost evropskih kultur tudi v prihodnosti in poudarjati njihove skupne značilnosti. V letu 2013 so tako Evropski parlament, Svet ministrov in Evropska komisija posodobili zakonodajni okvir za naslednjo fazo Evropskih prestolnic kulture za obdobje od leta 2020 do leta 2033.

Evropske prestolnice kulture velja za enega najprepoznavnejših in ambicioznih programov, ki pa se na podlagi večletnih preteklih izkušenj spopada z nekaterimi izzivi in ovirami. Med njimi sta ena večjih izzivov doseganje evropske razsežnosti in dolgoročno financiranje, ki bi sovpadalo z dolgoročno strategijo, ki jo mesta načrtujejo v kandidaturah.

Ustrezno je potrebno uravnovesiti kulturne, družbene in gospodarske načrte in poskrbeti za jasno vizijo evropskih prestolnic kulture, kar je mogoče le z ustreznim prenosom znanj in izkušenj med bivšimi prestolnicami kulture. To potrjujejo tudi rezultati in sklepi študije Evropskega parlamenta iz novembra 2013 o evropskih prestolnicah kulture: uspešne strategije in dolgoročni učinki.

Komisijo zato sprašujem:

1. Ali obstaja na EU ravni kakšna oblika finančne podpore nekdanjim evropskim prestolnicam kulture za uresničevanje dolgoročnih kulturnih strategij mest tudi po zaključku enoletnega programa?

2. Ali so nekdanje evropske prestolnice kulture upravičene do sredstev razpisov pod programom Ustvarjalna Evropa?

3. Kako bo Komisija dopolnila sedanja merila za evropsko razsežnost programa evropskih prestolnic kulture, da bo evropska dimenzija bolj upoštevana in bodo mesta izpolnjevala obljube mednarodnih teženj programa Evropskih prestolnic kulture?

4. Ali Komisija načrtuje ukrepe, finančne spodbude ali strokovno podporo za formalen prenos znanj med bivšimi in načrtovanimi prestolnicami kulture?

Odgovor Androulle Vassiliou v imenu Komisije
(20. marec 2014)

Nekdanje evropske prestolnice kulture lahko zaprosijo za sofinanciranje v okviru številnih programov in instrumentov Unije, zlasti strukturnih skladov in programa Ustvarjalna Evropa, za izboljšanje ali izvajanje svojih dolgoročnih kulturnih strategij po letu, za katero jim je bil podeljen ta naziv.

Evropski parlament in Svet bosta kmalu sprejela nov sklep o nadaljevanju programa evropskih prestolnic kulture po letu 2019. V novem sklepu bodo natančneje določena merila za ocenjevanje vlog, vključno s posebnimi merili za ocenjevanje „evropske razsežnosti“ ([1]).

Komisija je v okviru konference Kultura v gibanju, ki je potekala leta 2012, organizirala delavnico, na kateri so nekdanje, tedanje in prihodnje evropske prestolnice kulture delile svoje izkušnje. Komisija namerava z organizacijo podobnih dogodkov v prihodnosti podpreti prenos znanja med nekdanjimi in prihodnjimi evropskimi prestolnicami kulture.

([1]) COM(2012)0407 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001019/14
to the Commission
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: European Capitals of Culture

European Capitals of Culture is an EU programme which has positive cultural, social and economic effects and an impact on the image of the cities concerned. The programme aims to preserve and promote the diversity of European cultures in the future and to emphasise their common characteristics. In 2013, Parliament, the Council and the Commission amended the legislative framework for the next phase of the European Capitals of Culture programme for the period 2020-2033.

European Capitals of Culture is one of the EU's most widely recognised and ambitious programmes, but one which over the years has faced a number of challenges and obstacles. The major challenges include achieving a European dimension and long-term financing to match the long-term strategy which the cities set out in their candidacies.

The cultural, social and economic plans need to be appropriately balanced and a clear vision of the European Capitals of Culture is required, which is only possible with appropriate transfer of knowledge and experience among the former Capitals of Culture. This is something that was also confirmed in the results and conclusions of Parliament's November 2013 study on the European Capitals of Culture: success strategies and long-term effects.

In view of the above, I would like to ask the Commission:

1. Does there exist at EU level any kind of financial support for former European Capitals of Culture for cities to implement long-term cultural strategies following the end of the one-year programme?

2. Are the former European Capitals of Culture eligible for funding under the Creative Europe programme?

3. How does the Commission intend to supplement the existing European dimension criteria in the European Capitals of Culture programme so that the European dimension is better taken into account and that cities fulfil their promises regarding the programme's international aspirations?

4. Is the Commission planning measures, financial incentives or expert support for the formal transfer of knowledge between former and prospective Capitals of Culture?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2014)

Former European Capitals of Culture can apply for co-funding under a wide range of Union programmes and instruments, in particular the Structural Funds and the Creative Europe Programme, to improve or implement their long-term cultural strategies after the year of the title.

A new Decision allowing for the continuation of the European Capitals of Culture action after 2019 will soon be adopted by the European Parliament and the Council. The criteria used to assess applications will be more explicit in the new Decision, including the specific criteria to evaluate the 'European dimension' ([1]).

Within the framework of its 2012 Culture in Motion conference, the Commission organised a workshop where past, current and future European Capitals of Culture shared their experience. The Commission envisages organising similar events in the future in order to support the transfer of knowledge between former and future European Capitals of Culture.

([1]) COM(2012) 407 final.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-001020/14
za Komisijo
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(31. januar 2014)

Zadeva: Pilotni projekti in pripravljalni ukrepi v letnem proračunu

Pravna podlaga za pilotne projekte in pripravljalne ukrepe je v Finančni uredbi v naslovu IV v členu 54(2)(a) in (b) o izvrševanju proračuna. Tako so eksperimentalni pilotni projekti tisti, ki so namenjeni preizkušanju izvedljivosti projekta in njegove uporabnosti. Pripravljalni ukrepi pa naj bi bili namenjeni pripravi predlogov za sprejetje prihodnjih ukrepov.

Medinstitucionalni sporazum iz 17. maja 2006 je vpeljal postopkovne elemente za bolj tekoč sprejem pilotnih projektov in pripravljalnih ukrepov. V njem je tako določeno, da je potrebno o nameri o vložitvi amandmajev, s katerimi se predlagajo novi pilotni projekti in pripravljalni ukrepi, obvestiti Komisijo do sredine junija.

Komisijo zato sprašujem:

1. Kaj se predvideva v predlogu oz. opisu pilotnega projekta ali pripravljalnega ukrepa s strani poslancev ali specializiranih odborov, ki se morajo do sredine junija posredovati Komisiji, ki potem poda oceno predlaganih pilotnih projektov in pripravljalnih ukrepov?

2. Katera merila, Komisija upošteva pri ocenjevanju ustreznosti in upravičenosti do financiranja pri pilotnih projektih in pripravljalnih ukrepih, ki ji jih posreduje Evropski parlament?

3. Kakšni je v tem letu predvidena časovni načrt sprejemanja proračuna za leto 2015?

Odgovor g. Lewandovskega v imenu Komisije
(19. marec 2014)

Postopek posvetovanja, ki je bil uveden z Medinstitucionalnim sporazumom z dne 17. maja 2006, je bil podaljšan z Medinstitucionalnim sporazumom z dne 2. decembra 2013, in sicer v določbah točke 11 Priloge: „*Da bi lahko Komisija pravočasno ocenila izvedljivost sprememb, ki sta jih predvidela Evropski parlament in Svet in zaradi katerih bi se začeli novi ali podaljšali obstoječi pripravljalni ukrepi ali pilotni projekti, Evropski parlament in Svet Komisijo obvestita o svojih namerah v zvezi s tem, tako da se lahko o njih prvič razpravlja že na teh tristranskih pogovorih.*“

Obliko, vsebino, postopek in časovni razpored za predložitev okvirnih predlogov Parlamenta opredeli Evropski parlament v skladu s svojimi notranjimi postopki in zlasti Odbor za proračun in poročevalec, imenovan za proračunski postopek v zadevnem letu.

Za proračun za leto 2014 so bile takšne podrobnosti določene v delovnem dokumentu PE506.189v01-00 z dne 1. marca 2013.

Komisija pri preučevanju okvirnih predlogov oceni vsak predlog glede na njegovo skladnost z določbami finančne uredbe, zlasti členom 54(2)(a) in (b) Uredbe. Ker so pilotni projekti in pripravljalni ukrepi izjeme od načela, da morajo biti odhodki zajeti v temeljnem aktu, analiza predlogov vključuje oceno, ali okvirni predlog spada pod to izjemo ali pa je nasprotno že delno ali v celoti zajet v obstoječem ali predlaganem temeljnem aktu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001020/14
to the Commission
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Pilot projects and preparatory actions in the annual budget

The legal basis for pilot projects and preparatory actions is in the Financial Regulation, in Title IV, Article 54(2)(a) and (b) on the implementation of the budget. Accordingly, pilot projects of an experimental nature are those designed to test the feasibility of an action and its usefulness, while preparatory actions should be designed to prepare proposals with a view to the adoption of future actions.

An interinstitutional agreement of 17 May 2006 introduced procedural elements to make the adoption of pilot projects and preparatory actions a smoother process. The agreement provides for the Commission to be notified by mid-June of the intention to submit amendments proposing new pilot projects and preparatory actions.

In view of the above, I would like to ask the Commission:

1. What is envisaged in the proposal or description of a pilot project or preparatory action by Members or specialised committees that needs to be submitted by mid-June to the Commission, which will then make an assessment of the proposed pilot projects and preparatory actions?

2. What criteria does the Commission apply in assessing the suitability and eligibility for funding of pilot projects and preparatory actions submitted by the European Parliament?

3. What is the timetable envisaged this year for the adoption of the 2015 budget?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(19 March 2014)

The process of consultation introduced by the Interinstitutional agreement of 17 May 2006 was prolonged in the Interinstitutional agreement of 2 December 2013, in the provisions of point 11 of the annex: 'In order for the Commission to be able to assess in due time the implementability of amendments, envisaged by the European Parliament and the Council, which create new preparatory actions or pilot projects or which prolong existing ones, the European Parliament and the Council shall inform the Commission of their intentions in this regard, so that a first discussion may already take place at that trilogue.'

The format, content, procedure and timetable for submitting the indicative proposals by the Parliament are defined by the European Parliament in accordance with its own internal procedures, and in particular by the Committee on Budgets and the Rapporteur appointed for the Budget procedure of the relevant year.

For the 2014 budget, such details were set out in Working Document PE506.189v01-00 of 1 March 2013.

When examining the indicative proposals, the Commission assesses each proposal in relation to its compliance with the provisions of the Financial Regulation, and in particular Article 54(2) (a) and (b). As pilot projects and preparatory actions are exceptions to the principle that expenditure must be covered by a basic act, the analysis of the proposals includes an assessment as to whether the indicative proposal falls within this exception, or on the contrary is already partly or fully covered by an existing or proposed basic act.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001021/14
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(31 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Protección del Estrecho Oriental

Hace algunos meses trasladé a la Comisión mi preocupación por el espacio marino «Estrecho Oriental», considerado lugar de importancia comunitaria (E-007437/2013).

Son repetidas las ocasiones en las que me he dirigido a la Comisión en relación con esta cuestión (E-004560/2012, E-007803/2012). En su última respuesta, la Comisión me anunció que solicitaría con carácter oficial a las autoridades del Reino Unido una explicación sobre las causas de esa contaminación y las acciones correctoras que sobre las mismas tenía previstas.

Me gustaría saber ahora cuál ha sido el resultado de los contactos establecidos. ¿Va a hacerse cargo el Reino Unido del perjuicio irrogado a un espacio protegido por la Unión Europea y por el Gobierno español?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(20 de marzo de 2014)

La Comisión solicitó información de las autoridades del Reino Unido a propósito de la contaminación en la Bahía de Algeciras, y en particular inquirió si se estaba desarrollando allí alguna actividad de vertido de basuras procedentes del aeropuerto. La Comisión ha evaluado la información facilitada por dichas autoridades, donde se indica que no se está llevando a cabo ningún vertido.

La Comisión ha pedido recientemente al Reino Unido que aclare determinadas cuestiones relativas a una serie de actividades realizadas en las aguas que circundan Gibraltar, entre ellas las de ganar tierras al mar en el marco del proyecto Eastside, y a su conformidad con las Directivas 2011/92/EU ([1]), 2008/56/CE ([2]) y 92/43/CEE ([3]). La Comisión está esperando la respuesta del Reino Unido.

([1]) Directiva 2011/92/UE relativa a la evaluación de las repercusiones de determinados proyectos públicos y privados sobre el medio ambiente, DO L 26 de 28.1.2012 (versión codificada).

([2]) Directiva 2008/56/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 17 de junio de 2008, por la que se establece un marco de acción comunitaria para la política del medio marino (Directiva marco sobre la estrategia marina), DO L 164 de 25.6.2008.

([3]) Directiva 92/43/CEE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora, DO L 206 de 22.7.1992 (con sus modificaciones).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001021/14
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Protection of the 'Estrecho Oriental'

Some months ago I expressed my concern to the Commission regarding the marine space 'Estrecho Oriental', which is designated as a site of Community importance (E-007437/2013).

I have asked the Commission many times about this matter (E-004560/2012, E-007803/2012). In its last answer the Commission informed me that it would formally ask the UK authorities to explain the causes of the contamination and the remedial measures it envisages to correct it.

I would now like to know what has been the result of these contacts. Will the United Kingdom assume responsibility for the harm caused to a space that is protected by the European Union and by the Spanish Government?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2014)

The Commission requested information from the UK authorities on the matter of pollution in the Bay of Algeciras, in particular on whether any dumping activity of the rubbish collected in the airport was taking place. The information submitted by the UK authorities has been assessed and indicates that no such dumping is taking place.

The Commission has recently asked the United Kingdom to provide further clarifications on a number of activities carried out in the waters around Gibraltar, including land reclamation for the Eastside project, and particularly regarding their compliance with Directives 2011/92/EU ([1]), 2008/56/EC ([2]) and 92/43/EEC ([3]). The Commission is now waiting for a reply from the United Kingdom.

([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 (codified version).
([2]) Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive), OJ L 164, 25.6.2008.
([3]) Council Directive 92/43/EC, of 21 May 1992, on the protection of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992 (as amended).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001023/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(31 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Coste del agua

El artículo 9 de la Directiva marco del agua (DMA) hace referencia a la recuperación de los costes de los servicios relacionados con el agua y propone profundizar en su aplicación y ejecución. Sin embargo, la experiencia ha demostrado que, debido a las excepciones contempladas en la misma DMA, este artículo es inoperante, especialmente cuando los gobiernos no están por la labor de aplicarlo.

¿Considera la Comisión que la restricción al máximo de las excepciones actualmente existentes a la recuperación de los costes de los servicios relacionados con el agua podría ayudar a la aplicación y ejecución de políticas más eficaces de recuperación de costes?

¿Considera la Comisión que la modificación del artículo 9, concretamente en los apartados 1 y 4, podría ser el camino?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de marzo de 2014)

La Comisión quisiera remitir a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta E-14174/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001023/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Cost of water

Article 9 of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) refers to the recovery of the costs of water services and proposes that further steps should be taken to apply and enforce such recovery. However, experience has shown that, owing to the exceptions provided for in the WFD, this Article is inoperative, particularly when governments do not take steps to apply it.

Does the Commission consider that limiting so far as possible the current exceptions to recovery of the costs of water services might encourage the application and enforcement of more effective policies for cost recovery?

Does the Commission consider that amendment of Article 9, specifically of paragraphs 1 and 4, might be the way forward?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2014)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Question E-14174/2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001024/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(31 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Consumo del agua en la agricultura

En algunos países del sur de Europa, el consumo de agua para la agricultura puede llegar al 80 % del agua consumida. Parece un consumo porcentual demasiado elevado y deberían considerarse políticas para una reducción de su uso. Muchas veces, la calidad del agua que se devuelve al entorno natural no es la adecuada.

¿Qué medidas cree la Comisión que podrían adoptarse para lograr un uso mas eficaz del agua en la agricultura?

¿Se debería poner algún límite a los cultivos de regadío en función de la disponibilidad de recursos de la cuenca o subcuenca hídrica donde se realicen?

Para mejorar la calidad de agua devuelta al medio natural, ¿qué tipo de medidas cree la Comisión que se podrían tomar?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de marzo de 2014)

1. La Unión Europea seguirá financiando a lo largo del actual período de programación del desarrollo rural (2014-2020) la sustitución de los sistemas de regadío actuales por nuevas tecnologías que ahorren agua. Las inversiones que se realicen deberán incluir la instalación de contadores o sistemas de medición del agua. El artículo 46 del Reglamento (UE) n° 1305/2013 ([1]) (Reglamento del Desarrollo Rural) establece para las inversiones en infraestructuras de irrigación una serie de disposiciones que dependen de la mayor o menor disponibilidad de agua a nivel de cuenca hidrográfica. Además, en el marco de los Reglamentos (CE) n° 1234/2007 ([2]) y (UE) n° 1308/2013 ([3]), pueden subvencionarse también aquellas inversiones que tengan por objeto reducir el uso del agua en el sector de las frutas y hortalizas.

2. El principal instrumento legislativo sobre la gestión del agua a nivel de cuenca hidrográfica es la Directiva 2000/60/CE (Directiva Marco del Agua), que exige elaborar planes de cuenca que permitan alcanzar un buen estado hídrico antes de que finalice 2015. En el caso de algunas cuencas hidrográficas, esto requerirá la imposición de restricciones al uso del agua (por ejemplo, en los sectores agrarios donde el balance hidrológico se vea amenazado a largo plazo).

3. El Reglamento del Desarrollo Rural y el Reglamento único para las OCM prevén la posibilidad de prestar apoyo a las inversiones destinadas al tratamiento de las aguas residuales y a la reutilización del agua. La devolución del agua al medio natural en buenas condiciones se ve favorecida por la aplicación de los compromisos agroambientales, como, por ejemplo, la extensificación, la fertilización de precisión, la producción integrada, la agricultura ecológica o los requisitos de condicionalidad o de ecologización. Por otra parte, como seguimiento del «Plan de salvaguardia de los recursos hídricos de Europa», la Comisión se encuentra realizando en estos momentos una evaluación de impacto sobre las posibilidades de regular a nivel de la UE la reutilización del agua y de establecer normas y criterios comunes. A la vista de los resultados de esa evaluación, la Comisión decidirá las medidas que deban adoptarse.

([1]) DO L 347 de 20.12.2013.
([2]) DO L 299 de 16.11.2007.
([3]) DO L 347 de 20.12.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001024/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Water consumption in agriculture

In some countries in southern Europe water consumption for the purposes of agriculture can amount to 80% of all the water consumed. This percentage of consumption seems too high, and policies ought to be considered to reduce such use. Moreover, the quality of the water that is returned to the natural environment is often not as good as it should be.

What measures does the Commission believe might be adopted to achieve more efficient use of water in agriculture?

Should some restrictions be imposed on agriculture based on irrigation according to the availability of resources in the water basin or sub-basin where these crops are grown?

What measures does the Commission believe might be adopted in order to improve the quality of the water that is returned to the natural environment?

Answer given by M. Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

1. The European Union will continue funding over the Rural Development (RD) Programming period 2014-2020 the replacement of existing irrigation systems with new technologies that save water. The investments must include the installation of water metering. Article 46 of the Rural Development (EU) Regulation No 1305/2013 ([1]) establishes rules for investments in irrigation depending on the availability of water at watershed level. Investments aimed at reducing water use in the fruit and vegetables sector are also eligible for support under Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 ([2]) and Regulation (EU) 1308/2013 ([3]).

2. The main legislative instrument providing rules for water management at watershed level is the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC which requires the development of river basin plans that will deliver good status by 2015. In certain river basins this will necessitate restrictions in water use, e.g. in the agricultural sector when the water balance is threatened in the long term.

3. The RD Regulation and the single CMO Regulation foresee the possibility to support investments in wastewater treatment and water reuse. The return of water to the natural environment in good conditions is also enhanced by the application of the agri-environmental commitments like extensification, precision fertilisation, integrated production, and organic farming, cross-compliance and greening requirements. As a follow up to 'Blueprint to safeguard Europe's water resources' the Commission is currently carrying out an impact assessment (IA) for potential EU-level regulation on water re-use, including the possibility of a regulation establishing common standards. The Commission will determine the further course of action following the results of the IA.

([1]) OJ L347 of 20.12.2013.
([2]) OJ L299, 16.11.2007.
([3]) OJ L347, 20.12.2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001026/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(31 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: DMA y PAC

El pasado mes de noviembre representantes de una quincena de organizaciones de defensa del medio ambiente del Reino de España entregaron a representantes de la Comisión el documento titulado «Propuestas para la mejora de la gestión del agua en la Unión Europea».

En dicho documento se proponen una serie de medidas que se deben adoptar e integrar en la legislación comunitaria. Entre ellas se propone incluir de forma expresa el cumplimiento de la Directiva marco relativa al agua y de las otras directivas que inciden en la calidad del agua y en los mecanismos de condicionalidad de cualquier tipo de ayudas de la política agrícola común.

¿Cuál es la opinión de la Comisión sobre dicha propuesta?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de marzo de 2014)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a la respuesta dada a la pregunta E-14178/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001026/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: WFD and CAP

Last November representatives from fifteen Spanish environmental protection organisations delivered a document entitled 'Proposals for the improvement of water management in the European Union' to representatives of the Commission.

This paper put forward a number of proposals for the adoption of measures to be incorporated into Community legislation. One of these proposals is to expressly include compliance with the EU Water Framework Directive and other Directives on water quality and mechanisms making the receipt of any type of aid under the common agricultural policy conditional upon compliance.

What is the Commission's view on such a proposal?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2014)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Question E-14178/2013 ([1]).

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001029/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(31 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Captaciones ilegales de agua

Las captaciones ilegales de aguas superficiales y subterráneas se cuentan por cientos de miles en algunos países del sur de Europa. Ello tiene como consecuencia daños ambientales muy graves por la sobreexplotación de acuíferos. Se llega en algunos casos al secado total de tramos de ríos.

El combate contra las captaciones ilegales corresponde a los Estados miembros, pero la experiencia demuestra que las administraciones responsables de los mismos ponen muy poco interés en sancionarlas y menos en erradicarlas.

¿Tiene prevista la Comisión alguna iniciativa para impulsar en los Estados miembros políticas eficaces de combate contra las captaciones ilegales de agua?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de marzo de 2014)

La Comunicación de la Comisión «Plan para salvaguardar los recursos hídricos de Europa» ([1]) reconoce que la excesiva captación de agua es la segunda agresión más habitual que sufre la ecología de la UE, y que en gran medida procede de captaciones de agua ilegales.

La Comisión está estudiando la posibilidad de promover entre los Estados miembros la utilización de imágenes tomadas por satélite y de información del tipo de la proporcionada por el programa Vigilancia mundial del Medio Ambiente y la Seguridad (GMES) al objeto de detectar las captaciones ilegales e identificar zonas que reciben más irrigación de la permitida.

Además, como parte del seguimiento de la Comunicación de la Comisión sobre la aplicación de las medidas de la UE en materia de medio ambiente ([2]), la Comisión está examinando diferentes opciones destinadas a reforzar las inspecciones y las disposiciones de vigilancia en determinadas áreas de la normativa de la UE, entre ellas el sector del agua.

([1]) Comunicación de la Comisión al Parlamento Europeo, al Consejo, al Comité Económico y Social Europeo y al Comité de las Regiones. Plan para salvaguardar los recursos hídricos de Europa (COM/2012/0673 final) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0673:FIN:ES:PDF

([2]) Comunicación de la Comisión (COM(2012)95) «Sacar el mejor partido de las medidas ambientales de la UE: instaurar la confianza mediante la mejora de los conocimientos y la capacidad de respuesta».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001029/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Illegal abstraction of water

There are hundreds of thousands of instances of illegal abstraction of surface water and groundwater in some countries in southern Europe, leading to severe damage to the environment due to the over-exploitation of aquifers. In some cases, sections of rivers have even dried up completely.

It is up to Member States to tackle the problem of illegal abstraction but experience has shown that the bodies responsible for doing so have very little interest in punishing offenders and even less in stamping out the practice entirely.

Does the Commission intend to take any measures to encourage Member States to develop effective policies to combat illegal water abstraction?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(19 March 2014)

The Commission Communication 'A Blueprint to safeguard Europe's water resources' ([1]) acknowledges over-abstraction of water as the second most common pressure on EU ecological status, partly stemming from illegal water abstraction.

The Commission is exploring the possibility to encourage Member States to use satellite imagery and information such as provided by the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) programme to detect illegal abstraction and to help them identify areas that are irrigated beyond what is permitted.

Moreover, as part of the follow up to the Commission Communication on Implementation of EU environment measures ([2]), the Commission is currently examining different options to strengthen inspections and surveillance requirements in various areas of EU environment law among them the water sector.

([1]) Communication from the commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the RegionS A Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources (COM/2012/0673 final) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0673:FIN:EN:PDF

([2]) Commission Communication (COM(2012) 95) on Improving the delivery of benefits from EU environment measures: building confidence through better knowledge and responsiveness.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001030/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(31 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Caudal ecológico

El documento de la Comisión de 2012 titulado «Plan para salvaguardar los recursos hídricos de Europa» considera necesaria la determinación del caudal ecológico de ríos, arroyos y manantiales. Sin embargo, reconoce que no se dispone de una definición para caudal ecológico, por lo que propone, en el marco de la estrategia común de aplicación de la Directiva marco sobre el agua, la elaboración de un «documento de orientación», en el que además se plantearía una metodología de cálculo común.

¿Ha avanzado la Comisión en la definición de *caudal ecológico* y en la elaboración del denominado «documento de orientación»?

¿Llegará el documento de orientación a tiempo para ser aplicable al nuevo ciclo de planes hidrográficos que comienza en 2015?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(18 de marzo de 2014)

Se ha constituido un grupo de trabajo en el que participan los Estados miembros y partes interesadas para elaborar un documento de orientación que permita abordar la gestión de los caudales ecológicos ante la perspectiva de la puesta en práctica de la Directiva marco del agua ([1]). La primera reunión del grupo de trabajo se celebró en octubre de 2013 y se ha hecho pública el acta de la misma ([2]).

Se prevé que la entrega del documento tenga lugar a finales de 2014, de modo que en el próximo ciclo de planes hidrográficos, que deberá aprobarse a finales de 2015, será posible mejorar la caracterización de los caudales ecológicos.

([1]) Directiva 2000/60/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 23 de octubre de 2000, por la que se establece un marco comunitario de actuación en el ámbito de la política de aguas (DO L 327 de 22.12.2000, pp. 1-73).
([2]) https://circabc.europa.eu/d/a/workspace/SpacesStore/8bbb46f9-f605-47a4-8468-fd6117415309/Minutes1stMeetingWGEflow.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001030/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Ecological flow

The Commission's 2012 document entitled 'Blueprint to safeguard Europe's water resources' states that the ecological flows of rivers, streams and springs ought to be identified. However, it acknowledges that there is no definition of 'ecological flow' available. It therefore proposes that, within the ambit of the common strategy for application of the EU Water Framework Directive, a 'guidance document' should be drawn up, which would also propose a system for common calculation.

Has the Commission made any progress in defining 'ecological flow' and drawing up the so-called 'guidance document'?

Will the guidance document be ready in time for it to be applied to the new cycle of hydro-graphic plans beginning in 2015?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(18 March 2014)

A working group, involving Member States and stakeholders, has been set up to elaborate a guidance document to better address ecological flows in the implementation of the Water Framework Directive ([1]). The first meeting of this working group was held in October 2013 and minutes are publicly available ([2]).

The delivery of this document is expected at the end of 2014, so that consideration of ecological flows can be improved in the next cycle of River Basins Management Plans due for adoption by the end of 2015.

([1]) Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p. 1-73).
([2]) https://circabc.europa.eu/d/a/workspace/SpacesStore/8bbb46f9-f605-47a4-8468-fd6117415309/Minutes1stMeetingWGEflow.pdf

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-001031/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(31 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: Il-grit blasting

Residenti ta' Bormla, Malta, li jgħixu fil-viċinanzi tat-Tarzna ta' Malta qed jilmentaw dwar il-prattika tal-grit blasting li qed tintuża hemm.

Din il-prattika qed tirriżulta f'inkonvenjenza kontinwa għar-residenti, b'effetti negattivi fuq saħħithom, il-proprjetà u l-kwalità tal-ħajja.

Il-Kummissjoni temmen li dan it-tip ta' grit blasting għandu jsir f'distanza sigura miż-żoni residenzjali?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Potočnik f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(27 ta' Marzu 2014)

F'petizzjoni li ġiet irreġistrata mill-Kumitat għall-Petizzjonijiet tal-Parlament Ewropew fl-2010 issemma l-inkonvenjent ikkawżat mit-Tarzna ta' Palombo, inkluża l-attività tas-sandblasting.

Fuq il-bażi tal-informazzjoni li waslet f'dan il-kuntest mill-awtoritajiet Maltin, il-Kummissjoni kkonkludiet li din l-attività ma taqax fil-kamp ta' applikazzjoni tal-leġiżlazzjoni ambjentali tal-UE dwar l-attivitajiet industrijali, b'mod partikolari d-Direttiva dwar l-Emissjonijiet Industrijali (2010/75/UE). ([1]) Minkejja dan, l-awtoritajiet Maltin irrappurtaw li huma indirizzaw il-kwistjoni billi abbozzaw permess ambjentali ġdid li jistabbilixxi rekwiżiti aktar stretti fuq l-emissjonijiet fl-arja kif ukoll pjan ta' azzjoni dwar l-istorbju. Hija r-responsabbiltà tal-awtoritajiet Maltin li jiżguraw li jkun hemm konformità ma' dawn ir-rekwiżiti u li l-popolazzjoni u l-ambjent ikunu mħarsa mill-impatti negattivi tal-attività tas-sandblasting.

([1]) ĠU L 334, 17.12.2010, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001031/14
to the Commission
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Grit blasting

Residents of Cospicua, Malta, living in close proximity to the Malta Dockyard have been complaining about the practice of grit blasting being used there.

This practice is resulting in continued inconvenience to residents, with negative effects on their health, property and quality of life.

Does the Commission believe that this form of grit blasting should be performed at a safe distance from residential areas?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2014)

The nuisance caused by the Palombo Shipyard, including the grit blasting activity, was raised in a petition registered by the Petition Committee of the European Parliament in 2010.

On the basis of the information received in this context from the Maltese authorities, the Commission concluded that this activity does not fall under EU environmental legislation on industrial activities, including in particular the Industrial Emissions Directive (2010/75/EU). ([1]) Notwithstanding this, the Maltese authorities have reported that they have addressed the issue by drafting a new environmental permit establishing stricter requirements on air emissions as well as a noise action plan. It is the responsibility of the Maltese authorities to ensure that these requirements will be complied with and that the population and the environment are appropriately protected against any adverse impacts of the grit blasting activity.

([1]) OJ L 334, 17.12.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001034/14
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Merlin Woods bus corridor in Galway city (Ireland)

Is the Commission aware of the proposed development of a bus road through the Merlin Woods amenity in Galway city? In the light of the Habitats Directive (transposed into Irish national law through the relevant regulations (the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, SI 94/1997)), is the Commission concerned about the impact that such a development would have on the conservation of a number of important species in the city? Has the Commission been informed by the Galway City Council about the proposals under the Galway City Development Plan 2011-2017?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2014)

The Commission is not aware of the proposed development of a bus road through Merlin Woods in Galway city. This area is not protected as a Natura 2000 site and therefore the procedural safeguards under the Habitats Directive ([1]) in relation to plans and projects that may affect Natura 2000 sites do not apply. Members States are not generally required to inform the Commission of their specific development plans.

If species protected under the Habitats Directive or Birds Directive ([2]) occur in this site then the strict species protection provisions of these directives apply. Member States may derogate from these provisions if the conditions for application of derogations set down in the directives are met. Member State authorities are not required to inform the Commission about the intended use of derogations but to notify it of their application afterwards.

([1]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([2]) OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001036/14
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Automatic emergency braking and road safety

Statistics show that the EU is no longer meeting its targets for reducing the number of deaths from road accidents. New technologies have resulted in the development of systems that can prevent or greatly reduce the severity of car collisions. It is understood that more than 30% of traffic accidents are classed as accidents that could be avoided by using automatic emergency braking (AEB). Is the Commission of the view that it is time to legislate for these technologies? Does the Commission intend to call for the mandatory fitting of AEB systems in a revision of the General Safety Regulation? When will a revision of the General Safety Regulation take place?

A cost-benefit study carried out in 2008 indicated that the mandatory fitting of AEB systems in passenger cars would not be beneficial. However, the cost information used at the time of the study has changed significantly and is now out of date. In fact, active safety systems are now an available option for many compact cars. Will the Commission consider current data with a view to recalculating the cost-benefit ratio?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2014)

The attention of the Honourable Member is drawn to the fact that the statistics demonstrate that the EU is well advancing with meeting its targets for the reduction of road fatalities. Compared to 2001 when the target was set, the number of road deaths has declined until 2012 by 49%. The preliminary information for the latest trends in 2013 indicates a continuation of the compliance with the target set ([1]). Nevertheless, the Commission agrees that recent technology developments may further support and strengthen this positive trend.

Therefore, the Commission has recently started the review of safety legislation in the automotive sector linked to Article 17 of the 'General Safety Regulation' ([2]) with respect to the monitoring of technical developments in the field of new and enhanced safety features and technologies.

Promising technical solutions can form the basis of improved safety requirements for vehicles, benefitting vehicle occupants and other road users.

In this light, the introduction of Automatic Emergency Braking Systems for vehicle categories, other than the ones already covered by legal requirements, will be taken into consideration based on a revised cost effectiveness analysis. The final report will be presented to the European Parliament and the Council in early 2015.

([1]) Preliminary data is expected to be published in the course of March 2014.
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 661/2009 of the European Parliament and Council concerning type-approval requirements for the general safety of motor vehicles, their trailers and systems, components and separate technical units intended therefor, OJ L 200, 31.07.2009, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001037/14
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Automatic emergency braking: progress made by the Commission

Could the Commission provide an update on the progress made in relation to the statements below? What proposals have been put forward as a result of the reviews and reports mentioned below? Were they carried out?

Regulation (EC) No 78/2009, Article 12(4):

'By 24 February 2014, the Commission shall review the feasibility and application of any such enhanced passive safety requirements. It shall review the functioning of this regulation with regard to the use and effectiveness of brake assist and other active safety technologies'.

Regulation (EC) no 661/2009 (GSR), Article 17:

'By 1 December 2012 and every three years thereafter, the Commission shall present a report to the European Parliament and to the Council including, where appropriate, proposals for amendment to this regulation or other relevant Community legislation regarding the inclusion of further new safety features'.

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Question E-1036/2014 on the same subject ([1]). Additionally, the Commission is pleased to confirm that the review of both the safety legislation linked to Article 17 of the General Safety Regulation ([2]), as well as the safety of vulnerable road users linked to Article 12 of the Pedestrian Protection Regulation ([3]), is presently underway.

Both the General Safety and Pedestrian Protection Regulations acknowledge that the Commission is to provide a report to the European Parliament and the Council in relation to the monitoring of technical developments in the field of enhanced passive safety requirements, the consideration and possible inclusion of new and enhanced safety features as well as enhanced active safety technologies. For obvious reasons of coherence and efficiency, the reporting will be combined and the final report will be presented to the European Parliament and the Council in early 2015. This will enable the analysis of more up-to-date information about technological developments and innovations that are now being developed following the full application of both Regulations for which the majority of provisions are entering into force between November 2012 and November 2014.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 661/2009 of the European Parliament and Council concerning type-approval requirements for the general safety of motor vehicles, their trailers and systems, components and separate technical units intended therefor, OJ L 200, 31.7.2009, p. 1.
([3]) Regulation (EC) No 78/2009 on the type-approval of motor vehicles with regard to the protection of pedestrians and other vulnerable road users, OJ L 35, 4.2.2009, page 1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001039/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(31 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Concorso per idee sullo sviluppo urbano

Recentemente un noto politico statunitense ha lanciato una singolare iniziativa denominata «Mayor's Challenge», con la quale invita le città europee a proporre idee innovative nel campo dello sviluppo urbano. I premi in palio per i primi cinque classificati ammontano a nove milioni di euro e saranno assegnati in base alla decisione di una giuria di esperti internazionali, a patto che vengano utilizzati per la realizzazione dei progetti vincenti. La regola principale del concorso è che le idee proposte devono essere coraggiose e creative, realizzabili ed esportabili in altre comunità.

L'innovazione nello sviluppo urbano è un tema estremamente rilevante in Europa, dal momento che si ricollega a varie tematiche, quali la protezione ambientale, il miglioramento della qualità della vita dei cittadini, la salute umana e animale, l'ottimizzazione dell'uso delle risorse e l'efficienza energetica, tutti temi collegati a vari ambiti di implementazione come il trasporto, la produzione e la distribuzione di beni, lo sviluppo di infrastrutture, il trattamento dei rifiuti e la gestione delle risorse.

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

1. Ritiene che l'iniziativa in questione possa fungere da stimolo per nuovi progetti di sviluppo urbano?

2. Esistono programmi simili sviluppati a livello europeo o in alcuni degli Stati membri dell'Unione?

3. Intende valutare la creazione di un progetto omologo, qualora non esista ancora in Europa?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(31 marzo 2014)

Il «Mayors Challenge» è molto simile all'iniziativa Azioni Innovative Urbane nel quadro del Fondo europeo per lo sviluppo regionale (FESR). La Commissione appoggia pertanto, in generale, l'idea di facilitare l'attuazione di idee innovative nelle città.

1. Il «Mayors Challenge» può certamente stimolare il nuovo sviluppo urbano sperimentando idee innovative, in particolare se le esperienze e le lezioni ricavate sono trasferite verso altre città. A tale proposito, è importante sottolineare che i programmi FESR per il periodo 2007-2013 dedicano già una parte dei loro finanziamenti allo sviluppo urbano sostenibile.

2.-3. L'iniziativa Azioni Innovative Urbane è attuata su impulso della Commissione e sarà finanziata attraverso il FESR. Il bilancio è di 330 milioni di euro per il periodo 2014-2020. Le Azioni Innovative Urbane finanzieranno gli studi e i progetti pilota che identificano o sperimentano nuove soluzioni a problemi connessi con lo sviluppo urbano sostenibile e rilevanti a livello dell'UE. Sarà dedicata particolare attenzione ai progetti che sono innovativi e sono trasferibili verso altre città.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001039/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Contest for urban development ideas

A well-known US politician has recently launched a unique initiative named the 'Mayors Challenge', in which he invites European cities to put forward innovative ideas in the field of urban development. The prizes for the top five ideas total EUR 9 million and will be awarded by a selection committee made up of international experts, on condition that the money is used to put the winning projects into practice. The main rule of the contest is that the ideas proposed should be bold and creative, feasible and transferrable to other communities.

Innovation in urban development is an extremely important topic in Europe since it is closely connected to a number of subjects, such as environmental protection, improving people's quality of life, human and animal health, optimising resource use and energy efficiency. These topics are in turn linked to a number of areas of implementation, including transport, the manufacture and distribution of goods, infrastructure development, waste treatment and resource management.

1. Does the Commission believe that the initiative in question can stimulate new urban development projects?

2. Are there any similar schemes organised either at European level or in any EU Member States?

3. Will the Commission consider setting up a project of this kind if none yet exists in Europe?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 2014)

The 'Mayors Challenge' is very similar to the Urban Innovative Actions initiative under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Hence, overall, the Commission is indeed supportive of the idea to facilitate the implementation of innovative ideas in cities.

1. The 'Mayors Challenge' can certainly stimulate new urban development by experimenting with innovative ideas, especially if the experience and lessons learned are transferred to other cities. In this regard, it is important to underline that the ERDF programmes in the 2007-2013 period already dedicate a part of their funds to sustainable urban development.

2 and 3. The Urban Innovative Actions initiative is implemented at the initiative of the Commission and will be financed through the ERDF. The budget is EUR 330 million for the 2014-2020 period. Urban Innovative Actions will support studies and pilot projects which identify or test new solutions that address issues which are related to sustainable urban development and are of relevance at EU level. The focus will be on projects which are innovative and which are transferable to other cities.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001040/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(31 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Crisi di apprendimento globale e accesso allo studio per i bambini

Il rapporto annuale sull'istruzione pubblicato dall'UNESCO denuncia una vera e propria «crisi di apprendimento globale», rivelando che oggi circa 57 milioni di bambini nel mondo sono ancora totalmente esclusi dai sistemi d'istruzione. Circa un bambino su dieci quindi non ha ancora libero accesso all'istruzione più elementare, in palese violazione del diritto all'istruzione, così come definito dal protocollo addizionale alla Convenzione europea per la salvaguardia dei diritti dell'uomo e delle libertà fondamentali.

Secondo il rapporto, al ritmo attuale bisognerà aspettare ancora settanta anni affinché l'istruzione possa raggiungere anche le aree più povere e rurali, in special modo nel continente africano. Nei casi più gravi, solo un bambino su quattro sa leggere e scrivere, mentre alle bambine l'accesso all'istruzione è del tutto precluso.

Il dato non è del tutto negativo, dato che dal 2000 questa quota è stata ridotta quasi del 50 %, da 102 a 57 milioni e considerando l'incidenza della crisi economica globale. Tuttavia il raggiungimento dell'istruzione universale entro il 2015 pare quanto mai irraggiungibile.

Alla luce di questi fatti, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Quali sono i tassi di accesso ai sistemi scolastici nelle aree rurali europee e quali sono gli Stati europei con il maggiore tasso di analfabetismo di minori?

2. A quanto ammontano gli aiuti allo sviluppo verso i paesi sottosviluppati o in via di sviluppo nel settore della promozione dell'istruzione?

3. Ritiene che gli aiuti nel settore aumenteranno negli ultimi anni, alla luce del fatto che l'UNESCO ha stabilito che una spesa globale aggiuntiva di 26 miliardi di dollari statunitensi sarebbe necessaria per garantire l'accesso allo studio a tutti i bambini del mondo?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(31 marzo 2014)

1. Eurostat non pubblica i tassi di iscrizione degli alunni alla scuola dell'obbligo, ma tali tassi possono essere calcolati per ciascuna età sulla base dei dati anagrafici e di iscrizione disponibili a livello regionale ([1]). Le percentuali sono circa del 100 % a livello nazionale e regionale.

Nelle statistiche ufficiali (Eurostat) non sono disponibili dati concernenti l'analfabetismo tra bambini. L'OCSE ha pubblicato gli ultimi risultati dell'indagine PISA 2012 ([2]), dai quali emerge che diversi paesi dell'UE sono ben lontani dall'obiettivo dell'UE per il 2020 in materia di istruzione e formazione, che prevede meno del 15 % di giovani con scarse capacità di lettura (BG: 39,4 %, RO: 37,3 % e CY: 32,8 %).

2. Secondo gli ultimi dati ufficiali dell'assistenza pubblica allo sviluppo (APS) raccolti dall'OCSE, nel 2012 sono stati stanziati 8,8 miliardi di USD direttamente a favore di progetti e programmi educativi. Tale importo comprende le spese per gli studenti provenienti da paesi in via di sviluppo sostenute dai sistemi pubblici di istruzione superiore dei paesi donatori (2,2 miliardi di USD). Gli APS dell'UE a favore dell'istruzione sono stati pari a 893 milioni di USD secondo i dati OCSE del 2012.

Inoltre, una parte dei 1,4 miliardi di USD destinati a paesi in via di sviluppo dal bilancio generale beneficiano indirettamente il settore dell'istruzione.

3. Se si confermano le tendenze attuali, è improbabile che vi sia un aumento degli aiuti allo sviluppo in questo settore: dal 2010 si è registrato un calo, in cifre costanti, degli aiuti pubblici allo sviluppo destinati all'istruzione.

([1]) NUTS 2 — cfr. le tabelle «Population on 1 January by age and sex — NUTS 2 regions» (demo_r_d2jan) e «Number of students by age, sex and NUTS 2 regions» (educ_renrlrg3). http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/region_cities/regional_statistics/data/database, http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page-/portal/education/data/database

([2]) Programma per la valutazione internazionale degli studenti

Nel suo Programma di cambiamento ([3]), la Commissione si è impegnata a sostenere l'inclusione sociale e lo sviluppo umano con almeno il 20 % degli aiuti.

La Commissione ritiene pertanto che il deficit di finanziamento nel settore dell'istruzione possa essere colmato solo attraverso uno sforzo collettivo nel quale gli aiuti allo sviluppo integrino maggiori risorse nazionali destinate all'istruzione.

([3]) COM(2011) 637 definitivo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001040/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: The global learning crisis and children's access to education

The Unesco annual report on education highlights a real global learning crisis, as it reveals that at present about 57 million children worldwide are still completely excluded from the education system. That means that about one child in ten still lacks free access to the most basic education, in clear breach of the right to education as defined in the additional Protocol to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

The report points out that at current rates we will have to wait another 70 years before education reaches the poorest rural areas, especially in Africa. In the worst cases only a quarter of boys know how to read and write, while girls have no access to education at all.

The figures are not all negative, since the numbers out of school have been cut by almost 50% since 2000, from 102 million down to 57 million, despite the global economic crisis. Even so, the goal of universal education by 2015 definitely seems unachievable.

1. Can the Commission say what the school enrolment rates are in rural areas in Europe and which European countries have the highest illiteracy rates among children?

2. How much development aid is being given to underdeveloped or developing countries to promote education?

3. Does the Commission believe that aid for this sector will increase in the coming years, in view of the fact that Unesco has calculated that a further USD 26 billion will be needed to ensure that every child in the world is in school?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 2014)

1. Eurostat does not publish enrolment rates for pupils in compulsory education but they can be calculated by single ages given the enrolment and population data, available at regional level ([1]). The percentages are 100% or close to at national and regional level.

No data are available regarding illiteracy among children from official statistics (Eurostat). OECD has published the latest 2012 PISA ([2]) results and they show that the EU Education and Training 2020 benchmark for low achievers in reading (less than 15%) is far from being met in a number of EU countries (BG: 39,4%, RO: 37.3% and CY: 32.8%).

2. According to the latest official development assistance (ODA) figures compiled by the OECD, in 2012, USD 8.8 billion are directly supporting education projects and programs. The costs of students from developing countries born by donor countries public tertiary education systems are included in this amount (USD 2.2 billion). EU ODA for education amounted for USD 893 million in 2012 OECD figures.

In addition, part of the USD 1.4 billion channelled to developing countries through general budget support is indirectly contributing to education.

3. The development aid in the sector is not likely to increase if current trends continue. In constant figures there is a decline in ODA amounts dedicated to education since 2010.

In the Agenda for Change ([3]) the Commission has committed to support social inclusion and human development through at least 20% of its aid.

The Commission therefore considers that the education financing gap can only be filled through a collective effort where development aid complements increasing domestic resources to education.

([1]) NUTS 2 — see tables 'Population on 1 January by age and sex — NUTS 2 regions: "demo_r_d2jan"' and 'Number of students by age, sex and NUTS 2 regions: "educ_renrlrg3"'. http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/region_cities/regional_statistics/data/database, http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page-/portal /education/data/database

([2]) Programme for International Student Assessment.

([3]) COM(2011) 637 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001041/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(31 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Possibile cura per il tumore tiroideo

Un istituto universitario del Sud Italia ha recentemente effettuato un'importante scoperta in campo medico. La ricerca ha individuato un nuovo bersaglio per la terapia del tumore della tiroide, potenzialmente utilizzabile anche in altri tumori. Si tratta di un enzima conosciuto per il suo ruolo nel cervello ma che, se bloccato, arresta la crescita delle cellule tumorali. Un farmaco che blocca questo enzima è in grado di arrestare la crescita delle cellule di tumore tiroideo, ma è possibile che questo risultato possa essere applicato anche ad altri tumori.

Il dato è estremamente importante, dal momento che l'incidenza del tumore tiroideo è in progressivo aumento ed è praticamente raddoppiata negli ultimi 10 anni. Non si conosce il perché di questo incredibile aumento della malattia, anche se il principale indiziato è l'inquinamento ambientale.

Alla luce di questa scoperta, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. è a conoscenza dello studio in questione?

2. l'UE dispone di strumenti per finanziare la ricerca e proseguire lo studio dell'enzima in questione?

3. è a conoscenza di studi simili in Europa o in altri paesi che possano cooperare e accelerare gli sviluppi nel settore, data la gravità della diffusione del tumore tiroideo?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(13 marzo 2014)

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza dello studio menzionato dall'onorevole deputato, pubblicato nella rivista Clinical Cancer Research ([1]), ([2]).

I risultati di tale studio indicano che la chinasi calcio-calmodulina dipendente di tipo II (CaMKII) potrebbe rappresentare un nuovo obiettivo terapeutico per il carcinoma midollare della tiroide e che il suo inibitore, hCaMKIINα, potrebbe essere utilizzato come un biomarcatore prognostico.

2. Sebbene nel settimo programma quadro per le attività di ricerca (2007-2013) non sia previsto un finanziamento a sostegno della ricerca specifica relativa a questo nuovo obiettivo terapeutico, alla ricerca sul cancro della tiroide sono stati destinati 10 milioni di euro. I progetti sostenuti comprendono studi sui meccanismi molecolari della carcinogenesi tiroidea e ricerche epidemiologiche.

Orizzonte 2020, il programma quadro di ricerca e innovazione (2014-2020) ([3]), offrirà nuove opportunità per la ricerca sulle terapie contro il cancro e sui biomarcatori nel quadro dell'obiettivo «Salute, cambiamento demografico e benessere», contenuto nella priorità «Sfide per la società». Le informazioni sulle attuali possibilità di finanziamento possono essere ottenute attraverso il portale dedicato alla ricerca e all'innovazione ([4]).

3. Per scelta politica, la Commissione non valuta i risultati di ricerche non direttamente correlate alle sue attività di finanziamento.

([1]) Russo et al. CCR 2014 doi: 10.1158/1078-0432.CCR-13-1683.
([2]) Comunicato stampa dell'Università di Salerno, 29 gennaio 2014-4 febbraio 2014, http://www.unisa.it/news/index/idStructure/1/id/12140
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0809:FIN:IT:PDF
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001041/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Possible cure for thyroid cancer

A university college in southern Italy has recently made an important medical discovery. Research has identified a new target for the treatment of thyroid cancer, which could potentially also be used for other cancers. It is an enzyme which is known for its role in the brain but which, if blocked, stops the growth of cancer cells. A drug that blocks this enzyme can halt the growth of thyroid tumour cells, but it is possible that this result could also be applied to other cancers.

The data are extremely important, especially as the rate of thyroid cancer is on the increase and has practically doubled in the last 10 years. The reason for this dramatic rise in the disease is unknown, although environmental pollution is the prime suspect.

1. Is the Commission aware of the above study?

2. Does the EU have mechanisms for funding the research so that further studies can be carried out on the enzyme in question?

3. Is the Commission aware of similar studies in Europe or elsewhere, which could lead to collaboration and speed up developments in the sector, given the alarming increase in thyroid cancer rates?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2014)

1. The Commission is aware of the study referred to by Honourable Member, published in the journal Clinical Cancer Research ([1]) ([2]).

The results of this study suggest that the calcium-calmodulin dependent kinase II (CaMKII) could represent a new therapeutic target in medullary thyroid carcinoma (MTC), and that its inhibitor, hCaMKIINα, might be used as a prognostic biomarker.

2. Although no specific research related to this new therapeutic target is being supported by the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013), EUR 10 million have been devoted to support thyroid cancer research. Projects supported included studies on molecular mechanisms of thyroid carcinogenesis and epidemiological research.

Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([3]), will offer new opportunities to address research on cancer therapies and biomarkers through the 'Health, demographic change and wellbeing' societal challenge. Information on current funding opportunities can be obtained through the Research and Innovation Participant Portal ([4]).

3. It is not Commission policy to assess research results that do not directly relate to its funding activities.

([1]) Russo et al. CCR 2014 doi: 10.1158/1078-0432.CCR-13-1683.
([2]) Press release of Università di Salerno, 29.01-4.02.2014, http://www.unisa.it/news/index/idStructure/1/id/12140
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0809:FIN:EN:PDF
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001042/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(31 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Riduzione del rischio di demenza per i diabetici

Il diabete è una patologia alla quale sono ricollegate numerose complicazioni, tra cui anche la demenza e il morbo di Alzheimer, particolarmente debilitanti per l'organismo.

Uno studio condotto da alcuni ricercatori su ratti diabetici ha analizzato il meccanismo di azione che si innesca durante i cambiamenti cerebrali causati da livelli di zucchero eccessivamente alti. Durante la ricerca si è potuto constatare come i ratti diabetici avessero un'attività enzimatica particolarmente elevata che ha aumentato l'attività infiammatoria delle cellule cerebrali portando a una loro morte prematura. L'attivazione dei processi infiammatori è stata sensibilmente ridotta tramite l'iniezione di nuove molecole che imitano l'azione antiossidante della proteina tioredoxina; è stato così possibile comprendere meglio il collegamento funzionale tra glicemia alta e processi infiammatori a livello cerebrale.

Considerando che, secondo la Federazione internazionale del diabete, in Europa circa 56 milioni di persone soffrono di diabete, con picchi del 14 % della popolazione in alcuni Stati, l'esperimento potrebbe avere risvolti estremamente importanti per il benessere dei cittadini europei.

Alla luce dei dati illustrati, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. esistono studi simili in Europa;

2. l'UE dispone di una strategia per la lotta al diabete e alle relative complicazioni.

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(20 marzo 2014)

1. Sebbene il settimo programma quadro per la ricerca, lo sviluppo tecnologico e le attività dimostrative (7PQ, 2007-2013) ([1]) non finanzi alcuna ricerca riguardante la specifica proteina menzionata dall'onorevole parlamentare, sono stati destinati 31 milioni di EUR per esaminare il nesso tra diabete e disturbi neurologici come la demenza e il morbo di Alzheimer o per studiare strategie nutrizionali per ritardare l'insorgere della malattia di Alzheimer e della demenza vascolare (progetto LipiDiDiet — 5 899 843 EUR di finanziamenti) ([2]).

2. La Commissione ha fatto della ricerca sul diabete una priorità costante nel corso del 7PQ con circa 840 milioni di EUR destinati al sostegno specifico per questo particolare settore nell'ambito della ricerca medica. Gli sforzi sono diretti in particolare alla ricerca sul diabete traslazionale al fine di trasferire le conoscenze di base per migliorare la diagnosi e disporre di strategie di prevenzione più sicure e accurate.

Orizzonte 2020 — Il programma quadro per la ricerca e l'innovazione (2014-2020) ([3]), offrirà nuove possibilità di ricerca sulla prevenzione, la diagnosi e la cura del diabete e delle sue complicazioni, tra l'altro attraverso le sfide sociali «Salute, cambiamento demografico e benessere» e «Sicurezza alimentare, agricoltura e silvicoltura sostenibili, ricerca marina, marittima e sulle acque interne e bioeconomia» ([4]).

Le informazioni sulle possibilità attuali di finanziamento possono essere ottenute attraverso il Portale dedicato alla ricerca e all'innovazione ([5]).

La Commissione inoltre cofinanzia progetti collegati al diabete attraverso il programma Salute. ([6])

([1]) Settimo programma quadro di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione (7PQ, 2007-2013). http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home_en.html
([2]) progetto LipiDiDiet (211696): Impatto terapeutico e preventivo della dieta basata sui lipidi sulle prestazioni neuronali e cognitive nell'invecchiamento, nella malattia di Alzheimer e nella demenza vascolare; http://www.lipididiet.eu/
([3]) COM(2011) 809 del 30.11.2011.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/bioeconomy/h2020/index_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.htm
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/health/index.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001042/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Reducing the risk of dementia in diabetics

Diabetes is a disease associated with a large number of particularly debilitating complications, including dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

A study carried out by researchers on diabetic rats examined the action mechanism triggered during brain changes caused by extremely high sugar levels. The research showed that the diabetic rats had particularly elevated enzyme activity, which increased the inflammatory activity of brain cells and resulted in their early death. The activation of these inflammatory processes was noticeably reduced by the injection of new molecules that imitate the antioxidant action of the protein thioredoxin. This led to a better understanding of the functional association between high blood sugar levels and inflammatory processes in the brain.

According to the International Diabetes Federation, there are some 56 million people with diabetes in Europe, and they represent up to 14% of the population in some countries. The experiment could therefore have extremely important consequences for the well-being of Europe's citizens.

1. Can the Commission please say whether similar studies exist in Europe?

2. Does the European Union have a strategy for tackling diabetes and its complications?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2014)

1. Although no research related to the specific protein referred to by the Honourable Member is being supported by the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013) ([1]), EUR 31 million have been devoted to address the relation between diabetes and neurological disorders such as dementia and Alzheimer's disease or to investigate nutritional approaches to delay the onset of Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia (LipiDiDiet project, EUR 5 899 843 funding) ([2]).

2. The Commission has made diabetes research a constant priority throughout FP7 with some EUR 840 million devoted to specific support for this particular area within the field of health research. Efforts address in particular translational diabetes research aimed at bringing basic knowledge through to ensure better diagnosis and more accurate and safer prevention and therapeutic approaches.

Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([3]), will offer new opportunities to address research on the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diabetes and its complications through, amongst others, the 'Health, demographic change and wellbeing' as well as the 'Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine and maritime and inland water research, and the Bioeconomy' ([4]) societal challenges.

Information on current funding opportunities can be obtained through the Research and Innovation Participant Portal ([5]).

The Commission furthermore co-funds diabetes related projects through the Health Programme ([6]).

([1]) Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013); http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home_en.html
([2]) LipiDiDiet (211696) project: Therapeutic and preventive impact of nutritional lipids on neuronal and cognitive performance in aging, Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia; http://www.lipididiet.eu/
([3]) COM(2011)809, 30.11.2011.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/bioeconomy/h2020/index_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.htm
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/health/index.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001043/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(31 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Terapie ormonali e rischio di infarto

Un team di ricercatori californiani ha lanciato un allarme riguardo a possibili complicazioni cardiache per gli uomini under 65 che assumono farmaci a base di testosterone. Studi passati avevano confermato simili rischi per gli uomini over 65 ma, secondo lo studio effettuato dal team, l'assunzione di testosterone può raddoppiare il rischio di infarto anche a soli 90 giorni dalla prima assunzione, indipendentemente dal vettore utilizzato per l'assunzione stessa (gel, pasticche, patch, iniezioni). Il test è stato condotto su un campione di circa 48 000 uomini under 65.

Il test si riferisce soprattutto a uomini con problematiche cardiache preesistenti, ma i risultati non escludono possibili complicazioni anche per gli individui sani.

La teoria del team è che il testosterone, promuovendo la coagulazione, influisca sulla capacità di scorrimento del sangue nel sistema cardiovascolare, oppure che l'assunzione di testosterone favorisca la produzione di estrogeni, fortemente collegati ai disturbi cardiovascolari.

Il dato è ancora controverso e osteggiato da alcuni esponenti del mondo scientifico ma, qualora dovesse risultare veritiero, dovrebbe essere preso in seria considerazione, dato che il testosterone, utilizzato spesso per migliorare le prestazioni sessuali, nel 2013 ha superato le vendite di altri prodotti farmacologici destinati allo stesso scopo.

Alla luce di quanto detto l'interrogante chiede alla Commissione di rispondere ai quesiti di seguito elencati.

1. Esistono in Europa studi che abbiano portato a risultati simili a quelli esposti?

2. Ritiene che, nel prescrivere farmaci a base di testosterone, i medici dovrebbero informare i pazienti del rischio di complicazioni cardiache?

3. Ritiene necessaria una campagna di informazione e sensibilizzazione in merito alle complicazioni descritte?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(14 marzo 2014)

Un prodotto medicinale può essere immesso sul mercato dell'UE solo se ha ottenuto un'autorizzazione alla commercializzazione ([1]) dall'autorità competente dello Stato membro o dalla Commissione. L'autorizzazione alla commercializzazione è rilasciata dopo che si sono valutate la qualità, la sicurezza e l'efficacia del prodotto medicinale e si è stabilito che vi è un rapporto positivo rischi/benefici per quanto concerne il suo uso. Le informazioni sul prodotto, che rientrano nell'autorizzazione alla commercializzazione, riportano il fatto che si tratta di un medicinale approvato nonché le sue indicazioni, controindicazioni e, se del caso, le precauzioni da seguire e avvertimenti specifici.

I prodotti medicinali contenenti testosterone sono stati autorizzati dagli Stati membri che sono quindi le autorità responsabili. Dopo l'autorizzazione iniziale la sicurezza del prodotto è seguita durante il suo intero ciclo di vita nel quadro del sistema di farmacovigilanza. Il Comitato di valutazione dei rischi per la farmacovigilanza (PRAC) facente capo all'Agenzia europea per i medicinali è stato istituito nel 2012 e vaglia i segnali di sicurezza legati all'uso dei prodotti medicinali, compresi quelli autorizzati dagli Stati membri o dalla Commissione.

Per quanto concerne la ricerca, la Commissione non ha finanziato studi per indagare l'impatto dei medicinali contenenti testosterone sui cardiopatici. L'Agenzia europea per i medicinali è a conoscenza dello studio menzionato dall'Onorevole deputato e segue la questione sulla base della procedura di gestione dei segnali. Quando si ritiene necessaria una valutazione ulteriore di un segnale, il PRAC analizza i dati disponibili e formula raccomandazioni sulla linea d'azione appropriata, che possono ad esempio concernere un aggiornamento delle informazioni sul prodotto o una comunicazione all'indirizzo degli operatori sanitari.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 726/2004 che istituisce procedure comunitarie per l'autorizzazione e la sorveglianza dei medicinali per uso umano e veterinario e che istituisce l'Agenzia europea per i medicinali, GU L 136 del 30.4.2004, pag. 1; direttiva 2001/83/CE recante un codice comunitario relativo ai medicinali per uso umano, GU L 311 del 28.11.2001 pag. 67.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001043/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Hormone treatments and the risk of heart attack

A Californian research team has raised the alarm regarding possible heart complications for men under 65 who take testosterone-based medication. Previous studies had confirmed similar risks for men over 65, but the study conducted by the team shows that taking testosterone can double the risk of heart attack within just 90 days of the first dose, regardless of how it is taken (in gels, pills, patches or injections). The test was carried out on a sample of some 48 000 men under 65.

The test relates especially to men with existing heart problems, but the results do not rule out possible complications for healthy individuals as well.

The team's theory is that as testosterone promotes coagulation it influences the ability of the blood to flow through the cardiovascular system, or that taking testosterone favours the production of oestrogens, which are closely associated with cardiovascular disorders.

The idea is still controversial and is opposed by some scientists but, if it proves to be true, it should be taken into serious consideration because testosterone is often used to improve sexual performance and in 2013 it outsold other pharmaceutical products designed for the same purpose.

1. Can the Commission say whether any studies have been conducted in Europe that have led to similar results to those outlined above?

2. Does it believe that doctors should inform patients of the risk of heart complications when they prescribe testosterone-based medication?

3. Does it believe an information campaign is needed to raise awareness of the complications described?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 March 2014)

A medicinal product can be placed on the EU market only after a marketing authorisation has been granted ([1]) either by the competent authority of a Member State or by the Commission. A marketing authorisation is granted after quality, safety and efficacy of the medicinal product have been evaluated and a positive benefit-risk balance related to its use has been concluded. Product information, which is part of the marketing authorisation, states the approved use of the medicine, including its indications, contraindications and as appropriate, special precautions and warnings.

Medicinal products containing testosterone have been authorised by the Member States who are therefore the responsible authorities. After the initial authorisation, the safety of a product is followed during its whole life-cycle within a framework of pharmacovigilance. The Pharmacovigilance Risk Assessment Committee (PRAC) of the European Medicines Agency was established in 2012 and it assesses safety signals related to use of medicinal products, including those authorised by the Member States or by the Commission.

With regard to research, the Commission has not funded studies to investigate the impact of testosterone medicines and heart problems. The European Medicines Agency is aware of the studies referred to by the Honourable Member and they are being followed up through the signal management procedure. When a further assessment of a signal is considered necessary, the PRAC assesses the available data and makes recommendations on the appropriate action, which could include an update of product information or communication to healthcare professionals.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 laying down Community procedures for the authorisation and supervision of medicinal products for human and veterinary use and establishing a European Medicines Agency, OJ L 136, 30.4.2004, p. 1; Directive 2001/83/EC on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, OJ L 311, 28.11.2001 p. 67.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001044/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(31 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Discriminazione contro un'azienda cantieristica italiana

Una società cantieristica belga è stata di recente sottoposta a procedura fallimentare e i curatori del fallimento hanno alienato i beni del cantiere per 1 milione di EUR a un consorzio di quattro imprese con sede ad Anversa senza alcuna esperienza pregressa nel campo della cantieristica.

Un'azienda italiana, sul mercato dal 1967 e con una solida situazione alle spalle, aveva formulato un'offerta di 3,6 milioni di EUR per acquisire gli asset della società, includendo anche l'assunzione dei 60 lavoratori rimasti disoccupati, ma si è vista rifiutare la proposta a discapito del consorzio belga sopracitato, per cui ha presentato ricorso presso il tribunale di Anversa, che ha annullato la vendita.

In seguito a tale decisione, l'azienda italiana ha ripresentato la propria proposta, che è stata trasmessa all'Autorità portuale di Anversa. Questa ha però affermato di voler vendere gli asset della società al consorzio di imprese belghe, adducendo la motivazione che queste abbiano sede ad Anversa.

Alla luce di quanto esposto, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. la decisione dell'Autorità portuale non violi la libertà di stabilimento delle imprese, una delle quattro libertà su cui si fonda il mercato interno?

2. tale decisione non sia stata adottata in violazione del principio di leale concorrenza, anche alla luce del fatto che, già nella comunicazione COM(2003) 0717, la Commissione denunciava la concorrenza sleale nel settore da parte di alcuni membri?

Risposta di Joaquín Almunia a nome della Commissione
(25 marzo 2014)

La Commissione non è in grado, sulla scorta delle limitate informazioni ricevute, di accertare l'incompatibilità della vendita del costruttore navale belga con la libertà di stabilimento.

La Commissione non ha ricevuto alcuna informazione circa tale vendita e pertanto non può stabilire se comporti una distorsione della concorrenza. Tuttavia, se la società italiana dovesse ritenere che la vendita da parte dell'autorità portuale di Anversa comporta aiuti di Stato, può presentare una denuncia ufficiale alla Commissione, corredata di tutte le informazioni necessarie, a norma del regolamento (CE) n. 659/1999 del Consiglio, del 22 marzo 1999, recante modalità di applicazione dell'articolo 93 del trattato CE (attualmente articolo 108 del TFUE).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001044/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Discrimination against an Italian shipbuilder

A Belgian shipbuilder has recently been declared bankrupt and the liquidators have transferred the shipyard's assets, for EUR 1 million, to a consortium of four companies based in Antwerp without any prior experience in shipbuilding.

An Italian company, which has been in the industry since 1967 with a solid track record, made an offer of EUR 3.6 million to acquire the company's assets, and would also have employed 60 workers set to lose their jobs, but lost out to the aforementioned Belgian consortium. It subsequently filed an appeal with the Court of Antwerp, which blocked the sale.

Following this decision, the Italian company resubmitted its proposal, which was passed to the Port Authority of Antwerp. However, the latter insists on selling the assets to the consortium of Belgian companies, on the grounds that they have their headquarters in Antwerp.

1. Does the Commission agree that the Port Authority's decision is contrary to the freedom of establishment of companies, one of the four freedoms central to the internal market?

2. Does the Commission agree that this decision breaches the principle of fair competition, especially given that, in communication COM(2003)0717, the Commission denounced unfair trading practices in the industry in some Member States?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2014)

The Commission is not in a position to assess the incompatibility of the sale of the Belgian shipbuilder with freedom of establishment on the basis of the limited information provided.

The Commission has not received any information about the sale of the Belgian shipbulder and therefore is not in a position to assess whether it distorts competition. If however the Italian company considers that the sale by the Port of Authority of Antwerp involved state aid it can file an official complaint with the Commission, providing all necessary information, pursuant to Council Regulation No 659/1999 of 22 March 1999 laying down detailed rules for the application of Article 93 of the EC Treaty (now Art.108 TFEU).

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001045/14
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(31 ianuarie 2014)

Subiect: Turism medical și promovarea tradițiilor locale

La nivel european, există o multitudine de stațiuni balneare amplasate în zone cu bogat potențial turistic și care oferă turistului șansa de a vizita obiective culturale, istorice, religioase sau de a „proba" gastronomia locală, concomitent cu efectuarea de proceduri de tratament balnear.

Pe de altă parte, asemenea locații oferă posibilitatea organizării unor evenimente de anvergură, dar și seminarii și conferințe care sunt benefice atât pentru participanți, cât și pentru turismul balnear, având în vedere că, pe lângă programul specific, participanții pot să se relaxeze în bazele de wellness din hotelurile unde sunt cazați.

Turismul medical reprezintă deci o tendință nouă în turismul de sănătate și el reprezintă o bună ocazie de exploatare a potențialului turistic și gastronomic la nivel local și regional, dar și șansa de a crea pachete noi de servicii, concomitent cu dezvoltarea de noi meserii și crearea de noi locuri de muncă în aceste meserii specifice, mergând până la a crea o rețea de rezervă de personal calificat.

Cum intenționează Comisia să sprijine eforturile autorităților locale de a dezvolta mai mult acest segment economic și cum intenționează să încurajeze parteneriatele public-privat în vederea dezvoltării de noi servicii specializate și promovarea potențialului stațiunilor?

Răspuns dat de dl Tajani în numele Comisiei
(27 martie 2014)

Comisia încurajează parteneriatele public-privat prin sprijinirea inițiativelor transnaționale care vizează valorificarea patrimoniului natural și cultural european.

În special, în 2014, Comisia va lansa trei cereri de oferte ([1]) având următoarele scopuri: (i) sprijinirea produselor turistice transnaționale durabile; (ii) dezvoltarea produselor turistice transnaționale bazate pe patrimoniul cultural și industrial; (iii) promovarea unor pachete turistice accesibile. Proiectele de natură diferită, dar care se concentrează pe diverse segmente ale sectorului turismului ([2]), sunt, de asemenea, eligibile pentru acordarea de granturi.

În 2012, Comisia a finanțat deja, prin inițiativa Calypso ([3]), proiectul HEALTOUR ([4]), în cadrul căruia a fost efectuată o analiză a turismului medical.

În plus, Comisia cooperează cu Consiliul Europei pentru a sprijini itinerariile culturale europene. Printre acestea se numără „Itinerariul european al orașelor termale istorice", conceput în jurul termalismului, care este considerat un atu esențial cu un potențial turistic substanțial.

Comisia, în colaborare cu Comisia europeană a turismului (ETC), a lansat un portal ([5]) consacrat promovării gastronomiei ca parte integrantă a patrimoniului cultural intangibil al Europei. Este vorba despre un nou instrument de comunicare care permite o mai bună planificare a excursiilor de către turiști. Oficiile de turism naționale, regionale și locale pot încărca informații privind târgurile și festivalurile lor gastronomice pentru a deveni mai vizibile.

Inițiativele la nivel local și/sau regional legate de turismul durabil sunt, de asemenea, eligibile pentru finanțare, ca parte a unei strategii teritoriale, din fondurile structurale și de investiții europene, inclusiv în cazul FEDR ([6]), pentru infrastructurile turistice de dimensiuni reduse și durabile, cu condiția ca acestea să contribuie la prioritățile tematice și la obiectivele fondurilor ([7]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/contracts-grants/calls-for-proposals/index_en.htm
([2]) De exemplu, turism și bunăstare.
([3]) Obiectivul inițiativei Calypso este facilitarea schimburilor turistice transnaționale în extrasezon pentru grupuri-țintă dezavantajate specifice: persoane în vârstă, tineri, persoane cu handicap și familii cu venituri reduse. Puteți afla mai multe informații la adresa următoare: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/calypso/index_en.htm
([4]) Puteți afla informații suplimentare privind proiectul la adresa următoare: http://www.fundacionyuste.es/desarrollo/index.php?Itemid=94&id=508&option=com_actividades&task=mostrar
([5]) www.tastingeurope.com
([6]) Fondul European de Dezvoltare Regională.
([7]) Este deosebit de important ca investițiile să fie încorporate în strategii localizate și integrate de dezvoltare și să aibă o justificare economică temeinică din punctul de vedere al sustenabilității pe termen lung și al impactului asupra creșterii economice și a ocupării forței de muncă.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001045/14
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Health tourism and promoting local traditions

There are a large number of spas in Europe, in areas with a rich tourism potential offering tourists the opportunity to visit cultural, historical and religious sites or to sample the local cuisine while receiving spa treatments.

These resorts also have facilities for organising large-scale events, seminars and conferences, offering benefits for both participants and the spa tourism sector, since alongside the specific programme for the event, participants can relax in their hotel's wellness centre.

Health tourism represents a new trend that offers a good opportunity for exploiting tourism and gastronomic potential at local and regional level, as well as an opportunity to create new packages of services, develop new occupations and create new jobs in these sectors, with the ultimate aim of creating a reserve network of qualified people.

How will the Commission support the efforts being made by local authorities to develop this segment of the economy further, and what will it do to encourage public-private partnerships with a view to developing new specialised services and helping resorts to realise their potential?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2014)

The Commission encourages public-private partnerships by supporting transnational initiatives geared towards the capitalization of the European natural and cultural heritage.

In particular, in 2014, the Commission will launch three calls for proposals ([1]) with the purpose of: (i) supporting sustainable transnational tourism products; (ii) developing transnational tourism products based on cultural and industrial heritage; (iii) promoting accessible-tourism packages. Projects of a different nature focusing on different tourism segments ([2]) are eligible for grants.

Already in 2012, the Commission co-funded, under the Calypso initiative ([3]), the HEALTOUR project ([4]) which amongst others carried out an analysis of health tourism.

Moreover, the Commission cooperates with the Council of Europe to support European Cultural Routes. Among them, the 'European Route of Historical Thermal Towns' is conceived around Thermalism as a key asset with a great tourism potential.

The Commission together with the European Travel Commission (ETC) has launched a dedicated portal ([5]) to promote gastronomy as part of Europe's intangible cultural heritage. It is a new communication tool to help tourists to better plan their trips. National, regional and local tourism offices can upload information on their food fairs and festivals to achieve better visibility.

Moreover, sustainable tourism-related initiatives at local and/or regional level are eligible for funding, as part of a territorial strategy, under the European Structural and Investment Funds, including in the case of the ERDF ([6]), small-scale and sustainable tourism infrastructure, provided they contribute to the thematic priorities and objectives of the funds ([7]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/contracts-grants/calls-for-proposals/index_en.htm
([2]) e.g. food tourism and wellness.
([3]) The Calypso initiative aims at facilitating transnational tourist exchanges in the low season for specific disadvantaged target groups: seniors, youths, people with disabilities and families with low income. For more information: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/calypso/index_en.htm
([4]) For more information about the project: http://www.fundacionyuste.es/desarrollo/index.php?Itemid=94&id=508&option=com_actividades&task=mostrar
([5]) www.tastingeurope.com
([6]) European Regional Development Fund.
([7]) It is of particular importance that the investments are embedded in integrated, place-based development strategies and that they have a sound economic rationale in terms of their growth and jobs impact and long-term sustainability.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-001046/14
an den Rat
Bernd Posselt (PPE)
(31. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Rolle der Gülen-Bewegung auf dem Balkan

Der Rat führt Verhandlungen mit mehreren Staaten des Westlichen Balkans. Besitzt er Erkenntnisse über Versuche der türkischen Gülen-Bewegung, dort — insbesondere in Bosnien und Herzegowina — über Netzwerke Einflusszonen zu errichten, und welche Rolle spielen dabei islamistische Kräfte?

Antwort
(24. März 2014)

Der Rat hat die von dem Herrn Abgeordneten angesprochene Frage nicht erörtert.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001046/14
to the Council
Bernd Posselt (PPE)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Role of the Gülen movement in the Balkans

The Council is conducting negotiations with several Western Balkan countries. Does it know anything about attempts by the Turkish Gülen movement to use networks to establish spheres of influence in that part of the world and in Bosnia and Herzegovina in particular? What role are Islamists playing in that process?

Reply
(24 March 2014)

The Council has not discussed the issue raised by the Honourable Member.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001047/14
to the Commission
Gerard Batten (EFD)
(31 January 2014)

Subject: Irish anti-competition law

I raise a question on behalf of Mr Christophe Krief, a French citizen who is resident in Dublin. He is a member of the Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists (CIAT), which is based in London. The Institute has been recognised in the Republic of Ireland since the 1980s.

Mr Krief has written to me about the Irish Building Control Act 2007 (Sections 21, 22, 50), and the new Building Control Regulations 2013, which come into force in March 2014. Mr Krief says that these regulations are in breach of EU directives on competition, freedom of establishment and the free movement of workers. The finding of the European Ombudsman is that the Building Control Act 2007 is in breach of European law (complaint reference 0503/2012/R).

The Building Control Regulations 2013 stipulate that only three groups of professionals are authorised to design and certify compliance with building regulations, with the CIAT having been excluded from the list for no reason. The CIAT has submitted a complaint to the Commission, and Mr Krief has also submitted his own complaint (reference CHAP(2013)03587).

If the new regulations come into force in March 2014, Mr Krief will be prevented from working in Ireland. He believes that these laws are in contradiction with EU directives.

Therefore, I ask the following:

1. What is the Commission doing to enforce the finding of the European Ombudsman regarding its decision on the Irish Building Control Act 2007?

2. What is the Commission's view on the complaints by the CIAT and Mr Krief that the Building Control Regulations 2013 are in violation of EU directives on competition and the free movement of workers?

Personally, I don't want any EU 'law', but the Republic of Ireland is an enthusiastic proponent of economic and political union and I would expect the country to obey EC law.

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2014)

The Commission is aware of the issues raised by Mr Krief and others regarding changes to the Irish Building Control Act 2007. The Commission understands that as of 1 March 2014, changes to this regulation will have implications for the right of architectural technologists to practise in Ireland. It must be noted that Member States retain the competence to regulate professions and reserve activities to qualified professionals to the extent this is justified and proportionate, particularly with regard to safety considerations. However, that said, the Commission understands that any changes to current regulatory practices may affect access to the profession for those individuals already established within that profession.

The Commission is currently examining the broad range of different issues raised by the complainants so as to establish if any of these could be considered a potential breach of EC law.

Regarding the findings of the European Ombudsman, these findings concerned a different issue relating to the Irish Building Control Act 2007. The Ombudsman considered that a number of grandfathering provisions in that legislation affecting only a determined number of professionals already working in Ireland were contrary to EC law. In this context, the Commission notes that only the European Court of Justice is competent to deliver legally binding interpretations of EC law.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001050/14
a la Comisión
Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D) y Alejandro Cercas (S&D)
(3 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Pérdida de la prestación de asistencia sanitaria española en caso de estancia en el extranjero durante más de 90 días

El Gobierno de España, a través de la Ley 22/2013, de 23 de diciembre, ha reformado la legislación relativa al derecho a la prestación de asistencia sanitaria, modificando los criterios para mantener estas prestaciones cuando los beneficiarios se desplacen fuera de las fronteras nacionales. En concreto introduce una nueva condición respecto del concepto de residencia por la cual se perderá el derecho a la prestación cuando las estancias en el extranjero superen los 90 días en un año natural. Tras este periodo la Seguridad Social española no se hará cargo de las prestaciones sanitarias servidas en el territorio de otro Estado miembro de la UE.

Entendemos que esta nueva normativa atenta a la libertad de circulación de trabajadores y personas de la UE, y de forma aún más grave por cuanto quienes van a sufrir, sobre todo, son los jóvenes españoles que se desplazan buscando empleo a otros Estados miembros.

Es obvio que esta legislación española vulnera el concepto de residencia habitual establecido en el artículo 11 del Reglamento (CE) n° 987/2009 por el que se adoptan las normas de aplicación del Reglamento (CE) n° 883/2004 sobre la coordinación de los sistemas de seguridad social, según el cual, la residencia tiene otros criterios de calificación, listados en dicho artículo, y nunca por el mero transcurso de un plazo de días fijo. El Comisario Borg así lo ha recordado en respuesta a la pregunta parlamentaria E-012596/2013: «[…] una persona puede ausentarse temporalmente durante un periodo superior a noventa días y seguir manteniendo su residencia habitual […] esto depende de una evaluación global de la situación personal del interesado, teniendo en cuenta distintos factores que determinan su centro de interés real». En la misma dirección se ha pronunciado una reiterada jurisprudencia del TJUE (entre otros C-76/76 del TJUE), y es fundamental que se mantenga pues, si se validara la legislación española, todos los ciudadanos comunitarios cuyo derecho a la asistencia sanitaria esté vinculado al criterio de residencia podrían perder la misma si la legislación española se generalizara en otros Estados miembros.

Por todo ello, y porque estimamos que el Gobierno de España ha infringido el Derecho comunitario y el principio de libre circulación, y que esa legislación española debe ser revocada, pedimos y preguntamos lo siguiente:

¿Va la Comisión a iniciar un expediente de infracción contra el Gobierno de España en virtud de lo dispuesto en el artículo 258 del TFUE por causa de la disposición final 4,7 de la Ley 22/2013 que colisiona con los Reglamentos de coordinación de los sistemas de seguridad social y con la jurisprudencia del TJUE?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de marzo de 2014)

Se remite a Su Señoría a la respuesta dada a las preguntas E-000145/2014, E-000259/2014 y P-001087/2014 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001050/14
to the Commission
Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D) and Alejandro Cercas (S&D)
(3 February 2014)

Subject: Loss of the right to Spanish healthcare assistance following periods spent abroad lasting over 90 days

Through Law 22/2013 of 23 December 2013, the Spanish Government has reformed its legislation on the right to healthcare assistance, amending the criteria for maintaining this assistance in the event of the recipients leaving Spain. Specifically, it introduces a new condition *vis-à-vis* the concept of residence whereby the right to assistance will be revoked following periods spent abroad lasting over 90 days over the course of a calendar year. Beyond this period, Spanish social security will no longer cover healthcare dispensed in the territory of the other EU Member State.

We view this new regulation as an attack on the free movement of workers and persons within the EU, and an extremely serious threat given that those who are going to suffer most are young Spanish people who have left the country to look for work in other Member States.

This Spanish legislation is a clear contravention of the concept of habitual residence established in Article 11 of Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 laying down the procedure for implementing Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems, which states that residence may be defined by other criteria, which are listed in said Article, and never on the basis of a fixed period of days. Commissioner Borg reiterated this in his reply to Parliamentary Question E-012596/2013: 'a person may […] be temporarily absent for a period exceeding 90 days and still maintain his/her habitual residence […] this depends on an overall assessment of the person's situation, taking into account various factors which determine his/her real centre of interest'. That same directive cites a ruling from established CJEU case-law (inter alia CJEU Case C-76/76), and it is vital that this is maintained, because if the Spanish legislation is passed, all EU citizens whose right to healthcare assistance hinges on the criterion of residence could lose that right if the Spanish legislation were reproduced in other Member States.

Therefore, and because we believe that the Spanish Government has violated Community law and the principle of free movement, and that this Spanish legislation must be revoked, we would like to ask the following:

Is the Commission going to start infringement proceedings against the Spanish Government pursuant to Article 258 TFEU on account of the final provision 4.7 of Law 22/2013, which clashes with the regulations on the coordination of social security systems and with CJEU case-law?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2014)

The Honourable Member is referred to the answer to questions E-000145/2014, E-000259/2014 and P-001087/2014 ([1]).

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001051/14
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(3 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Grave contradicción: elusión de impuestos y obtención de subvenciones

Durante muchos meses miles de trabajadores de una conocida compañía de alimentación han visto amenazado su puesto de trabajo ante los planes presentados por su empresa. Tras duras negociaciones se ha evitado la quiebra y lo que hubiera sido el despido de más de cuatro mil trabajadores se ha reducido a un expediente de regulación de empleo que puede afectar, según informan los periódicos, a un veinte por ciento.

Las negociaciones siguen, pero otras informaciones sobre la compañía han generado algunas sorpresas. Me refiero, por un lado, a que la empresa ha obtenido importantes subvenciones de gobiernos regionales de España (Cataluña, Andalucía y Castilla y León, entre otros) y está pidiendo su incremento. Mientras que, por otro lado, se ha conocido que el titular único de la empresa alimentaria es un fondo de inversión localizado en el Gran Ducado de Luxemburgo. En consecuencia, los posibles beneficios y ganancias patrimoniales de las fábricas españolas se trasladan a Luxemburgo, donde la imposición es mucho menor.

Muchas han sido las ocasiones en que he trasladado a la Comisión Europea mi preocupación sobre la falta de una mínima armonización tributaria entre los Estados miembros y los graves problemas que eso genera (entre otras, en mis preguntas E-005182/2011, E-010066/2012, E-003038/2013). Y aunque sigo con interés las nuevas propuestas de esa Comisión Europea (por ejemplo, el nuevo Plan de acción para reforzar la lucha contra el fraude y la evasión fiscal COM(2012)0722), insisto en preguntar ante este nuevo ejemplo:

1. ¿No considera la Comisión que deben acelerarse los instrumentos para garantizar la armonización tributaria y lograr que la competencia entre las empresas sea leal y no perjudique a los trabajadores?

2. ¿No piensa que se están produciendo trasvases de fondos públicos de un Estado, a través de las subvenciones que muchas administraciones han de otorgar para salvar las mínimas condiciones sociales, a los beneficios que ofrece una tributación relajada?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de marzo de 2014)

La Comisión cree en las ventajas económicas de la armonización de la base imponible del impuesto de sociedades y ha estado trabajando en los detalles de tal armonización desde que la Comisión adoptó en 2011 la propuesta de la base imponible consolidada común del impuesto sobre sociedades. Sin embargo, las decisiones sobre esta cuestión solo pueden adoptarse con el apoyo unánime de todos los Estados miembros. Otras medidas, en particular el Código de Conducta sobre la Fiscalidad de las Empresas y las normas relativas a la transparencia y el intercambio de información ya están vigentes para garantizar la aplicación de la buena gobernanza en materia fiscal en todos los Estados miembros.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001051/14
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(3 February 2014)

Subject: A serious paradox: tax evasion and the granting of subsidies

Over the past few months thousands of workers of a well-known food company have seen their jobs threatened by plans submitted by their company. Following tough negotiations, bankruptcy was avoided and the potential dismissal of over four thousand employees has been downgraded to a restructuring operation, which according to newspaper reports may affect some 20% of workers.

The negotiations are ongoing, but other information on the company has raised a few eyebrows. I am referring, firstly, to the fact that the company has received considerable subsidies from Spanish regional governments (Catalonia, Andalusia and Castile-Leon, among others) and is requesting that these be increased. Meanwhile, it has come to light that the food company is owned exclusively by an investment fund located in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. As a result, any profits and capital gains made by the Spanish factories are passed on to Luxembourg, where the tax rates are much lower.

I have expressed my concerns to the European Commission on a number of occasions about the lack of a minimum level of tax harmonisation among the Member States and the serious problems that this causes (in my questions E-005182/2011, E-010066/2012, E-003038/2013, among others). Although I am following the European Commission's new proposals with interest (e.g. the new Action Plan to strengthen the fight against fraud and tax evasion COM(2012)0722), in light of this new example, I must ask:

1. Does the Commission not think that the mechanisms for guaranteeing tax harmonisation should be put in place more quickly to ensure that competition between companies is legal and not detrimental to employees?

2. Does it not think that public funds are being drained from a State, through the subsidies that many governments have to grant in order to safeguard minimum social conditions, in favour of the profits offered by relaxed taxation?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 2014)

The Commission believes in the economic advantages of a harmonised corporate tax base and has been working on the details of such a harmonised corporate tax base since the Commission adopted the relevant proposal in 2011 for the Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base. However, decisions in this matter can only be taken with the unanimous support of all Member States. Other measures, notably the Code of Conduct for Business Taxation and rules on transparency and the exchange of information are already in place to ensure implementation of good governance in tax matters in all Member States.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001053/14
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(3 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Suicidios

En los últimos días se ha difundido un informe del Instituto Nacional de Estadística de España en el que se subraya el incremento de suicidios en el último año, algo que también reflejan los informes de la OCDE con relación a otros Estados miembros de la Unión Europea.

Hace ya un año trasladé a la Comisión mi preocupación por el incremento de suicidios de niños y jóvenes (pregunta E-005330/2013) y supe que las instituciones europeas habían puesto en marcha una acción conjunta en 2013 para prevenir la depresión y evitar el suicidio.

Ante estos nuevos datos, desearía preguntar lo siguiente:

¿Existe para el año 2014 y para los siguientes algún plan similar para favorecer la salud mental, el bienestar psíquico, prevenir las depresiones y evitar los suicidios?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de marzo de 2014)

La acción conjunta con los Estados miembros en materia de Salud y Bienestar Mental apoyada por el Programa de Salud ([1]) a que hace referencia la Comisión en su respuesta a la pregunta 005330/2013 se lanzó a principios de 2013 y continuará su trabajo hasta 2016. Por tanto, la Comisión no tiene intención de incluir acciones similares en el programa de trabajo para 2014 en el marco del nuevo Programa de Salud de la UE.

([1]) http://www.mentalhealthandwellbeing.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001053/14
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(3 February 2014)

Subject: Suicides

A few days ago the Spanish National Institute of Statistics published a report highlighting an increase in suicides over the past year, a trench which is also reflected in OECD reports on other EU Member States.

One year ago I communicated my concerns to the Commission about the increase in suicides in children and young people (Question E-005330/2013) and I found out that the European institutions had set up a Joint Action in 2013 to prevent depression and suicides.

In light of this new data, I would like to ask the following:

Is there a similar plan for 2014 and subsequent years to promote mental health and psychological well-being, and to prevent depression and suicides?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 2014)

The Joint Action with the EU Member States on Mental Health and Well-being supported by the Health Programme ([1]), to which the Commission referred to in its response to Question E-005330/2013, was launched in early 2013, and will pursue its work until 2016. As such, the Commission does not intend to launch similar actions under the 2014 work plan of the new EU-Health Programme.

([1]) http://www.mentalhealthandwellbeing.eu/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001056/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Contrasto ai fenomeni di contraffazione alimentare e «Italian sounding»: precisazioni sulla creazione del nuovo registro per la tutela delle indicazioni geografiche

In riferimento alla risposta all'interrogazione E-013294/2013 «Contrasto ai fenomeni di contraffazione alimentare e Italian sounding», la Commissione afferma che «l'UE si impegna a migliorare la tutela delle indicazioni geografiche attraverso la creazione di un registro multilaterale giuridicamente vincolante in grado di facilitarne la tutela, ampliando inoltre l'ulteriore tutela attualmente disponibile solo per le indicazioni geografiche dei vini e degli alcolici nell'ambito dell'accordo TRIPS (vale a dire, la tutela oggettiva indipendente dal fatto che il pubblico sia o meno indotto in errore sull'origine geografica del prodotto) alle indicazioni geografiche per tutti i prodotti».

La Commissione può indicare:

1. a che punto è la creazione del citato registro?

2. In quale modo la normativa tutelerà le indicazioni geografiche?

3. Se il registro riguarderà sia prodotti IGP che DOP?

4. Quali paesi riguarderà l'ambito di azione di questo registro?

Risposta di Karel De Gucht a nome della Commissione
(25 marzo 2014)

1. Negoziati intensivi per la costituzione del registro multilaterale sulle indicazioni geografiche si sono svolti nella sessione speciale del Consiglio TRIPS (Consiglio per gli aspetti dei diritti di proprietà intellettuale attinenti al commercio) svoltasi nel 2011 presso l'OMC. Questi negoziati sono culminati in un progetto composito di testo di negoziato in cui sono registrate le posizioni rispettive dei membri dell'OMC. Questo è stato un soggetto contenzioso dell'agenda di Doha. Non essendosi registrati da diversi anni progressi sostanziali, questa questione estremamente importante per l'UE dovrà rientrare nell'agenda Post-Bali (9ª Conferenza ministeriale dell'OMC nel 2013) dell'OMC.

2. Secondo la proposta dell'UE e i relativi allegati il segretariato dell'OMC dovrebbe iscrivere nel registro l'indicazione geografica notificata. Ciascun membro dell'OMC dovrebbe assicurare che le autorità nazionali consultino il registro e tengano conto delle informazioni in esso contenute allorché prendono decisioni in merito alla registrazione e alla protezione di marchi registrati e di indicazioni geografiche conformemente alle proprie procedure domestiche. In assenza di prova contraria, nel corso di tali procedure il registro va considerato quale prova *prima facie* del fatto che, in tale paese membro dell'OMC, l'indicazione geografica registrata soddisfa la definizione di «indicazione geografica» di cui all'articolo 22.1 del TRIPS.

3. Il registro multilaterale coprirebbe sia le Indicazioni geografiche protette (IGP) sia le Denominazioni d'origine protette (DOP). Sia le DOP che le IGP sono in effetti «indicazioni geografiche» conformemente alla definizione di cui all'articolo 22 dell'accordo TRIPS dell'OMC.

4. L'UE è a favore dell'istituzione di un registro multilaterale consultabile da parte di tutti i membri dell'OMC dotato di conseguenze giuridiche certe così da aiutare il detentore legittimo del diritto a fare rispettare i propri diritti nei paesi terzi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001056/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 February 2014)

Subject: Combating food counterfeiting and the use of words that give the impression that a product is Italian: more details on the creation of the new register for the protection of geographical indications

In its answer to Question E-013294/2013 'Combating food counterfeiting and the use of words that give the impression that a product is Italian', the Commission stated that 'the EU seeks to improve the protection of geographical indications through the creation of a legally binding multilateral register facilitating their protection as well as through the extension of the additional protection which is currently only available for wines and spirits' geographical indications under the TRIPS Agreement (i.e. objective protection notably independent of whether the public is misled as to the geographical origin of the product) to geographical indications for all products.

1. How far has the Commission got in creating this register?

2. How will the legislation protect geographical indications?

3. Will the register cover both protected geographical indication (PGI) and protected designation of origin (PDO) products?

4. Which countries will come under the scope of this register?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2014)

1. Intensive negotiations on the establishment of the multilateral register on GIs took place in the Special Session of the TRIPS (Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual property Rights) Council at the WTO in 2011. These negotiations culminated in a Draft Composite Text indicating the respective positions of WTO Members. This has been a contentious subject on the Doha agenda. While there has not been substantive progress for several years, this very important issue for the EU will have to be part of the Post-Bali (9th WTO Ministerial Conference in 2013) agenda of the WTO.

2. Under the proposal of the EU and its allies, the WTO Secretariat should enter the notified geographical indication into the register. Each WTO Member should provide that domestic authorities will consult the Register and take its information into account when making decisions regarding registration and protection of trademarks and geographical indications in accordance with its domestic procedures. In the absence of proof to the contrary in the course of these, the Register shall be considered as a *prima facie* evidence that, in that Member, the registered geographical indication meets the definition of 'geographical indication' laid down in TRIPS Article 22.1.

3. The multilateral register would cover both Protected Geographical Indications (PGI) and Protected Designations of Origin (PDO). Both PDOs and PGIs in fact are 'geographical indications' according to the definition provided for in Article 22 of the WTO TRIPS Agreement.

4. The EU favours the establishment of a multilateral register that would be consulted by all WTO Members, providing for certain legal consequences and thus facilitating the legitimate right holder in enforcing his/her rights in third countries.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001057/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Decreto «svuota carceri» e rischio per i cittadini: aggiornamento

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-009550/2013 sul Decreto «svuota carceri» e rischio per i cittadini, può la Commissione riferire circa gli esiti della riunione prevista per il novembre 2013? Può indicare se la relazione di attuazione delle tre decisioni quadro adottate nel settore della detenzione è stata pubblicata? In caso di risposta affermativa, dove è possibile accedere ai suoi contenuti?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(27 marzo 2014)

La Commissione ha adottato una relazione sull'attuazione delle tre decisioni quadro nel settore della detenzione ([1]) il 5 febbraio 2014. La relazione e il documento di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione possono essere consultati al seguente indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/criminal/news/140205_en.htm.

Per redigere la menzionata relazione di attuazione, il 13 novembre 2013 la Commissione ha organizzato una riunione di esperti con i rappresentanti degli Stati membri sulle tre decisioni quadro. La riunione era principalmente intesa ad assistere gli Stati membri nel processo di attuazione e a discutere i problemi che fossero emersi. La riunione si è svolta in uno spirito di fattiva collaborazione e il relativo resoconto sarà trasmesso all'onorevole parlamentare a tempo debito.

([1]) Decisione quadro 2008/909/GAI, del 27 novembre 2008, relativa all'applicazione del principio del reciproco riconoscimento alle sentenze penali che irrogano pene detentive o misure privative della libertà personale, ai fini della loro esecuzione nell'Unione europea (GU L 327 del 5.12.2008 pag. 27); decisione quadro 2008/947/GAI, del 27 novembre 2008, relativa all'applicazione del principio del reciproco riconoscimento alle sentenze e alle decisioni di sospensione condizionale in vista della sorveglianza delle misure di sospensione condizionale e delle sanzioni sostitutive (GU L 337 del 16.12.2008 pag. 102); decisione quadro 2009/829/GAI, del 23 ottobre 2009, sull'applicazione tra gli Stati membri dell'Unione europea del principio del reciproco riconoscimento alle decisioni sulle misure alternative alla detenzione cautelare (GU L 294 dell'11.11.2009 pag. 20).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001057/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 February 2014)

Subject: 'Empty prisons' decree and risks for citizens: update

With reference to my previous Question E-009550/2013 concerning the 'empty prisons' decree and risks for citizens, can the Commission report back on the outcome of the meeting scheduled for November 2013? Can it state whether an implementation report has been published for the three framework decisions adopted in relation to the field of detention and, if so, where its contents can be accessed?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2014)

The Commission adopted an implementation report on the three Framework Decisions in the field of detention ([1]) on 5 February 2014. The report as well as the Staff Working Document can be consulted under the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/criminal/news/140205_en.htm

In order to prepare the implementation report, the Commission organised an Experts' meeting on the three Framework Decisions on 13 November 2013 with representatives of the Member States. The main objective of this meeting was to provide assistance to Member States in the implementation process and to discuss hurdles that have come up. The meeting took place in a very constructive spirit. Minutes of this meeting have been drawn up and will be sent to the Honourable Member in due course.

([1]) The framework Decision 2008/909/JHA of 27 November 2008 on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to judgments in criminal matters imposing custodial sentences or measures involving deprivation of liberty for the purpose of their enforcement in the European Union, OJ 5.12.2008, L 327/27, the framework Decision 2008/947/JHA of 27 November 2008 on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to judgments and probation decisions with a view to the supervision of probation measures and alternative sanctions, OJ 16.12.2008, L 337/102, and the framework Decision 2009/829/JHA of 23 October 2009 on the application, between Member States of the European Union, of the principle of mutual recognition to decisions on supervision measures as an alternative to provisional detention, OJ 11.11.2009, L 294/20.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-001058/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Regolamentazione delle attività degli operatori del sesso in Europa

Con la Legge 20 febbraio 1958 n. 75, nota come «Legge Merlin», in Italia sono state disposte la chiusura delle case di tolleranza, l'abolizione della regolamentazione della prostituzione e l'istituzione di una serie di reati finalizzati a contrastarne lo sfruttamento. Secondo la commissione Affari sociali del Parlamento italiano, oggi nel nostro paese le prostitute sono quasi 70 000 e producono un volume di affari stimato intorno a 25 miliardi di euro. Passati cinquant'anni dalla nascita di questo disposto legislativo, gli abusi e i problemi di ordine pubblico legati alla prostituzione si sono moltiplicati: le organizzazioni criminali, attraverso la violenza, la minaccia o l'inganno, continuano a gestire il business dell'illecito. Nel caso della prostituzione volontaria si sono poi create forti discriminazioni: chi sceglie questa attività non ha diritto a nessun tipo di copertura previdenziale e non è soggetto a nessun controllo sanitario obbligatorio, con evidenti pericolose conseguenze per la salute pubblica.

A tale riguardo vanno considerati anche altri aspetti. In alcuni Stati europei la prostituzione corrisponde a una comune forma di lavoro dipendente, indipendente o cooperativo, con i diritti e i doveri che discendono da tali status, vale a dire la copertura previdenziale ma anche la tassazione. Inoltre, si assiste al pericoloso fenomeno dell'aumento dei falsi centri massaggi gestiti da malviventi cinesi, che occultano invece prostituzione non regolamentata e varie attività illecite. Infine, la Corte di Giustizia delle Comunità europee, nella sentenza del 20 novembre 2011 sulla causa Jany C-268/99, ha stabilito che l'attività della prostituzione esercitata a titolo individuale può essere considerata come un servizio erogato dietro remunerazione e pertanto si inserisce nell'ambito delle disposizioni del diritto comunitario relative alla libera prestazione di servizi.

1. Ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere se ritiene, sulla base dell'esempio di alcuni Stati membri, che la prostituzione regolamentata ed esercita in luoghi dedicati, seguendo precisi protocolli medico sanitari, possa rappresentare uno strumento efficace di garanzia e tutela degli operatori del settore, favorendo la legalità, il decoro urbano e la tutela della salute pubblica?

2. Seguendo la pronuncia della Corte di Giustizia, la Commissione ha valutato se e in quale misura la raccolta dell'IVA e la tassazione del reddito derivante dalla prostituzione, intesa come libera prestazione di servizi, potrebbe garantire agli Stati e agli enti locali risorse aggiuntive per evitare ulteriori aumenti delle tasse e alleggerire il carico fiscale collettivo?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(24 marzo 2014)

I trattati dell'UE non conferiscono all'Unione europea un'esplicita competenza a regolamentare la prostituzione — settore in cui i vari Stati membri hanno diverse politiche.

L'Unione europea ha comunque un suo ruolo nel combattere la tratta degli esseri umani legata alla prostituzione. In un documento di lavoro Eurostat sulla tratta degli esseri umani ([1]) (aprile 2013) viene rilevato che, per il periodo di riferimento 2008-2010, la maggioranza delle vittime (il 62 %) sono state oggetto di tratta a scopo di sfruttamento sessuale, cosa che include la tratta a fini di sfruttamento della prostituzione altrui e altre forme di sfruttamento sessuale. Questi dati dimostrano il legame fra l'industria del sesso e la tratta degli esseri umani.

Secondo i risultati Eurostat per il periodo 2008-2010, la maggioranza delle vittime della tratta degli esseri umani è costituita da donne e ragazze (80 %). Donne e ragazze rappresentano anche la maggioranza schiacciante delle vittime della tratta a scopo di sfruttamento sessuale (il 96 % nel 2010).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/EU+Policy/Report_DGHome_Eurostat

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001058/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 February 2014)

Subject: System of regulation for the activities of sex workers in Europe

In Italy, Law No 75 of 20 February 1958, which is known as the 'Merlin Law', has led to the closure of brothels, the abolition of the system of regulation for prostitution and the introduction of a series of fines aimed at combating exploitation. According to the Italian Parliament's Social Affairs Committee, our country has nearly 70 000 prostitutes, with an estimated revenue of around 25 billion euros. Fifty years on from the introduction of this legislative provision, the infringements and public order issues connected with prostitution have multiplied: criminal organisations carry on this illicit trade by means of violence, threats and deception. Voluntary prostitution is now subject to significant discrimination: anyone choosing to work as a prostitute shall not be entitled to any kind of social-security benefit and shall not undergo any obligatory healthcare checks. The resulting dangers to public health are clear.

Other angles will also be investigated in this respect. In some European countries prostitution is a common form of paid employment, self-employment or cooperative employment, with the associated rights and obligations, i.e. social-security benefits but also taxation. We are also witnessing the dangerous phenomenon of the increase of bogus massage parlours run by criminal gangs from China, which conceal unregulated prostitution and other illegal activities. Finally, the Court of Justice of the European Communities ruled, in its judgment of 20 November 2011 in Case C-268/99, 'Jany', that individual prostitution can be deemed to be a service provided for payment and therefore falls under the scope of the provisions of Community legislation on the freedom to provide services.

1. In light of the above, can the Commission indicate whether it believes, on the strength of the example set by some Member States, that regulated prostitution in dedicated areas, which complies with specific healthcare protocols, can represent an effective tool in protecting operators in this sector, promoting lawfulness, urban respectability and the safeguarding of public health?

2. Following the ruling by the Court of Justice, has the Commission assessed whether and to what extent the collection of VAT and taxation on earnings from prostitution, which is perceived to be the free provision of services, could guarantee the Member States and local bodies additional resources in order to avoid further tax increases and to relieve the collective tax burden?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

The EU Treaties do not confer to the EU explicit competence to regulate prostitution. Member States have diverse policies on prostitution.

The EU does have a role in tackling trafficking in human beings linked with prostitution. A Eurostat Working Paper on human trafficking ([1]) (April 2013) identified that the majority of victims (62%) in the reference period 2008-2010 were trafficked for sexual exploitation, which includes trafficking for the purpose of exploitation of the prostitution of others and other forms of sexual exploitation. These data demonstrate links between the sex industry and trafficking in human beings.

According to the Eurostat results for 2008-2010, women and girls are the vast majority of victims of human trafficking (80%) and the overwhelming majority of victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation are also women and girls (96% in 2010).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/EU+Policy/Report_DGHome_Eurostat

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001059/14
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(3 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Beneficiari dei fondi europei destinati alla Turchia

Si chiede alla Commissione l'elenco dei beneficiari finali di tutti i fondi che l'UE, a diverso titolo, ha destinato alla Turchia nel periodo 2007-2013 e l'indicazione, per ciascuno di essi, degli importi ricevuti.

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(1º aprile 2014)

I programmi finanziati nell'ambito dell'assistenza preadesione dell'UE alla Turchia sono attuati in gestione indiretta a norma del regolamento finanziario n. 966/2012 del 25 ottobre 2012. In questa modalità di gestione, la pubblicazione degli inviti a presentare proposte/dei bandi di gara e l'aggiudicazione degli appalti sono di competenza dei ministeri e delle strutture operative incaricati dalla Commissione.

I fondi IPA assegnati alla Turchia sono stati programmati in funzione delle priorità strategiche dei documenti di programmazione indicativa pluriennale (MIPD), con particolare attenzione ai seguenti settori: giustizia, affari interni e diritti fondamentali; sviluppo del settore privato; ambiente e cambiamenti climatici; trasporti; energia; sviluppo sociale, agricoltura e sviluppo rurale. L'ultimo MIPD è disponibile al seguente indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/mipd_turkey_2011_2013_en.pdf.

Informazioni dettagliate sulle attività programmate e già finanziate figurano nelle relazioni annuali sull'assistenza finanziaria per l'allargamento e nei documenti tecnici che le accompagnano. Le ultime relazioni annuali sono disponibili al seguente indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/news_corner/key-documents/index_en.htm?key_document=08012624885ccbf7,08012624887bee13,08012624887d3850.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001059/14
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(3 February 2014)

Subject: Recipients of European funds allocated to Turkey

Can the Commission please provide a list of the ultimate recipients of all the funds that the European Union allocated to Turkey for whatever purpose in the period 2007-2013, with the amounts received by each one?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(1 April 2014)

Programmes funded in the context of the EU pre-accession assistance to Turkey are implemented under indirect management according to the Financial Regulation No 966/2012 of 25 October 2012. With this implementation modality, the launch of calls for proposals/tender and the contracting responsibility are under the responsibility of different Ministries and Operating Structures which have been entrusted by the Commission.

Funds allocated for Turkey under IPA have been programmed in line with the strategic priorities of the Multi-annual Indicative Planning Documents (MIPDs). Particular attention has been given to Justice, Home Affairs and Fundamental Rights; Private Sector Development; Environment and Climate Change; Transport; Energy; Social Development as well as Agriculture and rural development. For the latest MIPD, please see: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/mipd_turkey_2011_2013_en.pdf

Details about programmed activities that have already been funded can be found in the Annual Reports on Financial Assistance for Enlargement and its complementing technical Staff Working Documents. For the latest Annual Reports see: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/news_corner/key-documents/index_en.htm?key_document=08012624885ccbf7,08012624887bee13,08012624887d3850

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001071/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(3 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Nuovi studi sulla lotta contro l'AIDS

Un gruppo di ricercatori tedeschi ha pubblicato un articolo in cui si afferma che tramite un recente studio è stata scoperta la proprietà degli estratti di *Pelargonium sidoides* (un tipo di geranio) nella lotta contro il virus HIV-1, causa della sindrome da immunodeficienza acquisita (AIDS). Secondo lo studio, gli estratti sarebbero in grado di attaccare le particelle del virus, impedendone la replicazione, e di proteggere il sangue e le cellule immunitarie dall'infezione. Secondo le analisi chimiche, l'effetto antivirale degli estratti di PS è mediato dai polifenoli che, isolati dall'estratto grezzo, hanno mostrato di essere meno tossici e molto efficaci nell'azione antivirale.

Secondo i ricercatori, dagli estratti di geranio *sidoides*, già noto per il suo utilizzo in fitoterapia, si potrebbe ricavare il primo fitofarmaco scientificamente validato contro l'HIV-1, che potrebbe divenire un complemento prezioso per stabilite terapie.

Il geranio potrebbe dunque divenire più di un semplice fiore da ornamento, ma un vero e proprio trattamento contro una delle malattie che attendono di essere debellate e che, secondo i dati dell'OMS, colpisce oltre 35 milioni di persone nel mondo.

Alla luce di questa scoperta, può la Commissione precisare se:

1. È al corrente dello studio in questione?

2. Nel quadro dei prossimi programmi quadro sono previsti finanziamenti europei per finanziare e approfondire tale studio, al fine di procedere a test in vivo?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(24 marzo 2014)

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza dello studio al quale si riferisce l'onorevole parlamentare.

2. Nell'ambito del Settimo programma quadro di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione (7° PQ, 2007-2013), i finanziamenti a progetti di ricerca sull'HIV — comprendenti la ricerca su nuovi schemi di trattamento — hanno totalizzato più di 170 milioni di euro. La ricerca sull'HIV è una priorità di Orizzonte 2020, il programma quadro di ricerca e innovazione (2014-2020) ([1]). Non sono previste assegnazioni specifiche di finanziamenti destinati alla continuazione di particolari studi già pubblicati. Attualmente, tutti i temi degli inviti a presentare proposte descritti nei programmi di lavoro 2014-2015 adottano un approccio basato sulle sfide e sono definiti in modo più ampio per consentire la valutazione e la selezione competitive delle migliori proposte elaborate dalla comunità scientifica. Ulteriori informazioni sono reperibili sul *Research and Innovation Participant Portal* ([2]).

([1]) COM(2011) 809 del 30 novembre 2011.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001071/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(3 February 2014)

Subject: New studies on the fight against AIDS

A recently published study carried out by a group of German researchers has revealed that extracts from a type of geranium, *Pelargonium sidoides*, have antiviral properties against HIV-1: the virus that leads to acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). These extracts are reportedly able to attack HIV-1 particles, thereby prevent the virus from replicating, and also protect blood and immune cells from infection. Chemical analyses revealed that the antiviral effect of the PS extracts is mediated by polyphenols which, when isolated from the crude extract, are less toxic while still maintaining their high anti-HIV-1 activity.

The researchers also claim that the first scientifically validated phytomedicine against HIV-1 could be obtained from extracts of *Pelargonium sidoides*, which is already renowned for its phytotherapeutic effects, and could become an invaluable supplement to established therapies.

With this discovery, the geranium could become much more than just a pretty flower and actually pave the way to the development of a treatment for this as yet incurable disease which, according to statistics from the World Health Organisation, has infected more than 35 million people worldwide.

1. Is the Commission aware of the study reported above?

2. In the context of further framework programmes, has European funding been set aside to finance further research into this study in order to proceed to *in vivo* testing?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

1. The Commission is aware of the study referred to by the Honourable Member.

2. Under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013), research projects on HIV — including research on new treatment regimens — were supported through an EU contribution exceeding EUR 170 million. HIV research will be one of the priorities of Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020). ([1]) No funding has been earmarked for the continuation of any specific study already published. Currently, call topics described in the work programmes 2014-2015 are challenge-based and defined more broadly in order to enable the competitive evaluation and selection of the most promising approaches proposed by the scientific community. Further information can be obtained through the Research and Innovation Participant Portal. ([2])

([1]) COM(2011) 809, 30/11/2011.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.htm

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001072/14
do Komisji
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE)
(3 lutego 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Standardy leczenia bólu przewlekłego w UE – wyższy poziom ochrony zdrowia publicznego

Dobry stan zdrowia to jedna z głównych trosk obywateli europejskich, szczególnie w świetle wysokich kosztów opieki zdrowotnej oraz wzrastającej liczny chorób cywilizacyjnych oraz nowotworowych. Unia Europejska zgodnie z art. 168 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej w ramach swoich kompetencji w zakresie ochrony zdrowia dąży do osiągnięcia wyższego poziomu ochrony zdrowotnej w ramach wszystkich europejskich polityk, mając na celu w szczególności poprawę zdrowia publicznego. Niestety wciąż istnieje wiele nierówności w tym zakresie. Problemem milionów pacjentów w UE jest brak spójnej unijnej polityki w kwestiach dotyczących leczenia bólu przewlekłego, będącego rezultatem chorób onkologicznych i przewlekłych.

Nieleczony ból to nie tylko straty dla społeczeństwa w postaci niezdolności do pracy pacjentów, ale także porzucone miejsca pracy przez opiekunów chorych oraz nakłady pieniężne na konieczność niesienia dalszej pomocy pacjentom cierpiącym z powodu nieleczonego lub nieprawidłowo leczonego bólu.

Według stwierdzenia ONZ z dnia 1 lutego 2013 r. pozbawianie odpowiedniego leczenia bólu u pacjentów stanowi naruszanie podstawowych praw człowieka. Ujednolicenie polityk krajowych w kwestii dostępu do terapii przeciwbólowych z całą pewnością mogłoby się przyczynić do lepszej realizacji kompetencji UE w zakresie wyższego poziomu ochrony zdrowotnej. W związku z tym chciałabym zapytać Komisję Europejską, czy planuje podjąć działania na rzecz ujednolicenia standardów opieki przeciwbólowej chorych na choroby onkologiczne i przewlekłe, włączając w to również wydanie wytycznych dotyczących edukacji lekarzy, pacjentów i bliskich w zakresie możliwości, korzyści i zagrożeń leczenia bólu przewlekłego?

Czy Komisja posiada aktualne dane statystyczne dotyczące dostępu do kontrolowanych leków przeciwbólowych w państwach członkowskich UE?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(25 marca 2014 r.)

Zgodnie z Traktatem o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej określanie polityki dotyczącej zdrowia oraz organizacja i świadczenie usług zdrowotnych i opieki medycznej należą przede wszystkim do obowiązków państw członkowskich. W związku z tym Komisja nie może podjąć działań w celu ujednolicenia standardów opieki przeciwbólowej chorych na choroby onkologiczne i przewlekłe.

Komisja Europejska współfinansuje wspólne działanie na rzecz „Europejskiego poradnika na temat poprawy jakości kompleksowego zwalczania chorób nowotworowych", które rozpocznie się w kwietniu 2014 r. Głównym celem tego wspólnego działania będzie opracowanie „Europejskiego poradnika na temat poprawy jakości kompleksowego zwalczania chorób nowotworowych", który mógłby obejmować oparte na dowodach zalecenia w dziedzinie opieki paliatywnej, w tym zwalczanie bólu na późniejszych etapach choroby. Ponadto inicjatywa Unii Europejskiej w zakresie leków innowacyjnych (finansowana przez siódmy program ramowy) stanowi wsparcie dla projektu „Zrozumienie bólu przewlekłego i poprawa jego leczenia" skupiającego się na poprawie leczenia pacjentów cierpiących na ból przewlekły.

Jeżeli chodzi o aktualne statystyki, OECD gromadzi dane dotyczące spożycia leków przeciwbólowych dla kategorii N02 (leki przeciwbólowe) w Systemie klasyfikacji anatomicznej, terapeutycznej i chemicznej. Niestety dane nie są gromadzone w sposób zharmonizowany dla kategorii N02A i N02B (opioidowe leki przeciwbólowe i silne leki przeciwbólowe).

Komisja Europejska nie posiada danych statystycznych dotyczących dostępu do kontrolowanych lejków przeciwbólowych w państwach członkowskich. W ramach drugiego wspólnotowego programu działań w dziedzinie zdrowia (lata 2008-2013) sfinansowano jednak projekt dotyczący farmaceutycznego systemu informacji medycznej ([1]). W sprawozdaniu ([2]) dotyczącym tego systemu stwierdzono, że leki przeciwbólowe są składnikami czynnymi spożywanymi w szpitalach w największej ilości.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=2007333
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database/fileref/2007333_phis_hospital_pharma_report_deliverable_5__received__12_07_2010.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001072/14
to the Commission
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE)
(3 February 2014)

Subject: Standards of chronic pain treatment in the EU — high level of public health protection

Good health is one of the main concerns of European citizens, particularly in view of the rising costs of healthcare and the increasing incidence of cancer and various diseases associated with modern living. In accordance with Article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, in the context of its competences in the field of healthcare the EU seeks to achieve a high level of health protection in all European policies aimed in particular at improving public health. Unfortunately many inequalities persist in this area. A problem facing millions of patients in the EU is the lack of a coherent EU policy on issues relating to the treatment of chronic pain caused by cancer and chronic diseases.

Untreated pain not only represents a loss to society in the form of incapacity to work, but also means carers abandoning their jobs and the need to pay for additional help for patients suffering from untreated or improperly treated pain.

According to a UN report published on 1 February 2013, denying patients appropriate pain treatment amounts to a violation of their basic human rights. Harmonising national policies on access to pain therapy could definitely contribute to better implementation of EU competences in relation to the provision of a high level of health protection. In this connection, I would like to ask whether the Commission is planning to take action to harmonise pain alleviation treatment standards for patients suffering from cancer and chronic diseases, including by issuing guidelines for doctors, patients and loved ones about the possibilities, benefits and risks of chronic pain treatment.

Does the Commission have any current statistics on access to controlled analgesics in the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2014)

According to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the definition of health policies and the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care is primarily the responsibility of Member States. The Commission is therefore not in a position to take action to harmonise pain alleviation treatment standards for patients suffering from cancer and chronic diseases.

The European Commission is co-funding the Joint Action 'European Guide on Quality Improvement in Comprehensive Cancer Control', which will start its work in April 2014. The main deliverable of this Joint Action will be a European Guide on Quality Improvement in Comprehensive Cancer Control, which could include evidence-based recommendations on Palliative Care including pain management in latter stages of the disease. Additionally, the European Union Innovative Medicines Initiative (funded by the framework Programme 7) is supporting the project 'Understanding Chronic pain and improving its treatment' to improve the treatment of patients with chronic pain.

With regards of current statistics, data on consumption of analgesics is collected by the OECD for the category N02 (Analgesics) of the 'Anatomical Therapeutic Chemical Classification System' Unfortunately no harmonised collection of data exists for categories N02A and N02B (opioids and strong analgesics).

The European Commission does not have statistics on access to controlled analgesics in the Member States. However, the EU Health Programme (2008-2013) has funded the Pharmaceutical Health Information System project ([1]) which identified in its report ([2]) that analgesic was the top active ingredient by consumption in hospitals.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=2007333
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database/fileref/2007333_phis_hospital_pharma_report_deliverable_5__received__12_07_2010.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001075/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Programa Erasmus+ en el Estado español

Mucha gente coincide en que el programa Erasmus (ahora Erasmus+) es uno de los grandes éxitos de la Unión Europea: fomenta el intercambio de conocimiento, el aprendizaje de idiomas y la convivencia entre jóvenes de distintos países de Europa. De hecho, se conoce coloquialmente a los ciudadanos que han sido estudiantes Erasmus como los *truly Europeans*, ya que a partir de este momento pasan a tener conciencia de que su espacio de relación natural no es solamente su país sino todo el continente.

La Comisión también es consciente de ello y por este motivo ha reformulado el programa con el nuevo Erasmus+ y también ha aumentado la partida presupuestaria, que pasa a tener 14 700 millones de euros (2014-2020), lo que supone un incremento del 40 % ([1]).

En la prensa de hoy se publica que la CE respalda que el Estado español reduzca a un semestre la estancia Erasmus ([2]), cuando la duración del programa de estudios es de entre tres y doce meses, a libre elección entre los estudiantes. ¿Puede confirmar la Comisión si es eso cierto?

El pasado mes de noviembre, la Comisión ya tuvo que desmentir que el Estado español fuera a recibir menos fondos para las becas Erasmus ([3]) y señaló que era el cuarto país con mayor dotación. ¿A qué se debe esta reducción de becas? ¿No cree la Comisión que esta medida del Gobierno español discrimina a los miles de estudiantes españoles ([4]) con respecto al resto de estudiantes Erasmus europeos?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de marzo de 2014)

El presupuesto para los intercambios de estudiantes y personal de enseñanza superior Erasmus+ que se ha asignado a España aumentará un 4,3 % en 2014 y, de aquí a 2020, es probable que se incremente alrededor de un 60 %. España, como quinto país más poblado de la UE, será el cuarto país en términos de presupuesto recibido y el tercero en cuanto a movilidad en la enseñanza superior.

En anteriores períodos de programación, España apoyó el mayor número de estudiantes Erasmus combinando fondos europeos con financiación nacional. En la actual situación presupuestaria nacional, las autoridades españolas han optado por otro modelo de financiación para el curso académico 2014-2015.

La duración media de un período de movilidad Erasmus en Europa es de alrededor de seis meses, resultante de los estudiantes que permanecen durante un semestre (generalmente entre 4 y 5 meses naturales) y, del menor número que estudiantes que permanecen un curso académico completo. El período de movilidad medio de los estudiantes españoles ha sido superior, situándose en alrededor de ocho meses, por lo que reducir este período hasta la media de la UE permitirá que más estudiantes reciban una beca. La Comisión entiende que, no obstante, habrá flexibilidad para que los estudiantes permanezcan más tiempo en caso de que resulte necesario para sus estudios.

La Comisión acoge con satisfacción los esfuerzos realizados por el Gobierno español para mantener el número de estudiantes de Erasmus en el próximo año académico, a pesar de la difícil situación presupuestaria a nivel nacional.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/documents/erasmus-plus-programme-guide_en.pdf
([2]) http://www.expansion.com/2014/01/22/entorno/1390394435.html
([3]) http://www.rtve.es/noticias/20131112/ce-niega-fondos-europeos-para-becas-erasmus-se-vayan-reducir/790021.shtml
([4]) http://www.oapee.es/dctm/weboapee/servicios/publicaciones/publicaciones-erasmus/bajadatos-y-cifrasok-2.pdf?documentId=0901e72b81579623

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001075/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 February 2014)

Subject: Erasmus+ programme in Spain

Many people agree that the Erasmus programme (now Erasmus+) is one of the great success stories of the European Union, promoting the exchange of knowledge, learning other languages and communal living among young people from different European countries. In fact, EU citizens who have once been Erasmus students are known colloquially as 'truly Europeans', because they learn from that experience that the natural scope of their relationships is not just their own country but rather the whole continent.

The Commission is also aware of this. It has therefore reformulated the programme as the new Erasmus+ and has also increased its budget, which now amounts to 14 700 million euros (2014-2020) — a rise of 40% ([1]).

Today's press carries a report that the Commission supports the Spanish Government's decision to reduce Erasmus students' stay to six months ([2]), when the duration of study programmes is between three and twelve months, according to whichever option students may freely choose. Can the Commission confirm whether or not this is true?

Last November the Commission had to issue a denial that Spain was to receive fewer funds for Erasmus grants ([3]) and pointed out that it receives the fourth largest amount of funding by country. What is the reason for this reduction in grants? Does the Commission not think that this measure adopted by the Spanish Government discriminates against the thousands of Spanish Erasmus students ([4]) vis-à-vis those from other European countries?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

The budget for Erasmus+ higher education student and staff exchanges which is allocated to Spain will increase by 4.3% in 2014 and, by 2020, it is likely to rise by some 60%. Spain, as the country with the 5th largest population in the EU, will receive the 4th highest total budget share and the 3rd highest regarding Higher Education mobility.

In the previous programming periods, Spain supported the highest number of Erasmus students, combining European funds with national financing. In the current national budgetary situation, the Spanish authorities have opted for another financing model for the academic year 2014-2015.

The average duration of an Erasmus mobility period in Europe is around 6 months, made up of students who stay for one semester — generally between 4 and 5 calendar months — and the smaller number that stays for a full academic year. The average mobility period of Spanish students has been higher, at around 8 months; reducing this period to the EU average will allow more students to receive a grant. The Commission understands that there will nevertheless be flexibility for students to stay longer if this is necessary for their studies.

The Commission welcomes the efforts made by the Spanish Government to maintain the number of Erasmus students in the next academic year, despite the difficult budgetary situation at national level.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/documents/erasmus-plus-programme-guide_en.pdf
([2]) http://www.expansion.com/2014/01/22/entorno/1390394435.html
([3]) http://www.rtve.es/noticias/20131112/ce-niega-fondos-europeos-para-becas-erasmus-se-vayan-reducir/790021.shtml
([4]) http://www.oapee.es/dctm/weboapee/servicios/publicaciones/publicaciones-erasmus/bajadatos-y-cifrasok-2.pdf?documentId=0901e72b81579623

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001079/14
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(3 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Carenza di infermieri

Sebbene chi lavora in corsia rappresenti il 58,2 % della forza lavoro complessiva nel sistema sanitario italiano, emerge una grave carenza di personale negli ospedali, e chi lavora si trova a dovere fare turni più lunghi e meno pagati.

L'Italia è all'ultimo posto in Europa per numero di infermieri pro-capite, solo 6,6 ogni 1 000 abitanti. È stato calcolato che in Italia servono almeno altri 50 000 infermieri. Molti infermieri non sono italiani e non parlano correttamente la nostra lingua.

Anche il numero degli infermieri in rapporto ai medici è uno dei più bassi d'Europa, 1,6. Il taglio di circa 7 400 posti letto previsto dal nuovo decreto legge pone un problema non da poco, visto che diminuirà il servizio per i cittadini e aumenterà la tensione sociale, di cui le corsie di ospedale sono pericolose fucine, e di cui le prime vittime sono gli infermieri stessi dal momento che uno su cinque dichiara di aver ricevuto minacce fisiche o verbali in orario di lavoro.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se ha a disposizione dati più specifici sulla carenza di infermieri nel sistema sanitario italiano;

2. se non ritiene necessario che gli Stati membri organizzino corsi di lingua per gli infermieri stranieri in modo che possano comprendersi con i malati;

3. quali normative comunitarie si applicano alla categoria degli infermieri, alla loro qualifica professionale e alla loro libertà di movimento nell'UE;

4. quali strumenti mette a disposizione per la formazione di medici ed infermieri?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2014)

La Commissione rinvia l'Onorevole deputata alla propria risposta P-0014382/2013 in cui si delineano le azioni della Commissione per affrontare le carenze di operatori sanitari nell'UE e sostenere gli sforzi degli Stati membri per migliorare la disponibilità di dati.

La direttiva 2005/36/CE ([1]) relativa al riconoscimento delle qualifiche professionali tratta del regime linguistico degli operatori sanitari. Essa stabilisce che gli Stati membri possono esigere che le persone le quali beneficiano del riconoscimento di qualifiche professionali in altri Stati membri, compreso il personale infermieristico, dispongano delle conoscenze linguistiche necessarie per praticare la professione. Le autorità nazionali competenti possono effettuare controlli proporzionati delle competenze linguistiche.

Questa direttiva si applica ai casi in cui i cittadini di uno Stato membro dell'UE desiderino esercitare una professione in uno Stato membro diverso da quello in cui hanno ottenuto la loro qualifica professionale. La direttiva contiene requisiti minimi armonizzati in materia di formazione per quanto concerne sette professioni, compresi gli infermieri dell'assistenza generale, che prevedono il riconoscimento automatico di tali qualifiche in tutta l'UE.

Il Fondo sociale europeo è uno degli strumenti a disposizione degli Stati membri per sostenere le azioni di istruzione e formazione, anche in ambito sanitario. Le priorità di spesa dei finanziamenti del Fondo sociale europeo negli Stati membri nel periodo 2014-2020 saranno stabilite negli accordi di partenariato con gli Stati membri e nei programmi operativi nazionali attualmente in corso di negoziazione.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2005:255:0022:0142:it:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001079/14
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(3 February 2014)

Subject: Shortage of nurses

Although ward staff account for 58.2% of the total workforce of the Italian health system, a serious shortage of hospital staff is beginning to emerge, with existing staff having to work longer, more poorly paid shifts.

Italy is in bottom place in Europe in terms of the number of nurses per capita, with only 6.6 nurses for every 1 000 people. It has been calculated that Italy needs at least another 50 000 nurses. Many nurses are not Italian and do not speak the language fluently.

The number of nurses per doctor is also at 1.6, one of the lowest in Europe. The cut in the number of bed spaces by approximately 7 400, as laid down by the new decree law, is no small problem, since it will reduce the services available to patients and increase social tension, for which hospital wards are a dangerous hotbed and whose first victims are nurses, with one in five saying they have been physically or verbally threatened while at work.

In the light of the above, could the Commission tell me:

1. whether it has more specific data on the shortage of nurses in the Italian health system;

2. whether it does not think it necessary for the Member States to organise language courses for foreign nurses so that they can understand and be understood by patients;

3. what Community rules apply to nurses, their professional qualifications and their freedom of movement in the EU;

4. what resources it is making available for the training of doctors and nurses?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

The Commission refers to its reply P-0014382/2013 which sets out the Commission's actions to address the shortages of health professionals in the EU and to support efforts by Member States to improve the availability of data.

Directive 2005/36/EC ([1]) on the recognition of professional qualifications covers the language regime for health professionals. It stipulates that Member States can require that persons benefiting from the recognition of professional qualifications in other Member States — including nurses — have the knowledge of languages necessary for practicing the profession. The competent national authorities can carry out proportionate language controls.

This directive applies to cases where nationals of an EU Member State wish to pursue a profession in a Member State other than where they obtained the professional qualification. The directive contains harmonised minimum training requirements for seven professions, including nurses responsible for general care, which allow for automatic recognition of these qualifications throughout the EU.

The European Social Funds is one instrument at Member States' disposal to support education and training, including in the health area. Spending priorities for European Social Fund funding in the Member States in t2014-2020 will be set out in the partnership agreements with the Member States and the national operational programmes, currently under negotiation.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2005:255:0022:0142:en:PDF

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001080/14
alla Commissione
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(3 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Allarme inquinamento nel delta del fiume Niger

Secondo uno studio compiuto da Amnesty International, ingenti fuoriuscite di petrolio, dovute alla fatiscenza dei vecchi oleodotti, starebbero avvelenando il delta del fiume Niger.

Le compagnie petrolifere negano ogni responsabilità, attribuendo il problema a continui sabotaggi o episodi di criminalità e nell'attesa di chiarire le effettive cause, milioni di contadini e di pescatori subiscono i danni dell'inquinamento.

È la Commissione a conoscenza di tale problema? Sono state predisposte azioni per capire le cause dell'inquinamento e porvi un rimedio?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2014)

I danni ambientali provocati dalle fuoriuscite di petrolio nel delta del Niger sono fonte di grande preoccupazione. L'inquinamento è riconducibile a diverse cause: mancanza di manutenzione degli oleodotti, perdite e attività criminali di qualsiasi tipo.

L'UE discute periodicamente di tali questioni con le autorità nigerine, la società civile e le compagnie petrolifere internazionali. Ha esortato le autorità nigerine ad adottare quanto prima la modifica della legge sull'Agenzia nazionale per l'individuazione e la risposta alle fuoriuscite di petrolio (NOSDRA) che prevede, tra l'altro, misure correttive quali reazioni di emergenza, sanzioni, compensazioni, gestione dell'inquinamento e rafforzamento delle capacità dell'Agenzia.

Attraverso il Fondo europeo per lo sviluppo (FES), l'UE sostiene le riforme governative volte a promuovere la trasparenza e la responsabilità, anche nel settore petrolifero. Vengono inoltre finanziati progetti volti a fornire mezzi di sussistenza sostenibili alle comunità locali del delta del Niger vittime di danni ambientali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001080/14
to the Commission
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(3 February 2014)

Subject: Pollution alert in the Niger delta

A study carried out by Amnesty International reveals that vast oil spills from decaying old pipelines are poisoning the Niger delta.

The oil companies deny any responsibility and attribute the problem to continual acts of sabotage or criminal activity. While everyone waits for the real causes to be made clear, millions of small farmers and fishermen are facing the harmful effects of the pollution.

Is the Commission aware of this problem? Has any action been taken to discover the causes of the pollution and to remedy it?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

The environmental damage caused by oil spills in the Niger Delta is of great concern. There are many causes for the pollution: lack of maintenance of oil pipelines, leakages and criminal activities of all sorts.

The EU is regularly discussing the issues with the Nigerian authorities, civil society and international oil companies. It has urged the Nigerian authorities to quickly adopt the National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA) amendment bill, which would provide, *inter alia*, for remediation measures to oil spills, including emergency reaction, penalties, compensation, pollution management and reinforcement of NOSDRA capacities.

Through the European Development Fund (EDF), the EU supports the government's reforms fostering transparency and accountability, including in the oil industry. Projects contributing to sustainable livelihoods for local communities in the Niger Delta affected by environmental damage are also funded.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001083/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(3 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Ragazze-madri espulse dalle scuole in Tanzania

Da una ricerca condotta dal Centro per i Diritti riproduttivi in Tanzania emergerebbe una pratica tanto diffusa quanto allarmante: fare test di gravidanza invasivi sulle adolescenti che, in caso di esito positivo, verrebbero espulse dalla scuola senza considerare il fatto che il 30 % di queste ragazze sarebbe rimasto incinta perché vittima di abusi sessuali.

Circa 55 000 ragazze sono già state forzate a interrompere gli studi nell'ultimo biennio, vedendo così di molto ridotte le loro prospettive future.

È l'Alto Rappresentante a conoscenza di questo triste fenomeno? Quali iniziative intende intraprendere per promuovere il cambiamento di una cultura che, nel ventunesimo secolo, in talune aree discrimina ancora così profondamente le donne?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2014)

Sulla base dei principi della divisione del lavoro e dell'efficacia degli aiuti, il DFID rappresenta l'Unione europea nel dialogo sulla politica in materia di istruzione con il governo della Tanzania. Attraverso il DFID, l'Unione europea ha già sollevato la questione con il governo del paese.

Nel 2012 la Commissione delle Nazioni Unite per i diritti del fanciullo ha esortato la Tanzania a vietare l'espulsione delle adolescenti incinte dalle scuole. La Tanzania sta rivedendo la propria politica in materia di istruzione e formazione e prevede l'adozione di una strategia riveduta durante il periodo 2014/2015, che comprenderà linee guida nazionali elaborate dal governo per consentire alle giovani madri di continuare il proprio percorso d'istruzione dopo il parto. Dal 2009, il governo della Tanzania ha permesso alle allieve della scuola primaria in stato di gravidanza di sostenere l'esame finale dell'ultimo anno. Si tratta di una misura temporanea in vista dell'attuazione legislativa delle summenzionate linee guida.

Una questione così delicata sotto il profilo culturale e sociale richiede un'opera di sensibilizzazione che coinvolga i giovani, i genitori, i tutori, le organizzazioni confessionali, il governo e i partner per lo sviluppo. L'UNICEF è operativa nel paese e la delegazione UE lancerà quest'anno un invito locale a presentare proposte per contrastare le pratiche tradizionali lesive che legittimano la violenza sessuale e di genere. La delegazione UE e il DFID stanno valutando i modi migliori per continuare ad impegnarsi in questo campo, in particolare attraverso strategie più ampie per la lotta contro la violenza sessuale e rafforzando le conoscenze delle ragazze in materia di salute sessuale e riproduttiva.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001083/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(3 February 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Teenage mothers expelled from school in Tanzania

Research conducted by the Centre for Reproductive Rights in Tanzania has revealed a practice that is both widespread and alarming: invasive pregnancy tests are being performed on teenage girls, who are expelled from school if they test positive, without considering the fact that 30% of these girls become pregnant as a result of sexual abuse.

Some 55 000 girls have been forced to give up school in the last two years, thereby seriously damaging their future prospects.

Is the High Representative aware of this sad situation? What measures does she intend to adopt to help change this culture, which in the 21st century is still discriminating so badly against women in certain areas?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

Based on the principles of Division of Labour and Aid Effectiveness, DFID represents the EU in the education policy dialogue with the Government of Tanzania. Through DFID, the EU has already raised the matter with the government.

In 2012, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child urged Tanzania to prohibit the expulsion of pregnant teenagers from schools. Tanzania is reviewing its Education and Training Policy and foresees the adoption of a revised Policy during 2014/2015. It will include the national guidelines developed by the government for allowing young mothers to continue their education after delivery. Since 2009, the government has let primary school pregnant pupils sit for their final examination in the last year of school. This is meant to be a temporary measure until the legislative enactment of the above guidelines.

This culturally and socially sensitive question requires advocacy involving youth, parents, guardians, faith-based organisations, the government and development partners. Unicef is active in the area and the EU Delegation will launch a local call for proposals this year on 'combating harmful traditional practices that legitimize sexual and gender based violence'. The EU Delegation and DFID consider how best to continue engaging on the issue, including broader strategies to combat sexual violence and promote sexual and reproductive health knowledge amongst female youth.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-001088/14
à la Commission
Françoise Castex (S&D)
(4 février 2014)

Objet: Consultation publique sur le droit d'auteur

La révision des règles de l'Union européenne en matière de droit d'auteur fait actuellement l'objet d'une consultation publique depuis le 5 décembre 2013 et jusqu'au 5 février prochain.

À quelques jours de la fin du délai de réponse à cette consultation publique, celle-ci demeure uniquement disponible en anglais ([1]).

Or, le fait que la consultation publique ne soit disponible que dans cette langue favorise les réponses faites par les citoyens mais aussi les entreprises de langue anglaise, notamment américaines.

Comment la Commission envisage-t-elle de remédier à cette inégalité de fait? Si la consultation est qualifiée de publique, pourquoi n'est-elle pas disponible dans l'ensemble des langues officielles de l'Union européenne?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(5 mars 2014)

La Commission tient à informer l'Honorable Parlementaire que la clôture de la consultation publique relative à la révision des règles de l'Union sur le droit d'auteur a été reportée au 5 mars 2014.

La Commission estime que l'apport des citoyens et des parties intéressées est essentiel et s'emploie à répondre aux besoins de tous les publics cibles, comme le préconise également son document d'orientations sur les consultations publiques (*cf*. COM(2002)704).

Parallèlement, la Commission doit hiérarchiser les nombreuses demandes concurrentes adressées à ses services de traduction, ce qui signifie qu'actuellement, elle ne peut garantir la publication de documents de consultation en plusieurs versions linguistiques.

Néanmoins, les réponses données à la consultation publique relative au droit d'auteur sont acceptées dans toutes les langues officielles de l'UE. La Commission confirme qu'elle reçoit des contributions dans toutes les langues officielles de l'UE et les analyse actuellement.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/consultations/2013/copyright-rules/index_fr.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001088/14
to the Commission
Françoise Castex (S&D)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: Public consultation on copyright rules

The revision of the EU's copyright rules is currently the subject of a public consultation that was launched on 5 December 2013 and will close on 5 February 2014.

With only a few days to go until the deadline for submitting contributions is reached, the public consultation documents are still only available in English ([1]).

The fact that the documents are available only in English favours contributions not only from English-speaking citizens, but also English-speaking firms, including American ones.

What does the Commission plan to do to address this de facto inequality? Given that the consultation is supposedly a public one, why is it not available in all the official EU languages?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2014)

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that the deadline to reply to the public consultation on the review of the EU copyright rules was extended to 5 March 2014.

The Commission believes that citizens and stakeholders' input is crucial and makes an effort to meet the need of all target audiences, as also stressed in its guidelines on public consultations (cf. COM(2002) 704).

At the same time, the Commission must prioritise the many competing demands on its translation services, which means that at the moment, it cannot always guarantee the publication of consultation documents in several languages.

However, replies to the public consultation on copyright are accepted in all the EU official languages. The Commission can confirm that it receives contributions in all official EU languages and is analysing them.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/consultations/2013/copyright-rules/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-001089/14
alla Commissione
Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(4 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Richiesta di fondi europei per l'emergenza maltempo nel Lazio e in Toscana

Negli scorsi giorni si è abbattuto sull'Italia un nubifragio di eccezionali dimensioni, il quale si è protratto ininterrottamente per tre giorni ed ha causato gravi danni nelle città di Roma (in particolare nel XV e XIII municipio), Fiumicino e Isola Sacra, nei comuni della Flaminia e nelle zone delle provincie di Pisa e Livorno.

Numerose voragini, frane e allagamenti hanno provocato danni a persone, alle infrastrutture, alle imprese ed alle coltivazioni. Le autorità stanno tuttora valutando l'ammontare esatto dei danni, i quali tuttavia sembrano essere di grande entità.

Data questa situazione di emergenza, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. Può attivare il Fondo di solidarietà dell'Unione europea, in quanto strumento dell'UE atto a fornire aiuti finanziari a zone colpite da calamità naturali?

2. Può verificare la possibilità di attivare i programmi e i finanziamenti previsti nell'ambito del Meccanismo europeo di protezione civile?

3. Può verificare quali ulteriori programmi di finanziamento siano disponibili per interventi di messa in sicurezza delle infrastrutture colpite?

4. Intendes prendere in considerazione la possibilità di nuove azioni a livello europeo in tema di prevenzione e di nuove risorse finanziarie per infrastrutture a rischio di calamità naturali?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(28 febbraio 2014)

1. Il Fondo di solidarietà può essere attivato solo in seguito a una richiesta in tal senso dello Stato membro interessato, avanzata entro 10 settimane del verificarsi dei primi danni causati dall'evento.

2. Qualsiasi paese, interno o esterno alla UE, colpito da un grave calamità può chiedere assistenza attraverso il Centro di Coordinamento di Risposta all'Emergenza (*Emergency Response Coordination Centre* — ERCC), il nucleo operativo cioè del Meccanismo europeo di protezione civile (*Union Civil Protection Mechanism* — UCPM), accessibile 24 ore su 24. Nel caso delle recenti piogge torrenziali che hanno colpito l'Italia, le competenti autorità italiane non hanno chiesto l'assistenza dell'UPCM.

3. I programmi regionali 2007-2013 sia della Regione Lazio che della Regione Toscana, entrambi cofinanziati dal Fondo di europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR), prevedono interventi a favore della prevenzione e della gestione dei rischi idrogeologici. La Commissione invita l'onorevole parlamentare a contattare le autorità di gestione nel Lazio ([1]) e in Toscana ([2]).

4. I finanziamenti destinati alla politica di coesione possono essere usati a favore di iniziative legate alla prevenzione delle calamità naturali, soprattutto nell'ambito dell'obiettivo tematico 5. Esse possono comprendere programmi e progetti incentrati sulla prevenzione delle inondazioni. Compete agli Stati membri selezionare e attuare i progetti in conformità alle priorità stabilite nei pertinenti programmi.

Il Programma regionale di sviluppo rurale (*Rural Development Programme* — RDP) attualmente in corso nel Lazio, comprende finanziamenti destinati a restaurare il potenziale agricolo danneggiato dalle calamità naturali. Il Programma regionale di sviluppo rurale della Toscana non prevede invece siffatti finanziamenti.

A favore di agricoltori esposti a rischi sempre maggiori di traversie a carattere climatico, gli Stati membri possono introdurre e finanziare misure di gestione dei rischi nell'ambito dei rispettivi RDP 2014-2020. Eventuali proposte di allocazione di finanziamenti, in tal modo formulate, saranno esaminate dalla Commissione in seno al processo di negoziazione dei programmi stessi.

([1]) Direzione regionale Sviluppo economico e Attività produttive, Via Rosa Raimondi Garibaldi 7, I — 00145 Roma; e-mail: adgcomplazio@regione.lazio.it.
([2]) Direzione generale dello Sviluppo economico, via Luca Giordano 13, I — 50132 Firenze; e-mail: Albino.caporale@regione.toscana.it; e autoritagestionecreo@regione.toscana.it.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001089/14
to the Commission
Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: EU financial assistance for severe weather damage in Lazio and Tuscany

Exceptionally heavy rain which continued unabated for three days recently caused severe damage in Rome (in particular in the thirteenth and fifteenth municipalities), Fiumicino, Isola Sacra and towns to the north of Rome, as well as in the provinces of Pisa and Livorno.

Widespread flooding, subsidence and landslides damaged homes, infrastructure, businesses and crops. The authorities are still in the process of assessing the full cost of the damage, which would appear to be very extensive.

In response to this emergency, can the Commission:

1. Mobilise the EU Solidarity Fund, which was set up to provide financial support to areas hit by natural disasters?

2. Look into whether EU Civil Protection Mechanism tools and funding can be brought to bear in this instance?

3. Look into what other sources of funding may be used to help make damaged infrastructure safe?

4. Say whether it intends to explore the possibility of introducing new preventive measures at EU level and making fresh funds available for infrastructure that is vulnerable to natural disasters?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2014)

1. The Solidarity Fund can only be mobilised following an application from the affected Member State, to be submitted within 10 weeks of the date of the first damage caused by the disaster.

2. Any country inside or outside the EU affected by a major disaster can make a request for European assistance through the Emergency Response Coordination Centre which is the operational heart of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM), accessible 24 hours a day. In the case of the recent heavy rains, the Italian authorities did not request assistance from the UCPM.

3. Both the Lazio and Tuscany 2007-2013 regional programmes co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) plan for interventions on prevention and management of hydrogeological risks. The Commission suggests the Honourable Member to contact the managing authorities in Lazio ([1]) and Tuscany ([2]).

4. Cohesion policy funding can be used for actions linked to the prevention of natural disasters, especially within thematic objective 5. This can include programmes and projects dealing with flood prevention. Member States are responsible for selecting and implementing projects according to the priorities set in the relevant programmes.

The current regional Rural Development Programme (RDP) for Lazio includes funding for the restoration of agricultural potential damaged by natural disaster. The regional RDP for Tuscany does not include such funding.

As farmers are exposed to increasing risks related to adverse climate events, Member States are able to introduce and fund risk management measures under their 2014-2020 RDPs. Any such proposal to allocate funding in this way will be assessed by the Commission as part of the programme negotiation process.

([1]) Direzione regionale Sviluppo economico e Attività produttive, Via Rosa Raimondi Garibaldi 7, 00145 Roma, e-mail: adgcomplazio@regione.lazio.it
([2]) Directorate-General for Economic Development, Via Luca Giordano 13, 50132 Firenze ,e-mail: Albino.caporale@regione.toscana.it and autoritagestionecreo@regione.toscana.it

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-001090/14
a la Comisión
Iratxe García Pérez (S&D)
(4 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Evaluación de impacto ambiental en zonas Natura 2000

El Proyecto Cronos de investigación de hidrocarburos afecta a zonas Natura 2000 de las CC.AA. de Castilla-La Mancha y Castilla y León. Se trata de espacios con figuras de especial protección, como: Altos de Barahona (LIC y ZEPA), Páramos de Layna (LIC y ZEPA), Embalse de Monteagudo de las Vicarías (ZEPA) y Sabinares del Jalón (LIC), en Castilla y León; y las Parameras de Maranchón, Hoz del Mesa y Aragoncillo (LIC y ZEPA), en Castilla-La Mancha.

El Consejo de Ministros concedió el 26 de abril de 2013 a la empresa Frontera Energy Corporation S.L. un permiso de investigación sobre hidrocarburos por un período de 6 años. Desde la Asociación Desarrollo Verde, una de las que han recurrido la citada autorización, se tienen dudas fundadas de que la empresa encargada de la investigación haya realizado la preceptiva evaluación de impacto ambiental que exige la normativa europea para una actuación de este tipo en zonas Natura 2000.

¿Puede el gobierno de un Estado miembro autorizar actuaciones de este tipo sin que la empresa adjudicataria haya realizado una evaluación de impacto ambiental sobre los territorios de Natura 2000?

¿Considera la Comisión que unos estudios de fractura hidráulica tendrán tan escasa repercusión medioambiental en zonas LIC y ZEPA como para que la Administración no someta a evaluación de impacto ambiental tales proyectos?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de febrero de 2014)

La Comisión toma nota de que, el 26 de abril de 2013, las autoridades competentes concedieron un permiso al proyecto Cronos, de exploración de hidrocarburos ([1]), por el que se faculta a su titular a investigar, en exclusiva, la existencia de hidrocarburos en la superficie otorgada. De acuerdo con ese permiso, los trabajos o proyectos específicos que se realicen en el desarrollo del programa de investigación (incluido cualquier proyecto de perforación o explotación) deben estar sujetos a una evaluación de impacto ambiental de acuerdo con la legislación pertinente.

De ello se desprende, por tanto, que cualquier actividad o proyecto que pueda afectar de manera significativa a los espacios Natura 2000 mencionados por Su Señoría se someterán a una evaluación de sus repercusiones sobre esos espacios en una fase posterior.

([1]) http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2013/05/14/pdfs/BOE-A-2013-5040.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001090/14
to the Commission
Iratxe García Pérez (S&D)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: Environmental impact assessment of projects in Natura 2000 network sites

The Cronos research project into hydrocarbons affects Natura 2000 network sites in the Spanish autonomous communities of Castilla-La Mancha and Castilla y León. The areas in question have special protection status, and include: Altos de Barahona (SCI ([1]) and SPAB ([2])), Páramos de Layna (SCI and SPAB), Embalse de Monteagudo de las Vicarías (SPAB) and Sabinares del Jalón (SCI), all of which are located in Castilla y León; and las Parameras de Maranchón, Hoz del Mesa y Aragoncillo (SCI and SPAB) in Castilla-La Mancha.

On 26 April 2013 the Spanish Council of Ministers granted Frontera Energy Corporation a six-year licence to carry out research into hydrocarbons. The Green Development Association (Asociación Desarrollo Verde), one of the organisations which appealed against the licencing decision, has reason to doubt whether the firm has carried out the environmental impact assessment (EIA) required under EU rules governing such activities in Natura 2000 sites.

Can a Member State government authorise activities of this kind when the company awarded the licence for the work has failed to carry out an EIA to assess its impact on Natura 2000 sites?

Does the Commission think that hydraulic fracturing or fracking studies will have such a limited environmental impact on SCIs and SPABs that a government does not need to submit such projects to an EIA?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2014)

The Commission takes note that, on 26 April 2013, the competent authorities granted to the hydrocarbon exploration 'Cronos' project a permit ([3]) providing exclusive rights for the investigation of hydrocarbon resources in the area concerned. According to this permit, any specific activities or projects to be undertaken in the framework of these investigations — including any possible drilling or exploitation project- shall be subject to an environmental impact assessment in accordance with the relevant legislation.

It therefore appears that any activity or project likely to have significant effects on the Natura 2000 sites concerned will be subject to an assessment of its implications to the sites concerned at a later stage.

([1]) Site of Community Interest.
([2]) Special Protection Area for Birds.
([3]) http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2013/05/14/pdfs/BOE-A-2013-5040.pdf

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор P-001091/14
до Комисията
Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE)
(4 февруари 2014 г.)

Относно: Незабавни действия на ЕС по отношение на транс-мазнините

През октомври 2013 г. Административният орган на САЩ по храните и лекарствата (FDA) издаде съобщение на Федералния регистър, в което се казва, че въз основа на новите научни доказателства и данни на експертни научни групи частично хидрогенираните масла, които са основният източник на произвежданите транс-мастни киселини в хранителната промишленост, или иначе казано транс-мазнините, не са общопризнати като безопасни за каквато и да било употреба в хранителни продукти, въз основа на наличните към момента научни данни, установяващи произтичащите от консумацията на транс-мазнини рискове за здравето. Съобщението гласи, че следователно транс-мазнините са хранителни добавки, които следва да подлежат на одобрение от страна на FDA преди пускането на пазара.

Решението на FDA се основава на най-новите научни данни, които доказаха и потвърдиха значителните рискове за здравето, произтичащи от транс-мазнините. Те са виновници за свързаните с храненето хронични заболявания — тежест, с чието разрешаване Комисията има за цел да се заеме.

Установила ли е Комисията отношения на сътрудничество с FDA, така че да осъвремени своята политика и да реагира от законодателна гледна точка на рисковете, произтичащи от транс-мазнините?

В състояние ли е Комисията да предостави нова информация относно постигнатия напредък в работата по доклада относно транс-мазнините, който трябва да бъде внесен в срок до декември 2014 г., в съответствие с изискването на Регламент 1169/2011? Има ли воля от страна на Комисията, в светлината на най-новите научни данни и съобщението на FDA, да ускори публикуването на този доклад?

Би ли обмислила Комисията възможността за прилагане на предохранителния принцип и би ли предприела незабавни регулаторни действия с цел да ограничи наличието на транс-мазнини в преработените храни и да позволи тяхното използване единствено след предоставянето на разрешение преди пускането на продуктите на пазара, както е планирано от FDA?

Отговор, даден от г-н Борг от името на Комисията
(25 февруари 2014 г.)

Комисията е в течение на съобщението във Федералния регистър на административния орган на САЩ по храните и лекарствата (FDA) относно частично хидрогенираните масла, издадено през октомври 2013 г., което отразява предварителната констатация на FDA, че частично хидрогенираните масла — основният източник на изкуствени трансмазнини (трансмастни киселини) в преработените храни, не са „общопризнати за безопасни“ за влагане в храни. FDA даде срок от 60 дни за коментари по тази предварителна констатация, с цел да събере допълнителни данни и да разбере от стопанските субекти в хранителната промишленост какъв период от време им е необходим за изменение на състава на продуктите им, които понастоящем съдържат изкуствени трансмазнини, ако тази предварителна констатация бъде потвърдена като окончателна, като този срок бе удължен с 60 дни — до 8 март 2014 г. Към момента Комисията не се е свързвала с FDA, но продължава да следи въпроса, както и резултатите от консултацията, и очаква окончателното решение на FDA.

Комисията е в процес на изготвяне на доклад относно трансмастните киселини, както се изисква по член 30, параграф 7 от Регламент (ЕС) № 1169/2011 на Европейския парламент и на Съвета за предоставянето на информация за храните на потребителите ([1]). За да може да включи нови сведения, Комисията извършва проучване сред потребителите, което ще приключи през 2014 г. Поради това няма да е възможно да се ускори публикуването на доклада.

Въпросът с трансмазнините бе обсъждан по време на преговорите за изготвянето на Регламент (ЕС) № 1169/20011. Съзаконодателят изрази своето съгласие с това Комисията да внесе гореспоменатия доклад, в който се разглеждат всички свързани с темата въпроси. Следователно на този етап не е необходимо да се възприема различен подход.

([1]) ОВ L 304, 22.11.2011 г., стр. 18.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001091/14
to the Commission
Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: Immediate EU action on trans fats

In October 2013, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a Federal Register Notice stating that, based on new scientific evidence and the findings of expert scientific panels, partially hydrogenated oils (PHOs), which are the primary dietary source of industrially produced trans fatty acids, or trans fats, are not generally recognised as safe for any use in food, based on current scientific evidence establishing the health risks associated with the consumption of trans fat. The Notice states that PHOs are therefore food additives which should be subject to a pre-market approval by the FDA.

The FDA decision is based on the latest scientific evidence which has demonstrated and confirmed the significant health risks posed by trans fats. These are responsible for the burden of diet-related chronic disease which the Commission aims to address.

Has the Commission been liaising with the FDA in order to update its policy and legislative response to the risks posed by trans fats?

Can the Commission provide an update on the progress made on the report on trans fats, which is to be submitted by December 2014 as required by Regulation 1169/2011? In light of the latest scientific evidence and the FDA Notice, is the Commission willing to bring forward the publication of this report?

Would the Commission consider applying the precautionary principle and take immediate regulatory action in order to restrict the presence of trans fats in processed food and to allow its use only after pre-market approval has been granted, as planned by the FDA?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(25 February 2014)

The Commission is aware of the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Federal Register Notice on partially hydrogenated oils (PHOs), from October 2013, which includes FDA's preliminary determination that PHOs, the primary dietary source of artificial trans-fat in processed foods, are not 'generally recognised as safe' (GRAS) for use in food. The FDA has opened a 60-day comment period on this preliminary determination to collect additional data and to gain input on the time potentially needed for food manufacturers to reformulate products that currently contain artificial trans-fat should this determination be finalised, which was extended by 60 days, to March 8, 2014. The Commission has so far not yet liaised with the FDA but is continuing to follow the issue, including the results of the consultation and the final decision of the FDA.

The Commission is in the process of drafting the report on trans-fats as required in Article 30(7) of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the provision of food information to consumers ([1]). In order to be able to include new data, the Commission is undertaking a consumer research study that will be finalised in 2014. Therefore, it is difficult to advance the publication of the report.

The issue of trans-fat has been discussed during the negotiations of Regulation (EU) No 1169/20011. The co legislator has agreed that the Commission will submit afore mentioned report that would address all the pertinent questions. Therefore, there is no need at this stage to take a differing approach.

([1]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p.18.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001092/14
to the Commission
Daniel Hannan (ECR)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: Advantages of EU membership

On 3 February, several pages appeared in two British newspapers, *The Independent* and the *Evening Standard*, advertising the advantages of EU membership.

1. Was anything paid to the newspapers in exchange?

2. How much in each case?

3. From what budget line did these payments come?

4. How much more will be spent in the United Kingdom in 2014?

5. How much will be spent across the EU as a whole in 2014?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2014)

On 3 February advertorials (paid for supplements) of several pages were published in two British newspapers: '*The Independent*' and the '*Evening Standard*' about 'The European debate'. These advertorials (paid for supplements) were paid for by the Commission and are aimed at informing readers of their rights as EU citizens. According to Eurobarometer, only 43% of EU citizens know their rights as EU citizens and 59% would like more information on them. For the UK, the figures are 34% and 48% respectively. The content of the advertorials was produced by journalists appointed by the editors of the participating newspapers. The newspapers were free to choose the topics and the way they wanted to inform citizens about EU rights.

The Commission did not pay '*The Independent*' and the '*Evening Standard*' separately. The amount of EUR 98 149 was paid for in a package.

The EUR 98 149 are from the budget line '16.030104 — Communication of the Commission Representations and Partnership actions'.

In 2014, the Commission will spend a total amount of around EUR 340 000 across the EU on advertorials.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001093/14
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: Dunlop Motorsports

It has been announced that Dunlop Motorsports, in Castle Bromwich in the West Midlands, is to relocate.

A total of 241 jobs will potentially be affected, with the work shifting to Hanau, in Germany, and Montlucon, in France.

Could the Commission advise me if any EU funding is being made available to those locations in Germany and France?

Could the Commission further advise me if those workers made redundant could theoretically qualify for funding for retraining through the Global Adjustment Fund?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2014)

1. Neither Dunlop Motorsport in Hanau nor Dunlop Motorsport in Montluçon has received or is receiving any funding from the European Social Fund nor from the European Regional Development Fund.

2. Provided that worker redundancies can be linked to trade-related globalisation or to the global financial and economic crisis, the Member States can apply for support from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF). In the case in point, it would, however, seem that the cause of the redundancies is neither globalisation nor the global financial and economic crisis. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the EGF Regulation ([1]) for 2014-20 for further details of the rules applicable to the Fund since the beginning of 2014.

The Honourable Member may wish to get in touch with the EGF Contact Persons for the UK to find out whether an application is being planned in support of workers being made redundant by Dunlop Motorsports. The relevant contact details are available on the EGF website ([2]).

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1309/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (2014-2020) and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1927/2006, OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 855.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=en

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-001094/14
alla Commissione
Erminia Mazzoni (PPE)
(4 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Stabilimento siderurgico ILVA di Taranto

Considerando:

— che la Commissione europea ha aperto una procedura di infrazione contro l'Italia per violazione della normativa europea relativamente allo stabilimento siderurgico ILVA di Taranto;

— che la perizia epidemiologica commissionata dal GIP del Tribunale di Taranto ha accertato un eccesso di mortalità pari a 30 decessi l'anno per le emissioni industriali;

— che le misurazioni effettuate dimostrano che gli IPA (idrocarburi policiclici aromatici), che compongono la miscela potenzialmente cancerogena che in buona parte proviene dall'ILVA, non sono diminuiti nel 2013 rispetto al periodo 2009-2010;

— che nel mese di dicembre si sono registrati picchi di IPA elevatissimi, che hanno raggiunto e superato i 500 nanogrammi a metro cubo;

— che con sentenza 85/2013 la Corte costituzionale ha dichiarato l'illegittimità della prosecuzione dell'attività produttiva, in mancanza di adeguamento alle prescrizioni e al cronoprogramma per l'implementazione delle norme in materia di ambiente e tutela della salute;

— che l'ILVA non procede, non avendo i fondi necessari in quanto la proprietà ha subito un sequestro ingente di risorse da parte dell'autorità giudiziaria,

e considerando altresì che la Commissione ha lanciato il nuovo piano per l'industria dell'UE e, in particolare, per quella siderurgica,

può dire la Commissione:

1. se la procedura di infrazione tiene conto del corto circuito generatosi e, per l'effetto, se chiede al governo italiano un intervento specifico e straordinario per sbloccare l'adeguamento alle prescrizioni AIA;

2. se all'implementazione delle norme per la tutela dell'ambiente e della salute combini quelle sulla tutela del lavoro?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(7 marzo 2014)

La Commissione sta valutando le informazioni inviate dai denuncianti e dalle autorità italiane nell'ambito della procedura in questione e deciderà di conseguenza la linea d'azione più opportuna.

In base alle informazioni disponibili, alla Commissione risulta che le autorità giudiziarie nazionali stiano affrontando in maniera soddisfacente la questione della sicurezza sul lavoro nel quadro delle indagini in corso.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001094/14
to the Commission
Erminia Mazzoni (PPE)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: ILVA steel plant in Taranto

The Commission has initiated proceedings against Italy for infringement of EU legislation with regard to the ILVA steel plant in Taranto.

The epidemiological survey commissioned by the examining magistrate of the Court of Taranto has revealed an excess mortality rate attributable to industrial emissions, amounting to 30 deaths annually.

Findings reveal that the level of PAHs (Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons) in the potentially carcinogenic mixture, much of which originates from the ILVA plant, has not fallen in 2013 from the period 2009-2010.

In December 2013, PAH levels peaked massively at over 500 nanograms per cubic meter.

In its judgment 85/2013, the Constitutional Court ruled that continued operation of the plant was illegal in view of its failure to comply with the necessary requirements and the timetable for implementation of environmental and health protection standards.

In fact, the ILVA plant is unable to continue its operations for lack of funds, the Court having ordered the seizure of many of its assets.

In view of this and of the new plan launched by the Commission for the EU industrial sector, including the steel industry:

1. Can the Commission say whether the infringement proceedings take into account the short circuit in the system and whether it has called on the Italian Government to take specific and exceptional measures to ensure compliance with environmental authorisation provisions?

2. Is implementation of environmental and health protection standards being accompanied by implementation of those concerning safety at work?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(7 March 2014)

The Commission is currently assessing the information received from the complainants and the Italian Authorities in the context of this procedure, and will decide accordingly on the appropriate course of action.

According to the information available to the Commission, the issue of work safety is being satisfactorily addressed by the national judicial authorities in the framework of their ongoing investigations.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-001095/14
aan de Commissie
Toine Manders (ALDE)
(4 februari 2014)

Betreft: Europese lidstaten hebben crisis zelf verergerd door IMF-afspraken niet te handhaven

Kan de Europese Commissie aangeven of het klopt dat Nederlandse, Franse en Duitse banken de eurocrisis hebben verergerd door tegen de afspraken in Grieks schuldpapier te dumpen.

1. Klopt het dat Nederlandse, Franse en Duitse banken de eurocrisis in 2010 verergerd hebben door tegen afspraken in, die met het IMF waren gemaakt, op grote schaal Griekse schulden te dumpen?

2. Was Commissie destijds op de hoogte van het feit dat de banken zich niet aan de met het IMF gemaakte afspraken hielden?

3. Is daardoor de rekening voor een groter deel dan noodzakelijk op het bordje van de lidstaten c.q. de Europese en ook Nederlandse belastingbetaler terechtgekomen?

Antwoord van de heer Rehn namens de Commissie
(13 maart 2014)

Tijdens de crisis hadden overheden en regeringen de banken opgeroepen om Griekse overheidsobligaties in hun portefeuille te behouden. De manier waarop banken op deze oproep reageerden, valt volledig onder de verantwoordelijkheid van hun eigen management.

De lidstaten van de eurozone hebben aan Griekenland bijna 200 miljard euro financiële steun verleend in de vorm van leningen met een looptijd tot 30 jaar.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001095/14
to the Commission
Toine Manders (ALDE)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: Aggravation of crisis by EU Member States themselves failing to honour IMF agreements

Is it true that Dutch, French and German banks aggravated the euro crisis by dumping Greek bonds, contrary to what had been agreed?

1. Is it true that Dutch, French and German banks aggravated the euro crisis in 2010 by dumping Greek debt on a large scale, contrary to what had been agreed with the IMF?

2. Was the Commission aware that the banks were not abiding by the agreements with the IMF?

3. Did this result in a larger share of the bill than necessary being footed by the Member States, or by European (including Dutch) tax-payers?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2014)

During the crisis, public authorities and governments had called upon banks to maintain their exposures on the Greek Sovereign. How banks responded to this call remained under the sole responsibility of the banks' management.

The Euro area Member States have provided financial support of close to EUR 200 bn to Greece in the form of loans with up to 30 years maturity.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-001096/14
do Komisji
Wojciech Michał Olejniczak (S&D)
(4 lutego 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Konsekwencje nieprawidłowości stwierdzonych w ramach kontroli udzielenia pomocy finansowej z UE – Program Rozwoju Obszarów Wiejskich

W zaistniałym stanie faktycznym w Polsce instytucja pośrednicząca (Samorząd Województwa – Urząd Marszałkowski) rozwiązała umowę z beneficjentem (Gminą) o przyznanie pomocy w ramach działania 321 „Podstawowe usługi dla gospodarki i ludności wiejskiej" objętego Programem Rozwoju Obszarów Wiejskich w Polsce na lata 2007-2013, oś 3: „Jakość życia na obszarach wiejskich i zróżnicowanie gospodarki wiejskiej", powołując się na negatywną ocenę postępowania o udzielenie zamówienia publicznego.

Proszę o wyjaśnienie, czy umowa o przyznanie pomocy ze środków UE zawierana przez krajową instytucję pośredniczącą z beneficjentem (m.in. w ramach działania „Podstawowe usługi dla gospodarki i ludności wiejskiej") może przewidywać automatyczne rozwiązanie tejże umowy skutkujące odebraniem całości środków, bez względu na rodzaj i stopień naruszenia. Czy każde naruszenie musi prowadzić do rozwiązania umowy i zwrotu środków pomocowych do budżetu ogólnego UE?

Jeżeli nie, to według jakich kryteriów powinno się oceniać wagę naruszenia oraz jego wpływ na cel dofinansowania i czy organy państwa członkowskiego powinny brać pod uwagę charakter naruszenia oraz jego wpływ na cel dofinansowania podejmując decyzję o rozwiązaniu umowy?

Ponadto proszę o wyjaśnienie, czy prawidłową sytuacją jest, że droga odwoławcza od wyników oceny postępowania ma charakter jednoinstancyjny, tzn. nie zapewnia możliwości rzeczywistej weryfikacji oceny postępowania (nie chodzi o drogę sądową, która przysługuje w każdej sytuacji).

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Daciana Cioloşa w imieniu Komisji
(4 marca 2014 r.)

Zgodnie z zasadą zarządzania dzielonego między UE a państwami członkowskimi, organy państwa członkowskiego są odpowiedzialne za wdrożenie programu rozwoju obszarów wiejskich na poziomie krajowym, a także za pierwsze kontrole zgodności z obowiązującymi przepisami (zob. m.in. art. 7 i 74 rozporządzenia Rady (WE) nr 1698/2005 ([1])). Kontrole powinny obejmować między innymi zgodność z unijnymi i krajowymi przepisami dotyczącymi zamówień publicznych mającymi zastosowanie w odniesieniu do środków wspieranych przez EFRROW.

Jeżeli chodzi o odzyskanie całości środków, należy podkreślić, że zgodnie z art. 33 ust. 1 rozporządzenia (WE) nr 1290/2005 ([2]) (i art. 56 rozporządzenia (UE) nr 1306/2013 ([3])), w przypadku wykrycia nieprawidłowości lub zaniedbań w programach dotyczących rozwoju obszarów wiejskich państwa członkowskie dokonują dostosowania finansowego przez całkowite lub częściowe anulowanie odnośnego finansowania Unii. Państwa członkowskie uwzględniają charakter i wagę stwierdzonych nieprawidłowości, jak również rozmiar straty finansowej poniesionej przez EFRROW.

Prawodawstwo krajowe musi zapewniać prawo do skutecznych środków odwoławczych, zapisane w Karcie praw podstawowych, jak również być zgodne z przepisami UE w zakresie zamówień publicznych. Pana zapytanie zawiera zbyt mało informacji, by ustalić, czy w omawianym przypadku przepisy te były przestrzegane.

([1]) Dz.U. L 277 z 21.10.2005, s. 1.
([2]) Dz.U. L 209 z 11.8.2005, s. 1.
([3]) Dz.U. L 347 z 20.12.2013, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001096/14
to the Commission
Wojciech Michał Olejniczak (S&D)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: Consequences of irregularities identified in checks on the provision of EU financial support — Rural Development Programme

In one specific case in Poland, the intermediate body (the provincial executive) terminated an agreement with a beneficiary (the local authority) for aid to be granted under measure 321, 'Basic services for the rural economy and rural population', of the Rural Development Programme, Poland, 2007-2013, axis 3, 'Improving the quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification'. The reason given for this decision was a negative assessment of the way in which public contracts were being awarded.

Can an agreement to provide assistance from EU funds concluded by a national intermediate body with a beneficiary (for example under the measure entitled 'Basic services for the rural economy and rural population') provide for the automatic termination of that agreement, resulting in the recovery of the full amount of the funding, regardless of the nature and extent of the infringement? Must every infringement result in the agreement being terminated and the financial assistance being returned to the EU general budget?

If not, according to what criteria must the seriousness of an infringement and its impact on the aim of the funding be assessed? Should Member State authorities take into account the nature of an infringement and its impact on the aim of the funding in deciding whether to terminate an agreement?

Could the Commission state whether it is right that appeals against assessment findings go through only one authority, which means that no provision is made for any meaningful verification of the assessment of the measures taken (other than court action, which is always an option)?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2014)

Under the principle of shared management between the EU and the Member States, the Member State authorities are responsible for the implementation of the rural development programme at national level, as well as, in the first instance, for the control of compliance with the applicable rules (see *inter alia* Articles 7 and 74 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 ([1])). The control shall cover among other things compliance with Union and national public procurement rules relevant for the supported EAFRD measures.

As regards recovery of the full amount of the funding, it should be mentioned that, in accordance with Article 33(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1290/2005 ([2]) (and Article 56 of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 ([3])), where irregularities or negligence are detected in rural development programmes, Member States shall make financial adjustments by totally or partially cancelling the Union financing concerned. Member States shall take into consideration the nature and gravity of the irregularities detected and the level of the financial loss to the EAFRD.

The national legislation must comply with the right to an effective appeal as enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights, as well as the EU rules in the area of public procurement. The limited information contained in your query is insufficient to judge whether or not these rules have been followed in the case at hand.

([1]) OJ L 277, 21.10.2005.
([2]) OJ L 209, 11.8.2005.
([3]) OJ L 347, 20.12.2013.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-001097/14
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(4 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Καταστροφή και απόρριψη χημικών όπλων της Συρίας στη Μεσόγειο

Μεγάλη ανησυχία επικρατεί στη χώρα μου αλλά και σε άλλες χώρες της Μεσογείου για τις οικολογικές επιπτώσεις της πιθανής διαδικασίας καταστροφής και απόρριψης των χημικών όπλων της Συρίας στη Μεσόγειο.

Όπως γνωρίζετε, στις 9 Ιανουαρίου 2014, το εμπορικό πλοίο «Ark Futura» απέπλευσε από τον λιμένα της Λατάκιας της Συρίας, με προορισμό την Ιταλία, μεταφέροντας τα πρώτα εννέα κοντέινερ με χημικά όπλα, συνοδευόμενο από ρωσικά και κινεζικά πολεμικά πλοία. Στόχος είναι η μεταφόρτωσή τους στο σκάφος του Πολεμικού Ναυτικού των ΗΠΑ «MV Cape Ray» και η εν πλω καταστροφή τους σε διεθνή ύδατα μέχρι τις 31 Μαρτίου 2014.

Με βάση τα ανωτέρω, η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος ερωτάται:

1. Ποια ενημέρωση έχει η Επιτροπή για την τύχη του φορτίου αυτού, αλλά και των υπολοίπων που έπονται από το μεγάλο χημικό οπλοστάσιο της Συρίας;

2. Εκτός από τη Γερμανία, η οποία δήλωσε δια του Υπουργού Εξωτερικών, Δρος Frank-Walter Steinmeier, ότι θα καταστρέψει 350 τόνους χημικών καταλοίπων, ποιες άλλες χώρες εμπλέκονται και με ποιο τρόπο;

3. Ποιες οι ενέργειές σας, σε συνεργασία με την Υπηρεσία Εξωτερικής Δράσης και τα κράτη μέλη, για τη διαφάνεια των σχετικών αποφάσεων, καθώς και την ασφάλεια της Μεσογείου και των κατοίκων της, για την αποφυγή επιβλαβών διαδικασιών καταστροφής των χημικών όπλων;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(18 Μαρτίου 2014)

Η καταστροφή του χημικού οπλοστασίου της Συρίας έχει ήδη εγκριθεί και εποπτεύεται από το Εκτελεστικό Συμβούλιο του Οργανισμού για την Απαγόρευση των Χημικών Όπλων (ΟΑΧΟ) και το Συμβούλιο Ασφαλείας των Ηνωμένων Εθνών, τα οποία έχουν λάβει όλα τα κατάλληλα μέτρα για την ασφαλή και φιλική προς το περιβάλλον καταστροφή όλων των κατηγοριών συριακών χημικών όπλων. Το σχέδιο αυτό βρίσκεται σε μια σειρά δημοσίων εγγράφων του ΟΑΧΟ που περιέχουν σχετικές αποφάσεις του Εκτελεστικού Συμβουλίου του ΟΑΧΟ. Στο σχεδιασμό της επιχείρησης συμμετείχαν ενεργά τόσο το Πρόγραμμα των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για το περιβάλλον (UNEP), όσο και η Παγκόσμια Οργάνωση Υγείας (ΠΟΥ). Η κοινή αποστολή διοργάνωσε πρόσφατα συνάντηση με τις σημαντικότερες περιβαλλοντικές ΜΚΟ προκειμένου να καταστήσει σαφές ότι η καταστροφή θα πραγματοποιηθεί σύμφωνα με τη διεθνή και εθνική νομοθεσία. Η υδρόλυση των προδρόμων χημικών ουσιών θα πραγματοποιηθεί στη θάλασσα επί αμερικανικού πλοίου και δεν τίθεται ζήτημα απόρριψης τυχόν χημικών ουσιών ή των λυμάτων αυτών στη θάλασσα μετά την υδρόλυση. Η Κυβέρνηση της Δανίας και του Ηνωμένου Βασιλείου, καθώς και η Νορβηγία, συμφώνησαν να διαθέσουν σκάφη για την υποστήριξη του σχεδίου, ενώ, εκτός από τη Γερμανία, το Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο και η Φινλανδία συμφώνησαν επίσης όσον αφορά την επεξεργασία των λυμάτων στην επικράτειά τους. Θα πρέπει επίσης να υπογραμμιστεί ότι η ΕΕ και άλλα κράτη μέλη έχουν συνεισφέρει τόσο οικονομικά, όσο και σε είδος στην επιχείρηση αυτή, που σκοπό έχει να αποτραπεί η επανάληψη της χρήσης τους κατά του συριακού λαού.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001097/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Destruction and disposal of Syria's chemical weapons in the Mediterranean

There is great anxiety in Greece and other Mediterranean countries about the environmental consequences of the methods to be used for destroying and disposing of Syria's chemical weapons in the Mediterranean.

On 9 January 2014, the merchant vessel 'Ark Futura' sailed from the Syrian port of Latakia bound for Italy, carrying the first nine containers of chemical weapons; it was escorted by Russian and Chinese warships. The aim is to transfer them to the US Navy vessel 'MV Cape Ray' and to destroy them at sea, in international waters, by 31 March 2014.

In view of the above, will the VP/HR say:

1. What information does she have about the fate of this cargo and the rest of the cargo from Syria's large chemical weapons arsenal?

2. Apart from Germany, which has announced, through its Foreign Minister, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, that it would destroy 350 tonnes of chemical residues, which other countries are involved in this operation and how?

3. What action is she taking, in cooperation with the EEAS and Member States, to ensure the transparency of such decisions and the safety of the Mediterranean and its inhabitants and to prevent the use of any harmful methods in destroying these chemical weapons?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(18 March 2014)

The destruction of the Syrian chemical weapons arsenal has been agreed and is supervised by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Executive Council and the UN Security Council, who have taken all relevant measures in securing a safe and environmentally sound destruction of all the categories of the Syrian chemical weapons. This plan is contained in a series of public OPCW documents containing relevant decisions by the OPCW Executive Council. In the planning of the operation both United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and World Health Organisation (WHO) were actively involved. The Joint Mission has recently organised a meeting with leading environmental NGOs to explain that the destruction will take place in accordance with international and national legislation. Hydrolysis of chemical precursors will take place at sea on a US ship, and there is no intention to discharge any chemicals or their effluent after hydrolysis into the sea. The Danish and UK Governments, along with Norway, have agreed to provide vessels to support the plan and, in addition to Germany, the UK and Finland have also agreed to treat waste effluents on their territory. It should also be underlined that the EU and other Member States have been contributing financially and in kind to this operation, aimed preventing a repetition of their use against the Syrian people.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001099/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(4 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Κοινοτικές χρηματοδοτήσεις για πρόγνωση σεισμών

Στην Ελλάδα εκλύεται το 52% του σεισμικού δυναμικού της ΕΕ. Πρόσφατα έγινε άλλος ένας καταστρεπτικός σεισμός στην Ελλάδα, στο νησί της Κεφαλλονιάς. Παλαιότερα η Επιτροπή είχε συνδράμει την προσπάθεια πρόγνωσης σεισμών των επιστημόνων του PRENLAB, στην Μ. Βρετανία.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Ποια είναι τα ποσά που δόθηκαν από την Επιτροπή, από το 2004 ως σήμερα, για την πρόγνωση σεισμών; Ποια εργαστήρια και επιστημονικές ομάδες (και σε ποιές χώρες μέλη) ενισχύθηκαν και ποια τα αποτελέσματα που υπάρχουν ως προς την πρόγνωση σεισμών;

Απάντηση της κ. Geoghegan-Quinn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Μαρτίου 2014)

Παρά τις επιστημονικές προσπάθειες στον τομέα της σεισμικής πρόβλεψης (ακριβής ένδειξη της τοποθεσίας, του χρόνου εκδήλωσης, και του μεγέθους), και της προόδου στην πιθανολογική πρόγνωση (πιθανότητα ότι συγκεκριμένος σεισμός θα εκδηλωθεί σε συγκεκριμένη περιοχή εντός καθορισμένου χρονικού διαστήματος) μέσω της εφαρμογής προηγμένων στατιστικών μεθόδων, υπάρχει ευρεία συναίνεση μεταξύ των επιστημόνων ότι η έγκυρη σεισμική πρόβλεψη δεν είναι ακόμα δυνατή.

Τα ενταγμένα σε διαδοχικά προγράμματα-πλαίσιο έρευνας της ΕΕ έργα έχουν ακολουθήσει μία διεθνή και διεπιστημονική προσέγγιση της σεισμικής έρευνας με στόχο να βελτιωθούν οι γνώσεις σχετικά με την πρόγνωση, την έγκαιρη προειδοποίηση, την προβλεψιμότητα και την άμβλυνση των συνεπειών του σεισμού. Καταβλήθηκαν επίσης προσπάθειες σύστασης ενός εκτεταμένου σύγχρονου πανευρωπαϊκού δικτύου σεισμικής παρακολούθησης που θα παρέχει υψηλής ποιότητας δεδομένα και πληροφορίες, ιδίως τα έργα NERIES ([1]) και NERA ([2]) με συνολική συνεισφορά της ΕΕ ύψους περίπου 20 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ.

Με βάση το έργο SAFER ([3]), το εν εξελίξει έργο FP7 REAKT ([4]) φέρνει σε επαφή 26 εταίρους, συμπεριλαμβανομένων οργανισμών από την Ελλάδα, τις Ηνωμένες Πολιτείες, την Ταϊβάν και την Ιαπωνία. Το έργο αναπτύσσει και εντάσσει νέες γνώσεις σε ένα σύστημα περιορισμού του σεισμικού κινδύνου σε πραγματικό χρόνο, εντάσσοντας βέλτιστες πρακτικές στη σεισμική πρόγνωση, την έγκαιρη προειδοποίηση και την ταχεία εκτίμηση της πιθανής έκτασης των ζημιών του σεισμού, καθώς και στρατηγικές και εργαλεία λήψης αποφάσεων.

Το «Ορίζων 2020» θα συνεχίσει να στηρίζει τη σεισμική έρευνα και να προωθεί πρακτικές και λειτουργικές λύσεις που θα μπορούσαν να συμβάλουν στον περιορισμό του σεισμικού κινδύνου στο μέλλον. Περαιτέρω πληροφορίες μπορούν να αντληθούν από τη δικτυακή «πύλη συμμετεχόντων στην έρευνα και την καινοτομία» ([5]).

([1]) http://www.nera-eu.org
([2]) http://www.neries-eu.org
([3]) Seismic Early warning for European Region, EU contribution of EUR 3.6 million http://www.saferproject.net
([4]) Strategies and Tools for Real Time Earthquake Risk Reduction, EU contribution EUR 7 million http://www.reaktproject.eu/
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001099/14
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: EU funding for earthquake prediction

In Greece, 52% of EU seismicity is released. Recently another devastating earthquake struck the island of Kefalonia in Greece. Previously the Commission had contributed to the earthquake prediction work carried out by scientists from PRENLAB in Great Britain.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

What amount of funding has it granted since 2004 for earthquake prediction? Which laboratories and scientific teams (in which Member States) have received funding and what results have been achieved in predicting earthquakes?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

Despite scientific efforts in the field of seismic prediction (precise indication of location, time of occurrence, and magnitude), and advances in probabilistic forecasting (probability that a given earthquake will occur in a given area in a fixed time window) through the application of advanced statistical methods, there is broad consensus amongst scientists that the reliable prediction of earthquakes is still not possible.

Projects in successive EU Research Framework Programmes have pursued an international and multidisciplinary approach to seismic research in order to improve knowledge on forecasting, early warning, predictability and mitigation. Efforts have also been deployed to establish an extensive modern pan-European seismic monitoring network that delivers quality data and information, notably the NERIES ([1]) and NERA ([2])projects with a total EU contribution of around EUR 20 million.

Building on the SAFER ([3]) project, the on-going FP7 REAKT ([4]) project brings together 26 partners, including organisations from Greece, the United States, Taiwan and Japan. The project develops and integrates new knowledge into a real-time earthquake risk reduction system comprising best practices in earthquake forecasting together with early warning and rapid assessment of earthquake damage potential as well as strategies and tools for decision making.

Horizon 2020 will continue to support research on earthquakes and to promote practical and operational solutions that could help reduce seismic risk in the future. Further information can be obtained through the Research and Innovation Participant Portal. ([5])

([1]) http://www.nera-eu.org
([2]) http://www.neries-eu.org
([3]) Seismic Early warning for European Region, EU contribution of EUR 3.6 million http://www.saferproject.net
([4]) Strategies and Tools for Real Time Earthquake Risk Reduction, EU contribution EUR 7 million http://www.reaktproject.eu/
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001106/14
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(4. Februar 2014)

Betrifft: Epilepsie und die Belastung für Personen und deren Familien

Rund 1,8 Millionen Menschen in der EU leben mit Epilepsie.

1. Ist sich die Kommission der Tatsache bewusst, dass nicht in jedem Mitgliedstaat die Möglichkeit besteht, eine Einrichtung für Epilepsiepatienten aufzusuchen?

Wenn dies der Fall ist, welche Strategie empfiehlt die Kommission für Mitgliedstaaten derartige Einrichtungen zur Unterstützung der von dieser Krankheit betroffenen Menschen entsprechend der Bevölkerungszahl des Landes einzurichten?

2. Ist der Kommission bekannt, dass etwa 25 % der diagnostizierten Epileptiker in Wirklichkeit falsch diagnostiziert wurden?

Diese Patienten reagieren nicht auf die Medikamente und stellen daher fest, dass sie gar nicht an Epilepsie leiden.

Welche Strategie sieht die Kommission vor, um die Ausbildung von Gesundheitspersonal zu verbessern, so dass sie richtige Diagnosen stellen können?

Wie viele öffentliche Gelder wurden vergebens für derartige falsche Diagnosen ausgegeben?

3. Viele Epileptiker sind zusätzlich durch Arbeitslosigkeit belastet. Die Kosten für Medikamente, die oft hoch sind, können kaum bezahlt werden, besonders in den krisengeschüttelten südlichen Ländern.

Ist die Einführung eines EU-Fonds vorgesehen, um wenigstens die ärmsten Epilepsiepatienten zu unterstützen?

4. Gibt es eine EU-weite Strategie, um mehr auf dem Gebiet der „unerwarteten Todesfälle bei Epilepsie“ zu forschen, damit die Ursache ausfindig gemacht und durch angemessene Medikamente Vorbeugung betrieben werden kann?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(28. März 2014)

Für die Organisation und Bereitstellung von Gesundheitsleistungen und medizinischer Versorgung, einschließlich der medizinischen Versorgung von Epileptikern und der Schaffung von Einrichtungen für Epilepsiepatienten, sind die Mitgliedstaaten zuständig. Die Erarbeitung von Leitlinien für die Diagnose von Epilepsie und die Ausbildung des Gesundheitspersonals sind Aufgabe der Mitgliedstaaten und der Berufsverbände der Angehörigen der Gesundheitsberufe. Die Kommission selbst beabsichtigt nicht, einen EU-Fonds zur Unterstützung von Epilepsiepatienten in von der Krise betroffenen Ländern einzurichten.

Der Kommission ist keine EU-weite Strategie zur Erforschung unerwarteter Todesfälle bei Epilepsie bekannt. Allerdings wurden im Rahmen des Siebten Rahmenprogramms für Forschung und technologische Entwicklung (2007-2013, RP 7) Forschung und Innovation im Bereich der Prävention, Diagnose und Behandlung von Epilepsie unterstützt. So lautete z. B. eines der Themen der letzten Aufforderungen zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen im Rahmen des RP 7 „Pathophysiologie und Therapie von Epilepsie und epileptiformen Störungen“ — in diesem Zusammenhang wurden letztlich 4 Vorhaben mit EU-Mitteln in Höhe von insgesamt 45,5 Mio. EUR gefördert. Die Ergebnisse dieser Vorhaben könnten dadurch, dass sie zu einem tieferen Verständnis der Krankheit und ihrer Behandlung führen, zu einem wirksameren Schutz vor unerwarteten Todesfällen bei Epilepsie beitragen. Horizont 2020, das neue Rahmenprogramm für Forschung und Innovation (2014-2020) ([1]), wird weitere Möglichkeiten für Forschungsarbeiten in diesem Bereich bieten, insbesondere im Rahmen der gesellschaftlichen Herausforderung „Gesundheit, demografischer Wandel und Wohlergehen“ ([2]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0809:FIN:DE:PDF
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001106/14
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: Epilepsy and the burden on individuals and their families

About 1.8 million people in the European Union live with epilepsy.

1. Is the Commission aware of the fact that it is not possible to visit an epilepsy centre in every Member State?

If so, what strategy does the Commission have to recommend that Member States establish such centres according to the population of the relevant country, thereby supporting those affected?

2. Is the Commission aware that about 25% of people diagnosed with epilepsy are in fact misdiagnosed?

Such patients do not respond to one drug and thereby discover that they do not even have epilepsy.

What strategy does the Commission have to improve the education of health professionals so that they can provide the right diagnosis?

Furthermore, how much public money is being spent in vain on such misdiagnoses?

3. Many people with epilepsy have the additional burden of being unemployed. The cost of medication, which is often high, can barely be paid, especially in the crisis-shaken southern countries.

Is there any plan to introduce a European fund to financially support, at least in part, the most deprived epilepsy sufferers?

4. Is there any EU-wide strategy to do more research into 'sudden unexpected death in epilepsy', with the goal of discovering the cause and thereby being able to prevent it using the appropriate medication?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

Member States have the responsibility for the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care, including epilepsy care and the establishment of epilepsy centres. Member States and health professional's organisations are responsible for the development of clinical guidelines for the diagnosis of epilepsy and for the education of health professionals. As such, the Commission does not plan to create a European fund to financially support people experiencing epilepsy in countries hit by the economic crisis.

The Commission is not aware of any EU-wide strategy on research into 'sudden unexpected death in epilepsy'. However, research and innovation on the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of epilepsy have been supported throughout the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (2007-2013, FP7). For example, the last calls under FP7 included a topic 'Patho-physiology and therapy of epilepsy and epileptiform disorders', which resulted in the funding of 4 projects with a total EU contribution of EUR 45.5 million. The findings of these projects might contribute to a more efficient prevention of sudden unexpected death in epilepsy through a better understanding and treatment of epilepsy. Horizon 2020, the framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([1]), will offer further opportunities for research in this area, in particular through the 'Health, demographic change and wellbeing' societal challenge ([2]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0809:FIN:EN:PDF
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-001107/14
a Bizottság számára
Bánki Erik (PPE)
(2014. február 4.)

Tárgy: Az EU vízpolitikája

Köztudott, hogy a víz az egyik legszűkösebb erőforrásunk, és hogy az európai vízpolitika a jövőben komoly kihívásokkal fog szembenézni.

A fentiek fényében a vízzel kapcsolatos kérdéseket illetően Európában milyen fő problémákat tárt fel a Bizottság?

Az elmúlt öt évben milyen válaszlépéseket és intézkedéseket tett az Unió e kihívások kezelése érdekében?

Melyek a fenti intézkedésekre vonatkozó fő jogi aktusok?

Janez Potočnik válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. március 21.)

A Bizottság felhívja a tisztelt képviselő úr figyelmét, hogy az európai vízkészletek megőrzésére irányuló terv (2012) ([1]) a Bizottság vízügyi prioritásainak és fellépéseinek áttekintése mellett a hatályos jogszabályok végrehajtásának értékelését is tartalmazza.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/blueprint/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001107/14
to the Commission
Erik Bánki (PPE)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: EU water policy

It is common knowledge that water is one of our scarcest resources and that European water policy will face tough challenges in the future.

In light of the above, what has the Commission identified as being the main problems regarding European water issues?

What response and action has the EU taken in the last five years in order to tackle these challenges?

What are the main legislative acts concerning the above actions?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(21 March 2014)

The Commission invites the Honourable Member to consult the 2012 Water Blueprint ([1]) which contains an overview of Commission priorities and actions in the field of water policy as well as an assessment of the implementation of current legislation.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/blueprint/index_en.htm

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001406/14
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(11. februar 2014)

Om: Mishandling af hunde i Rumænien

Herreløse hunde er et stort problem i Rumænien. Man regner med, at der omkring 65 000 løse hunde strejfer rundt i Bukarests gader, hvorfra der er rapporteret om 16 000 tilfælde, hvor folk er blevet bidt af disse hunde i 2012, og en fireårig dreng blev overfaldet og ædt ihjel af en flok herreløse hunde i september 2013. Hunde, der er blevet indfanget, lever under forfærdelige forhold og modtager ikke den dyrlægebehandling, som de måske har behov for, og kan blive aflivet efter at have tilbragt 14 dage i et hundehjem. Aflivningsmetoderne er uansvarlige og unødvendigt grusomme set ud fra en dyrevelfærdssynsvinkel og omfatter indsprøjtning af isvæske i hjertet, hårde tæsk med trækøller eller gasning med forkert eller utilstrækkelig koncentration af gas. Hundene aflives desuden af mennesker med ingen eller utilstrækkelig erfaring og kompetence på området, eftersom regeringen betaler en præmie for hver hund, der slås ihjel. Dette er derfor blevet en indtægtskilde for fattige familier ([1]). Situationer som beskrevet ovenfor forekommer antagelig også andre steder, især i Øst- eller Sydeuropa.

Artikel 13 i traktaten om Den Europæiske Unions funktionsmåde opfordrer indtrængende medlemsstaterne at tage fuldt hensyn til velfærden hos dyr som levende væsener, når de fastlægger og gennemfører Unionens politik.

Er Kommissionen blevet underrettet om lignende tilstande andre steder i EU, og hvis ja, vil den forsøge at fastslå problemets omfang?

Kan Kommissionen bruge samhørighedspolitikkens instrumenter, såsom Samhørighedsfonden og Strukturfondene, til at løse problemet med de herreløse hunde for at garantere en bedre dyrevelfærd og sætte en stopper for disse brutale metoder?

Samlet svar afgivet på af Tonio Borg
(27. marts 2014)

Det ærede medlem henvises til svarene på skriftlig forespørgsel E-006543/2011, E-007161/2011, E-002062/2012 og E-005276/2013 ([2]), der omhandler problematikken om herreløse hunde og forvaltning af hundebestanden.

Kommissionen fremmer og befordrer aktivt god praksis for velfærd for selskabsdyr og samarbejder aktivt med andre organisationer om udviklingen af hjemmesiden »CARODOG« ([3]), der er et forum for oplysning om forvaltning af hundebestanden, hvis formål er at gøre ansvarsbevidst ejerskab af dyr til en grundlæggende forudsætning for et hundevenligt samfund.

EU's beføjelser giver ikke Kommissionen hjemmel til at finansiere kontrolprogrammer for herreløse hunde.

([1]) http://ekstrabladet.dk/nyheder/samfund/article2128181.ece.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([3]) Se www.carodog.eu.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001108/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Eliminazione sistematica dei randagi

Negli ultimi anni, notizie pervenute da associazioni animaliste e da Amnesty International mettono a nudo la cruda realtà degli eccidi di randagi, che sono attuati sistematicamente in determinati contesti nazionali. Recentemente, tale pratica torna a riproporsi, legittimandosi quale espediente estremo per migliorare l'immagine di Città sedi di eventi sportivi di rilievo mondiale.

Alla luce di quanto esposto, si interroga la Commissione per sapere:

1. qual è la posizione della Commissione in merito;

2. quali sono gli strumenti specifici che essa contempla per la tutela degli animali, specie nei riguardi di gravi violazioni dei loro diritti;

3. con quali modalità la Commissione intende agire per sensibilizzare l'opinione pubblica e le istituzioni degli Stati membri.

Risposta congiunta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(27 marzo 2014)

Si rinvia l'Onorevole deputato alle risposte alle interrogazioni scritte E-006543/2011, E-007161/2011, E-002062/2012 ed E-005276/2013 ([1]) che affrontano la problematica dei cani randagi e della gestione delle popolazioni canine.

La Commissione promuove e incoraggia le buone pratiche per il benessere degli animali da compagnia e collabora attivamente con altre organizzazioni allo sviluppo del sito web «CARODOG» ([2]), una piattaforma d'informazione sulla gestione delle popolazioni canine che incoraggia la responsabilizzazione dei proprietari di animali quale condizione previa essenziale per una società «*dog-friendly*».

L'attribuzione delle competenze unionali non consente alla Commissione di finanziare programmi di controllo dei cani randagi.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001108/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: Systematic culling of stray animals

Over the past few years, press releases issued by animal welfare organisations and Amnesty International have revealed the stark reality that stray animals are being systematically slaughtered in some countries. The practice has recently been back in the news, with attempts to justify it as an extreme measure to improve the image of cities hosting international sporting events.

In the light of the above, I ask the Commission:

1. what is its position on this issue;

2. what specific measures is it considering taking to protect animals, especially in the face of serious violations of their rights;

3. what action is it planning to take to raise the awareness of both the general public and Member States' institutions?

Question for written answer E-001406/14
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Ill-treatment of dogs in Romania

Stray dogs are a major problem in Romania. It is estimated that some 65 000 live on the streets of Bucharest, where there were 16 000 recorded incidents of people being bitten by stray dogs in 2012, and a four-year-old boy was mauled to death by a pack of stray dogs in September 2013. Captured dogs live in dreadful conditions, do not receive the veterinary treatment they may require, and can be put down after spending 14 days in a dogs' home. The methods used to put them down are irresponsible and unnecessarily cruel from an animal welfare perspective, and include injections of coolants to the heart, multiple frenzied blows with wooden clubs, or gassing with the wrong or insufficient concentration of gases. Furthermore, the animals are put down by people with little or no experience and competence in the matter, as the government pays a premium for each dog killed, making this a source of income for poor families ([1]). Presumably the situation described above also occurs elsewhere, especially in eastern and southern Europe.

Article 13 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union urges Member States, since animals are sentient beings, to pay full regard to their welfare requirements when formulating and implementing Union policy.

Is the Commission aware of similar circumstances elsewhere in the EU and, if so, will it seek to identify the extent of the problem?

Can the Commission use cohesion policy instruments such as the Cohesion and Structural Funds to solve the problem of stray dogs, to guarantee better animal welfare and to put an end to these brutal methods?

Joint answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2014)

The Honourable Member is invited to refer to the answers to written questions E-006543/2011, E-007161/2011, E-002062/2012 and E-005276/2013 ([2]) which address the issues of stray dogs and of dog population management.

The Commission is active in promoting and encouraging good practices on companion animal welfare and actively cooperates with other organisations to the development of the 'CARODOG' website ([3]) , an informative platform on canine population management, leading to responsible animal ownership as a fundamental precondition for a dog-friendly society.

EU competences do not allow the Commission to fund stray dogs control programs.

([1]) http://ekstrabladet.dk/nyheder/samfund/article2128181.ece
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([3]) See www.carodog.eu

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-001110/14
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(4 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Rapporto anticorruzione: la situazione italiana

Il 3 febbraio è stato pubblicato il primo rapporto della Commissione sulla diffusione del fenomeno della corruzione negli Stati membri. L'indagine, realizzata da Price&Waterhouse per l'OLAF (l'agenzia antifrode europea), è stata presentata a Bruxelles dal commissario agli affari interni Cecilia Malmström;

— considerando che la corruzione mina la fiducia dei cittadini nelle istituzioni democratiche e nello Stato di diritto, danneggia l'economia europea e priva gli Stati di un gettito fiscale particolarmente necessario;

— considerando che, come riportato nel rapporto della Commissione, essa costa all'economia europea 120 miliardi di euro l'anno e soprattutto in Italia, nonostante la «legge anticorruzione» adottata nel novembre del 2012 e gli sforzi profusi, il fenomeno rimane preoccupante;

— considerando inoltre che metà dei 120 miliardi che ogni anno la corruzione sottrae all'economia dell'Unione europea interessa l'Italia;

— considerando che dal sondaggio Eurobarometro allegato alla relazione risulta che per più dei tre quarti dei cittadini europei (76 %) e ben il 97 % degli italiani, la corruzione è un fenomeno nazionale dilagante.

Tutto ciò premesso, ritiene la Commissione di dover prendere in considerazione l'idea di lavorare ad una nuova iniziativa che sproni gli Stati membri ad uniformare le normative anti-corruzione, garantendo quindi pari opportunità in tutti gli Stati membri?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(10 marzo 2014)

La relazione dell'UE sulla lotta alla corruzione, pubblicata il 3 febbraio 2014, rileva che gli Stati membri dispongono già di buona parte delle norme e istituzioni necessarie per prevenire e contrastare la corruzione. Tuttavia, i risultati ottenuti non sono soddisfacenti in tutta l'UE. Le norme anticorruzione non sono applicate dappertutto con lo stesso rigore, i problemi sistemici non sono affrontati in modo efficace e le istituzioni competenti non sempre dispongono delle capacità sufficienti per garantire l'applicazione delle regole.

Attualmente la Commissione, insieme con gli Stati membri e altre parti interessate, s'incentra sugli aspetti principali individuati nella prima relazione sulla lotta alla corruzione, evitando di imporre soluzioni uniche per tutti e tenendo invece conto delle circostanze e delle problematiche specifiche di ogni Stato membro.

Nell'immediato la Commissione non prevede di presentare nuovi atti legislativi in quest'ambito. Tuttavia, ciò non esclude di portare avanti una riflessione di lungo termine, prendendo spunto dalla relazione sulla lotta alla corruzione, su eventuali aspetti per cui una soluzione legislativa potrebbe portare risultati tangibili, considerando anche i limiti delle competenze dell'UE in questo settore.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001110/14
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: Anti-corruption report: the situation in Italy

The first Commission report on corruption in the Member States was published on 3 February 2014. The report, based on a study produced by PricewaterhouseCooper for the EU's anti-fraud office, OLAF, was presented in Brussels by the Commissioner with responsibility for home affairs, Cecilia Malmström.

Corruption saps public confidence in democratic institutions and the rule of law, has a damaging effect on the EU economy and deprives Member States of much-needed tax revenue.

As stated in the Commission report, the annual cost to the European economy stands at some EUR 120 billion. The situation is particularly alarming in Italy, despite the adoption of an 'anti-corruption act' in November 2012 and the other efforts the country has made in this area.

Italy in fact accounts for more than half of the EUR 120 million lost to corruption each year.

The Eurobarometer survey attached to the report shows that more than three-quarters of Europeans (76%) — and as many as 97% of Italians — think that corruption is widespread.

In view of this situation, will the Commission look into the idea of putting forward a new initiative encouraging the Member States to standardise anti-corruption laws and thus ensure equal opportunities in all the Member States?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(10 March 2014)

The EU Anti-Corruption Report, published on 3 February 2014, notes that Member States have in place most of the necessary laws and institutions to prevent and fight corruption. However, the results they deliver are not satisfactory across the EU. Anti-corruption rules are not always vigorously enforced, systemic problems are not tackled effectively enough, and the relevant institutions do not always have sufficient capacity to enforce the rules.

The Commission's current focus is therefore on addressing, together with Member States and other stakeholders, the main issues identified in the first EU Anti-Corruption Report, without imposing 'one-size-fits-all' solutions and taking account of the circumstances and challenges faced by each Member State.

The Commission has no immediate plans to propose legislation in this field. However, this does exclude any reflection on the longer term, based on the findings of the EU Anti-Corruption Report, on possible areas where a legislative solution could bring tangible results, considering the limits of EU competences in this field.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-001111/14
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(4 lutego 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Zapewnienie ochrony chrześcijańskim misjom oraz ludności cywilnej w Republice Środkowoafrykańskiej, w tym w miastach Bocaranga i Ngaoundaye

Trwający od kilku lat konflikt w Republice Środkowoafrykańskiej, mimo podejmowanych politycznych działań, cały czas uderza w chrześcijańskich misjonarzy oraz w ludność cywilną. Przykładowo w dniu 21 stycznia br. w miastach Bocaranga oraz Ngaoundaye miały miejsce walki zbrojne, które skutkowały ofiarami cywilów. Obecne na miejscu misje Kościoła katolickiego zostały zaatakowane i ograbione i nie mogły liczyć na wsparcie żołnierzy francuskich pełniących tam misję międzynarodową. Misjonarze pełnią na miejscu istotną rolę wspierającą ludność cywilną poszkodowaną w konflikcie zbrojnym.

W związku z tym pragnę zapytać:

1. Czy jednym z priorytetów działań misji UE wspartej rezolucją ONZ nr 2134 z dnia 28 stycznia 2014 r. jest ochrona misji chrześcijańskich obecnych na terenie konfliktu?

2. Czy żołnierze będą wspierać misje chrześcijańskie w zakresie umożliwienia niesienia pomocy ludności cywilnej?

3. Czy misja zbrojna UE została poinformowana o wydarzeniach z 21 stycznia br. w miastach Bocaranga i Ngaoundaye i czy przedsięwzięto środki, aby uniknąć podobnych wydarzeń w tych miejscach?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(28 marca 2014 r.)

Priorytetem misji UE będzie ochrona najbardziej zagrożonej ludności w okolicach Bangui oraz stworzenie bezpiecznych warunków umożliwiających niesienie pomocy humanitarnej. Aby chronić ludność cywilną EUFOR podejmie wszelkie niezbędne środki zgodnie ze swoim mandatem na mocy rezolucji Rady Bezpieczeństwa ONZ nr 2134. Struktura społeczna kraju została poważnie naruszona. Jednym z priorytetów Unii Europejskiej będzie krzewienie pojednania oraz wspieranie także tych przywódców religijnych różnych wyzwań, którzy obecnie wspólnie działają na rzecz mediacji i pojednania. UE już zapewnia wsparcie poprzez projekt, który ma na celu propagowanie dialogu między poszczególnym wspólnotami oraz rozładowanie rosnących napięć między chrześcijanami i muzułmanami.

EUFOR RCA Bangui będzie koncentrować swoje działania na stabilizacji sytuacji w stolicy, Bangui. Misja UE pozwoli także żołnierzom francuskim oraz żołnierzom międzynarodowej misji wsparcia w Republice Środkowoafrykańskiej pod dowództwem sił afrykańskich przesunąć się poza granice stolicy i skoncentrować działania na poprawie bezpieczeństwa w innych regionach kraju.

UE za pośrednictwem swojej delegatury w Republice Środkowoafrykańskiej została poinformowana o wydarzeniach, które miały miejsce w miastach Bocaranga i Ngaoundaye w dniu 21 stycznia 2014 r. Prowadzona przez Unię Afrykańską międzynarodowa misja wsparcia w Republice Środkowoafrykańskiej pod dowództwem sił afrykańskich oraz francuskie siły Sangaris są obecnie rozmieszczane poza stolicą, aby przywrócić porządek publiczny i zapobiec podobnym incydentom.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001111/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Ensuring protection for Christian missions and civilians in the Central African Republic, including in the towns of Bocaranga and Ngaoundaye

In spite of the political efforts to address it, the conflict in the Central African Republic, which has been ongoing for several years now, is continuing to hit Christian missionaries and civilians hard. For example, on 21 January 2014 fighting took place in the towns of Bocaranga and Ngaoundaye, claiming civilian victims. Catholic missions in the area have been attacked and robbed, and have been unable to count on the support of the French troops taking part in the international mission to the country. Missionaries in the Central African Republic play a vital role in helping civilians who are injured in the fighting.

With this in mind:

1. Is the protection of Christian missions in conflict zones one of the priorities of the EU mission on the basis of UN Security Council resolution 2134 of 28 January 2014?

2. Are the troops going to support the Christian missions with regard to facilitating the delivery of assistance to the civilian population?

3. Was the armed EU mission informed of the events that took place in Bocaranga and Ngaoundaye on 21 January 2014, and have steps been taken to prevent similar incidents from occurring in these areas in future?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

The priority of the EU operation will be to protect in the Bangui area the population most at risk and to create a safe and secure environment for the provision of humanitarian aid. In order to protect civilians the EUFOR will take any necessary measures in line with the mandate it provided under the UNSC Resolution 2134. The Country's social fabric has been severely disrupted. One of the priorities of the European Union will be to foster reconciliation, supporting also those religious leaders of all faiths who are now working together on mediation and reconciliation. The EU already provides active support through a project to promote inter-community dialogue and the de-escalation of rising tensions between Christians and Muslims.

The action of EUFOR RCA Bangui will be focused on the stabilisation of the capital city, Bangui. The EU operation will also allow the French and MISCA troops to move outside the capital and to concentrate their action on improving security in other regions of the country.

The EU, via its delegation in CAR, has been informed of the events that took place in Bocaranga and Ngaoundaye on 21 January 2014. The AU operation MISCA and French forces Sangaris are currently deploying outside the capital in order to restore law and order and prevent similar incidents.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001113/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(4 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Ampliación de capital en el Banco de Italia

El Gobierno italiano ha aprobado una ampliación de capital del Banco de Italia, que podría significar una ayuda encubierta a las entidades transalpinas de cara a las pruebas de estrés de este año.

La inyección podría ascender a varios miles de millones de euros, al revalorizar las participaciones en el capital del Banco Central desde 0,52 euros en la actualidad a 20 000 euros. Los principales accionistas son Unicredito e Intesa Sanpaolo. Y la plusvalía, aún sometida al fisco, podría contribuir a cubrir las necesidades de capital que se detecten en las pruebas de esfuerzo.

Tras casi 80 años sin modificar el procedimiento de ampliación de capital (se fijó en 1936, en tiempos de Mussolini), el Gobierno de Letta aprobó un decreto ley a finales del año pasado sin informar a tiempo al Banco Central Europeo.

Como consecuencia del decreto ley, el Banco de Italia pasará de un valor contable de 156 000 euros a 7 500 millones de euros. Esto beneficiará a sus accionistas, entre los que figuran en primer lugar Intesa Sanpaolo, con 30,3 % de las 300 000 cuotas participativas que el sector italiano tiene en su Banco Central, seguido por Unicredito (66 342 o el 22,1 %) y la aseguradora Generali (19 000 o el 6,3 %).

Por otra parte, dicho decreto, fija un techo de participación del 3 %, lo que obligará a esas entidades a deshacerse de buena parte de sus acciones, que podrían serle compradas por el propio Banco de Italia en un plazo de 24 meses. Algunos analistas cifran en 2300 millones el beneficio potencial para Intesa Sanpaolo. Y en 1 150 millones el de Unicredito.

¿Tiene la Comisión conocimiento de estos hechos?

¿No cree la Comisión que dicha medida es en realidad una ayuda estatal (artículo 107 del TUE) que distorsiona la competencia dentro del sector bancario italiano y europeo?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de marzo de 2014)

La Comisión es consciente de que el Gobierno y el Parlamento italianos han dado el visto bueno a una revalorización del capital del banco central de Italia, Banca d'Italia.

La Comisión envió una solicitud de información a las autoridades italianas.

Cuando la Comisión reciba la respuesta a dicha solicitud, estará en mejores condiciones de determinar si existen indicios de ayuda estatal en la revalorización de Banca d'Italia y, en caso afirmativo, si son compatibles o no con el mercado interior.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001113/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: Increase of capital at the Bank of Italy

The Italian Government has given its approval to an increase of capital at the Bank of Italy, which could imply covert aid being given to Italian institutions with respect to the stress tests due to be conducted this year.

This capital injection could amount to several billion euros by revaluing the share capital of the central bank from EUR 0.52 at the moment to EUR 20 000. The main shareholders are Unicredito and Intesa Sanpaolo, and the capital gain, which is still subject to tax, could help to cover the capital requirements discovered in the stress tests.

After almost 80 years without any changes to the procedure for capital increases, which was established in 1936, during Mussolini's era, Letta's government approved a decree-law at the end of 2013, without informing the European Central Bank of this in a timely manner.

As a result of the decree-law, the book value of the Bank of Italy will rise from EUR 156 000 to EUR 7 500 million, benefitting its shareholders, which include, as leading shareholder, Intesa Sanpaolo with 30.3% of the 300 000 non-voting shares that the Italian sector owns in its central bank, followed by Unicredito (66 342 shares or 22.1%) and the insurance company Generali (19 000 shares or 6.3%).

This decree moreover establishes a ceiling of 3% participation, meaning that these institutions will have to dispose of the majority of their shares, which could be bought by the Bank of Italy itself in a period of 24 months. Some analysts are quoting the figure of EUR 2 300 million as the potential profit reaped by Intesa Sanpaolo, and EUR 1 150 million for Unicredito.

Is the Commission aware of this situation?

Does the Commission not think that this measure is in fact state aid (under Article 107 of the Treaty on European Union) which distorts competition within the Italian and European banking industry?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(19 March 2014)

The Commission is aware that the Italian Government and Parliament have given their approval to a revaluation of the capital of Italy's central bank, Banca d'Italia.

The Commission has sent a request for information to the Italian authorities.

After the Commission receives the reply to this request for information, it will be better placed to determine whether there might be elements of state aid in the revaluation of Banca d'Italia and, if so, whether they are compatible with the internal market or not.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001120/14
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(4 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Contaminación atmosférica en España y en la EU

Considerando que la Agencia Europea de Medio Ambiente (AEMA) ([1]), publicó un informe en el que se afirma que alrededor del 90 % de los habitantes de las ciudades en la EU están expuestos a una contaminación atmosférica en niveles superiores a los que marca la Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS). Considerando que la OMS recomienda no superar los 10 microgramos de $PM_{2.5}$ (unos de los contaminantes considerados más peligrosos) y que, en los Estados Unidos, el límite se fija en 15 microgramos. Teniendo en cuenta que en Europa aún no hay un límite específico establecido para las $PM_{2.5}$ y que el límite de 25 microgramos por metro cúbico solo será obligatorio en 2015, con posibilidad de rebajarlo a 20 microgramos en 2020.

Considerando que la contaminación atmosférica tiene graves efectos sobre la salud humana reduciendo la capacidad pulmonar y afecta de manera directa en la mortalidad por enfermedades cardiovasculares y respiratorias. Considerando que, como se indica en dicho informe, buena parte de los problemas de contaminación en Europa tienen un origen transfronterizo (el 50 % de las $PM_{2.5}$ provienen de otros lugares) y que una manera de luchar contra esta exportación es endurecer las exigencias de la Directiva de Techos de Emisión.

Considerando que España es uno de los Estados que incumple estos techos de emisión y que el 22 % de los españoles respira un aire por encima de los límites legales de la UE y un 94 % por encima de los valores de la OMS. Considerando que en España se aprobó recientemente el «Plan AIRE» ([2]) para reducir la contaminación atmosférica, pero que este tiene numerosas limitaciones (no marca los valores recomendados por la OMS y no es de obligado cumplimiento, entre otras).

¿Se plantea la Comisión endurecer la normativa europea en términos de contaminación atmosférica para garantizar a los ciudadanos el derecho a respirar aire limpio y adecuarse a los valores recomendados por la OMS? ¿Qué mecanismos tiene la Comisión para asegurar que los Estados Miembros cumplan la normativa europea? ¿Qué acciones pretende realizar la Comisión ante el incumplimiento de la normativa europea en relación a la contaminación atmosférica del Estado español?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de marzo de 2014)

El 18 de diciembre de 2013, la Comisión adoptó el Programa «Aire Puro» para Europa ([3]), al que acompaña una evaluación de impacto minuciosa. La medida, que tiene por objeto minimizar los efectos negativos sobre la salud y el medio ambiente, reduciendo aún más las emisiones nocivas para la atmósfera procedentes de la industria, el tráfico, las instalaciones de producción de energía y la agricultura, se basa en una revisión exhaustiva de la política vigente de calidad del aire de la UE. El Programa presenta actuaciones concretas, entre ellas medidas legislativas sobre los límites máximos nacionales de las emisiones y sobre las instalaciones de combustión medianas, con el fin de aproximarse a los valores límite recomendados por la OMS a largo plazo, a la vez que se cumplen plenamente los valores límite vigentes no más tarde de 2020.

Con este fin, la Comisión seguirá tomando las medidas apropiadas contra los Estados miembros que infrinjan los valores límite vigentes. Con respecto a las partículas PM_{10}, la Comisión ha incoado procedimientos de infracción contra diecisiete Estados miembros, entre ellos España. Además, se ha presentado una solicitud de información a través del sistema EU Pilot con respecto a este Estado miembro, al igual que en el caso de todos los que se hallan en la misma situación, en relación con los excesos de NO_2 en las zonas en que no se aplican decisiones de prórroga adoptadas en virtud del artículo 22 de la Directiva 2008/50/CE ([4]).

([1]) EEA Report No 9/2013, EEA (European Environment Agency).
([2]) http://www.magrama.gob.es/es/calidad-y-evaluacion-ambiental/temas/atmosfera-y-calidad-del-aire/calidad-del-aire/Plan_Aire.aspx
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/clean_air_policy.htm
([4]) DO L 152 de 11.6.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001120/14
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: Air pollution in Spain and elsewhere in the EU

The European Environment Agency (EEA) has published a report ([1]) which says that around 90% of people living in EU cities are exposed to air pollution levels in excess of the World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines. The WHO recommends not exceeding 10 micrograms of $PM_{2.5}$ (considered to be one of the most dangerous pollutants), while in the United States the limit is 15 micrograms. In Europe no specific limit has yet been laid down for $PM_{2.5}$. A proposed limit of 25 micrograms per cubic metre will not become mandatory until 2015, although it may be reduced to 20 micrograms in 2020.

Air pollution has a serious impact on human health. It reduces lung capacity and has a direct influence on mortality rates for people suffering from cardiovascular and respiratory illnesses. The report states that pollution problems in Europe are largely cross-border in origin (50% of $PM_{2.5}$ particles come from elsewhere) and that one way of combating this 'exported pollution' is to tighten up the requirements under the National Emission Ceilings Directive.

Spain is one of a number of countries failing to comply with these emission ceilings. Some 22% of people in Spain breathe air that exceeds the EU's pollutant limits, while 94% breathe air exceeding the WHO guideline levels. Spain recently approved a plan to reduce air pollution known as the AIRE Plan ([2]), but it has a number of limitations (for example, it does not apply the values recommended by the WHO and compliance is not compulsory).

Does the Commission intend to tighten European regulations on air pollution, in line with the values recommended by the WHO, in order to safeguard people's right to breathe clean air? What mechanisms does the Commission have at its disposal to ensure that Member States comply with European regulations? What action does the Commission intend to take with regard to Spain's failure to comply with European air pollution regulations?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 2014)

On 18 December 2013 the Commission adopted a Clean Air Programme for Europe ([3]) which is accompanied by a thorough impact assessment. The package is designed to minimise negative health and environmental impacts by further reducing harmful air emissions from industry, traffic, energy plants and agriculture, and is based on a comprehensive review of existing EU air policy. The Programme sets out concrete actions, including legislative measures on national emission ceilings and medium combustion plants, to move towards WHO recommended limit values in the longer term, while achieving full compliance with existing limit values by 2020 at the latest.

To this purpose, the Commission will keep on taking appropriate action against Member States which are in breach of the existing limit values. As regards PM_{10}, the Commission has started infringement procedures against 17 Member States including Spain.

Furthermore, an EU pilot request is being launched for Spain, as for all Member States in the same situation, concerning the NO_2 exceedances in the zones which are not covered by postponement Decisions under Article 22 of Directive 2008/50/EC ([4]).

([1]) EEA Report No 9/2013, EEA (European Environment Agency).
([2]) http://www.magrama.gob.es/es/calidad-y-evaluacion-ambiental/temas/atmosfera-y-calidad-del-aire/calidad-del-aire/Plan_Aire.aspx
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/clean_air_policy.htm
([4]) OJ L 152, 11.6.2008.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001124/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Misure in merito alla regolamentazione della deforestazione

Alla luce di una recente indagine condotta dall'UNEP, agenzia ONU per il programma ambientale, si evince come l'erosione del patrimonio boschivo mondiale proceda secondo una progressione dai tassi allarmanti.

Secondo le stime effettuate, entro il 2050 sarebbero a rischio 800 milioni di ettari.

Quanto detto graverebbe in maniera particolarmente penalizzante sulle sorti dell'ecosistema terrestre.

La ricerca sui biocarburanti — che implica la coltivazione estensiva della colza — e la creazione di nuove aree coltivabili sono a monte del problema.

Di conseguenza, un'azione regolamentatrice che miri ad uno sfruttamento più razionale ed efficiente delle risorse boschive si impone.

Alla luce di quanto esposto, si interroga la Commissione per sapere:

1. qual è la posizione della Commissione in merito;

2. quali azioni prefigura per regolare in maniera efficiente e sostenibile l'utilizzo delle risorse boschive.

Risposta di Connie Hedegaard a nome della Commissione
(31 marzo 2014)

1) La Commissione riconosce la gravità del problema della deforestazione e conosce molto bene l'entità e le tendenze dei tassi passati e futuri. Sulla scorta della comunicazione del 2008 relativa ai problemi di deforestazione e degrado forestale da affrontare per combattere i cambiamenti climatici e la perdita di biodiversità, l'UE si impegnata a raggiungere obiettivi mondiali ambiziosi per ridurre la deforestazione entro il 2020 e il 2030.

2) Sia il settimo programma d'azione per l'ambiente dell'UE sia la nuova strategia forestale dell'UE invitano a valutare la necessità di compiere ulteriori sforzi e gli eventuali margini a tal fine, anche mediante un piano d'azione unionale in materia di deforestazione. La strategia, che ha tra i principi guida la responsabilità mondiale nei confronti delle foreste, promuove la gestione sostenibile in Europa e nel mondo e, nell'ambito della cooperazione e dell'azione esterna dell'UE, sostiene il ruolo che le foreste svolgono nella transizione verso un'economia verde. L'UE è un mercato chiave per una serie di prodotti e materie prime (tra cui quelle destinate alle bioenergie) a cui potrebbero ricondursi la deforestazione e il degrado forestale.

La Commissione è anche tra i maggiori dispensatori di aiuti pubblici allo sviluppo nel settore rurale d'oltremare. Avvalendosi di una serie di canali bilaterali e multilaterali nell'ambito dell'iniziativa FLEGT (Applicazione delle normative, la governance e il commercio nel settore forestale), della biodiversità, dello sviluppo rurale, dei programmi di ricerca, della convenzione quadro delle Nazioni Unite sui cambiamenti climatici (UNFCCC) e del programma REDD+, l'UE continua ad adoperarsi per limitare la pressione cui sono sottoposti gli ecosistemi boschivi sul nostro pianeta.

Il settimo programma quadro ha cofinanziato molti progetti di ricerca sull'osservazione, sull'analisi e sulla riduzione dei fenomeni di deforestazione, anche a sostegno di REDD+.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001124/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: Measures relating to the regulation of deforestation

A recent survey conducted by the UNEP, the UN environmental programme agency, has revealed that erosion of the world's forests is rising at alarming rates.

Estimates indicate that, by 2050, 800 million hectares will be at risk.

This will adversely affect the future of the terrestrial ecosystem in particular.

The search for biofuels — which entails extensive rapeseed cultivation — and the creation of new cultivable areas are the source of the problem.

A regulative stance designed to achieve a more rational and efficient exploitation of forestry resources is therefore called for.

In the light of the above, the Commission is asked:

1. What is the Commission's position on this matter?

2. What action does the Commission contemplate to achieve efficient and sustainable regulation of the use of forestry resources?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 2014)

1. The Commission is well aware of the magnitude, trends and gravity of the problem of past and future deforestation rates. Following the 2008 Communication on 'Addressing the challenges of deforestation and forest degradation to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss', the EU has committed itself to ambitious global targets for reducing deforestation by 2020 and 2030.

2. The Seventh EU Environmental Action Programme and the new EU Forest Strategy both suggest exploring the need and rationale for further efforts, including through an EU Action Plan on Deforestation. The strategy, that includes among its guiding principles global forest responsibility, promotes sustainable forest management across Europe and globally, and the role of forests in the transition to a green economy in the context of EU external cooperation and external action. The EU remains a key market for a range of products and commodities (including bioenergy feedstock) possibly associated with deforestation or forest degradation.

The Commission is also a leading provider of official development assistance in rural sectors overseas. Through a variety of bilateral and multilateral channels in relation to FLEGT, biodiversity, rural development, research programmes and UNFCCC/REDD+, the EU continues to contribute to limiting the pressure on global forest ecosystems.

The 7th Framework Programme has co-financed several research projects on the observation analysis and reduction of deforestation events, also in support of REDD+.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-001125/14
komissiolle
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)
(4. helmikuuta 2014)

Aihe: Talvivaaran kaivoksen jatkuvat ympäristöluparikkomukset ja Suomen viranomaisten puutteellinen toiminta

Esitin komissiolle 26.4.2012 kirjallisella kysymyksellä E-004384/2012 kysymyksen Suomen ympäristöviranomaisten toimista Kainuussa toimivan kaivosyhtiö Talvivaaran ympäristöluvan jatkuvan ja räikeän rikkomisen suhteen. Vastauksessaan komissio lupasi sekä pyytää Suomen viranomaisilta lisäselvitystä että aloittaa tutkinnan siitä, rikkovatko viranomaisten toimet Suomen EU-sitoumuksia.

Lukuisista hallinto-oikeuden päätöksistä (esim. ennakkoratkaisu KHO 2013:189) huolimatta lainvastainen tilanne Talvivaarassa jatkuu edelleen. Yritys itse on ilmoittanut julkisesti, ettei se kykene noudattamaan ympäristöluvassa määriteltyjä lupaehtoja. Paikallisviranomainen, Kainuun ELY-keskus, ei ole ryhtynyt toimiin tilanteen parantamiseksi eikä määrännyt hallintopakkokeinoja Talvivaaran toiminnan saattamiseksi lupaehtojen mukaisiksi.

1. Koska paikallisviranomainen ei ole ryhtynyt lain sille velvoittamiin toimiin tilanteen parantamiseksi, eikö Suomen voida katsoa edelleen rikkovan velvoitettaan panna tehokkaasti täytäntöön EU:n antamaa ympäristölainsäädäntöä, erityisesti komission yllä mainittuun kysymykseen antamassaan vastauksessa mainitsemia lakeja?

2. Missä vaiheessa komission yllä mainitun kysymyksen johdosta aloittama selvitys on?

3. Mihin toimiin komissio aikoo ryhtyä Talvivaaran tilanteen uusimpien kehityskulkujen johdosta (esim. marraskuussa 2012 tapahtuneen kipsisakka-altaan vuodon turvallisuustutkinta)?

Janez Potočnikin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(26. maaliskuuta 2014)

Komissio käynnisti kirjallisen kysymyksen E-004384/2012 johdosta tutkimuksen sen selvittämiseksi, onko mahdollisesti rikottu EU:n lainsäädäntöä ja erityisesti ympäristön pilaantumisen ehkäisemisen ja vähentämisen yhtenäistämistä koskevaa direktiiviä (2008/1/EY), vesipolitiikan puitteita koskevaa direktiiviä (2000/60/EY ([1])), ympäristövaikutusten arviointia koskevaa direktiiviä (2011/92/EU ([2])), kaivannaisjätedirektiiviä (2006/21/EY ([3])) ja ympäristövastuuta koskevaa direktiiviä (2004/35/EY ([4])).

Suomen viranomaiset ovat vahvistaneet, että joitakin lupaehtoja on rikottu. Toimivaltaiset viranomaiset käsittelevät parhaillaan näitä rikkomuksia. Asiaan liittyvistä luvista ja niiden käynnissä olevista tarkistuksista saatujen tietojen perusteella voidaan todeta, että Suomen viranomaiset ovat käynnistäneet riittävästi toimenpiteitä varmistaakseen EU:n lainsäädännön noudattamisen.

Erityisesti voidaan todeta, että

i) tarkistettu lupa myönnetään kaivannaisjätedirektiivin mukaisesti ja siihen sisältyy kaivannaisjätteen hallintasuunnitelma, lupa tarkistetaan kolmen vuoden välein ja tarkastuksia suoritetaan säännöllisesti;

ii) vesistöissä suoritetaan ylimääräistä sedimenttiseurantaa ja tulosten mukaan vaikuttaa siltä, että seurannassa on mukana riittävä määrä aineita;

iii) ympäristövastuuta koskevan direktiivin vaatimuksia on noudatettu;

iv) turvallisuusjohtamisjärjestelmä on perustettu ja sisäinen pelastussuunnitelma on laadittu ja päivitetty vuonna 2012.

Näin ollen komissio päätti asian käsittelyn marraskuussa 2013.

([1]) EYVL L 327, 22.12.2000.
([2]) EUVL L 26, 28.1.2012.
([3]) EUVL L 102, 11.4.2006.
([4]) EUVL L 143, 30.4.2004.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001125/14
to the Commission
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: Continued environmental permit infringements by the Talvivaara mine and lack of action by the Finnish authorities

In my Question E-004384/2012 of 26 April 2012 to the Commission I queried the Finnish environmental authorities' action in connection with the ongoing blatant breaches by Talvivaara, a mining company based in Kainuu in Finland, of its environmental licence. In its answer the Commission promised to request further information from the Finnish authorities and to open an investigation on whether the authorities' action breaches Finland's obligations under EC law.

Despite numerous judgments in administrative law (e.g. preliminary ruling KHO 2013:189), the illegal situation at Talvivaara persists. The company has itself publicly announced that it is unable to comply with the conditions of the environmental permit. The local authority, the Kainuu Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, has not taken any action to remedy the situation or imposed any administrative law coercive measures seeking to bring Talvivaara's activities into line with the conditions of the environmental permit.

1. Since the local authority has not taken the action to remedy the situation which it was required to take under the law, should not Finland be regarded as still breaching its obligation to effectively implement EU environmental legislation, and in particular the laws referred to in the Commission's answer to the abovementioned question?

2. What stage has been reached in the Commission's investigation arising from the abovementioned question?

3. What measures does the Commission propose to take as a result of the numerous developments in the situation at Talvivaara (e.g. the safety investigation into the November 2012 leak from the gypsum waste pond)?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2014)

Further to Written Question E-004384/2012, the Commission opened an investigation to examine possible breaches of EC law in particular of the directive concerning Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (2008/1/EC), the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC ([1])), the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (2011/92/EU ([2])), the Mining Waste Directive (2006/21/EC ([3])) and the Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC ([4])).

Whilst the Finnish authorities have confirmed the breach of certain permit conditions, these breaches are being addressed by the competent authorities. According to information provided on the relevant permits and their on-going revision, sufficient measures are being put in place by the Finnish authorities to ensure compliance with EC law.

In particular it has been noted that:

(i) the revised permit will be issued under the Mining Waste Directive and will include a management plan for the mining waste, the permit will be reviewed on a 3-yearly basis and regular inspections will be carried out;

(ii) additional sediment monitoring of water bodies is taking place and the results appear to cover an appropriate range of substances;

(iii) requirements of the Environmental Liability Directive have been complied with;

(iv) a safety management system and an internal emergency plan were established and updated in 2012.

Consequently, the Commission has decided to close the file in November 2013.

([1]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.
([2]) OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.
([3]) OJ L 102, 11.4.2006.
([4]) OJ L 143, 30.4.2004.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001127/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(4 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Recomendaciones de la Comisión al Reino de España (1)

Recientemente, la Comisión Europea y el Banco Central Europeo han impuesto al Reino de España una nueva agenda de reformas financieras. Las dos instituciones han pedido al Gobierno de España, entre otras cosas, que vigile que las diferentes medidas para limitar los desahucios a nivel estatal y regional no pongan en riesgo la estabilidad financiera.

¿Por qué cree la Comisión que las medidas para limitar los desahucios ponen en peligro la estabilidad financiera?

¿Piensa la Comisión que las autoridades deben garantizar a la ciudadanía el acceso a una vivienda digna?

¿Piensa la Comisión que es deber de las autoridades tomar medidas eficaces para evitar que los ciudadanos sean desahuciados de su vivienda habitual?

¿Cree sinceramente la Comisión que las medidas para limitar los desahucios de la Junta de Andalucía o del Parlamento navarro son un riesgo real para la estabilidad financiera?

¿Piensa la Comisión que la dignidad y los derechos de las personas se anteponen a un posible riesgo para la estabilidad financiera?

¿Cree la Comisión que el riesgo para la estabilidad financiera del Reino de España se debe fundamentalmente a las actividades especulativas del mismo sistema financiero y no a las posibles tensiones que puedan crear los impagos de las personas desahuciadas?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de marzo de 2014)

La Comisión es muy consciente de la precaria situación social y en materia de vivienda de las familias españolas. De ahí que, desde la puesta en práctica del Memorando de Entendimiento sobre condiciones de Política Sectorial Financiera para los bancos firmado por las autoridades españolas y la Comisión en nombre del FEEF/MEDE en julio de 2012, se anima a todos los niveles de gobierno a que asuman su responsabilidad en la materia y busquen el equilibrio adecuado entre proteger los justificados intereses de las capas más vulnerables de la sociedad y la preocupación por la estabilidad financiera. Las autoridades españolas informaron a la Comisión sobre las medidas relativas a los desahucios en cuanto a cualquier posible impacto material para la consecución de los objetivos del programa.

En este caso, la estabilidad financiera podría verse afectada por medidas que producen un debilitamiento indebido de los balances bancarios a través del debilitamiento de los derechos de propiedad sobre las garantías prendarias de sus créditos. Por esta razón, la Comisión ha manifestado su preocupación por algunas iniciativas regionales.

Sin embargo, la Comisión trabaja en paralelo en varias medidas para aumentar la fortaleza del sector de la vivienda, incluida una propuesta de Directiva de crédito hipotecario, que animará a los acreedores a ser razonablemente pacientes antes de que se inicie una ejecución hipotecaria, y a instaurar procedimientos que permitan, en el caso de venta forzosa, que la propiedad sea vendida al mejor precio posible, con el fin de reducir la deuda residual que sigue teniendo con sus acreedores el prestatario con problemas de pago. No obstante, la propuesta de Directiva de crédito hipotecario introduce normas comunes para evaluar la solvencia con el fin de garantizar que los acreedores concedan los créditos cuando sea probable que se respeten las obligaciones derivadas de los contratos correspondientes, reduciendo el riesgo de que los ciudadanos entren en el círculo vicioso de la pobreza por deudas hipotecarias impagadas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001127/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: The Commission's recommendations to Spain (1)

Recently, the European Commission and the European Central Bank set out a new financial reform agenda for Spain. The two institutions have asked the Spanish Government, *inter alia*, to ensure that the various measures at state and regional levels to limit evictions do not put financial stability at risk.

Why does the Commission believe that measures to limit evictions endanger financial stability?

Does the Commission think that the authorities should give people access to adequate housing?

Does the Commission think that the authorities should implement effective measures to prevent people from being evicted from their habitual residence?

Does the Commission really believe that the Andalusian Regional Government and the Parliament of Navarre's measures to limit evictions are a genuine risk to financial stability?

Does the Commission think that people's dignity and rights take precedence over potential risks to financial stability?

Does the Commission believe that risks to Spain's financial stability are primarily linked to the speculative activities of the financial system itself rather than to any tension that might be caused by evicted people being unable to make payments?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

The Commission is well aware of the precarious social and housing situation for families in Spain. Hence, as for the implementation of the memorandum of understanding on the Financial Assistance for banks signed by the Spanish authorities and the Commission on behalf of the EFSF/ESM in July 2012, all levels of government are encouraged to assume their responsibility in this matter such that it strikes a proper balance between protecting the justified interests of most vulnerable parts of society against concerns of financial stability. The Spanish authorities informed the Commission on the measures on evictions regarding any possible material impact on the achievement of the programme objectives.

In this case, financial stability could be affected by measures that lead to an undue weakening of balance sheets of banks via a weakening of the property rights over their loan collateral. This is why the Commission has expressed concerns on some regional initiatives.

However, the Commission works in parallel on several measures to increase the housing sectors' resilience including a proposal for a Mortgage Credit Directive (MCD), that will encourage creditors to exercise reasonable forbearance before foreclosure proceedings are initiated, and to have procedures in place to enable in the event of a forced sale that the property is sold at its best efforts price aiming at reducing the residual debt borrowers in payment difficulties still owe to creditors. However, the proposal for a MCD introduces common credit worthiness assessment standards to ensure that creditors make credits available where the obligations resulting from the credit agreement are likely to be met reducing people's risk of falling into the poverty trap due to unpaid mortgage debt.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-001130/14
до Комисията
Svetoslav Hristov Malinov (PPE)
(4 февруари 2014 г.)

Относно: Разследване на Европейската комисия № CHAP(2013)00755 във връзка със застрояването на бившия къмпинг „Корал“

През последните години се наблюдават съмнителни практики, свързани със застрояването на бившия къмпинг „Корал“, община Царево, разположен на Черноморието в България. През 2007 г. местната администрация одобрява мащабен проект за застрояване на значителна площ, разположена върху намиращото се там естествено блато и върху пясъка на територията на къмпинга. През следващите години Министерството на регионалното развитие и благоустройството и Районният административен съд установяват незаконността на част от строителните разрешителни, което поставя под въпрос легалността на целия проект. Допълнителна проверка на фактите показва, че не са извършени надлежно необходимите оценки на въздействието върху околната среда, които се изискват по закон, както и произтичащи като задължение според Директива 2011/92/ЕС от 13 декември 2001 г. Отделно, извършените ботанически и биологически проучвания на територията на бившия къмпинг установяват наличието на защитени видове (например блатно кокиче и други ценни видове, описани в академични доклади), които са застрашени от изчезване. Повдига се въпросът дали евентуалното застрояване няма да навреди на растителни или животински видове, които са от европейско значение по смисъла на Директива 92/43/ЕИО от 1992 г.

Запознат съм с това, че по сигнал на граждани Комисията е сезирана за случая и в момента тече разследване с номер CHAP(2013)00755, което продължава вече близо една година.

1. С оглед на горепосоченото, може ли Европейската комисия да ме информира на какъв етап е стигнало разследването?

2. Може ли да се констатира, че България е извършила нарушение на европейското законодателство във връзка с този конкретен случай?

3. Ако се констатират нарушения по този казус, какви следващи стъпки ще предприеме Европейската комисия за разрешаването му?

Отговор, даден от г-н Поточник от името на Комисията
(26 март 2014 г.)

Според информацията, с която разполага Комисията, единственият проект, разрешен на територията на бившия къмпинг „Корал“, е проектът, започнат от „Iberdrola Inmobiliaria Real Estate Investments“. Предоставеното разрешение е било отменено от компетентните органи в България по няколко причини, в т.ч. несъответствие със законодателството в областта на околната среда. Тази отмяна е потвърдена с окончателно решение на националния съд. С оглед на горепосоченото Комисията не възнамерява да предприема по-нататъшни действия.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001130/14
to the Commission
Svetoslav Hristov Malinov (PPE)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: Commission investigation No CHAP(2013)00755 into development of former 'Koral' campsite

Dubious practices have come to light in recent years in connection with the development of the former Koral campsite area in the Tsarevo district on Bulgaria's Black Sea coast. In 2007, the local administrative authority approved a major project to build on a substantial tract of land there, including both natural fenland and the beach area of the former campsite. Since then, the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works and the Regional Administrative Court have established that some of the building permits for the site were issued unlawfully, and this has raised questions about the legality of the entire project. Additional checks revealed that the environmental impact assessments required by law, and in accordance with Directive 2011/92/EU of 13 December 2011, were not properly conducted. Separately, botanical and biological research on the former campsite land has established and scientifically documented the presence of protected plants (including the spring snowflake and other important species) which are in danger of disappearance. The question arises as to whether any development would not be detrimental to plant or animal species of European importance under Directive 1992/43/EEC.

I am aware that, having been alerted by members of the public, the Commission undertook to investigate the case and that its investigation (No CHAP(2013)00755) has been under way for almost a year.

1. Can the Commission therefore tell me what stage the investigation has reached?

2. Can it be established that Bulgaria is in breach of EC law in this particular case?

3. If such a breach of the law is established, what measures does the Commission intend to take next?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2014)

According to information available to the Commission, the only project that has been authorised on the territory of the former campsite 'Koral' is the one initiated by 'Iberdrola Inmobiliaria Real Estate Investments'. The permit granted was repealed by the competent authorities in Bulgaria for several reasons, including non-conformity with environmental legislation. The repeal was confirmed by a final decision of the national court. In view of the above, the Commission does not intend to take any further steps.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-001131/14
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(5 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Καταστροφή χημικών όπλων από την Συρία στην Μεσόγειο

Πρόσφατα δημοσιεύματα αναφέρουν ότι ένα μέρος του χημικού οπλοστασίου της Συρίας πρόκειται να καταστραφεί σε διεθνή ύδατα, δυτικά του νομού Χανίων της Κρήτης, με ανυπολόγιστες περιβαλλοντικές προεκτάσεις και συνέπειες για την υγεία των κατοίκων.

Σύμφωνα με αυτό το σχέδιο, το πλοίο θα φτάσει στην Ιταλία και το τοξικό φορτίο του θα μεταφερθεί στα διεθνή ύδατα μεταξύ Ιταλίας και Ελλάδας, όπου και θα καταστραφεί, χωρίς να δίδονται περαιτέρω διευκρινίσεις.

Επειδή πρόκειται για μια διαδικασία η οποία έχει ήδη ξεκινήσει και, επιπλέον, είναι άγνωστη η ακριβής σύσταση των αποβλήτων, είναι επιβεβλημένη η άμεση δραστηριοποίηση των ευρωπαϊκών αρχών, σχετικά με την αποτροπή μιας περιβαλλοντικής απειλής με ανυπολόγιστες συνέπειες για τη Μεσόγειο.

Ερωτάται η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος:

Γνωρίζει η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος για την εν λόγω ενέργεια για την καταστροφή των χημικών όπλων της Συρίας στην Μεσόγειο και σε ποιες ενέργειες προτίθεται να προβεί άμεσα, δεδομένου ότι ήδη μεταφέρονται τα χημικά όπλα για την καταστροφή τους;

Γνωρίζει η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος ποια είναι η ακριβής σύσταση των αποβλήτων, η συγκέντρωσή τους, ο όγκος τους και οι μέθοδοι διάλυσής τους;

Ποιες θα είναι οι περιβαλλοντικές συνέπειες για τη Μεσόγειο και οι συνέπειες στην υγεία των κατοίκων της Κρήτης και της Μάλτας;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Μαρτίου 2014)

Η καταστροφή του συριακού χημικού οπλοστασίου έχει ήδη εγκριθεί και εποπτεύεται από το Εκτελεστικό Συμβούλιο του Οργανισμού για την Απαγόρευση των Χημικών Όπλων (ΟΑΧΟ) και το Συμβούλιο Ασφαλείας των Ηνωμένων Εθνών, τα οποία έχουν λάβει όλα τα σχετικά μέτρα για να εξασφαλίσουν την ασφαλή και φιλική προς το περιβάλλον καταστροφή όλων των κατηγοριών συριακών χημικών όπλων. Το σχέδιο αυτό περιλαμβάνεται σε μια σειρά δημοσίων εγγράφων του ΟΑΧΟ που περιέχουν σχετικές αποφάσεις του Εκτελεστικού Συμβουλίου του ΟΑΧΟ. Στον σχεδιασμό της ενέργειας αυτής συμμετείχαν ενεργά τόσο το Πρόγραμμα των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για το Περιβάλλον (UNEP), όσο και η Παγκόσμια Οργάνωση Υγείας (ΠΟΥ). Η μέθοδος υδρόλυσης για την προτεραιότητα 1 «πρόδρομες χημικές ουσίες» έχει επιλεγεί με βάση τη μακρά επιτυχή πείρα στην καταστροφή χημικών όπλων των ΗΠΑ και άλλων κρατών. Η ακριβής θέση για την υδρόλυση σε πλοίο που παρέχει η κυβέρνηση των ΗΠΑ (σε διεθνή ύδατα) δεν έχει ακόμη αποφασιστεί. Δεν υπάρχει καμία πρόθεση απόρριψης χημικών ουσιών ή των λυμάτων τους μετά από υδρόλυση στη θάλασσα. Αντίθετα, τα λύματα θα αποθηκευθούν στο αμερικανικό σκάφος και θα μεταφερθούν μαζί με τα υπόλοιπα συριακά χημικά που καλύπτονται από το σχέδιο σε επιλεγμένες εμπορικές υποδομές για τελική καταστροφή με αποτέφρωση. Η κοινή αποστολή οργάνωσε πρόσφατα συνεδρίαση με τις σημαντικότερες διεθνείς και εθνικές περιβαλλοντικές ΜΚΟ, για να εξηγηθεί ότι η καταστροφή θα πραγματοποιηθεί σύμφωνα με το διεθνές και εθνικό δίκαιο. Τέλος, πρέπει να υπογραμμιστεί ότι η ΕΕ και τα κράτη μέλη της έχουν συνεισφέρει τόσο χρηματοδοτικά όσο και σε είδος για την ενέργεια αυτή, προκειμένου να εξαλειφθεί μια κατηγορία θανατηφόρων όπλων μαζικής καταστροφής και να μην επαναληφθεί η χρήση τους κατά του συριακού λαού.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001131/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(5 February 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Destruction of Syrian chemical weapons in the Mediterranean

Recent reports indicate that part of Syria's chemical arsenal will be destroyed in international waters west of the prefecture of Chania in Crete: such a move will have incalculable environmental implications and consequences for the health of local inhabitants.

According to this plan, the vessel will arrive in Italy and the toxic load will be transported to international waters between Italy and Greece, where it will be destroyed; no further details are given.

Because it is a procedure which has already started and the exact composition of the waste is unknown, it is imperative that the EU authorities act immediately to prevent a threat to the environmental which could have incalculable consequences for the Mediterranean.

In view of the above, will the VP/HR say:

Is she familiar with the procedure used for destroying Syrian chemical weapons in the Mediterranean and what immediate action does she intend to take, as the chemical weapons are already being transported in order to be destroyed?

Does she know the exact composition of the waste, its concentration, volume and the methods being used to break it down?

What will be the environmental consequences for the Mediterranean and the effects on the health of the inhabitants of Crete and Malta?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2014)

The destruction of the Syrian chemical weapons arsenal has been agreed and is supervised by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Executive Council and the UN Security Council, which have taken all relevant measures in securing a safe and environmentally sound destruction of all the categories of the Syrian chemical weapons. This plan is contained in a series of public OPCW documents containing relevant decisions by the OPCW Executive Council. In the planning of the operation both United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and World Health Organisation (WHO) were actively involved. The method of hydrolysis for the Priority 1 chemical precursors has been chosen on the basis of long successful experience of application in the context of destroying the chemical weapons of the US and other states. The exact location for hydrolysis on board a ship provided by the US Government (in the international waters) has not been decided yet. There is no intention to discharge any chemicals or their effluent after hydrolysis into the sea. Instead, the effluents will be stored on the US vessel and transferred, together with the rest of the Syrian chemicals covered by the plan to selected commercial facilities for final destruction by incineration. The Joint Mission has recently organised a meeting with leading international and national environmental NGOs, to explain that the destruction will take place in accordance with international and national legislation. Finally, it should be underlined that the EU and its MS have been contributing financially and in kind to this operation, aimed at eliminating a category of lethal weapons of mass destruction and preventing a repetition of their use against the Syrian people.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-001132/14
do Komisji
Tadeusz Ross (PPE)
(5 lutego 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Szkolenia internetowe dla osób starszych

Internet stał się podstawą codziennego życia dla wszystkich obywateli UE. Wykluczenie cyfrowe, które jest szczególnie widoczne wśród osób starszych, jest zatem bardziej naglącym problemem niż kiedykolwiek wcześniej.

Ponieważ coraz więcej usług jest dostępnych online, chciałbym zapytać, co jest robione, by usługi te były dostępne również dla osób starszych.

Moim zdaniem kursy obsługi internetu dla osób starszych pozwoliłyby im skorzystać z rozwiązań e-administracji i usług bankowych online, tworzyć strony internetowe i korzystać z portali społecznościowych.

Komisja mogłaby promować kursy obsługi internetu, a takie sesje mogłyby być organizowane w instytucjach publicznych, jak na przykład biblioteki.

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wiceprzewodniczącą Neelie Kroes w imieniu Komisji
(28 lutego 2014 r.)

W europejskiej agendzie cyfrowej Komisja podkreśla, jak ważne jest zwalczanie wykluczenia cyfrowego m.in. osób starszych, i zobowiązała się do przeprowadzenia działań na poziomie europejskim, a także wezwała państwa członkowskie do wdrożenia długoterminowych polityk w zakresie umiejętności cyfrowych i do wspierania odpowiednich inicjatyw dla grup w niekorzystnej sytuacji.

Wiedza i szkolenia są ważne, aby wszyscy obywatele (w tym osoby starsze) mogli zdobyć odpowiednie umiejętności posługiwania się Internetem. W przypadku gdy kursy szkoleniowe są organizowane na poziomie krajowym z udziałem funduszy publicznych, państwa członkowskie zachęca się do udostępniania tych kursów w ramach otwartych zasobów edukacyjnych ([1]), tak aby wszyscy mogli z nich korzystać. Okazuje się jednak, że skutecznymi sposobami angażowania i uczenia osób starszych są także: wsparcie dla pośredników, takich jak opiekunowie, mentoring rówieśniczy, organizowanie inicjatyw międzypokoleniowych, a także kampanie typu „Tydzień z Internetem". Społeczeństwo obywatelskie i organizacje, takie jak biblioteki, odgrywają ważną rolę w tym zakresie. Na poziomie europejskim udziela się wsparcia dla wymiany najlepszych praktyk i doświadczeń poprzez sieci takie jak Carenet ([2]) i telecentres-europe ([3]). Dobrymi przykładami są również inicjatywy w państwach członkowskich, a liderzy cyfryzacji utworzyli forum prezentujące priorytety i inicjatywy, z których wiele koncentruje się na włączeniu cyfrowym i osobach starszych ([4]).

Komisja przedłożyła także wniosek dotyczący dyrektywy w sprawie dostępności stron internetowych instytucji sektora publicznego ([5]). Osoby starsze często także cierpią z powodu słabszego wzroku i innych upośledzeń, które nie pozwalają im na dostęp do zasobów Internetu, dlatego Komisja współfinansuje projekty w zakresie badań i innowacji w dziedzinie technologii, które wspomagałyby osoby niepełnosprawne w obsłudze Internetu.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-859_en.htm
([2]) http://www.carenetproject.eu/
([3]) http://www.telecentre-europe.org/ – sieć europejskich publicznych ośrodków nauczania umiejętności cyfrowych w gminach, organizacjach pozarządowych, bibliotekach i ośrodkach edukacyjnych, wspierających dzielenie się wiedzą i nauczanie wśród swoich członków.
([4]) Dobrym przykładem jest także program www.latarnicy.pl, w ramach którego przeprowadzono dotychczas szkolenia w zakresie umiejętności cyfrowych dla ponad 140 000 starszych obywateli.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/proposal-directive-european-parliament-and-council-accessibility-public-sector-bodies-websites

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001132/14
to the Commission
Tadeusz Ross (PPE)
(5 February 2014)

Subject: Internet training for senior citizens

The Internet has become a mainstay of everyday life for all EU citizens. Digital exclusion, which is especially prevalent among senior citizens, is therefore a more pressing issue than ever before.

Since more and more services are available online, I would like to enquire about what is being done to make those online services accessible to senior citizens.

In my opinion, Internet courses for older people would let them take advantage of e-administration solutions and online banking, create websites and use social networking.

The Commission could promote courses on the Internet, and these training sessions could be organised by public institutions such as libraries.

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2014)

The Commission in the Digital Agenda for Europe recognises the importance of combating digital exclusion, including among the elderly and has committed to actions at European level and also called on Member States to implement long-term e-skills and digital literacy policies and promote relevant incentives for disadvantaged groups.

Awareness and training are important if the elderly, and all citizens, are to acquire the appropriate skills to participate online and where courses are developed at national level with public funds Member States are encouraged to make them available as open education resources ([1]) so others can share. However, support to intermediaries such as carers, peer mentoring, setting up inter-generational initiatives, as well as campaigns such as Get Online Week, have been shown also to be effective means of engagement and for learning for the elderly. Civil society and organisations such as libraries play an important role in this. At European level, support is given to the exchange of best practices and experiences through networks such as Carenet ([2]) and telecentres-europe ([3]). Initiatives in Member States also provide good examples and the Digital Champions provide a forum for showcasing priorities and initiatives, many of which focus on inclusion and the elderly ([4]).

The Commission has also submitted a proposal for a directive on the accessibility of public sector bodies' websites ([5]). The elderly as a group also tend to suffer from visual and other impairments that prevent them accessing content and websites and the Commission co-funds research and innovation projects into technologies that will assist those with disabilities in accessing the Internet.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-859_en.htm
([2]) http://www.carenetproject.eu/
([3]) http://www.telecentre-europe.org/ — network of European public ICT learning centres in municipalities, NGOs, libraries & education venues, fostering knowledge sharing and learning amongst its members.
([4]) One of the successful examples is the programme www.latarnicy.pl which to date has provided training on digital skills for over 140 000 senior citizens.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/proposal-directive-european-parliament-and-council-accessibility-public-sector-bodies-websites

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-001133/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D)
(5 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Sede legale della Fiat Chrysler Automobiles

Il giorno 29 Gennaio, il CdA della Fiat ha approvato la definitiva integrazione del gruppo Chrysler e la costituzione di una nuova società transnazionale denominata Fiat Chrysler Automobiles. Il CdA ha contestualmente deciso di stabilire la sede legale del gruppo in Olanda e di richiedere la sede fiscale nel Regno Unito.

Dietro la scelta della collocazione delle sedi legali vi sono ragioni di convenienza fiscale e societaria: se la sede fiscale nel Regno Unito trova spiegazione in una tassazione più bassa, quella della sede legale in Olanda si spiega attraverso una norma del diritto societario olandese che consente di attribuire in assemblea degli azionisti un valore proporzionalmente maggiore ai voti dei soci che detengono una quota più alta di azioni.

Può dire la Commissione:

1. se ritiene che tali pratiche di delocalizzazione secondo convenienza fiscale o amministrativa non rischino di innescare circuiti pericolosi per molte realtà produttive europee e, in caso affermativo, quali misure intende proporre per arginare il fenomeno;

2. se considera la competizione basata su un ribasso fiscale ed una disomogenea deregolamentazione amministrativa un pericolo per uno sviluppo equilibrato del Mercato Unico;

3. se ritiene di escludere, al di là delle rassicurazioni provenienti dall'azienda, ogni possibile nesso tra il trasferimento della sede legale ed una successiva delocalizzazione degli stabilimenti produttivi che hanno sede in Italia e, in caso affermativo, quali strumenti intende mettere atto;

4. se non ritiene inappropriato che tali scelte non siano state accompagnate da alcuna forma di consultazione o informazione preliminare dei lavoratori o dei loro rappresentanti?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(5 marzo 2014)

La Commissione non ha alcun potere per intervenire nel caso in questione dato che, in generale, l'imposizione diretta rientra nelle competenze degli Stati membri. Nel quadro delle competenze conferitele dal trattato, la Commissione ha sempre raccomandato il coordinamento delle misure fiscali tra gli Stati membri, al fine di evitare i disallineamenti e di eliminare le scappatoie. A tale scopo, nel 2011 la Commissione ha proposto l'introduzione a livello UE di una base imponibile consolidata comune per l'imposta sulle società (CCCTB) ([1]). Armonizzando la base imponibile per l'imposta sulle società, la proposta CCCTB mira, tra l'altro, a ridurre le opportunità di pianificazione fiscale che possono potenzialmente condurre alla delocalizzazione delle imprese.

Stabilire le aliquote per le imposte sulle società compete agli Stati membri. In linea di principio, la concorrenza in materia di aliquote generali è trasparente, ed è pertanto considerata come concorrenza fiscale leale. Allo stesso tempo, la Commissione incoraggia la lotta contro la concorrenza fiscale dannosa, in particolare sostenendo il lavoro del gruppo Codice di condotta del Consiglio in materia di tassazione delle imprese.

Nell'ambito delle norme UE in materia di libera circolazione, l'ubicazione degli impianti di produzione non è necessariamente legata all'ubicazione della sede legale di una società. La Commissione non ha il potere di interferire nelle decisioni delle società in materia di ubicazione o delocalizzazione degli impianti, ma le invita ad anticipare i cambiamenti aziendali e a seguire le buone pratiche in materia di gestione della ristrutturazione ([2]).

Secondo le informazioni di cui la Commissione dispone, nel marzo 1996 la Fiat S.p.A. ha istituito un comitato aziendale europeo. L'accordo sul comitato aziendale ([3]) ([4]) prevede un elenco di questioni che devono essere oggetto di informazione e consultazione. Spetta alle autorità nazionali valutare se, nella situazione descritta dall'onorevole deputato, il datore di lavoro ha rispettato l'accordo.

([1]) COM(2011) 121 definitivo.
([2]) Comunicazione del 13 dicembre 2013, COM(2013) 882 final.
([3]) http://www.ewcdb.eu/show_agreement.php?agreement_ID=335
([4]) Modificato il 28 giugno 2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001133/14
to the Commission
Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D)
(5 February 2014)

Subject: Registered office of Fiat Chrysler Automobiles

On 29 January, Fiat's board of directors officially approved the takeover of the Chrysler Group and the formation of a new multinational company called Fiat Chrysler Automobiles. At the same time, the board of directors decided to establish the registered office of the group in the Netherlands and to apply for tax residence in the United Kingdom.

These locations were chosen for tax reasons and for reasons of corporate convenience. While registration in the United Kingdom for tax purposes can be explained by the lower rate of taxation, having a registered office in the Netherlands means that, under a provision of Netherlands corporate law, the votes cast at general meetings by shareholders with larger numbers of shares are awarded a proportionately higher weighting.

Can the Commission state:

1. Whether it considers that this practice of relocating for tax or administrative reasons might not trigger a dangerous chain of events in many industries in the EU and, if so, what steps it will take to arrest this trend;

2. Whether it considers competition based on lower rates of taxation and non-uniform administrative deregulation to be a danger for the balanced development of the single market;

3. Whether, leaving aside the assurances provided by the company, it feels that the possibility of any connection between the transfer of the registered office and a subsequent relocation of its Italy-based production plants can be ruled out and, if so, what instruments it intends to harness;

4. Whether it does not feel it inappropriate that the workers and their representatives were not informed or consulted before this decision was taken?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2014)

The Commission has no specific power of intervention in the case at hand given that, in general, direct tax matters fall within Member States' competence. Within its Treaty competences, the Commission has always recommended coordinating tax measures between Member States in order to prevent mismatches and close loopholes. In 2011 the Commission proposed the introduction at EU level of a common consolidated corporate tax base (CCCTB) ([1]) to this end. By harmonising the corporate tax base, the CCCTB proposal, among other things, aims at reducing tax planning opportunities which may potentially lead to business relocations.

Setting corporate tax rates is a competence of the Member States. In principle, competition on general rates is transparent and therefore considered to be fair tax competition. At the same time, the Commission supports the fight against harmful tax competition, notably by supporting the work of the Council's Code of Conduct Group on business taxation.

Under the EU free movement rules, the location of production facilities is not necessarily linked to the location of the registered office of a company. The Commission has no powers to interfere in companies' decisions on the location or relocation of plants, but urges them to anticipate business changes and follow good practices on management of restructuring ([2]).

According to the information available to the Commission, FIAT S.p.A. established a European Works Council in March 1996. This EWC agreement ([3]) ([4]) foresees a list of issues to be subject to information and consultation. It is for the national authorities to assess if, in the situation described by the Honourable Member, the employer complied with the agreement.

([1]) COM(2011) 121 final.
([2]) Communication of 13 December 2013, COM(2013) 882 final.
([3]) http://www.ewcdb.eu/show_agreement.php?agreement_ID=335
([4]) As amended on 28 June 2011.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001142/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Recepimento della direttiva relativa alle alluvioni in Italia

Considerati i recenti fenomeni alluvionali che hanno colpito l'Italia, con perdite di vite umane e gravi danni a strutture pubbliche e private e considerata la direttiva 2007/60/CE relativa alla valutazione e alla gestione dei rischi di alluvioni, può la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

— Intende essa riferire sullo stato di attuazione della direttiva nelle varie regioni d'Italia?

— Intende essa fornire una valutazione dell'efficacia della direttiva in rapporto agli eventi alluvionali occorsi negli ultimi anni?

— Intende essa comunicare se sono stati stanziati fondi da parte dell'Unione europea per sostenere le regioni italiane nell'attuazione di tale normativa? In caso di risposta affermativa, può indicarne l'importo?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001143/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Recepimento della direttiva relativa alle alluvioni in Italia

Considerati i recenti fenomeni alluvionali che hanno colpito l'Italia e in molti altri paesi dell'UE, con perdite di vite umane e gravi danni a strutture pubbliche e private, e considerata la direttiva 2007/60/CE relativa alla valutazione e alla gestione dei rischi di alluvioni, può la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

— Intende essa riferire sullo stato di attuazione della direttiva negli Stati membri?

— Intende essa fornire una valutazione dell'efficacia della direttiva in rapporto agli eventi alluvionali occorsi negli ultimi anni?

— Intende essa comunicare se sono stati stanziati fondi da parte dell'Unione europea per sostenere gli Stati membri nell'attuazione di tale normativa? In caso di risposta affermativa, può indicarne l'importo Stato per Stato?

Risposta congiunta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(25 marzo 2014)

Ai sensi della direttiva relativa alla valutazione e alla gestione dei rischi di alluvioni ([1]), gli Stati membri sono tenuti a effettuare una valutazione preliminare del rischio di alluvioni entro il 2011, a elaborare mappe della pericolosità e del rischio di alluvioni entro il 2013 nonché piani di gestione del rischio di alluvioni entro il 2015. La Commissione sta attualmente valutando i progressi realizzati dagli Stati membri, compresa l'Italia, e prevede di pubblicare una relazione di sintesi della valutazione europea verso la fine di quest'anno, al fine di facilitare la messa a punto di piani di gestione del rischio di alluvioni nel 2015.

Inoltre, ai sensi della suddetta direttiva, la Commissione è tenuta a presentare al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio, entro il 22 dicembre 2018 e successivamente ogni sei anni, una relazione di valutazione sull'attuazione della direttiva.

La Commissione non dispone di informazioni specifiche sull'uso dei finanziamenti del fondo FESR per sostenere l'attuazione della direttiva 2007/60/CE.

Tuttavia, per il periodo di programmazione 2007-2013, l'Italia ha destinato un importo di 430 milioni di EUR del fondo FESR alla prevenzione dei rischi (inclusa l'elaborazione e l'attuazione di piani e provvedimenti volti a prevenire e gestire i rischi naturali e tecnologici) e 113 milioni di EUR ad altre misure in materia di ambiente e prevenzione dei rischi.

([1]) Direttiva 2007/60/CE, GU L 288 del 6.11.2007.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001142/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 February 2014)

Subject: Transposition of the directive on floods in Italy

In view of the recent floods which have hit Italy, causing loss of life and serious damage to public and private buildings, and in the light of Directive 2007/60/EC on the assessment and management of flood risks, can the Commission clarify the following:

— Does the Commission intend to report on the implementation status of the directive in the various regions of Italy?

— Does the Commission intend to provide an assessment of the efficacy of the directive in the light of flood events in recent years?

— Does the Commission intend to disclose whether funds have been allocated by the European Union to support the Italian regions in the implementation of this directive? If so, can the Commission indicate the amount of such funds?

Question for written answer E-001143/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 February 2014)

Subject: Transposition of the directive on floods in Italy

In view of the recent floods which have affected Italy and many other EU countries, causing loss of life and serious damage to public and private buildings, and in the light of Directive 2007/60/EC on the assessment and management of flood risks, can the Commission clarify the following:

— Does the Commission intend to report on the implementation status of the directive in Member States?

— Does the Commission intend to provide an assessment of the efficacy of the directive in the light of flood events in recent years?

— Does the Commission intend to disclose whether funds have been allocated by the European Union to support Member States in the implementation of this directive? If so, can the Commission provide a State by State breakdown of the funds allocated?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2014)

The Floods Directive (FD) ([1]) required Member States to undertake preliminary flood risk assessments by 2011, to prepare flood hazard and risk maps by 2013 and flood risk management plans by 2015. The Commission is currently assessing progress achieved by the Member States, including Italy, and envisages a publication of a European overview assessment report later this year in order to facilitate the finalisation of the flood risk management plans in 2015.

Moreover, under the FD, the Commission is required to submit to the European Parliament and to the Council, by 22 December 2018 and every six years thereafter, a report assessing the implementation of the directive.

The Commission does not have any specific information on the use of ERDF financial allocation to support the implementation of the directive 2007/60/EC.

However, for the 2007-2013 programming period, Italy has allocated an ERDF amount of EUR 430 million on risk prevention (including the drafting and implementation of plans and measures to prevent and manage natural and technological risks) and EUR 113 million to other environmental and risk prevention measures.

([1]) Directive 2007/60/EC, OJ L 288, 6.11.2007.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001144/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Allarme peste suina in Canada

Secondo un comunicato ufficiale del governo canadese, sarebbe ripartita, nel Quebec e nell'Ontario, una nuova epidemia di peste suina. Lo scorso anno, il virus era stato segnalato in 23 stati USA e si era diffuso in diversi branchi di suini. La malattia è mortale per quasi il 100 % dei suini più piccoli. I protocolli di sicurezza, pur stringenti, non danno la garanzia assoluta di circoscrivere il fenomeno. I trasporti via truck hanno contribuito a diffondere il malanno, tanto più che il virus si ambienta meglio alle basse temperature, come le attuali.

Può dire la Commissione:

1. se è a conoscenza del fenomeno?

2. Come intende tutelare gli allevatori europei dai pericoli derivanti da un possibile contagio?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(24 marzo 2014)

1. La Commissione è al corrente dell'epidemia del suino attualmente in atto tra i suini negli Stati Uniti e in Canada, causata dall'introduzione del virus della diarrea epidemica del suino (PED — Porcine Epidemic Diarrhoea). Poiché la popolazione suina locale non è immune a tale virus, pare che l'epidemia stia causando problemi significativi alla salute e alla produzione dei suini nell'America settentrionale.

2. Il PED è stato per la prima volta identificato nel Regno Unito nel 1971 e in seguito rilevato in molti paesi produttori di carne suina in Europa e in Asia. A causa della diffusione del virus all'interno dell'Europa l'impatto sanitario di questa malattia in Europa è tuttavia attualmente piuttosto limitato e non sono in vigore nell'Unione misure armonizzate contro la malattia, né all'interno dell'UE né per quanto riguarda le importazioni da paesi terzi. Oltretutto, il PED non è stato incluso nell'elenco delle malattie dell'organizzazione mondiale per la salute animale (OIE) e non esistono specifiche norme internazionali a riguardo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001144/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 February 2014)

Subject: Swine fever alert in Canada

According to an official announcement from the Canadian Government, a new epidemic of swine fever has broken out in Québec and Ontario. Last year the virus was reported in 23 US States and had spread to several pig herds. The illness is almost 100% fatal to younger pigs. Safety protocols, while stringent, provide no absolute guarantee of containment of the phenomenon. Truck transportation has contributed to the spread of the disease, especially given that the virus is better adapted to the low temperatures currently experienced.

Can the Commission tell us:

1. whether it is aware of this phenomenon?

2. how it intends to protect European breeders from the risks of possible contagion ?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

1. The Commission is aware of the swine epidemic currently ongoing in the United States and in Canada, caused by the introduction of Porcine Epidemic Diarrhoea (PED) virus. This virus seems to be causing significant problems to pig health and production in North America due to the lack of immunity in the local pig population.

2. PED was first detected in the United Kingdom in 1971 and subsequently reported in many swine-producing countries in Europe and Asia. However, because of its spread within Europe, the health impact of this disease in Europe is currently rather limited and no harmonised Union measures are in place against the disease, both within the EU and on import from third countries. Moreover, PED has not been included in the list of diseases of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and no specific international standards exist.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001145/14
do Komisji
Tadeusz Ross (PPE)
(5 lutego 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Postęp i zamiary w związku z dyrektywą w sprawie dostępności stron internetowych instytucji sektora publicznego

Parlament i Rada pracują obecnie nad dyrektywą dotyczącą dostępności stron internetowych sektora publicznego. Chciałbym zwrócić się do Komisji o śledzenie i wspieranie negocjacji w sprawie tej dyrektywy. Jej nieprzyjęcie przed końcem kadencji byłoby godne ubolewania.

Czy Komisja sądzi, że uda się zamknąć wspomniane negocjacje przed końcem bieżącej kadencji?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wiceprzewodniczącą Neelie Kroes w imieniu Komisji
(20 marca 2014 r.)

Komisja w dalszym ciągu zachęca do przyspieszenia prac legislacyjnych nad wnioskiem dotyczącym dyrektywy w sprawie dostępności stron internetowych instytucji sektora publicznego.

Po głosowaniu Parlamentu Europejskiego w pierwszym czytaniu, które miało miejsce dnia 26 lutego 2014 r., przyjęcie tego wniosku w ramach obecnej kadencji Parlamentu zależy w dużej mierze od postępów i wyników dyskusji w Radzie.

Obecna prezydencja zamierza przyjąć sprawozdanie z postępu prac.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001145/14
to the Commission
Tadeusz Ross (PPE)
(5 February 2014)

Subject: Progress and intentions on the directive on the accessibility of public sector bodies' websites

Parliament is currently working with the Council on a directive concerning the accessibility of the public sector's websites. I would like to ask the Commission to follow up and promote negotiations on this directive; it would be regrettable not to adopt this ambitious directive by the end of the legislature.

Does the Commission believe that the negotiations can be completed by the end of this legislature?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2014)

The Commission continues to encourage faster progress in the legislative process with regard to the proposal for a directive on the accessibility of public sector bodies' websites.

Following the European Parliament's first reading vote on 26th February 2014, the possibilities for adoption within the parliament's current mandate depend to a great extent on the progress and results of the discussions in the Council.

The current presidency aims to adopt a progress report.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-001148/14
upućeno Komisiji
Dubravka Šuica (PPE)
(5. veljače 2014.)

Predmet: Diskriminacija potrošača u novim članicama EU-a, a samim time i u Hrvatskoj

Istraživanje slovačke udruge za zaštitu potrošača utvrdilo je da multinacionalne kompanije koje prodaju hranu i piće pakiraju proizvode različite kvalitete pod istim imenom za različita tržišta. Prije ulaska Hrvatske u EU udruga je testirala proizvode kupljene u velikim trgovinama u osam zemalja članica EU-a: Austriji, Slovačkoj, Češkoj, Njemačkoj, Rumunjskoj, Poljskoj, Mađarskoj i Bugarskoj. Proizvodi koji su obuhvaćeni istraživanjem su Coca Cola, čokolada Milka, papar i crvena paprika tvrtke Kotanyi, instant kava Nescafe Gold, kava u zrnu Jacobs Kronung i espresso kava Tchibo. Rezultati istraživanja su pokazali da je jedino čokolada Milka iste kvalitete u svim zemljama.

Hrvatska kao nova članica, a samim time i hrvatski potrošači imaju pravo znati postoje li i koje su razlike u kvaliteti prehrambenih proizvoda koji se prodaju pod istim imenom u tzv. „starim članicama EU-a" i „novim članicama EU-a". Može se zaključiti da i proizvodi lošije kvalitete zadovoljavaju postavljene sigurnosne i zdravstvene standarde, no nedopustiva je diskriminacija potrošača i podjela na siromašni jug i bogati sjever jer se protivi osnovnim europskim politikama i načelima.

Sukladno provedenim istraživanjima, može li Komisija odgovoriti koji je razlog da proizvodi lošije kvalitete završavaju na tržištima „novih" država članica EU-a te koje mjere Komisija namjerava poduzeti kako hrvatski potrošači, a samim time i potrošači ostalih „novih" članica EU-a, ne bi bili diskriminirani?

Odgovor g. Mimice u ime Komisije
(24. ožujka 2014.)

U pogledu razlika u kvaliteti proizvoda koji se prodaju pod istom robnom markom u različitim državama članicama, Komisija upućuje uvaženog zastupnika na svoje nedavne odgovore na pisane upite E-007154/2013 i E-001209/2013 ([1]).

U tom smislu Komisija bi bila zahvalna kada bi primila bilo kakve značajne informacije, pored istraživanja iz 2012. koje navodi uvaženi zastupnik, kako bi mogla procijeniti postoje li kršenja propisa EU-a.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001148/14
to the Commission
Dubravka Šuica (PPE)
(5 February 2014)

Subject: Discrimination against consumers in new Member States and hence in Croatia

Research by the Slovak consumer protection association has established that multinational food and drink companies sell products of varying quality under the same name on different markets. Before Croatia joined the EU, the Slovak association tested products bought in supermarkets in eight Member States: Austria, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Romania, Poland, Hungary, and Bulgaria. The products covered by the research were Coca Cola, Milka chocolate, Kotanyi pepper and red peppers, Nescafé Gold instant coffee, Jacobs Krönung ground coffee, and Tchibo espresso coffee. The findings showed that only Milka chocolate was of the same quality in every country.

Given that it is a new Member State, Croatia and hence Croatian consumers have the right to know whether — and, if so, what — differences exist in the quality of foods sold under the same name in the old Member States, as they are called, and what are termed the 'new Member States'. It can be inferred that even products of inferior quality satisfy health and safety standards, but it is unacceptable to discriminate between consumers and divide them into the poor South and the wealthy North: to do so goes against Europe's core policies and principles.

In the light of the study carried out, can the Commission say why products of lower quality end up on the markets of 'new' Member States? What steps will it take to ensure that Croatian consumers, and by extension consumers in the other 'new' Member States, do not suffer discrimination?

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

With regard to differences in the quality of products sold under the same brand name in different Member States, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its recent answers to written questions E-007154/2013 and E-001209/2013 ([1]).

In this context, the Commission would appreciate to receive any substantive information other than the study of 2012 referred to by the Honourable Member, so as to be able to assess whether there are any violations of the EU rules.

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

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-001150/14
upućeno Komisiji
Dubravka Šuica (PPE)
(5. veljače 2014.)

Predmet: Izgradnja Jadransko-jonskog koridora

Europska komisija prihvatila je da će razmotriti određene izuzetke kada je riječ o mreži europskih prometnih koridora do 2023. godine koji se financiraju sredstvima EU-a.

Na plenarnoj sjednici u studenom 2013. godine Europski parlament je odobrio Instrument za povezivanje Europe (CEF) u vrijednosti od 29,3 mlrd. eura namijenjenih za dovršetak ključnih europskih prometnih, energetskih i telekomunikacijskih veza za sedmogodišnje razdoblje od 2014. do 2020. godine, a financirat će se prije svega prekogranično prometno povezivanje, dovršetak nedostajućih dionica i rješavanje uskih grla na transeuropskim pravcima. Većina sredstava u iznosu od 23,2 milijarde eura namijenjena je za prometni sektor, a još 10 milijardi eura za prometno povezivanje bit će na raspolaganju iz Kohezijskog fonda.

Budući da mi Europljani dijelimo zajedničke vrijednosti, i to vrlo rado i često ističemo, smatram da bismo trebali dijeliti i razinu standarda poput infrastrukture, jer uostalom kohezijska politika i postoji kako bi životni standard građana Unije bio ujednačen.

Može li Komisija podrobno objasniti kada i kako namjerava financirati gradnju autoceste na Jadransko-jonskom koridoru od Ploča u Hrvatskoj prema Crnoj Gori, Albaniji i Grčkoj, a sve kako bi i u praksi zaživjela Strategija Jadransko-jonske makroregije?

Odgovor g. Kallasa u ime Komisije
(31. ožujka 2014.)

Od četiri zemlje koje je naveo časni zastupnik, potpora iz Kohezijskog fonda (KF) i Europskog fonda za regionalni razvoj (EFRR) dostupna je samo za projekte u Hrvatskoj i Grčkoj, državama članicama kvalificiranima za te fondove. Potpore EFRR-a/KF-a uglavnom su dostupne u obliku bespovratnih sredstava.

Potpora iz CEF-a ([1]) može se pružati u svakoj od četiri navedene države u obliku bespovratnih sredstava i financijskih instrumenata, pod uvjetom da projekti udovoljavaju uredbi o smjernicama za TEN-T ([2]).

Bespovratna se sredstva mogu dodjeljivati za studije kao i za radove. Bespovratna se sredstva za cestovne radove mogu dodjeljivati jedino za projekte s prekograničnim dionicama (uključujući granične prijelaze) u Hrvatskoj i Grčkoj, specifično, za dionicu Ioannina — Kakavia ceste koja povezuje Grčku i Albaniju i za dionicu Dubrovnik — Karasovići ceste koja povezuje Hrvatsku i Crnu Goru.

Cestovni projekti u Albaniji i Crnoj Gori mogli bi također dobiti potporu iz Instrumenta pretpristupne pomoći (IPA), a posebno Okvirom za ulaganja na zapadnom Balkanu (WBIF).

Podnošenje zahtjeva za financijsku potporu EU-a je na pojedinoj zemlji. Komisija će odlučiti hoće li dodijeliti takvu potporu ovisno o važnosti i dodanoj vrijednosti projekta u vezi s ciljevima politika EU-a i o dostupnosti financijskih sredstava u različitim navedenim instrumentima, kao što je propisano prema odgovarajućim kriterijima.

([1]) Uredba (EU) br. 1316/2013 Europskog parlamenta i Vijeća od 11. prosinca 2013. o uspostavi Instrumenta za povezivanje Europe, izmjeni Uredbe (EU) br. 913/2010 i stavljanju izvan snage uredaba (EZ) br. 680/2007 i (EZ) br. 67/2010, SL L 348, 20.12.2013.

([2]) Uredba (EU) br. 1315/2013 Europskog parlamenta i Vijeća od 11. prosinca 2013. o smjernicama Unije za razvoj transeuropske prometne mreže i stavljanju izvan snage Odluke br. 661/2010/EU, SL L 348, 20.12.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001150/14
to the Commission
Dubravka Šuica (PPE)
(5 February 2014)

Subject: Building of the Adriatic-Ionian corridor

The Commission has agreed to consider specific exceptions regarding the network of European transport corridors up to 2023, which is being financed by EU funding.

At the November 2013 part-session Parliament approved the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), which has a budget of EUR 29.3 billion earmarked to complete key European transport, energy, and telecommunications links in the six-year period from 2014 to 2020, and funding will be allocated primarily with a view to building cross-border transport links, filling gaps, and dealing with bottlenecks along the trans-European corridors. Most of the funding, EUR 23.2 billion in all, is earmarked for the transport sector, and a further EUR 10 billion will be available for transport links under the Cohesion Fund.

Given that we Europeans share common values, a fact that we readily and frequently point out, we should, to my mind, also have the same standard of, say, infrastructure; the aim of cohesion policy, at any rate, is to enable Union citizens to enjoy a uniform standard of living.

Can the Commission explain in detail when and how it intends to finance the building of motorways along the Adriatic-Ionian corridor from Ploč in Croatia to Montenegro, Albania, and Greece in order that the strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian macro-region may be translated into practice?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 2014)

Within the four countries mentioned by the Honourable Member, support from the Cohesion Fund (CF) and the European Development Fund (ERDF) is available only to projects in Croatia and Greece, as EU Member States eligible to these funds. CF/ERDF support is mainly available in the form of grants.

Support from the CEF ([1]) could be provided in all four countries mentioned, in the form of grants and financial instruments provided these projects comply with the requirements in the TEN-T Guidelines regulation ([2]).

Grants could be awarded for studies as well as for works. Grants for road works can be awarded only for cross-border section projects (including the border crossing point) in Croatia and Greece. More specifically, on the Ioannina-Kakavia section of the road connection between Greece and Albania, and the Dubrovnik-Karasovići section of the road connection between Croatia and Montenegro.

Road projects in Albania and Montenegro could also benefit of support from the Instrument for Pre-Accession IPA in particular through the western Balkans Investment Framework(WBIF).

It is up to the respective countries to come forward with requests for EU financial support. The Commission will decide on whether to grant such support depending on the relevance and value-added of the project with regard to the EU policy objectives, and the availability of financial resources under the various instruments mentioned as established in the relevant criteria.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing the Connecting Europe Facility, amending Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulations (EC) No 680/2007 and (EC) No 67/2010, OJ L 348, 20.12.2013.

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network and repealing Decision No 661/2010/EU, OJ L 348, 20.12.2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001151/14
alla Commissione
Giovanni La Via (PPE)
(5 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Traduzione Erasmus+

Il programma ERASMUS+ è stato finora pubblicato soltanto in lingua inglese e le traduzioni nelle altre 23 lingue ufficiali dell'Unione europea non saranno disponibili prima dell'aprile 2014.

Dal momento che la scadenza per poter presentare i progetti nel quadro ERASMUS+ è il 17 marzo 2014, così agendo si favoriscono i madrelingua inglesi poiché favoriti dall'uso della stessa lingua, mentre gli altri cittadini europei saranno svantaggiati e discriminati nella presentazione dei progetti ERASMUS+ in quanto potranno usufruire del programma ERASMUS+ soltanto in inglese e non nella loro lingua madre.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione indicare se, considerata l'impossibilità di procedere alla traduzione in tempi brevi in tutte le lingue ufficiali, non ritiene opportuno posticipare la data di scadenza della presentazione dei progetti, al fine di poter garantire a tutti i cittadini europei la possibilità di leggere il programma ERASMUS+ nella propria lingua madre?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(1º aprile 2014)

La Commissione rinvia l'Onorevole deputato alla propria risposta alle interrogazioni scritte E-000509/2014; E-000550/2014; P-000721/2014; E-000916/2014. ([1])

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001151/14
to the Commission
Giovanni La Via (PPE)
(5 February 2014)

Subject: Translation of the Erasmus + Programme

The Erasmus + Programme has so far been published only in English, and translations into the 23 other official languages of the European Union will not be available until April 2014.

Since the deadline for submitting projects under the Erasmus + Programme is 17 March 2014, this will obviously favour English native speakers, while discriminating against other European citizens, who will be placed at an unfair disadvantage in submitting their projects, since they can access the Erasmus + Programme only in English and not in their mother tongue.

In light of the above and given the impossibility of arranging a translation into all the other official languages within a short period of time, does the Commission agree that the deadline for the presentation of projects should be postponed in order to ensure that all European citizens can read the Erasmus + Programme in their native language?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(1 April 2014)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written questions E-000509/2014; E-000550/2014; P-000721/2014; E-000916/2014. ([1])

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

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-001157/14
an die Kommission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(5. Februar 2014)

Betrifft: Missbrauch der Gelder für NGOs in Albanien

Laut Informationen aus der albanischen Zivilgesellschaft sollen mehrere NGOs, die für Entwicklungsprojekte in Albanien zuständig sind, EU-Gelder veruntreut haben. Finanzielle Unregelmäßigkeiten der Projektfonds der EU von März 2011 bis März 2012 seien der EU-Delegation zwar aufgefallen, wurden jedoch nicht weiter evaluiert. Im November 2013 wurden weitere Gelder bewilligt.

Gegen eine der geförderten NGOs läuft derzeit ein Verfahren vor dem Obersten Gerichtshof in Tirana wegen illegaler Beendung von Arbeitsverträgen.

1. Sind der Kommission diese Zustände bekannt?

2. Plant die Kommission, strengere Kontrollmaßnahmen für EU-Gelder einzuführen, um Missbrauch vorzubeugen?

3. Welche konkreten Maßnahmen sieht die Kommission vor, um die Zusammenarbeit mit förderfähigen Projekten zu stärken und die inhaltlichen wie finanziellen Absichten besser zu erfassen?

Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(7. März 2014)

Der Kommission ist bekannt, dass in Albanien ein Gerichtsverfahren im Zusammenhang mit einer arbeitsrechtlichen Streitigkeit läuft, an dem zwei zivilgesellschaftliche Organisationen beteiligt sind, die im Rahmen eines EU-Programms einen Zuschuss erhalten hatten. In der Regel greift die Kommission in Vertragsfragen zwischen Finanzhilfeempfängern und ihren Beschäftigten nicht ein. In diesem Fall hat die Kommission eine Reihe von Kontrollen durchgeführt, um zu beurteilen, ob diese Streitsache mit einer etwaigen missbräuchlichen Verwendung von EU-Mitteln zusammenhängt. Nach dem bei Finanzhilfen dieser Art üblichen Verfahren hat die Kommission die Rechnungen vor der Auszahlung der Gelder überprüft. Ferner hatte sie für diesen Auftrag eine externe Ausgabenüberprüfung vornehmen lassen, bei der keine finanziellen Unregelmäßigkeiten festgestellt wurden. Da diese Kontrollmaßnahmen keine Unregelmäßigkeiten bei der Verwaltung der EU-Mittel ergaben, wurde einer der beiden Organisationen im November 2013 im Anschluss an eine Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen eine weitere Finanzhilfe bewilligt.

Die Kommission verfügt über ein verlässliches System zur Überwachung der Verwendung von EU-Mitteln während der gesamten Laufzeit der Projekte. Dazu gehören regelmäßige Vor-Ort-Besuche und Ausgabenkontrollen. Vor jeder Zahlung werden alle Rechnungen im Hinblick auf die Förderfähigkeit überprüft. Darüber hinaus können auf der Grundlage einer Risikobewertung und je nach der Höhe der Finanzhilfe externe Prüfungen vorgenommen werden. Nach Auffassung der Kommission reichen die vorhandenen Kontrollmaßnahmen aus.

Die Kommission führt mit zivilgesellschaftlichen Organisationen einen ständigen Dialog über die Ziele der EU-Unterstützung für die Zivilgesellschaft und über die Modalitäten für die Umsetzung dieser Hilfe. Außerdem wird technische Hilfe bereitgestellt, um Antragsteller bei der Ausarbeitung von Projektvorschlägen zu unterstützen.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001157/14
to the Commission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(5 February 2014)

Subject: Misuse of funding for NGOs in Albania

According to information provided by Albanian civil society, several NGOs responsible for development projects in Albania have allegedly embezzled EU funds. It appears that the EU delegation noticed financial irregularities in relation to EU project funding between March 2011 and March 2012 but failed to investigate them further. More funding was approved in November 2013.

One of the NGOs that received funding is now the subject of a court case before the Supreme Court in Tirana on the grounds that it illegally ended employment contracts.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. Is the Commission planning to introduce stricter monitoring measures for EU funding inorder to prevent misuse?

3. What specific measures will the Commission take to boost cooperation with projectseligible for funding and gain a more accurate picture of the planned projects and theirfinancing?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(7 March 2014)

The Commission is aware of a court case in Albania for an employment-related dispute, involving two civil society organisations (CSO) having received a grant under an EU programme. As a general rule, the Commission does not interfere in contractual issues between a grant beneficiary and its employees. In this case, it has undertaken a number of control measures to assess whether this dispute is related to possible mismanagement of EU funds. According to the standard procedure followed with grants of this type, the Commission has checked the invoices before payment. The Commission had additionally launched an external expenditure verification for this contract, which had not identified any financial irregularities. Since from this series of control measures no irregularity in the management of EU funds has been identified, one of the two organisations has been awarded another grant in November 2013 following a call for proposals.

The Commission has in place a reliable system to monitor the use of EU funds throughout the life of a project. This involves regular visits on the spot and controls of the expenditure. Before any payment, every invoice is counter-checked to assess its eligibility. External audits may also take place on the basis of a risk assessment and the amount of the grant. The Commission is confident that adequate control measures are in place.

The Commission has a constant dialogue with civil society organisations to discuss about the objectives of EU support to civil society and the modalities for delivering assistance. Technical assistance is also provided in view of helping applicants in the preparation of project proposals.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001164/14
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(5 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Diritto a un equo processo per i due marò italiani Massimiliano La Torre e Salvatore Girone

L'India in quest'ultimo periodo sta vivendo un intenso susseguirsi di gravi episodi di violenza ed inumana amministrazione della giustizia locale.

L'ultimo caso risale a qualche settimana fa e riguarda uno stupro di gruppo, compiuto da dieci persone ai danni di una giovane ragazza di 20 anni, avvenuto nel distretto indiano del Birbhum, nel Bengala occidentale.

Non si è trattato, però, dello sfogo abominevole di pulsioni carnali, ma dell'esecuzione di una condanna emessa dal «consiglio degli anziani», un'istituzione locale nota e tollerata dallo Stato indiano.

Nello stesso paese sono detenuti in attesa di giudizio, in spregio alle norme del diritto internazionale, due militari italiani, Massimiliano La Torre e Salvatore Girone, e nel corso del processo è emersa più volte l'ipotesi di applicazione della pena capitale.

Non ritiene la Commissione allarmante che due cittadini europei, e ancor più due elementi delle forze armate impiegate in una missione internazionale anti-pirateria, si trovino in balia di un sistema giudiziario che ha più volte dimostrato pesanti lacune nel rispetto dei diritti umani fondamentali riconosciuti a livello internazionale?

Non ritiene opportuno la Commissione attivare immediatamente tutti i canali diplomatici per far sì che i due marò vengano affidati a un sistema giudiziario diverso da quello indiano e che sia scevro da elementi ritualistici e tribali, oltreché maggiormente rispettoso del diritto internazionale?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2014)

L'AR/VP segue con estrema attenzione sin dall'inizio il caso dei due marò italiani detenuti in India.

L'AR/VP ha sollevato la questione con le autorità indiane in varie occasioni, esortandole a trovare rapidamente una soluzione equa nel pieno rispetto della convenzione delle Nazioni Unite sul diritto del mare e del diritto internazionale.

L'AR/VP ha preso nota, il 24 febbraio 2014, della decisione della Corte suprema indiana di non applicare la legislazione antiterrorismo indiana (la cosiddetta SUA — Suppression of Unlawful Acts) al caso in questione. L'AR/VP rimane fermamente impegnata a trovare rapidamente una soluzione conformemente al diritto internazionale e alla convenzione delle Nazioni Unite sul diritto del mare.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001164/14
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(5 February 2014)

Subject: Right to a fair trial for the two Italian marines Massimiliano La Torre and Salvatore Girone

India has recently seen a large number of cases of extreme violence and inhumane administration of local justice.

The latest incident, which happened a few weeks ago, involved the gang rape of a 20-year-old woman by 10 men in Birbhum district, West Bengal.

This was not, however, for the abominable satisfaction of carnal impulses, but to carry out a sentence passed by the 'council of elders', a local institution known to and tolerated by the Indian authorities.

Two Italian servicemen, Massimiliano La Torre and Salvatore Girone, are also detained in India awaiting trial, contrary to international law. The possibility of a death sentence has been raised several times during the proceedings.

Does the Commission not consider it alarming that two European citizens and, what is more, two members of the armed forces engaged in an international mission against piracy, should be at the mercy of a justice system that has more than once revealed serious failings in its respect for internationally recognised fundamental human rights?

Does the Commission not believe it should immediately activate all possible diplomatic channels to ensure that the two marines are transferred from the Indian justice system to one that is free from ritualistic and tribal influences and adheres more closely to international law?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

The HR/VP has been following closely the case of the two Italian marines detained in India, since the very beginning.

She has raised the issue with the Indian authorities many times, urging them to find a rapid and fair solution to the case, in full respect of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos) and international law.

She took note, on 24 February, of the decision by India's Supreme Court, not to apply the anti-terrorism SUA Act to this case. She remains steadfast in her support to resolve this case quickly in line with international law and Unclos.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001173/14
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(5 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Incumplimiento de la Directiva del IVA

Tanto la directiva europea ([1]) como la ley española ([2]) en relación al Impuesto sobre el Valor Añadido disponen que la educación de la infancia y de la juventud quede exenta de IVA cuando esté realizada por entidades de derecho público o entidades privadas autorizadas.

Desgraciadamente, el órgano consultivo español en materia de impuestos, la Dirección General de Tributos, entiende que el elemento objetivo de la exención del artículo se limita sólo a la enseñanza, y excluye a la «*educación*».

Esta posición se sigue manteniendo a pesar de que el Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea ha entendido en la Sentencia de 28 de noviembre de 2013 (MDDP, As. C-391/12) ([3]) que el elemento objetivo del «artículo 132, apartado 1, letra i), de la Directiva IVA es incondicional en cuanto a su contenido en la medida en que no deja opción alguna a los Estados miembros sino que impone a cada uno de dichos Estados la obligación de conceder la exención establecida en el citado artículo».

¿Cuál es la postura de la Comisión sobre la interpretación que realiza el órgano consultivo del Reino de España —la Dirección General de Tributos— del elemento objetivo del artículo 132, apartado 1, letra i), de la Directiva 2006/112/CE, de forma que está excluyendo de manera voluntaria de su ámbito «la educación de la infancia y la juventud», a pesar de que el texto es incondicionado?

Al condicionar la exención del IVA a los planes de estudio del sistema educativo, competencia del Ministerio de Educación español, ¿no se vulnera el principio de igualdad en el caso de que una materia sí estuviera en un hipotético plan de estudios de otro país miembro de la UE y no en el español?

¿Está de acuerdo la Comisión en que las actividades educativas formales e informales como el servicio de comedor, las actividades extraescolares o la guardia de los niños son complementarias de la enseñanza convencional y que constituyen elementos importantes del proceso educativo, promoviendo además la integración social; y por tanto deben incluirse en el concepto de «educación»? ¿Qué opinión le merece el hecho de que las actividades educativas, prestadas por monitores escolares en servicios de comedores y en los proyectos educativos aplicados en horarios interlectivos estén en España gravadas por el IVA y no se consideren exentas, repercutiendo negativamente en el derecho a la educación a causa del encarecimiento sustancial de los servicios?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de marzo de 2014)

La exención para «educación» prevista en el artículo 132, apartado 1, letra i), de la Directiva del IVA ([4]) debe interpretarse de manera estricta. El objetivo perseguido por la Directiva es que solo estén exentas las actividades «educativas» (y no las «recreativas» o de cualquier otro tipo). Corresponde a los Estados miembros asegurar que se obtenga este resultado en la práctica y, a este respecto, la Comisión no tiene pruebas de que no sea así en España.

Asimismo, en lo referente a:

— la prestación de servicios de los comedores escolares y de las guarderías, la Comisión se remite a su respuesta a la pregunta E-13312/2013 ([5]);

— las actividades extraescolares y otras actividades formativas, las autoridades españolas han explicado ([6]) que la exención, en España, abarca en la práctica todas las actividades que son «educativas» por naturaleza. Así, por ejemplo, las actividades de danza, teatro, idiomas, informática, música, canto, guitarra, pintura, cerámica, manualidades, cocina, refuerzo de matemáticas, de física, economía, peluquería y estética, costura, expresión artística, seguridad en el trabajo, formación para agentes de seguros, talleres sobre energías renovables, radio y telecomunicaciones, etc. están todas exentas.

Por último, las autoridades españolas han explicado que la exención no se aplicará si el servicio no lo presta un organismo público sino uno con ánimo de lucro, restricción permitida por el artículo 133 de la Directiva del IVA.

([1]) Directiva 2006/112/CE (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:347:0001:0001:ES:PDF), relativa al Sistema Común del Impuesto sobre el Valor Añadido, artículo 132(i).
([2]) Ley 37/1992 (http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/1992/12/29/pdfs/A44247-44305.pdf) del Impuesto sobre el Valor Añadido en España, art.20.Uno.9º.
([3]) Sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:62012CJ0319:ES:NOT) (Sala Tercera) de 28 de noviembre de 2013.
([4]) Directiva 2006/112/CE, de 28 de noviembre de 2006, relativa al sistema común del impuesto sobre el valor añadido, DO L 347 de 11.12.2006.
([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/es/parliamentary-questions.html
([6]) Como se indicó en la respuesta a las preguntas E-13312/2013, E-1602/2013, E-5758/2013, E-3640/2013, E-3528/2013, E-3097/2013 y E-3052/2013, la Comisión ya se ha puesto en contacto con las autoridades españolas en relación con la cuestión planteada en la presente pregunta parlamentaria.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001173/14
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(5 February 2014)

Subject: Breach of the VAT Directive

It is specified in both the European directive ([1]) and the Spanish law ([2]) on value added tax that the education of children and young people shall be exempt from VAT when carried out by bodies covered by public law or authorised private bodies.

Unfortunately, the Spanish consultative body on taxation, the Directorate-General for Taxation, interprets the area of exemption as applicable only to teaching and not education per se.

It has stuck to this position, despite the European Court of Justice having ruled in its judgment of 28 November 2013 (MDDP, As. C-319/12) ([3]) that the objective element 'of point (i) of Article 132(1) of the VAT Directive is unconditional, since it does not provide the Member States with an option, but requires each Member State to grant the exemption laid down by that provision'.

How does the Commission view the interpretation made by the Kingdom of Spain's consultative body, the Directorate-General for Taxation, of the objective element of point (i) of Article 132(1) of Directive 2006/112/EC in that it voluntarily excludes the education of children and young people from the scope of the law, despite the fact that the text is unconditional?

Does not restriction of the VAT exemption to areas covered by the educational system, which is controlled by the Spanish Ministry of Education, constitute an infringement of the principle of equality, in the hypothetical case of a subject being included in the study plan of another EU Member State but not in that of Spain?

Does the Commission agree that formal and informal educational activities such as the provision of school meals, extracurricular activities and day-care services for children are complementary aspects of conventional education and make an important contribution to the educational process, as well as encouraging social integration, and should therefore be included in the concept of education? How does it view the fact that educational services provided by school monitors in canteens, and educational projects which take place outside teaching hours are subject to VAT in Spain, rather than being exempt, and that this has a negative impact on the right to education as it considerably raises the cost of such services?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2014)

The 'education' exemption in Article 132(1)(i) of the VAT Directive ([4]) must be strictly interpreted. The result sought by the directive is that only 'educative' activities (and not 'recreational' or any other activities) are covered by the exemption. It is for Member States to ensure that this result is achieved in practice and at this stage the Commission has no evidence showing that this is not the case in Spain.

Further, as regards:

— the provision of school canteens and day-care services for children, the Commission refers to its answer to Question E-13312/2013 ([5]);

— extracurricular school and other training activities, the Spanish authorities have explained ([6]) that the exemption covers in practice in Spain all activities which are 'educative' in nature. Thus, for instance, dancing, theatre, languages, informatics, music, singing, guitar playing, painting, ceramics, crafts, cooking, 'catch-up' courses in mathematics, physics…, accounting, hairdressing and beauty care, dressmaking, artistic expression, safety at work, training for insurance agents, workshops for renewable energies, radio and telecommunications… are all covered by the exemption.

Finally, the Spanish authorities have explained that the exemption will not be granted where the service is not supplied by a public body but is supplied by a profit-making body. That restriction is allowed by Article 133 of the VAT Directive.

([1]) Directive 2006/112/EC (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:347:0001:0118:en:PDF) on the common system of value added tax.
([2]) Law 37/1992 (http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/1992/12/29/pdfs/A44247-44305.pdf) on value added tax in Spain, Article 20, paragraph 1, point 9.
([3]) European Court of Justice judgment (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:62012CJ0319:EN:HTML) (Third Chamber), of 28 November 2013.
([4]) Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006 on the common system of value added tax, OJ L 347, 11.12.2006.
([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([6]) As stated in the reply to questions E-13312/2013, E-1602/2013, E-5758/2013, E-3640/2013, E-3528/2013, E-3097/2013, E-3052/2013, the Commission has already contacted the Spanish authorities on the issue raised in this parliamentary question.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001174/14
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 februari 2014)

Betreft: Transferunie aan het werk

Volgens het Griekse dagblad Kathimerini ([1]) zou bij de volgende gift aan Griekenland onder meer de looptijd voor reddingsleningen worden opgetrokken tot 50 jaar en de rentevoet op bepaalde vroegere hulpleningen worden verminderd met 50 basispunten. EU-ambtenaren hebben bekendgemaakt dat het plan ook een derde reddingsoperatie ten belope van 13 à 15 miljard euro zou kunnen inhouden. Tot nu toe heeft Athene 240 miljard euro ontvangen in twee reddingsoperaties, waarvoor de voorwaarden al zijn afgezwakt door de crediteurlidstaten van de eurozone en het Internationaal Monetair Fonds.

Kan de Commissie, overwegende dat zij lid is van de „trojka" en zij daarin met name verantwoordelijk is voor de onderhandelingen over de voorwaarden voor financiële steun aan lidstaten van de eurozone, en overwegende dat de trojka ook verantwoordelijk is voor de voorbereiding van de officiële besluiten van de Eurogroep, antwoorden op de volgende vragen:

1. Welke rentevoet zal worden toegepast op Griekenland? Zal dat een rente van 2,5% zijn?

2. Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat, als de rente 2,5% bedraagt, de crediteurlidstaten nettoverliezers zullen zijn voor de leningen die zij aan Griekenland hebben gegeven, aangezien een rentevoet van 2,5% betekent dat zij minder zullen ontvangen dan het bedrag dat zij voor deze leningen moeten betalen?

3. Kan de Commissie in dit verband een overzicht geven van de nettoverliezen op Griekse leningen die een aantal lidstaten hebben geleden, alsook de nettoverliezen die zij waarschijnlijk zullen lijden indien bovengenoemd plan wordt goedgekeurd in de volgende maanden?

4. Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat dit plan bijgevolg een transferunie tot stand zal brengen voor de komende 50 jaar, wat indruist tegen de letter en de geest van het Verdrag alsook tegen de steeds sterkere politieke wil van het Europese volk?

5. Indien de Commissie het hiermee niet eens is, kan zij zeggen waarom?

Antwoord van de heer Rehn namens de Commissie
(24 maart 2014)

De lidstaten van de eurozone zullen verdere maatregelen en bijstand overwegen, met inbegrip van onder meer een lagere cofinanciering in de structuurfondsen en/of verdere verlaging van de rente van de Griekse kredietfaciliteit. Deze maatregelen zullen, indien nodig, worden genomen met het oog op een verdere geloofwaardige en duurzame vermindering van de Griekse schuldquote en wanneer Griekenland een jaarlijks primair overschot boekt, op voorwaarde dat alle voorwaarden die zijn opgenomen in het programma zijn uitgevoerd ([2]).

De Commissie wenst te beklemtonen dat de financiële bijstand aan Griekenland is overeengekomen door de lidstaten van de eurozone en niet in strijd is met het Verdrag. Verordening nr. 472/2013 betreffende de versterking van het economische en budgettaire toezicht op lidstaten van de eurozone heeft de betrokkenheid van de trojka in het economische aanpassingsprogramma voor Griekenland formeel bekrachtigd en zorgt tegelijkertijd voor een betere verantwoording jegens het Europees Parlement en de nationale parlementen.

([1]) http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_wsite2_1_05/02/2014_537107.
([2]) http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/media/367646/eurogroup_statement_greece_27_november_2012.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001174/14
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 February 2014)

Subject: Transfer union at work

According to the Greek newspaper *Ekathimerini* ([1]), 'the next handout to Greece may include extending the maturity on rescue loans to 50 years and cutting the interest rate on some previous aid by 50 basic points'. EU officials have revealed that the plan may also include a third bailout worth between EUR 13 and 15 billion. So far, Athens has received EUR 240 billion in two bailouts, the terms of which have already been eased by the Eurozone's creditor Member States and the International Monetary Fund.

The Commission is part of the 'troika', within which it is specifically responsible for negotiating the conditions for financial assistance for Eurozone Member States. The troika is also responsible for the preparation of formal decisions of the Eurogroup. In light of all this:

1. Could the Commission clarify what interest rate will be applied to Greece? Will it be 2.5%?

2. If the interest is 2.5%, does the Commission agree that creditor Member States will be net losers with regard to the loans they have agreed to pay to Greece, since an interest rate of 2.5% will mean they will receive less than the sum they have to pay on the loans themselves?

3. In this respect, can the Commission provide an overview of the net losses on Greek loans which are suffered by some Member States, as well as the net losses likely to be suffered should the aforementioned plan be approved in the next few months?

4. As a consequence, does the Commission agree that this plan will create a transfer union for the next 50 years, contrary to the letter and spirit of the Treaty as well as to the mounting political will of the European people?

5. If the Commission does not agree, could it clearly state why?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

Euro area Member States will consider further measures and assistance, including *inter alia* lower co-financing in structural funds and/or further interest rate reduction of the Greek Loan Facility, if necessary, for achieving a further credible and sustainable reduction of Greek debt-to-GDP ratio, when Greece reaches an annual primary surplus, conditional on full implementation of all conditions contained in the programme. ([2])

The Commission would like to stress that financial assistance provided to Greece has been agreed by the Euro Area Member States and is not in contradiction with the Treaty. Regulation 472/2013 on the strengthening of economic and budgetary surveillance of euro area Member States has formally endorsed the involvement of the Troika in the Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece, while ensuring a better level of accountability vis-à-vis the European and national parliaments.

([1]) http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_wsite2_1_05/02/2014_537107
([2]) http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/media/367646/eurogroup_statement_greece_27_november_2012.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001176/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Prevenzione del diabete di tipo 2

Il diabete di tipo 2 è una malattia che colpisce milioni di cittadini europei, ma che si manifesta molto lentamente, spesso rimanendo silente anche per anni. Chi è colpito dalla malattia, infatti, all'inizio non avverte disturbi e spesso la diagnosi arriva in occasione di controlli fatti per altre ragioni, o per la comparsa di complicanze, come un infarto o un ictus.

Se non riconosciuta e trattata in modo corretto, questa malattia può avere numerose ripercussioni negative. Arginare questa malattia non è semplice: occorre modificare le abitudini alimentari e aumentare l'attività fisica nei casi cosiddetti pre-diabete, ma quando i livelli di glicemia cominciano a salire occorrono i farmaci.

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

1. Esistono studi riguardo al miglioramento dei metodi di prevenzione del diabete di tipo 2?

2. Ha avviato un dialogo con organizzazioni di specialisti per varare campagne di sensibilizzazione delle autorità e dei cittadini europei?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2014)

La strategia europea del 2007 sugli aspetti sanitari connessi all'alimentazione, al sovrappeso e all'obesità ([1]) promuove una dieta equilibrata e stili di vita attivi ed incoraggia i partenariati attivi che coinvolgono gli Stati membri dell'UE ([2]) e la società civile ([3]). In tale contesto il Gruppo ad alto livello ha messo a punto un piano d'azione da portare avanti sotto la guida degli Stati membri per affrontare l'obesità infantile (2014-2020) ([4]).

La Commissione ha sostenuto progetti legati al diabete nell'ambito del suo programma Salute, come ad esempio EUROBIROID, SWEET, e IMAGE ([5]). Attualmente è anche in corso di implementazione il progetto pilota del Parlamento europeo «Elaborazione e attuazione di efficaci strategie di prevenzione del diabete di tipo II».

Nel quadro dell'azione congiunta «Affrontare le malattie croniche e promuovere l'invecchiamento in buona salute nell'intero ciclo della vita» cofinanziata dal programma Salute vi è un pacchetto di lavoro consacrato specificamente alla prevenzione e alla diagnosi precoce del diabete di tipo II.

Inoltre, la Commissione convoca il 3-4 aprile 2014 a Bruxelles un vertice unionale sulle malattie croniche per portare avanti le discussioni al fine di accertare se l'intervento dell'UE nell'ambito delle malattie croniche, compreso il diabete, possa recare un valore aggiunto.

Nell'ambito del Settimo programma quadro di ricerca (2007-2013) la Commissione ha stanziato 292 milioni di euro per la ricerca sul diabete di tipo II, dei quali 27 milioni di euro sono destinati a misure di prevenzione. Ad esempio, il progetto DALI ([6]) identifica le migliori misure disponibili per prevenire il diabete mellito gestazionale durante la gravidanza. Orizzonte 2020, il programma quadro per la ricerca e l'innovazione (2014-2020), offrirà l'opportunità per indirizzare ulteriori ricerche sulla materia. Informazioni sulle attuali possibilità di finanziamento sono ottenibili consultando il portale dedicato alla ricerca e all'innovazione ([7]).

([1]) COM(2007) 279.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_it.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_it.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/childhoodobesity_actionplan_2014_2020_en.pdf
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html
([6]) http://www.dali-project.eu/
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001176/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 February 2014)

Subject: Prevention of type 2 diabetes

Type 2 diabetes is a disease which affects millions of European citizens, but which develops very slowly, often remaining undetected for years. Indeed, those suffering from the disease do not notice its effects at the beginning, and a diagnosis is often made when testing for other reasons, or when complications arise, such as heart attack or stroke.

If not recognised and correctly treated, this disease may have numerous harmful effects. Fighting this disease is not simple: in so-called pre-diabetic patients, it is necessary to change eating habits and increase physical activity, but when sugar levels start to rise, drug treatment is required.

In view of the above, can the Commission respond to the following enquiries:

1. Does any research into the improvement of methods of preventing type 2 diabetes exist?

2. Has it entered into dialogue with specialist organisations to launch campaigns aimed at raising awareness among European authorities and citizens?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

The 2007 Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related Health Issues ([1]) promotes a balanced diet and active lifestyles, and encourages action oriented partnerships involving EU Member States ([2]) and civil society ([3]). In this context, the High Level Group has shaped a Member State-led Action Plan to tackle childhood obesity (2014-2020) ([4]).

The Commission has supported projects related to diabetes through the Health programme, such as EUROBIROID, SWEET, and IMAGE ([5]). A European Parliament pilot project 'Developing and implementing successful prevention strategies for type II diabetes' is also currently being implemented.

In the framework of the joint action 'Chronic Diseases and Promoting Healthy Ageing across the Life Cycle' co-financed by the health programme, there is a work package specifically dedicated to the prevention and early diagnosis of diabetes type II.

In addition, the Commission is convening an EU summit on chronic diseases on 3/4 April 2014 in Brussels, to continue the discussion on where further EU action in the area of chronic diseases, including diabetes, might add value.

Within the 7th Framework Programmes for Research (2007 — 2013) the Commission has devoted EUR 292 million to type 2 diabetes research, of which EUR 27 million on prevention. For example, the DALI ([6]) project identifies best available measures to prevent Gestational Diabetes mellitus in pregnancy. Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) will offer opportunities to address further research on this subject. Information on current funding opportunities can be obtained at the EC Research and Innovation Participant Portal ([7]).

([1]) COM(2007) 279.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/childhoodobesity_actionplan_2014_2020_en.pdf
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html
([6]) http://www.dali-project.eu/
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001178/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Programmi per fondi diretti, città di Manfredonia

Gli enti territoriali, quali Comuni e Province, sono tra i primi possibili beneficiari dei fondi diretti programmati ed erogati dalle Direzioni generali della Commissione. Tra i fondi disponibili rientrano ad esempio quelli relativi al programma «Cultura», al programma per la promozione della cittadinanza «Europa per i cittadini», a quello per l'ambiente «Life +», a quello per la gestione dei flussi migratori «Solidarietà e gestione dei flussi migratori», a quello dedicato alle risorse umane «Investire nelle persone» e ad altri ancora.

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

1. esistono programmi per i quali la città di Manfredonia ha fatto richiesta?

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

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001661/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(14 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Programmi per fondi diretti — città di Avetrana

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

1. In merito a questo e ad altri programmi disponibili, può la Commissione chiarire se esistono programmi per i quali la città di Avetrana ha fatto richiesta?

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

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001814/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(18 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Programmi per fondi diretti — città di Battipaglia

Gli enti territoriali, quali Comuni e Province, sono tra i primi possibili beneficiari dei Fondi diretti programmati ed erogati da parte delle direzioni generali della Commissione europea. Tra i fondi disponibili ci sono ad esempio il programma cultura, il programma per la cittadinanza «Europa per i cittadini», quello per l'ambiente «Life +», quello per gestire i flussi migratori «Solidarietà e gestione dei flussi migratori», quello dedicato alle risorse umane «Investire nelle persone» e altri ancora.

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

1. se esistano programmi per i quali la città di Battipaglia ha fatto richiesta?

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

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001933/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(19 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Programmi per fondi diretti — Città di Gioia Tauro

Gli enti territoriali, quali Comuni e Province, sono tra i primi possibili beneficiari dei Fondi diretti programmati ed erogati dalle Direzioni generali della Commissione europea. Tra i fondi disponibili vi sono ad esempio il programma cultura, il programma per la cittadinanza «Europa per i cittadini», quello per l'ambiente «Life +», quello per gestire i flussi migratori «Solidarietà e gestione dei flussi migratori», quello dedicato alle risorse umane «Investire nelle persone» e altri ancora.

In merito a questo e ad altri programmi disponibili,

1. può la Commissione indicare se vi sono programmi per i quali la Città di Gioia Tauro ha fatto richiesta?

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

Risposta congiunta di Janusz Lewandowski a nome della Commissione
(20 marzo 2014)

La Commissione non può, per rispondere a un'interrogazione scritta e fornire all'onorevole parlamentare le informazioni richieste, effettuare ricerche lunghe e costose. Le informazioni relative a determinati beneficiari dei finanziamenti del bilancio UE versati dalla Commissione direttamente dal 2007 sono disponibili sul sito web della Commissione creato per il Sistema di trasparenza finanziaria ([1]), che permette all'utente di effettuare una ricerca nella base di dati in base a diversi criteri.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/fts/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001178/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 February 2014)

Subject: Programmes for direct funds, town of Manfredonia

The territorial administrations such as Municipalities and Provinces are among the first possible beneficiaries of the direct funds programmed and allocated by the Directorates-General of the Commission. Funds available include, for example, those relating to the 'Cultura' programme, the programme for the promotion of citizenship 'Europe for citizens', the environment programme 'Life +', the programme for the management of migration flows 'Solidarity and management of migration flows', the human resources programme 'Investing in people', and others.

In view of this and of other programmes available, can the Commission clarify the following:

1. are there any programmes which the town of Manfredonia has applied for?

2. If so, which projects have had access to European funds, and what outcomes did those programmes bring about?

Question for written answer E-001661/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(14 February 2014)

Subject: Direct funding programmes for the town of Avetrana

Local authorities, such as municipalities and provinces, are among the first potential recipients of the direct funding administered and allocated by the Directorates-General of the European Commission. Funds are available, for example, through the culture programme, the 'Europe for citizens' citizenship programme, the 'Life+' environmental programme, the 'Solidarity and management of migration flows' programme, the 'Investing in people' programme dedicated to human resources, and many others.

1. Could the Commission clarify whether the town of Avetrana has applied for funding from any such programmes?

2. If so, which projects have been successful in securing European funding, and what results have these programmes achieved?

Question for written answer E-001814/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(18 February 2014)

Subject: Direct funding programmes — town of Battipaglia

Local authorities such as Municipalities and Provinces are among the prime potential beneficiaries of direct funding distributed by Directorates General of the European Commission. The funds available are provided for example under the culture programme, 'Europe for citizens' programme, 'Life+' environment programme, 'Solidarity and management of migration flows' programme and 'Investing in people' programme dedicated to human resources, among others.

With regard to this and other available programmes, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Has the town of Battipaglia applied for funding under such programmes?

2. If so, for what projects have European funds been granted and what are the end results of those projects?

Question for written answer E-001933/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(19 February 2014)

Subject: Programmes for direct funds — Town of Gioia Tauro

Territorial bodies such as municipalities and provinces are among the first possible beneficiaries of the Direct Funds programmed and allocated by the European Commission's Directorates-General. The funds available include, for example, the 'Cultura' programme, the citizenship programme 'Europe for Citizens', the environment programme 'Life+', the programme for managing migratory flows 'Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows', the human resources programme 'Investing in People' and others.

In view of the above and of other available programmes,

1. can the Commission indicate whether the town of Gioia Tauro has applied for any programmes?

2. If so, which projects have had access to European funds and what results have been obtained from the said programmes?

Joint answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2014)

The Commission cannot undertake, for the purposes of answering a written question, the lengthy and costly research that would be required to provide the Honourable Member with the information requested. Information on identified beneficiaries of funding from the EU budget paid by the Commission directly from 2007 onwards is available at the Commission's website established for the Financial Transparency System (FTS) ([1]), which enables the user to perform searches in the database on the basis of several criteria.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/fts/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001181/14
to the Commission
Andrew Duff (ALDE)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: Bulgarian Security Agency

Mr Delyan Peevski was appointed Head of the Bulgarian National Security Agency on 14 June 2013.

During the three days in which he held the post, does the Commission have reason to fear that there was a leak of intelligence detrimental to the internal interests of the European Union?

Question for written answer E-001182/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Andrew Duff (ALDE)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Bulgarian Security Agency

Mr Delyan Peevski was appointed Head of the Bulgarian National Security Agency on 14 June 2013.

During the three days in which he held the post, does the High Representative have reason to fear that there was a leak of intelligence detrimental to the external interests of the European Union?

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2014)

The issue raised by the Honourable Member of the European Parliament is closely linked to the internal security of the Member States and it is not up to the Commission to take a position in these matters.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001199/14
a la Comisión
Teresa Riera Madurell (S&D)
(6 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Alternativas para completar el Espacio Europeo de Investigación

Siguiendo las Conclusiones del Consejo Europeo, el Espacio Europeo de Investigación (EEI) debería completarse en este año 2014. Para alcanzar este objetivo se barajan dos opciones. La primera pasa por confiar en acuerdos políticos entre Estados miembros. La segunda pasa, en cambio, por avanzar a través de legislación a nivel de la Unión.

¿Podría la Comisión informar sobre qué opción le parece más viable y efectiva para completar el EEI? ¿Cuáles son las ventajas e inconvenientes que ve la Comisión en cada una de estas opciones? Dicho esto, ¿cree la Comisión que completar el EEI en 2014 es un objetivo realista y alcanzable?

Respuesta de la Sra. Geoghegan-Quinn en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de marzo de 2014)

El Espacio Europeo de Investigación (EEI) es una de las prioridades políticas, gracias a la insistencia del Consejo Europeo, a los esfuerzos realizados en y por los Estados miembros y al apoyo que prestan las organizaciones interesadas. Todo ello es fundamental para lograr avances en la aplicación de las medidas del EEI y la realización de este espacio antes de que concluya 2014. La atención especial que el Parlamento Europeo presta a los avances realizados queda patente en el Manifiesto que presentó el año pasado.

La Comisión hará balance de cuanto se ha realizado hasta ahora para erigir el EEI en su segundo Informe de situación, cuya publicación está prevista en septiembre de 2014. En él se evaluarán los aspectos que han funcionado y los que requieran mejoras, tomando como referencia las medidas que se propusieron en la Comunicación sobre el EEI de 2012. El dictamen de la Comisión sobre las diferentes opciones disponibles para seguir avanzando en la consecución del EEI se basarán, pues, en los datos que se presenten en ese informe.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001199/14
to the Commission
Teresa Riera Madurell (S&D)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: Alternatives for completing the European Research Area

According to the conclusions of the European Council, the European Research Area (ERA) should be completed this year. Two options are being weighed up to achieve this goal. The first consists of establishing political agreements between Member States. Alternatively, the second consists of proceeding with EU-level legislation.

Could the Commission inform us as to what option it deems to be the most viable and effective for completing the ERA? In the opinion of the Commission, what are the advantages and disadvantages of these options? With that in mind, does the Commission believe that completing the ERA in 2014 is a realistic and achievable goal?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

The European Research Area (ERA) is high on the policy agenda, thanks to the calls by the European Council, the efforts in/by Member States and the dedicated support of the ERA stakeholder organisations, all of which are essential for making progress with respect to the implementation of ERA actions and the achievement of the ERA by the end of 2014. The European Parliament has paid specific attention to the progress via its Manifesto initiative last year.

The Commission will take stock of what has been done so far to achieve the ERA in its second ERA Progress Report, planned for publication in September 2014. This report will assess what worked, and what still needs to be improved, with regard to the measures proposed in the 2012 ERA Communication. The Commission's opinion on the different options available for further advancing with respect to the achievement of the ERA will therefore be based on the evidence gathered for this Report.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001201/14
a la Comisión
Teresa Riera Madurell (S&D)
(6 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Implementación del nuevo Instrumento para las PYME en Horizonte 2020

Facilitar e incrementar la participación de las PYME en el nuevo programa Horizonte 2020 ha sido una de las prioridades de este Parlamento. Así lo defendimos durante las negociaciones con el Consejo y con la Comisión y así quedó finalmente recogido en el programa.

Parte de esta participación pasará por el nuevo Instrumento dedicado a las PYME que se dirige a todos los tipos de PYME con potencial innovador.

Una de las exigencias del Parlamento fue que este Instrumento se gestionara de forma centralizada y se implementara a través de convocatorias abiertas con temas propuestos por las propias PYME. El objetivo no era otro que el de facilitar el acceso y la utilización del nuevo Instrumento.

Llegados a la fase de implementación de Horizonte 2020, ¿puede la Comisión informarnos de cómo y bajo qué estructura organizativa se está implementando el nuevo Instrumento PYME? ¿Cuáles son los cauces de participación y los puntos de acceso e información de que disponen las PYME interesadas en utilizar el Instrumento?

Respuesta de la Sra. Geoghegan-Quinn en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de marzo de 2014)

El instrumento dedicado a las PYME al amparo de Horizonte 2020: Programa Marco de Investigación e Innovación (2014-2020) está encaminado a aumentar la participación de todos los tipos de PYME innovadoras que demuestren una gran ambición y un gran potencial de desarrollo, crecimiento e internacionalización. El instrumento ofrece ayuda para actividades próximas al mercado escalonada en tres fases y complementada con un servicio de asesoramiento empresarial. La convocatoria permanentemente abierta de proyectos para el instrumento para las PYME se inició el 1 de marzo de 2014.

El instrumento para las PYME lo gestiona la Agencia Ejecutiva para las Pequeñas y Medianas Empresas (EASME) ([1]), que ofrece una ventanilla única para todas las actividades afines. Asimismo, EASME se encargará de la ejecución de COSME ([2]), el Programa para la Competitividad de las Empresas y para las Pequeñas y Medianas Empresas, con lo que quedan garantizadas las sinergias a la hora de llevar a cabo las actividades de la Unión en materia de innovación, crecimiento y competitividad de las PYME.

El «Participant Portal» ([3]), o portal de los participantes, es la vía única de acceso de quienes deseen acogerse al programa Horizonte 2020. En él se presenta de forma clara toda la información pertinente, como las páginas dedicadas a las PYME participantes. Además, las PYME pueden utilizar un sólido sistema de ayuda que hace posible una estrecha cooperación entre los puntos nacionales de contacto y la Red Europea para las Empresas.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/easme/
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/initiatives/cosme/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001201/14
to the Commission
Teresa Riera Madurell (S&D)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: Implementation of the new Tool for SMEs in Horizon 2020

Facilitating and increasing SMEs' participation in the new Horizon 2020 programme has been one of this Parliament's priorities. That is why we defended it in the negotiations with the Council and the Commission and it was finally incorporated in the programme.

Some of this participation will go through the new Tool dedicated to SMEs, which is aimed at all kinds of SMEs with potential for innovation.

One of the Parliament's requirements was that this Tool be managed centrally and implemented via open notices featuring topics proposed by the SMEs themselves. The goal was none other than to provide access to and use of the new Tool.

Now that we are in the implementation stage of Horizon 2020, could the Commission give us some information on how and under what organisational structure the new SME tool is being implemented? What means of participation and points of access and information are available to SMEs that are interested in using this Tool?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2014)

The dedicated SME instrument under Horizon 2020, the framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020), aims at increasing the participation of all kinds of innovative SMEs that show a strong ambition and potential to develop, grow and internationalise. It offers staged support of close-to-market activities in three phases complemented by a business coaching service. The permanently open call for SME instrument projects has opened on 1 March 2014.

The SME instrument is managed by the European Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME) ([1]) providing a one stop shop for all related activities. EASME will also implement COSME, ([2]) the Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs, thereby ensuring synergies in implementing the Union activities fostering innovation, growth and competitiveness of SMEs.

The Participant Portal ([3]) is the single entry point for applicants to Horizon 2020 and presents all relevant information in an easily accessible way, including dedicated pages for SME participants. Furthermore, SMEs can benefit from a robust support system that entails close cooperation between the National Contact Points and the Enterprise Europe Network.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/easme/
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/initiatives/cosme/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001202/14
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(6 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Violenze sui popoli indigeni e distruzione dell'ecosistema in Etiopia, fenomeni legati alla costruzione di una diga da parte di una multinazionale italiana

Nel luglio 2006 il governo dell'Etiopia ha appaltato a una società italiana, parrebbe addirittura senza gara, i lavori per la realizzazione della diga sul fiume Omo denominata «Gibe III»; l'opera, che si trova già in fase avanzata di costruzione, dovrebbe produrre 6.500 Gigawattora all'anno destinati sia al consumo interno che alla vendita all'estero. Secondo quanto riferito da vari organi di stampa ([1]), il progetto sembrerebbe essere stato approvato senza alcuna preventiva valutazione del suo impatto socio-ambientale, in violazione dello stesso ordinamento giuridico etiope. L'EPA (Ethiopian Environmental Protection Authority) avrebbe infatti dato retroattivamente il via libera ai lavori solo nel 2008, dopo aver ricevuto un dossier elaborato da un'agenzia milanese che definiva l'impatto socio-ambientale legato al progetto «trascurabile» o addirittura «positivo». Ciononostante, gli studi effettuati da vari esperti indipendenti sostengono il contrario, ovvero che la diga avrà un impatto devastante sul delicato ecosistema della regione e sulle comunità indigene che vi abitano. Secondo costoro, infatti, la portata dell'Omo andrà a subire una drastica riduzione, con interruzione del ciclo naturale delle esondazioni che periodicamente riversano acqua e humus nei terreni limitrofi, rendendo attualmente possibili l'agricoltura e la pastorizia di sussistenza delle comunità locali. L'acqua verrà invece convogliata in canali per consentire l'irrigazione della regione, di cui il governo etiope ha cominciato, a partire dal 2011, ad affittare enormi appezzamenti a investitori statali e privati specializzati nella produzione di biocarburanti. La stampa descrive questo processo quale fenomeno di land grabbing accompagnato dal trasferimento forzato delle tribù, già avviato dalle Autorità etiopi e portato avanti attraverso violenze fisiche e morali ([2]). Gravissimo potrebbe anche essere, infine, l'impatto sui popoli e sull'ecosistema del lago Turkana in Kenya, alimentato dalle acque dell'Omo. Contro tale scempio, che ridurrà alla dipendenza dagli aiuti stranieri centinaia di migliaia di persone fino a oggi autosufficienti, si sono attivati molti enti e organizzazioni internazionali, primi fra tutti l'UNESCO e Survival International ([3]).

Tutto ciò premesso, la Commissione:

1. è a conoscenza della drammatica situazione in atto in Etiopia, collegata alla realizzazione di una diga da parte di una società europea, e che giudizio dà sulla vicenda?

2. Quali iniziative potrebbe intraprendere per contribuire a far cessare le violenze contro i popoli indigeni e impedire la distruzione dell'ecosistema?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2014)

La Commissione e l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente sono a conoscenza delle preoccupazioni relative alla costruzione della diga Gibe III sul fiume Omo.

La diga potrebbe comportare vantaggi potenzialmente considerevoli per l'Etiopia, consentendo quasi un raddoppiamento della capacità attuale di produzione di energia elettrica del paese e contribuendo quindi a soddisfare il fabbisogno energetico interno in rapida crescita, e permettendo esportazioni.

Tuttavia, il progetto Gibe III solleva una serie di perplessità, in particolare per quanto riguarda il suo impatto socio-ambientale. Gli esperti hanno sottolineato che la diga potrebbe alterare in modo permanente i cicli idrologici naturali del fiume Omo in Etiopia e del lago Turkana in Kenya, mettendo quindi a rischio il sostentamento delle popolazioni locali, soprattutto se si prevede di sviluppare l'irrigazione su larga scala. Anche se le autorità etiopi hanno fornito informazioni dettagliate, sono necessari ulteriori chiarimenti sui progetti di irrigazione a partire dal bacino, attualmente in fase di sviluppo, e sulle presunte violazioni dei diritti umani commesse nel tentativo di liberare migliaia di ettari di terre irrigue.

L'UE mantiene un dialogo politico regolare con le autorità etiopi ed è un membro attivo del gruppo di donatori per l'assistenza allo sviluppo in questo paese. In tale contesto, l'UE segue da vicino la situazione e solleva le proprie preoccupazioni con il governo etiope su vari argomenti, tra cui la costruzione della diga Gibe III e i programmi di irrigazione connessi, nonché le presunte conseguenze per la sopravvivenza delle popolazioni locali.

([1]) Gli articoli di stampa a cui si fa riferimento in questa sede sono decine. A solo titolo d'esempio, cfr.: http://ricerca.repubblica.it/repubblica/archivio/repubblica/2013/06/21/la-battaglia-del-nilo.html e http://www.ipsnews.net/2013/11/ethiopias-indigenous-excluded-from-rapid-growth/

([2]) Cfr.: http://www.greenreport.it/_archivio2011/index.php?page=default&id=21472&cat=Urbanistica%20e%20territorio

([3]) Organizzazione internazionale dedita alla difesa dei popoli indigeni e dei loro diritti. Cfr.: http://www.survival.it/popoli/valleomo

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001202/14
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: Violence against indigenous people and destruction of the ecosystem in Ethiopia, owing to the building of a dam by an Italian multinational

In July 2006, the Ethiopian Government awarded a contract to an Italian company — apparently without even a call for tenders — for the construction of the dam on the River Omo, known as Gibe III. The dam, which is already at an advanced stage of construction, is supposed to produce 6 500 gigawatt-hours (GWh) per year for both domestic consumption and for sale abroad. According to a number of press reports ([1]), the project appears to have been authorised without any prior assessment of its social and environmental impact, in breach of Ethiopia's own laws. The EPA (Ethiopian Environmental Protection Authority) apparently gave the green light to the work retrospectively, only in 2008, after receiving a file prepared by an agency in Milan which defined the social and environmental impact of the project as 'negligible', or even 'positive'.

However, studies conducted by a number of independent experts state the opposite — namely, that the dam will have a devastating impact on the region's delicate ecosystem and the indigenous communities living there. According to those experts, indeed, the flow of the River Omo will be drastically reduced, with a break in the natural cycle of flooding that regularly pours water and humus into the surrounding soil, currently making it possible for local communities to farm subsistence crops and livestock. The water will instead be channelled into canals to irrigate the region, in which the Ethiopian Government began, in 2011, to lease huge plots of land to public and private investors specialising in the production of biofuels. The press describes this process as a land grabbing phenomenon accompanied by the forced resettlement of tribes, which has already been initiated by the Ethiopian authorities and is being carried out by using physical and psychological violence ([2]). Lastly, the dam could also have a very serious impact on the peoples and ecosystem of Lake Turkana in Kenya, into which the waters of the Omo flow. Numerous international bodies and organisations, first and foremost Unesco and Survival International ([3]), have taken action to protest against this disaster, which will reduce hundreds of thousands of hitherto self-sufficient people to becoming dependent on foreign aid.

1. Is the Commission aware of the dramatic situation taking place in Ethiopia, relating to the building of a dam by a European firm? What is its view of the matter?

2. What measures could it take to help put an end to the violence against indigenous peoples and prevent the destruction of the ecosystem?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

The Commission and the HR/VP are aware of the concerns related to the construction of the Gibe III dam on the Omo river.

The benefits such a dam could bring to Ethiopia are potentially considerable, as it could almost double Ethiopia's current installed power generating capacity and therefore contribute to meeting rapidly growing domestic energy needs, as well as allow for exports.

However, the Gibe III project raises a series of questions, notably regarding the social and environmental impacts to be expected. Experts have pointed out that the dam could permanently alter the natural hydrological cycles in Ethiopia's Omo river and Kenya's Lake Turkana, and hence the livelihoods of local populations, especially if irrigation is to be developed on a large scale. While the Ethiopian authorities have provided detailed information, further clarifications are needed on irrigation schemes currently being developed from the reservoir and on alleged human rights violations committed in the process of clearing the thousands of hectares to be irrigated.

The EU has regular political dialogue with the Ethiopian authorities, and is an active member of the Development Assistance Group of donors in Ethiopia. In this context, the EU closely monitors the situation and raises its concerns with the Ethiopian Government on relevant topics, including on the construction of Gibe III and the related irrigation schemes and their alleged consequences on the livelihoods of local populations.

([1]) There are dozens of such reports — for example, see http://ricerca.repubblica.it/repubblica/archivio/repubblica/2013/06/21/la-battaglia-del-nilo.html and http://www.ipsnews.net/2013/11/ethiopias-indigenous-excluded-from-rapid-growth/
([2]) http://www.greenreport.it/_archivio2011/index.php?page=default&id=21472&cat=Urbanistica%20e%20territorio
([3]) See: http://www.survival.it/popoli/valleomo

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001221/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(6 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Νέος νόμος στο Αφγανιστάν

Σύμφωνα με την ηλεκτρονική εφημερίδα *The Guardian*, ένας νέος νόμος πρόκειται σύντομα να ψηφιστεί στο Αφγανιστάν, ο οποίος θα επιτρέπει στους άνδρες να επιτίθενται στις συζύγους, τα παιδιά και τις αδελφές τους χωρίς να αντιμετωπίζουν δικαστική ποινή. Επιπλέον, ο κώδικας ποινικής δικονομίας θα απαγορεύει στους συγγενείς κατηγορουμένου να καταθέσουν εναντίον του. Δεδομένου ότι οι περισσότερες περιπτώσεις βίας κατά των γυναικών λαμβάνουν χώρα μέσα στην οικογένεια, αυτός ο νέος νόμος θα επιβάλλει τη σιγή στα ταλαιπωρούμενα θύματα και τους μάρτυρες σκηνών βίας.

Επίσης, θα είναι σχεδόν αδύνατο να τιμωρηθούν οι υπεύθυνοι για τα εγκλήματα «τιμής» εις βάρος των γυναικών και για τους αναγκαστικούς γάμους. Η πώληση ή το εμπόριο γυναικών θα είναι επίσης δύσκολο να ελεγχθεί βάσει της νομοθεσίας της χώρας.

Σε ποιες ενέργειες προτίθεται να προβεί η Επιτροπή για την προστασία αυτών των ευάλωτων γυναικών, από τις οποίες αφαιρούνται και τα βασικά δικαιώματα επιβίωσης;

Κοινή απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(25 Μαρτίου 2014)

Μετά τις ανησυχίες που έχουν εκφράσει οι ακτιβιστές για τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα, η διεθνής κοινότητα και η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, και ιδίως η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος/Αντιπρόεδρος στη δήλωσή της της 10ης Φεβρουαρίου 2014, ο Πρόεδρος Καρζάι αποφάσισε να τροποποιήσει το άρθρο του Κώδικα Ποινικής Δικονομίας που θα μπορούσε να είχε αποτρέψει τους συγγενείς να καταθέσουν κατά των εικαζόμενων δραστών της κακοποίησης.

Ο Κώδικας Ποινικής Δικονομίας τέθηκε σε ισχύ στις 23 Φεβρουαρίου, ταυτοχρόνως με το προεδρικό διάταγμα που τροποποιεί το νόμο και επιδιώκει να αντιμετωπίσει τις κύριες ανησυχίες. Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 79 του Συντάγματος, το νομοθετικό διάταγμα που έχει εγκριθεί από τον Πρόεδρο αποκτά ισχύ νόμου και αποστέλλεται στο Κοινοβούλιο μέσα σε 30 ημέρες. Το διάταγμα αυτό θεωρείται πλέον ότι συγκαταλέγεται μεταξύ των εκτελεστέων ρυθμίσεων της νομοθεσίας, έως ότου το κοινοβούλιο αποφασίσει διαφορετικά.

Οι κοινές προσπάθειες από τη διεθνή κοινότητα και την ΕΕ αποδείχθηκαν επιτυχείς για την τροποποίηση του νόμου. Εξακολουθεί ωστόσο να υπάρχει ο κίνδυνος ότι το αφγανικό Κοινοβούλιο θα επανακάμψει στο θέμα. Η ΕΕ συνεχίζει να παρακολουθεί την κατάσταση εκ του σύνεγγυς.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001205/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(6 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Nuova legge afgana in materia di protezione delle donne

Il 4 febbraio 2014 Human Rights Watch ha riferito che i legislatori afgani stanno tentando di ottenere l'approvazione del Presidente Hamid Karzai per un nuovo codice di procedura penale che, di fatto, negherebbe alle donne la protezione contro la violenza domestica e il matrimonio forzato o minorile. La nuova legge è passata in entrambe le camere del Parlamento afgano ed entro poche settimane dovrebbe essere trasmessa al Presidente Karzai per la firma finale. La legge impedirebbe in pratica alle autorità giudiziarie di interrogare i parenti degli imputati, il che servirebbe a far tacere le vittime di violenze domestiche. I testimoni appartenenti alla famiglia potrebbero scegliere di non testimoniare, rendendo in tal modo molto difficile perseguire i colpevoli degli abusi. L'articolo 26 di tale legge, dal titolo «Divieto di interrogare un persona in qualità di testimone» afferma che «le seguenti persone non possono essere interrogate come testimoni: […] i familiari dell'imputato».

Il nuovo codice rappresenta una grave minaccia all'essenziale tutela di donne e bambine prevista dalla legge afgana sull'eliminazione della violenza contro le donne, approvata nel 2009. La nuova legge di procedura penale costituisce l'ultimo dei vari tentativi portati avanti dal Parlamento afgano per indebolire la tutela giuridica delle donne, già di per sé inadeguata. I parlamentari contrari ai diritti delle donne hanno tentato di abrogare o indebolire la legge sull'eliminazione della violenza contro le donne e, nel 2013, hanno avuto luogo vari attacchi di alto profilo contro funzionari del governo o della polizia di sesso femminile. Inoltre a novembre un progetto di legge controverso elaborato dai parlamentari afgani, che avrebbe reintrodotto la lapidazione pubblica come pena per l'adulterio, è stato bloccato in seguito a una fuga di informazioni alla stampa.

1. È l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente disposto a chiedere al Presidente Hamid Karzai di respingere il nuovo codice di procedura penale sulla base del fatto che negherebbe i principi sanciti nella legge sull'eliminazione della violenza contro le donne del 2009?

2. Qual è il parere dei funzionari dell'UE con sede in Afghanistan in merito all'entità delle minacce poste ai diritti delle donne dal nuovo codice e da altri atti legislativi simili?

Risposta congiunta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(25 marzo 2014)

A seguito delle preoccupazioni espresse da attivisti per i diritti umani, dalla comunità internazionale e dall'Unione europea, in particolare dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente nella dichiarazione del 10 febbraio 2014, il presidente Karzai ha deciso di modificare l'articolo del codice di procedura penale che avrebbe impedito ai parenti di deporre contro il presunto colpevole di un abuso.

Il 23 febbraio il codice di procedura penale è entrato in vigore insieme a un decreto presidenziale che modifica la legge e riguarda questo aspetto fondamentale. A norma dell'articolo 79 della Costituzione, un decreto legislativo approvato dal presidente diventa legge e viene inviato al Parlamento entro 30 giorni. Il decreto ha ora forza di legge fino a quando il Parlamento non decida altrimenti.

Anche se, grazie agli sforzi congiunti della comunità internazionale e dell'UE, si è riusciti a far modificare la legge, vi è ancora il rischio che il Parlamento afghano riapra la questione. L'UE continua a controllare la situazione da vicino.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001205/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — New Afghan law regarding the protection of women

On 4 February 2014, Human Rights Watch reported that Afghan law-makers are seeking approval from President Hamid Karzai for a new criminal procedure code that would effectively deny women protection from domestic violence and forced or child marriage. The new law has been passed in both houses of the Afghan Parliament and is expected to be sent to Karzai for final signature within a few weeks. In effect, the law would prohibit the judicial authorities from questioning the relatives of a criminal defendant, which would serve to silence victims of domestic violence. Family witnesses could choose not to testify, which would make the prosecution of abusers extremely difficult. Article 26 'Prohibition of Questioning an Individual as a Witness' states that 'The following people cannot be questioned as witnesses: […] Relatives of the accused'.

The new code poses a serious threat to the critical protections for women and girls embodied in Afghanistan's law on the Elimination of Violence against Women (EVAW), which was passed in 2009. This new criminal-procedure law follows several efforts by the Afghan Parliament to weaken already inadequate legal protections for women. Members of the Parliament opposed to women's rights have sought to repeal or weaken the EVAW law, and in 2013 there were a number of high-profile attacks reported against female government and police officials. In addition, in November a controversial draft law prepared by Afghan officials, which would have reinstated public stoning as a punishment for adultery, was stopped after it was leaked to the press.

1. Is the High Representative/Vice-President prepared to ask President Hamid Karzai to reject the new criminal-procedure code on the basis that it would negate the principles enshrined in the 2009 EVAW law?

2. What is the assessment of EU officials based in Afghanistan regarding the threats posed to women's rights by the new code and other similar forms of legislation?

Question for written answer E-001221/14
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: New Afghan law

According to the online newspaper *The Guardian*, a new law is soon to be passed in Afghanistan which will allow men to attack their wives, children and sisters without facing judicial punishment. Furthermore, the criminal prosecution code will ban relatives of an accused person from testifying against them. As most violence against women occurs within the family, this new law will silence victims and witnesses to their suffering.

It will be almost impossible to punish those responsible for 'honour' killings against women and forced marriages. The sale or trade of women will also be difficult to control under the country's law.

What actions does the Commission intend to take to protect these vulnerable women, whose basic rights of survival are being taken away from them?

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2014)

Following the concerns raised by human rights activists, the international community and the European Union, notably by the HR/VP in her statement of 10 February 2014, President Karzai decided to amend the article in the Criminal Procedure Code which might have prevented relatives from testifying against an alleged abuser.

On 23 February, the Criminal Procedure Code came into force together with a Presidential decree amending the law and addressing the main concern. According to Article 79 of the constitution, a legislative decree endorsed by the President shall acquire the force of law and be sent to the Parliament within 30 days. This decree is now considered an enforceable law until parliament decides otherwise.

The joint efforts from the international community and the EU proved successful in amending the law. But there is still the risk that the Afghan parliament may return to the issue. The EU continues monitoring the situation very closely.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001206/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(6 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Dirottamento di una petroliera al largo delle coste angolane

Il 18 gennaio 2014 la MT Kerala, battente bandiera liberiana, è scomparsa al largo delle coste angolane. La nave, di proprietà della società greca Dynacom Tankers Management Ltd., era stata incaricata di perfezionare un contratto per conto della compagnia petrolifera statale angolana Sonangol. Il 26 gennaio la nave è infine riapparsa al largo delle coste nigeriane: le 60 000 tonnellate di gasolio erano state rubate, ma l'equipaggio era fortunatamente rimasto illeso. Stando ad alcune notizie diffuse dai mass media, si teme che gli atti di pirateria, aumentati di un terzo lungo le coste dell'Africa occidentale, potrebbero diffondersi a sud del Golfo di Guinea. L'Angola è attualmente il secondo maggiore produttore di greggio in Africa.

Le notizie concernenti l'attacco alla MT Kerala, tuttavia, hanno spinto la marina angolana a smentire le segnalazioni di pirateria. Un portavoce della marina angolana ha affermato che l'equipaggio della nave aveva interrotto le comunicazioni per simulare un attacco. Non è stata fornita alcuna spiegazione in merito alle ragioni di tale atto, ma alcuni ritengono che la decisione della marina di sostenere la messa in scena dell'attacco sia stata presa per dissipare qualsiasi timore circa il rischio di attacchi di pirateria a cui sono soggette le navi che si trovano in acque angolane. Allo stesso tempo, la marina dell'Angola non è stata in grado di spiegare in che modo le 60 000 tonnellate di gasolio siano state rubate.

1. Alla luce delle notizie apprese riguardo alla cattura della MT Kerala, è l'UE preoccupata per l'emergere di una nuova ondata di pirateria lungo le coste sud-occidentali dell'Africa?

2. Quali misure intende adottare per indagare sulle circostanze dell'attacco del 18 gennaio?

3. È pronta ad adottare una strategia di lotta alla pirateria nell'Africa occidentale che tengaconto dei successi conseguiti al largo delle coste somale?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2014)

1. Nel 2013, secondo l'osservatorio sulla pirateria dell'Ufficio marittimo internazionale, dei 234 incidenti riferiti a livello mondiale, 51 si sono verificati nel golfo di Guinea ([1]), compresi 6 dirottamenti. Gli attacchi prendono in genere di mira le navi ormeggiate oppure quelle che si dirigono o stanno per salpare da piattaforme petrolifere o battelli deposito offshore e porti. Di recente è stato però valutato che il rischio di attacchi potrebbe spostarsi dalla costa verso il mare aperto, come osservato nell'incidente della MT Kerala.

Si rilevano inoltre preoccupanti tendenze a commettere inopinati atti di violenza contro gli equipaggi, anche con armi da fuoco, e dirottamenti di navi cisterna per i furti di greggio, la cosiddetta «petro-pirateria».

2. L'Interpol e le autorità angolane stanno indagando sul caso.

3. L'UE sostiene gli sforzi della regione e dei suoi Stati costieri volti ad affrontare le numerose sfide poste dall'insicurezza marittima e dalla criminalità organizzata. A breve il Consiglio dovrà adottare una strategia dell'UE sul Golfo di Guinea basata sulla comunicazione congiunta della Commissione e dell'AR/VP. La strategia dell'UE prende le mosse dallo slancio impresso dai capi di Stato della Comunità economica degli Stati dell'Africa occidentale (ECOWAS), della Comunità economica degli Stati dell'Africa centrale (CEEAC) e della Commissione del Golfo di Guinea (GGC) in occasione del vertice tenutosi a Yaoundé, in Camerun, nel giugno 2013. Con la strategia l'UE sostiene questi sforzi e riconosce inoltre la necessità di proteggere i cittadini europei dalle minacce provenienti dalla regione, inclusi la pirateria, il terrorismo, la tratta degli esseri umani e il traffico di stupefacenti e armi. Se da un lato vi sono differenze tra le situazioni della pirateria nel Corno d'Africa e nel Golfo di Guinea, dall'altro alcuni insegnamenti risultano pertinenti per entrambe le regioni e sono contemplati nella strategia dell'UE sul Golfo di Guinea.

([1]) Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Costa d'Avorio, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Congo e Togo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001206/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — oil tanker hijacked off the Angolan coast

On 18 January 2014, the Liberian-flagged ship *MT Kerala* went missing off the Angolan coast. The ship, owned by the Greek-based company Dynacom Tanker Management Ltd., had been assigned to finish a contract for the Angolan state oil firm Sonangol. On 26 January the ship eventually reappeared off the Nigerian coast. However, 60 000 tonnes of diesel had been stolen. Fortunately the ship's crew were left unharmed. According to a number of media reports, there are fears that piracy, which has risen by a third off West Africa, could be spreading south of the Gulf of Guinea. Angola is currently Africa's second largest producer of crude oil.

However, news of the attack on *MT Kerala* prompted the Angolan Navy to deny reports of piracy. A spokesman for the Angolan Navy said that the ship's crew had turned off communications to fake an attack. They provided no explanation for the motivation behind this act, but some suggest that the navy's decision to claim that the attack was staged was taken to allay fears that ships in Angolan waters are at risk from pirates. At the same time, the Angolan Navy was also not able to explain how 60 000 tonnes of diesel had been stolen.

1. In light of reports emerging as regards the capture of *MT Kerala*, does the EU have concerns that we are experiencing a new wave of piracy along the south-west coast of Africa?

2. What steps is the EU taking to investigate the circumstances surrounding the attack on 18 January?

3. Is the EU prepared to adopt a strategy to tackle piracy off West Africa which takes into account the success that has been achieved off the coast of Somalia?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

1. In 2013, according to the International Maritime Bureau Piracy reporting Center, of 234 reported incidents worldwide, 51 took place in the Gulf of Guinea ([1]), including 6 hijackings. These attacks occur mainly when ships are moored, bound for, or leaving offshore oil platforms, storage vessels and ports. However, latest assessments are that the risk of attack could shift further from the coast — and further afield — as we have seen with the MT Kerala incident.

The unpredictable use of violence against crews, including use of guns, and the hijacking of tankers for fuel theft or 'petro-piracy', are worrying trends.

2. Interpol and the Angolan authorities are investigating the case.

3. The EU is supporting the efforts of the region and its coastal states to address the many challenges of maritime insecurity and organised crime. The Council is due to adopt an EU Strategy on the Gulf of Guinea shortly based on the Joint Communication of the Commission and the HR/VP. The EU Strategy builds upon the momentum which was created by the Heads of State Summit in Yaoundé, Cameroon in June 2013, of the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission (GGC). The strategy provides the support of the EU to these efforts and also recognises the need to protect European citizens from the threats that emanate from the region, including piracy, terrorism and trafficking of people, drugs and arms. While there are differences between the piracy situations in the Horn of Africa and the Gulf of Guinea certain lessons are relevant and are included in the EU Strategy on the Gulf of Guinea.

([1]) Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, the Congo, Togo.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001207/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(6 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Richiesta di informazioni sullo stato dei negoziati per un accordo di stabilizzazione e associazione tra l'Unione europea e il Kosovo

I processi di allargamento sono sempre problematici e caratterizzati da numerose implicazioni politiche, economiche e socio-culturali.

Particolare attenzione merita la questione riguardante il Kosovo, il più giovane tra i paesi della regione balcanica, dichiaratosi indipendente dalla Serbia il 17 febbraio 2008. I negoziati per la stipulazione di un accordo di stabilizzazione e associazione tra Kosovo e Unione europea sono iniziati nell'ottobre 2013. Tuttavia sono diverse le criticità che rendono indispensabile un atteggiamento prudente, particolarmente riguardo alle questioni concernenti il riconoscimento dello Stato del Kosovo e alle relazioni tra questo e la Serbia. Perplessità desta il fatto che cinque paesi membri dell'Unione europea non hanno riconosciuto il Kosovo. Seppure grandi sforzi siano stati fatti per la normalizzazione dei rapporti tra Kosovo e Serbia, non deve essere abbassato il livello di attenzione sulle relazioni tra i due stati. Inoltre, la recente uccisione di un consigliere comunale del settore nord (serbo) di Kosovska Mitrovica, nel nord del Kosovo, ha suscitato grande preoccupazione per la buona riuscita del processo di normalizzazione dei rapporti fra Pristina e Belgrado.

Tutto ciò premesso, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. di fornire un quadro generale della situazione della normalizzazione dei rapporti tra Kosovo e Serbia;

2. se può chiarire la sua posizione circa il mancato riconoscimento del Kosovo da parte di alcuni degli Stati membri dell'UE;

3. se può chiarire quali sono i maggiori benefici che l'Unione europea trarrà dalla stipulazione di un accordo di stabilizzazione e associazione con il Kosovo.

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(31 marzo 2014)

1. Per quanto riguarda la normalizzazione, nel periodo marzo 2011-marzo 2012 l'UE ha agevolato le discussioni a livello tecnico tra Kosovo ([1]) e Serbia, che nell'ottobre 2012 sono state sostituite da discussioni politiche a livello dei primi ministri agevolate dall'AR/VP Ashton. Le discussioni tecniche hanno portato alla firma di accordi in materia di timbri doganali, registro civile, catasto, riconoscimento reciproco dei diplomi, libera circolazione, gestione integrata delle frontiere/linee di confine, partecipazione e rappresentanza regionale del Kosovo. Il dialogo ad alto livello ha permesso di concludere accordi sullo scambio di funzionari di collegamento, sulle telecomunicazioni e sull'energia nonché del «primo accordo sui principi che disciplinano la normalizzazione delle relazioni», che prevede la graduale integrazione dei comuni settentrionali, specie per quanto riguarda la polizia e la magistratura. L'AR/VP Ashton ha informato in più occasioni (da ultimo il 17 dicembre 2013) il Consiglio Affari generali sullo stato di attuazione di questi accordi.

2. La Commissione non ha una posizione circa il mancato riconoscimento del Kosovo da parte di alcuni degli Stati membri dell'UE, i quali decidono la propria posizione secondo le rispettive procedure. Finora l'indipendenza del Kosovo è stata riconosciuta da 23 dei 28 Stati membri.

3. Il principale beneficio derivante dal negoziato di un accordo di stabilizzazione e associazione con il Kosovo consiste nella sua progressiva integrazione politica ed economica in una regione di pace, stabilità e prosperità. Questo è nell'interesse immediato dell'Unione, se si considerano la vicinanza geografica della regione e i forti legami politici ed economici con essa.

([1]) «Tale designazione non pregiudica le posizioni riguardo allo status ed è in linea con la risoluzione 1244 (1999) dell'UNSC e con il parere della CIG sulla dichiarazione di indipendenza del Kosovo».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001207/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: Request for information on the status of negotiations for a stabilisation and association agreement between the European Union and Kosovo

Enlargement processes are increasingly problematic and characterised by multiple political, economic and socio-cultural implications.

Particular attention must be paid to the question of Kosovo, the youngest country in the Balkan region, which declared independence from Serbia on 17 February 2008. Negotiations for the signature of a stabilisation and association agreement between Kosovo and the European Union began in October 2013. However, a number of critical factors make it essential to adopt a prudent attitude, particularly on questions relating to recognition of the State of Kosovo and relations between Kosovo and Serbia. The fact that five European Union Member States have not recognised Kosovo is a cause of concern. Although major efforts have been made to normalise relations between Kosovo and Serbia, the level of attention to relations between the two States must not be reduced. Furthermore, the recent killing of a municipal councillor in the Serbian municipality of Kosovska Mitrovica in the north of Kosovo has aroused great concern in terms of a successful outcome for the process of normalisation of relations between Pristina and Belgrade.

In full consideration of the above, the Commission is asked:

1. to provide an overview of the situation regarding the normalisation of relations between Kosovo and Serbia;

2. if it is able to clarify its position concerning the non-recognition of Kosovo by certain EU Member States;

3. if it is able to clarify the key benefits to the European Union of the negotiation of a stabilisation and association agreement with Kosovo.

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 2014)

1. As regards normalisation, the EU facilitated discussions at technical level between Kosovo ([1])and Serbia between March 2011 and March 2012. These discussions were replaced in October 2012 by political discussions at Prime Ministers' level facilitated by HR/VP Ashton. The technical discussions have led to agreements on customs stamps, civil registry, cadastre, mutual recognition of diplomas, free movement, integrated border/boundary management and Kosovo's regional participation and representation. The high-level dialogue has resulted in agreements to exchange liaison officers, agreements on telecommunications and energy, and the 'First agreement of principles governing the normalization of relations', which provides for the gradual integration of the northern municipalities, notably as concerns the police and judiciary. HR/VP Ashton informed the General Affairs Council on the state of implementation of these agreements most recently on 17 December 2013.

2. The Commission has no position on the non-recognition of Kosovo by some Member States, who decide on their position in accordance with their respective procedures. To date, twenty three Member States have recognised Kosovo's independence and five have not.

3. The key benefits of negotiating a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Kosovo lie in its progressive political and economic integration into a region of peace, stability and prosperity. Given the region's geographical proximity and close political and economic ties, this is in the European Union's immediate interest.

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001209/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(6 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Richiesta di informazioni circa lo stato dei negoziati di adesione della Serbia all'Unione europea

I processi di allargamento sono sempre problematici e caratterizzati da numerose implicazioni politiche, economiche e socio-culturali.

La strategia di allargamento adottata dall'Unione europea sancisce la centralità di alcuni criteri fondamentali di adesione quali lo Stato di diritto, le questioni relative alle riforme giudiziarie, alla lotta contro la criminalità organizzata e la corruzione e al rispetto dei diritti umani. Il 21 gennaio 2014, sono iniziati i negoziati per l'adesione della Serbia all'Unione europea. Il primo ministro serbo, Ivica Dačić, ha affermato che l'obiettivo è perfezionare l'ingresso della Serbia nell'UE entro il 2020. Nonostante la manifestazione di volontà e gli sforzi compiuti dal governo serbo per il recepimento dell'acquis unionale, sono diversi i punti critici che necessitano un atteggiamento prudente e attento. In particolare, ci si riferisce alla necessità di riforme nel settore dell'amministrazione della giustizia e al rispetto delle libertà e dei diritti fondamentali, tra cui il rispetto e la libertà di espressione delle minoranze. Inoltre, nonostante siano stati effettuati diversi passi in avanti verso la normalizzazione dei rapporti tra Serbia e Kosovo, i rapporti tra i due Stati devono essere costantemente posti sotto osservazione.

Premesso ciò, può dire la Commissione:

1. qual è la strategia che utilizzerà la Serbia per eliminare le criticità riscontrate nei settori dell'amministrazione della giustizia e del rispetto delle libertà e dei diritti umani?

2. Quali saranno i benefici derivanti dall'adesione della Serbia all'Unione europea?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(20 marzo 2014)

L'avvio dei negoziati di adesione è un'occasione unica per incoraggiare la Serbia a intensificare gli sforzi in materia di Stato di diritto, sistema giudiziario e diritti fondamentali. In linea con il «nuovo approccio», nel negoziare il capitolo 23, che riguarda i settori suddetti, si presterà la massima attenzione all'allineamento legislativo con l'acquis e alla creazione o al rafforzamento della capacità istituzionale di applicarlo correttamente.

In base alla valutazione («screening») della conformità della Serbia all'acquis, iniziata nel settembre 2013, la Commissione presenterà relazioni contenenti raccomandazioni agli Stati membri, i quali decideranno se e a quali condizioni sia possibile avviare negoziati sui singoli capitoli dell'acquis. La Commissione applica alla Serbia lo stesso metodo utilizzato per qualsiasi altro paese candidato, valutandone il grado di preparazione all'adesione secondo il principio dei «propri meriti». È pertanto prematuro fare supposizioni su un'eventuale data di adesione.

Parallelamente, la Serbia ha iniziato a lavorare su un piano d'azione finalizzato all'adozione e all'attuazione delle riforme necessarie nell'ambito del capitolo 23. La Commissione coadiuverà la Serbia fornendo consulenze mirate, in stretta collaborazione con gli Stati membri dell'UE e con organismi internazionali specializzati quali Europol, ma anche un sostegno finanziario specifico nell'ambito dello strumento IPA. La Commissione continuerà inoltre a monitorare con attenzione la situazione dello Stato di diritto in Serbia, segnatamente nella sua relazione dell'ottobre 2014 ([1]).

La Commissione ritiene che l'adesione della Serbia contribuirà anzitutto alla stabilità regionale e servirà a promuovere le riforme in tutti i paesi dei Balcani occidentali.

([1]) Per ulteriori informazioni, cfr. la relazione del 2013 sui progressi compiuti dalla Serbia: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/brochures/serbia_2013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001209/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: Request for information on the status of negotiations for Serbia's accession to the European Union

The enlargement processes are always problematic and characterised by multiple political, economic and socio-cultural implications.

The enlargement strategy adopted by the European Union sanctions the centrality of certain fundamental accession criteria, such as the rule of law, matters associated with judicial reform, the fight against organised crime and corruption and respect for human rights. Negotiations for Serbia's accession to the European Union began on 21 January 2014. The Serbian Prime Minister, Ivica Dačić, has asserted that the objective is to finalise Serbia's entry to the EU by 2020. In spite of this expression of intent and the efforts of the Serbian Government to transpose the body of EC law, there are a number of critical factors which call for a prudent and watchful attitude, in particular the need for reform in the administration of justice and respect for fundamental rights and freedoms, including respect and freedom of speech for minorities. In addition, while a number of steps have been taken in the direction of normalisation of relations between Serbia and Kosovo, relations between the two States must remain under constant observation.

In consideration of the above, can the Commission tell us:

1. What strategy will Serbia employ to eliminate the critical factors encountered with regard to the administration of justice and respect for human rights and freedoms?

2. What will be the benefits of Serbia's accession to the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2014)

The opening of the accession negotiations creates a major opportunity to encourage Serbia to intensify its efforts on rule of law, judiciary and fundamental rights. In line with the 'new approach' in negotiating Chapter 23 which covers the abovementioned areas, a central focus will be on legal alignment with the acquis as well as on establishing or enhancing the institutional capacity to effectively implement it.

The screening exercise, i.e. assessment of Serbia's compliance with the *acquis,* started in September 2013. Based on this assessment, the Commission will provide reports including recommendations to the Member States who will decide on whether and under which conditions negotiations on individual *acquis* chapters can be opened. The Commission applies the same method to Serbia as to any other candidate country by assessing the country's readiness for accession on the basis of the own-merits principle. It is therefore premature to speculate on a possible date of accession.

In parallel, Serbia has started working on an action plan to adopt and implement the necessary reforms required under Chapter 23. The Commission will stand besides Serbia in this exercise by providing targeted expertise, in close cooperation with EU Member States and international expert bodies such as Europol, but also dedicated financial support under the IPA instrument. It will also continue to closely monitor the situation of the rule of law in Serbia in particular in its October 2014 Progress Report ([1]).

The Commission considers that Serbia's eventual accession will first and foremost contribute to regional stability and act as an overall driver for reforms throughout the western Balkans.

([1]) For further information, please see the 2013 Progress Report on Serbia:
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/brochures/serbia_2013.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001210/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(6 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Richiesta di informazioni circa lo stato dei negoziati di adesione dell'Islanda all'Unione europea

I processi di allargamento sono sempre problematici e caratterizzati da numerose implicazioni politiche, economiche e socio-culturali.

L'Islanda ha manifestato interesse alla negoziazione dell'adesione all'Unione europea nel luglio 2009, con il deposito della relativa domanda di adesione. In un primo periodo, i negoziati sembravano procedere positivamente, anche in ragione della condivisione dei valori dell'Unione europea, essendo l'Islanda un paese tradizionalmente democratico, rispettoso dei diritti dell'uomo e delle libertà fondamentali, nonché uno dei paesi aderenti allo Spazio economico europeo e all'area di Schengen. Un'improvvisa sospensione dei negoziati sui trattati di adesione è avvenuta nel gennaio 2013, per volontà del governo islandese, in vista delle elezioni politiche dell'aprile 2013. La vittoria dei partiti euroscettici ha comportato lo scioglimento dei comitati di adesione.

1. Ciò premesso, può la Commissione chiarire la sua posizione in merito a tale improvvisa sospensione della negoziazione dei trattati?

2. Può inoltre informare se sono stati compiuti sforzi per impedire la sospensione dei negoziati?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(1º aprile 2014)

La domanda di adesione dell'Islanda all'Unione europea è stata presentata nel luglio 2009. Su invito del Consiglio, la Commissione ha espresso il suo parere nel febbraio 2010. I negoziati sono iniziati nel luglio 2010 e si sono svolti conformemente al quadro negoziale. Dopo le elezioni politiche dell'aprile 2013, il nuovo governo islandese ha deciso di sospendere i negoziati di adesione all'UE fintanto che non saranno stati approvati tramite referendum. Al momento della sospensione dei negoziati erano stati aperti 27 capitoli, 11 dei quali erano stati provvisoriamente chiusi.

Il governo islandese in carica ha detto esplicitamente che non intende portare avanti i negoziati. Nel 2013, quando l'Islanda l'ha informata della sua posizione, la Commissione ha ribadito la sua disponibilità a proseguire i negoziati di adesione purché l'Islanda lo desideri.

Alla fine di febbraio 2014 il governo islandese ha presentato una risoluzione sul ritiro della domanda di adesione che è attualmente all'esame in parlamento. La decisione sul futuro della sua domanda di adesione spetta esclusivamente all'Islanda.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001210/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: Request for information on the status of negotiations for the accession of Iceland to the European Union

The enlargement processes are always problematic and characterised by multiple political, economic and socio-cultural implications.

Iceland first expressed interest in negotiations for accession to the European Union in July 2009 by filing the necessary application. Initially, the negotiations appeared to be proceeding positively, especially given that Iceland shares the values of the European Union, is a traditionally democratic country respectful of human rights and fundamental freedoms, a member of the European Economic Area and signatory of the Schengen agreement. In January 2013 the negotiations on accession treaties were abruptly suspended at the instigation of the Icelandic Government in view of the political elections held in April 2013. The victory of the Euro-sceptic parties led to the dissolution of the accession committees.

1. In consideration of the above, can the Commission clarify its position on the abrupt suspension of negotiations on the treaties?

2. Can the Commission also disclose whether efforts have been made to prevent the suspension of these negotiations?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(1 April 2014)

Iceland submitted its application for EU membership in July 2009. Upon invitation by the Council, the Commission gave its opinion in February 2010. The negotiations were opened in July 2010 and proceeded in-line with the negotiating framework. Following the April 2013 general elections, the new Icelandic government decided to put the EU accession negotiations on hold and has indicated that the negotiations will not be continued unless approved through a referendum. At the time when the negotiations were put on hold, 27 chapters had been opened, of which 11 had been provisionally closed.

The current Icelandic government has been clear that it does not wish to continue with the accession negotiations. When Iceland informed the Commission of this position in 2013, the Commission, for its part, indicated that it remained committed to continuing the accession negotiation process, provided Iceland wants it.

In late February 2014 the Icelandic government introduced a resolution to the Icelandic parliament to withdraw the accession application. This resolution is currently being debated in the Icelandic parliament. The decision on what should happen regarding the future of Iceland's membership application is entirely up to Iceland.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001217/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(6 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Σε κίνδυνο η Ελληνική Τράπεζα Γενετικού Υλικού

Η Ελληνική Τράπεζα Γενετικού Υλικού Ιδρύθηκε το 1981 με την υποστήριξη του Οργανισμού Τροφίμων και Γεωργίας των Ηνωμένων Εθνών (FAO), ως η εθνική οργάνωση για την προστασία των καλλιεργειών της χώρας και εργάζεται για να σώσει τη βιολογική ποικιλότητα των διατροφικών πόρων ([1]). Αν και έχει κατασκευαστεί νέο κτίριο για να στεγάσει την Τράπεζα, ήδη από το 2008 ([2]), το οποίο πληροί όλες τις προϋποθέσεις για την ασφαλή βιωσιμότητα των σπόρων, εκείνη δεν μπορεί να μεταστεγαστεί, καθώς το κτίριο δεν έχει παραληφθεί από τις αρμόδιες υπηρεσίες των Υπουργείων στα οποία υπάγεται η Τράπεζα, όσον αφορά τις υποχρεώσεις προς την ΕΕ ([3]). Έτσι, το ευαίσθητο γενετικό υλικό παραμένει σε εντελώς ακατάλληλες συνθήκες διατήρησης. Εκτός από το θέμα του κτιρίου, εκκρεμεί και η διευθέτηση της διοικητικής υπαγωγής της Τράπεζας σε ένα φορέα και, παράλληλα, η στελέχωσή της με εξειδικευμένο επιστημονικό προσωπικό. Παρά το γεγονός ότι ορίζεται το ΕΘΙΑΓΕ ως «φορέας λειτουργίας» του έργου ([4]), η καθ' ύλην αρμόδια υπηρεσία του ΥΠΑΑΤ (Δ/νση Χωροταξίας και Προστασίας Περιβάλλοντος) καθυστερεί να δώσει έγκριση. Ως εκ τούτου προτάθηκε ως εναλλακτική λύση η επαναφορά της Τράπεζας στο ΥΠΑΑΤ και η λειτουργία της σε συνδυασμό με το Ινστιτούτο Ελέγχου Ποικιλιών Καλλιεργούμενων Φυτών. Για το θέμα είχε αποστείλει επιστολή προς τον Υπουργό κ. Τσαυτάρη και η Πρόεδρος της Επιτροπής Natura 2000, στις 16 Ιουλίου 2012, όπου αναφερόταν ότι «η όποια καθυστέρηση τώρα πια μπορεί να αποβεί μοιραία». Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει ολοκληρώσει το κράτος μέλος τις υποχρεώσεις του όσον αφορά το έργο του νέου κτιρίου της Ελληνικής Τράπεζας Γενετικού Υλικού;

2. Εάν υπάρχουν εκκρεμότητες ως προς τη Διεθνή Συνθήκη του FAO για τους φυτογενετικούς πόρους, τη διατροφή και τα τρόφιμα (Ν. 3165/2003, ΦΕΚ 177/Α') και το ευρωπαϊκό πρόγραμμα ECPGR, τι μέτρα μελετά να πάρει;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Μαρτίου 2014)

Η Ελλάδα διαθέτει μια ποικιλομορφία φυτών, κυρίως σιτάρι, ελιές και σταφύλια, που χαρακτηρίζουν την περιοχή της Μεσογείου. Επομένως, είναι σημαντικό η ελληνική τράπεζα γονιδίων να συνεχίσει τις δραστηριότητες της προκειμένου να διαφυλαχθεί η ποικιλομορφία των φυτών.

Ως μέρος της διεθνούς συνθήκης για τους φυτογενετικούς πόρους για τη διατροφή και τη γεωργία (IT-PGRFA), η Ελλάδα συμφώνησε να διατηρήσει τους φυτογενετικούς πόρους της, να αποκτήσει βιώσιμο σύστημα των εκτός τόπου (ex situ) συλλογών και να ελαχιστοποιήσει τις απειλές στη φυτική βιοποικιλότητα. Επιπλέον, τα μέρη της συνθήκης συμφωνούν να χρηματοδοτήσουν τις εθνικές δραστηριότητες για τη διατήρηση και τη χρήση των φυτογενετικών πόρων για τη διατροφή και τη γεωργία, σύμφωνα με τις εθνικές δυνατότητες τους. Τα διαθέσιμα κεφάλαια στη στρατηγική χρηματοδότησης της IT-PGRFA προορίζονται να υποστηρίξουν σχέδια σε αναπτυσσόμενες χώρες.

Η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει την τράπεζα γονιδίων και τα ερευνητικά σχέδια μέσω:

— του άρθρου 28(9) του κανονισμού (ΕΕ) αριθ. 1305/2013 ([5]), υποστηρίζοντας τις εργασίες που εκτελούνται από επιστημονικά ιδρύματα για τη διατήρηση, την αειφόρο χρήση και την ανάπτυξη των γενετικών πόρων στη γεωργία·

— μίας πρόσκλησης του προγράμματος «Ορίζοντας 2020» η οποία είναι αφιερωμένη στους γενετικούς πόρους για την πολυμορφία και την ασφάλεια των τροφίμων, εστιάζοντας στους παραδοσιακούς πόρους για τη γεωργική ποικιλομορφία και την τροφική αλυσίδα το 2014 και στην εκτός τόπου διατήρηση το 2015·

— της ευρωπαϊκής σύμπραξης καινοτομίας (EIP) και της σύστασης μίας ομάδας εστίασης με θέμα «Γενετικοί πόροι: μοντέλα συνεργασίας» η οποία θα αντιμετωπίζει τα σημεία συμφόρησης που περιορίζουν τη συνεργασία των ομάδων ενδιαφερομένων.

([1]) http://envicom.wordpress.com/about-genebanks/the-greek-genebank/
([2]) Ενταγμένο στο Μέτρο 4.4 του ΕΠΑΑ-ΑΥ 2000-2006, υπό τον τίτλο «Δημιουργία Τράπεζας Γενετικού Υλικού» με έδρα τη Θέρμη Θεσσαλονίκης και συγχρηματοδοτούμενο από την ΕΕ.
([3]) http://goo.gl/ehzdfq
([4]) Άρθρο 2 της αρ. πρωτ. 131396/03-10-2003 (ΦΕΚ 1610/τ.Β'/31-10-2003) Απόφασης Υπουργού Γεωργίας.
([5]) ΕΕ L 347 της 20.12.2013, σ. 487-548.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001217/14
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: Greek Gene Bank at risk

The Greek Gene Bank was founded in 1981, with the support of the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), and is the national organisation responsible for crop conservation in Greece and saving the biological diversity of food sources. ([1]) Although a new building designed to ensure seed sustainability was built to house the Bank in 2008, ([2]) it is unable to relocate, as the building has not been signed off by the competent departments of the ministries to which the Bank reports with respect to obligations towards the EU. ([3]) Thus, sensitive genetic material is being preserved under totally unsuitable conditions. Aside from the matter of the building, arrangements to place the Bank under the administration of one agency and recruit specialist staff are still pending. Despite the fact that the National Agricultural Research Foundation has been appointed as the 'operating agency' for this project, ([4]) the department of the Ministry of Rural Development and Food with material competence (Directorate of Physical Planning and Environmental Protection) is delaying approval. As such, an alternative solution has been proposed, whereby the Bank would come back under the Ministry of Rural Development and Food and would operate in conjunction with the Variety Research Institute of Cultivated Plants. According to a letter sent to the Minister, Mr Tsaftaris, by the President of the Natura 2000 Committee on 16 July 2012, 'any further delay may prove to be fatal'. In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Has the Member State fulfilled its obligations in respect of the new building project for the Greek Gene Bank?

2. Are there any outstanding matters with respect to the FAO International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Law 3165/2003, Government Gazette I/177) and the ECPGR and what measures does it intend to take?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

Greece hosts a diversity of plants characteristic for the Mediterranean area, notably wheat, olives and grapes. Thus it is important that the Greek Gene Bank continues its activities in order to safeguard the plant diversity.

As a member of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (IT-PGRFA), Greece agreed to conserve its plant genetic resources, to have a sustainable system of *ex situ* collections and to minimise threats to plant diversity. In addition, Treaty members agree to provide financial resources for national activities for the conservation and use of PGRFA, in accordance with their national capabilities. The funds available in the IT-PGRFA funding strategy are directed to support projects in developing countries.

The Commission supports Gene Bank and research projects through:

— Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 ([5]), Article 28(9) by providing support for the conservation, sustainable use and development of genetic resources in agriculture for operations carried out by scientific institutions;

— One call of 'Horizon 2020' is dedicated to genetic resources for diversity and food security, with a focus in 2014 on traditional resources for agricultural diversity and food chain, and in 2015 on ex-situ conservation;

— The European Innovation Partnership (EIP) has set up a focus group on 'Genetic Resources: cooperation models' which will address bottlenecks limiting cooperation between stakeholders' groups.

([1]) http://envicom.wordpress.com/about-genebanks/the-greek-genebank/
([2]) Integrated into Measure 4.4 of the Rural Development/Rural Reconstruction Operational Programme 2000-2006 [Creation of a Gene Bank based in Thermi (Thessaloniki) and co-financed by the EU].
([3]) http://goo.gl/ehzdfq
([4]) Article 2 of Decision no 131396/03.10.2003 by the Minister for Agriculture (Government Gazette II/1610/31.10.2003).
([5]) OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, pp. 487-548.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001218/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(6 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Ενθαρρύνει η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή Χωροταξικά Πλαίσια για τον Τουρισμό, όπως το πρόσφατο της Ελλάδας;

Υπογράφηκε στις 13 Δεκεμβρίου 2013, από την Επιτροπή Συντονισμού της Κυβερνητικής Πολιτικής στον τομέα του Χωροταξικού Σχεδιασμού και της Αειφόρου Ανάπτυξης και δημοσιεύθηκε στην Εφημερίδα της Κυβέρνησης, το νέο Χωροταξικό Σχέδιο για τον Τουρισμό στην Ελλάδα ([1]). Αυτό προωθεί ένα υπερεντατικό μοντέλο τουριστικής ανάπτυξης, με γήπεδα γκολφ και πίστες χιονοδρομίας, δικαίωμα οικοδόμησης ακόμη και εντός περιοχών του δικτύου Natura 2000, αλλά και σε μικρές βραχονησίδες ([2]) ([3]). Περιβαλλοντικές οργανώσεις της χώρας, όπως το WWF ([4]) και άλλοι, είχαν εκφράσει σοβαρές επιφυλάξεις για την εντατική εκμετάλλευση του φυσικού χώρου, την έλλειψη υπολογισμού φέρουσας ικανότητας, την απουσία ρυθμίσεων για την απομάκρυνση αυθαιρέτων, την απουσία Στρατηγικής Μελέτης Περιβαλλοντικών Επιπτώσεων, απειλές για την παράκτια ζώνη που έρχονται σε σύγκρουση με τη νομολογία του ΣτΕ, και, φυσικά, για τη δόμηση εντός Natura 2000 και βραχονησίδων.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Θεωρεί ότι το Νέο Χωροταξικό Πλαίσιο για τον Τουρισμό της Ελλάδας παραβιάζει προβλέψεις της ελληνικής και ευρωπαϊκής νομοθεσίας; Παραβιάζει το άρθρο 8.2 του Πρωτοκόλλου για την Παράκτια Ζώνη ([5]);

2. Έχουν καθοριστεί μέτρα διαχείρισης σε περιοχές Natura 2000, τα οποία να θέτουν και προδιαγραφές για πιθανή έγκριση μεγάλων (σύνθετων) τουριστικών εγκαταστάσεων; Πόση αλλοίωση είναι ανεκτή από τουριστικές παρεμβάσεις σε νησίδες που είναι ολόκληρες ενταγμένες στο Δίκτυο Natura 2000;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Μαρτίου 2014)

Η Ελλάδα είναι συμβαλλόμενο μέρος στο πρωτόκολλο της ολοκληρωμένης διαχείρισης των παράκτιων ζωνών δυνάμει της επικύρωσής του από την ΕΕ στις 13 Σεπτεμβρίου 2010. Το πρωτόκολλο της ολοκληρωμένης διαχείρισης των παράκτιων ζωνών προβλέπει περιορισμούς για τις δραστηριότητες στις παράκτιες ζώνες με σκοπό τη διασφάλιση της βιώσιμης χρήσης και διαχείρισης των εν λόγω ζωνών. Οι περιορισμοί αυτοί μπορούν να προσαρμοστούν από τα συμβαλλόμενα μέρη, υπό την προϋπόθεση ότι οι προσαρμογές αυτές είναι σύμφωνες με τις απαιτήσεις του πρωτοκόλλου. Σε περίπτωση που πραγματοποιούνται τέτοιες προσαρμογές, αυτές πρέπει να κοινοποιούνται στη σύμβαση της Βαρκελώνης από το συμβαλλόμενο μέρος. Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή δεν γνωρίζει εάν η εν λόγω κοινοποίηση πραγματοποιήθηκε και, ως εκ τούτου, δεν μπορεί να σχολιάσει κατά πόσον το πλαίσιο σχεδιασμού παραβιάζει το άρθρο 8.2 του πρωτοκόλλου της ολοκληρωμένης διαχείρισης των παράκτιων ζωνών.

Η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει τον στρατηγικό σχεδιασμό ως ένα αποτελεσματικό μέσο για την αντιμετώπιση των επιπτώσεων στις περιοχές του δικτύου Natura 2000 σε πρώιμο στάδιο. Σχέδια, όπως το πλαίσιο σχεδιασμού για τον τουρισμό, πρέπει να υπόκεινται σε κατάλληλη αξιολόγηση σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 6 παράγραφος 3 της οδηγίας 92/43/ΕΟΚ ([6]). Η τουριστική ανάπτυξη στις νησίδες που είναι πλήρως ενταγμένες στο δίκτυο Natura 2000 θα μπορούσε, συνεπώς, να εγκριθεί βάσει του άρθρου 6 παράγραφος 3 της ανωτέρω οδηγίας, με την προϋπόθεση ότι η ανάπτυξη αυτή τηρεί τις υποχρεώσεις που απορρέουν από την οδηγία.

([1]) http://www.ypeka.gr/Default.aspx?tabid=389&sni[524]=2841&language=el-GR
([2]) http://www.naftemporiki.gr/story/742564
([3]) http://www.tovima.gr/society/article/?aid=548699
([4]) http://politics.wwf.gr/images/stories/political/positions/eidikoplaisiotourismou.pdf
([5]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:034:0019:0028:EL:PDF
([6]) ΕΕ L 206 της 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001218/14
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: Does European Commission support initiatives such as the recent Planning Framework for Tourism in Greece?

The new Planning Framework for Tourism in Greece ([1]) was signed on 13 December 2013 by the Government Policy Coordination Committee for Planning and Sustainable Development and has been published in the Government Gazette. It promotes a super-intensive tourism development model, with golf courses and ski trails, and even provides for planning permission to be granted within Natura 2000 areas and on small rocky islets. ([2]),([3]) Environmental organisations in Greece, including the WWF ([4]), expressed serious reservations regarding the intensive use of natural space, the lack of any load-bearing provisions, the lack of rules for the demolition of buildings erected without planning permission, the lack of a strategic environmental impact study, the threats to coastal zones in breach of Council of State case-law and, of course, construction within Natura 2000 areas and on rocky islets.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. if it considers that the new Planning Framework for Tourism in Greece infringes provisions of Greek and Union legislation? Does it infringe Article 8.2 of the Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management? ([5])

2. if management measures have been adopted for Natura 2000 areas which include criteria for approving large (complex) tourism facilities? To what extent can alterations be tolerated for the purpose of tourist development on islets which are fully integrated into the Natura 2000 network?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2014)

Greece is a Contracting Party to the ICZM Protocol by virtue of the EU's ratification of it on 13 September 2010. The ICZM Protocol provides for restrictions on activities in coastal zones to ensure those zones' sustainable use and management. These restrictions can be adapted by Contracting Parties as long as such adaptations are consistent with the requirements of the Protocol. If such adaptations are made, they must be notified to the Barcelona Convention by the Contracting Party. However, the Commission is not aware whether such notification has taken place and, therefore, cannot comment on whether the Planning Framework infringes Article 8.2 of the ICZM Protocol.

The Commission supports strategic planning as an effective means to address effects on Natura 2000 sites at an early stage. Plans such as the Planning Framework for Tourism need to be subject to an appropriate assessment under Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43/EEC ([6]). Tourism development on islets which are fully integrated into the Natura 2000 network could therefore be approved on the basis of Article 6(3) of the above Directive provided such developments respect the obligations of the directive.

([1]) http://www.ypeka.gr/Default.aspx?tabid=389&sni[524]=2841&language=el-GR
([2]) http://www.naftemporiki.gr/story/742564
([3]) http://www.tovima.gr/society/article/?aid=548699
([4]) http://politics.wwf.gr/images/stories/political/positions/eidikoplaisiotourismou.pdf
([5]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:034:0019:0028:EL:PDF
([6]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001222/14
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: Legal firearms in the EU

The Commission is concerned that legally registered firearms are being diverted into criminal markets or to unauthorised people.

The Commission's press release of 21 October 2013 ([1]) states that 'there is a clear need for EU action'. Please can the Commission confirm what additional bureaucracy constituents are likely to face when registering for a firearm? Can the Commission explain how adding a serial number to a gun will prevent someone who is willing to use it unlawfully from using it in that way?

Can the Commission clearly express what steps it is planning to take regarding legally held firearms?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

In its communication on firearms and the internal security of the EU ([2]), the Commission proposed an integrated strategy for addressing illicit trafficking in firearms. This strategy does not propose any additional bureaucratic step for registering firearms.

Among other goals, the strategy aims to safeguard the legitimate market for civilian firearms. The Commission is evaluating, in close collaboration with the European Associations of gun manufactures and owners, the benefits for the EU as a whole of some best practices which are already current practice in many Member States, such as medical checks and criminal records checks.

The Commission is also investigating, in consultation with industry and the Permanent International Commission for firearms testing, the feasibility for EU marking standards to minimise the risk of markings being adulterated and to facilitate police cooperation and ballistic identification capabilities.

Several studies are on-going to collect relevant information before taking any final decision.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-13-842_en.htm
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0716:FIN:en:PDF

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-001223/14
an die Kommission
Elisabeth Schroedter (Verts/ALE)
(6. Februar 2014)

Betrifft: Allgemeine Gruppenfreistellungsverordnung und Feststellung der Vereinbarkeit bestimmter Gruppen von Beihilfen mit dem Binnenmarkt (KOM(2013)9256)

Die Reform der Allgemeinen Gruppenfreistellungsverordnung ist Bestandteil der in der Mitteilung über die Modernisierung des EU-Beihilferechts angekündigten umfassenden Überarbeitung der Beihilfevorschriften. In der AGVO werden die Voraussetzungen festgelegt, unter denen bestimmte Gruppen von Beihilfen als mit dem Binnenmarkt vereinbar angesehen werden können. Im Bereich der Ausbildungsbeihilfen hat die Kommission erstmalig Einschränkungen vorgeschlagen. So wird die Beihilfeintensität auf 50 % der beihilfefähigen Kosten abgesenkt und die Anerkennung von Personalkosten für Ausbildungsteilnehmer und indirekte allgemeine Kosten als beihilfefähige Kosten auf KMU-Beihilfen beschränkt. Diese Einschränkung steht im Gegensatz dazu, dass die Ausbildung ein zentrales Ziel des ESF zur Erfüllung der EU-2020-Ziele ist.

— Wie sollen gemäß der Kommission Ausbildungsorganisationen, die in ihrer Grundtätigkeit sozialen Zielen verpflichtet sind und daher nicht kostendeckend arbeiten, die Finanzierungslücke zwischen der AGVO und den förderfähigen Kosten im Rahmen der Struktur- und Investitionsfonds, die durch die neue Herabsetzung der Beihilfeintensität für die beihilfefähigen Kosten entsteht, schließen?

— Wie gedenkt die Kommission die Widersprüche zwischen den Beihilferegeln und den Fondsverordnungen 2014-2020 aufzulösen und sicherzustellen, dass es zu keinen Zielkonflikten in der Umsetzung der Programme insbesondere unter der Investitionspriorität 9 und 10 im ESF kommt?

— Mit der aktuellen Überarbeitung der AGVO werden die obengenannten Möglichkeiten für eine Unterstützung der Sozialwirtschaft durch die Kommission deutlich eingeschränkt. Wie will die Kommission sicherstellen, dass Einrichtungen der Sozialwirtschaft, die gemäß ihrer Satzung meist keine Möglichkeit haben, Kapitalrücklagen zu bilden, und keine Fremdmittel einwerben dürfen, im Rahmen des integrierten Ansatzes zur Armutsbekämpfung Ausbildungstätigkeiten unter den Förderprioritäten 9 und 10 im ESF finanzieren können?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(7. März 2014)

Obwohl sich die Bestimmungen für Ausbildungsbeihilfen in der Allgemeinen Gruppenfreistellungsverordnung (AGVO) grundsätzlich in der Praxis bewährt haben, war die Kommission der Auffassung, dass für die nationalen Behörden weitere Vereinfachungen sinnvoll sein könnten. Daher hat sie im Entwurf der AGVO vorgeschlagen, die häufig schwierige Unterscheidung zwischen spezifischen und allgemeinen Ausbildungsmaßnahmen abzuschaffen und nur noch eine Beihilfehöchstintensität vorzusehen. In der Praxis bedeutet dies für spezifische Ausbildungsmaßnahmen eine Verdopplung der Beihilfeintensität (von 25 % in der aktuellen AGVO auf 50 %), während die bisherige Beihilfeintensität von 60 % für allgemeine Ausbildungsmaßnahmen auf 10 % gesenkt werden soll. Laut dem AGVO-Entwurf kann die Beihilfeintensität allerdings bei Beihilfen für KMU um 10 % bzw. 20 % und bei Ausbildungsmaßnahmen für Arbeitnehmer mit Behinderungen oder benachteiligte Arbeitnehmer um 10 % erhöht werden.

Da es sich hierbei um eher großzügige Regelungen für die maximalen Beihilfeintensitäten handelt, erachtete es die Kommission als angemessen, die beihilfefähigen Kosten für die Ausbildung zu begrenzen.

Was die Sozialwirtschaft betrifft, so sind die Fördermöglichkeiten im Rahmen der verschiedenen Beihilfegruppen mit dem Entwurf der AGVO aufgrund der vertikalen und horizontalen Erweiterung sogar gestiegen. Für mehrere Beihilfearten wurde die Anmeldeschwelle angehoben; ferner ist die Anzahl der freigestellten Beihilfegruppen erheblich gestiegen.

Es sei an dieser Stelle daran erinnert, dass der Entwurf der AGVO einer öffentlichen Konsultation unterlag, in deren Rahmen die Kommission mehrere kritische Stellungnahmen zu den Bestimmungen der Ausbildungsbeihilfe erhielt. In der Tat betreffen einige dieser Stellungnahmen die Diskrepanzen zwischen den Bestimmungen im Entwurf der AGVO und den ESF-Förderrichtlinien. Die Kommission analysiert derzeit die Rückmeldungen und wird sie mit den Mitgliedstaaten im Beratenden Ausschuss besprechen. Der endgültige Text soll vor dem Sommer 2014 verabschiedet werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001223/14
to the Commission
Elisabeth Schroedter (Verts/ALE)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: General Block Exemption Regulation and declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market (C(2013) 9256)

The reform of the General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) is included in the comprehensive revision of aid rules announced in the communication on the modernisation of EU State aid legislation. The GBER lays down the conditions under which certain categories of aid can be regarded as compatible with the internal market. The Commission has for the first time proposed restrictions in the area of training aid. Aid intensity has been cut to 50% of the eligible costs, and recognition of trainees personnel costs and general indirect costs as eligible costs has been restricted to aid granted to SMEs. This restriction stands in sharp contrast to training's status as a key objective of the ESF aimed at achieving the EU 2020 targets.

In the Commission's view, how should training organisations whose activity centres on social objectives, and which are consequently unable to cover their costs, fill the funding gap between the GBER and eligible costs under the structural and investment funds that will result from the new reduction in aid intensity?

How will the Commission resolve the contradictions between the aid rules and the fund regulations 2014-2020 and ensure that they do not lead to conflicting goals in the programmes implementation, particularly in ESF investment priorities 9 and 10?

The Commission has significantly restricted the possibilities for supporting the social economy in its latest revision of the GBER. How will the Commission ensure that social economy institutions, whose statutes generally prevent them from building up capital reserves or seeking external financing, are able to finance training activities under ESF priorities 9 and 10 as part of the integrated approach to combating poverty?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(7 March 2014)

Although the GBER's provisions on training aid have in principle worked well in practice, the Commission considered that further simplifications could be useful for national authorities. Therefore, it proposed in the draft GBER to abolish the distinction between specific and general training, which was often difficult to apply, and replace it by a single basic maximum aid intensity which was set at 50%. In practice this means that for specific training this intensity would double (from 25% in the current GBER) while for general training it would decrease by 10% (from 60%). According to the draft GBER the basic aid intensity can still be increased by an SME bonus (10 or 20%) and by a bonus granted if the training is given to workers with disabilities or disadvantaged workers (10%).

To balance what are in fact more generous rules on the maximum aid intensities the Commission considered that a limitation on the eligible costs of training would be appropriate.

As regards the social economy sector, the possibilities of support through different aid categories have actually increased under the draft GBER due to the vertical and horizontal extension of its scope: for several types of aid the notification thresholds have been raised and the number of block-exempted categories of aid has increased greatly.

It should be recalled that the draft GBER was subject to public consultation, in the context of which the Commission received several comments on the training aid provisions. Some of these comments concern indeed the discrepancies between the draft GBER and ESF funding rules. The Commission is currently analysing this feedback and will discuss it with Member States in the Advisory Committee. The final text will be prepared for adoption before summer 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001224/14
to the Commission
Andrew Henry William Brons (NI)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: Firearms licensing

When launching her firearms proposals last October (Firearms and the internal security of the EU: protecting citizens and disrupting illegal trafficking), Commissioner Maelstrom referred to 10 000 people having been killed by firearms in the EU between 2000 and 2010, but made no attempt to define what proportion of those people were killed with legally held firearms and what proportion with illegal weapons.

1. Why was there no attempt to determine the percentages of people killed with legal and illegal firearms?

2. Does the Commission agree that in the absence of such information, it will be impossible to reach an impartial view of the situation surrounding the use of firearms and the extent to which crime involving firearms involves illegally held firearms as opposed to legally held firearms?

3. Does the Commission really intend to penalise those who hold firearms legally by introducing yet a further layer of heavy regulation, which will do nothing whatsoever to reduce firearms crime, because it involves the use of illegally held weapons?

4. Has the Commission discovered any correlations between convictions for firearms crime and demographic factors such as age, gender, social class, ethnicity and citizenship?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2014)

The Commission took into account all existing statistics in preparing its communication ([1]) of 21 October 2013. The figures presented therein were based on available national and international statistics which do not include the level of detail necessary to provide a breakdown into the proportion of people killed with legal or illegal weapons.

According to the Schengen Information System, almost half a million firearms lost or stolen in the EU remain unaccounted for. This leads to the conclusion that many firearms in illegal circulation are the result of theft or diversion from lawful circulation.

The Commission considers it a priority to gather more accurate and comprehensive data on firearms-related crime in the EU and globally. A data collection exercise has been included in the Multi Annual Strategic Plan 2014-2017 which was adopted by the Council in December 2013. An Operational Action Plan has been created within the EU Policy Cycle for organised and serious international crime and includes 'firearms trafficking' within its priorities.

The Commission believes it will be important to develop a firearms data collection plan in order to exploit synergies and improve national crime assessments. However, the Commission has no plans to undertake a study on correlations between convictions for firearms crime and demographic factors.

([1]) Firearms and the internal security of the EU: protecting citizens and disrupting illegal trafficking COM(2013) 716.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-001225/14
à la Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(6 février 2014)

Objet: Rôle de la Troïka

Une délégation parlementaire s'est déplacée au Portugal, en Irlande, en Grèce et à Chypre, quatre pays mis «sous tutelle et sous contrôle» de la Troïka afin d'évaluer le rôle de celle-ci dans la gestion de la crise de la dette en Europe.

Un premier bilan relève le manque de transparence du système tripartite ainsi que son inefficacité manifeste compte tenu des résultats en termes de croissance et de protection des droits fondamentaux des populations soumises à des politiques d'austérité dévastatrices.

L'enquête parlementaire vise les méthodes utilisées par la Troïka et il s'avèrerait que le manque de base juridique ne justifierait pas l'existence de celle-ci.

De nombreuses voix s'élèvent pour demander la dissolution de la Troïka et le remplacement de celle-ci par un mécanisme contrôlé démocratiquement.

1. La Commission est-elle au courant de ce premier bilan de l'enquête parlementaire?

2. La Commission a-t-elle envisagé de remplacer le système tripartite de la Troïka par un mécanisme démocratique?

3. Quels sont les résultats dont dispose la Commission concernant les méthodes utilisées par la Troïka?

4. Y a-t-il une étude d'impact social concernant l'application des mesures imposées aux pays par la Troïka?

5. Quelles sont les prochaines étapes prévues par la Troïka?

Réponse donnée par M. Rehn au nom de la Commission
(13 mars 2014)

La Commission a parfaitement connaissance des travaux parlementaires sur les rapports d'initiative et y contribue en répondant à des questions par écrit et lors d'auditions publiques.

La Troïka a été créée à la demande des États membres comme mécanisme ad-hoc pour faire face à une situation d'urgence exceptionnelle. Conformément au protocole d'accord (MoU), les éléments des prêts et les conditions dont ils sont assortis ont été négociés avec les gouvernements des États membres emprunteurs et approuvés par les parlements nationaux respectifs. En outre, toutes les décisions concernant les prêts et les conditions sous-jacentes ont été convenues par les ministres des finances de la zone euro, responsables devant leurs parlements nationaux respectifs. La Commission a agi au sein de la Troïka uniquement au nom des États membres prêteurs et ne possède pas de pouvoir de décision.

La législation du «two pack», qui est entrée en vigueur en mai 2013, avalise formellement l'implication de la Troïka dans les pays faisant l'objet d'un programme, tout en garantissant un meilleur niveau de responsabilité à l'égard du Parlement européen et des parlements nationaux. Elle oblige la Commission à informer régulièrement le Parlement européen au sujet des pays soumis à un programme. Par ailleurs, le PE peut organiser des débats dans le contexte d'un dialogue économique avec d'autres institutions de l'UE et d'autres États membres.

L'élaboration des actions dans les pays soumis à un programme tient systématiquement compte de leur impact social. Il est essentiel de répartir de la manière la plus équitable possible la charge inévitable de l'ajustement.

L'objectif final est de mener à bien les programmes existants, comme dans le cas de l'Irlande, en aidant les pays sous programme à restaurer la confiance des marchés financiers, à promouvoir la croissance économique et à renforcer la stabilité macrofinancière.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001225/14
to the Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: Role of the Troïka

A parliamentary delegation has travelled to Portugal, Ireland, Greece and Cyprus, four countries placed 'under the control and supervision' of the Troïka, in order to assess the latter's role in managing the debt crisis in Europe.

The initial findings highlight the inherently non-transparent nature of the tripartite system and its obvious ineffectiveness in generating growth and protecting the fundamental rights of those members of society who have borne the brunt of devastating austerity policies.

The parliamentary investigation focuses on the methods employed by the Troïka and the fact that the lack of a proper legal basis casts considerable doubt on the legitimacy of its work.

Many people are now calling for the Troïka to be disbanded and replaced by a mechanism which is subject to proper democratic scrutiny.

1. Is the Commission aware of the initial findings of the parliamentary investigation?

2. Does the Commission plan to replace the tripartite Troïka system with a democratic mechanism?

3. In the Commission's view, how effective have the Troïka's methods been?

4. Has the social impact of the measures imposed by the Troïka on the countries concerned been assessed?

5. What steps does the Troïka plan to take next?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2014)

The Commission is well aware of the parliamentary work on the own-initiative reports and has contributed by answering questions in writing and in public hearings.

The Troika was set up at the request of the Member States as an ad-hoc mechanism to deal with an exceptional emergency situation. The terms of loans and conditionality enshrined in the memorandum of understanding (MoU) have been negotiated with the sovereign government of the borrowing Member State and approved by the respective national parliament. Furthermore, all lending decisions and underlying conditions have been agreed on by finance ministers of the euro area who are accountable to their national parliaments. The Commission acted in the Troika only on behalf of the lending Member States and does not have a decision-making power.

The 2-pack legislation which came into force in May 2013 formally endorses the involvement of the Troika in programme countries while ensuring a better level of accountability vis-à-vis the European and national parliaments. It foresees a regular reporting obligation for the Commission vis-à-vis the European Parliament on programme countries. Moreover, the EP can organise debates in the context of an economic dialogue with other EU institutions and the Member States.

The social impact of policies has always been a concern in policy designing in programme countries. It is essential that the inevitable adjustment burden is shared in the most equitable way possible.

The final objective is to bring existing programmes to a successful end, as seen in the case of Ireland, by assisting programme countries to restore financial market confidence, to promote economic growth and underpin macro-financial stability.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-001226/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(6 février 2014)

Objet: Google is back

La Commission européenne serait sur le point de trouver un accord avec Google dans le cadre de l'enquête pour abus de position dominante ouverte contre la compagnie américaine depuis 2010.

Les plaignants vont recevoir une lettre dans laquelle la Commission leur communique le refus de leur plainte en leur donnant sa vision des choses.

1. Ne serait-ce pas plus constructif et transparent d'organiser une consultation que de mettre les plaignants devant le fait accompli après avoir négocié? Ce n'est pas du tout une consultation, c'est le début du procès du refus des plaintes.

2. Les plaignants vont-ils recevoir tous les détails de la dernière proposition de Google? Dans le cas contraire, la Commission partage-t-elle notre avis selon lequel cela limite toute possibilité de formuler des observations sur la substance des mesures proposées, ce qui est dommageable pour un tel exercice?

3. Pourquoi les autres parties intéressées comme les associations européennes de consommateurs (BEUC) ou diverses commissions seront-elles laissées de côté et ne recevront-elles absolument rien comme information?

4. Dans ce cadre, que fait-on des 600 réponses à la première consultation du marché?

5. Pour un tel accord, est-il normal que la presse soit au courant de l'évolution du dossier avant d'autres institutions et le collège des commissaires?

6. La Commission estime-t-elle que les principes de transparence et de légitimité ont été suivis dans ce procès?

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission
(5 mars 2014)

La Commission continue de dialoguer avec l'ensemble des parties prenantes, ainsi qu'elle l'a fait tout au long de l'enquête. Tous les intéressés qui ont répondu à la consultation des acteurs du marché menée en avril 2013 et portant sur la première proposition d'engagements de Google ont été de nouveau consultés en octobre 2013 au sujet de la deuxième proposition de Google. La Commission a organisé de nombreuses réunions avec les parties prenantes et ses déclarations publiques régulières sur l'avancement de l'affaire sont allées au-delà des révélations habituelles dans une affaire en cours.

Les services de la Commission ont analysé les 600 réponses reçues à l'enquête de marché. À la suite de cette analyse, le champ de l'enquête a été étendu au problème de concurrence que pose l'utilisation par Google, dans ses propres services de recherche verticale sur l'internet, du contenu original de sites web appartenant à des tiers, sans leur consentement.

En vertu de l'article 7 du règlement (CE) nº 773/2004 de la Commission, lorsque la Commission considère que, sur la base des informations dont elle dispose, il n'existe pas de motifs suffisants pour donner suite à une plainte, elle informe le plaignant de ses raisons. Tous les plaignants seront donc informés des raisons ayant conduit la Commission à considérer, en première analyse, la troisième proposition d'engagements de Google comme une solution adéquate aux problèmes de concurrence relevés. Les plaignants recevront une version non confidentielle de la proposition et auront la possibilité de faire connaître leur point de vue à la Commission. Celle-ci analysera les observations reçues avant de prendre la décision finale de rendre ou non la proposition de Google juridiquement contraignante. Google a également rendu publique sa troisième proposition, toutes les parties peuvent donc la commenter.

C'est au collège des membres de la Commission, tenu informé de l'enquête, qu'il revient de prendre la décision finale.

L'enquête concernant Google est menée dans le plein respect des droits procéduraux de toutes les parties.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001226/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: Google is back

The Commission is apparently close to reaching an agreement with Google in the context of the investigation it opened in 2010 into whether the US company was abusing its dominant position.

The plaintiffs will receive a letter from the Commission informing them that their complaint has been rejected and setting out its views on the matter.

1. Would it not be more constructive and transparent to hold a consultation than to present the plaintiffs with a fait accompli following negotiations? The approach taken by the Commission is not a consultation, but the beginning of the procedure for rejecting complaints.

2. Will the plaintiffs receive full details of Google's latest proposal? If not, does the Commission agree that this would limit any scope for drawing up observations on the substance of the proposed measures, which would undermine such a process?

3. Why will other stakeholders such as the European Consumers' Organisation (BEUC) and various committees be left out and not given any information whatsoever?

4. Against this backdrop, what will be done with the 600 responses to the first market consultation?

5. Is it normal in the case of such agreements for the press to be informed about progress on the issue in question before other institutions and the College of Commissioners?

6. Does it think that the principles of transparency and legitimacy have been upheld in this case?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2014)

The Commission continues to engage with all interested parties, as it has done throughout its investigation of the case. All parties that replied to the formal market test in April 2013 on Google's first commitments proposal were consulted again in October 2013 on Google's second proposal. The Commission has held many meetings with interested parties and has made regular public statements on case progress which go beyond what is normally communicated during an ongoing case.

The Commission services analysed the 600 responses received in reply to the market investigation. Following that analysis, the competition concern regarding Google's use without consent of original content from third party websites in its own vertical Web search services was added to the scope of the investigation.

Pursuant to Article 7 of Commission Regulation 773/2004, if the Commission considers, on the basis of the information it has, that there are insufficient grounds for acting on a complaint it must inform the complainant of its reasons. So all complainants will be informed why the Commission is of the preliminary view that Google's third commitments proposal addresses its competition concerns adequately. They will receive a non-confidential version of the proposal and have the opportunity to inform the Commission of their views. The Commission will analyse the comments before taking any final decision on whether to make Google's proposal legally binding. Google has also made its third proposal public — all parties can therefore comment on it.

A final decision in this case will be taken by the College of Commissioners which has been kept informed of the investigation.

The Google investigation is being conducted in full respect of the procedural rights of all parties.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-001227/14
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(6 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: L'accordo Etihad-Alitalia può danneggiare l'Expo 2015

L'accordo Etihad-Alitalia prevede l'eventualità di un sostanziale abbandono dell'aeroporto di Malpensa come hub internazionale da parte della compagnia Alitalia;

l'aeroporto di Malpensa è punto essenziale ed irrinunciabile per i collegamenti aerei internazionali del Nord Italia e, se attuato nel senso sopra indicato, l'accordo rischia di danneggiare gravissimamente l'Expo 2015 di Milano;

la Commissione, che fortemente sostiene l'Expo 2015 di Milano, come intende intervenire per scongiurare l'irrimediabile danno che questa decisione sull'hub internazionale di Malpensa arrecherà inevitabilmente all'Expo 2015 di Milano?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(26 febbraio 2014)

La Commissione comprende le preoccupazioni dell'onorevole deputato sulla salvaguardia dell'aeroporto di Milano Malpensa come nodo vitale per i collegamenti internazionali da e verso il Nord Italia. È altamente probabile che eventi come l'EXPO 2015 di Milano comporteranno un aumento del traffico passeggeri in tutti gli aeroporti di milanesi e che questi ultimi rappresenteranno destinazioni attraenti dal punto di vista commerciale per le compagnie aeree.

Attualmente la Commissione non dispone di informazioni relative ad accordi tra Etihad Airways e Alitalia, anche se è ovviamente al corrente di quanto riportato dalla stampa in merito ai negoziati in corso tra gli azionisti di Etihad Airways e di Alitalia.

Tuttavia, come regola generale, non esiste alcuna disposizione nella legislazione europea in materia di trasporto aereo che imponga alle compagnie aeree di operare da/verso determinati aeroporti o impedisca loro di trasferire la loro attività presso altri aeroporti. Tale decisione rientra nella libertà commerciale di ogni vettore aereo, una libertà garantita dalla creazione di un mercato interno del trasporto aereo.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001227/14
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: Possible damage by the Etihad-Alitalia agreement to Expo 2015

The Etihad-Alitalia agreement provides for the possibility that the airline Alitalia will largely abandon Malpensa airport as an international hub.

Malpensa airport is a vital and indispensable link in international air travel to and from northern Italy and, if the agreement is implemented as indicated above, it is liable to cause serious damage to Expo 2015 in Milan.

Bearing in mind that the Commission is strongly supporting Expo 2015 in Milan, what action will it take to prevent the irremediable damage which this decision concerning the Malpensa international hub will inevitably cause to the exhibition?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2014)

The Commsission understands the Honourable Member's preoccupation to maintain Milan Malpensa as a vital link in international travel to and from northern Italy. Events like the Expo 2015 in Milan can be expected to increase passenger traffic to all Milan airports and the airports can be expected to represent commercially attractive destinations for airlines.

At present, the Commission does not have any information on any agreement between Etihad Airways and Alitalia, although it is of course aware of press reports on ongoing negotiations between Etihad Airways and Alitalia's shareholders.

Nonetheless, as a general rule, nothing in European aviation law would impose airlines to operate from/to certain airports or prevent them from moving their activity to other airports. This is a decision in the realm of commercial freedom of any air carrier, a freedom granted to it by the creation of an aviation internal market.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-001232/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(6 ta' Frar 2014)

Suġġett: Progress fil-garanzija tal-kwalità fl-edukazzjoni għolja

Reċentement il-Kummissjoni ppubblikat rapport dwar il-progress li sar s'issa fil-garanzija tal-kwalità fl-edukazzjoni għolja ([1]). Ir-rapport jenfasizza kif sistemi ta' garanzija tal-kwalità siewja jistgħu jġibu bidla reali fl-edukazzjoni għolja.

Il-Kummissjoni qiegħda tipprevedi li titbiegħed mill-orjentazzjoni lejn il-proċess ħalli tistabbilixxi kultura ta' kwalità ġenwina fl-istituzzjonijiet tal-edukazzjoni għolja, xi ħaġa li tista' tiġi żviluppata biss meta l-istudenti jkunu involuti f'kull livell tal-proċess?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Vassiliou f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(21 ta' Marzu 2014)

Ir-Rapport tal-Kummissjoni Ewropea dwar il-Progress fl-Assigurazzjoni tal-Kwalità fl-Edukazzjoni Għola jenfasizza l-importanza li titfassal assigurazzjoni ta' kwalità fl-istituzzjonijiet ta' edukazzjoni għola, b'tali mod li r-riżultati tagħha jinfurmaw li-teħid tad-deċiżjonijiet strateġiku u jikkontribwixxu għat-titjib kontinwu tal-istituzzjoni.

Filwaqt li r-rapport jinnota żviluppi promettenti f'kultura ta' kwalità b'mod ġenerali, jisħaq li l-assigurazzjoni tal-kwalità sikwit għadha titqies bħala ffukata fuq il-proċess aktar milli fuq il-kontenut. Jisħaq dwar il-ħtieġa għal bidla minn approċċ ta' rutina għal appoġġ reali lill-istituzzjonijiet biex itejbu l-prestazzjoni tagħhom, għajnuna biex jindirizzaw sfidi bħalma huma l-espansjoni tal-popolazzjoni tal-istudenti, it-tqarrib tat-tagħlim lejn il-ħtiġijiet soċjali u tas-suq tax-xogħol u l-użu ta' teknoloġiji ġodda bbażati fuq l-ICT.

L-istudenti għandhom ikunu sħab sħaħ f'din il-bidla ta' kwalità. Madankollu, għalkemm l-involviment tal-istudenti fil-proċessi ta' assigurazzjoni tal-kwalità qed jitjieb, dan huwa ta' sikwit limitat għal preżenza u osservazzjoni formali. L-involviment relevanti ta' studenti u partijiet interessati oħra bħala sħab attivi fl-assigurazzjoni tal-kwalità huwa prerekwiżit biex titmexxa bidla reali fl-edukazzjoni ogħla.

Il-Kummissjoni sejħet ukoll biex jittieħed dan l-approċċ fir-reviżjoni attwali tal-Istandards u Linji Gwida Ewropej għall-Assigurazzjoni tal-Kwalità fil-proċess ta' Bolonja.

L-istituzzjonijiet ta' edukazzjoni ogħla u l-Aġenziji tal-Assigurazzjoni tal-Kwalità jistgħu jużaw l-opportunitajiet ta' finanzjament tal-Erasmus+ għall-iżvilupp ta' sħubijiet biex jitgħallmu minn xulxin kif jiżviluppaw kulturi ta' kwalità.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/higher-education/doc/quality_mt.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001232/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: Progress in quality assurance in higher education

The Commission has recently published a report on the progress made so far in quality assurance in higher education ([1]). The report highlights how meaningful quality assurance systems can drive real change in higher education.

Is the Commission envisaging moving away from process-orientation to establishing a genuine quality culture at higher education institutions, something that can only be developed when students are involved at every level of the process?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(21 March 2014)

The European Commission's Report on Progress in Quality Assurance in Higher Education emphasises the importance of designing quality assurance in higher education institutions in such a way that its results are channelled back into strategic decision-making and contribute to continuous improvement of the institution.

While the report notes the promising developments in quality culture in general, it underlines that quality assurance is still often perceived as focusing on process rather than content. It stresses the need for a shift away from a box-ticking approach to really supporting institutions in improving performance, helping them deal with challenges such as expanding the student population, aligning teaching and learning more closely to societal and labour market needs and harnessing new ICT-based technologies.

Students have to be full partners in such a quality shift. However, although the involvement of students in quality assurance processes is improving, it is often limited to formal presence and observation. Meaningful involvement of students and other stakeholders as active partners in quality assurance is a prerequisite for driving real change in higher education.

The Commission has also called for this approach to be taken on board in the current revision of the European Standards and Guidelines of Quality Assurance within the Bologna process.

Higher education institutions and Quality Assurance Agencies can use the funding opportunities within Erasmus+ to develop partnerships to learn from each other in developing quality cultures.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/higher-education/doc/quality_en.pdf

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-001235/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(6 ta' Frar 2014)

Suġġett: L-edukazzjoni għolja Ewropea

Fl-2013 il-Kummissjoni ppubblikat komunikazzjoni dwar l-edukazzjoni għolja Ewropea fid-dinja ([1]) li telenka numru ta' rakkomandazzjonijiet u prijoritajiet ewlenin li għandhom ikunu implimentati mill-istituzzjonijiet tal-edukazzjoni, l-Istati Membri u l-Kummissjoni.

Il-Kummissjoni segwiet ir-rakkomandazzjonijiet u l-prijoritajiet ewlenin stabbiliti f'dan id-dokument ta' komunikazzjoni biex tara jekk s'issa ttieħditx xi azzjoni dwar din il-kwistjoni? Minbarra dan, x'għamlet il-Kummissjoni fir-rigward tar-rakkomandazzjonijiet li speċifikament jirreferu għall-pjan ta' azzjoni tal-Kummissjoni?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Vassiliou f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(20 ta' Marzu 2014)

L-azzjonijiet ta' segwitu ewlenin għall-Komunikazzjoni tal-2013 dwar l-edukazzjoni ogħla Ewropea fid-dinja qegħdin jiġu implimentati permezz tal-Erasmus+ u tal-programmi tal-Orizzont 2020, li ġew imnedija fl-1 ta' Jannar 2014. L-ewwel sejħiet għall-proposti ġew ippubblikati f'Diċembru 2013 u permezz tagħhom istituzzjonijiet ta' Edukazzjoni Ogħla jistgħu japplikaw għal finanzjament tal-UE biex iżidu l-attivitajiet ta' internazzjonalizzazzjoni tagħhom fl-edukazzjoni u r-riċerka. Sejħiet oħra għall-kooperazzjoni ma' pajjiżi li mhumiex fl-UE (mobilità bilaterali għall-persunal u l-studenti, proġetti għall-iżvilupp tal-kapaċità) se jinfetħu fil-ħarifa tal-2014.

Fir-rigward ta' attivitajiet ta' politika oħra proposti fil-Komunikazzjoni, fil-ħarifa li għaddiet il-Kummissjoni adottat il-Komunikazzjoni "Niftħu l-Edukazzjoni" (COM/2013/0654 final) dwar l-użu tal-ICT fl-edukazzjoni u riżorsi edukattivi miftuħa; u ppreżentat Karta Erasmus imsaħħa f'Diċembru 2013 ([2]).

Fl-2014 il-Kummissjoni qed tippjana li ssaħħaħ il-kooperazzjoni ma' assoċjazzjonijiet tal-alumni u aġenziji ta' promozzjoni tal-Istati Membri biex tippromwovi l-Ewropa bħala destinazzjoni ta' studju u riċerka ta' kwalità għolja; u biex tikseb djalogi ta' politika bilaterali u multilaterali fl-edukazzjoni ogħla ma' sħab internazzjonali ewlenin. Minn issa 'l quddiem dawn l-attivitajiet se jsiru fuq bażi annwali.

Aktar ħidma ta' segwitu se tiġi implimentata matul is-snin li ġejjin, bħat-tishih tat-tfassil ta' politika skont l-evidenza fil-qasam tal-edukazzjoni internazzjonali, pereżempju permezz ta' promozzjoni tal-implimentazzjoni tal-U-Multirank, l-għodda ġdida multidimensjonali u internazzjonali ta' klassifikazzjoni għal istituzzjonijiet ta' edukazzjoni ogħla.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0499:FIN:MT:PDF
([2]) https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/funding/erasmus-charter-for-higher-education-2014-2020_en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001235/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: European higher education

In 2013 the Commission published a communication on European higher education in the world ([1]) which lists a number of key priorities and recommendations to be implemented by education institutions, the Member States and the Commission.

Has the Commission followed up on the key priorities and recommendations set out in this communication document to see whether any action has been taken so far on this matter? Moreover, what has the Commission done with regard to recommendations that specifically refer to the Commission's action plan?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2014)

The main follow-up actions to the 2013 Communication on European higher education in the world are being implemented through the Erasmus+ and the Horizon 2020 programmes, which were launched on 1 January 2014. The first calls for proposals were published in December 2013, allowing Higher Education institutions to apply for EU funding to increase their internationalisation activities in education and research. Further calls for cooperation with non-EU countries (bilateral mobility for staff and students, capacity building projects) will be opened in autumn 2014.

Regarding other policy activities proposed in the communication, last autumn the Commission adopted the communication Opening up Education (COM/2013/0654 final) on the use of ICT in education and open educational resources; and presented a reinforced Erasmus Charter in December 2013 ([2]).

In 2014 the Commission plans to strengthen cooperation with alumni associations and MS promotion agencies to promote Europe as top quality study and research destination; and to pursue bilateral and multilateral policy dialogues in higher education with key international partners. These activities will henceforth take place on an annual basis.

Further follow-up work will be implemented during the years to come, such as strengthening evidence-based policymaking in the field of international education, for example by promoting the implementation of U-Multirank, the new multi-dimensional and international ranking tool for higher education institutions.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0499:FIN:EN:PDF
([2]) https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/funding/erasmus-charter-for-higher-education-2014-2020_en

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-001236/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(6 ta' Frar 2014)

Suġġett: Assistenza lill-persuni b'vista batuta waqt il-votazzjoni

L-Artikolu 29 tal-Konvenzjoni tan-NU dwar id-Drittijiet ta' Persuni b'Diżabilità jiddikjara li "l-Istati Partijiet għandhom jiggarantixxu lill-persuni b'diżabilità drittijiet politiċi u l-opportunità li jgawduhom fuq bażi ugwali mal-oħrajn, u għandhom jimpenjaw ruħhom biex:

a) Jiżguraw li l-persuni b'diżabilità jistgħu jipparteċipaw b'mod effettiv u sħiħ fil-ħajja politika u pubblika fuq bażi ugwali mal-oħrajn, direttament jew permezz ta' rappreżentanti magħżula b'mod ħieles, inklużi d-dritt u l-opportunità għall-persuni b'diżabilità biex jivvutaw u jiġu eletti, inter alia, billi:

i) jiżguraw li l-proċeduri, il-faċilitajiet u l-materjal ta' votazzjoni jkunu adegwati, aċċessibbli u faċli biex wieħed jifhimhom u jużahom;

ii) jipproteġu d-dritt tal-persuni b'diżabilità biex jivvutaw b'vot sigriet f'elezzjonijiet u referenda pubbliċi mingħajr intimidazzjoni, u biex jikkontestaw l-elezzjonijiet, biex effettivament jokkupaw karigi u jwettqu l-funzjonijiet pubbliċi kollha fil-livelli kollha tal-gvern, filwaqt li jiffaċilitaw l-użu ta' teknoloġiji ġodda u ta' assistenza fejn adegwat;

iii) jiggarantixxu l-espressjoni ħielsa tar-rieda tal-persuni b'diżabilità bħala eletturi u għal dan il-għan, fejn meħtieġ, fuq talba tagħhom, jippermettu l-assistenza fil-votazzjoni minn persuna tal-għażla tagħhom".

Il-Kummissjoni għandha informazzjoni dwar kif kull Stat Membru tal-UE jimplimenta d-drittijiet tal-persuni b'vista batuta biex jivvutaw b'vot sigriet fl-elezzjonijiet fis-sistemi tagħhom?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Reding f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(26 ta' Marzu 2014)

Permezz tal-Istrateġija Ewropea tad-Diżabilità 2010-2020 ([1]) il-Kummissjoni għandha l-għan li tindirizza l-ostakoli li jfixklu persuni b'diżabilità fl-eżerċizzju tad-drittijiet fundamentali tagħhom — inklużi d-drittijiet taċ-ċittadinanza tal-UE — u li jillimitaw il-parteċipazzjoni tagħhom fis-soċjetà, inkluż fil-ħajja pubblika u politika. F'dan is-sens tindirizza l-aċċessibbiltà għall-votazzjoni u tappoġġa l-isforzi tal-Istati Membri fl-istandards ta' żvilupp u t-tixrid ta' faċilitajiet ta' elezzjoni aċċessibbli u materjal tal-kampanja.

Ħarsa ġenerali tal-leġiżlazzjoni u miżuri prattiċi fis-seħħ li huma meħtieġa għall-implimentazzjoni tal-Konvenzjoni dwar id-Drittijiet ta' Persuni b'Diżabilità tan-NU — kemm fuq il-livell tal-UE kif ukoll f'kull wieħed mill-Istati Membri tagħha — hija pprovduta bl-Għodda Onlajn tal-Kummissjoni dwar id-diżabilità (DOTCOM) ([2]). Din l-għodda tintuża sabiex tidentifika prattiċi tajbin iżda wkoll nuqqasijiet eżistenti li jeħtieġu aktar azzjoni. Informazzjoni dwar "L-Aċċessibbiltà għall-votazzjoni u l-elezzjonijiet" hija inkluża. Is-sitwazzjoni partikolari ta' persuni li għandhom diffikultà bil-vista hija xi kultant speċifikata, iżda din l-informazzjoni mhix disponibbli għall-Istati Membri kollha.

L-Aġenzija tal-UE għad-Drittijiet Fundamentali u n-Netwerk Akkademiku Ewropew ta' Esperti dwar id-Diżabilità jaħdmu fuq proġett komuni dwar l-iżvilupp ta' indikaturi dwar il-parteċipazzjoni politika ta' persuni b'diżabilitajiet fl-Istati Membri kollha ([3]). Dan il-proġett jittratta l-aspetti ġenerali prinċipali tal-parteċipazzjoni fil-ħajja politika, speċjalment dawk marbuta mal-votazzjoni u l-ħruġ għall-elezzjonijiet Il-pubblikazzjoni tal-konklużjonijiet hija mistennija fir-rebbiegħa 2014.

([1]) "Impenn mill-ġdid għal Ewropa mingħajr ostakoli", COM(2010) 0636 finali http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/MT/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A52010DC0636 u l-lista ta' azzjonijiet għall-2010 — 2015 SEC(2010) 1324 finali http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/MT/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A52010SC1324

([2]) http://www.disability-europe.net/dotcom, imnedija fl-2012 f'kooperazzjoni man-Netwerk Akkademiku Ewropew ta' Esperti dwar id-Diżabilità — www.disability-europe.net

([3]) http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2013/political-participation-persons-disabilities

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001236/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: Assistance to visually impaired persons during voting

Article 29 of the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities states that 'States Parties shall guarantee to persons with disabilities political rights and the opportunity to enjoy them on an equal basis with others, and shall undertake to:

(a) Ensure that persons with disabilities can effectively and fully participate in political and public life on an equal basis with others, directly or through freely chosen representatives, including the right and opportunity for persons with disabilities to vote and be elected, *inter alia*, by:

(i) ensuring that voting procedures, facilities and materials are appropriate, accessible and easy to understand and use;

(ii) protecting the right of persons with disabilities to vote by secret ballot in elections and public referendums without intimidation, and to stand for elections, to effectively hold office and perform all public functions at all levels of government, facilitating the use of assistive and new technologies where appropriate;

(iii) guaranteeing the free expression of the will of persons with disabilities as electors and to this end, where necessary, at their request, allowing assistance in voting by a person of their own choice'.

Does the Commission have information on how each EU Member State implements the rights of persons who are visually impaired to vote by secret ballot in elections within their systems?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2014)

Through the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 ([1]) the Commission aims to tackle the obstacles hindering disabled people in the exercise of their fundamental rights — including their EU citizenship rights — and limiting their participation in society, including in public and political life. In this sense it addresses accessibility to voting and supports Member States' efforts developing and disseminating standards on accessible election facilities and campaign material.

An overview of the legislation and practical measures in place that are required for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities — both at the level of the EU and in each of its Member States — is provided by the Commission's Disability Online Tool (DOTCOM) ([2]). This tool is used to identify good practices but also existing gaps requiring further action. Information on 'Accessibility of voting and elections' is included. The particular situation of visually impaired people is sometimes specified, but this information is not available for all Member States.

The EU Fundamental Rights Agency and the Academic Network of European Disability Experts work in a common project on developing indicators on the political participation of people with disabilities in all Member States ([3]). This project deals with the main general aspects of participation in political life, particularly related to voting and standing for elections. The publication of the findings is expected in spring 2014.

([1]) 'A renewed commitment to a barrier-free Europe', COM(2010) 0636 final http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0636:en:NOT and the list of actions for 2010-2015 SEC(2010)1324 final http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010SC1324:EN:NOT
([2]) http://www.disability-europe.net/dotcom launched in 2012 in cooperation with the Academic Network of European Disability Experts — www.disability-europe.net
([3]) http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2013/political-participation-persons-disabilities

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001240/14
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(6 februari 2014)

Betreft: Vrijlating Palestijnse terrorist

Op 4 februari 2014 heeft Likoed Nederland een persbericht uitgegeven waarin wordt gemeld dat de president van de Palestijnse Autoriteit, de heer Abbas, als voorwaarde voor het beginnen van vredesonderhandelingen heeft gesteld dat Israël 104 Palestijnse moordenaars vrijlaat ([1]). Eén van die moordenaars is Abd Rabbo die, voordat hij werd vrijgelaten, een levenslange gevangenisstraf uitzat voor de moord op twee Israëlische studenten. Bij zijn vrijlating noemde Abbas hem een held. Deze held heeft in een televisie-interview verklaard dat hij koelbloedig, gemaskerd en met een geweer gewapend op de studenten afstapte, hen vastbond en elk met een kogel doodde. Hij had met die daad naar eigen zeggen „het bloed van Mohammed gewroken".

In eerdere vragen aan de Commissie heb ik aangegeven dat dergelijke moordenaars naast een heldenstatus, ook een geldbedrag en een goedbetaalde baan ontvangen van de Palestijnse autoriteiten ([2]). De Commissie heeft in haar antwoorden niet kunnen uitsluiten dat die betalingen worden medegefinancierd door de Europese Unie.

1. Kan de Commissie bevestigen dat Abd Rabbo gedurende zijn gevangenschap door de Palestijnse Autoriteit een financiële tegemoetkoming heeft ontvangen?

2. Kan de Commissie aangeven of Abd Rabbo na zijn vrijlating een betaalde baan aangeboden heeft gekregen van de Palestijnse Autoriteit?

3. Is de Commissie van mening dat het vrijlaten van deze terrorist en van terroristen in het algemeen de kans op succesvolle vredesonderhandelingen vergroot?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(31 maart 2014)

Ter verduidelijking, in haar vorige antwoorden waarnaar het geachte Parlementslid verwijst, heeft de Commissie op categorische wijze verklaard dat „geen van de aan de Palestijnse Autoriteit betaalde EU-middelen terechtkomen in de handen van veroordeelde terroristen."

Wat uw eerste twee vragen betreft, is de Commissie er zich van bewust dat de Palestijnse Autoriteit (PA) een systeem van uitkeringen voor gevangenen onderhoudt. Deze programma's worden niet door de EU ondersteund. Gewoonlijk levert de EU geen commentaar op de toekenning van uitkeringen of banen door buitenlandse regeringen.

Beide partijen sloten de overeenkomst voor het vrijlaten van 104 gedetineerden van vóór de Oslo-akkoorden als een vertrouwenwekkende maatregel. In ruil daarvoor zette de Palestijnse Autoriteit haar inspanningen stop om volwaardig lid te worden van internationale organisaties. Deze overeenkomst vormde een voorwaarde voor de hervatting van de onderhandelingen. De EU steunt ten volle de inspanningen van beide partijen en van de VS om een onderling overeengekomen, rechtvaardige en duurzame regeling van het Israëlisch-Palestijnse conflict te vinden.

([1]) Likud.nl.
([2]) E-008299/2012 en P-014034/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001240/14
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: Release of Palestinian terrorist

On 4 February 2014, the Dutch branch of Likud issued a press release stating that the President of the Palestinian Authority, Mr Abbas, was only prepared to enter into peace negotiations on condition that Israel released 104 Palestinian murderers ([1]). One of them is Abd Rabbo, who, before being released, was serving a life sentence for murdering two Israeli students. Upon his release, Abbas called him a hero. In a television interview, this hero stated that he had approached the students in cold blood, wearing a mask and armed with a gun, then tied them up and shot them dead. He claimed that in this way he had 'avenged the blood of Mohammed'.

In previous questions to the Commission I pointed out that such murderers not only acquire hero status but also receive a sum of money and a well-paid job from the Palestinian authorities ([2]). In its answers, the Commission was unable to exclude the possibility that those payments might have been co-financed by the European Union.

1. Can the Commission confirm that Abd Rabbo received financial assistance from the Palestinian Authority during his imprisonment?

2. Can the Commission indicate whether Abd Rabbo was offered a paid job by the Palestinian Authority after his release?

3. Does the Commission consider that releasing this terrorist, and terrorists in general, increases the likelihood that the peace negotiations will succeed?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 2014)

To clarify, in its previous answers referred to by the Honourable Member, the Commission was categorical in stating that 'no EU funds paid to the Palestinian Authority end up in the hands of convicted terrorists.'

As regards your first two questions, the Commission is aware that the Palestinian Authority (PA) has a system of allowances provided to prisoners. These programmes are not supported by the EU. The EU does not habitually comment on the granting of allowances or employment by foreign governments.

The agreement to release 104 pre-Oslo prisoners was reached between the parties as a confidence building measure. In return, the Palestinian party halted efforts to fully accede to international organisations. This agreement was a precondition to the relaunching of negotiations. The EU fully supports the efforts of the parties and of the US towards a mutually-agreed, just and lasting settlement for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

([1]) Likud.nl
([2]) E-008299/2012 and P-014034/2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001242/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(6 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Construcción de una línea de muy alta tensión (MAT) en Santa Coloma de Farners

Red Eléctrica Española tiene previsto construir un ramal de la línea de alta tensión de 17 km entre las poblaciones de Santa Coloma de Farners y Riudarenes para suministrar energía a la línea de tren de alta velocidad entre Barcelona y Girona.

La cuestión es que muchos trenes de alta velocidad no utilizan una línea de alta tensión de 440 kv y funcionan comúnmente con 220 kv. La construcción de dicha línea no respeta la distancia mínima con casas habitadas y supone una agresión al medio ambiente.

Por otro lado, el Consejo Europeo emitió el 12 de julio de 1999 una recomendación (1999/519/CE) en que se afirmaba que «las medidas en relación con los campos electromagnéticos deberán proporcionar un elevado nivel de protección a todos los ciudadanos de la Comunidad», así como que «la observancia de las restricciones y niveles de referencia recomendados debería proporcionar un elevado nivel de protección contra los efectos nocivos para la salud que pueden resultar de la exposición a campos electromagnéticos».

También cabe tener en cuenta la Directiva 92/43/CEE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres y la Directiva 85/337/CEE del Consejo, de 27 de junio de 1985, relativa a la evaluación de las repercusiones de determinados proyectos públicos y privados sobre el medio ambiente.

A la luz de todo lo anterior,

¿Tiene la Comisión conocimiento sobre si se cumplen las citadas directivas en el tramo de la MAT que está previsto construir entre Santa Coloma de Farners y Riudarenes?

¿No cree la Comisión que los nuevos proyectos de líneas aéreas de transporte de energía eléctrica deberían tener en cuenta los campos electromagnéticos que generan, y que por tanto, se fijen límites de exposición, denominados preventivos?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de marzo de 2014)

El proyecto de construcción de una línea de muy alta tensión entre Ruidarenes y Santa Coloma de Farners se ha sometido al procedimiento de evaluación de impacto ambiental, de conformidad con la legislación por la que se incorpora al ordenamiento jurídico español la Directiva correspondiente ([1]). Por su parte, el Ministerio de Medio Ambiente ha publicado una declaración de impacto ambiental ([2]), que confirma que el proyecto se situará a 1,5 km de los sitios de la red Natura 2000 ES5120012 Les Guilleries y ES5120017 Estany de Sils-Riera de Santa Colom y que se ha efectuado la evaluación apropiada, de conformidad con el artículo 6 de la Directiva sobre los hábitats ([3]).

Con respecto a las medidas preventivas, los artículos 168 y 169 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea no confieren a la UE competencias para legislar en el ámbito de la protección del público general de los posibles efectos de los campos electromagnéticos y deja este cometido a cargo de los Estados miembros.

([1]) Directiva 2011/92/UE (versión codificada de la Directiva 85/337/CEE, relativa a la evaluación de las repercusiones de determinados proyectos públicos y privados sobre el medio ambiente, tal como se ha modificado), DO L 26 de 28.1.2012.
([2]) http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2013/02/22/pdfs/BOE-A-2013-1999.pdf
([3]) Directiva 92/43/CEE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres, DO L 206 de 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001242/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: Construction of a very high-voltage line in Santa Coloma de Farners

Red Eléctrica Española, the company that operates the Spanish national electricity grid, intends to construct a high-voltage branch line stretching 17 km between the settlements of Santa Coloma de Farners and Riudarenes in order to supply the high-speed railway line between Barcelona and Girona with power.

The issue is that many high-speed trains do not use a 440 kV high-voltage line and generally operate at 220 kV. The construction of this line also does not observe the minimum distance from inhabited dwellings and will have a damaging effect on the environment.

Moreover, on 12 July 1999, the European Council issued a recommendation (1999/519/EC) in which it stated that 'measures with regard to electromagnetic fields should afford all Community citizens a high level of protection' and that 'adherence to the recommended restrictions and reference levels should provide a high level of protection as regards the established health effects that may result from exposure to electromagnetic fields'.

Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora and Council Directive 85/337/EEC of 27 June 1985 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment should also be borne in mind.

In light of the above:

Does the Commission know whether the aforementioned directives have been complied with as regards the section of the very high-voltage line that is scheduled to be constructed between Santa Coloma de Farners and Riudarenes?

Does the Commission not think that new projects for overhead power transmission lines should take into account the electromagnetic fields that they generate and, therefore, that precautionary exposure limits should be established?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(21 March 2014)

The project for the construction of a power line between Ruidarenes and Santa Coloma de Farners has been subject to an environmental impact assessment procedure, in accordance with the Spanish legislation transposing the EIA Directive ([1]). An EIA Statement has been issued by the Ministry for the Environment ([2]). This confirms that the project will be located 1.5 Km from the Natura 2000 sites ES5120012 Les Guilleries and ES5120017 Estany de Sils-Riera de Santa Colom and that an appropriate assessment has been undertaken, in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive ([3]).

Regarding preventive 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 electromagnetic fields and leaves the primary responsibility with the Member States.

([1]) Directive 2011/92/EU (codified version of Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, as amended). OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.
([2]) http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2013/02/22/pdfs/BOE-A-2013-1999.pdf
([3]) Council Directive 92/43/EC, of 21 May 1992, on the protection of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001244/14
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE) und Paul Rübig (PPE)
(6. Februar 2014)

Betrifft: NGO-Finanzierung und erster Korruptionsbericht

1. Wieviel Geld erhielt Transparency International in den Jahren 2012 und 2013aus dem Haushaltsplan der Kommission?

2. Aus welchen Haushaltslinien erhielt Transparency International EU-Mittel?

3. Welche Leistungen wurden dafür erbracht?

4. Auf welche Weise erhob die Kommission die im ersten Korruptionsbericht (vorgelegt am 3. Februar 2014) aus den EU-Mitgliedstaaten übermittelten Daten? Wer erhob die Daten?

5. Wer entwarf die Schlussfolgerungen?

6. Warum erstellte die Kommission nicht schon vor Jahren einen solchen Bericht?

7. Auf welcher Rechtsgrundlage veröffentlichte die Kommission diesen Bericht über Korruption in den Mitgliedstaaten und die darauf fußenden Forderungen?

8. Wie erklärt die Kommission, dass Bulgarien in den sieben Jahre unter ihrer besonderen Überwachung im Rahmen des Kooperations- und Kontrollverfahrens von Platz 64 auf Platz 77 im Korruptionsindex von Transparency International zurückgefallen ist?

9. Wie erklärt die Kommission, dass Rumänien in den sieben Jahren unter ihrer besonderen Überwachung auf Platz 69 des Korruptionsindex von Transparency International verharrt?

10. Welche Maßnahmen plant die Kommission bis zum Erscheinen des zweiten Berichts für die Mitgliedstaaten, um die Ergebnisse des ersten Berichts umzusetzen?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(27. März 2014)

1.-3. Transparency International (TI) und seine nationalen „Ableger“ innerhalb und außerhalb der EU erhielten insgesamt 5 927 188 EUR aus dem Haushaltsplan der Kommission für 2012 und 2013, u. a. über die GD Entwicklung und Zusammenarbeit — EuropeAid und das Programm „Kriminalprävention und Kriminalitätsbekämpfung“ (ISEC). Die Mittel waren für Projekte bestimmt, die u. a. auf die Aufdeckung von Korruption im öffentlichen Auftragswesen, die Verbesserung der Wirksamkeit der Beschlagnahmung illegaler Vermögenswerte, die Einbindung der Bürger bei der Bekämpfung von Korruption und die Förderung der Transparenz der Lobbyarbeit abzielten.

4. Die Methodik für die Erhebung und Bewertung von Daten wird ausführlich in einem Anhang des Korruptionsbekämpfungsberichts der EU ([1]) dargelegt (Seiten 37-41).

5. Die Schlussfolgerungen des Berichts fallen unter die ausschließliche Zuständigkeit der Kommission.

6.-7. Der Korruptionsbekämpfungsbericht der EU wurde aufgrund eines Beschlusses der Kommission ([2]) vom 6. Juni 2011 erstellt.

8.-9. Im Rahmen des Kooperations- und Überprüfungsmechanismus werden weniger etwaige Änderungen im Korruptionswahrnehmungsindex von Transparency International, sondern vielmehr die Fortschritte zu spezifischen politischen Vorgaben in Bulgarien und Rumänien überwacht. Die Überwachung wird fortgesetzt, bis die beiden Länder die Vorgaben in zufriedenstellender Weise erfüllen ([3]).

10. Die Kommission plant, die Mitgliedstaaten in den Dialog über weitere künftige Schritte, die im Korruptionsbekämpfungsbericht der EU vorgeschlagen werden, einzubeziehen. Die Kommission wird zudem in diesem Jahr ein Programm für den Austausch von Erfahrungen einführen, um den Mitgliedstaaten, lokalen NRO und anderen Beteiligten zu helfen, bewährte Praktiken auszutauschen, Mängel im Bereich der Korruptionsbekämpfung zu beseitigen, Folgemaßnahmen zu erleichtern, Sensibilisierungsarbeit zu leisten und Schulungen anzubieten.

([1]) Abrufbar auf: http://ec.europa.eu/anti-corruption-report/
([2]) K(2011)3673 endgültig.
([3]) Näheres unter: http://ec.europa.eu/cvm/progress_reports_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001244/14
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE) and Paul Rübig (PPE)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: NGO funding and first Anti-Corruption Report

1. How much money did Transparency International receive from the Commission's budget in 2012 and 2013?

2. From which budget line did Transparency International receive EU funds?

3. What services were provided in return?

4. What method did the Commission use to collect the data submitted by the EU Member States for the first Anti-Corruption Report (published on 3 February 2014)? Who collected the data?

5. Who drew up the conclusions?

6. Why did the Commission not produce a report like this years ago?

7. What was the legal basis for the Commission publishing this report on corruption in the Member States and the claims it makes?

8. How does the Commission explain the fact that Bulgaria has fallen from 64th place to 77th place in Transparency International's Corruption Index during the seven years in which it has been subject to special monitoring by the Commission under the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism?

9. How does the Commission explain the fact that Romania has not moved from 69th place in Transparency International's Corruption Index in the seven years during which it has been subject to special monitoring?

10. What measures is the Commission planning so that the findings of this first report have been implemented by the time the second report on the Member States is published?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2014)

1 to 3. Transparency International (TI) and its national 'chapters' within and beyond the EU received a total of EUR 5 927 188 from the Commission budget for 2012 and 2013, including through Development and Cooperation — EuropeAid, and the programme 'Prevention of and fight against Crime' (ISEC) for projects to detect corruption in public procurement, enhance the effectiveness of illegal asset confiscation, engage citizens in fighting corruption, and promote transparency of lobbying, among others.

4. The methodology for data collection and assessment is detailed in an annex to the EU Anti-Corruption Report ([1]) (pages 37-41).

5. The report's conclusions are the sole responsibility of the Commission.

6 and 7. The EU Anti-Corruption Report was established through a Commission Decision ([2]) on 6 June 2011.

8 and 9. The Cooperation and Verification Mechanism monitors progress on specific policy benchmarks in Bulgaria and Romania, rather than any change in TI's Corruption Perceptions Index. Monitoring will continue until the two countries satisfactorily fulfil the benchmarks ([3]).

10. The Commission plans to engage Member States in dialogue on follow-up of future steps suggested in the EU Anti-Corruption Report. The Commission will also put in place this year an experience sharing programme to help Member States, local NGOs and other stakeholders exchange good practice and overcome shortcomings in anti-corruption policy, facilitate follow-up work, raise awareness, and provide training.

([1]) Available at http://ec.europa.eu/anti-corruption-report/
([2]) C(2011) 3673 final.
([3]) Further information is available at http://ec.europa.eu/cvm/progress_reports_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001245/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(6 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Αλλαγές του νόμου του ελληνικού Ταμείου Χρηματοπιστωτικής Σταθερότητας

Σύμφωνα με πληροφορίες η ελληνική κυβέρνηση σκοπεύει θα προβεί σε αλλαγές στο καταστατικό του ελληνικού Ταμείου Χρηματοπιστωτικής Σταθερότητας (ΤΧΣ), το οποίο ιδρύθηκε ώστε να συμβάλλει στην ανακεφαλαιοποίηση των ελληνικών τραπεζών. Βασικό σημείο των προτεινόμενων αλλαγών είναι να μπορεί το ΤΧΣ να πωλεί τις μετοχές των τραπεζών που έχει στη διάθεσή του, σε τιμές χαμηλότερες αυτών με τις οποίες συμμετείχε στην ανακεφαλαιοποίησή τους, δηλαδή, να πουλάει τις μετοχές με ζημιά.

Με δεδομένο ότι τα κεφάλαια που έχει χρησιμοποιήσει και θα χρησιμοποιήσει στο μέλλον το ΤΧΣ, ύψους 50 δις ευρώ, αποτελούν κομμάτι του δημοσίου χρέους, το οποίο ξεπληρώνεται με τις θυσίες του ελληνικού λαού, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει γνώση η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή της εν λόγω τροπολογίας που δίνει τη δυνατότητα στο ΤΧΣ να ιδιωτικοποιήσει τις ελληνικές τράπεζες, με ζημιές;

2. Υπάρχει οικονομική ανάγκη, σήμερα που επιβάλλει την πώληση των ελληνικών τραπεζών με ζημιά; Μήπως έχει διαπιστωθεί από την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή κάποιο ιδιαίτερο επενδυτικό ενδιαφέρον για την αγορά των ελληνικών τραπεζών, σε τιμές κάτω του κόστους ανακεφαλαιοποίησης; Εάν ναι, για ποιες τράπεζες;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(1 Απριλίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή δεν σχολιάζει νομοθεσία που βρίσκεται στο στάδιο της προετοιμασίας σε εθνικό επίπεδο.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001245/14
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: Changes to the law governing the Greek Financial Stability Fund

According to information, the Greek Government intends to amend the statute of the Greek Financial Stability Fund (FSF) established in order to help recapitalise the Greek banks. The basic point of the proposed changes is that the FSF will be able to sell the shares of the banks which it holds at prices below the price at which it participated in their recapitalisation; in other words, it will be able to sell the shares at a loss.

In view of the fact that the EUR 50 billion in capital which the FSF has been using and will continue to use in the future forms part of the public debt, which is being repaid on the back of sacrifices by the Greek people, will the Commission say:

1. Is the Commission aware of the amendment in question, which will allow the FSF to privatise Greek banks at a loss?

2. Is it necessary from an economic standpoint today to sell Greek banks at a loss? Has the Commission perhaps identified any particular interest on the part of investors in buying Greek banks at prices below recapitalisation costs? If so, which banks are they interested in?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(1 April 2014)

The Commission does not comment on legislation under preparation at the national level.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001256/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(6 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Energía y vida útil de las centrales nucleares

El presidente de la Empresa Nacional de Residuos Radiactivos (Enresa), Francisco Gil-Ortega, ha confirmado los planes del Gobierno de ampliar el plazo de vida útil de las centrales nucleares de 40 años a 50 o 60 años, siguiendo así la línea de otros países, como Estados Unidos. La energía nuclear supone alrededor del 20 % de la demanda eléctrica en España. Cabe señalar que el uso de las energías renovables constituye una inversión importante para los actores económicos.

Si otro Gobierno decidiera proponer en el futuro un apagón nuclear, las empresas podrían pedir indemnizaciones por lucro cesante acogiéndose a la nueva legislación. La Unión impulsa precisamente el uso de energías renovables, en particular mediante la Hoja de Ruta de la Energía para 2050 (COM(2012)0271). En esta Comunicación, la Comisión afirma que es necesario «reforzar la coherencia de los planteamientos nacionales y evitar la fragmentación del mercado interior». Añade que el mercado liberalizado de la electricidad debe garantizar «que los operadores obtengan un rendimiento que sea suficiente para cubrir sus costes de inversión en la nueva generación a fin de mantener la adecuación del sistema». Sin ello, los mercados nacionales quedarían segmentados y se perjudicaría al comercio transfronterizo, el cual, según afirma la Comisión, es «necesario para un mercado europeo de la electricidad eficiente y para el despliegue de las energías renovables».

¿Qué opina la Comisión sobre este asunto?

¿Piensa la Comisión dar algún impulso para que España no amplíe el plazo de vida útil de las centrales nucleares?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001508/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(12 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Reapertura de la central nuclear de Garoña

La central nuclear de Santa María de Garoña (Burgos), con algo más de 40 años de funcionamiento comercial, es la única central en funcionamiento en el Estado español de las llamadas de primera generación. Las otras dos, Vandellós-1 y Zorita, están cerradas ya; la primera tras un accidente en 1989 y la segunda en 2006 tras decidirse su cierre por motivos de seguridad.

Durante sus 43 años de funcionamiento, Garoña ha sufrido múltiples problemas que han evidenciado su falta de seguridad. Ha habido innumerables peticiones de cierre por parte de colectivos e instituciones y, finalmente, el Consejo de Ministros del Gobierno español, en el año 2012, estableció su cierre definitivo para el 6 de julio de 2013.

Tras el cambio de Gobierno en el Estado español a finales de 2012, el nuevo Ejecutivo ha cuestionado desde el principio la decisión tomada y se ha manifestado dispuesto a retrasar el cierre mediante una prórroga en el funcionamiento de la central nuclear.

Esto se ha confirmado con la petición del 16 de mayo pasado, realizada por el consejo de administración de Nuclenor (empresa que explota la central), solicitando la revocación de la Orden Ministerial de 29 de junio de 2012 para así obtener una autorización para continuar con la explotación de Garoña.

En consecuencia, actualmente Garoña no está en funcionamiento. Sin embargo, el Gobierno español, anteponiendo los intereses económicos a la seguridad de la ciudadanía y generando incertidumbre y preocupación, parece estar dispuesto a facilitar la reapertura de la central mediante cambios legales *ad hoc*.

Este comportamiento por parte del Estado español pone en peligro la seguridad de los ciudadanos y parece inexplicable después de la catástrofe de Fukushima.

¿Conoce la Comisión el caso?

¿Estima la Comisión que la prórroga del funcionamiento de la central de Garoña es aceptable desde el punto de vista de la seguridad y del principio de precaución?

Vista la historia de problemas técnicos y de seguridad sufridos por la central de Garoña, ¿cree la Comisión que dicha prórroga se ajusta a los estándares de gestión de las instalaciones nucleares?

¿Tiene la Comisión información sobre si la central de Garoña cumple los estándares de seguridad y las nuevas medidas post-Fukushima?

¿Piensa la Comisión tomar alguna iniciativa sobre el caso?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de marzo de 2014)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-00370/2014 de Izaskun Bilbao Barandica ([1]). La Comisión ha sido informada de que la modificación a que se hace referencia en esa respuesta ya ha sido adoptada por el Gobierno español, si bien no se le ha notificado aún.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2014-000370&language=ES

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001256/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(6 February 2014)

Subject: Energy and operating life of nuclear power plants

The president of the Spanish National Radioactive Waste Company (Enresa), Francisco Gil-Ortega, has confirmed the government's plans to extend the operating life of nuclear power plants from 40 years to 50 or 60 years, following the policies made by other countries such as the USA. Nuclear power accounts for around 20% of the electricity demand in Spain. It must be noted that the use of renewable energy represents a significant investment for the economic operators.

If another government were in future to propose a nuclear shutdown, companies could ask for compensation for loss of earnings under the new legislation. The Union is specifically promoting the use of renewable energy, in particular by means of the Energy Roadmap 2050 (COM(2012)0271). In this communication, the Commission states that it is necessary to 'help ensure greater consistency in national approaches and avoid fragmentation of the internal market'. It adds that the liberalised electricity market should ensure 'that operators earn sufficient returns to cover their investment costs for new generation to maintain system adequacy'. Without this, the national markets would be segmented and cross-border trade would be undermined, which, according to the Commission, is 'necessary for an efficient European electricity market and for the deployment of renewable energy'.

What is the Commission's opinion on this matter?

Does the Commission intend to give any kind of impetus so that Spain does not extend the operating life of nuclear power plants?

Question for written answer E-001508/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(12 February 2014)

Subject: Reopening of the Garoña nuclear facility

The Santa María de Garoña nuclear plant in Burgos has been in commercial operation for over 40 years and is the last remaining so-caalled 'first generation' facility in Spain. The other two, Vandellós-1 and Zorita, have already closed: the first in 1989, following an accident, and the second in 2006 for safety reasons.

Over its 43 years in service, Garoña has had numerous problems which have highlighted its lack of safety. Countless petitions calling for its closure have been submitted by associations and institutions, until finally, in 2012, the Spanish Government's Council of Ministers decided that it should be permanently closed down on 6 July 2013.

Following the change in government in 2012, the new administration queried the decision from the outset and has favoured postponing the plant's closure and prolonging its active life.

This was confirmed with the submission of a request by the managing board of Nuclenor (the company running the plant) on 16 May 2013, asking for the Ministerial Order of 29 June 2012 to be revoked so that authorisation could be granted for Garoña to remain in operation.

At present, the Garoña plant is out of operation, but the Spanish Government seems to support the idea of reopening it, using ad hoc legal changes to do so and placing economic interests ahead of public safety, a situation which is giving rise to uncertainty and concern.

This behaviour on the part of the Spanish state is dangerous to public safety and seems inexplicable in the aftermath of the Fukushima disaster.

Is the Commission familiar with this case?

Does the Commission consider prolonging the useful life of the Garoña nuclear plant to be acceptable from a safety perspective and in terms of the principle of precaution?

In view of the plant's long history of technical and safety problems, does the Commission see this extension of its useful life as being in line with the management standards applied to nuclear facilities?

Does the Commission have any information as to whether the Garoña plant meets safety standards and complies with the new post-Fukushima measures?

Does the Commission intend to take any action in this case?

Joint answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 2014)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-00370/2014 by Izaskun Bilbao Barandica ([1]). The Commission is informed that the amendment referred to in that reply has now been adopted by the Spanish Government, although it has not yet been notified to the Commission.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2014-000370&language=EN

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001260/14
a la Comisión
Eider Gardiazábal Rubial (S&D)
(7 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Planes de aplicación de la Garantía Juvenil

En una comunicación al Parlamento, al Consejo, al Consejo Europeo, al Comité Económico y Social Europeo y al Comité de las Regiones, la Comisión indicaba que con el fin de tener acceso a las líneas presupuestarias facilitadas por la Iniciativa sobre Empleo Juvenil, los Estados miembros en los que haya regiones con tasas de desempleo juvenil superiores al 25 %, debían presentar sus planes de aplicación de la Garantía Juvenil antes de octubre de 2013. En una rueda de prensa celebrada el 15 de enero de 2014, la Comisión informó de que 17 Estados miembros ya habían presentado sus planes.

La participación de distintos órganos democráticos europeos (principalmente parlamentos), de interlocutores sociales y de la sociedad civil para diseñar, aplicar y analizar la Garantía Juvenil es un requisito previo para su éxito. Teniendo todo ello en cuenta, ¿tiene intención la Comisión de hacer públicos los planes de aplicación recibidos hasta la fecha?

¿Tiene previsto la Comisión facilitar un análisis sobre estos planes?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de marzo de 2014)

Desarrollar enfoques de colaboración con respecto al diseño y la ejecución de planes nacionales de Garantía Juvenil (GJ) es uno de los pilares de la Recomendación del Consejo sobre el establecimiento de una Garantía Juvenil. Los Estados miembros han implicado a interlocutores pertinentes, como los agentes sociales y las organizaciones de jóvenes, en el diseño de sus Planes de Aplicación de la Garantía Juvenil (PAGJ). No es intención de la Comisión divulgar los 19 PAGJ recibidos hasta la fecha; sin embargo, alienta a todos los Estados miembros a que actúen en este sentido. Determinados Estados miembros, como España, Irlanda e Italia, ya han divulgado y publicado sus PAGJ a través de Internet.

La Recomendación del Consejo exige que la Comisión controle el diseño, la ejecución y los resultados de los sistemas de GJ, y que informe regularmente al respecto. La Comisión está evaluando los PAGJ y está expresando su opinión a los Estados miembros en reuniones coincidentes con los encuentros bilaterales que tienen lugar en el marco del Semestre Europeo, entre el 3 y el 18 de febrero de 2014.

Este ejercicio de seguimiento guarda asimismo relación con el desembolso de 6 000 millones EUR ([1]) de la Iniciativa sobre Empleo Juvenil (IEJ), cuya condicionalidad previa comprende la existencia de un marco de políticas estratégico dirigido a impulsar el empleo juvenil, incluso mediante la aplicación de la GJ. Cuando resulte necesario, se invitará a los Estados miembros a que presenten sus PAGJ revisados a la vez que sus programas nacionales de reforma en abril de 2014.

Se incluirá una evaluación formal de la ejecución de los planes de GJ en los 28 Estados miembros en un apartado específico del Documento de Trabajo de los Servicios de la Comisión para el Semestre Europeo (DTS) que se remite a cada Estado miembro. De manera análoga, las recomendaciones específicas por país correspondientes a 2014 servirán para destacar ámbitos prioritarios de actuación con respecto a la ejecución de los PAGJ de los Estados miembros.

([1]) Precios de 2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001260/14
to the Commission
Eider Gardiazábal Rubial (S&D)
(7 February 2014)

Subject: Youth Guarantee implementation plans

In a communication to Parliament, the Council, the European Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions, the Commission stated that, in order to have access to the budgetary lines provided by the Youth Employment Initiative, Member States with regions experiencing youth unemployment rates of above 25% were called to submit their Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans by October 2013. In a press release issued on 15 January 2014, the Commission reported that 17 Member States had already submitted their plans.

The participation of different European democratic bodies (mainly Parliament), social partners and civil society in the design, implementation and assessment of the Youth Guarantee is a prerequisite for its success. Taking this into consideration, is the Commission intending to make public the implementation plans received to date?

Is the Commission planning to provide an assessment of the abovementioned plans?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(19 March 2014)

Building up partnerships-based approaches in the design and implementation of national Youth Guarantee (YG) scheme is one of the pillars of the Council Recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee. Member States have involved relevant partners, such as social partners and youth organisations, in the design of their Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan (YGIP). The Commission does not intend to make public the 19 YGIPs received to date; however, it encourages all Member States to do so. Certain Member States, such as Ireland, Italy and Spain, have already made their YGIP public and published it online.

The Council Recommendation requires that the Commission monitor and report regularly on the design, implementation and results of YG schemes. The Commission is currently assessing the YGIPs and is giving feedback to Member States in meetings that are held back-to-back with bilateral meetings taking place within the framework of the European Semester between 3-18 February 2014.

This monitoring exercise is also linked to the disbursement of the EUR 6 billion ([1]) of the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), whose *ex-ante* conditionality comprises the existence of a strategic policy framework for promoting youth employment, including through the implementation of the YG. Where necessary, Member States will be invited to submit revised YGIPs at the same time as their National Reform Programme in April 2014.

A formal assessment of the implementation of the YG in all 28 Member States will be provided in a dedicated section of the European Semester Staff Working Document (SWD) addressed to each Member State. Similarly, the 2014 Country Specific Recommendations will serve to highlight priority areas for action in the implementation of a Member State's YGIP.

([1]) 2011 prices.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001263/14
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(7 February 2014)

Subject: Telecommunications competition in Ireland

Is the Commission investigating the proposed takeover of Telefonica's mobile phone operator O2 in Ireland by Hutchison Whampoa Ltd.'s mobile phone operator Three Ireland? Could the Commission provide an update of its investigations?

Is the Commission satisfied that adequate competition exists in the Irish mobile phone market? Does the Commission feel that a merger between Ireland's second and third largest out of four phone operators would inhibit competition?

Does the Commission have data on the average revenue per user of each Member State?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(1 April 2014)

The proposed acquisition of Telefónica's mobile telecoms operator O2 Ireland by Hutchison Whampoa's mobile telecoms operator Three Ireland was notified to the Commission on 1 October 2013.

On 6 November 2013, the Commission opened an in-depth investigation. On 30 January 2014, the Commission sent its Statement of Objections to H3G. The legal deadline for the final decision in this case is 19 May 2014.

The proposed transaction is an in-country consolidation from four to three mobile operators in an already concentrated market with high barriers to entry. Opening its second phase investigation, the Commission expressed concerns about the elimination of competition between Three and O2 and the removal of an important competitive force on the market. The transaction may also affect the competitor Eircom's ability to compete effectively due to a risk of termination and/or frustration of its network sharing agreement with O2 Ireland. Finally, the transaction may lead to a degradation of the hosting conditions for mobile virtual network operators ('MVNOs').

The Commission has data for the average revenue per user (ARPU) and average revenue per minute (ARPM) in each Member State.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001264/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(7 February 2014)

Subject: Youth Guarantee pilot projects

Could the Commission provide details of the names, locations, Member States, and budgets of the pilot projects approved to date under the Youth Guarantee preparatory action aimed at 'supporting partnerships for activation measures targeting young people through projects in the context of Youth Guarantee schemes at national, regional or local level' (Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion call for proposals No VP/2012/012, Budget Heading 04.04.17)?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

The information requested on the grants awarded under the call for proposals VP/2012/012 can be found on the Europa website at : http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=632&langId=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001265/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(7 February 2014)

Subject: Young child formula

What action is the Commission considering in response to the opinion published by the European Food Safety Authority's Panel on Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies on 25 October 2013, which concluded that the use of milk-based 'young-child' formula does not bring any additional value to a balanced diet in meeting the nutritional requirements of young children aged between one and three years of age?

Does the Commission intend to prepare legislative proposals to regulate the marketing of products intended for young children, which, unlike infant and follow-on formulae, are not subject to specific EU rules?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

The European Commission requested the European Food Safety Authority to provide scientific advice on milk-based drinks and similar products intended for infants and young children in the context of the implementation of Regulation (EU) No 609/2013 ([1]).

EFSA's advice is divided into two parts. The first one, mentioned in the question of the Honourable Member, was published on 25 October 2013. The second part will come up in the first half of 2014. In the second opinion, EFSA will propose updated compositional requirements for infant formulae and follow-on formulae and, if considered appropriate, suggest compositional requirements for young-child formula.

As requested by Article 12 of Regulation (EU) No 609/2013 the Commission will present a report to the European Parliament and the Council (by 20 July 2015) in which it will analyse whether rules are necessary for young-child formula. To prepare this report, the Commission will consider EFSA's opinions as well as other legitimate factors (e.g. the consumption of these products, their role on the market).

It should be noted that in compliance with Article 11 of Regulation (EU) No 609/2013 the Commission will also adopt by 20 July 2015 a specific delegated act to set updated requirements for infant formulae and follow-on formulae, on the basis of the forthcoming EFSA's advice.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 609/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 June 2013 on food intended for infants and young children, food for special medical purposes, and total diet replacement for weight control and repealing Council Directive 92/52/EEC, Commission Directives 96/8/EC, 1999/21/EC, 2006/125/EC and 2006/141/EC, Directive 2009/39/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and Commission Regulations (EC) No 41/2009 and (EC) No 953/2009, OJ L 181, 29.6.2013, p. 35-56.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001266/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(7 February 2014)

Subject: Study on the impact of the entitlements of non-active intra-EU migrants to special non-contributory cash benefits and healthcare granted on the basis of residence

What is the current situation with regard to the study of the impact of the entitlements of non-active intra-EU migrants to special non-contributory cash benefits and healthcare granted on the basis of residence, which was due to be finalised in autumn 2013?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(19 March 2014)

The ICF GHK final report 'A fact finding analysis on the impact on the Member States' social security systems of the entitlements of non-active intra-EU migrants to special non-contributory cash benefits and healthcare granted on the basis of residence' was published on the Commission's website ([1]) on 14 October 2013.

([1]) Final report submitted by ICF GHK in association with Milieu Ltd, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion via DG Justice Framework Contract, 14 October 2013 (revised on 16 December 2013), at: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1980&furtherNews=yes

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001267/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(7 February 2014)

Subject: Planned EU study on the welfare of dogs and cats involved in commercial practices

Article 13 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union requires the EU to pay full regard to the welfare requirements of animals as sentient beings. What is the current situation with regards to the planned study on the welfare of dogs and cats involved in commercial practices planned for 2014 under the EU strategy for the protection and welfare of animals 2012-2015? Will the study examine the intra-Community trade of dogs and cats involved in commercial purposes? What action is the Commission considering on foot of this study?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

The purpose of the on-going study on the welfare of dogs and cats involved in commercial practices, is to determine to what extent EU initiatives on the welfare of dogs and cats involved in commercial practices would be necessary to achieve key EU objectives like better functioning of the internal market, better protection of the consumer, better public health and better animal health and welfare.

In the light of this study, which is expected to be finalised by the end of 2014, the Commission will consider if it is necessary to take specific initiatives in this field with due regard to the competences conferred by the Treaty to the European Union.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001269/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(7 February 2014)

Subject: Passenger rights on urban public transport

What action has the Commission taken, or is it considering taking, as a follow-up to the study commissioned by its DG for Mobility and Transport and published in April 2013 on passenger rights in urban public transport (buses, trams, trains, metro)?

Has the Commission given, or will it give, consideration to coming forward with a legal instrument to protect the rights of passengers on urban public transport across the EU?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

In most European urban areas, public transport is a central pillar of urban mobility. Further increasing the quality of public transport services and the share of public transport use can make an important contribution to rendering urban mobility more efficient and more sustainable. In this context, the action plan on Urban Mobility of 2009 announced a comprehensive study to explore present approaches and best practices for safeguarding and strengthening passenger rights in public transport.

The study has been published in April 2013 and creates a solid basis for an informed discussion on the topic, both locally in EU and internationallly like International Association of Public Transport (UITP), city networks such as Polis and Eurocities, or Commission-supported initiatives like Civitas.

The Commission will continue to support an active exchange on urban mobility, including public transport and the protection of passenger rights in public transport. It will also continue to showcase best practice examples through channels like the Urban Mobility Portal Eltis. No legislative action is presently foreseen as an outcome of the 2013 study.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001270/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(7 February 2014)

Subject: Noise from ports and gantry cranes

To the Commission's knowledge, which Member States consider ports and gantry cranes to be industrial activities under Annex 1 to Council Directive 96/61/EC on integrated pollution prevention and control and thus subject to the assessment and management of environmental noise under the Environmental Noise Directive (Directive 2002/49/EC)?

The Commission's June 2011 report (COM(2011)0321) on the implementation of the environmental noise directive stated that a 'number of possible technical improvement[s] were identified including clarifications of the definitions and obligations related to agglomerations, quiet areas, major roads, industrial noise and action plans'. What action has the Commission taken, or is it considering taking, on foot of this conclusion, particularly in relation to industrial noise?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2014)

Ports and gantry cranes are not activities falling under the scope of application of the Industrial Emissions Directive (2010/75/EU ([1])), which repealed and replaced Council Directive 96/61/EC on 7 January 2013. Accordingly, the Commission does not possess any list of Member States that would consider ports and gantry cranes as activities subject to Industrial Emissions Directive (2010/75/EU).

The Commission will perform in 2014-2015 an evaluation of the directive 2002/49/EC ([2]) on environmental noise in the context of the REFIT programme, to identify burdens, inconsistencies, gaps or ineffective measures. Technical improvements such as the definitions concerning industrial noise may be evaluated in this context.

([1]) OJ L 334, 17.12.2010.
([2]) OJ L 189, 18.7.2002.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001274/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(7 February 2014)

Subject: EU support for numeracy and literacy programmes in South African classrooms

Could the Commission indicate what EU funding programmes would be of interest in relation to a planned pilot project involving an Ireland-based charity, local education authorities and other stakeholders in South Africa, aimed at supporting the roll-out of tablet-technology in classrooms in a small group of schools in a disadvantaged part of Cape Town with the objective of raising education standards, particularly in literacy and numeracy? Could it indicate when the next call for proposals for these programmes will be made and where further information on these programmes can be found?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2014)

One of the conclusions of the EU High Level Conference on Education and Development in May 2013 was that Literacy and Numeracy empowers people. Women, who have the ability to read and write, also have a better knowledge of health and family planning. Literate parents are more likely to send their children to school and to help them with their studies. In developing countries, literacy is a way out of poverty.

The Commission supports South Africa's national Department of Basic Education in the implementation of its 'Action Plan to 2014: Towards the realisation of Schooling 2025'.

The Commission has also supported the Department of Science and Technology though its 'Innovation for Poverty Alleviation' programme where some actions promoting Internet and information technology at schools level where initiated.

Education, Training and Innovation might be considered as one of the 3 focal sectors of intervention in the Multi-Annual Programme (2014-20) for South Africa. The Charity is invited to visit EuropeAid's calls for proposals website ([1]) and to engage with the EU Delegation to the Republic of South Africa to enquire about future plans.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/funding/index_en.htm or through the EU delegation to the Republic of South Africa website http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/south_africa/grants_tenders/grants/index_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001281/14
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(7 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Muerte de inmigrantes en la frontera de Ceuta

El pasado 6 de febrero se produjeron las trágicas muertes de al menos 9 personas que trataban de entrar en la Ciudad Autónoma de Ceuta en un nuevo intento. Al menos cuatro personas han muerto por aplastamiento y otras tres ahogadas en el mar cuando intentaban llegar a nado a las costas de la ciudad española.

Estas personas trataban de entrar en la ciudad a través de nuevas vías, puesto que trataban de esquivar las famosas concertinas instaladas por el Gobierno de España. En mi pregunta anterior E-012537/2013, ya denuncié la instalación de las citadas concertinas por no cumplir con la normativa europea ni con los derechos humanos. En esta ocasión, han sido los cuerpos de seguridad del Estado los que han empleado balas de goma y gases lacrimógenos contra los inmigrantes que intentaban acceder por vía marítima a la ciudad, según han contado miembros de la ONG Caminando Fronteras.

Este acto de empleo de material antidisturbios contra personas que pretendían llegar a la costa para salvar sus vidas ha tenido como consecuencia la muerte de ocho personas que no han cometido crimen alguno. El Delegado del Gobierno en Ceuta ha alegado la violencia extrema de los inmigrantes de origen subsahariano, declaraciones que han sido inmediatamente desmentidas por los testimonios recogidos en las primeras horas. Este acto confirma la voluntad del Gobierno de dañar físicamente a los inmigrantes irregulares que traten de cruzar la frontera aprovechando el hueco que existe en la legislación europea, ya puesto de manifiesto en mi anterior pregunta E-005391/2013, que no legisla sobre la obligación de proteger la salud y la vida de los inmigrantes que, estando en territorio de un Estado de la UE, no están aún bajo procedimiento de expulsión alguno.

¿Conoce la Comisión el citado caso que ha producido la muerte de al menos 9 inmigrantes?

¿Piensa condenar públicamente a España por los graves daños producidos a las personas migrantes y los daños y las muertes causadas por la intervención de las fuerzas de seguridad en la frontera de Ceuta?

¿Piensa instar a España a que retire las concertinas de la valla de Ceuta ante las gravísimas consecuencias que ha traído?

¿Piensa, de una vez por todas, impulsar alguna propuesta legislativa que obligue a los Estados miembros a proteger la vida y la salud de los inmigrantes irregulares que no están sujetos a un procedimiento de retorno?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de marzo de 2014)

La Comisión es consciente de los hechos descritos en la pregunta de Su Señoría.

Asimismo, ha pedido explicaciones sobre este incidente a las autoridades españolas, que han confirmado que se está investigando a fondo. La Comisión examinará los resultados de esta investigación y seguirá de cerca la evolución de la situación.

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-012537/2013.

Como ya se ha expuesto en la respuesta de la Comisión a la pregunta escrita E-005391/2013, el acceso a la asistencia sanitaria y a otros derechos fundamentales de los nacionales de terceros países en situación irregular que no están sujetos a las disposiciones de la Directiva de retorno ([1]) no está armonizada a nivel de la Unión. La posibilidad de una iniciativa legislativa de la Comisión en este ámbito se ve limitada por el hecho de que, de acuerdo con el Tratado, los derechos de los inmigrantes en situación irregular solo pueden armonizarse a nivel de la UE en la medida en que las medidas propuestas tengan el objetivo de prevenir o combatir la inmigración y residencia ilegales.

([1]) Directiva 2008/115/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 16 de diciembre de 2008, relativa a normas y procedimientos comunes en los Estados miembros para el retorno de los nacionales de terceros países en situación irregular; DO L 348 de 24.12.2008, p. 98-107.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001281/14
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(7 February 2014)

Subject: Death of immigrants at the border at Ceuta

On 6 February 2014 at least nine people died tragically while trying to enter the Autonomous City of Ceuta, during a new mass attempt to cross the frontier. At least four people were crushed to death and another three drowned in the sea while trying to swim to the shore of the Spanish city.

These people were attempting to enter the city via new routes, trying to avoid the notorious razor wire fences, known as 'concertinas', installed by the Spanish Government. In my previous Written Question E-012537/2013, I already drew attention to the fact that these 'concertinas' neither comply with European legislation nor respect human rights. This time, according to members of the non-governmental organisation Caminando Fronteras, the Spanish security forces used rubber bullets and tear gas against the would-be immigrants, who were trying to reach the city from the sea.

This decision to use riot-control equipment against people trying to reach land to save their lives has resulted in the deaths of eight people who had committed no crime. The representative of the Spanish central government in Ceuta has claimed that the African immigrants showed extremely violent behaviour, an allegation which was immediately refuted by eye-witness statements gathered immediately after the events. These events confirm the Spanish Government's willingness to physically harm irregular immigrants trying to cross the border, taking advantage of the loophole in European law to which I referred in my previous Question E-005391/2013, in that there is no legal obligation to protect the health and life of immigrants who are inside the territory of a Member State but not yet subject to any form of expulsion procedure.

Is the Commission aware of the events described, which resulted in the deaths of at least nine immigrants?

Does it intend to publicly censure Spain for causing serious physical harm to migrants and for the injuries and deaths caused by the actions of its security forces on the Ceuta border?

Does the Commission intend to urge Spain to remove the razor wire from the Ceuta border fences, in light of its extremely serious consequences?

Will it, once and for all, present some form of legislative proposal to force Member States to protect the lives and health of irregular immigrants who are not subject to any return procedure?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2014)

The Commission is aware of the incident described in the Honourable Member's question.

The Commission has requested explanations from the Spanish authorities on this incident. The Spanish authorities have confirmed that they have launched a full inquiry. The Commission will examine the outcome of this inquiry and closely monitor further developments.

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-012537/2013.

As already set out in the Commission's reply to Written Question E-005391/2013, access to healthcare and other basic rights of illegally staying third-country nationals who are not covered by the provisions of the Return Directive ([1]) is not harmonised at Union level. The possibility for a legislative initiative by the Commission in this field is limited by the fact that — according to the Treaty — the rights of irregular migrants can only be harmonised at Union level insofar as the proposed measures are aimed at preventing or combatting irregular migration and unauthorised residence.

([1]) Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals; OJ L 348, 24.12.2008, p. 98-107.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001282/14
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(7 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Amenaza a las zonas ZEPIM, LIC y ZEPA de las Islas Columbretes (Castelló)

El Gobierno español ha hecho público el estudio de impacto ambiental del proyecto de la empresa Cairn Energy de prospecciones para buscar petróleo en el entorno de las Islas Columbretes (Castelló).

Las Islas Columbretes fueron declaradas Parque Natural ([1]) por el Decreto ([2]) 15/1988, de 25 de enero, del Consell ([3]) de la Generalidad Valenciana ([4]), y reserva marina de 4 400 hectáreas (una de las mayores de España) por Orden ([5]) de 19 de abril de 1990 ([6]), del Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación ([7]). Fueron recalificadas como reserva natural ([8]) por Ley 11/1994, de 27 de diciembre, de la Generalidad Valenciana. Asimismo, están declaradas como zona especialmente protegida de importancia para el Mediterráneo (ZEPIM ([9])), lugar de importancia comunitaria (LIC ([10])), zona de especial protección para las aves (ZEPA ([11])), y microrreserva de flora ([12]).

El proyecto presentado por la empresa Cairn Energy carece de fundamento técnico, siendo un simple compendio de generalidades y estudios propios sin rigor ni evaluación real del impacto que tanto la prospección sísmica como los trabajos posteriores —en caso de producirse— podrían tener en sectores estratégicos castellonenses como el turismo y la pesca, o del grave impacto medioambiental.

La prospección sísmica en 3D supondrá inyectar 259 decibelios en el mar, lo que provocaría la muerte instantánea de peces y crustáceos, o daños irreparables en la fauna marina, así como el efecto de huida de la pesca, que tardaría años en revertirse.

¿Qué medidas piensa adoptar la Comisión, dentro de sus competencias, para evitar daños irreparables en las zonas ZEPIM, LIC y ZEPA de las Islas Columbretes y su entorno?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001378/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(11 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Aplicación de la Directiva 2008/56/CE en el Estado español

Está previsto que en octubre empiecen los sondeos sísmicos para buscar petróleo entre la costa valenciana y las Islas Baleares ([13]). La compañía ha elaborado el estudio de impacto ambiental sobre cuya base se harán las pruebas (emisiones acústicas de hasta 265 decibelios cada diez segundos) para obtener información sobre la existencia o no de hidrocarburos. En el documento sí se admite el riesgo de mortandad y huida de peces, con sus consecuencias para el sector pesquero. Parece ser que la propuesta hace caso omiso de la recomendación de la Dirección General de Sostenibilidad de la Costa y del Mar del Ministerio de Medio Ambiente de que no se hagan sondeos en áreas de presencia de cetáceos y, en consecuencia, se evite una zona de especial protección conocida como «corredor de migración de cetáceos».

Los pescadores están preocupados por la posible disminución de las capturas como consecuencia de la huida de bancos por las pruebas sísmicas (las cofradías pusieron el ejemplo de Noruega). Estas pruebas afectarán a 180 especies protegidas, de las que 50 cuentan con la máxima protección ([14]).

La Directiva marco sobre la estrategia marina (Directiva 2008/56/CE) tiene como uno de sus objetivos proteger y restablecer los ecosistemas marinos europeos y garantizar la viabilidad ecológica de las actividades económicas relacionadas con el medio marino de aquí al año 2021.

([1]) http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parque_Natural
([2]) http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decreto
([3]) http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consejo_de_la_Generalidad_Valenciana
([4]) http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Generalidad_Valenciana
([5]) http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orden
([6]) http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/1990
([7]) http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ministerio_de_Agricultura,_Pesca_y_Alimentaci%C3 %B3n
([8]) http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reserva_Natural
([9]) http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/ZEPIM
([10]) http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/LIC
([11]) http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/ZEPA
([12]) http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Microrreserva_de_flora
([13]) http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2014/01/08/valencia/1389207641_491621.html?rel=rosEP
([14]) http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2014/02/03/valencia/1391437531_354208.html

¿Cumple este proyecto con la mencionada Directiva?

¿Cumple este proyecto con la Directiva 92/43/CEE relativa a la conservación de los hábitats?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de marzo de 2014)

La Comisión tiene conocimiento de las actividades relacionadas con los hidrocarburos cuya realización frente a la costa de Valencia se ha propuesto y ha solicitado más información al respecto. Las autoridades españolas han proporcionado datos para aclarar cómo se está aplicando la normativa medioambiental pertinente de la UE y cómo se están teniendo en cuenta los aspectos medioambientales de las actividades propuestas, en concreto los derivados de las Directivas sobre los hábitats ([15]) y sobre las aves ([16]), de la Directiva marco sobre la estrategia marina ([17]) y del Convenio de Barcelona. De acuerdo con la información facilitada por las autoridades en agosto de 2013, no se ha podido comprobar infracción alguna de la normativa de la UE ni de las disposiciones del citado Convenio.

Ahora que se ha publicado la evaluación de impacto ambiental mencionada por Su Señoría, las autoridades competentes españolas han de decidir si permiten o no las actividades propuestas. Por su parte, la Comisión ha pedido ser informada de los resultados de la citada evaluación y de toda decisión que se adopte para autorizar las actividades.

([15]) Directiva 92/43/CEE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres.
([16]) Directiva 2009/147/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 30 de noviembre de 2009, relativa a la conservación de las aves silvestres.
([17]) Directiva 2008/56/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 17 de junio de 2008, por la que se establece un marco de acción comunitaria para la política del medio marino.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001282/14
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(7 February 2014)

Subject: Threat to protected areas in the Columbretes Islands (Castellon, Spain)

The Spanish Government has published the environmental impact assessment of the project presented by the Cairn Energy company for oil prospection in the vicinity of the Columbretes Islands (Castellon).

The Columbretes Islands were declared a natural park by the Valencian regional government's Decree 15/1988 of 25 January, and were subsequently included in a 4 400 hectare marine reserve (one of the largest in Spain) by Order of 19 April 1990, by the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. They were reclassified as a natural reserve by the Valencian government's Law 11/1994 of 27 December. The islands are also listed as a specially protected area of Mediterranean importance (SPAMI), a site of Community interest (SCI), a special protection area (SPA) for birds and a plant micro-reserve.

The project put forward by Cairn Energy has no technical basis; it simply presents a collection of generalisations and studies carried out by the company itself, which are neither rigorous nor properly assess the impact which seismic prospecting or any subsequent activities — should they take place — are likely to have on sectors of strategic importance to Castellon, such as tourism and fishing, or their serious environmental impact.

3D seismic imaging involves the injection of 259 decibels into the sea, which would cause the instant death of fish and crustaceans and irreparable damage to marine fauna, as well as driving fish away. It would take years to reverse this damage.

What steps does the Commission intend to take, within its powers, to prevent irreversible damage being caused to the SPAMI, SCI and SPA of the Columbretes Islands and their immediate surroundings?

Question for written answer E-001378/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(11 February 2014)

Subject: Application of Directive 2008/56/EC in Spain

In October, there are plans to launch seismic probes to map out oil locations between the Valencian coastline and the Balearic Islands ([1]). The company has carried out an environmental study on which the tests will be based (acoustic emissions of up to 265 decibels every ten seconds) in order to obtain information on whether or not hydrocarbons are present. The document admits that there is a risk of fish being killed or fleeing the area, with the corresponding effects this will have on the fishing sector. The proposal seems to fly in the face of the recommendation made by the Spanish Ministry for the Environment's Directorate General for Sustainability of the Sea and Coastline that probes should not be used in areas where shellfish are present, so as to preserve an area of special protection known as a 'shellfish migration corridor'.

Fishermen are worried about the potential reduction in their hauls as a result of shoals fleeing the area because of the seismic tests (the associations pointed to the example of Norway). These tests will affect 180 protected species, 50 of which are in the highest category of protection ([2]).

One of the goals of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (Directive 2008/56/EC) is to protect and restore European marine ecosystems and guarantee the ecological viability of economic activities relating to the marine environment from now until 2021.

Does this project comply with the abovementioned Directive?

Does this project comply with Directive 92/43/EEC relating to the conservation of habitats?

([1]) http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2014/01/08/valencia/1389207641_491621.html?rel=rosEP
([2]) http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2014/02/03/valencia/1391437531_354208.html

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2014)

The Commission is aware of the proposed hydrocarbon activities off the coast of Valencia and has asked for more information on this issue. The Spanish authorities have provided information to clarify how relevant EU environmental legislation is being implemented and how the environmental aspects of the proposed activities are being taken into account, in particular those arising from the Habitats ([3]) and Birds ([4]) Directives, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive ([5]) and the Barcelona Convention. Based on the information provided by the authorities in August 2013, no evidence was found of a breach of EU legislation or of the provisions of the Barcelona Convention.

Now that the Environment Impact Assessment referred to by the Honourable Member has been published, the competent authorities in Spain will need to decide whether or not to permit the proposed activities. The Commission has asked to be informed of the results of the EIA and of any subsequent authorisation decision.

([3]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.
([4]) Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds.
([5]) Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001283/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(7 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Αυξήσεις στις τιμές των διοδίων στην Ελλάδα

Έντονες αντιδράσεις προκαλούν στους έλληνες καταναλωτές οι τελευταίες αυξήσεις στα διόδια που τέθηκαν σε εφαρμογή και φτάνουν σε ορισμένες περιπτώσεις μέχρι και το 60%. Σύμφωνα με την κοινοτική οδηγία, η ύπαρξη διοδίων βασίζεται στην αρχή της ανάκτησης του κόστους των υποδομών.

Σημειώνεται ότι το εισόδημα των ελληνικών νοικοκυριών έχει μειωθεί δραματικά, οι αυξήσεις έγιναν χωρίς να έχει γίνει επανεκκίνηση των έργων, ενώ ήδη οι εργολάβοι έχουν εισπράξει περίπου 1,3 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ για την έναρξη των έργων υποδομής από το ελληνικό δημόσιο. Παράλληλα, σε πολλούς από τους αυτοκινητοδρόμους στους οποίους έχουν τοποθετηθεί σταθμοί διοδίων δεν πληρούνται όλες οι προδιαγραφές ασφάλειας, όπως αυτές ορίζονται από την ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία.

Σύμφωνα με τα παραπάνω ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Είναι σύμφωνη με την ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία μια τόσο μεγάλη αύξηση στις τιμές των διοδίων, από τη στιγμή που η συντήρηση στα εν λόγω οδικά δίκτυα είναι σχεδόν ανύπαρκτη, ενώ, επιπλέον, δεν έχουν ξεκινήσει νέα έργα;

2. Σύμφωνα με στατιστικά στοιχεία που διαθέτει η Επιτροπή, λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τη συνάρτηση ποιότητας τιμής, τι θέση κατέχει η Ελλάδα συγκριτικά με τα υπόλοιπα κράτη μέλη στις τιμές των διοδίων;

Απάντηση του κ. Kallas εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Μαρτίου 2014)

1. Η νομοθεσία της ΕΕ σχετικά με τα τέλη χρήσης του οδικού δικτύου ([1]) εφαρμόζεται μόνο στα βαρέα φορτηγά οχήματα, βάσει δε αυτής απαιτείται το ύψος των διοδίων για τα εν λόγω οχήματα να στηρίζεται στην αρχή της ανάκτησης του κόστους των υποδομών. Η Επιτροπή δεν ενημερώθηκε από τις ελληνικές αρχές για την αύξηση των διοδίων που ισχύουν για τα βαρέα φορτηγά οχήματα, θα διερευνήσει όμως περαιτέρω το θέμα κατόπιν της ερώτησης του κ. βουλευτή.

Δεν υπάρχει ειδική νομοθεσία της ΕΕ σχετικά με τα τέλη χρήσης του οδικού δικτύου από άλλους τύπους οχημάτων, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των επιβατικών αυτοκινήτων. Τα κράτη μέλη μπορούν να καθορίζουν ελεύθερα το ύψος των διοδίων αυτών, εφόσον τηρούν τις θεμελιώδεις αρχές της Συνθήκης, και ιδίως την αρχή της απαγόρευσης των διακρίσεων λόγω ιθαγένειας (άρθρο 18 της Συνθήκης για τη λειτουργία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης). Κατά συνέπεια, στα διόδια για οχήματα διαφορετικά από τα βαρέα φορτηγά δεν υφίσταται υποχρέωση τήρησης της αρχής της ανάκτησης του κόστους των υποδομών.

2. Δεν υπάρχει από κοινού συμφωνημένος δείκτης μέτρησης της ποιότητας του οδικού δικτύου στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση. Υφιστάμενοι δείκτες, όπως ο δείκτης ποιότητας του οδικού δικτύου που ανέπτυξε το Παγκόσμιο Οικονομικό Φόρουμ στην παγκόσμια έκθεση για την ανταγωνιστικότητα, βασίζονται σε υποκειμενικές απαντήσεις των εμπλεκόμενων παραγόντων σε ερωτηματολόγιο, με αμφισβητήσιμα αποτελέσματα.

Επίσης, τα κράτη μέλη δεν υπέχουν υποχρέωση υποβολής έκθεσης στην Επιτροπή σχετικά με την ποιότητα των οδικών τους δικτύων.

Για τους ανωτέρω λόγους, η Επιτροπή δεν έχει υπόψη της τυχόν αξιόπιστες πηγές σύγκρισης των δεικτών ύψους διοδίων προς ποιότητα οδικού δικτύου σε διάφορα κράτη μέλη.

([1]) Οδηγία 1999/62/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 17ης Ιουνίου 1999, περί επιβολής τελών στα βαρέα φορτηγά οχήματα που χρησιμοποιούν ορισμένα έργα υποδομής (ΕΕ L 187 της 20.7.1999), όπως έχει τροποποιηθεί.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001283/14
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(7 February 2014)

Subject: Increases in toll charges in Greece

Greek consumers have reacted angrily to the latest increases in toll charges which in some cases are up by 60%. According to the relevant EU directive, tolls are based on the principle of recovering the cost of the infrastructure.

It should be noted that the income of Greek households has decreased dramatically, the increases have been introduced without projects restarting, and contractors have already received about EUR 1.3 billion from the Greek Government for starting infrastructure projects. At the same time, many of the highways on which tollbooths have been erected do not meet all the safety standards set out in EU legislation.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Are such large increases in toll charges in keeping with European legislation, since maintenance work on these roads is virtually non-existent, and, moreover, no new projects have been launched?

2. According to statistics available to the Commission, taking into account the connection between quality and cost, what position does Greece occupy, in relation to the other Member States, as regards toll charges?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(24 March 2014)

1. EU legislation on road pricing ([1]) applies only to heavy goods vehicles and requires tolls for these vehicles to be based on the principle of infrastructure cost recovery. The Commission has not been notified by the Greek authorities of an increase in tolls applying to heavy goods vehicles, but will enquire on the subject further to the Honourable Member's question.

There is no specific EU legislation on road pricing for other types of vehicles, including for passenger cars. Member States may freely decide on the level of such tolls as long as they respect the basic principles of the Treaty, and in particular the principle of non-discrimination on the basis of nationality (Article 18 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union). Consequently, tolls for vehicles other than heavy goods vehicles do not have to be based on the principle of infrastructure cost recovery.

2. There is no commonly agreed indicator for measuring road quality in the European Union. Existing indicators, such as the indicator of the quality of roads developed by the World Economic Forum in the Global Competitiveness Report, are based on subjective answers by stakeholders to a questionnaire and provide questionable results.

There is also no obligation for Member States to report to the Commission on the quality of their roads.

For the above reasons, the Commission does not know of any reliable sources to compare the toll/road quality ratios in different Member States.

([1]) Directive 1999/62/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 1999 on the charging of heavy goods vehicles for the use of certain infrastructures, OJ L 187, 20.7.1999, as amended.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001284/14
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(7 February 2014)

Subject: Road safety on highways in Kenya part-financed by EU

I understand that the EU Rural Roads Rehabilitation Project supports Kenya's roads maintenance plan (2010-2017). The target is the rehabilitation and construction of over 4 000 km of roads and the setting-up of routine maintenance for around 38 000 km.

It is said that the overall objective is to reduce transport costs and travel time, as well as to 'improve road safety and thereby facilitate higher economic growth, employment and improved living standards'. In addition, 'a well-managed network of safe rural roads will be created in five regions of the Eastern Province of Kenya'. ([1])

I am informed by a constituent that a stretch of the A104 road in Kenya, a busy part of the Northern Corridor, was upgraded in 2008 with funding from the EU. It has been said that the funding was used for the building of the road, but that little was spent on appropriate road safety. It is claimed that people waiting for buses have been run over, that cars and lorries speed at 130 km/h, and that the road was built with no provision for overtaking or protection for pedestrians.

Can the Commission confirm what requirements regarding road safety, if any, have been attached to the funding Kenya has received as part of the EU Rural Roads Rehabilitation Project?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

Road safety continues to be a major challenge experienced by the Government of Kenya, a challenge it shares with many African countries. The situation is exacerbated by growing traffic volumes along major regional corridors that traverse towns and trading centres with growing populations. Consequently, it is becoming more widespread for non-motorised traffic (pedestrians and cyclists) to share the road space with motorised traffic, in some instances travelling at high speeds. Statistics show that pedestrians are most affected by accidents.

While the rural roads rehabilitation programme does not include any requirements on road safety, the EU is actively engaged in supporting the Government of Kenya with a comprehensive approach to road safety. This approach includes engineering measures (see annex for details), educational programmes as well as support to the enforcement of traffic rules.

In addition, the EU is currently supporting the newly established National Transport and Safety Authority (NTSA) with legislative proposals and technical specifications for speed cameras and breathalysers to reduce incidents of drivers speeding and driving under the influence of alcohol. The programme also aims to build capacity with the design and implementation of campaigns in a bid to improve road safety awareness amongst motorists and pedestrians. Finally, the programme supports the NTSA with the collection and analysis of crash data with a view to helping the Authority to better target its road safety interventions.

([1]) IP/12/882.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001285/14
a la Comisión
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE) y Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(7 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Nuevas pruebas de la violación del Acuerdo sobre normas internacionales de captura no cruel (pregunta complementaria a E-010289/2012 y E-003294/2013)

El 22 de enero de 2013, el Comisario Potočnik respondió a la pregunta escrita E 010289/2012, indicando que la Comisión había iniciado una consulta con los EE.UU. en un esfuerzo para alcanzar una solución aceptable para ambos sobre el asunto. Los EE.UU. han solicitado tiempo para analizar el informe elaborado por la asociación italiana sin ánimo de lucro Lega Anti-Vivisezione (LAV), que demuestra que el uso de cepos es una práctica extendida, regulada y autorizada en los EE.UU. Considerando que la firma del Acta aprobada (DO 219/26 de 7 de agosto de 1998) no se puede ver como una oportunidad para usar libremente dispositivos que por su diseño y funcionamiento están totalmente incluidos en la definición del artículo 1 del Reglamento (CEE) n° 3254/91 del Consejo, la Comisión ha respondido a la pregunta escrita E-003294/2013 afirmando que no puede suspender la importación de pieles antes de que concluya el proceso de investigación ni antes de que se haya confirmado el uso de métodos de captura crueles.

Dado que la Comisión manifestó su preocupación por este asunto en primera instancia, se han presentado pruebas adicionales, entre otras:

a) El II Informe LAV de 2013 titulado «Pruebas de violaciones (CE-EE.UU.) de las normas internacionales de captura no cruel» ([1]), que demuestra que los cepos se usan habitualmente en los EE.UU. para capturar animales a fin de comercializar pieles en el mercado europeo y

b) El informe de 2013 del Ministerio de Salud italiano titulado «Dictamen técnico y científico sobre el cumplimiento de las normas internacionales de captura no cruel entre la UE y los EE.UU. de los dispositivos de captura utilizados en USA para capturar animales silvestres» ([2]), que demuestra la incompatibilidad de los dispositivos existentes con las normas de captura no cruel y la legislación europea.

A la luz de lo anterior,

1. ¿Prohibirá la Comisión la importación de todas las pieles y productos de peletería derivados de animales no criados a tal efecto (y, por tanto, de especies distintas del visón, zorro, coatí y chinchilla) y procedentes de países en los que está permitida la venta de cualquier dispositivo de captura comprendido en la definición de «cepo» en virtud del artículo 1 del Reglamento (CEE) n° 3254/91?

2. ¿Exigirá la Comisión para la importación de pieles y productos de peletería derivados de visones, zorros, coatíes y chinchillas (y de cualquier otra especie cuya cadena de suministro esté vinculada con su cría) un etiquetado explícito para cada artículo (y para cada lote de pieles) con la indicación de que las pieles proceden de animales criados a tal fin y del país de cría?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de marzo de 2014)

La UE ha seguido solicitando la atención de las autoridades estadounidenses para aclarar las alegaciones mencionadas en la pregunta, principalmente con motivo de la reunión del quinto Comité mixto de gestión (CMG) celebrada en octubre de 2013. El informe de dicha reunión se hará público de acuerdo con el reglamento interno del CMG, una vez se haya concluido.

El Acta aprobada fija un plazo de ocho años (hasta julio de 2016) en el que las autoridades estadounidenses competentes eliminarán progresivamente los métodos de captura crueles de las especies amparadas por el Acuerdo. Por su parte, los Estados Unidos han informado sobre los avances conseguidos en la aplicación de las mejores prácticas de gestión y los programas de formación de tramperos. Asimismo, han informado de planes para realizar en 2014 un nuevo estudio sobre la propiedad y la utilización de los cepos en el territorio estadounidense. Los Estados Unidos tienen la esperanza de que este estudio demuestre que los métodos de captura conformes con el Acta aprobada gozan de una gran aceptación y son utilizados ampliamente.

([1]) II Informe LAV, 2013, Pruebas de violaciones (CE-EE.UU.) de las normas internacionales de captura no cruel http://issuu.com/lavonlus6/docs/lav_report_ii__sep_2013__-_iahts__e
([2]) http://www.salute.gov.it/imgs/C_17_pagineAree_205_listaFile_itemName_1_file.pdf

El Reglamento (CEE) n° 3254/91 del Consejo ([3]) no prohíbe de forma absoluta las importaciones de pieles de los países donde el uso de cepos de captura cruel no están prohibidos y permite explícitamente las importaciones de los países en los que los métodos de captura cumplen las normas de captura no cruel acordadas internacionalmente. Se ha certificado que varios cepos de captura cruel que han sido mejorados cumplen las normas previstas en el Acta aprobada y en el Acuerdo sobre normas internacionales de captura no cruel ([4]).

La Comisión no tiene previsto actualmente presentar ninguna iniciativa legislativa al respecto.

([3]) DO L 308 de 9.11.1991, p. 1.
([4]) DO L 42 de 14.2.1998, p. 42.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001285/14
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE) e Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(7 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Ulteriori prove sulla violazione degli accordi sulle norme internazionali in materia di catture mediante trappole senza crudeltà (IAHTS) (seguito dato alle interrogazioni E-010289/2012 e E 003294/2013)

Il 22 gennaio 2013, rispondendo all'interrogazione E-010289/2012, il Commissario Potočnik ha fatto sapere che la Commissione ha avviato le consultazioni con gli USA con l'impegno di trovare una soluzione reciprocamente accettabile nei confronti della questione. Gli Stati Uniti avevano chiesto del tempo per esaminare la relazione presentata dalla LAV (Lega anti-vivisezione, associazione italiana senza fini di lucro), in cui si dimostra che negli Stati Uniti l'uso di tagliole rappresenta una pratica diffusa, regolamentata e autorizzata. Dato che la firma del verbale concordato (GU L 219/26 del 7 agosto 1998) non può essere ritenuta un'opportunità per utilizzare liberamente i dispositivi che, in virtù della loro progettazione e del loro funzionamento, sono integralmente coperti dalla definizione dell'articolo 1 del regolamento (CEE) n. 3254/91 del Consiglio, la Commissione ha risposto all'interrogazione scritta E-003294/2013 sostenendo che «[la Commissione] non può sospendere le importazioni di pellicce finché le indagini non sono terminate e finché non è dimostrato che negli USA si impiegano metodi di cattura crudeli».

Dalla data in cui la Commissione è venuta a conoscenza della questione sono state presentate ulteriori prove, tra cui:

a) la relazione II LAV del 2013 intitolata «IAHTS (EC-USA) Evidences of Violations» ([1]), in cui si dimostra che le tagliole sono utilizzate di routine negli USA per catturare animali e commercializzare le pellicce sul mercato europeo; e

b) la relazione del 2013 del ministero della Salute intitolata «Parere tecnico-scientifico circa la incompatibilità dei dispositivi di cattura impiegati negli USA per la cattura di animali selvatici rispetto agli standard del verbale concordato tra UE e USA noto come International Agreement on Humane Trapping Standards» ([2]), in cui si dimostra l'incompatibilità dei dispositivi di cattura esistenti con le norme di cattura mediante trappole senza crudeltà e con la normativa europea.

Alla luce di quanto precede:

1. Intende la Commissione vietare le importazioni di tutti gli articoli di pelle e di pelliccia derivanti da animali non allevati appositamente (e pertanto non appartenenti alle specie di visone, volpe, cane procione e cincillà) e provenienti da paesi in cui è ammessa la vendita di dispositivi di cattura associati alla definizione di «tagliola» di cui all'articolo 1 del regolamento (CEE) n. 3254/91?

2. Intende imporre, per l'importazione di articoli di pelle e di pelliccia derivanti da visoni, volpi, cani procioni e cincillà (e di ogni altra specie proveniente in modo comprovato da allevamenti), un'etichettatura specifica per ogni singolo articolo (e per ogni lotto di pelle) in cui sia indicato che le pellicce provengono da animali allevati appositamente e il paese di allevamento?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(31 marzo 2014)

L'UE ha continuato a collaborare con le autorità statunitensi al fine di chiarire le affermazioni citate nell'interrogazione, in particolare a margine della 5a riunione del comitato di gestione misto svoltasi in ottobre 2013. Una volta completata, la relazione di questa riunione sarà resa pubblica conformemente al regolamento interno del comitato.

Il verbale concordato fissa un periodo di 8 anni (fino al luglio 2016) nel corso del quale le autorità statunitensi competenti si sono impegnate ad eliminare gradualmente i metodi di cattura mediante trappole con crudeltà per le specie contemplate nell'accordo. Gli americani hanno segnalato progressi nell'attuazione delle buone pratiche di gestione e dei programmi di sensibilizzazione dei cacciatori mediante trappole (*Trappers Education Programmes*). Gli americani hanno anche riferito la loro intenzione di effettuare nel corso del 2014 un'indagine sulla proprietà e l'utilizzo delle trappole nel territorio statunitense. A loro parere l'indagine permetterà di dimostrare l'ampia accettazione e l'utilizzo diffuso di metodi di cattura mediante trappole conformi al verbale concordato.

([1]) Relazione II LAV del 2013, «IAHTS (EC-USA) Evidences of Violations». http://issuu.com/lavonlus6/docs/lav_report_ii__sep_2013__-_iahts__e.
([2]) http://www.salute.gov.it/imgs/C_17_pagineAree_205_listaFile_itemName_1_file.pdf

Il regolamento (CEE) n. 3254/91 ([3]) non stabilisce il divieto assoluto di importazione delle pellicce da paesi in cui l'uso di tagliole non è vietato, bensì autorizza esplicitamente le importazioni da paesi nei quali i metodi di cattura sono conformi alle norme concordate a livello internazionale in materia di cattura mediante trappole senza crudeltà. Varie trappole perfezionate sono state riconosciute conformi alle norme stabilite nel verbale concordato e nell'accordo sulle norme internazionali relative a metodi di cattura non crudeli ([4]).

Attualmente la Commissione non ha in progetto di presentare un'iniziativa legislativa su questo tema.

([3]) GU L 308 del 9.11.1991.
([4]) GU L 42 del 14 febbraio 1998, pag. 42.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001285/14
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE) and Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(7 February 2014)

Subject: Further evidence of violation of the International Agreements on Humane Trapping Standards (IAHTS) (follow-up question to E-010289/2012 and E-003294/2013)

On 22 January 2013, Commissioner Potočnik replied to Written Question E-010289/2012, indicating that the Commission had started a consultation with the USA in an effort to reach a mutually acceptable solution to the matter in question. The USA has asked for time to examine the report produced by the Italian non-profit association Lega Anti-Vivisezione (LAV), which shows that the use of leghold traps is a widespread, regulated and authorised practice in the USA. Whereas the signing of the Agreed Minutes (OJ L 219/26 of 7 August 1998) cannot be regarded as an opportunity to use freely devices which, by their design and functioning, are fully covered by the definition in Article 1 of Council Regulation (EEC) No 3254/91, the Commission has responded to Written Question E-003294/2013 by saying that '[it] cannot suspend imports of furs before the end of the investigation process and before any non-humane trapping methods in the US have been confirmed'.

Since the Commission first became concerned about this matter, further evidence has been produced, including:

(a) the 2013 LAV Report II entitled 'IAHTS (EC-USA) Evidences of Violations' ([1]), which demonstrates how leghold traps are routinely used in the USA to catch animals in order to market the furs on the European market, and;

(b) the 2013 Italian Ministry of Health report entitled 'Technical and scientific opinion about the compliance of trapping devices used in the USA to capture wild animals with standards set out in the Agreed Minute known as International Agreement on Humane Trapping Standards between the EU and the USA' ([2]), which demonstrates the incompatibility of existing capture devices with the Humane Trapping Standards and European legislation.

In light of the above:

1. Will the Commission forbid imports of all skins and fur products derived from animals not specially bred (and therefore species other than mink, fox, raccoon dog and chinchillas) and originating from countries in which the sale of any capture devices associated with the definition of 'leghold trap' under Article 1 of Regulation (EEC) No 3254/91 is allowed?

2. Will the Commission require, for the import of skins and fur products derived from mink, fox, raccoon dog, chinchillas (and every other species for which the supply chain from farming is proved), explicit labelling for every single article (and for each batch of skins) stating that the furs are made from animals specially bred and indicating the country of rearing?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 2014)

The EU has continued to engage the US authorities with a view to clarifying the allegations referred to in the question, notably in the margins of the 5th Joint Management Committee meeting (JMC) in October 2013. The report of this meeting will be made public in line with the JMC rules of procedures once it is finalised.

The Agreed Minute sets a timeframe of 8 years (until July 2016) within which the competent US authorities will phase out inhumane trapping methods for the species covered by the Agreement. The US side has reported progress in implementing Best Management Practices and Trappers Education Programmes. The US side further reported on plans to conduct during 2014 a new survey of trap ownership and use on US territory. US expectations are that the survey will demonstrate wide acceptance and use of trapping methods that are in accordance with the Agreed Minute.

Council Regulation (EEC) No 3254/91 ([3]) does not lay down an absolute prohibition of imports of pelts from countries where the use of leghold traps is not prohibited. It explicitly allows imports from countries where trapping methods meet the internationally agreed humane trapping standards. Several improved leghold traps have been certified as compliant with the standards included in the Agreed Minute and in the AIHTS ([4]).

The Commission is currently not planning to put forward any legislative initiative on this subject.

([1]) LAV Report II, 2013, IAHTS (EC-USA) Evidences of Violations http://issuu.com/lavonlus6/docs/lav_report_ii__sep_2013__-_iahts__e
([2]) http://www.salute.gov.it/imgs/C_17_pagineAree_205_listaFile_itemName_1_file.pdf
([3]) OJ L 308, 9.11.1991.
([4]) OJ L 42/42 of 14 February 1998.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001287/14
do Komisji
Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)
(7 lutego 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Sytuacja bezdomnych psów w Rumunii

Posłowie do Parlamentu Europejskiego otrzymują wiele listów od obywateli Rumunii i innych krajów, informujących o brutalnych i niehumanitarnych metodach likwidowania bezdomnych psów w Rumunii. W związku z tymi sygnałami dwukrotnie odwiedziłem Rumunię i uzyskane tam informacje oraz własne obserwacje potwierdzają niestety płynące od obywateli sygnały o niehumanitarnym traktowaniu bezdomnych zwierząt. Wiąże się z tym nie tylko cierpienie zwierząt, ale i wrażliwych na krzywdę zwierząt ludzi, bezradnych wobec dokonujących się na ich oczach aktów okrucieństwa.

Pragnę zapytać, czy Komisja zna tę sytuację, czy otrzymuje podobne sygnały, czy podejmuje bądź zamierza podjąć jakieś działania w tej sprawie?

Proszę również Komisję o wyjaśnienie, czy w ramach środków pomocowych Unii Europejskiej przewidzianych w budżecie na lata 2014-2020 istnieje możliwość uzyskania unijnego wsparcia na działania zmierzające do humanitarnego ograniczenia populacji bezdomnych psów, takie jak sterylizacja, adopcja czy utrzymywanie schronisk?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(25 marca 2014 r.)

Pozwalam sobie skierować Szanownego Pana Posła do odpowiedzi na zapytania wymagające odpowiedzi na piśmie E-006543/2011, E-007161/2011, E-002062/2012 oraz E-005276/2013 ([1]) dotyczące kwestii bezpańskich psów i kontroli populacji psów.

W duchu Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej, w szczególności jego art. 13, w którym przypomniano, że zwierzęta są istotami zdolnymi do odczuwania, Komisja przypomniała rumuńskiemu ministrowi zdrowia kluczową rolę właściwych organów krajowych w zapewnianiu pełnej zgodności z zaleceniami Światowej Organizacji Zdrowia Zwierząt (OIE) dotyczącymi kontroli populacji bezpańskich psów.

Władze rumuńskie odpowiedziały na pismo Komisji, udzielając informacji na temat aktualnej sytuacji i podjętych przez nie kroków. Informacje zostały przekazane zainteresowanym organom państw członkowskich na forum Stałego Komitetu ds. Łańcucha Żywnościowego i Zdrowia Zwierząt.

Kompetencje UE nie pozwalają Komisji na finansowanie programów kontroli bezpańskich psów.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001287/14
to the Commission
Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)
(7 February 2014)

Subject: Stray dogs in Romania

MEPs receive many letters from members of the public in Romania and other countries concerning the brutal and inhumane methods being used to get rid of stray dogs in Romania. I have visited Romania twice in response to these reports of the inhumane treatment of stray animals, which, unfortunately, are borne out by the information I obtained in the country and my first-hand observations. This is not just a matter of animal suffering but also of suffering on the part of animal lovers who are helpless in the face of the acts of cruelty being carried out before their very eyes.

Is the Commission aware of this situation? Is it receiving similar reports? Is it taking or is it intending to take any action on this matter?

Could the Commission state whether there is a possibility for financial assistance from the EU budget for 2014-2020 to be used to support action to control the stray dog population humanely, such as sterilisation, adoption or support for animal shelters?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(25 March 2014)

The Honourable Member is invited to refer to the answers to written questions E-006543/2011, E-007161/2011, E-002062/2012 and E-005276/2013 ([1]) which address the issues of stray dogs and of dog population management.

In the spirit of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and in particular its Article 13 which acknowledges that animals are sentient beings, the Commission reminded to the Romanian Minister of Health the critical role of the national competent authorities in ensuring the full compliance with the OIE recommendations on stray dog population control.

The Romanian authorities have replied to the Commission letter providing information on the situation and the initiatives taken. The information has been shared with Member States authorities in the framework of the Standing Committee on the Food and Animal Health Chain.

EU competences do not allow the Commission to fund stray dog control programs.

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001288/14
alla Commissione
Clemente Mastella (PPE)
(7 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Rapporto UE sulla corruzione in Italia

Secondo un recente rapporto della Commissione europea, la corruzione in Italia varrebbe 60 miliardi di euro, ovvero la metà dei 120 miliardi, totale registrato in tutti gli Stati membri dell'Unione europea.

Nel rapporto in questione si sottolineano varie carenze, tra cui la nuova legge italiana contro la corruzione, che lascerebbe irrisolti alcuni problemi come la disciplina della prescrizione, la legge sul falso in bilancio, l'autoriciclaggio, la non introduzione dei reati per il voto di scambio, il conflitto di interesse. Questa legge, sempre secondo il rapporto UE, frammenterebbe le disposizioni sulla concussione e la corruzione, rischiando di dare adito ad ambiguità nella pratica e limitando ulteriormente la discrezionalità dell'azione penale.

Giudizi pesanti sono formulati anche in merito alla prescrizione, un problema particolarmente serio per la lotta alla corruzione in Italia, perché termini, regole e metodi di calcolo, sommati alla lunghezza dei processi, determinerebbero l'estinzione di un gran numero di procedimenti.

La Commissione suggerisce inoltre all'Italia di bloccare l'adozione di leggi cosiddette «ad personam»: nel rapporto si evidenzia che «in Italia i legami tra politici, criminalità organizzata e imprese, e lo scarso livello di integrità dei titolari di cariche elettive e di governo sarebbero tra gli aspetti più preoccupanti».

Si chiede pertanto alla Commissione:

1. di indicare, innanzitutto, le fonti da cui sono state estrapolate tali cifre, che risultano essere sproporzionate e che soprattutto rischiano di creare grandi problemi di reputazione e di immagine all'Italia;

2. di indicare poi quali sono i criteri che hanno condotto a tale conclusione, se si è in presenza solo di una percezione o di una teoria, oppure di dati realmente dimostrabili.

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(26 marzo 2014)

La stima di 120 miliardi di euro per il costo annuo della corruzione negli Stati membri dell'UE, presentata per la prima volta dalla Commissione nella comunicazione del 2011 sulla lotta alla corruzione nell'UE, si basa su stime di istituti e organi specializzati, quali la Camera di commercio internazionale, Transparency International, il Global Compact delle Nazioni Unite e il Forum economico mondiale, secondo le quali la corruzione rappresenta il 5 % del PIL mondiale. Il dato riguardante l'UE è calcolato in base a una stima prudente della corruzione nell'UE pari all'1 % del PIL.

Le informazioni contestuali sull'impatto stimato della corruzione, figuranti nel capitolo relativo all'Italia della relazione dell'Unione sulla lotta alla corruzione, mirano ad illustrare gli sforzi nazionali in questo ambito. Su questa stima la Commissione non effettua analisi né trae conclusioni. Nessuna stima a livello nazionale, che si tratti dell'Italia o di qualunque altro Stato membro, può essere utilmente confrontata con il costo globale stimato della corruzione nell'UE, poiché derivano da processi e si basano su metodologie diverse. La Commissione non formula supposizioni sul peso del costo stimato della corruzione in un determinato Stato membro rispetto alla stima globale dell'UE.

Per quanto riguarda le conclusioni su ciascun paese, queste sono spiegate approfonditamente nel rispettivo capitolo, che analizza in dettaglio i principali aspetti della corruzione. La relazione dell'Unione sulla lotta alla corruzione si basa sui lavori di organizzazioni internazionali, tra cui il Consiglio d'Europa, l'OCSE e l'ONU, aggiungendo informazioni raccolte dalla Commissione tramite un'ampia gamma di fonti e in base all'analisi della Commissione stessa. La metodologia usata per la raccolta e la valutazione dei dati è illustrata in dettaglio nell'allegato della relazione ([1]).

([1]) Consultabile all'indirizzo http://ec.europa.eu/anti-corruption-report/ (pagg. 37-41).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001288/14
to the Commission
Clemente Mastella (PPE)
(7 February 2014)

Subject: EU report on corruption in Italy

According to a recent report by the Commission, corruption in Italy is allegedly worth EUR 60 billion, i.e. half of EUR 120 billion, which is the total recorded figure for all EU Member States.

The report in question highlights several shortcomings, including the new Italian anti-corruption law, which allegedly leaves certain issues unaddressed, such as the statute of limitations, the law on false accounting, self-laundering, the failure to provide for vote-buying offences and conflicts of interest. This law, according to the EU report, fragments the criminal provisions on bribery and corruption, which could lead to ambiguities in practice and further limit discretion for prosecution.

Highly critical judgments were also expressed on the statute of limitations, which is a particularly serious problem as regards the fight against corruption in Italy, because the terms, rules and methods of calculation, in addition to the length of trials, led to a large number of cases becoming time-barred.

The Commission also suggests that Italy halt the adoption of so-called *ad personam* laws: the report notes that 'the relationship between politicians, organised crime and businesses, and the degree of integrity within the ranks of elected and appointed officials, are among the most present concerns in Italy'.

Can the Commission therefore say:

1. first of all, from which sources it has extrapolated these figures, which appear to be disproportionate and which, above all, are likely to create major problems for the reputation and image of Italy;

2. which criteria led to this conclusion, whether it is merely a perception or theory, or whether it is based on real evidence?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2014)

The estimate of EUR 120 billion as the annual cost in EU Member States of corruption, first presented in the 2011 Commission Communication for Fighting Corruption in the EU, is based on estimates by specialised institutions and bodies, such as the International Chamber of Commerce, Transparency International, UN Global Compact and the World Economic Forum, which suggest that corruption amounts to 5% of GDP at world level. The EU figure is based on the careful estimate that corruption amounts to 1% of GDP in the EU.

The background information on the estimated impact of corruption provided in the chapter on Italy of the EU Anti-Corruption Report aimed at illustrating national efforts in this area. The Commission did not base any analysis or conclusion on this estimate. No estimate at national level, whether related to Italy or any other Member State, can be usefully compared with the abovementioned EU-wide estimate of the overall cost of corruption, as they do not stem from the same process, nor do they follow the same methodology. The Commission has not made any assumption as to the weight of the estimated cost of corruption in a given Member State as compared to the overall EU estimate.

As regards the country-specific conclusions, these are explained in depth in each country chapter, where the issues in focus are analysed in detail. The EU Anti-Corruption Report draws on the work of international organisations including the Council of Europe, the OECD, and the UN, but it also adds information collected by the Commission from a wide range of sources and the Commission's own analysis. The methodology for data collection and assessment is detailed in an annex to the EU Anti-Corruption Report ([1]).

([1]) Available at http://ec.europa.eu/anti-corruption-report/ (pages 37-41).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001289/14
alla Commissione
Carlo Fidanza (PPE), Marco Scurria (PPE) e Magdi Cristiano Allam (EFD)
(7 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Rapporto trimestrale sull'area euro (Quarterly Report EU area)

Nel mese di dicembre 2013, la Commissione europea ha pubblicato il rapporto trimestrale sull'area euro.

La Commissione assume che, in assenza di riforme, i tassi di crescita economica nel prossimo decennio saranno sostanzialmente inferiori rispetto ai livelli pre-crisi, in media nell'ordine dell'1 % (e di circa la metà degli Stati Uniti), per poi gradualmente convergere verso il 2023. Nel 2023 la disoccupazione dell'area euro sarà più alta rispetto ai tempi pre-crisi (il tenore di vita più basso rispetto agli anni '60) e rappresenterà circa il 60 % dei livelli statunitensi, mentre nel lungo termine l'impatto della crisi porterebbe ad una perdita del 5 % del livello della produzione potenziale dell'area euro rispetto alle stime più attendibili elaborate secondo uno scenario in assenza di crisi. La Commissione sostiene che il quadro potrebbe migliorare se gli Stati membri proseguissero sulla strada delle riforme strutturali in linea con le raccomandazioni e le priorità definite nel contesto del Semestre europeo e del nuovo quadro di governance economica, in modo particolare adottando misure in grado di rilanciare la crescita ed intervenendo sulla produttività del lavoro. Inoltre, nel rapporto si sostiene, ancorché senza argomentare, che, nei paesi dove sono stati messi in atto programmi di aggiustamento delle finanze pubbliche, i tassi di crescita dovrebbero subire un'accelerazione a partire dal 2015. Tuttavia, tali assunzioni sollevano numerosi dubbi dal momento che evidenti sono apparsi i limiti delle politiche di austerity che hanno spinto gli Stati membri già con squilibri eccessivi in una spirale recessiva: ingenti tagli alla spesa pubblica e forti aumenti di tasse hanno prodotto il fallimento delle attività economiche, livelli di disoccupazione fuori controllo e hanno determinato una forte frenata agli investimenti precludendo così anche ogni possibilità di crescita collegata ad una ripresa dell'occupazione.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se, alla luce degli studi prodotti dai suoi stessi servizi e della acclarata insostenibilità delle cosiddette «riforme» a vincoli di bilancio invariati, non intenda rivedere il proprio modus operandi in materia di sorveglianza dei bilanci nazionali;

2. se, in tale contesto, intenda procedere celermente all'elaborazione di una proposta nel segno della golden rule, consentendo lo scorporo dal rapporto del 3 % deficit/PIL delle spese per gli investimenti produttivi, per il cofinanziamento di fondi europei, per il pagamento dei debiti delle pubbliche amministrazioni alle imprese e di ogni altra misura volta ad incidere positivamente sulla crescita economica e il contrasto alla disoccupazione?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(17 marzo 2014)

L'adozione di politiche economiche solide è nell'interesse comune di tutti gli Stati membri. Le politiche di bilancio sono di competenza nazionale, ma sono coordinate anche a livello dell'UE, come previsto dal trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea (TFUE). Il patto di stabilità e crescita (PSC) fornisce il quadro che disciplina la sorveglianza multilaterale delle politiche di bilancio nell'UE sulla base di valori di riferimento specifici per il disavanzo pubblico (3 % del PIL) e per il debito (60 % del PIL). Tali disposizioni sono state recentemente integrate dal cosiddetto «two-pack», costituito da due regolamenti che introducono ulteriori processi di sorveglianza e di monitoraggio per gli Stati membri della zona euro.

La Commissione non intende proporre modifiche a questo quadro intese a introdurre un'ulteriore differenziazione sul fronte della spesa pubblica.

La Commissione è tuttavia consapevole sia della necessità di investire, sia delle difficoltà di attuazione dei progetti in un periodo di forti vincoli di bilancio. Il patto di stabilità e crescita prevede che gli investimenti pubblici siano uno dei fattori di cui la Commissione deve tenere debitamente conto nell'elaborazione della relazione che precede la decisione di avvio di una procedura per i disavanzi eccessivi nei confronti di uno Stato membro. Inoltre, la Commissione ha introdotto una «clausola sugli investimenti» che, alla luce della situazione economica sfavorevole riscontrata di recente nell'UE, consente agli Stati membri di scostarsi temporaneamente dall'obiettivo di bilancio a medio termine o dal percorso di avvicinamento a tale obiettivo per sostenere programmi di investimento cofinanziati dall'UE. La clausola è subordinata a una serie di condizioni, tra cui una crescita negativa o un forte divario negativo tra prodotto effettivo e potenziale nonché il fatto di non essere soggetti alla procedura per i disavanzi eccessivi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001289/14
to the Commission
Carlo Fidanza (PPE), Marco Scurria (PPE) and Magdi Cristiano Allam (EFD)
(7 February 2014)

Subject: Quarterly report on the euro area

In December 2013 the Commission published its Quarterly report on the euro area.

The Commission acknowledges that, without reform, economic growth rates over the next decade will be substantially lower than pre-crisis levels, averaging around 1% (about half the level of the United States), and will then gradually converge towards 2023. In 2023, unemployment in the euro area will be higher than in pre-crisis times (with a lower standard of living than in the 1960s) and will be at approximately 60% of U.S. levels; in the long term, meanwhile, the impact of the crisis will apparently lead to a 5% drop in the level of potential output in the euro area compared to the best estimates if there were no crisis. The Commission argues that the picture could improve if the Member States were to continue implementing structural reforms in line with the recommendations and priorities set out in the European Semester and the new economic governance framework, in particular by adopting measures to boost growth and taking action to improve labour productivity. In addition, the report states, albeit without any firm arguments, that in countries in which public finance adjustment programmes have been implemented, growth rates should increase from 2015.

However, these assumptions raise a number of doubts, given that the limits of austerity policies have been evident. Such policies have pushed Member States which already had excessive imbalances into a downward spiral; huge cuts in public spending and high tax increases have led to the failure of businesses, out-of-control levels of unemployment and a sharp slowdown in investment, thus precluding any possibility of growth connected to higher employment levels.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following questions:

1. In the light of the studies produced by its own services, and of the clear unsustainability of the so-called reforms involving fixed budget constraints, will the Commission not review its *modus operandi* with regard to its supervision of national budgets?

2. In this regard, will it not take swift action to draw up a proposal in accordance with the 'golden rule', to enable expenditure for productive investments, the co-financing of EU funds, the payment of government debts to companies and any other measure that will have a positive impact on economic growth and combating unemployment, to be separated from the 3% deficit/GDP ratio criterion?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(17 March 2014)

Sound economic policies are a matter of shared concern for all Member States. Whereas Member States are responsible for their fiscal policies, these policies are also coordinated at EU level, as provided in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). The Stability and Growth Pact (SGP) provides the framework for multilateral surveillance of fiscal policies in the EU on the basis of specific reference values for government deficit (3% of GDP) and debt (60% of GDP). This framework has been recently complemented by the two-pack which introduces additional surveillance and monitoring processes for euro area Member States.

It is not in the intention of the Commission to propose amendments to this framework in order to introduce further differentiation amid government expenditure.

However, the Commission is mindful of both the need for investment and the difficulties in implementing such projects amid tight fiscal constraints. The SGP foresees that public investments are one of the relevant factors that have to be duly taken into account in the report, which the Commission has to prepare before a decision can be taken to place a Member State in Excessive Deficit Procedure (EDP). Moreover, the Commission has devised an 'investment clause' which, in view of the unfavourable economic situation recently experienced by the EU, allows Member States to temporarily deviate from the Medium-Term-Objective or the adjustment path towards it to accommodate investment programmes co-financed by the EU, subject to a number of conditions, including negative growth or largely negative output gap and being out of the Excessive Deficit Procedure.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-001291/14
alla Commissione
Susy De Martini (ECR)
(10 febbraio 2014)

Oggetto: Sanità — Prevenzione e semestre europeo

Premesso che:

— la prevenzione in campo medico è fondamentale per ridurre i costi per il sistema sanitario nazionale oltreché l'incidenza e gli effetti negativi sulla popolazione;

— nel novembre 2011, il Consiglio e il Parlamento hanno adottato il pacchetto legislativo cosiddetto «six pack» (regolamento (UE) n. 1173/2011; regolamento (UE) n. 1174/2011; regolamento (UE) n. 1175/2013; regolamento (UE) n. 1176/2013; regolamento (UE) n. 1177/2013; direttiva 2011/85/UE dell'8 novembre 2011), che ha introdotto il «semestre europeo»;

— nell'ambito del semestre europeo la Commissione ha il potere di effettuare raccomandazioni agli Stati membri circa l'esecuzione delle politiche fiscali e macroeconomiche e indicare l'attuazione di riforme strutturali, ivi compresa la sanità;

— l'analisi annuale della crescita 2014, che definisce le priorità del semestre europeo in corso (COM(2013) 800 final), raccomanda di riformare i sistemi sanitari degli Stati membri per garantire la loro efficienza e sostenibilità e per assicurare la loro efficacia e adeguatezza a rispondere ai bisogni della popolazione;

— in data 20 novembre 2013 l'interrogante ha presentato un'interrogazione scritta alla Commissione per sapere se la prevenzione in campo medico fosse stata inclusa nel pacchetto di riforme suggerite all'Italia al fine di migliorare la sostenibilità del sistema sanitario nazionale e la salute della popolazione;

— la Commissione ha risposto il 27 gennaio scorso dichiarando che nessuna specifica raccomandazione è stata rivolta all'Italia quando invece ha dichiarato di avere già raccomandato ad Austria, Germania, Finlandia, Lussemburgo e Slovenia di dare maggior risalto alla prevenzione, nel contesto dell'assistenza di lunga durata;

può la Commissione:

1. giustificare tale mancata raccomandazione di riformare una voce importante del bilancio pubblico quale quella rappresentata dalle spese del sistema sanitario nazionale;

2. includere esplicitamente la prevenzione nel pacchetto di riforme suggerite all'Italia nel quadro del prossimo semestre europeo?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(11 marzo 2014)

La selezione di raccomandazioni specifiche per paese nell'ambito del Semestre europeo è il risultato di un'analisi puntuale e dettagliata della situazione di ciascuno Stato membro, delle sfide che esso si trova ad affrontare e del processo di riforma che sta attraversando.

Se è vero che nella maggior parte degli Stati membri al sistema sanitario è destinata una parte sostanziale del bilancio statale, non tutti gli Stati membri hanno ricevuto una raccomandazione a riformarlo. Il numero di raccomandazioni specifiche per paese indirizzate a ciascuno Stato membro deve rimanere limitato per assicurare un intervento efficace impostato su priorità selezionate. Nel caso dell'Italia, la valutazione effettuata dalla Commissione e sottoscritta dal Consiglio europeo ha posto in luce ambiti e settori per i quali attualmente si avverte una maggiore necessità di riforme alla luce degli obiettivi del Semestre europeo. A tutt'oggi la Commissione non ha selezionato la sanità quale ambito prioritario per la riforma in Italia.

Per il momento non è possibile rispondere al quesito dell'Onorevole deputata. La Commissione proporrà un insieme di raccomandazioni specifiche per paese soltanto dopo aver esaminato i programmi nazionali di riforma che gli Stati membri devono presentare ad aprile. Sulla base di tale esame e dopo aver analizzato altre informazioni pertinenti la Commissione dovrebbe proporre le raccomandazioni specifiche per paese entro la prima settimana di giugno.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001291/14
to the Commission
Susy De Martini (ECR)
(10 February 2014)

Subject: Health — Prevention and the European Semester

Given that:

— preventive medicine is vital in order to reduce the cost of national healthcare systems as well as the incidence of disease and the adverse effects on the public;

— in November 2011 the Council and Parliament adopted the legislative package known as the 'six-pack' (Regulation (EU) No 1173/2011; Regulation (EU) No 1174/2011; Regulation (EU) No 1175/2011; Regulation (EU) No 1176/2011; Regulation (EU) No 1177/2011; and Directive 2011/85/EU of 8 November 2011), which marked the start of the 'European Semester';

— the European Semester process allows the Commission to make recommendations to Member States concerning the implementation of fiscal and macroeconomic policies and to suggest structural reforms, which can extend to health;

— the Annual Growth Survey 2014, which lays down the priorities for the European Semester now under way (COM(2013)0800), recommends that the Member States' healthcare systems be reformed in order to make them efficient and sustainable so that they can effectively serve to meet people's needs;

— in a written question tabled on 20 November 2013 the questioner asked the Commission whether preventive medicine had been included in the suggested reform package for Italy with a view to making its national healthcare system more sustainable and improving public health;

— replying to that question on 27 January 2014, the Commission stated that it had not made any specific recommendation to Italy, but had recommended that Austria, Germany, Finland, Luxembourg, and Slovenia focus more strongly on prevention within the context of long-term care;

1. Can the Commission say why it has not made any recommendation calling for reform of expenditure under the Italian healthcare system, bearing in mind that this accounts for such a substantial portion of the state budget?

2. Can it explicitly include prevention in the reform package to be suggested to Italy in the next European Semester?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 March 2014)

The selection of country-specific recommendations in the European Semester is the result of a tailored and detailed analysis of the situation of each Member State, the challenges it faces, and the process of reforms it is undergoing.

Whilst the health system accounts for a substantial portion of the state budget in the majority of Member States, not all of them have received a recommendation to reform it. The number of country-specific recommendations addressed to each Member State shall remain limited, in order to ensure an effective approach which focuses on selected priorities. In the case of Italy, the assessment done by the Commission, and endorsed by the European Council, highlighted areas and sectors which are currently more in need of reforms, in light of the objectives of the European Semester. Up to now, the Commission has not selected health as a priority for reform in Italy.

At the time it is not possible to answer the question of the Honourable Member of the Parliament. The Commission will propose a set of country-specific recommendations only after having assessed the national reform programmes, which Member States will submit in April. On the basis of this assessment, and analysing other relevant information, the Commission is expected to propose the country-specific recommendations by the first week of June.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-001292/14
till kommissionen
Anna Hedh (S&D)
(10 februari 2014)

Angående: Fri rörlighet för EU-medborgare

Den fria rörligheten inom EU har skapat många möjligheter men även nya utmaningar, något som skapat stor debatt i mitt hemland Sverige. I spåren av den ekonomiska krisen har många européer tvingats lämna sina hemländer för att klara sitt uppehälle genom att tigga. En majoritet av de hemlösa EU-migranterna är romer, som ofta drabbas av diskriminering och fattigdom.

När människor enkelt kan röra sig över gränserna måste politiken följa efter. EU-medborgare har förvisso rätt att uppehålla sig i andra EU-länder, men med det följer inte rätten till det nationella välfärdssystemet. Även om socialpolitik främst är en nationell kompetens så måste EU anta en ledande roll för att de resurser som EU tillhandahåller utnyttjas effektivt. EU måste också agera om medlemsländer bryter mot unionens grundläggande principer och inte tar initiativ att förbättra tillvaron för samtliga sina medborgare.

Hur tänker kommissionen åstadkomma en mer effektiv samordning av arbetet för social inkludering av romer, och hur kan EU säkerställa att samtliga medlemsländer använder det EU-stöd som finns tillgängligt? Hur kommer EU arbeta för skapa bättre kontroll- och påtryckningsmekanismer för att se till att medlemsländerna lever upp till de fri- och medborgerliga rättigheterna?

Svar från Viviane Reding på kommissionens vägnar
(13 mars 2014)

Kommissionen stödjer medlemsländerna i deras arbete med att integrera, både socialt och ekonomiskt, romerna inom EU:s ram för nationella strategier för romer. Den fortsätter sina bilaterala utbyten med medlemsländerna, romska intresseföreningar och alla andra berörda parter. I oktober 2012 inrättades ett nätverk med nationella kontaktpunkter för alla EU:s medlemsländer. Syftet var att låta länderna dela med sig av resultaten av sina respektive nationella strategier för integrering av romer, utbyta bästa praxis och ömsesidigt utvärdera deras genomförande.

Den nya fleråriga budgetramen för 2014–2020 stärker det europeiska ekonomiska stödet till integrering av romer genom att underlätta medlemsländernas användning av EU-medel i just detta syfte. För första gången är medlemsländerna skyldiga att använda 20 % av den europeiska socialfonden för social integration.

Vad gäller övervakningen av detta, fortsätter EU:s byrå för grundläggande rättigheter sina undersökningar i hela EU-området angående EU-ramens fyra nyckelområden (utbildning, sysselsättning, hälsa och bostäder) och även angående frågor rörande fattigdom och diskriminering. År 2012 inrättade byrån en ad hoc-arbetsgrupp för att hjälpa de deltagande medlemsländerna (11) att inrätta en effektiv övervakningsmekanism för att erhålla tillförlitliga och jämförbara resultat. Parallellt med detta utvärderar kommissionen varje år medlemsländernas framsteg med att genomföra sina nationella strategier för romer.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001292/14
to the Commission
Anna Hedh (S&D)
(10 February 2014)

Subject: Freedom of movement for EU citizens

Freedom of movement within the EU has created many opportunities, but also new challenges, a state of affairs which has given rise to intensive debate in my home country, Sweden. In the wake of the economic crisis, many people in Europe have been compelled to leave their home countries in order to support themselves by begging. A majority of homeless EU migrants are Roma, and they often encounter discrimination and live in poverty.

When it is easy for people to move across borders, policies must keep pace with developments. EU citizens certainly have the right to reside in other Member States, but it does not follow that they have the right to draw benefits from the national welfare system. Even though social policy is primarily a national matter, the EU should assume a leading role in bringing about effective use of the resources which the EU makes available. The EU should also take action if Member States breach the fundamental principles of the Union and do not take the initiative to improve life for all their citizens.

How will the Commission bring about more effective coordination of measures to bring about social inclusion of Roma people, and how can the EU ensure that all Member States make use of the EU support which is available? What will the EU do to establish better monitoring and leverage systems to ensure that Member States respect citizens' rights and freedoms?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(13 March 2014)

The Commission supports Member States in their efforts in addressing the social and economic inclusion of Roma in the context of the EU framework for National Roma Strategies. It is pursuing its bilateral exchanges with Member States, Roma civil society organisations and all the other stakeholders involved. A network of National Contact Points of all EU Member States was set up in October 2012 to share the results of their national strategies addressing Roma inclusion, exchange best practices and peer-review their implementation.

The new multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 reinforces the European financial support to Roma inclusion by facilitating the use by Member States of EU funds for such purposes. For the first time Member States will be obliged to use 20% of the European Social Fund for social inclusion.

As regards monitoring the EU's Fundamental Rights Agency continues its surveys across the EU in the four key areas of the EU framework (education, employment, health and housing) and also on issues of poverty and discrimination. In 2012, the Agency set up an ad hoc working group to help participating Member States (11) set up effective monitoring mechanisms to obtain reliable and comparable results. In parallel, the commission assesses every year progress made by Member States in implementing their national Roma Strategies.