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 87 E/01)

Treść **Strona**

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008430/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Alterações estruturais nos programas de ajustamento em curso

Em resposta à minha pergunta P-006635/2013, o senhor Comissário Olli Rehn ateve-se fundamentalmente à questão grega, não respondendo à última questão que coloquei.

Assim, reitero a minha pergunta à Comissão:

Não será a altura de proceder a alterações estruturais nos programas de ajustamento em curso?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(22 de agosto de 2013)

Todos os programas de ajustamento económico são concebidos para fazer face aos graves problemas e desequilíbrios que estão na origem da crise nos respetivos países e são acordados entre o Governo e os seus credores. O papel a desempenhar pela Comissão relativamente a estes programas é o de agir em nome dos Estados-Membros da área do euro, incluindo aquando da negociação de um Memorando de Entendimento. As revisões de que são objeto os programas de três em três meses permitem verificar a execução das reformas, bem como os seus efeitos sobre a economia. Sempre que tal se justifique, são decididas alterações pelos Estados-Membros da área do euro, incluindo pelo país em causa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008430/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Structural changes to ongoing adjustment programmes

In response to my Question P-006635/2013, Commissioner Olli Rehn basically stuck to the Greek question and did not respond to my last question.

Hence, is it not time for the Commission to make structural changes to ongoing adjustment programmes?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(22 August 2013)

All economic adjustment programmes are designed to address the severe problems and imbalances at the root of the crisis in the respective countries and are agreed between the Government and its creditors. The Commission's role in these programmes is to act on behalf of the euro area Member States, including when negotiating a memorandum of understanding. Programme reviews that take place every three months allow checking both the implementation of reforms and their effect of the economy. As warranted, changes are decided by the euro area Member States, including the country concerned.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008431/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Medidas na luta contra a dopagem

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005033/2013, a Comissária Androulla Vassiliou declarou, em nome da Comissão, que A Comissão tomou medidas na luta contra a dopagem, em consonância com as ações previstas na sua Comunicação «Desenvolver a Dimensão Europeia do Desporto» (2011). Neste contexto, a Comissão financiou, em 2011-2012, a criação de redes centradas em medidas de prevenção no domínio do desporto amador, do desporto para todos e do exercício físico. Pode estar disponível mais apoio para projetos semelhantes no capítulo «Desporto» incluído na proposta do programa «Erasmus para Todos».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que avaliação faz das medidas tomadas, nomeadamente, das redes centradas em medidas de prevenção no domínio do desporto amador, do desporto para todos e do exercício físico?

— De que depende o apoio eventual constante do capítulo «Desporto» incluído na proposta do programa «Erasmus para Todos»?

Resposta dada por Androulla Vassiliou em nome da Comissão
(27 de agosto de 2013)

Uma avaliação destas medidas seria prematura nesta fase. As três redes de prevenção da dopagem referidas na resposta da Comissão à pergunta E-005033/2013 ([1]) foram cofinanciadas ao abrigo da Ação Preparatória de 2010 (Convite à Apresentação de Propostas EAC/22/2010) e ainda não foram avaliadas. Todavia, estes projetos já contribuíram para o desenvolvimento de iniciativas conjuntas da UE no domínio do desporto. Com efeito, as conclusões do Conselho de 10 de maio de 2012 sobre o combate à dopagem no desporto recreativo referem explicitamente a informação fornecida por estes projetos, tendo o Conselho, neste contexto, convidado o Grupo de Peritos Antidopagem, instituído no âmbito do Plano de Trabalho da UE para o Desporto 2011-2014, a apresentar um conjunto de recomendações sobre o combate à dopagem no desporto recreativo que possam ser aplicadas tanto a nível da UE como a nível nacional. A Comissão apoiou este trabalho logistica e financeiramente e o projeto de recomendações dos peritos deverá ser concluído para adoção pelo Conselho até ao final de 2013.

No que se refere às oportunidades de financiamento de projetos antidopagem no âmbito do futuro capítulo «Desporto» do programa Erasmus+, a eliminação das ameaças transnacionais ao desporto «como a dopagem, a viciação de resultados, a violência, o racismo e a intolerância» constitui precisamente um dos três objetivos do programa. Os fundos serão executados de acordo com as normas e os procedimentos que deverão ser ainda adotados para o programa em geral.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008431/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Anti-doping measures

In response to my Question E-005033/2013, Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission stated that 'The Commission has taken anti-doping measures, in line with actions set out in its communiqué "Developing the European Dimension in Sport" (2011). In 2011 — 2012, it financed the creation of networks to promote preventative measures in amateur sport, sport for all and physical exercise. More support may be available for similar projects in the Sport chapter of the "Erasmus for All" programme proposal'.

— What is the Commission's assessment of the measures taken, specifically the networks on preventative measures in amateur sport, sport for all and physical exercise?

— What are the criteria for ongoing support in the Sport chapter of the 'Erasmus for All' programme proposal?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(27 August 2013)

An assessment of these measures would seem premature at this stage. The three doping prevention networks referred-to in the Commission's reply to Question E-005033/2013 ([1]) were co-financed under the preparatory action 2010 (call for proposals EAC/22/2010) and have not yet been evaluated. However, these projects have already contributed to the development of joint EU initiatives in the field of sport. In fact, the Council Conclusions of 10 May 2012 on combating doping in recreational sport refer explicitly to the evidence provided by these projects and in this context, the Council has invited the Expert Group on Anti-Doping, established under the EU Work Plan for Sport 2011-2014, to present a set of recommendations on combating doping in recreational sport that can be applied at both EU and national level. The Commission has supported this work logistically and financially and the draft recommendations of the Experts will be ready for adoption by the Council before the end of 2013.

Regarding funding opportunities for anti-doping projects under the future sport chapter of the Erasmus+ programme, tackling transnational threats to sport — such as doping, match fixing, violence, racism and intolerance — is one of the three programme objectives. Funds will be spent according to rules and procedures still to be adopted for the programme in general.

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

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008432/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Relações UE — Canadá — ponto da situação

Por motivos históricos e culturais, pelas afinidades étnicas e políticas e pela partilha de valores e referências civilizacionais comuns, o Canadá constitui um parceiro fiável e importante da União Europeia.

Se surgem obstáculos neste relacionamento, nomeadamente no que respeita às pescas, à segurança e à imigração, a verdade é que, comparativamente com outros países, o relacionamento UE-Canadá é estável e frutuoso para ambos os parceiros.

Assim, pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

— Qual o estado das relações entre a União e o Canadá?

— Dispõe de informações acerca de quando terá lugar a próxima cimeira?

— Quais serão os pontos essenciais que a União pretende colocar na sua agenda?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(2 de setembro de 2013)

As longas e profícuas relações existentes entre a UE e o Canadá encontram-se atualmente numa fase decisiva, na perspetiva da finalização das negociações de um acordo de parceria estratégica e de um acordo económico e comercial global. Quando estiverem concluídos, os dois acordos permitirão elevar as nossas relações com este país para um novo patamar, promovendo o aprofundamento das nossas relações em todos domínios.

O acordo económico e comercial global será um acordo inovador, com o objetivo de permitir uma profunda liberalização das relações comerciais e de investimento. O objetivo do acordo de parceria estratégica é facilitar a cooperação setorial e em matéria de política externa entre a UE e o Canadá, mais além do previsto no acordo-quadro de 1976 e na agenda de parceria de 2004, proporcionando uma plataforma para uma intervenção comum no contexto internacional. A UE e o Canadá têm interesses comuns e cooperam, nomeadamente, em domínios como a política externa e de segurança, a justiça e os assuntos internos, a promoção do crescimento económico mundial e a resposta aos desafios globais, designadamente as alterações climáticas e a pobreza nos países em desenvolvimento. A próxima cimeira com o Canadá, que terá lugar neste país, ainda não foi agendada.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008432/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU-Canada relations — Progress

For historical and cultural reasons and because of ethnic and political affinities, shared values and common civilisation references, Canada is an important and reliable partner of the European Union.

There are obstacles in this relationship, specifically in fishing, security and immigration. However, compared to other countries, EU-Canada relations are stable and fruitful for both partners.

— Can the Vice-President/High Representative report on the current state of EU-Canada relations?

— Does she have information about when the next summit will take place?

— What are the key points that the EU intends to include in the agenda?

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

The European Union and Canada are at a significant juncture in their long-standing and close relations, working to finalise negotiations for a Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) and a Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA). When concluded, these two agreements will take our relations with Canada to another level and promote a deepening of ties across the board. The CETA will be a ground-breaking agreement, which seeks an ambitious liberalisation of trade and investment relations. The aim of the SPA is to advance EU-Canada foreign policy and sectoral cooperation beyond the 1976 Framework Agreement and the 2004 Partnership Agenda, and to provide a platform for joint action in the international arena. The EU and Canada have shared interests and cooperate, *inter alia*, in foreign and security policy, in the field of justice and home affairs, in reinvigorating global economic growth, and in tackling global challenges including climate change and poverty in developing countries. The next EU-Canada summit, to be hosted by Canada, has not yet been scheduled.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008433/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Estratégia europeia para o sul do Cáucaso

O conflito entre a Rússia e Geórgia, país que vem proclamando o seu desejo de entrada na União Europeia e a sua adesão aos seus valores, tornou clara a urgência da definição de uma estratégia europeia para a região do sul do Cáucaso.

Assim, pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

— Como avalia a presente situação do sul do Cáucaso?

— A estratégia conduzida pela União tem-lhe permitido um aprofundamento do conhecimento que já tem sobre esta região e contribuir para a sua pacificação e o seu progresso?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(26 de agosto de 2013)

Todos os anos, a UE apresenta a sua avaliação da situação no Sul do Cáucaso nos relatórios de progresso elaborados no âmbito da Política Europeia de Vizinhança ([1]).

A estratégia da UE no que respeita às suas relações com o Sul do Cáucaso é definida e implementada no âmbito da Parceria Oriental, enquanto dimensão oriental da Política Europeia de Vizinhança. Esta política destina-se a promover a estabilidade, a segurança e a prosperidade dos países vizinhos da UE, incluindo os países

do Sul do Cáucaso, aplicando uma agenda bilateral e multilateral que promove a democracia através da realização de reformas. No âmbito da Parceria Oriental, a União Europeia oferece aos países do Sul do Cáucaso uma associação política e uma integração económica.

A UE acredita que a terceira Cimeira da Parceria Oriental, a realizar em Vílnius em novembro de 2013, irá representar um importante passo em frente nas suas relações com os países do Sul do Cáucaso. Em Vílnius, a UE espera rubricar Acordos de Associação tanto com a Arménia como com a Geórgia, que conterão disposições relativas à criação de zonas de comércio livre aprofundadas e abrangentes.

([1]) Os relatórios mais recentes estão disponíveis em linha: http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/documents_en.htm#3

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008433/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — European strategy for the South Caucasus

The conflict between Russia and Georgia, a country which has stated its desire to join the European Union and to adhere to its values, has underlined the urgency for a European strategy for the South Caucasus.

— What is the Vice-President/High Representative's assessment of the current situation in the South Caucasus?

— Has the European Union's strategy allowed her to deepen her existing knowledge of the region and contribute to its peace and progress?

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

The EU offers its assessment of the situation in the South Caucasus each year through its European Neighbourhood Policy Progress Reports ([1]).

The EU's strategy for its relations with the South Caucasus is established and delivered through the Eastern Partnership, as the Eastern dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy. The European Neighbourhood Policy is intended to deliver stability, security, and prosperity to the EU's neighbours, including the countries of the South Caucasus, by pursuing a bilateral and multilateral agenda which builds deep democracy through reforms. Under the Eastern Partnership, the European Union offers political association and economic integration to the countries of the South Caucasus.

The EU believes that the third Eastern Partnership Summit, which will take place in Vilnius in November 2013, will represent an important step forward in its relations with the countries of the South Caucasus. At Vilnius, the EU hopes to initial Association Agreements with both Armenia and Georgia: both these Agreements will contain provisions establishing Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas.

([1]) Most recent reports are available online: http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/documents_en.htm#3

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008434/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Protocolo sobre a Gestão Integrada da Zona Costeira do Mediterrâneo — ponto da situação

O Protocolo sobre a Gestão Integrada da Zona Costeira do Mediterrâneo (Protocolo GIZCM) visou inverter a tendência de agravamento das condições ambientais registadas no Mar Mediterrâneo nos últimos decénios.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Como avalia a execução do Protocolo?

— Está em condições de fazer uma avaliação preliminar do mesmo?

Resposta dada por Janez Potočnik em nome da Comissão
(30 de agosto de 2013)

Após a entrada em vigor do Protocolo, em março de 2011, as Partes na Convenção de Barcelona prosseguiram os trabalhos com vista à sua execução. Um primeiro marco importante foi a adoção pela Conferência das Partes, em fevereiro de 2012, do Plano de Ação ([1]) para a execução do Protocolo 2012-2019, que estabelece o roteiro para alcançar os objetivos do Protocolo, incluindo o estabelecimento de estratégias regionais e nacionais.

É demasiado cedo para fazer qualquer tipo de avaliação sobre a execução do Protocolo. O Plano de Ação será objeto de um exame intercalar e de uma avaliação em 2014.

([1]) http://www.pap-thecoastcentre.org/razno/Decision%202 %20-%20ICZM%20Action%20Plan.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008434/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: The Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management of the Mediterranean — progress

The Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management of the Mediterranean (ICZM Protocol) was aimed at reversing the worsening trend in the environment recorded in the Mediterranean Sea in recent decades.

— How does the Commission view progress in the implementation of the Protocol?

— Is the Commission in a position to carry out a preliminary assessment of it?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(30 August 2013)

After the Protocol came into force in March 2011, the Parties to the Barcelona Convention continued working to put it into effect. An initial important milestone was the adoption by the Conference of the Parties in February 2012 of the action plan ([1]) for the Implementation of the Protocol 2012-2019. This sets out the roadmap for achieving the Protocol's aims, including the establishment of regional and national strategies.

It is too early to make any sort of assessment about the implementation of the Protocol. The action plan will be subject to a mid-term review and evaluation in 2014.

([1]) http://www.pap-thecoastcentre.org/razno/Decision%202%20-%20ICZM%20Action%20Plan.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008435/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: UE, Islândia e Noruega — aprofundamento da cooperação transfronteiras, em particular no domínio da luta contra o terrorismo e da criminalidade transfronteiras

O Acordo entre a União Europeia e a Islândia e a Noruega sobre a aplicação de determinadas disposições da Decisão 2008/615/JAI do Conselho relativa ao aprofundamento da cooperação transfronteiras, em particular no domínio da luta contra o terrorismo e da criminalidade transfronteiras, e da Decisão 2008/616/JAI do Conselho referente à execução da Decisão 2008/615/JAI relativa ao aprofundamento da cooperação transfronteiras, em particular no domínio da luta contra o terrorismo e da criminalidade transfronteiras, provou uma vez mais que partilhamos os mesmos valores, em particular o mesmo apego à democracia e ao Estado de Direito e o repúdio da violência cega e extremista contra cidadãos indefesos.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

A sua aplicação tem permitido uma resposta coletiva mais firme e adequada aos desafios que o terrorismo e os crimes transfronteiras colocam aos sistemas judiciais e às forças policiais? De que modo?

Resposta dada por Cecilia Malmström em nome da Comissão
(13 de setembro de 2013)

O Acordo entre a União Europeia e a Islândia e a Noruega sobre a aplicação de determinadas disposições da Decisão 2008/615/JAI do Conselho relativa ao aprofundamento da cooperação transfronteiras, em particular no domínio da luta contra o terrorismo e da criminalidade transfronteiras, bem como da Decisão 2008/616/JAI do Conselho referente à execução da Decisão 2008 2008/615/JAI relativa ao aprofundamento da cooperação transfronteiras, em particular no domínio da luta contra o terrorismo e da criminalidade transfronteiras (a seguir designado «Acordo»), foi publicado no Jornal Oficial de 31 de dezembro de 2009 tendo sido aprovado ulteriormente, em nome da União, pelo Conselho mediante a sua Decisão de 26 de julho de 2010 (2010/482/UE).

A entrada em vigor do Acordo ainda está pendente por falta das declarações da Islândia e da Noruega, exigidas em conformidade com o seu artigo 8.°.

A Comissão não tem conhecimento de medidas adotadas por estes dois países tendo em vista a preparação para a aplicação das disposições do Acordo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008435/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: The EU, Iceland and Norway: stepping up cross-border cooperation, particularly in combating terrorism and cross-border crime

The agreement between the EU and Iceland and Norway on the application of certain provisions of Council Decision 2008/615/JAI relating to stepping up cross-border cooperation, particularly in combating terrorism and cross-border crime, and Council Decision 2008/616/JAI relating to the implementation of Decision 2008/615/JAI relating to stepping up cross-border cooperation, particularly in combating terrorism and cross-border crime, proved once again that we share the same values, in particular the same commitment to democracy and the rule of law, and the rejection of mindless extremist violence against defenceless citizens.

Has its application brought about a collective response that is stronger and more capable of facing the challenges that terrorism and cross-border crime place on our legal systems and police forces? In what way has it done this?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

The agreement between the EU and Iceland and Norway on the application of certain provisions of Council Decision 2008/615/JAI relating to stepping up cross-border cooperation, particularly in combating terrorism and cross-border crime, and Council Decision 2008/616/JAI relating to the implementation of Decision 2008/615/JAI relating to stepping up cross-border cooperation, particularly in combating terrorism and cross-border crime ('the Agreement') was published in the OJ on 31 December 2009 and subsequently approved on behalf of the Union by the Council in its Decision of 26 July 2010 (2010/482/EU).

The entry into force of the Agreement is still pending failing the declarations by Iceland and Norway required according to Article 8 thereof.

The Commission is not aware of activities in the two countries regarding the preparation of the implementation of the provisions of the Agreement.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008436/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Frontex — avaliação da participação da Suíça e Liechtenstein

A participação da Confederação Helvética e do Principado do Liechtenstein na Agência Frontex aumentou os meios à sua disposição e a capacidade de resposta conjunta ao fenómeno da imigração ilegal, envolvendo Estados que se encontram na orla da União e que padecem de problemas semelhantes aos sentidos internamente no que concerne ao controlo dos fluxos migratórios e ao combate à imigração ilegal.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Como avalia a participação da Suíça e Liechtenstein na Agência Frontex?

— Considera que esta experiência de trabalho em conjunto poderá estender-se a outras áreas? Quais?

Resposta dada por Cecilia Malmström em nome da Comissão
(26 de agosto de 2013)

A participação da Confederação Helvética e do Principado do Liechtenstein no trabalho da Agência Frontex baseia-se em acordos específicos celebrados para o efeito entre cada um dos países associados de Schengen (Islândia, Noruega, Suíça e Liechtenstein) e a União Europeia.

A Comissão preza o nível de participação dos quatro países associados de Schengen no trabalho da Agência Frontex e espera que estes países continuem a apoiar o trabalho de coordenação efetuado por esta agência nas fronteiras externas da União Europeia.

A União Europeia coopera em muitos domínios com a Suíça e o Liechtenstein. Qualquer cooperação que ultrapasse os atuais domínios de ação terá de ser avaliada em função das necessidades, tendo em conta as relações gerais entre a União Europeia e estes dois países.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008436/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Frontex: assessment of Switzerland's and Liechtenstein's participation

The participation of the Swiss Confederation and the Principality of Liechtenstein in the Frontex agency has increased the resources at its disposal and its ability to respond jointly to the issue of illegal immigration by involving Member States located at the edges of the EU which suffer problems similar to those experienced internally in relation to controlling migration flows and combating illegal immigration.

— What is the Commission's assessment of the participation of Switzerland and Liechtenstein in the Frontex agency?

— Does it think that this experience of working together could be extended to other areas? Which ones?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(26 August 2013)

The participation of the Swiss Confederation and the Principality of Liechtenstein in the work of the Frontex Agency is based on specific Arrangements concluded to that effect between each of the Schengen Associated Countries (Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein) and the European Union.

The Commission values the level of participation of the four Schengen Associated Countries in the work of the Frontex Agency, and expects the Associated Countries to continue to support the coordination work undertaken by the Agency at the external borders of the European Union.

The European Union cooperates in many fields with Switzerland and Liechtenstein respectively. Any cooperation going beyond the existing policy fields would need to be assessed on a needs basis taking into account the general relations between the European Union and these two countries.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008437/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Acordo de Comércio Livre UE-Coreia — avaliação

Pergunto à Comissão como avalia a aplicação do Acordo de Comércio Livre entre a União e a Coreia? Que perspetivas futuras oferece? Foi já aplicada a cláusula bilateral de salvaguarda?

Resposta dada por Karel De Gucht em nome da Comissão
(22 de agosto de 2013)

A data de 1 de julho de 2013 marca o segundo aniversário do acordo de comércio livre UE-Coreia do Sul (ACL). Embora só possamos conhecer o pleno impacto do ACL depois de eliminadas todas as tarifas, o balanço feito até agora é positivo para a UE.

As exportações da UE para a Coreia registaram um aumento de 16,2 %, passando de 32,5 mil milhões de euros em 2011 para 37,8 mil milhões de euros em 2012. Ao mesmo tempo, as importações da UE provenientes da Coreia aumentaram, passando de 36,2 milhões de EUR em 2011 para 37,9 mil milhões de euros em 2012 (4,7 %). Em consequência, no primeiro trimestre de 2013, a UE dispõe agora de um excedente comercial com a Coreia, pela primeira vez em 15 anos. Além disso, a parte da UE no total das importações para a Coreia tem vindo a aumentar progressivamente, passando de 9,0 % em 2011 para 9,7 % em 2012, ou seja, o aumento mais significativo quando comparado com as importações provenientes da China, do Japão e dos EUA.

As perspetivas são boas, portanto, e os exportadores da UE também utilizam crescentemente os direitos preferenciais.

A cláusula bilateral de salvaguarda ainda não foi aplicada por nenhuma das Partes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008437/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: EU-South Korea free trade agreement: an assessment

What is the Commission's assessment of the application of the Free Trade Agreement between the EU and South Korea? What future prospects does it offer? Has the bilateral protection clause been applied?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(22 August 2013)

1 July 2013 marked the second anniversary of the EU-South Korea Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The full impact of the FTA will only be known once all the tariffs have been eliminated, but so far this has proven to be a good deal for the EU.

EU exports to Korea are up by 16.2%, from EUR 32.5 billion in 2011 to EUR 37.8 billion in 2012. At the same time EU imports from Korea have grown, from EUR 36.2 billion in 2011 to EUR 37.9 billion in 2012 (4.7%). As a consequence, by the first quarter of 2013 the EU now has a trade surplus with Korea for the first time in 15 years. In addition, the EU's share of total imports to Korea has increased steadily, from 9.0% in 2011 to 9.7% in 2012, the largest increase when comparing with imports from China, Japan and the US.

The prospects are therefore bright and EU exporters are also making increasing use of the preferential tariffs.

The bilateral safeguard clause has not been applied by either side.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008438/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Esfera pública europeia — investimento e retorno

A criação de uma esfera pública europeia tem resvalado na indiferença dos povos e no desinteresse das opiniões públicas nacionais que não parecem acompanhar o investimento maciço em informação e divulgação feito pelas instituições e que, antes, se vêm distanciando do projeto europeu de modo preocupante.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Como avalia e quantifica o investimento realizado, visando a criação de uma esfera pública europeia?

— Que resultados apresenta?

— Concorda que, apesar do investimento realizado, existe um crescente distanciamento das populações em relação ao projeto europeu?

— Como pretende procurar inverter esta tendência?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(27 de agosto de 2013)

As ações de comunicação da Comissão Europeia são motivadas pelo desejo de envolver os cidadãos e ouvir as suas preocupações, reforçando assim a Esfera Pública Europeia, tal como sublinhou no ano passado o Presidente Barroso no seu discurso sobre o estado da União Europeia. Um dos principais objetivos é discutir os assuntos europeus do ponto de vista europeu. Este é um trabalho em curso e não algo que está já criado, como a pergunta implica.

O Ano Europeu dos Cidadãos 2013 (que será avaliado no final do projeto) foi concebido, em conjunto com o Parlamento Europeu, como instrumento para assegurar uma maior participação. No contexto do Ano Europeu dos Cidadãos, a Comissão está a organizar cerca de 45 Diálogos com os Cidadãos, com o intuito de ouvir diretamente o que estes têm a dizer. Nestes diálogos participam membros da Comissão, do Parlamento Europeu e responsáveis políticos nacionais e regionais. A ambição da Comissão é promover uma nova forma de fazer política: envolver os cidadãos antes de tomar decisões políticas com um impacto direto nas suas vidas. Os Diálogos com os Cidadãos irão continuar a realizar-se até às eleições europeias de 2014.

A recomendação da Comissão para as próximas eleições do Parlamento Europeu apoia igualmente o espaço público europeu quando sugere candidatos europeus para o cargo de Presidente da Comissão, destaca o papel das famílias políticas europeias e preconiza a realização das eleições no mesmo dia em todos os Estados-Membros. Obviamente, a Comissão irá igualmente apoiar a campanha de comunicação do Parlamento Europeu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008438/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: European public sphere: investment and return

The creation of a European public sphere was met with indifference by the people of Europe and disinterest by national public opinion. This does not seem to justify the massive investment made in information and promotion by the institutions, which previously distanced themselves from the European project in a worrying manner.

— How does the Commission assess and quantify the investment made in creating a European public sphere?

— What results has it achieved?

— Does it accept that, despite the investment made, the distance between the people and the European project grows ever wider?

— How will it attempt to reverse this trend?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(27 August 2013)

The European Commission's communication activities are driven by the desire to involve citizens and listen to their concerns — and thereby strengthen a European Public Space as highlighted in last year's State of the European Union speech by President Barroso. One of the central aims is to discuss European affairs from European point of view. This is work in progress, nor something which is already created as the question implies.

The European Year of Citizens 2013 (which will be evaluated at the end of the project) has been designed, together with the European Parliament, as the vehicle for stronger engagement. In the context of the European Year of Citizens, the Commission is organising about 45 Citizens' Dialogues in order to listen directly to citizens. Members of the Commission, Members of the European Parliament as well as national and regional politicians take part. The Commission's ambition is nothing short of a new way of making policy: involving citizens before taking political decisions that directly impact upon their daily lives. The dialogues with citizens will continue in the run-up to the European elections in 2014.

The Commission's Recommendation for the next election of the European Parliament also supports a European Public Space by suggesting European candidates for the post of President of the Commission, by highlighting the role of European party families and advocating to vote on a single day in all Member States. Of course the Commission will also support the European Parliament's communication campaign.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse P-008439/13
til Kommissionen
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(11. juli 2013)

Om: Det Europæiske Luftfartssikkerhedsagenturs udtalelse til Kommissionen med henblik på nye regler til begrænsning af piloters arbejdstid (flyvetidsbegrænsninger)

I oktober 2012 offentliggjorde Det Europæiske Luftfartssikkerhedsagentur en udtalelse om flyvetidsbegrænsninger. Kommissionen vil på grundlag heraf forelægge et nyt forslag med henblik på at begrænse piloters arbejdstid.

I en rapport fra det europæiske færdselssikkerhedsråd understreges det, at træthed kan forværres af tre centrale elementer:

— døgnrytmekomponenten (den tid på døgnet, som kroppen ikke kan ignorere)

— den søvnrelaterede komponent (mængden og kvaliteten af søvn, tidsrum siden sidste søvnperiode og søvninerti (døsighed efter opvågning)

— den opgaverelaterede komponent (tid på opgaven, dvs. selve opgavens art, herunder antallet af befløjne sektorer).

Disse elementer skal hver især tages i betragtning som led i en træthedsforvaltningsproces. Hvorledes vil Kommissionen sikre, at dens forslag vil tage hensyn til alle tre elementer, når den foreslår nye flyvetidsbegrænsninger?

Ovennævnte rapport understreger også, at den søvn, en person får, når vedkommende er på standbytjeneste, altid er kortere og af dårligere kvalitet. Desuden er der ikke foretaget undersøgelser af standbytjenestes indvirkninger på træthed.

Hvorledes vil Kommissionen tage hensyn til spørgsmålet om standbytjeneste ved evalueringen af de nye flyvetidsbegrænsninger, og vil standbytjeneste (hvis den forstyrrer normale søvnmønstre) tælle med ved beregningen af flyvetjenesteperioder?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Siim Kallas
(12. august 2013)

De tre centrale aspekter, som det ærede medlem henviser til, er universelt anerkendte principper i henseende til flyvebesætningers træthed, som der allerede er taget hensyn til i EU's nuværende FTL-regler ([1]), der har været gældende siden 2007. Kommissionens har til hensigt at indføre endnu strengere sikkerhedsforskrifter med gennemførelsen af disse principper for øje. Den har derfor iværksat en ændring i overensstemmelse hermed. Ændringen vedrører eksempelvis strengere (mere beskyttende) regler vedrørende nattjeneste eller regler vedrørende hvile under flyvning eller standbytjeneste.

Det ærede medlem påpeger med rette, at der ikke findes undersøgelser af standbytjenestes indvirkning på flyvebesætningers træthed. Derfor baserede Kommissionen sig på bedste nationale praksis, praktiske erfaringer og principperne for flyvebesætningers træthed. Efter Kommissionens opfattelse bør standbyperioder, der griber forstyrrende ind i normale søvnmønstre, under visse omstændigheder medregnes som tjenesteperioder.

([1]) Subpart Q i bilag III til forordning (EØF) nr. 3922/91, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:010:0001:0206:DA:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008439/13
to the Commission
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: European Aviation Safety Agency opinion to the Commission for new rules to limit pilots' hours of duty (flight time limitations)

In October 2012, the European Aviation Safety Agency published an opinion on flight time limitations (FTLs). Following this, the Commission will come forward with a new proposal to limit pilots' hours of duty.

In a report conducted by the European Transport Safety Council, it is emphasised that fatigue can be exacerbated by three key elements:

— Circadian component (the time of day, which the human body cannot ignore);

— Sleep-related component (the amount and quality of sleep, time since the last period of sleep and sleep inertia);

— Task-related component (time-on-task, i.e. the nature of the task itself, including the number of sectors flown).

Each of these needs has to be considered as part of a fatigue management process. How will the Commission ensure that its proposal will take all these three elements into account when proposing new FTLs?

The same report underlines that sleep taken when on standby is always for shorter periods and of poorer quality. Moreover, there have been no studies into the effects of standby with regard to fatigue.

How will the Commission take the issue of standby into account when evaluating the new FTLs, and will standby (if it interferes with normal sleep patterns) be counted towards flight duty periods?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(12 August 2013)

The three key elements mentioned by the Honorable Member constitute universally recognised aircrew fatigue principles which were already applied in the current EU FTL rules ([1]), applicable since 2007. The Commission's intention is to put in place even stricter safety rules with a view to implement those principles. It has therefore launched a corresponding amendment. This concerns for example stricter (more protective) rules concernig nigh duties or the rules on in-flight rest or standby duties.

The Honourable Member is right in pointing out that there are no studies concerning the effects of standby with regard to aircrew fatigue. For this reason, the Commission has based itself on best national practices, on operational experience and on aircrew fatigue principles. According to the Commission, standby periods interfering with normal sleep patterns should be counted as duty periods under certain circumstances.

([1]) Subpart Q of Annex III to Regulation (EEC) 3922/91, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:010:0001:0206:EN:PDF

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-008440/13
alla Commissione
Patrizia Toia (S&D)
(11 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Rimpatrio in Kazakistan di Alma Šalabaeva

La direttiva 2004/83/CEE sulla qualifica di rifugiato e la direttiva rimpatri 2008/115/CE che stabilisce norme per la protezione dei rifugiati politici sono valide in tutti gli Stati membri dell'Unione mentre il pacchetto asilo è in via di approvazione definitiva.

In data 29 maggio, numerosi poliziotti hanno fatto irruzione nella villa a Casal Palocco in periferia di Roma, dove viveva Alma Shalabayeva con la figlia Aula di 6 anni, alla ricerca del marito, il dissidente politico kazako Muktar Ablyazov che ha ottenuto asilo politico dalla Gran Bretagna, e le hanno prelevate portandole al CIE.

Alma e Aula sono state rimpatriate su un volo fatto arrivare appositamente dall'Austria e partito dall'aeroporto di Ciampino, quando solitamente le persone sono trattenute nei CIE per mesi e le espulsioni avvengono usando voli di linea oppure voli speciali gestiti dall'agenzia europea Frontex.

L'ultimo rapporto di Amnesty International riferisce che in Kazakistan «pratiche di tortura sono regolarmente perpetrate nei confronti di oppositori e dissidenti da parte delle forze di polizia e di sicurezza».

Può la Commissione chiarire:

1. come valuta i fatti stante che la donna è stata estradata nonostante lei, la figlia e il marito siano stati riconosciuti rifugiati politici nel Regno Unito, adducendo come motivo un passaporto falso quando a fine giugno una sentenza del tribunale del riesame di Roma aveva invece stabilito che il documento era valido;

2. se è d'accordo nell'affermare che le autorità italiane abbiano agito in violazione nel diritto dell'Unione, secondo il quale lo status di rifugiato garantito a una persona è valido in tutta l'Unione?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(17 settembre 2013)

Le questioni poste dall'onorevole parlamentare sollevano dubbi sulla compatibilità delle iniziative prese dalle autorità italiane con l'acquis dell'Unione europea in materia di rimpatrio e di asilo.

In seguito alla pubblicazione, il 16 luglio 2013, dei risultati di indagini interne condotte dal capo della Polizia italiana, e in attesa dei risultati delle indagini della Procura di Roma in corso, la Commissione ha contattato le autorità italiane per comprendere meglio in che modo la procedura di rimpatrio prevista dalla direttiva rimpatri sia solitamente applicata in Italia e in che modo sia stata applicata nel caso in questione, riguardante Alma Shalabayeva e sua figlia. La Commissione ha inoltre richiesto informazioni sull'accesso alla procedura di asilo e sul rispetto del principio di non respingimento, allo scopo di accertarsi, fra l'altro, che le autorità italiane abbiano rispettato pienamente l'articolo 18 (Diritto di asilo) e l'articolo 19 (Protezione in caso di allontanamento, di espulsione e di estradizione) della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea. La Commissione, in stretto contatto con il Servizio europeo per l'azione esterna, esaminerà accuratamente la risposta delle autorità italiane e seguirà con attenzione ogni ulteriore sviluppo.

Pur stabilendo norme comuni sulle condizioni e procedure di concessione dello status di rifugiato, il diritto dell'UE in materia di asilo attualmente non prevede il mutuo riconoscimento, da parte degli Stati membri, dello status di rifugiato concesso da altri Stati membri.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008440/13
to the Commission
Patrizia Toia (S&D)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Alma Shalabayeva returned to Kazakhstan

The Refugee Qualification Directive (2004/83/EC) and the Returns Directive (2008/115/EC) laying down rules for the protection of political refugees already apply in all of the Member States, and the asylum package is currently pending final adoption.

On 29 May 2013 police raided the home of Alma Shalabayeva and her six-year-old daughter, Aula, in Casal Palocco on the outskirts of Rome, in search of Ms Shalabayeva's husband, the Kazakh dissident, Mukhtar Ablyazov, who has been granted political asylum in the United Kingdom, and took them away to a detention centre.

Alma and Aula were then returned to Kazakhstan on board an aircraft that had been flown in specially from Austria to Rome's Ciampino Airport, from where the flight departed. The normal practice in such cases is for people to be kept in the detention centre for some months prior to expulsion and for scheduled flights or special flights arranged by the Frontex agency to be used for that purpose.

In its latest report, Amnesty International states that the Kazakh police and security forces regularly use torture against political opponents and dissidents.

1. What are the Commission's views on this matter given that, despite Ms Shalabayeva, her daughter and her husband having been granted political refugee status in the UK, she was still extradited to Kazakhstan, on the grounds that she held a false passport, when that passport was in fact found to be fully in order by the Rome Court of Appeal in late June 2013?

2. Would it agree that the Italian authorities acted in breach of EC law, under which refugee status granted in one Member State is valid throughout the EU?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(17 September 2013)

The issues set out by the Honourable Member raise questions as regards the compatibility of the actions taken by the Italian authorities with the EU's return and asylum *acquis*.

Following the publication on 16 July 2013 of the results of internal investigations conducted by the head of the Italian police and pending the results of ongoing investigations by the prosecutor of Rome, the Commission contacted the Italian authorities in order to better understand how the return procedure set out in the Return Directive is usually conducted in Italy and how it was implemented in the present case of Alma Shalabayeva and her daughter. The Commission also requested information regarding access to the asylum procedure and the respect of the principle of non-refoulement, in view of ensuring *inter alia* that Articles 18 (right to asylum) and 19 (protection in the event of removal, expulsion or extradition) of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights were fully respected by the Italian authorities. The Commission, in close contact with the European External Action Service, will examine carefully the reply from the Italian authorities and closely monitor any further developments.

Although EU asylum law establishes common rules concerning the conditions and procedure for granting refugee status, it does not currently provide for mutual recognition by Member States of refugee status granted by other Member States.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008441/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(11 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Cambios en las prioridades en inversión ferroviaria en Francia

Las orientaciones generales del transporte aprobadas recientemente en Europa señalan el eje atlántico como una de las inversiones prioritarias para disponer de unas infraestructuras de valor añadido europeo. Dicho conjunto de infraestructuras incorpora, en el caso de España, la resolución de uno de los cuellos históricos para la conexión de la red ferroviaria de este país con Francia.

Sin embargo, la pasada semana se conoció el contenido del informe «Movilidad 21» elaborado por la Asamblea Nacional Francesa. Tras su aprobación el Primer Ministro y el titular de la cartera de Transportes han confirmado sus contenidos, destacando que en aquel país consideran prioritaria la conexión por alta velocidad entre Burdeos y Toulouse, y que posponen la unión entre la capital aquitana y Hendaya, su conexión con el tramo del eje atlántico peninsular y la solución del consecuente «cuello de botella» hasta después de 2 030. En ambos casos las decisiones francesas se alejan, en primer lugar, de los contenidos del informe sobre orientaciones prioritarias de transporte recién aprobado tras ser negociado con los entonces 27 componentes de la UE, y también de los criterios y metodologías establecidas por la UE para considerar una inversión en el sector como «prioritaria». Dicho concepto se aplica a las infraestructuras que resuelven conexiones transfronterizas, favorecen la intermodalidad y se vinculan al menos con un puerto de mar principal y apuestan por la mejora en los tramos que soportan actualmente más tráfico. A esta situación se suman nuevos retrasos anunciados por el Ministerio de Fomento español en el mismo eje atlántico, lo que compromete la amortización y eficiencia de inversiones ya realizadas con enorme esfuerzo y en algunos casos sorteando amenazas armadas afortunadamente ya desaparecidas, como ocurrió con la llamada «Y» vasca.

1. ¿Dispone la Comisión de información oficial sobre este cambio de prioridades en las inversiones ferroviarias en Francia?

2. ¿Considera que los nuevos planes son consecuentes con los compromisos adquiridos por Francia durante la negociación y aprobación de los plazos y trazados de las redes transeuropeas de transporte?

3. ¿Qué actuaciones puede emprender la Comisión Europea para corregir esta situación?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de septiembre de 2013)

La Comisión está examinando actualmente las consecuencias de las medidas anunciadas en el informe «Movilidad 21» sobre la nueva política de la RTE-T ([1]).

Tal como indica Su Señoría, algunas conclusiones de dicho informe posiblemente no se ajusten totalmente a los objetivos de la Red Transeuropea de Transporte (RTE-E) propuesta, como, por ejemplo, la realización de una nueva línea de alta velocidad entre Burdeos y Hendaya después de 2030, mientras que se propone finalizar la línea de alta velocidad Burdeos — Toulouse de aquí a 2030.

Ambos tramos, que forman parte de la red principal, pueden recibir financiación del Mecanismo «Conectar Europa», con un porcentaje de cofinanciación más elevado para los tramos transnacionales que para los nacionales.

En el contexto del futuro corredor atlántico de la red principal, la Comisión se propone proseguir el diálogo con las autoridades francesas y españolas sobre los pormenores de los proyectos, con el fin de garantizar unas conexiones de transporte interoperables y eficaces de la red principal, en consonancia con los resultados de las negociaciones sobre el nuevo Reglamento relativo a las orientaciones para el desarrollo de la Red Transeuropea de Transporte ([2]).

([1]) En curso de adopción: 2011/0299 (COD).
([2]) COM(2011) 650.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008441/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Changes in France's railway investment priorities

The recently approved general guidelines on transport in Europe stress the Atlantic corridor as an investment priority with a view to constructing infrastructure with European added value. This would mean a project to resolve one of the long-standing bottlenecks hindering rail transport Spain and France.

Last week, however, the content of the French National Assembly's 'Mobilité 21' report was revealed, following its approval by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Transport. The report states that the high-speed link between Bordeaux and Toulouse is a priority and that the construction of the new line between Bordeaux and Hendaye — part of the Atlantic corridor and a source of bottlenecks — is to be postponed until after 2030. These decisions run counter to both the report on priority transport guidelines recently approved following negotiations among the then 27 Member States and the EU's priority infrastructure investment criteria. These criteria encourage the development of infrastructure projects providing cross-border connections, promoting intermodality, providing links to at least one main sea port and increasing the capacity of saturated routes. In addition, the Spanish Ministry of Development has announced new delays to projects on the Spanish side of the Atlantic corridor, which will further compromise the efficiency of investments already made at enormous cost and sometimes in the face of terrorist threats (fortunately a thing of the past), as was the case with the Basque 'Y'.

1. Does the Commission have any official information on this change in France's railway investment priorities?

2. Does the Commission think that the new plans are consistent with the commitments made by France during the negotiation and approval of the trans-European transport routes?

3. What action can the Commission take to correct this state of affairs?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(6 September 2013)

The Commission is currently examining the consequences of the measures announced in the 'Mobilité 21 report' on the new Ten-T policy ([1]).

As the Honourable Member pointed out, some of the conclusions of this report may appear not to be fully in line with the objectives of the proposed Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) such as the completion of a new high speed line between Bordeaux and Hendaye after 2030, whereas the Bordeaux — Toulouse high speed line is proposed to be completed by 2030.

Both sections are part of the Core Network and could receive funding from the Connecting Europe Facility, with higher co-funding rates for the cross-border sections than for the national ones.

In the context of the future Atlantic Core Network Corridor, the Commission intends to pursue the dialogue with the French and Spanish authorities on the details of the projects in order to ensure interoperable and efficient transport connections in the Core Network, in line with the results of the negotiations on the new TEN-T guidelines Regulation ([2]).

([1]) Under adoption : 2011/0299(COD).
([2]) COM(2011) 650.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008442/13
an die Kommission
Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE)
(11. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Militärische Übungsstadt der deutschen Bundeswehr in der Altmark (Bundesland Sachsen-Anhalt)

Die deutsche Bundeswehr beabsichtigt, auf dem Truppenübungsplatz Altmark eine neue Übungsstadt zu bauen. Das geplante Gelände soll eine Fläche von ca. 6,5 km² umfassen. Die Fläche liegt vollständig im FFH-Gebiet DE-3535-301 Colbitz-Letzlinger Heide (FFH-Gebiet) sowie im gemeldeten Vogelschutzgebiet DE-3635- 401 Colbitz-Letzlinger Heide. Das geplante Vorhaben wird die Erhaltungsziele des FFH-Gebiets und des gemeldeten Vogelschutzgebiets erheblich beeinträchtigen. Wegen des Verstoßes gegen Gemeinschaftsrecht wurde bereits von dem Abgeordneten des Regionalparlamentes Sachsen-Anhalt, Dietmar Weihrich, eine Beschwerde gegen das Projekt eingereicht (Aktenzeichen CHAP(2013)00103).

1. Wie ist der Stand und Zeitplan der Bearbeitung der Beschwerde?

2. Ist die Kommission der Auffassung, dass Gebiete, die der Kommission als EU-Vogelschutzgebiete gemeldet, aber noch nicht nach nationalem Recht ausgewiesen wurden, als faktische Vogelschutzgebiete anzusehen sind?

3. Wenn Frage 2 mit ja beantwortet wird: Ist die Kommission der Auffassung, dass in faktischen Vogelschutzgebieten Pläne und Projekte, die zu Beeinträchtigungen oder Störungen der Avifauna im Gebiet führen können, nach Art. 4 Abs. 4 der EU-Vogelschutzrichtlinie zu beurteilen sind?

4. Wenn Frage 3 mit nein beantwortet wird: Wie ist die Rechtsauffassung der Kommission?

5. Welche Möglichkeiten hat die Kommission, Projekte wie die erwähnte militärische Übungsstadt zu stoppen, wenn die Genehmigung unter Anwendung von Art. 6 Abs. 4 Habitat-Richtlinie erfolgte, stattdessen das Projekt aber nach Art. 4 Abs. 4 Vogelschutzrichtlinie beurteilt werden müsste?

6. Welche Anforderungen sind bei dem erwähnten Projekt an den Nachweis zu stellen, dass keine Alternativlösung im Sinne von Art. 6 Abs. 4 Habitat-Richtlinie vorhanden ist?

7. Ist die Kommission der Auffassung, dass eine sachgerechte Beurteilung eines Projektes nach Art. 4 Abs. 4 Vogelschutzrichtlinie bzw. nach Art. 6 Abs. 3 und 4 Habitat-Richtlinie ohne eine vollständige Inventarisierung der Gebiete möglich ist?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(20. August 2013)

Die Kommission ist bestrebt, innerhalb von zwölf Monaten nach Eingang der Beschwerde in der Sache zu entscheiden (d. h. sie wird entweder ein Vertragsverletzungsverfahren einleiten oder die Akte schließen).

Die Kommission ist der Aufassung, dass jedes Gebiet, das von einem Mitgliedstaat als besonderes Schutzgebiet im Sinne der Vogelschutzrichtlinie ([1]) notifiziert wurde, aber im nationalen Recht nicht als solches ausgewiesen ist, *de facto* ein besonderes Schutzgebiet darstellt. Entsprechend kann ein Projekt, das Vögeln in Schutzgebieten schaden oder sie stören könnte, nur auf der Grundlage von Artikel 4 Absatz 4 der Richtlinie 79/409/EWG ([2]) bewertet werden. Artikel 6 der Richtlinie 92/43/EWG ([3]) findet in diesem Fall nicht Anwendung.

Es ist in erster Linie Sache der nationalen Gerichte und Verwaltungsstellen, die Einhaltung des EU-Rechts sicherzustellen. Stellt die Kommission fest, dass nationale Behörden gegen das EU-Recht verstoßen oder dass ein Projekt das EU-Recht verletzt, kann sie in Betracht ziehen, ein Vertragsverletzungsverfahren einzuleiten. Die Kommission beschließt auf Fallbasis, welche Schritte zu unternehmen sind.

([1]) Richtlinie 2009/147/EG, ABl. L 20 vom 26.1.2010.
([2]) Über die Erhaltung der wild lebenden Vogelarten, ABl. L 103 vom 25.4.1979.
([3]) Zur Erhaltung der natürlichen Lebensräume sowie der wild lebenden Tiere und Pflanzen, ABl. L 206 vom 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008442/13
to the Commission
Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Mock town for German army training in the Altmark region (Land of Saxony-Anhalt)

The German army is planning to construct a new mock town covering an area of around 6.5 km² in the Altmark military training area. The area to be used lies entirely within the Colbitz-Letzlinger Heide FFH area DE-3535-301 and the Colbitz-Letzlinger Heide registered bird protection area DE-3635-401. The project will have a considerable negative impact on the conservation objectives of the FFH area and the registered bird protection area. Dietmar Weihrich, a member of the Saxony-Anhalt regional parliament, has submitted a complaint against the project for breach of EC law (registered under CHAP(2013)00103).

1. What stage has the complaint reached, and how long is the procedure expected to take?

2. Does the Commission think that areas which have been registered with it as EU bird protection areas but which have not yet been designated as such under national law do in fact constitute bird protection areas?

3. If so, does the Commission consider that plans and projects in bird protection areas which might damage or disturb their birdlife should be evaluated under Article 4(4) of the Birds Directive?

4. If not, what is the Commission's interpretation of the law on this matter?

5. What can the Commission do to put a stop to a project such as that described above if it has been authorised under Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, even if it should have been evaluated under Article 4(4) of the Birds Directive?

6. What requirements are there in the case of the above project to provide proof that there is no other solution under Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive?

7. Does the Commission believe that a proper evaluation of a project under Article 4(4) of the Birds Directive or Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive is possible without a full investigation of the areas involved?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

The Commission will endeavour to take a decision on the substance (either to open infringement proceedings or to close the case) within twelve months of registration of the complaint.

The Commission considers that any site notified by a Member State as a special protection area under the Birds Directive ([1]) but not designated as such under national law constitutes a de facto special protection area. Under these circumstances any project which might damage or disturb birdlife can only be evaluated on the basis of the provisions of Article 4 (4) of Directive 79/409/EEC ([2]). Article 6 of Directive 92/43/EEC ([3]) does not apply in that case.

It is primarily for national courts and administrative bodies to ensure compliance with EC law. If the Commission becomes aware that national authorities do not comply with EC law, or that a project violates EC law, it may consider opening an infringement procedure. The Commission decides from case to case which steps are to be taken.

([1]) Directive 2009/147/EC, OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.
([2]) On the conservation of wild birds, OJ L 103, 25.4.1979.
([3]) On the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008443/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Niebler (PPE)
(11. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Einheimischenmodell/EuGH-Urteil

Am 8. Mai 2013 hat der Gerichtshof der Europäischen Union ein Urteil in den verbundenen Rechtssachen C-197/11 und C-203/11 gefällt und damit festgestellt, dass das flämische Dekret über die Grundstücks- und Immobilienpolitik gegen Unionsrecht verstößt, Einheimischenmodelle jedoch unter gewissen Prämissen zulässig sein können.

Auch in Deutschland, insbesondere in Bayern, praktizieren viele Kommunen sogenannte „Einheimischenmodelle", bei denen Ortsansässige vergünstigt Bauland in ihrem Heimatort erwerben können. Die EU-Kommission hat daraufhin gegen Deutschland ein Vertragsverletzungsverfahren eröffnet, das derzeit noch anhängig ist. Viele Gemeinden sind seitdem verunsichert, ob ihre Praxis europarechtlich zulässig ist. Die Gemeinden wollen mit den Einheimischenmodellen insbesondere Familien und sozial Schwächere unterstützen und in der Gemeinde halten. Gerade der ländliche Raum soll hierdurch als lebenswerter Raum erhalten bleiben.

Der EuGH erklärte in seinem Urteil, dass bestimmte soziale Kriterien, die darauf zielen, den Wohnungsbau der weniger kapitalkräftigen einheimischen Bevölkerung zu fördern, nach EU-Recht ausdrücklich erlaubt seien. Allerdings müssen die Einschränkungen beim Kauf der Immobilien angemessen und verhältnismäßig sein.

1. Wann wird die EU-Kommission konkrete Leitlinien bzw. einen detaillierten Kriterienkatalog für die Zulässigkeit von Einheimischenmodellen veröffentlichen, an dem sich Kommunen orientieren können, um endlich Rechtssicherheit herzustellen?

2. Ist es zutreffend, dass Einheimischenmodelle zulässig sind, wenn sie — zumindest in angemessenem Verhältnis — insbesondere folgende Kriterien berücksichtigen: Ortsansässigkeit; Einkommensniveau; Anzahl der Kinder; Beschäftigung in der Gemeinde; Freiwilligentätigkeit; pflegebedürftige Familienmitglieder in der Gemeinde?

3. Wann glaubt die EU-Kommission das Vertragsverfahren gegen Deutschland endgültig abschließen zu können?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(5. September 2013)

Wie die Frau Abgeordnete zutreffend bemerkt, hat der Gerichtshof bestätigt, dass eine Regelung, die auf die Deckung des Wohnbedarfs einkommensschwacher Personen oder anderer benachteiligter Gruppen der örtlichen Bevölkerung ausgerichtet ist, einen zwingenden Grund des Allgemeininteresses darstellen kann, der die Beschränkung von Grundfreiheiten rechtfertigt, sofern diese Maßnahmen mit Blick auf das Ziel angemessen und verhältnismäßig sind.

Bei der Bewertung sogenannter Einheimischenmodelle müssen alle rechtlichen und sachlichen Umstände berücksichtigt werden. Die Kommission hat nicht die Absicht, diesbezügliche Leitlinien oder detaillierte Kriterien zu veröffentlichen.

Die Dienststellen der Kommission stehen in Kontakt mit den deutschen Behörden, um zu erörtern, welche Folgen sich aus dem Urteil in den verbundenen Rechtssachen C-197/11 und C-203/11 für das laufende Vertragsverletzungsverfahren ergeben.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008443/13
to the Commission
Angelika Niebler (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: 'Local model'/Court of Justice ruling

On 8 May 2013 the Court of Justice of the European Union passed a judgment in Joined Cases C197/11 and C-203/11 which established that the Flemish decree on building-land and property policy was in breach of EC law but that 'local models' may be permissible under certain circumstances.

Many local authorities in Germany — particularly in Bavaria — also have such models, under which local residents can purchase building land in their place of residence at a discount. The Commission has opened infringement proceedings against Germany on this matter, and these are currently pending. Many local authorities are now uncertain as to whether the practice is permissible under EC law. The 'local model' enables local authorities to help in particular families and socially-vulnerable people and keep them living locally. The aim is for rural areas especially to remain attractive as places to live.

In its ruling, the Court stated that certain social criteria aimed at helping local residents with limited financial resources to fund housing construction were expressly permitted under EC law, provided the reductions to the purchase price were appropriate and proportionate.

1. When will the Commission publish specific guidelines or a detailed list of criteria for the permissibility of local models so that local authorities can be sure of legal certainty in this matter?

2. Is it true that local models are permitted if they take the following criteria into account, at least to a reasonable degree: residence locally; income level; number of children; employment in the district; voluntary activities; family members in the district in need of care?

3. When does the Commission expect to complete the infringement proceedings against Germany?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

As mentioned by the Honourable Member, the Court of Justice has confirmed that the purpose of responding to the housing needs of low-income or other disadvantaged sections of the local population can constitute an overriding reason in the public interest justifying restrictions on fundamental freedoms, provided that the measures are appropriate and proportionate to the objective pursued.

In assessing the 'local models', all the legal and factual circumstances need to be considered. The Commission does not intend to publish guidelines or detailed criteria for this assessment.

The Commission services are in contact with the German authorities to discuss the consequences of the Judgment in joined cases C-197/11 and C-203/11 as regards the ongoing infringement proceedings.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-008444/13
upućeno Komisiji
Andrej Plenković (PPE)
(11. srpnja 2013.)

Predmet: Mogućnost financijske potpore radnicima/otpremnicima u Hrvatskoj nakon pristupanja Europskoj uniji

Postoji mogućnost da će radnici u tvrtkama koje se bave otpremništvom u Hrvatskoj postati tehnološki višak nakon pristupanja Hrvatske EU-u i ukidanja unutarnjih granica i carinskih kontrola. Nekoliko stotina radnika moglo bi biti pogođeno u tom sektoru. Radnici vjeruju da bi trebali imati pravo na financijsku odštetu. Svjestan sam da se pitanje osjetljive situacije ovih radnika pokrenulo u dijalogu između relevantnih službi Komisije i nadležnih hrvatskih tijela.

Razmatra li Komisija poduzimanje odgovarajućih mjera (npr. financijska potpora) kako bi olakšala situaciju radnika/otpremnika u Hrvatskoj?

Mogu li se provesti mjere podrške financiranjem iz Europskog socijalnog fonda ili korištenjem bilo kojeg drugog instrumenta EU-a kojim bi se moglo doprinijeti rješavanju ovog problema?

Odgovor g. Andora u ime Komisije
(2. rujna 2013.)

Komisija je u potpunosti svjesna izazova s kojima će se hrvatsko tržište rada suočiti nakon pristupanja Europskoj uniji i uslijed globalnih gospodarskih kretanja te ih uzima u obzir. Kako bi se omogućile potrebne prilagodbe na tržištu rada i u obrazovnom sustavu te poboljšala socijalna uključenost i ojačali institucionalni kapaciteti, dostupno je financiranje iz Europskog socijalnog fonda (ESF).

Komisija i Hrvatska trenutačno započinju rasprave o ulaganjima u programe koje će podupirati ESF u razdoblju od 2014. do 2020. Razgovarat će se i o pitanju otpremnika. Zaposlenicima u otpremništvu omogućit će se korištenje mjerama namijenjenima izobrazbi i prekvalifikaciji u okviru mjera aktivne politike zapošljavanja Hrvatskog zavoda za zapošljavanje (HZZ) koje će sufinancirati ESF.

Početkom ožujka 2013. svi regionalni uredi HZZ-a počeli su organizirati sastanke s poslodavcima koji se bave otpremništvom i posjećivati ih. Na temelju pojedinačnog savjetovanja s radnicima koji su proglašeni viškom ponuđen im je niz mogućnosti podrške, a dodatne informacije moguće je zatražiti od Ministarstva rada i mirovinskoga sustava, upravnog tijela nadležnog za operativni program ESF-a u Hrvatskoj.

Regionalni uredi HZZ-a nastavit će s posjetima poslodavcima i aktivnostima mobilnih timova kako bi se utvrdili mogući viškovi radnika u otpremništvu i pružile usluge radnicima na temelju utvrđenih planova.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008444/13
to the Commission
Andrej Plenković (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Possibility of financial support to workers/forwarding agents in Croatia following the accession to the European Union

The workers in forwarding agents companies in Croatia are facing redundancy following Croatia's accession to the EU and the abolition of internal borders and customs controls. Several hundred workers could be affected in this sector. The workers believe that they should be entitled to receive some financial compensation. I am aware that the delicate situation of these workers has been raised in the dialogue between the relevant services of the Commission and the responsible Croatian authorities.

Is the Commission considering taking appropriate measures (e.g. financial support) to alleviate the situation of workers/forwarding agents in Croatia?

Could supportive measures be implemented through the funding from the European Social Fund or by using any other available EU instrument that might contribute to the solution of this problem?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

The Commission is fully aware of and takes into account the challenges that Croatia's labour market is going to face following the accession to the European Union and in view of global economic trends. Funding from the European Social Fund (ESF) is available to help undertake the necessary adaptation not only in the labour market but also in the education system, as well as to improve social inclusion and strengthen institutional capacities.

The Commission and Croatia are now commencing discussions for programming investments to be supported by the ESF in the period for 2014-2020. The issue of the forwarding agents will also be tackled. There will be a possibility for persons employed as forwarding agents to use training and retraining measures offered through active employment measures by the Croatian Employment Service (CES) which will be co-financed by the ESF.

At the beginning of March 2013 all the CES regional offices started organising meetings and conducting visits to employers performing forwarding agency business activity. Through individual counselling the redundant workers have been offered several possibilities of support whose details can be obtained from the Ministry of Labour and Pension System which is the Managing Authority responsible for the ESF operational programme in Croatia.

Regional CES offices will continue with visits to the employers and with mobile team activities in order to establish possible redundancies of forwarding agents and in order to provide services to workers based on established plans.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008446/13
an die Kommission
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE), Andreas Schwab (PPE), Othmar Karas (PPE), Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (PPE), Róża Gräfin von Thun und Hohenstein (PPE), Sabine Verheyen (PPE), Constance Le Grip (PPE), Wim van de Camp (PPE), Lara Comi (PPE) und Malcolm Harbour (ECR)
(11. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: freier Dienstleistungsverkehr, Verpflichtung zur Meldung vor Beginn der Erbringung von Dienstleistungen

Der Europäische Gerichtshof hat in seinem Urteil C-577/10 entschieden, dass das Limosa-System (das Dienstleistungserbringer vor Beginn der Ausübung ihrer Tätigkeiten auf belgischem Hoheitsgebiet zur Meldung verpflichtet) nicht mit Artikel 56 AEUV in Einklang steht (freier Dienstleistungsverkehr). Angesichts dieses Urteils:

1. Wie bewertet die Kommission die Maßnahmen, die die belgische Regierung vorgeschlagen hat, um der Entscheidung nachzukommen?

2. Welchen Standpunkt vertritt die Kommission in Bezug auf Systeme, die Dienstleistungserbringer verpflichten, sich vor der zeitweiligen Erbringung von Dienstleistungen in anderen Mitgliedstaaten zu melden?

3. Ist der Kommission bekannt, dass es in anderen Mitgliedstaaten ähnliche Systeme gibt?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(4. September 2013)

Selbstständige Dienstleistungserbringer, die in einem anderen Mitgliedstaat als dem Königreich Belgien niedergelassen sind, dürfen in Belgien steuerlichen und sozialen Verpflichtungen unterworfen werden. Laut Urteil des Gerichtshofs in der Rechtssache C-577/10 ist die Anwendung des Limosa-Systems jedoch nicht auf Fälle beschränkt, in denen Anlass zur Prüfung besteht, ob diese steuerlichen und sozialen Verpflichtungen beachtet werden. Wie der Gerichtshof außerdem festgestellt hat, verlangten die infrage stehenden belgischen Rechtsvorschriften von Dienstleistern vor der Erbringung ihrer Dienste sehr detaillierte Informationen, ohne dass hinreichend gerechtfertigt werde, inwiefern die Übermittlung dieser Informationen erforderlich sei, um die geltend gemachten Ziele von allgemeinem Interesse zu erreichen, und ohne dass dargelegt werde, dass die Pflicht zur vorherigen Mitteilung der betreffenden Informationen nicht die Grenzen dessen überschreite, was zur Erreichung der Ziele erforderlich sei. Somit folgte der Gerichtshof der Argumentation der Kommission und entschied, dass die Pflicht zur vorhergehenden Meldung unverhältnismäßig und nicht mit Artikel 56 AEUV vereinbar sei.

Diese Schlussfolgerungen könnten auch auf andere, vergleichbare Systeme anwendbar sein, die selbstständigen Dienstleistern die Verpflichtung auferlegen, vor Beginn ihrer Tätigkeiten eine Meldung abzugeben. Der Kommission ist bekannt, dass in Dänemark ein ähnliches System (unter der Bezeichnung „RUT“) existiert. Sie steht mit den dänischen Behörden in Kontakt, um die Vereinbarkeit dieses Systems mit dem EU-Recht abzuklären.

Belgien hat am 19. März 2013 einen Königlichen Erlass zur Änderung des Limosa-Erlasses verabschiedet. Die Kommission führt derzeit Gespräche mit den zuständigen belgischen Stellen, um gemeinsam mit diesen im Lichte des Urteils in der Rechtssache C-577/10 zu prüfen, inwieweit die neue Regelung dem Erfordernis der Verhältnismäßigkeit entspricht.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008446/13
à la Commission
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE), Andreas Schwab (PPE), Othmar Karas (PPE), Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (PPE), Róża Gräfin von Thun und Hohenstein (PPE), Sabine Verheyen (PPE), Constance Le Grip (PPE), Wim van de Camp (PPE), Lara Comi (PPE) et Malcolm Harbour (ECR)
(11 juillet 2013)

Objet: Libre prestation de services, obligation de déclaration préalable à l'exercice d'activités de prestation de services

Dans son arrêt rendu dans l'affaire C-577/10, la Cour de justice établit que le système Limosa (qui contraint les prestataires de services à effectuer une déclaration avant d'exercer des activités de fourniture de services sur le territoire belge) va à l'encontre de l'article 56 du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne (liberté de prestation de services). À la lumière de cet arrêt:

1. Que pense la Commission de la mesure proposée par le gouvernement belge pour se conformer à l'arrêt?

2. Quelle est sa position concernant les systèmes contraignant les prestataires de services à effectuer une déclaration préalablement à l'exercice temporaire de leur activité de prestation de services dans d'autres États membres?

3. A-t-elle connaissance de systèmes semblables dans d'autres États membres?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(4 septembre 2013)

La Cour de justice de l'Union européenne a estimé dans l'affaire C-577/10 que, même en admettant que les prestataires de services indépendants établis dans un État membre autre que le Royaume de Belgique puissent être soumis, dans ce dernier État, à des obligations fiscales et sociales, le système Limosa n'était pas limité aux hypothèses dans lesquelles il y aurait lieu de vérifier que ces obligations fiscales et sociales sont respectées. La Cour a également estimé que la législation belge en cause exigeait de la part des prestataires de services des informations de nature très détaillée préalablement à la prestation, sans justifier de manière suffisamment convaincante en quoi la communication de ces informations est nécessaire pour atteindre les objectifs d'intérêt général qu'elle invoque et en quoi l'obligation de communiquer de manière préalable de telles informations ne dépasse pas les limites de ce qui est nécessaire afin d'atteindre ces objectifs. En conséquence, conformément aux arguments soulevés par la Commission, la Cour a décidé que l'obligation de déclaration préalable était disproportionnée et, par conséquent, incompatible avec l'article 56 du TFUE.

Ces conclusions pourraient s'appliquer à d'autres systèmes semblables obligeant les prestataires de services indépendants de manière générale à notifier le début de leurs activités à l'avance. La Commission a connaissance de l'existence d'un système similaire (appelé «RUT») au Danemark et est en contact avec les autorités danoises pour déterminer la compatibilité du système en question avec le droit de l'Union européenne.

Le 19 mars 2013, la Belgique a adopté un arrêté royal modifiant le système Limosa. La Commission est en train d'examiner la proportionnalité du nouveau système avec les autorités belges, à la lumière de l'arrêt rendu dans l'affaire C-577/10.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008446/13
alla Commissione
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE), Andreas Schwab (PPE), Othmar Karas (PPE), Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (PPE), Róża Gräfin von Thun und Hohenstein (PPE), Sabine Verheyen (PPE), Constance Le Grip (PPE), Wim van de Camp (PPE), Lara Comi (PPE) e Malcolm Harbour (ECR)
(11 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Libera prestazione di servizi e obbligo di registrazione prima della prestazione di servizi

Nella sentenza C-577/10, la Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea ha stabilito che il sistema Limosa (che obbliga i prestatori di servizi a registrarsi prima di esercitare la propria attività nel territorio del Belgio) è incompatibile con l'articolo 56 del TFUE (libera prestazione di servizi). Alla luce della sentenza:

1. Come valuta la Commissione la misura proposta dal governo belga per rispettare la decisione?

2. Qual è la posizione della Commissione nei confronti dei sistemi che obbligano i prestatori di servizi a registrarsi prima di procedere alla prestazione temporanea di servizi in altri Stati membri?

3. È la Commissione a conoscenza dell'esistenza di sistemi simili in altri Stati membri?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(4 settembre 2013)

Nella causa C-577/10 la Corte di giustizia ha stabilito che, anche ammesso che i prestatori di servizi autonomi stabiliti in uno Stato membro diverso dal Regno del Belgio possano essere soggetti, in quest'ultimo Stato, ad obblighi fiscali e previdenziali, il sistema Limosa non si limita alle ipotesi in cui occorra verificare che tali obblighi fiscali e previdenziali siano rispettati. Inoltre, ha stabilito che la legislazione belga in questione richiede informazioni di natura dettagliata dai prestatori dei servizi prima della prestazione, senza una giustificazione sufficiente per quanto riguarda sotto qual profilo la comunicazione di tali informazioni risulti necessaria per conseguire gli obiettivi di interesse generale da esso invocati e sotto qual profilo l'obbligo di previa comunicazione di tali informazioni non vada oltre i limiti di quanto necessario ai fini del conseguimento degli obiettivi medesimi. La Corte ha pertanto concluso, conformemente alle argomentazioni della Commissione, che l'obbligo di dichiarazione previsto è sproporzionato e, in quanto tale, incompatibile con l'articolo 56 del TFUE.

Queste conclusioni potrebbero applicarsi ad altri sistemi simili che in linea generale obbligano i prestatori di servizi autonomi a comunicare l'avvio delle loro attività in anticipo. La Commissione è a conoscenza dell'esistenza di un sistema analogo in Danimarca (chiamato «RUT») ed è in contatto con le autorità danesi per chiarire la compatibilità della misura con il diritto dell'UE.

Il 19 marzo 2013 il Belgio ha adottato un regio decreto che modifica il sistema Limosa. La Commissione sta attualmente discutendo con le autorità belghe la proporzionalità del nuovo sistema, alla luce della sentenza della causa C-577/10.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008446/13
aan de Commissie
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE), Andreas Schwab (PPE), Othmar Karas (PPE), Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (PPE), Róża Gräfin von Thun und Hohenstein (PPE), Sabine Verheyen (PPE), Constance Le Grip (PPE), Wim van de Camp (PPE), Lara Comi (PPE) en Malcolm Harbour (ECR)
(11 juli 2013)

Betreft: Vrijheid van dienstverlening, verplichte registratie voor het begin van de dienstverlening

In zijn arrest in Zaak C-577/10 besloot het Hof van Justitie van de EU dat het Limosa-systeem (volgens welk dienstverleners op Belgisch grondgebied verplicht zijn zich tevoren aan te melden) niet verenigbaar is met artikel 56 VWEU (vrij verrichten van diensten). In het licht van dit arrest wilde ik de Commissie het volgende vragen:

1. Wat is de mening van de Commissie over de maatregel die de Belgische regering heeft voorgesteld?

2. Wat denkt de Commissie over regelingen die dienstverleners verplichten zich te laten registreren voor het begin van het tijdelijk verrichten van diensten in een andere lidstaat?

3. Weet de Commissie of er in andere lidstaten gelijksoortige systemen bestaan?

Antwoord van de heer Barnier namens de Commissie
(4 september 2013)

Het Hof van Justitie oordeelde in zaak C-577/10 dat, zelfs indien zou worden aanvaard dat zelfstandige dienstverleners die in een andere lidstaat dan het Koninkrijk België gevestigd zijn in de laatstgenoemde staat aan belastings- en socialezekerheidsverplichtingen zouden kunnen worden onderworpen, het Limosa-systeem niet beperkt was tot gevallen waarin er reden is om na te gaan of aan die belastings- en socialezekerheidsverplichtingen wordt voldaan. Het Hof oordeelde ook dat de in het geding zijnde Belgische wetgeving vereiste dat de dienstverleners voorafgaand aan de dienstverlening zeer gedetailleerde informatie verstrekken, zonder voldoende rechtvaardiging van het feit op welke wijze de verstrekking van die informatie noodzakelijk is om de doelstellingen van algemeen belang waarop de wetgeving berust te bereiken en op welke wijze de verplichting om die informatie vooraf te verstrekken niet verder gaat dan hetgeen noodzakelijk is om die doelstellingen te bereiken. Het Hof besliste dan ook, in lijn met de argumenten van de Commissie, dat de verplichting om zich vooraf aan te melden onevenredig was en als zodanig onverenigbaar met artikel 56 VWEU.

Die conclusies kunnen gelden voor andere soortgelijke systemen op grond waarvan zelfstandige dienstverleners in het algemeen verplicht zijn vooraf mededeling te doen van de aanvang van hun activiteiten. De Commissie is op de hoogte van het bestaan van zulk een systeem in Denemarken („RUT") en staat in contact met de Deense autoriteiten met betrekking tot de verenigbaarheid ervan met het EU-recht.

Op 19 maart 2013 heeft België een Koninklijk Besluit aangenomen tot wijziging van de Limosa-wet. De Commissie bespreekt momenteel in het licht van het arrest in zaak C-577/1 met de Belgische autoriteiten de evenredigheid van het nieuwe systeem.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008446/13
do Komisji
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE), Andreas Schwab (PPE), Othmar Karas (PPE), Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (PPE), Róża Gräfin von Thun und Hohenstein (PPE), Sabine Verheyen (PPE), Constance Le Grip (PPE), Wim van de Camp (PPE), Lara Comi (PPE) oraz Malcolm Harbour (ECR)
(11 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Swoboda świadczenia usług, obowiązek rejestracji przed rozpoczęciem świadczenia usług

Europejski Trybunał Sprawiedliwości orzekł w wyroku w sprawie C-577/10, że system Limosa (który zobowiązuje usługodawców do rejestracji przed rozpoczęciem świadczenia usług w Belgii) jest niezgodny z art. 56 TFUE (swoboda świadczenia usług). W świetle tego wyroku:

1. Jak Komisja ocenia środek zaproponowany przez rząd belgijski w celu zastosowania się do tego orzeczenia?

2. Jakie jest stanowisko Komisji nt. systemów zobowiązujących usługodawcę do rejestracji przed rozpoczęciem tymczasowego świadczenia usług w innych państwach członkowskich?

3. Czy Komisja jest świadoma istnienia podobnych systemów w innych państwach członkowskich?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Michela Barniera w imieniu Komisji
(4 września 2013 r.)

W wyroku w sprawie C-577/10 Trybunał Sprawiedliwości stwierdził, że nawet gdyby założyć, że samozatrudnieni usługodawcy mający siedzibę w państwie członkowskim innym niż Królestwo Belgii mogliby zostać objęci w Belgii obowiązkami podatkowymi i socjalnymi, to system Limosa nie ogranicza się jedynie do przypadków, w których konieczne byłoby sprawdzanie, czy owe obowiązki podatkowe i socjalne są przestrzegane. Trybunał stwierdził również, że przedmiotowe belgijski przepisy wymagały od usługodawców dostarczenia bardzo dokładnych informacji przed rozpoczęciem świadczenia usług, przy czym nie przedstawiono dostatecznie przekonujących dowodów, które świadczyłyby o tym, że obowiązek podawania tak szczegółowych informacji przyczynia się do realizacji celów interesu ogólnego, na które się powoływano, ani że obowiązek uprzedniego podania tego rodzaju informacji nie wykracza poza granice tego, co konieczne, aby cele te osiągnąć. W związku z tym Trybunał orzekł, zgodnie z argumentacją Komisji, że obowiązek uprzedniego zgłoszenia była nieproporcjonalny i jako taki niezgodny z art. 56 TFUE.

Wnioski te mogłyby mieć zastosowanie również do innych podobnych systemów zobowiązujących samozatrudnionych usługodawców do wcześniejszego zgłoszenia rozpoczęcia działalności. Komisja jest świadoma istnienia takiego systemu w Danii (tzw. RUT) i skontaktowała się z władzami duńskimi w sprawie jego zgodności z prawem UE.

W dniu 19 marca 2013 r. Belgia przyjęła dekret królewski zmieniający dekret w sprawie systemu Limosa. Komisja omawia obecnie proporcjonalność nowego systemu z władzami belgijskimi w świetle wyroku w sprawie C-577/10.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-008446/13
till kommissionen
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE), Andreas Schwab (PPE), Othmar Karas (PPE), Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (PPE), Róża Gräfin von Thun und Hohenstein (PPE), Sabine Verheyen (PPE), Constance Le Grip (PPE), Wim van de Camp (PPE), Lara Comi (PPE) och Malcolm Harbour (ECR)
(11 juli 2013)

Angående: Friheten att tillhandahålla tjänster, skyldigheten att göra en förhandsanmälan innan man börjar tillhandahålla tjänster

I sin dom i mål C-577/10 fastställer EU-domstolen att Limosasystemet (vilket ålägger tjänsteleverantörer att göra en förhandsanmälan innan de tillhandahåller tjänster i Belgien) är oförenligt med artikel 56 i EUF-fördraget (friheten att tillhandahålla tjänster). Kommissionen uppmanas, mot bakgrund av denna dom, att svara på följande frågor:

1. Hur bedömer kommissionen den åtgärd som den belgiska regeringen har föreslagit för att följa domen?

2. Vad anser kommissionen om de system som ålägger tjänsteleverantörer att göra en förhandsanmälan innan de inleder ett tillfälligt tillhandahållande av tjänster i andra medlemsstater?

3. Känner kommissionen till liknande system i andra medlemsstater?

Svar från Michel Barnier på kommissionens vägnar
(4 september 2013)

Domstolen konstaterar i mål C-577/10 att egenföretagare som tillhandahåller tjänster och som är etablerade i ett annat medlemsland än Belgien visserligen kan omfattas av skatte- och socialförsäkringsskyldigheter i Belgien, men att Limosasystemet inte bara gäller fall där det finns skäl att kontrollera att skyldigheterna har fullgjorts. Domstolen konstaterar också att den belgiska lagstiftningen i fråga krävde mycket ingående förhandsinformation från tjänsteleverantörerna, utan att tillräckligt motivera varför informationen behövs för att värna allmänhetens intresse och hur skyldigheten att lämna förhandsinformation inte går utöver vad som behövs för att uppnå detta mål. Domstolen fastställde därför, i linje med kommissionens argument, att kravet på förhandsanmälan var oproportionerligt och därför oförenligt med artikel 56 i EUF-fördraget.

Slutsatserna skulle kunna gälla andra liknande system som kräver att egenföretagare som tillhandahåller tjänster anmäler sin verksamhet i förväg. Kommissionen vet att det finns ett sådant system i Danmark (RUT-registret) och diskuterar med de danska myndigheterna om systemet är förenligt med EU-lagstiftningen.

Den 19 mars 2013 antog Belgien ett dekret som ändrar Limosadekretet. Kommissionen diskuterar för närvarande med de belgiska myndigheterna om systemet är proportionerligt, mot bakgrund av domen i mål C-577/10.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008446/13
to the Commission
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE), Andreas Schwab (PPE), Othmar Karas (PPE), Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (PPE), Róża Gräfin von Thun und Hohenstein (PPE), Sabine Verheyen (PPE), Constance Le Grip (PPE), Wim van de Camp (PPE), Lara Comi (PPE) and Malcolm Harbour (ECR)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Freedom to provide services, obligation to register prior to the commencement of the provision of services

In judgment C-577/10, the European Court of Justice ruled that the Limosa system (which obliges service providers to register prior to the commencement of the provision of services in Belgian territory) is incompatible with Article 56 of the TFEU (freedom to provide services). In view of this judgment:

1. What is the Commission's assessment of the measure proposed by the Belgian Government to comply with the ruling?

2. What is the Commission's position on the systems obliging the service provider to register before the start of the temporary provision of services in other Member States?

3. Is the Commission aware of the existence of the similar systems in other Member States?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2013)

The Court of Justice found in Case C-577/10 that, even if it were accepted that self-employed service providers established in a Member State other than the Kingdom of Belgium could be subject, in the latter State, to tax and social security obligations, the Limosa system was not restricted to cases where there is cause to ascertain that those tax and social security obligations are met. It also found that the Belgian legislation at stake required very detailed information from service providers in advance of the service provision, without sufficient justification as to how the provision of that information is necessary in order to achieve the objectives of public interest on which it relies and how the obligation to give that information in advance does not go beyond what is necessary to achieve those objectives. The Court therefore ruled, in line with the arguments of the Commission, that the prior declaration obligation was disproportionate and, as such, incompatible with Article 56 TFEU.

These conclusions could apply to other similar systems obliging self-employed service providers in general to notify the commencement of their activities in advance. The Commission is aware of the existence of such a system in Denmark (called 'RUT') and is in contact with the Danish authorities in regard to its compatibility with EC law.

On 19 March 2013, Belgium adopted a Royal Decree modifying the Limosa decree. The Commission is currently discussing the proportionality of the new system with the Belgian authorities, in light of the judgment in Case C-577/10.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-008447/13
komissiolle
Eija-Riitta Korhola (PPE)
(11. heinäkuuta 2013)

Aihe: Nuorisotyön tehostaminen EU:n jäsenvaltioissa laajemman yhteiskunnallisen kriisin ehkäisemiseksi

Nuorisotyöttömyys, joka joissakin EU:n jäsenvaltioissa koskettaa yli 50 prosenttia nuorista, uhkaa yhteiskunnallista vakautta. Rahoitus- ja talouskriisi on myös parhaillaan kehittymässä sosiaaliseksi kriisiksi. Komissio on arvioinut nuorisotyöttömyyden maksavan 153 miljardia euroa (työttömyyskorvaukset, tuottavuuden lasku ja verotulojen menetykset) sekä vaikuttavan pitkään ”arpeuttavalla” tavalla.

Nuorisotyön ja erityisesti etsivän nuorisotyön avulla voidaan erittäin tehokkaasti tukea nuorten osaamista ja kehitystä sekä lisätä heidän sosiaalista osallisuuttaan nuorisotyöttömyysasteen ollessa korkea. Komission nuorisotyöportaalissa todetaan nuorisotyön vaikuttavan nuorten elämään ja auttavan nuoria saavuttamaan täyden potentiaalinsa, ja nuorisotyö (itsenäisyyden ja avaintaitojen kehittämismahdollisuuksien edistäminen) myös kuuluu EU:n nuorisostrategian 2010–2018 tärkeimpiin painopistealueisiin. Lisäksi komissio on esittänyt Mahdollisuuksia nuorille -aloitteen ja pyrkinyt näin lisäämään nuorten työllistettävyyttä kriisin jatkuessa.

Nuorisotyö on kuitenkin osassa jäsenvaltioista huomattavasti kehittyneempää kuin toisissa. Rahoituskriisin aikana on erittäin tärkeää huolehtia siitä, ettei nuorisotyön asema heikkene ja että huomiota kiinnitetään syrjäytyneisiin ja muita heikommassa asemassa oleviin nuoriin, joilla on vähemmän mahdollisuuksia. Aikooko komissio tämän mukaisesti käynnistää aloitteita puuttuakseen eri jäsenvaltioiden väliseen epätasapainoon?

Androulla Vassilioun komission puolesta antama vastaus
(12. syyskuuta 2013)

Komissio yhtyy parlamentin jäsenen esittämään kantaan nuorisotyön tuloksellisuudesta nuorten taitojen ja osaamisen kehittämisessä: nuorisotyössä tapahtuva epävirallinen oppiminen parantaa nuorten työllistettävyyttä ja osallistumista yhteiskuntaelämään, mikä osaltaan edistää heidän yhteiskunnallista osallisuuttaan.

Komissio edistää nuorisotyötä eri tavoin, jotka kaikki ajan mittaan edistävät tasapainoista kehitystä kaikkialla Euroopan unionissa.

— Komissio helpottaa vertaisoppimisjärjestelyä, jossa jäsenvaltiot vaihtavat kokemuksia ja hyviä toimintatapoja aihepiirikohtaisessa jäsenvaltioiden nuorisotyön laatujärjestelmiä käsittelevässä asiantuntijaryhmässä.

— Komissio edistää nuorisotyökokemuksia Youth in Action -nuorisotyöohjelman kautta. Ohjelma tarjoaa koulutus- ja verkottumismahdollisuuksia vuosittain yli 200 000 nuorisotyöntekijälle. Vuodesta 2014 alkaen nuorisotyön tukemiseen tarjoutuu lisämahdollisuuksia Erasmus+ -ohjelmasta. Sen avulla voidaan erityisesti tukea oppimiseen liittyvää, valtioiden rajat ylittävää nuorisotyöntekijöiden liikkuvuutta, yhteistyötä ja hyvien toimintatapojen vaihtoa nuorisotyöhön osallistuvien organisaatioiden välillä sekä politiikan uudistamista siten, että nuorisotyötä arvostettaisiin paremmin jäsenvaltioissa.

— Komissio tilasi nuorisotyön arvostusta koskevan tutkimuksen ”*Working with Young People – The Value of Youth Work*”, joka julkaistaan pian. Tutkimuksella pyritään saamaan syvällisempi käsitys nuorisotyön merkityksestä ja arvosta kaikkialla Euroopan unionissa. Erityisenä painopisteenä on nuorisotyön erityistehtävä epäedullisessa asemassa olevien nuorten parissa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008447/13
to the Commission
Eija-Riitta Korhola (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Consolidating the effectiveness of youth work in EU Member States to prevent a wider social crisis

Youth unemployment, which well exceeds 50% in some EU Member States, presents a risk to social stability. The financial and economic crisis is, at the moment, spilling over to become a social crisis, too. The Commission has estimated that the cost of youth unemployment is EUR 153 billion (unemployment benefits, lost productivity and lost tax revenue), as well as having a long-term 'scarring effect'.

Youth work, in particular detached youth work, is a very effective tool to enhance the skills, development and social inclusion of young people in times of high youth unemployment. The Commission portal on youth work says that 'Youth work has an impact on young people's life and helps them to reach their full potential' and the EU Youth Strategy 2010-18 includes youth work (promoting opportunities to develop autonomy and key competences) in its priority areas. In addition, in the context of the crisis, the Commission has proposed the Youth Opportunities Initiative in an effort to enhance the employability of young people.

However, youth work is very developed in certain Member States, but under-developed in others. In times of financial crisis, it is very important that youth work does not lose ground, and it should focus particularly on marginalised and disadvantaged young people with fewer opportunities. In line with this, is the Commission planning on launching any initiatives to address this imbalance between different Member States?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(12 September 2013)

The Commission shares the opinion expressed by the Member as to the effectiveness of youth work in the development of skills and competences of young people; the non-formal learning approach implemented by youth work is a useful way to enhance the employability of young people as well as their active participation in society, thus contributing to their social inclusion.

The Commission promotes youth work in various ways, all of which should help, over time, to encourage more balanced progress across the European Union:

— it will facilitate a peer-learning exercise, where Member States will exchange experiences and good practices in the context of a thematic expert group to examine youth work quality systems in the Member States;

— it supports youth work experiences involving young people and training and networking opportunities for youth workers through the current Youth in Action Programme which involves annually more than 200 000 participants. As of 2014, increased opportunities of support to youth work will be offered through the Erasmus+ Programme, notably through: transnational learning mobility of youth workers; cooperation and exchange of good practices between organisations involved in youth work; support to policy reform, with a view to ensuring a better recognition of youth work in the Member States;

— it commissioned a study 'Working with Young People — The Value of Youth Work', soon to be published, which aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the role and value of youth work across the European Union, highlighting its specific role for young people with fewer opportunities.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008448/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(11 juillet 2013)

Objet: Le bon fonctionnement de la libre circulation des capitaux

Une législation nationale est-elle compatible avec le droit de l'Union — en particulier avec la libre circulation des capitaux — qui ne permet le retour des biens confisqués qu'après l'adhésion d'un État membre, dans un processus de restitution aux seuls citoyens de ces États membres et qui exclut même les héritiers s'ils ne disposent pas de la citoyenneté desdits États membres?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(3 septembre 2013)

La restitution de biens confisqués est considérée comme un mouvement de capitaux. En outre, il ressort de l'annexe à la directive du Conseil du 24 juin 1988 ([1]) que les mouvements de capitaux comprennent les successions, qui constituent une catégorie de mouvements de capitaux à caractère personnel. Le traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne interdit toutes les restrictions aux mouvements de capitaux entre les États membres et entre les États membres et les pays tiers ([2]).

Le traité, ainsi que l'a précisé la Cour de justice européenne dans sa jurisprudence, prévoit certaines exceptions à la libre circulation des capitaux, à condition qu'elles soient justifiées par des motifs énoncés dans le traité ([3]) ou par des raisons impérieuses d'intérêt général. Toute restriction doit en outre respecter le principe de proportionnalité, qui suppose que les mesures adoptées soient appropriées et n'excèdent pas ce qui est nécessaire pour atteindre leurs objectifs et qu'elles soient non discriminatoires.

Dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre de la législation européenne, les États membres doivent également respecter la Charte des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne, notamment le droit à la propriété et le principe de non-discrimination. Toutefois, dans ce contexte, les discriminations fondées sur la nationalité ne renvoient qu'à la nationalité dans le cadre des États membres de l'Union européenne.

Étant donné le peu d'informations dont dispose la Commission, il est impossible de fournir une réponse plus détaillée concernant la situation évoquée par l'Honorable Parlementaire.

([1]) Directive 88/361/CE du Conseil.
([2]) Article 63 du TFUE.
([3]) Article 65 du TFUE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008448/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: The proper functioning of the free movement of capital

Is national legislation compatible with EC law, in particular with regard to the free movement of capital, when it only allows confiscated property to be returned once a Member State has joined the Union, in a process that provides for property to be returned only to EU citizens and excludes non-EU nationals, even where they are the legal heirs?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

Restitution of property is considered a capital movement. Furthermore, it follows from the annex to Council Directive of 24 June 1988 ([1]) that capital movements include inheritances as a category of personal capital movements. The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union prohibits all restrictions on the movement of capital between Member States and between Member States and third countries ([2]).

The Treaty, as further specified in case law by the European Court of Justice, allows for certain exceptions to the free movement of capital, provided that these restrictions are justified on the grounds set out in the Treaty ([3]) or by overriding reasons in the general interest. Any restriction also have to observe the principle of proportionality, requiring that the measures are appropriate to attain the objectives which they pursue and do not go beyond what is necessary in order to attain them, and have to be non-discriminatory.

When implementing EC law, Member States should also respect the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, including the right to property and the principle of non-discrimination. However, in that context, discrimination on the grounds of nationality refers only to the nationality in the context of the EU Member States.

Based on the limited amount of information available to the Commission, it is not possible to give a more detailed answer regarding the situation referred to by the Honourable Member.

([1]) Council Directive 88/361/EC.
([2]) Article 63 TFEU.
([3]) Article 65 TFEU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008449/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Blacklisting of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards

The Iranian Revolutionary Guards (IRG) have operated since 1979 as, effectively, a vast and private militia, directly answerable to the Supreme Leader. They have been responsible for crushing dissent inside Iran, and are accused of funding numerous terrorist activities outside the country. In particular, they have allegedly funded and armed the Taliban, Hamas and Hezbollah, assassinated Iranian dissidents abroad, and assisted the planning of multiple plots to commit atrocities, particularly in Israel, a country which the IRG have stated they wish to destroy. In 2011, US Attorney-General Eric Holder accused the IRG of plotting to kill the Saudi Ambassador to Washington, and there has recently been evidence that IRG soldiers are fighting alongside President Assad's brutal militias in Syria. Indeed, some analysts have argued that the combined threat of Hezbollah and the Quds force, the special operations branch of the IRG, outweighs that of even Al-Qaeda; between May 2011 and July 2012, 20 terrorist attacks by Hezbollah or Quds were thwarted worldwide.

The United States and Canada have already proscribed Quds as a terrorist organisation. In the face of mounting evidence of the terrorist activities of both Quds and the IRG more widely, many experts from across the political spectrum have argued that an EU blacklisting as a terrorist organisation could help to coordinate an effective response to Iran's terrorist threat, in tandem with nuclear sanctions, and block key funding on which the IRG depends.

How does the VP/HR assess the evidence relating to the IRG, in particular its Quds force?

Given the EU's commitment to fighting international terrorism, and its designation of Hamas, which is also an organisation indiscriminately targeting civilians, would she encourage the Member States to blacklist the IRG as well?

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

The EU has serious concerns regarding the activity of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), inside Iran as well as in the wider Middle East region.

The IRGC has been listed by the EU since July 2010, under the Iran nuclear sanctions regime, for its responsibility in relation to the nuclear programme. As part of the IRGC, the IRGC Quds Force is also listed. In addition, a number of members of IRGC and other entities owned or controlled by IRGC are also listed under the nuclear sanctions regime because of their involvement in the Iranian nuclear programme. A number of members of the IRGC also appear on the EU list of people responsible for serious human rights violations in Iran, under the EU's sanctions regime addressing the human rights situation in Iran. Finally, three IRGC commanders- under whom Qasim Soleimany, are designated under the Syria sanctions regime in relation to their support to help the Syrian regime suppress protests in Syria.

The designation of persons, groups or entities involved in terrorist acts is regulated by Council Common Position 2001/931/CFSP (CP931). The IRGC is not designated in the frame of this Common Position.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008450/13
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(11 July 2013)

Subject: Surveillance of foreign nationals by the US Government

I have been contacted by a constituent who is concerned about the recently leaked report that the US Government is spying on foreign nationals (including EU citizens) by accessing and intercepting online customer data from companies such as Facebook and Hotmail.

My constituent believes that what he refers to as this 'cloak-and-dagger surveillance' operates beyond the control of citizens of the UK and other EU Member States, is morally wrong and is potentially illegal according to Article 8 of the Human Rights Act and the UK Data Protection Act.

My constituent is also concerned that this surveillance programme has been used to uncover and steal business secrets which could further damage the EU economy.

Could the Commission confirm:

1. Whether it shares my constituent's concerns that this action by the US Government could be damaging to businesses operating in the EU and whether it is an unacceptable breach of the privacy of EU citizens?

2. Whether it has requested that the US Government discontinue its policy of spying on citizens of the UK and other EU Member States?

3. Whether it plans to request that citizens of EU Member States who have been illegally spied on should be given access to the information held on them by the US Government?

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

The Commision would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written question E-007934/13.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008739/13
alla Commissione
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(16 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Estensione dell'uso di JASPERS ad altri Stati membri

Il meccanismo di assistenza tecnica JASPERS stabilito per i nuovi paesi che hanno aderito all'UE nel 2004 e nel 2007 fornisce agli Stati membri interessati un sostegno e una competenza specializzata mirata relativamente ai principali progetti finanziati dall'UE.

Sin dal momento in cui è diventato operativo nel 2006, il partenariato ha portato a compimento più di 694 procedure per un ammontare complessivo di quasi 64 miliardi di euro, rispetto ai quali il volume di investimento dei progetti approvato dalla Commissione è ammontato a circa 30 miliardi di euro.

Più recentemente, il meccanismo è stato esteso alla Croazia e alla Grecia, mostrando l'efficacia dello strumento nel potenziare e nell'accelerare l'assorbimento dei fondi disponibili negli Stati membri dell'UE grazie all'aumento della quantità e della qualità dei progetti per i quali è stato richiesto il finanziamento nel quadro dei Fondi strutturali e del Fondo di coesione.

Alla luce di quanto precede:

1. Non ritiene la Commissione che, date le persistenti avverse condizioni economiche, l'accesso a detto meccanismo debba essere consentito a ogni Stato membro che lo richieda? Sta essa valutando la possibilità di includere un maggior numero di paesi nella lista di quelli ammissibili?

2. Prevede la Commissione di estendere a nuovi paesi la partecipazione a detto meccanismo? Se sì, a quali? In caso contrario, per quali motivi?

3. Quali condizioni devono essere rispettate affinché un paese possa essere incluso nellalista dei paesi ammissibili?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(20 agosto 2013)

JASPERS è stato varato per fornire sostegno agli Stati membri che hanno aderito all'UE nel 2004 e dopo tale data. Lo strumento era giustificato dalla necessità di garantire assistenza agli Stati membri nell'elaborazione di grandi progetti infrastrutturali da finanziare a valere sul Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale e sul Fondo di coesione, in particolare nei settori in cui tali Stati membri non disponevano delle conoscenze e dell'esperienza necessarie. Più recentemente la Commissione ha convenuto di offrire un certo sostegno alla Grecia, nel quadro dello strumento JASPERS, per potenziare la capacità delle autorità greche di approntare validi progetti di rapida attuazione nel contesto dell'attuale crisi economica.

La Commissione non intende estendere i servizi di consulenza specifici offerti da JASPERS ad altri Stati membri oltre i 13 che attualmente ne beneficiano, auspica tuttavia che JASPERS sia in grado di fungere da meccanismo indipendente di revisione della qualità di grandi progetti accessibile a tutti gli Stati membri.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008739/13
to the Commission
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Use of Jaspers extended to other Member States

The Jaspers technical assistance facility established for the new countries which joined the EU in 2004 and 2007 has been providing the Member States concerned with support and targeted specialist expertise on major EU-funded projects.

Since it began operating in 2006 the partnership has completed more than 694 assignments for a total volume of almost EUR 64 billion, of which the investment volume of projects approved by the Commission totalled almost EUR 30 billion.

More recently the tool has been extended to Croatia and to Greece, showing the effectiveness of the instrument in enhancing and accelerating the absorption of the available funds in the EU Member States by increasing the quantity and quality of projects applying for financing under the Structural and Cohesion Funds.

With this in mind:

1. Does the Commission not take the view that, owing to the persistent adverse economic conditions, access to this facility should be granted to any requesting Member State? Is the Commission considering including more countries in the list of eligible participants?

2. Is the Commission planning to extend participation in this tool to new countries? If so, which ones? If not, why not?

3. What are the conditions that need to be met in order for a country to be included?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

JASPERS was set up to provide support to the Member States which joined the EU in 2004 and afterwards. This was justified by the need to ensure support to those Member States in the preparation of large infrastructure projects for financing under the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund, particularly in areas where those Member States lacked the necessary knowledge and experience. More recently, the Commission agreed to extend some support under JASPERS to Greece, to boost the capacity of the Greek authorities to prepare sound projects for urgent implementation in the context of the current economic crisis.

While the Commission does not intend to extend the specific JASPERS advisory services beyond the 13 Member States currently benefiting, the Commission does expect that JASPERS will be able to function as an independent quality review mechanism for major projects accessible for all Member States.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008740/13
an die Kommission
Hermann Winkler (PPE)
(16. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Förderung des Tabakanbaus in Europa und Zusammenhang mit der Novellierung der Richtlinie über Tabakprodukte

Auch in der zukünftigen EU-Förderperiode wird es voraussichtlich möglich sein, europäische Fördermittel für den Anbau und die Verarbeitung von Rohtabak als Agrarprodukt zu beantragen. Darüber hinaus erlaubt die Europäische Kommission explizit die gesonderte Förderung des Tabakanbaus durch die Mitgliedstaaten (vgl. Zulassung ergänzender Beihilfen für die Kanaren — Verordnung (EU) Nr. 228/2013 vom 13. März 2013). Zugleich soll die Richtlinie über Tabakprodukte auch nach Vorstellungen der Europäischen Kommission erheblich verschärft werden, um über eine stärkere Regulierung von Produktion und Handel von Tabakwaren den Konsum derselben innerhalb der EU einzuschränken.

1. Welche Wechselwirkungen erwartet die Kommission vom Zusammenspiel dieser beiden Ansätze?

2. Inwiefern erscheint es der Kommission als schlüssige Politik, in Europa zugleich den Tabakanbau zu fördern und den Tabakkonsum durch Handelsrestriktionen einschränken zu wollen?

3. Wie begründet die Kommission die Notwendigkeit einer europaweit einheitlichen Regulierung von Tabakerzeugnissen? Warum ist dies eine Aufgabe für die Europäische Union?

Antwort von Herrn Cioloş im Namen der Kommission
(9. September 2013)

Im Rahmen der Reform der gemeinsamen Agrarpolitik (GAP) aus dem Jahr 2003 lief die besondere finanzielle Förderung der Rohtabakerzeugung 2009 aus. Für die Erzeugung von Rohtabak gelten nun ausschließlich die allgemeinen Instrumente der Agrarpolitik. Durch die Betriebsprämienregelung bzw. die Regelung für die einheitliche Flächenzahlung der GAP kann unter bestimmten Voraussetzungen unabhängig davon, welche Art von Erzeugnissen die Landwirte tatsächlich herstellen, finanzielle Unterstützung gewährt werden. Die Tabakerzeugung wird dabei neutral behandelt.

Bis 2014 können die Mitgliedstaaten jedoch beschließen, einen begrenzten Anteil ihrer nationalen Mittel für die Betriebsprämienregelung oder die Regelung für die einheitliche Flächenzahlung zu verwenden, um in klar definierten Fällen für bestimmte Erzeugnisse, einschließlich Tabak, besondere Unterstützung zu gewähren. Allerdings gehört Tabak nicht zu den Erzeugnissen, die im Rahmen der ab 2015 geltenden fakultativen gekoppelten Stützungsregelung förderfähig sind. Ziel dieser neuen Regelung ist es, Regionen oder Branchen Unterstützung zu gewähren, in denen bestimmte Schwierigkeiten auftreten. Ziel ist nicht die Erhöhung der erzeugten Mengen. Dies gilt auch für die Beihilfe, mit der verschiedene Erzeugnisse auf den Kanarischen Inseln gefördert werden.

Darüber hinaus bieten die Programme zur Entwicklung des ländlichen Raums innerhalb der GAP zahlreiche Möglichkeiten, Landwirte zu unterstützen, die strukturelle Veränderungen in der Erzeugung beschließen.

Nur durch ein auf EU-Ebene abgestimmtes Vorgehen ist es möglich, Hindernisse für den grenzüberschreitenden Handel auszuräumen, die Fragmentierung durch unterschiedliche Vorschriften in den einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten zu verhindern und gleichzeitig EU-weit ein hohes Maß an Gesundheitsschutz zu gewährleisten. Diesbezüglich wird bereits durch die Richtlinie 2001/37/EG ([1]), die derzeit überarbeitet wird, eine Harmonisierung im Bereich der Tabakerzeugnisse vorgenommen, z. B. hinsichtlich der Aufmachung der Verpackungen und der obligatorischen Gesundheitswarnungen.

([1]) ABl. L 194 vom 18.7.2001.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008740/13
to the Commission
Hermann Winkler (PPE)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Aid for tobacco farming in Europe and link to the revision of the directive on tobacco products

It will probably again be possible during the forthcoming aid period to apply for European aid funds for growing and processing raw tobacco as an agricultural product. Moreover, the European Commission explicitly allows separate subsidisation of tobacco farming by the Member States (see the authorisation for additional aid to the Canary Islands in Regulation (EU) No 228/2013 of 13 March 2013). At the same time, even the European Commission considers that the directive on tobacco products should be substantially tightened up, in order to limit the consumption of tobacco products within the EU by regulating the production of and trade in such products more strictly.

1. What interactions does the Commission anticipate from the interplay of these two approaches?

2. Does the Commission consider that subsidising tobacco farming, while at the same time applying trade restrictions in a bid to limit tobacco consumption, adds up to a coherent policy?

3. What grounds can the Commission cite for the need for uniform pan-European regulation of tobacco products? Why is this a task for the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(9 September 2013)

Special financial support for the raw tobacco production was phased out in 2009 according to the reform of the common agricultural policy (CAP) of 2003. The production of raw tobacco is fully integrated into the general agricultural policy instruments. The single payment scheme (SPS or SAPS) of the CAP, under certain conditions, provides financial support independently from which kind of commodities farmers actually produce. Tobacco production is treated in a neutral way.

However, until 2014 Member States may decide to use a limited percentage of their national ceiling for SPS or SAPS for granting specific support in clearly defined cases for targeted products including tobacco. However, the tobacco sector is not included in the list of products eligible to the voluntary coupled support scheme applicable from 2015 onwards. The aim of this new scheme is to grant a support in regions or sectors undergoing certain difficulties. The objective is not increasing the production. The aid to the Canary Islands for several products is guided by the same objective.

Furthermore, the Rural Development (RD) programmes of the CAP, offer numerous possibilities to help farmers who decide structural changes in production.

Only a harmonised approach at EU-level can remove obstacles to cross-border trade and avoid fragmentation resulting from different regulations in Member States, while ensuring a comparable high level of health protection across the EU. In this context, Directive 2001/37/EC ([1]), which is currently under revision already provides for the harmonisation of tobacco products as relates for example to the presentation of the package and the health warnings to be featured.

([1]) OJ L 194, 18.7.2001.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008741/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE) e Patrizia Toia (S&D)
(16 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Aumenti tariffari ingiustificati dei prodotti omeopatici

Il decreto legge italiano del 13 settembre 2012 n. 158 dispone all'articolo 13 la registrazione dei prodotti omeopatici attraverso procedure semplificate, ribadite recentemente dalla Commissione in risposta ad un'interrogazione di eurodeputati italiani. Al comma 2 dello stesso articolo 13 si fa riferimento alle tariffe di registrazione e si afferma: «Le tariffe vigenti (…) sono aggiornate con decreto del Ministro della Salute da adottare entro il 30 novembre 2012, con un incremento del 10 % dei relativi importi, applicabile dal 1° gennaio 2013». Tale decreto, però, pubblicato nella G.U. n. 63 del 15 marzo 2013, stabilisce l'aggiornamento dei tariffari oltre il 700 % in evidente e aperto contrasto con il comma 2 sopra citato. Queste misure contrastano nettamente con quanto avviene in diversi altri Stati europei (vedi Francia e Germania) e danneggiano in modo irreversibile la competitività delle aziende italiane costrette a ritirare prodotti dal mercato per gli alti oneri di registrazione, oltre che delle aziende straniere che operano in Italia, terzo mercato europeo dopo Francia e Germania.

Può la Commissione riferire se:

1. non ritiene che tale aumento alteri in modo pesante gli equilibri del mercato;

2. ha competenza per promuovere un allineamento dell'Italia che rappresenta per fatturato il terzo mercato in Europa alle norme in vigore in Germania e Francia per i medicinali omeopatici?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(13 settembre 2013)

Prescrizioni come quelle contenute nel decreto legge italiano menzionato dagli onorevoli deputati nella loro interrogazione, che impongono tariffe per la registrazione nazionale dei prodotti omeopatici, rientrano nella responsabilità esclusiva delle autorità degli Stati membri.

La Commissione non ha potere per intervenire nella definizione di tali tariffe a livello nazionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008741/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE) and Patrizia Toia (S&D)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Unjustified increases in fees for homoeopathic products

Article 13 of Italian Decree-Law No 158 of 13 September 2012 provides for the registration of homoeopathic products by means of simplified procedures, something that was recently reaffirmed by the Commission in answer to a question from Italian MEPs. Paragraph 2 of the aforementioned Article 13 refers to registration fees and states that the fees in force will be updated by a decree from the Ministry of Health, to be adopted by 30 November 2012, with an increase of 10% applied to the relevant amounts from 1 January 2013. However, this decree, which was published in Official Gazette No 63 of 15 March 2013, stipulates a fee increase of over 700%, in clear and blatant contrast with the aforementioned paragraph 2. These measures clearly stand at odds with the procedures in various other EU Member States (e.g. France and Germany) and irreversibly damage the competitiveness of Italian businesses, which are forced to withdraw products from the market because of high registration fees, as well as that of foreign companies operating in Italy, the third biggest market in Europe after France and Germany.

1. Does the Commission believe that such an increase dramatically alters the balance of the market?

2. Does it have the authority to encourage Italy, the third biggest market in Europe in terms of turnover, to bring itself in line with the legislation in force in Germany and France for homoeopathic medicines?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

Rules, such as those of the Italian Decree-Law mentioned by the Honourable Members in their question, setting fees for the national registration of homeopathic medicines are the exclusive responsibility of Member State authorities.

The Commission is not empowered to intervene in the setting of these fees at national level.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008742/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE) e Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(16 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Voto di genere

Le elezioni amministrative per i Comuni tenutesi in Italia nel mese di maggio hanno visto l'introduzione del cosiddetto voto di genere, la possibilità cioè di esprimere non una, ma due preferenze nominative per le assemblee elettive, a patto che la seconda preferenza espressa fosse attribuita a persona diversa, per genere, da quella indicata con la prima preferenza.

L'iniziativa, già avviata nell'autunno 2012 alle elezioni per l'Assemblea regionale siciliana, è ancora ai suoi inizi e, nonostante la limitata conoscenza della possibilità di voto di genere da parte degli elettori, ha consentito un aumento della presenza di rappresentanti elette di genere femminile.

Nella legislatura che tra un anno andrà a conclusione, il Parlamento europeo è invece caratterizzato da una forte disparità di genere, tanto più grave in virtù del differente grado di parità/disparità di genere che si registra negli ormai 28 Stati membri che costituiscono i collegi elettorali dello stesso Parlamento europeo. A fronte di paesi con perfetta o pressoché perfetta ripartizione di genere della propria rappresentanza al Parlamento europeo — come Finlandia, Slovenia, Estonia, Paesi Bassi e Danimarca — la maggior parte degli Stati comunitari vede il genere femminile ampiamente sottorappresentato nella propria delegazione in questa stessa Assemblea.

Può la Commissione far sapere se è in grado, attraverso la stessa commissaria Reding, di approntare una direttiva o altro provvedimento da indirizzare agli Stati membri affinché alle elezioni europee del prossimo anno adottino accorgimenti, sulla falsariga di quello introdotto dall'Italia per le assemblee locali, attraverso cui ridurre il divario della propria rappresentanza femminile in seno alle istituzioni comunitarie?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(24 settembre 2013)

L'organizzazione di elezioni rientra nelle competenze degli Stati membri. Tuttavia, incoraggiare la partecipazione dei cittadini dell'UE alla vita democratica è una priorità della Commissione.

Nel 2007 la Commissione ha adottato misure per eliminare gli squilibri di genere nel Parlamento europeo, con l'adozione del programma specifico Diritti fondamentali e cittadinanza. Più precisamente, una delle priorità tematiche annuali per il 2011 verteva sul miglioramento dell'equilibrio di genere in seno al Parlamento europeo. Pertanto, la Commissione ha erogato finanziamenti a diversi progetti di ONG e di altre organizzazioni nell'ambito di questa priorità.

Inoltre, la strategia della Commissione per la parità tra donne e uomini (2010-2015) ([1]) annovera tra le sue priorità la promozione della pari rappresentanza nei processi decisionali. La Commissione controlla periodicamente la situazione tramite la sua banca dati sulle presenze maschili e femminili nei processi decisionali ([2]), ma anche tramite la sua «relazione sui progressi verso la parità tra donne e uomini», pubblicata annualmente, e altre relazioni specifiche sulla presenza di entrambi nei processi decisionali.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/document/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-decision-making/database/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008742/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE) and Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: The gender vote

The local council elections held in Italy in May 2013 saw the introduction of the 'voto di genere' (gender vote), which gave voters the option of choosing not one, but two candidates for the elected assemblies, provided that the second choice was of a different gender from the first.

The initiative, which had already been applied in autumn 2012 during the Sicilian Regional Assembly elections, is still in its infancy and, despite the lack of awareness about this gender vote possibility among the electorate, has led to an increase in the number of female representatives elected.

However, in its current term, due to end next year, Parliament is marked by a large gender gap, which is even more serious considering the different levels of gender equality/inequality in the now 28 Member States that make up the electoral colleges of Parliament itself. Compared with countries with a perfect or almost perfect gender balance in their representations in Parliament — such as Finland, Slovenia, Estonia, the Netherlands and Denmark — women are greatly under-represented in the delegations of most Member States in Parliament.

Can the Commission, through Commissioner Reding, prepare a directive or other measure to call upon the Member States to adopt procedures for next year's European elections, along the lines of that introduced in Italy for local councils, to reduce the disparity in the representation of women within the European institutions?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(24 September 2013)

Organisation of elections falls within the remit of Member States. However, encouraging the participation of EU citizens in the democratic life is a high priority on the Commission's agenda.

The Commission took measures to address the gender imbalance in the European Parliament with the adoption in 2007 of the specific programme Fundamental Rights and Citizenship. More specifically, one of the annual thematic priorities for 2011 was dedicated to improving the gender balance in the European Parliament. Thus, the Commission has been funding several projects of NGOs and other organisations awarded under this priority.

Furthermore, the Commission's Strategy for Equality between Women and Men (2010-2015) ([1]) has amongst its priorities the promotion of equal representation in decision-making. The Commission monitors regularly the situation through its database on women and men in decision-making ([2]), its 'Report on Progress on Equality between Women and Men' published annually and other specific reports on women and men in decision-making.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/document/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-decision-making/database/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008743/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(16 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Violazione dei diritti umani nelle aree tribali del Pakistan

Milioni di persone vivono in uno stato costante di assenza di legalità nelle aree tribali del Pakistan, in cui, sotto il controllo delle diverse tribù Pashtun che popolano l'area, gli abusi commessi dall'esercito e dai talebani sono all'ordine del giorno.

Secondo quanto dichiarato da rappresentanti di Ong presenti sul posto, molti uomini fermati dalle forze dell'ordine hanno denunciato di essere stati torturati, altri non sono stati più visti dopo essere stati trasferiti in centri segreti di detenzione.

Anche i talebani e gli altri gruppi armati continuano a costituire una minaccia mortale per la società pakistana, rendendosi spesso responsabili di uccisioni brutali e illegali di soldati fatti prigionieri o di presunte spie, talvolta a seguito di procedimenti paragiudiziari che non rispettano neanche i requisiti minimi del diritto internazionale sui processi equi.

Sebbene negli ultimi tre anni abbiano ripreso il controllo di buona parte delle aree tribali, le forze armate hanno arrestato arbitrariamente migliaia di persone, tenendole per lungo tempo in carcere nella pressoché totale assenza di garanzie sul giusto processo.

Le garanzie fondamentali in materia di protezione dei diritti umani previste dalla Costituzione del Pakistan non sono in vigore nelle aree tribali, dove vige il regolamento sui crimini di frontiera risalente all'era coloniale.

Nel 2011, inoltre, i regolamenti di azione a sostegno del potere civile hanno dato all'esercito ulteriori poteri arbitrari d'arresto e imprigionamento. Né le corti d'appello né il parlamento hanno giurisdizione sulle aree tribali e nonostante i tribunali abbiamo preso in esame ricorsi contro la legittimità di alcune detenzioni, non vi è stato alcun procedimento nei confronti di militari sospettati di torture, sparizioni forzate e decessi in stato di custodia. I modesti tentativi del governo pakistano di modificare il regolamento sui crimini di frontiera non sono stati all'altezza delle norme e degli standard internazionali sui diritti umani e sono stati ulteriormente compromessi dall'entrata in vigore dei regolamenti del 2011.

Quali azioni intende dunque promuovere l'Alto Rappresentante per sollecitare il governo pakistano a una riforma del proprio sistema legale, profondamente difettoso e causa del perpetuarsi del ciclo di violenze nelle aree tribali?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(23 settembre 2013)

In merito all'azione dell'UE volta a promuovere le riforme del sistema giuridico nelle zone tribali del Pakistan, l'AR/VP rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alla risposta scritta E-011530/2012. La questione sarà sollevata con il nuovo governo pachistano in occasione del prossimo dialogo UE-Pakistan sui diritti umani previsto nell'autunno 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008743/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Violation of human rights in Pakistan's tribal areas

Millions of people are living in perpetual lawlessness in Pakistan's tribal areas where, under the control of the various Pashtun tribes which inhabit the area, abuses committed by the armed forces and the Taliban are a common occurrence.

According to statements by United Nations representatives on the ground, many men detained by the armed forces have alleged torture, and others have never been seen again after being transferred to secret detention centres.

The Taliban and other armed groups also continue to pose a deadly threat to Pakistani society, often carrying out brutal, unlawful killings of captured soldiers or suspected spies, sometimes following quasi-judicial proceedings that fail to meet even the most basic international fair trial standards.

Although the armed forces have regained control of most of the tribal areas over the past three years, they have arbitrarily arrested thousands of people, imprisoning them for long periods with virtually no due-process safeguards.

Fundamental human rights protections guaranteed in Pakistan's constitution are not enforceable in the tribal areas, which are governed by the colonial-era Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR).

Moreover, in 2011 the armed forces were granted further sweeping powers of arrest and detention under the Actions (in Aid of Civil Power) Regulations. Neither Pakistan's high courts nor its parliament have jurisdiction over the tribal areas. Although the courts have nevertheless heard cases challenging the lawfulness of some detentions, there have been no prosecutions of armed forces personnel for alleged torture, enforced disappearance or deaths in custody. Limited attempts by the Pakistani Government to reform the FCR have fallen far short of international human rights law and standards, and have been further undermined by the entry into force of the 2011 regulations.

What action will the High Representative therefore take to urge the Pakistani Government to reform its legal system, which is deeply flawed and the cause of the constant violence in the tribal areas?

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

Concerning EU action taken to encourage reform of the legal system in Pakistan's tribal areas, the HR/VP refers the Honourable Member to the answer to Written Question E-011530/2012. This issue will be raised with the new government of Pakistan in the next EU-Pakistan human rights dialogue which is expected to take place in the autumn of 2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008744/13
alla Commissione
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(16 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Anomala moria di delfini nel Mar Tirreno

Dall'inizio dell'anno un allarme ambientale si sta diffondendo nei mari italiani: da gennaio decine di carcasse di delfino nella varietà Stenella striata sono state ritrovate lungo le coste del Mar Tirreno, il che rappresenta un tasso di mortalità decisamente anomalo a fronte di una media storica di circa 4 ritrovamenti l'anno.

Il Ministero dell'Ambiente ha deciso di monitorare la situazione e di allertare il reparto ambientale marino.

Secondo i primi accertamenti sarebbe possibile escludere, quale causa dell'insolita moria, eventi eccezionali causati dall'uomo, come versamenti in mare di petrolio o di sostanze inquinanti. Sembra essere invece probabile una causa di natura infettiva a causa delle tracce del batterio Photobacterium Damselae rinvenute su 6 carcasse esaminate. Per avvalorare tale ipotesi gli esperti sono alla ricerca dell'eventuale presenza di virus o fioritura di alghe anomale.

In attesa di dati certi che mettano a confronto le conoscenze teoriche sulle correnti marine con i dati meteo-marini degli ultimi mesi, il Ministero dell'Ambiente italiano ha richiesto informazioni su eventuali spiaggiamenti avvenuti in Francia e in Spagna per avere un quadro più preciso della situazione.

È la Commissione a conoscenza dell'insolita moria di delfini nelle acque del Mar Tirreno negli ultimi mesi? Se sì, ha essa avviato indagini per capire le ragioni di tale fenomeno?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(30 agosto 2013)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alle sue risposte alle interrogazioni precedenti identiche E-002419/2013 e E-03794/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008744/13
to the Commission
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Unusual dolphin deaths in the Tyrrhenian Sea

Since the start of the year an environmental crisis has been affecting the seas off Italy: since January, dozens of striped dolphin carcasses have been found along the Tyrrhenian coast. This represents an abnormally high mortality rate compared with the historical average of about four corpses found per year.

The Ministry of the Environment has decided to monitor the situation and to alert the marine environment department.

According to initial findings, any exceptional man-made events, such as oil spills or pollution, can be ruled out as the cause of these unusual deaths. The probable cause actually seems to be an infection, as shown by the traces of the *Photobacterium Damselae* bacterium found in six of the carcasses examined. In order to confirm this hypothesis, experts are looking for the presence of viruses or abnormal algae blooms.

Pending concrete data comparing theoretical knowledge of sea currents with marine weather data from the last few months, the Italian Ministry of the Environment has requested information about any animals washed up on the beaches of France and Spain in order to obtain a more accurate picture of the situation.

Is the Commission aware of the unusual dolphin deaths in the Tyrrhenian Sea over the last few months? If so, has it launched an investigation to establish the cause?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(30 August 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to previous identical questions E-002419/2013 and E-03794/2013 ([1]).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008745/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(16 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Condizioni di lavoro inadeguate nelle fabbriche di abbigliamento al confine tra Birmania e Tailandia

Mae Sot, città di confine tra Birmania e Tailandia, conta quasi 38.000 lavoratori tailandesi e più di 60.000 lavoratori birmani. Molte delle aziende in cui sono occupati producono abbigliamento per marchi internazionali o applicano illegalmente etichette di marchi internazionali.

Vi sono circa 150 fabbriche di abbigliamento a Mae Sot e il 95 % dei lavoratori e delle lavoratrici sono birmani. Altre piccole fabbriche della zona lavorano in subappalto. Molte sfruttano il lavoro in nero dei birmani e producono prodotti con marchi falsi.

I lavoratori birmani clandestini vivono spesso nelle fabbriche dove lavorano, dormono e mangiano e vengono nascosti ogni qualvolta vengano compiute ispezioni da parte della polizia tailandese. Solo gli immigrati regolari sono assunti con contratto. I dormitori sono inadeguati e sovraffollati, le condizioni igieniche mancano del tutto e, a peggiorare la già complicata situazione, non esistono procedure per risolvere eventuali conflitti sorti con i datori di lavoro.

Gli orari di lavoro sono estremamente lunghi e non di rado i lavoratori effettuano gli straordinari sino alle 11 di sera. Secondo quanto riportato da fonti locali, in alcune aziende sarebbero impiegati anche i bambini delle lavoratrici migranti adibiti alla pulizia nelle fabbriche tessili.

Alla luce di quanto esposto, quali azioni intende intraprendere l'Alto Rappresentante per sollecitare le autorità tailandesi e birmane a promuovere migliori condizioni di lavoro e un salario adeguato nelle fabbriche della città di Mae Sot così come in altre fabbriche di città limitrofe che vivono la stessa, drammatica, emergenza?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(11 settembre 2013)

L'AR/VP è a conoscenza delle segnalazioni riguardanti le condizioni dei lavoratori in Thailandia.

L'UE si occupa della questione in diversi modi, sia attraverso i dialoghi bilaterali con le autorità thailandesi che nell'ambito degli organi internazionali competenti.

L'UE sostiene la ratifica e l'effettiva applicazione delle convenzioni dell'Organizzazione internazionale del lavoro (OIL), in particolare in relazione alle norme fondamentali del lavoro, e collabora a tal riguardo con l'OIL. La Commissione continuerà a seguire da vicino le attività dell'OIL in termini di controllo dell'attuazione di tali norme da parte della Thailandia nel quadro delle convenzioni OIL.

Inoltre, la Commissione promuove attivamente la responsabilità sociale delle imprese (RSI) e raccomanda che queste ultime aderiscano a tal riguardo ai principi e orientamenti riconosciuti a livello internazionale, compresi le linee guida dell'OCSE sulle imprese multinazionali, la dichiarazione tripartita dell'OIL sulle imprese multinazionali e i principi guida dell'ONU in materia di attività economiche e diritti umani. Tali strumenti riguardano anche la salute, la sicurezza e le condizioni di lavoro nella catena d'approvvigionamento delle imprese.

Una volta concluso, l'accordo di partenariato e di cooperazione UE-Thailandia fornirà un quadro supplementare per il dialogo e la collaborazione con la Thailandia riguardo a tali questioni. Inoltre, nei negoziati avviati di recente su un accordo di libero scambio UE-Thailandia, l'UE attribuisce una grande importanza all'inclusione di disposizioni in materia di commercio e sviluppo sostenibile. In tale contesto, l'UE punta a introdurre alcuni riferimenti all'effettiva applicazione delle norme fondamentali del lavoro e a rafforzare i canali di dialogo tra le parti su tali argomenti, ivi comprese le rispettive parti interessate.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008745/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Unsuitable working conditions in clothing factories along the border between Myanmar/Burma and Thailand

Mae Sot, a town on the border between Myanmar/Burma and Thailand, is home to almost 38 000 Thai workers and over 60 000 from Myanmar/Burma. Many of the companies in which they work produce clothes for international brands or illegally use international brand labels.

There are some 150 clothing factories in Mae Sot and 95% of the workers come from Myanmar/Burma. Some of the work is subcontracted to other small factories in the region. Many factories exploit the workers from Myanmar/Burma, paying them illegally, and produce fake branded products.

The illegal workers from Myanmar/Burma often live in the factories where they work, sleep and eat and are hidden away whenever inspections are conducted by the Thai police. Only legal immigrants are given an employment contract. The dormitories are too small and overcrowded, there is a total lack of hygiene and, to make an already complicated situation even worse, there are no procedures in place to resolve any disputes that arise with their employers.

The working hours are extremely long and the workers are often required to work overtime until 11 p.m. According to local sources, even the children of some migrant workers are employed to clean the textile factories.

In view of the above, what steps does the High Representative intend to take to urge the Thai authorities and the authorities of Myanmar/Burma to promote better working conditions and suitable salaries in the factories of Mae Sot, as well as in other factories in neighbouring towns where the same tragic situation prevails?

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

The HR/VP is aware of reports regarding working conditions for workers in Thailand.

The EU pursues this matter in several ways, both in bilateral dialogues with the Thai authorities, and within the relevant international bodies.

The EU supports the ratification and effective implementation of the Conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), in particular with regard to the core labour standards, and cooperates with the ILO in this respect. The Commission will continue to follow closely the ILO work in monitoring the implementation by Thailand of labour standards under the ILO Conventions.

The Commission also actively promotes Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and recommends that companies adhere to internationally recognised CSR principles and guidelines, including the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Guidelines on Multinational Enterprises, the ILO Tripartite Declaration on Multinational Enterprises, and the UN Guiding Principles on business and human rights. Such instruments also address health, safety and labour conditions along companies' supply chain.

When finally concluded, the EU-Thailand Partnership and Cooperation Agreement will provide for an additional framework for discussion and engagement with Thailand on these topics. Furthermore, in the recently launched negotiations of the EU-Thailand Free Trade Agreement (FTA), the EU attaches great importance to including provisions on trade and sustainable development. In this context, the EU aims at including references to the effective implementation of core labour standards, as well as creating strengthened channels for dialogue between the Parties on these matters, including with relevant stakeholders.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008746/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(16 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Preoccupante situazione ad Haiti a tre anni e mezzo dal terremoto

Il terremoto che il 12 gennaio 2010 colpì Haiti causò la morte di 200.000 persone e lasciò sulla strada più di due milioni di haitiani. A circa tre anni e mezzo di distanza la situazione abitativa nel paese resta sconcertante, con circa 350.000 persone che si trovano ancora a vivere nei 496 campiprofughi sorti dopo il terremoto.

Le condizioni di vita nelle tendopoli peggiorano di giorno in giorno e si registrano difficoltà di accesso all'acqua, ai servizi igienici e ai sistemi di raccolta dei rifiuti, che hanno contribuito alla diffusione del colera e di altre malattie infettive. Inoltre le donne e le ragazze, come già sottolineato in una precedente interrogazione scritta, rischiano quotidianamente stupri e altre forme di violenza sessuale.

Nell'aprile 2012, le autorità di Haiti hanno annunciato un piano nazionale sugli alloggi, che pur definendo una serie di priorità per la costruzione di nuove abitazioni, non specificava in che modo i più poveri potevano avere accesso ad alloggi adeguati e in condizioni economicamente sostenibili.

Qualche mese prima, nell'agosto 2011, grazie al sostegno dei donatori internazionali, il governo haitiano aveva lanciato un programma per trasferire i residenti di 50 tendopoli in 16 nuove strutture residenziali, attraverso un incentivo per famiglia di 500 dollari per 12 mesi e 25 dollari per i trasporti. Il progetto ha aiutato alcune famiglie, ma gli incentivi troppo bassi hanno impedito a molte altre di trasferirsi e accedere a una soluzione abitativa a lungo termine.

A peggiorare ulteriormente la situazione è stata la partenza dei principali operatori umanitari da Haiti e la conseguente diminuzione dei finanziamenti.

Alla luce di tutto ciò, quali provvedimenti intende prendere l'Alto Rappresentante per cercare di risolvere la difficile questione degli alloggi ad Haiti? È consapevole che risolvendo tale problema si potranno garantire maggiori diritti alla popolazione haitiana?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(3 settembre 2013)

La carenza di alloggi è un problema cronico ad Haiti, anteriore al terremoto. La catastrofe del 2010 ha peggiorato seriamente la situazione a Port-au-Prince costringendo 1,5 milioni di persone a rifugiarsi nei campi per gli sfollati interni.

L'UE ha reagito immediatamente a questa sfida umanitaria. La Commissione europea ha stanziato 157,5 milioni di euro per far fronte alle esigenze umanitarie urgenti ([1]) e probabilmente il finanziamento proseguirà nel biennio 2014-2015.

Per completare la risposta umanitaria, le autorità nazionali e i donatori internazionali hanno avviato vari progetti per la fornitura di alloggi duraturi. Grazie a queste iniziative e al naturale processo di ritorno nei quartieri di origine, il numero di abitanti nei campi profughi ha registrato un costante calo fino agli attuali 280 000.

Uno dei settori di intervento prioritari dell'Unione europea è la ricostruzione urbana. In collaborazione con gli altri donatori, l'UE ha avviato un ampio programma di ricostruzione per un importo di 56 milioni di euro a favore di oltre 100 000 beneficiari (il programma prevede la ristrutturazione e la ricostruzione di abitazioni nonché la fornitura di accesso a servizi e infrastrutture collegati).

Per trovare una soluzione sostenibile e a lungo termine alla carenza di alloggi ad Haiti, è necessario affrontare le cause strutturali profonde del problema, compresa la povertà diffusa e l'assenza di una politica nazionale per l'edilizia abitativa. A tal fine, l'UE sta collaborando con le autorità nazionali per sostenere le istituzioni responsabili dell'elaborazione di tali politiche.

([1]) Compresa la fornitura di alloggi temporanei.

L'UE ritiene che l'edilizia abitativa sia una componente fondamentale per lo sviluppo di Haiti e prevede di continuare a fornire sostegno a questo settore. Di conseguenza, lo sviluppo e l'habitat urbano sono stati proposti alle autorità haitiane come settore prioritario nel quadro dell'11° FES.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008746/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Worrying situation in Haiti three and a half years after the earthquake

The earthquake which struck Haiti on 12 January 2010 left 200 000 people dead and more than 2 million Haitians homeless. Three and a half years on, the housing situation in the country is still appalling, with approximately 350 000 people still living in the 496 refugee camps which were set up following the earthquake.

Living conditions in the tent cities are worsening by the day and there is little access to water, sanitation and waste disposal. This has contributed to the spread of cholera and other infectious diseases. Furthermore, women and girls, as already highlighted in a previous written question, are at constant risk of rape or sexual assault.

In April 2012, the Haitian authorities announced a national housing policy which set out a number of priorities for the construction of new houses, but did not establish the conditions for those living in poverty to access adequate and affordable housing.

Thanks to the support of international donors, a few months earlier, in August 2011, the Haitian Government launched a programme to relocate the residents of 50 tent cities to 16 new residential complexes, offering an incentive of USD 500 per family for 12 months and USD 25 for transport. Although the project has helped some families, the incentives are too low, preventing many others from moving and gaining access to long-term housing.

The withdrawal of the main humanitarian operators from Haiti and the resulting funding cuts are making the situation even worse.

In view of the above, what measures will the High Representative take to try to resolve the difficult issue of housing in Haiti? Is she aware that resolving this problem would secure more rights for the Haitian population?

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

Housing is a chronic problem in Haiti that predates the 2010 earthquake. The disaster severely aggravated the housing shortage in Port-au-Prince and forced 1.5 million people into IDP camps.

The EU responded immediately to this humanitarian challenge. The European Commission has since allocated EUR 157.5 million to address urgent humanitarian needs ([1]) and financing is likely to continue into 2014-2015.

To complement the humanitarian response, the national authorities and international donors have launched several initiatives aimed at the provision of sustainable housing. Through these initiatives, and the natural process of return to their neighbourhoods of origin, the number of people living in camps has been steadily dropping to reach 280 000 today.

The EU has also made urban reconstruction one of its priority areas of intervention. In collaboration with other donors, the EU has launched a comprehensive EUR 56 million neighbourhood reconstruction programme targeting over 100 ,000 beneficiaries (the programme consists of repairing and rebuilding housing as well as providing access to accompanying services and infrastructure).

A sustainable, long-term solution to the issue of housing in Haiti requires addressing deep-rooted structural causes, including widespread poverty and the absence of a national housing policy. To this end, the EU is working with the Haitian national authorities to support institutions responsible for the development of policies.

The EU considers housing a critical component of Haiti's development and plans to continue support to this sector. Accordingly, urban development and habitat have been proposed to the Haitian authorities as a focal sector under the 11th EDF.

([1]) Including the provision of temporary shelters.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008747/13
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(16. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: International Management Group

Die International Management Group (IMG) erhält von der Europäischen Kommission für verschiedene Projekte weltweit eine finanzielle Förderung.

1. Welche Verträge bestehen derzeit zwischen der IMG und der Kommission/dem EAD?

2. In welchen Ländern? In welchem Umfang?

3. Welche Leistungen werden erbracht? Wurden Verträge ohne öffentliche Ausschreibung vergeben? Wenn ja, welche und warum?

4. Gibt es OLAF-Untersuchungen von IMG-Verträgen?

5. Kann die Kommission Aussagen darüber machen, ob frühere IMG-Mitarbeiter inzwischen in ihren Diensten als örtliche Bedienstete tätig sind?

6. Kann die Kommission Aussagen darüber machen, ob Familienangehörige von IMG-Mitarbeitern in ihren Diensten als örtliche Bedienstete tätig sind?

7. Wie stellt die Kommission sicher, dass derartige Interessenkonflikte bekannt werden?

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008748/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin / Hohe Vertreterin)
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(16. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — International Management Group

Die International Management Group (IMG) erhält von der Europäischen Kommission für verschiedene Projekte weltweit eine finanzielle Förderung.

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5. Kann die VP/HV Aussagen darüber machen, ob frühere IMG-Mitarbeiter inzwischen in ihren Diensten als örtliche Bedienstete tätig sind?

6. Kann die VP/HV Aussagen darüber machen, ob Familienangehörige von IMG-Mitarbeitern in ihren Diensten als örtliche Bedienstete tätig sind?

7. Wie stellt die VP/HV sicher, dass derartige Interessenkonflikte bekannt werden?

Gemeinsame Antwort von Frau Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(24. Oktober 2013)

1. Die Kommission hat mehrere Verträge mit der International Management Group (IMG) geschlossen ([1]). Zwischen dem EAD ([2]) und der IMG bestehen keine Verträge.

2. Die IMG führt derzeit in Myanmar, Libanon, Aserbaidschan, Palästina, Kosovo, Libyen und Südsudan elf Verträge im Wert von insgesamt 48 508 188 EUR durch, die über das DCI ([3]), das ENPI ([4]) und das IfS ([5]) finanziert werden.

3. Den betroffenen Ländern kommt der Transfer von Fachwissen in ehemalige Konfliktgebiete zugute.

Die IMG wurde einer Prüfung unterzogen, die zu dem Schluss führte, dass die Verfahren, die die Organisation für Rechnungslegung, Rechnungsprüfung, interne Kontrolle und Auftragsvergabe anwendet, den international anerkannten Standards entsprechen. Die Kommission kann eine solche Organisation beauftragen, Verträge im Rahmen der gemeinsamen Verwaltung durchzuführen. Die Auswahl der Verträge ist auf objektive und transparente Weise zu begründen. Acht der elf laufenden Verträge wurden auf diese Weise vergeben, drei durch Verhandlungsverfahren im Einklang mit den in der Haushaltsordnung festgelegten Bestimmungen für flexible Vergabeverfahren in Krisensituationen.

4. Das OLAF ([6]) gibt generell keine Auskünfte über die Beteiligung natürlicher oder juristischer Personen an seiner Untersuchungstätigkeit und kann diese Frage daher nicht beantworten.

5. Der Kommission sind zwei solcher Fälle bekannt.

6. Die Kommission kann keine Aussagen über Tätigkeiten von Familienangehörigen ihrer Partner machen.

7. Sämtliche Mitarbeiter sind verpflichtet, etwaige Interessenkonflikte zu melden, die bei der Ausführung ihrer Aufgaben entstehen könnten. Im Falle des Verschweigens eines potenziellen Interessenkonflikts werden gegen die betreffenden Mitarbeiter Disziplinarmaßnahmen verhängt. Die Mitglieder des Bewertungsausschusses müssen eine Erklärung darüber unterzeichnen, dass sie die Vertraulichkeit und Unparteilichkeit wahren. Die Vorschriften in Bezug auf ethische und organisatorische Werte werden dem Personal der Delegationen, einschließlich der Ortskräfte, regelmäßig zur Kenntnis gebracht.

([1]) Die Einzelheiten werden der Frau Abgeordneten sowie dem Sekretariat des Parlaments als Anhang direkt zugesandt.
([2]) Europäischer Auswärtiger Dienst.
([3]) Instrument für Entwicklungszusammenarbeit.
([4]) Europäisches Nachbarschafts- und Partnerschaftsinstrument.
([5]) Instrument für Stabilität.
([6]) Europäisches Amt für Betrugsbekämpfung.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008747/13
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: International Management Group

The International Management Group (IMG) receives financial support from the Commission for various projects throughout the world.

1. What contracts currently exist between the IMG and the Commission/European External Action Service?

2. In which countries? What is the extent of these contracts?

3. What benefits are obtained? Were contracts awarded without a public invitation to tender? If so, which ones and why?

4. Is OLAF investigating any IMG contracts?

5. Can the Commission state whether any former IMG employees are now working in its services as local members of staff?

6. Can it state whether any family members of IMG employees are working in its services as local members of staff?

7. How does it ensure that any conflicts of interest of this kind are made known?

Question for written answer E-008748/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — International Management Group

The International Management Group (IMG) receives financial support from the Commission for various projects throughout the world.

1. What contracts currently exist between the IMG and the Commission/European External Action Service?

2. In which countries? What is the extent of these contracts?

3. What benefits are obtained? Were contracts awarded without a public invitation to tender? If so, which ones and why?

4. Is OLAF investigating any IMG contracts?

5. Can the High Representative state whether any former IMG employees are now working in her services as local members of staff?

6. Can she state whether any family members of IMG employees are working in her services as local members of staff?

7. How does she ensure that any conflicts of interest of this kind are made known?

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(24 October 2013)

1. The Commission has signed several contracts with IMG ([1]). There are no contracts between the EEAS ([2]) and IMG.

2. IMG is implementing 11 contracts for a value of EUR 48 508 188 (funded by DCI ([3]), ENPI ([4]) and IFS ([5])), in Myanmar, Lebanon, Azerbaijan, Palestine, Kosovo, Libya and South Sudan.

3. The countries concerned benefit from the transfer of public expertise in post-conflict zones.

IMG has undergone an assessment which concluded that IMG applies accounting, audit, internal control and procurement procedures equivalent to internationally accepted standards. The Commission may entrust implementation to such an organisation through joint management. The selection has to be justified in an objective and transparent manner. Eight of the 11 ongoing contracts were awarded in this manner, while three through negotiated procedure in accordance with the provisions for flexible contract award procedures in crisis situations defined in the Financial Regulation.

4. OLAF ([6]) generally neither confirms nor denies involvement of natural or legal persons in its investigative activities and is therefore not in a position to reply.

5. The Commission is aware of two such cases.

6. The Commission is not in a position to know about activities of family members of its partners.

7. All staff members are obliged to declare any conflict of interest they could incur during the accomplishment of tasks. Non-disclosure of any potential conflict of interest would expose staff members to disciplinary sanctions. Members of an evaluation committee have to sign a confidentiality and impartiality declaration. Rules concerning ethical and organisational values are regularly brought to the attention of Delegation staff including local agents.

([1]) Details are sent in Annex, directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat.
([2]) European External Action Service.
([3]) Development and Cooperation Instrument.
([4]) European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument.
([5]) Instrument for Stability.
([6]) European Anti-Fraud Office.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008750/13
a la Comisión
Pilar del Castillo Vera (PPE)
(16 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Litigios comerciales entre la UE y China

El Gobierno chino ha abierto una investigación formal sobre las subvenciones concedidas a la industria vitivinícola europea en represalia por la imposición de aranceles por la UE a las placas solares chinas.

¿Qué medidas está adoptando la Comisión para proteger a los viticultores y los distribuidores de vino de este litigio comercial?

¿Tiene la Comisión algún plan de acción para proteger los intereses europeos, dado que el número de litigios comerciales sigue multiplicándose en proporción directa a los vínculos comerciales?

Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de agosto de 2013)

El 1 de julio de 2013, se abrieron investigaciones antisubvenciones y antidumping relativas a las importaciones de vino de la UE. Los asuntos se encuentran actualmente en su fase preliminar y, con arreglo a las normas de la OMC, China los dará por terminados en un plazo máximo de dieciocho meses a partir de la apertura de las investigaciones.

La Comisión ha intervenido activamente en estos asuntos desde junio de 2013. En este contexto, ha facilitado la ayuda pertinente a los Estados miembros y a las partes interesadas de la industria vitivinícola, y se ha puesto también en contacto con las autoridades chinas para garantizar que haya un buen nivel de cooperación bilateral y que los procedimientos pendientes cumplan las normas de la OMC.

En particular, la Comisión desea subrayar que en junio de 2013 celebró consultas previas constructivas con China. Como resultado de dichas consultas previas, China redujo en su investigación el número de presuntos sistemas de subvenciones.

La Comisión considera que China tiene derecho a abrir investigaciones antisubvenciones y antidumping e imponer medidas de defensa comercial a condición de que se cumplan las normas pertinentes de la OMC.

La Comisión analiza siempre cuidadosamente los aspectos positivos y la evolución de dichas investigaciones y, en este contexto, coopera activamente con las partes interesadas correspondientes. La Comisión respalda de manera especial los derechos de defensa de los exportadores de la UE y está muy atenta a que se cumplan estrictamente las normas pertinentes, incluidas las relativas a la transparencia. De no ser así, la Comisión no dudaría en intervenir como procede.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008750/13
to the Commission
Pilar del Castillo Vera (PPE)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: EU-China trade disputes

The Chinese Government has officially launched a formal investigation into subsidies granted to the European wine industry in retaliation against the EU imposing duties on Chinese solar panels.

What measures is the Commission taking to protect wine growers and distributors from this trade dispute?

Does the Commission have an action plan to protect European interests, given that the number of trade disputes continues to multiply in direct relation to commercial ties?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(26 August 2013)

Anti-subsidy (AS) and anti-dumping (AD) investigations concerning imports of EU wine were initiated on 1 July 2013. The cases are currently in their preliminary phase and in view of the WTO rules they shall be concluded by China within a maximum period of 18 months after their initiation.

The Commission has been actively intervening in these cases since June 2013. In this context, it has been providing the Member States and wine industry stakeholders with relevant assistance and has been also in contact with the Chinese authorities to ensure a good level of bilateral cooperation and compliance of the pending proceedings with the WTO rules.

In particular, the Commission would like to underline that in June 2013 it held constructive pre-consultations with China. As a result of these pre-consultations, China narrowed down the number of alleged subsidy schemes it is investigating

The Commission is of the opinion that China has the right to initiate AS and AD investigations and to impose trade defence measures provided that the relevant WTO rules are respected.

The Commission always carefully analyses the merits and development of such investigations and in this context actively cooperates with relevant stakeholders. The Commission is particularly vigilant to support the EU exporters' rights of defence and to ensure that the relevant rules, including on transparency, are strictly applied. Should that not be the case, the Commission would not hesitate to duly intervene.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008751/13
a la Comisión
Pilar del Castillo Vera (PPE)
(16 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Mercado único digital

Todavía existen barreras a la venta y distribución digital de contenidos audiovisuales. La puesta a disposición de contenidos audiovisuales digitales a los usuarios potenciales, sin importar su ubicación geográfica ni el lugar donde se concedió la licencia a los contenidos, beneficiará a los consumidores y a los titulares de derechos como consecuencia de la competencia y de una mayor visibilidad.

Un asunto reciente del Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea señala que la explotación de contenidos audiovisuales basada en la exclusividad territorial constituye una violación del Tratado.

¿Tiene lista la Comisión alguna medida concreta para garantizar la plena realización del mercado único digital?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(9 de septiembre de 2013)

En 2011, la Comisión reconoció la importancia estratégica de los derechos de autor para el desarrollo del mercado único digital en su estrategia de propiedad intelectual ([1]). Un marco moderno de la UE en materia de propiedad intelectual debe fomentar las prácticas innovadoras en el mercado y facilitar la oferta transfronteriza de contenidos audiovisuales, garantizando al mismo tiempo los incentivos necesarios para la creación y la producción de contenidos creativos.

Ya se han tomado algunas medidas, tales como la adopción de la Directiva 2012/28/UE sobre las obras huérfanas y una propuesta legislativa sobre la gestión colectiva de derechos. La Comunicación sobre el contenido en el mercado único digital ([2]) anunció la evaluación de la normativa vigente de la UE sobre derechos de autor con vistas a decidir en 2014 si presenta propuestas de reforma legislativa. También anunció el inicio de un diálogo estructurado con las partes interesadas sobre el acceso transfronterizo y la portabilidad de los servicios, el sector audiovisual y el patrimonio cultural en el marco de «Licensing Europe» (Licencias para Europa). La Comisión ha hecho pública hace poco una revisión intermedia de este proceso ([3]).

([1]) COM(2011) 287 final.
([2]) COM(2012) 789 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/licences-for-europe-dialogue/en/content/mid-term-review-content-digital-single-market

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008751/13
to the Commission
Pilar del Castillo Vera (PPE)
(16 July 2013)

Subject: Digital single market

There are still barriers to the digital sale and distribution of audiovisual content. Making digital audiovisual content available to potential users, regardless of their geographical location and no matter where the content has been licensed, will benefit consumers and rights holders as a result of competition and broader exposure.

Recent European Court of Justice case-law indicates that the exploitation of audio-visual content on the grounds of territorial exclusivity constitutes a breach of the Treaty.

Does the Commission have in place any concrete measures to ensure the completion of the digital single market?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(9 September 2013)

In 2011, the Commission recognissd the strategic importance of copyright for the development of the Digital Single Market in its Intellectual Property Strategy ([1]): A modern EU — Intellectual property framework must foster innovative market practices and facilitate the cross-border offer of audiovisual content while ensuring the necessary incentives for the creation and production of creative content.

A number of actions have already been taken, such as the adoption of Directive 2012/28/EU on orphan works and a legislative proposal on collective rights management. The communication on 'Content in the Digital Single Market' ([2]) announced the assessment of the current EU copyright legislative framework with a view to a decision in 2014 whether to table legislative reform proposals. It also announced the launch of a structured stakeholder dialogue on the cross-border access and portability of services, the audiovisual sector and cultural heritage under the umbrella of 'Licensing Europe'. The mid-term review of this process has just recently been published by the Commission ([3]).

([1]) COM(2011) 287 final.
([2]) COM(2012) 789 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/licences-for-europe-dialogue/en/content/mid-term-review-content-digital-single-market

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008752/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Alda Sousa (GUE/NGL)
(17 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Violações dos direitos dos palestinianos e a questão da retirada de residência em Jerusalém

Nos termos do artigo 2.° do Acordo de Associação UE-Israel, as relações entre os dois intervenientes baseiam-se no respeito mútuo dos direitos humanos e nos princípios da democracia. Porém, apesar deste acordo Israel continua a violar os direitos dos palestinianos nos territórios ocupados.

Entre estes abusos aos seus direitos incluem-se políticas visando diretamente a saída da cidade de Jerusalém da sua população palestiniana. Em 2006, a União Europeia instou o Governo israelita a «cessar qualquer tratamento discriminatório dos palestinianos em Jerusalém Oriental». No entanto, Israel prossegue a sua estratégia para a saída da cidade dos palestinianos, a qual, desde 1967, inclui a retirada de mais de 14 000 documentos de identidade de palestinianos em Jerusalém, privando-os deste modo do seu direito de viver na cidade em que nasceram.

No entanto, a UE continua a desenvolver e expandir as suas relações com Israel sem impor nenhuma condicionalidade estrita no que diz respeito aos direitos humanos e ao direito internacional.

— Tendo em conta o que precede, que medidas está a tomar a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante para que Israel responda pelas suas violações dos direitos dos palestinianos? Em particular, de que forma está a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante a abordar a questão da retirada de residência em Jerusalém?

Neste contexto, pode a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante descrever ao Parlamento:

1. Cada um dos instrumentos que a União Europeia tem ao seu dispor e que a União Europeia (Conselho e Comissão) utilizou ao longo dos últimos vinte anos, para fazer com que Israel altere as suas políticas, de modo a dar cumprimento ao direito internacional — em particular o direito humanitário internacional — e às numerosas exigências formais que a União Europeia transmitiu a Israel, quer por escrito quer oralmente?

2. Os efeitos concretos da utilização de cada um destes instrumentos nas políticas de Israel ao longo dos últimos vinte anos?

3. Como é possível que ao longo dos últimos vinte anos, apesar da utilização de cada um destes instrumentos por parte da União Europeia, Israel não tenha melhorado de modo nenhum a sua política em matéria de direitos humanos internacionais e direito humanitário internacional, nem tenha dado cumprimento às exigências da União Europeia, como pode também ser comprovado por muitas ONG israelitas?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(13 de setembro de 2013)

A UE trabalha, desde 2002, em Jerusalém Oriental para atenuar as desigualdades e apoiar as comunidades palestinianas na cidade através de programas multissetoriais anuais que abrangem, *inter alia*, a educação, a saúde, o planeamento urbano, a ajuda jurídica e a emancipação económica. Em consonância com estes objetivos, a UE aumentou também progressivamente a sua assistência a Jerusalém Oriental com vista a melhorar a qualidade de vida dos palestinianos de Jerusalém. A UE apela também a um acesso equitativo da população da cidade aos recursos e ao investimento. Quanto à questão da retirada de residência em Jerusalém, a UE continua a insistir junto do Governo israelita nas suas preocupações a respeito da política de Israel em Jerusalém Oriental (incluindo os regimes de autorização de residência, as restrições à construção e a falta de serviços).

A UE introduziu uma clara condicionalidade nas relações UE-Israel, suspendendo qualquer estreitamento das relações e condicionando um eventual estreitamento aos progressos no processo de paz no Médio Oriente, bem como ao respeito do direito humanitário internacional. A posição da Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente quanto às perguntas específicas sobre os instrumentos da UE e os seus efeitos foi exposta na resposta conjunta às perguntas escritas E-007961/2013 e E-007769/13 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008752/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Alda Sousa (GUE/NGL)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Violations of Palestinians' rights and the issue of residency revocation in Jerusalem

Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement explicitly states that relations between the two actors will be based on mutual adherence to human rights and the principles of democracy. In spite of this agreement, however, Israel continues to violate the rights of Palestinians throughout occupied territories.

Among these rights abuses are policies aimed directly at ridding the city of Jerusalem of its Palestinian population. In 2006, the EU called on the Israeli Government to 'cease all discriminatory treatment of Palestinians in East Jerusalem'. Nonetheless, Israel continues with its strategy to purge the city of Palestinians which, since 1967, has included the revocation of over 14 000 IDs from Palestinians in Jerusalem, thereby stripping them of their right to live in the city in which they were born.

Nevertheless, the EU continues to develop and expand its relations with Israel without imposing strict conditionality regarding human rights and international law.

— In light of the above, what actions is the Vice-President/High Representative taking to hold Israel accountable for its violations of Palestinians' rights? In particular, how is the Vice-President/High Representative addressing the issue of residency revocation in Jerusalem?

In this connection, could the Vice-President/High Representative, for the benefit of the Parliament, describe:

1. Each of the instruments which the EU has at its disposal and which the EU (the Council and the Commission) has used over the past twenty years to make Israel modify its policies, so as to comply with international law — in particular international humanitarian law — and with the many formal demands which the EU has put to Israel both in writing and orally?

2. The concrete effects that the use of each of these instruments has had on Israeli policies over the past twenty years?

3. How it is possible that over the past twenty years, despite the use by the EU of each of these instruments, Israel has in no way improved its policy on international human rights and international humanitarian law, or has not complied with EU demands, as can also be attested by many Israeli NGOs?

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

Since 2002, the EU has been working in East Jerusalem to mitigate inequities and support Palestinian communities in the city through annual multi-sector programmes covering inter-alia education, health, urban planning and legal aid, and economic empowerment. In line with this stance, the EU has also progressively increased its assistance to East Jerusalem in order to improve the quality of life of Palestinian Jerusalemites. The EU also calls for an equitable provision of resources and investment to the city's population. On the issue of residency revocation in Jerusalem, the EU continues to stress with the Israeli government its concerns about Israeli policy on East Jerusalem (including residency and permit regimes, restrictions on building and lack of services).

The EU has introduced a clear conditionality on the EU-Israel relationship, freezing any 'upgrade' of relations, and conditioning such an upgrade both on progress in the Middle East peace process as well as respect for international humanitarian law. The HR/VP's position with regard to the three specific questions about EU instruments and their effect was set out in the joint reply to Written Questions E-007961/2013 and E-007769/13 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008753/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(17 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Discapacidad y educación

Considerando que la educación es la vía de entrada a una participación plena en la sociedad y que sin ella los ciudadanos verán minados su capacidad para disfrutar de unos plenos derechos y asumir funciones importantes en la sociedad, principalmente por medio del empleo productivo;

Considerando el artículo 24 de la Convención de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad;

Considerando el artículo 5 de la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad 2010-2020 en que la Comisión se comprometió a respaldar una educación y formación inclusivas;

Considerando los resultados del informe «Inclusive Education For Young Disabled People in Europe: Trends, Issues and Challenges» realizado por la ANED;

— ¿Cuándo y cómo tiene pensado la Comisión poner en práctica su Comunicación titulada «Un nuevo concepto de educación»?

— ¿Cuándo publicará la Comisión la iniciativa «Apertura de la educación»? ¿Cuáles serán las principales medidas?

— ¿Incluirán dichas comunicación e iniciativa a estudiantes que, a pesar de no tener discapacidad, queden fuera de la «normalidad» educativa?

— ¿Cómo se fomentará la movilidad de las personas con discapacidad en los programas de intercambio? ¿Qué medidas se tomarán de cara a facilitar los trámites de acreditación de la discapacidad?

— ¿Se ponen en práctica medidas adecuadas como respuesta a los datos, quejas y valoraciones recogidos por la Agencia Europea para el Desarrollo de la Educación Especial (Eadsne)?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de septiembre de 2013)

La Comisión ya está trabajando con los Estados miembros en la agenda que figura en su Comunicación «Un nuevo concepto de educación» ([1]). En julio de 2013 se puso en marcha la Alianza Europea para la Formación de Aprendices; en otoño de 2013 comenzará una consulta sobre el Espacio Europeo de las Aptitudes y Cualificaciones; asimismo, en otoño de 2013 se publicarán documentos sobre educación en materia de emprendimiento; y en 2014 debería finalizar el trabajo sobre un valor de referencia en relación con el aprendizaje de idiomas.

La Comunicación sobre la apertura de la educación, prevista para el otoño de 2013, tratará sobre cómo hacer un mejor uso de las tecnologías digitales y de los recursos educativos abiertos en el ámbito de la educación y la formación.

«Un nuevo concepto de educación» apoya el aprendizaje de las personas al margen de la enseñanza formal, al centrarse en cómo pueden validarse y reconocerse mejor las aptitudes adquiridas a través de un aprendizaje informal y no formal ([2]). Asimismo, la Comunicación sobre la apertura de la educación abordará el potencial de las tecnologías de la información y de las comunicaciones para mejorar el acceso de quienes aprenden de esta manera.

En el marco del Programa de Aprendizaje Permanente, los alumnos con necesidades especiales que ejerzan la movilidad pueden beneficiarse de medidas concretas, como que se cubran los gastos de estancia y de viaje de un acompañante. Las agencias nacionales del Programa de Aprendizaje Permanente velan por que toda la información y las oficinas sean accesibles para las personas con discapacidad.

([1]) COM(2012) 669, de 20 de noviembre de 2012.
([2]) Recomendación del Consejo, de 20 de diciembre de 2012, sobre la validación del aprendizaje no formal e informal, DO C 398 de 22.12.2012, p 1.

La propuesta de la Comisión de un nuevo programa de la UE en materia de educación, formación y juventud, Erasmus+ (2014-2020), presta especial atención a las cuestiones de accesibilidad: se pide explícitamente a la Comisión y a los Estados miembros que faciliten la participación de las personas que tengan dificultades específicas por razones educativas, sociales, de género, físicas, psicológicas, geográficas, económicas y culturales.

Todas las actividades descritas anteriormente tienen en cuenta las orientaciones y los conocimientos especializados que proporciona la Agencia Europea para el Desarrollo de la Educación de Alumnos con Necesidades Educativas Especiales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008753/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Disability and education

Education is the key to fully participating in society and not having an education undermines a person's ability to enjoy full rights and to play a valuable role in society, primarily through productive employment.

In view of Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;

In view of Article 5 of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, in which the Commission undertook to support inclusive education and training;

In view of the results of the report 'Inclusive Education for Young Disabled People in Europe: Trends, Issues and Challenges' by the Academic Network of European Disability Experts (ANED);

— When and how does the Commission intend to implement its communication 'Rethinking Education'?

— When will the Commission publish the 'Opening up education' initiative? What will be the main measures?

— Will this communication and initiative include students who, despite not being disabled, are outside 'normal' education?

— How will the mobility of disabled people be promoted in exchange programmes? What steps will be taken to facilitate disability vetting procedures?

— Have adequate measures been put in place in response to the data, complaints and assessments collected by the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (EADSNE)?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2013)

The Commission is already working with Member States on the agenda set out in its 'Rethinking Education' Communication ([1]). The European Alliance for Apprenticeships was launched in July 2013; a consultation on the European Area of Skills and Qualifications will start in autumn 2013; policy papers on entrepreneurship education will be published in autumn 2013; work on a language learning benchmark should finish in 2014.

The 'Opening Up Education' Communication, scheduled for the autumn of 2013, will address how to make better use of digital technologies and open educational resources in education and training.

'Rethinking Education' supports the learning of people outside formal education by focusing on how skills gained in informal and non-formal learning can be better validated and recognised ([2]). Similarly, 'Opening Up Education' will address the potential of Information and Communication Technologies to increase access for such learners.

Under the EU's Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP), mobile learners with special needs may benefit from specific measures, including subsistence and travel costs of an accompanying person. LLP National Agencies make all information and offices accessible to disabled people.

The Commission's proposal for the new EU programme for education, training and youth, Erasmus+ (2014-2020), pays special attention to questions of access: the Commission and Member States are explicitly required to facilitate the participation of people with difficulties for educational, social, gender, physical, psychological, geographical, economic and cultural reasons.

All activities described above take into account the guidance and expertise provided by the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education.

([1]) COM(2012) 669 of 20 November 2012.
([2]) Council recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning, OJEC 2012/C 398/01.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008754/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(17 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Desarrollo de bienes y servicios de diseño universal

La adquisición de bienes y servicios y la información pertinente y accesible acerca de ellos debería incluir soluciones comerciales adecuadas, así como bienes y servicios diseñados para ser accesibles a largo plazo.

Considerando la Resolución del Parlamento Europeo, de 25 de octubre de 2011, sobre la movilidad y la inclusión de las personas con discapacidad y la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad 2010-2020;

Considerando que, sobre la base de los derechos promulgados en la Carta de Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea, la Comisión cuenta con el enfoque correcto para lograr aumentar la sensibilización sobre la discapacidad, incluidos los conceptos de «diseño para todos» y «diseño universal», y destacar la importancia de los ajustes razonables;

Considerando que el artículo 4 de la Convención de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad establece la obligación de «emprender o promover la investigación y el desarrollo de bienes, servicios, equipo e instalaciones de diseño universal»;

Considerando que el artículo 2 de la Convención afirma que por «diseño universal» se entenderá el diseño de productos, entornos, programas y servicios que puedan utilizar todas las personas, en la mayor medida posible, sin necesidad de adaptación ni diseño especializado;

Considerando que EDeAN es una red que se encarga de apoyar y ofrecer recursos en materia de diseño universal, siendo el centro de excelencia y las organizaciones asociadas de cada Estado miembro los encargados de realizar informes, estudios y fomentar el intercambio de conocimientos, información y buenas prácticas, ¿se tienen en cuenta estos datos en las instituciones europeas? ¿No cree la Comisión que debe apoyar a estas asociaciones con medidas legislativas y prácticas que obliguen a los fabricantes a comercializar sus productos pensando en las personas con discapacidad?

¿Se informa a los consumidores con discapacidad de sus derechos con respecto a productos y servicios que no les tengan en cuenta?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de septiembre de 2013)

La Comisión promueve el enfoque «Diseño para todos» en sus iniciativas pertinentes de diseño, fabricación y suministro de bienes y servicios en el mercado interior, de conformidad con la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad 2010-2020 y con la Convención de las Naciones Unidas sobre los derechos de las personas con discapacidad.

Diversos instrumentos jurídicos de la UE ([1]) recogen la obligación explícita para los proveedores de bienes y servicios de tener en cuenta, de forma específica, a las personas con discapacidad.

Además, la Comisión ha emitido un mandato ([2]) dirigido a los organismos europeos de normalización que les requiere la incorporación del enfoque «Diseño para todos» en las iniciativas de normalización pertinentes.

En el marco de la Asociación Europea para la innovación en el ámbito del envejecimiento activo y saludable, un grupo multilateral ha asumido la tarea de desarrollar entornos vitales mejor adaptados a las personas mayores en toda la UE. Los organismos activos en la iniciativa «Diseño para todos» contribuyen a la actividad del grupo aportándole sus conocimientos y prácticas en la materia.

La legislación de la UE en materia de derechos de los pasajeros asegura que las personas con discapacidad y las personas con movilidad reducida tengan los mismos derechos a la hora de viajar que los demás pasajeros, y que no se les discrimine en razón de su discapacidad al hacer la reserva o al embarcar. Esos pasajeros tienen derecho a asistencia gratuita en los aeropuertos, puertos, estaciones de ferrocarril y de autocar y a bordo de los distintos medios de transporte.

([1]) Ejemplos: Directiva sobre el servicio universal — Directiva 2002/22/CE, DO L108 de 24.4.2002, p. 51, modificada por la Directiva 2009/136/CE, DO L337 de 18.12.200, p. 11, y Directiva sobre ascensores — Directiva 95/16/CE, DO L 213 de 7.9.1995, p. 1, modificada por la Directiva 2006/42/CE, DO L 157 de 9.6.2006, p. 24.

([2]) Mandato de normalización 473 al CEN, el Cenelec y el ETSI M/473 EN, Bruselas, 1 de septiembre de 2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008754/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Development of universally designed goods and services

The purchase of goods and services and relevant and accessible information on them should include appropriate commercial solutions, as well as goods and services designed to be accessible in the long term.

The European Parliament resolution of 25 October 2011 concerns mobility and inclusion of people with disabilities and the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020.

Based on the rights enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, the Commission has adopted the right approach to raise awareness of disability, including the concepts of 'design for all' and 'universal design', and to highlight the importance of reasonable accommodation.

Article 4 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities establishes the obligation to 'undertake or promote research and development of universally designed goods, services, equipment and facilities'.

Article 2 of the Convention defines 'universal design' as the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design.

The European Design for All e-Accessibility Network (EDeAN) is a network that provides support and resources in the field of universal design, and this centre of excellence and the associated organisations in each of the Member States are responsible for drafting reports, conducting studies and promoting the exchange of knowledge, information and good practice. Are these data taken into account in the European institutions? Does the Commission think it should take legislative and practical measures to support these associations, requiring manufacturers to market their products with disabled people in mind?

Are disabled consumers informed of their rights with regard to products and services that do not take account of their needs?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(27 September 2013)

The Commission promotes a 'Design for All' approach in its relevant initiatives dealing with the designing, manufacturing and provision of good and services in the internal market, in line with the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Several EU legal instruments ([1]) contain an explicit obligation for providers of goods and services to consider people with disabilities in particular.

The Commission has also issued a Mandate ([2]) to the European Standardisation Organisations to include the 'Design for all' approach in relevant standardisation initiatives.

In the frame of the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing, a multistakeholder group is working on developing living environments that are more age-friendly across the EU. Organisations active in the field of 'Design for All' are contributing to the groups' work by sharing their knowledge and expertise from their work on the matter.

EU passenger rights legislation ensures that disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility have the same rights to travel as other passengers and cannot be discriminated upon booking or boarding on the ground of their disability. These passengers have the right to free of charge assistance at airports, ports, railway stations and bus terminals and on-board.

([1]) Examples: 'Universal Services Directive' — Directive 2002/22/EC [2002] OJ L108/51 as amended by Directive 2009/136/EC [2009] OJ L337/11 and the 'Lifts Directive' — Directive 95/16/EC [1995] OJ L 213/1 as amended by Directive 2006/42/EC [2006] OJ L 157/24.

([2]) Standardisation Mandate 473 to CEN, CENELEC and ETSI M/473 EN, Brussels 1 September 2010.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008755/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(17 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Seguimiento de las tasas judiciales en España

En la respuesta conjunta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión a las preguntas escritas, P-011601/2012, E-011367/2012, E-011505/2012, E-011366/2012, del pasado 7 de febrero de 2013, relativa al caracter excesivo de las tasas judiciales en España se indica que:

«El carácter excesivo de una tasa debería evaluarse a la luz de todos los elementos pertinentes de la legislación por la que se establece dicha tasa, incluidas las posibles excepciones que se apliquen a las personas que puedan acogerse a asistencia jurídica. La Comisión entiende que el Tribunal Constitucional de España examinará la Ley 10/2012 ([1]) mencionada por Sus Señorías. La Comisión llevará a cabo un estrecho seguimiento de este asunto.»

¿Cuál ha sido el seguimiento otorgado por la Comisión a la Ley 10/2012?

¿Considera que son excesivas dichas tasas judiciales?

¿Se pronunciará públicamente al respecto?

¿Qué acciones realizará para revertir la situación y garantizar el acceso a la justicia de la ciudadanía?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(2 de octubre de 2013)

Como se indica en las respuestas a las preguntas escritas P-011601/2012, E-011367/2012, E-011505/2012 y E-011366/2012, el acceso a la justicia es un derecho fundamental garantizado por el artículo 47 de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea y por el artículo 6, apartado 1, del Convenio Europeo de Derechos Humanos, y una tasa excesiva puede ir en su detrimento.

La Comisión entiende que, tras la adopción de la Ley 20/2012, a las que se referían las respuestas mencionadas de febrero, las autoridades españolas adoptaron el Real Decreto-ley 3/2013, de 22 de febrero de 2013, para rebajar el tipo utilizado a efectos del cálculo de la tasa judicial aplicable a las personas físicas, añadir nuevas excepciones a las obligación de abonar tasas judiciales y ampliar las posibilidades de solicitar asistencia jurídica. La Comisión también entiende que el Tribunal Constitucional español examinará las disposiciones modificadas sobre las tasas judiciales. La Comisión seguirá prestando gran atención a este asunto.

([1]) Ley 10/2012, de 20 de noviembre, por la que se regulan determinadas tasas en el ámbito de la Administración de Justicia y del Instituto Nacional de Toxicología y Ciencias Forenses.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008755/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Follow-up on court fees in Spain

In her joint answer of 7 February 2013 to written questions P-011601/2012, E-011367/2012, E-011505/2012 and E-011366/2012 on excessive court fees in Spain, Mrs Reding stated on behalf of the Commission:

'The excessive nature of a fee should be assessed in light of all the relevant elements of the legislation establishing such a fee, including the possible exemptions for persons eligible for legal aid. The Commission understands that the Spanish Constitutional Court will examine the Law 10/2012 ([1]) referred by the Honourable Members. The Commission will follow closely this matter.'

What follow-up has the Commission given to Law No 10/2012?

Does it think these court fees are excessive?

Will it make a public statement on the issue?

What action will it take to remedy the situation and to safeguard the public's access to justice?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(2 October 2013)

As indicated in the replies to written questions P-011601/2012, E-011367/2012, E-011505/2012 and E-011366/2012, access to justice is a fundamental right guaranteed by Article 47 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and by Article 6(1) of the European Convention on Human Rights, which can be impaired by an excessive fee.

The Commission understands that after the adoption of Law 20/2012 to which the abovementioned replies in February referred, the Spanish authorities adopted the Royal Decree-Law 3/2013, of 22 February 2013 to lower the rate for the calculation of the court fee applicable to natural persons, to add new derogations to the obligation to pay court fees and to expand the possibilities to apply for legal aid. The Commission also understands that the Spanish Constitutional Court will examine the amended provisions on court fees.

([1]) Law No 10/2012 of 20 November 2012 on certain fees relating to the administration of justice and the National Institute of Toxicology and Forensic Science.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008756/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE) y Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE)
(17 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Accesibilidad y transporte

Cabe considerar el número de ciudadanos que hay en la Unión Europea con discapacidad o movilidad reducida, así como el hecho de que a menudo las personas de este colectivo se ven privadas de la capacidad de conducir un vehículo propio y, por consiguiente, dependen de terceras personas o del transporte urbano para desplazarse y poder hacer su vida con normalidad.

Existen muchos reglamentos concernientes al transporte que tienen en cuenta las necesidades de los pasajeros con discapacidad ([1]), pero ninguno hace referencia a los servicios de taxis y metro. ¿No considera la Comisión que también habría que regular la situación de estos? De hecho, en el caso de los taxis, hay muy pocas unidades adaptadas a pesar de que, por insuficiencias de otros medios de transporte, se han convertido en la forma de desplazamiento preferida de este colectivo pese al elevado coste de sus tarifas. En el caso del metro, hay ciudades en que hay muchas estaciones sin adaptar, especialmente conforme se alejan del centro urbano.

El cumplimiento de estos reglamentos se ha delegado en autoridades nacionales de cada Estado miembro. ¿Están los usuarios con discapacidad informados de las autoridades a quien deben dirigir sus quejas en materia de transporte? ¿Recopilan estas autoridades datos regularmente y/o envían informes para indicar las principales quejas y mejoras llevadas a cabo en el sector?

Con respecto a los vehículos, los salidos de fábrica, renovados o arreglados tienen que estar adaptados por ley, pero ¿se ha fijado algún plazo para la completa adaptación de todos los vehículos?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de septiembre de 2013)

La UE financia actividades de investigación, demostración y difusión en el campo de la movilidad urbana, incluso en relación con los servicios dirigidos a personas con movilidad reducida ([2]).

Las normas aplicables al transporte en taxi o en metro de pasajeros con discapacidad se desarrollan principalmente a nivel nacional o regional, lo que permite tener adecuadamente en cuenta las circunstancias y preferencias locales. Esas normas deben ser acordes con la Convención de las Naciones Unidas sobre los derechos de las personas con discapacidad ([3]), firmada por todos los Estados miembros y ratificada prácticamente por todos ellos.

En cuanto al cumplimiento de la normativa, la Comisión ha publicado las direcciones de los organismos de aplicación en su sitio web, donde, de acuerdo con los reglamentos a que se refieren Sus Señorías, las personas con discapacidad y con movilidad reducida pueden registrar sus quejas.

([1]) Reglamento (CE) n° 1107/2006 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 5 de julio de 2006, sobre los derechos de las personas con discapacidad o movilidad reducida en el transporte aéreo (DO L 204 de 26.7.2006, p. 1); Reglamento (CE) n° 1371/2007 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 23 de octubre de 2007, sobre los derechos y las obligaciones de los viajeros de ferrocarril (DO L 315 de 3.12.2007, p. 14); Reglamento (UE) n° 1177/2010 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 24 de noviembre de 2010, sobre los derechos de los pasajeros que viajan por mar y por vías navegables y por el que se modifica el Reglamento (CE) n° 2006/2004 (DO L 334 de 17.12.2010, p. 1); Reglamento (UE) n° 181/2011 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 16 de febrero de 2011, sobre los derechos de los viajeros de autobús y autocar y por el que se modifica el Reglamento (CE) n° 2006/2004 (DO L 55 de 28.2.2011, p. 1).

([2]) Información sobre esas actividades: www.civitas-initiative.org; www.eltis.org; http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/projects_en.html

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/disabilities/convention/index_en.htm (véase, en particular, el artículo 9 de esta Convención de las Naciones Unidas, relativo a la accesibilidad).

El artículo 29 del Reglamento (UE) n° 181/2011 ([4]) y el artículo 26 del Reglamento (UE) n° 1177/2010 ([5]) establecen que los organismos de aplicación tienen que publicar con periodicidad informes sobre su actividad, que deben contener estadísticas sobre las reclamaciones y las medidas adoptadas para aplicar ambos Reglamentos. El artículo 27, apartado 3, del Reglamento (CE) n° 1371/2007 ([6]) dispone que las empresas ferroviarias deben publicar cada año el número y tipo de las reclamaciones recibidas y de las reclamaciones tramitadas, el tiempo de respuesta y las eventuales medidas de mejora adoptadas. En cuanto al transporte aéreo, el artículo 9, apartado 3, del Reglamento (CE) n° 1107/2006 ([7]), aunque sin referirse específicamente a la información sobre el tratamiento de las reclamaciones, establece que las entidades gestoras de los aeropuertos deben publicar sus normas de calidad.

El considerando 10 del Reglamento (UE) n° 181/2011 recomienda tomar en consideración las necesidades de las personas con discapacidad o con movilidad reducida a la hora de equipar los vehículos nuevos y nuevamente acondicionados.

([4]) Reglamento (UE) n° 181/2011 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 16 de febrero de 2011, sobre los derechos de los viajeros de autobús y autocar y por el que se modifica el Reglamento (CE) n° 2006/2004 (DO L 55 de 28.2.2011).

([5]) Reglamento (UE) n° 1177/2010 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 24 noviembre de 2010, sobre los derechos de los pasajeros que viajan por mar y por vías navegables y por el que se modifica el Reglamento (CE) n° 2006/2004 (DO L 334 de 17.12.2010).

([6]) Reglamento (CE) n° 1371/2007 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 23 de octubre de 2007, sobre los derechos y las obligaciones de los viajeros de ferrocarril (DO L 315 de 3.12.2007).

([7]) Reglamento (CE) n° 1107/2006 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 5 de julio de 2006, sobre los derechos de las personas con discapacidad o movilidad reducida en el transporte aéreo (DO L 204 de 26.7.2006).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008756/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE) and Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Accessibility and transport

It is important to bear in mind the number of citizens in the European Union who have disabilities or reduced mobility, as well as the fact that members of this group are often unable to drive a private vehicle and, as a result, depend on other people or on urban transport to move about and to be able to lead their lives normally.

There are many regulations on transport that take the needs of passengers with disabilities into account ([1]), but none of them refer to taxi and metro services. Does the Commission not take the view that these services should be regulated as well? In fact, in the case of taxis, there are very few adapted vehicles, even though, given the inadequacies of other means of transport, taxis have become the preferred way to travel of persons with disabilities or reduced mobility, in spite of the high cost of taxi fares. In the case of the metro, in some cities, there are many stations that are not adapted, especially as one moves away from the urban centre.

Enforcement of these regulations has been delegated to national authorities in each Member State. Are users with disabilities informed about the authorities to whom they should direct any complaints regarding transport? Do these authorities regularly gather data and/or send reports to indicate the main complaints and improvements that have been made in this area?

With regard to vehicles, brand new, reconditioned or serviced vehicles are required by law to be adapted, but has a deadline been set for the full adaptation of all vehicles?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2013)

The EU supports research, demonstration and dissemination activities in the field of urban mobility, including services for people with reduced mobility ([2]).

The rules for transport by taxi or metro of passengers with disabilities are mainly made at national or regional level, and this allows to take local circumstances and preferences well into account. Such rules need to be in line with the United Nations Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities ([3]), signed by all Member States and ratified by almost all.

As regards enforcement, the Commission has published addresses of national enforcement bodies on its website where, according to the regulations referred to by the Honourable Members, disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility can register complaints.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1107/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 concerning the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air (OJ L 204, 26.7.2006, p. 1); Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on rail passengers' rights and obligations (OJ L 315, 3.12.2007, p. 14); Regulation (EU) No 1177/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2010 concerning the rights of passengers when travelling by sea and inland waterway and amending Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 (OJ L 334, 17.12.2010, p. 1); Regulation (EU) No 181/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 concerning the rights of passengers in bus and coach transport and amending Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 (OJ L 55, 28.2.2011, p. 1).

([2]) Information on the activities is available via: www.civitas-initiative.org ; www.eltis.org ; http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/projects_en.html .

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/disabilities/convention/index_en.htm (see in particular Article 9 of this UN Convention, dedicated to accessibility).

Article 29 of Regulation (EU) No 181/2011 ([4]) and Article 26 of Regulation (EU) No 1177/2010 ([5]) stipulate that national enforcement bodies must publish regularly reports on their activities, including statistics of complaints and actions to implement the regulations. Article 27(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007 ([6]) provides that railway undertakings shall report annually number and categories of received and processed complaints, response time and improvement actions undertaken. In air transport, according to Article 9(3) of Regulation (EC) 1107/2006 ([7]), although no specific reference is made to complaint handling data, the airport managing body must publish its quality standards.

Recital 10 of Regulation (EU) No 181/2011 recommends to take needs of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility into account when deciding on equipment of new and newly refurbished vehicles.

([4]) Regulation (EU) No 181/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 concerning the rights of passengers in bus and coach transport and amending Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004, OJ L 55, 28.2.2011.

([5]) Regulation (EU) No 1177/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2010 concerning the rights of passengers when travelling by sea and inland waterway and amending Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 , OJ L 334, 17.12.2010.

([6]) Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on rail passengers' rights and obligations, OJ L 315, 3.12.2007.

([7]) Regulation (EC) No 1107/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 concerning the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air, OJ L 204, 26.7.2006.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008757/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(17 Ιουλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Μεταρρύθμιση στην τεχνική εκπαίδευση στην Ελλάδα

Η ελληνική κυβέρνηση, στο πλαίσιο των δεσμεύσεών της έναντι της τρόικα για 4 000 απολύσεις και κινητικότητα 12 000 υπαλλήλων του στενού και ευρύτερου δημόσιου τομέα μέσα στο 2013, αποφάσισε την κατάργηση 52 ειδικοτήτων σε Επαγγελματικά Λύκεια και Σχολές.

Οι υπό κατάργηση ειδικότητες αφορούν κατά κύριο λόγο τους τομείς Υγείας-Πρόνοιας και εφαρμοσμένων τεχνών. Πρόκειται για ειδικότητες που εμφανίζουν μεγάλη ζήτηση και για τις οποίες έχουν ήδη πραγματοποιηθεί εγγραφές σημαντικού αριθμού μαθητών.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι η ΕΕ (πρώτον) προσπαθεί να ανακάμψει από μία σοβαρή οικονομική και χρηματοπιστωτική κρίση που πλήττει ιδιαίτερα την απασχόληση των νέων και (δεύτερον) χρειάζεται ένα υψηλών προσόντων και δεξιοτήτων εργατικό δυναμικό προκειμένου να μπορέσει να θέσει σε εφαρμογή τον προγραμματικό σχεδιασμό της για ανάπτυξη της ευρωπαϊκής οικονομίας, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Έχει στη διάθεσή της στοιχεία σχετικά με την ύπαρξη αντίστοιχων τομέων/ειδικοτήτων στο πλαίσιο των συστημάτων επαγγελματικής εκπαίδευσης άλλων κρατών μελών;

— Κρίνει ότι η δυνατότητα εγγραφής των μαθητών σε ιδιωτικές επαγγελματικές σχολές που καλύπτουν τις κατηργημένες ειδικότητες, είναι συμβατή με τον στόχο της χωρίς αποκλεισμούς επαγγελματικής εκπαίδευσης και κατάρτισης (ΕΕΚ) που έθεσε για το 2020 στο πλαίσιο του ανακοινωθέντος της Μπριζ;

— Κρίνει ότι η επιλογή της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης να ενισχύσει το πρόγραμμα κινητικότητας στρεφόμενη στην ΕΕΚ είναι συμβατή με την αρχή που εκφράζεται στο πλαίσιο του ανακοινωθέντος της Μπριζ, ότι στην κοινωνία της γνώσης οι επαγγελματικές δεξιότητες και ικανότητες είναι εξ ίσου σημαντικές με τις ακαδημαϊκές;

Απάντηση της κ. Βασιλείου εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(30 Αυγούστου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη για την πρόσφατη απόφαση της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης σχετικά με την αναδιάρθρωση της παροχής επαγγελματικής κατάρτισης σε δευτεροβάθμιο επίπεδο.

Ως προς το θέμα αυτό η Επιτροπή σημειώνει ότι σύμφωνα με τις δηλώσεις της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης η κατάργηση ορισμένων προγραμμάτων στην υγειονομική περίθαλψη και σε άλλους τομείς που προσφέρουν τα επαγγελματικά λύκεια (ΕΠΑΛ) είναι συμβατή με την παροχή προγραμμάτων στα Ινστιτούτα Επαγγελματικής Κατάρτισης (ΙΕΚ) σε μεταδευτεροβάθμιο επίπεδο. Έτσι, θα εξασφαλιστεί ότι οι έλληνες εκπαιδευόμενοι θα έχουν την ευκαιρία να λάβουν κατάρτιση στους εν λόγω τομείς, για τους οποίους όντως παρέχεται κατάρτιση σε άλλα κράτη μέλη.

Η Επιτροπή έχει επίγνωση του γεγονότος ότι μια σειρά ΙΕΚ αποτελούν ιδιωτικούς οργανισμούς, και σημειώνει επίσης το σχέδιο της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης να ενισχύσει τις ικανότητες των δημόσιων ΙΕΚ και να στηρίξει την προσβασιμότητα των κύκλων μαθημάτων τους.

Η ενίσχυση της κινητικότητας είναι συμβατή με την έμφαση που δίνεται στις επαγγελματικές δεξιότητες και ικανότητες στη διακήρυξη της Μπριζ, καθώς οι δράσεις για την κινητικότητα μπορούν να συμβάλουν σημαντικά στην ανάπτυξή τους καθώς και στην απασχολησιμότητα των συμμετεχόντων στα εν λόγω μέτρα.

Η Επιτροπή θα παρακολουθεί τον αντίκτυπο των ελληνικών μεταρρυθμίσεων εντός των συμφωνηθέντων πλαισίων υποβολής στοιχείων όσον αφορά την εφαρμογή της διακήρυξης της Μπριζ και του ευρωπαϊκού εξαμήνου.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008757/13
to the Commission
Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Technical education reform in Greece

As part of its undertakings to the Troika to achieve 4 000 redundancies and mobility for 12 000 employees of the narrow and broader public sector in 2013, the Greek Government has decided to abolish 52 specialisms in vocational lyceums and schools.

The main specialisms being abolished are in the health and welfare and applied arts sectors. There is a great demand for these specialisms, for which a large number of students have already enrolled.

In view of the fact that (firstly) the EU is trying to recover from a very serious economic and financial crisis which has had a particularly vicious impact on youth employment and (secondly) a highly qualified and skilled workforce is needed if its plan to foster growth in the European economy is to succeed, will the Commission say:

— Does it have information as to whether the vocational education systems of the other Member States include similar sectors/skills?

— Does it consider that the facility for students to enrol in private vocational schools that cater for the specialisms abolished is compatible with the objective of inclusive vocational training and education by 2020, as laid down within the framework of the Bruges communiqué?

— Does it consider that the decision by the Greek Government to strengthen the mobility programme at the expense of vocational training and education is compatible with the principle expressed within the framework of the Bruges communiqué, namely that, in the knowledge society, vocational skills and competences are just as important as academic skills and competences?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(30 August 2013)

The Commission is aware of the recent decision of the Greek Government to restructure the provision of vocational training at secondary level.

In that respect, the Commission notes that the Greek Government has stated that the abolition of a number of programmes in healthcare and other sectors offered by vocational high schools (EPAL) can be matched by the provision of programmes at post-secondary institutes of vocational training (IEK), thus ensuring that Greek trainees will have the opportunity to train in those sectors, which are indeed included in the provision in other Member States.

The Commission is aware that a number of IEK are private institutions, and it also takes note of the Greek Government's plan to widen the capacity of public IEKs and support the accessibility of their courses.

Reinforcing mobility is compatible with the emphasis given to vocational skills and competences in the Bruges communiqué, as mobility actions can significantly contribute to their development as well as to the employability of the participants in those actions.

The Commission will monitor the impact of the Greek reforms within the agreed reporting frameworks related to the implementation of the Bruges communiqué and the European Semester.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008758/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Gianni Pittella (S&D)
(17 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Rapporti UE — Kazakistan

L'espulsione verso il Kazakistan, in seguito revocata da parte delle autorità italiane, della cittadina kazaka Shalabayeva Ablyazov, rifugiata politica nel Regno Unito, pone a tutte le istituzioni europee la dirimente questione del rispetto dei diritti umani fondamentali all'interno dell'Unione europea e del rapporto tra l'UE, i suoi Stati membri e regimi autoritari quali il Kazakistan.

La repressione sistematica degli oppositori politici, la perpetrazione di torture nei loro confronti, il rifiuto di tenere elezioni libere, segrete e competitive e l'inesistenza di quella separazione tra poteri tipica di uno Stato di diritto, sono infatti — a detta di numerosi osservatori internazionali — indicativi della natura autoritaria del governo kazako.

Alla luce della rinnovata attività repressiva perseguita dalle autorità kazake nei confronti dei dissidenti politici nel territorio europeo, quali misure intende adottare il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per garantire la tutela dei diritti umani fondamentali all'interno dell'Unione europea qual è sancita, tra gli altri, dagli articoli 2 e 6 del trattato sull' Unione europea?

Intende prendere in considerazione l'adozione di misure ritorsive quali la richiesta di sospendere l'applicazione dell'accordo di cooperazione e partnership fra Unione Europa e Kazakistan nel caso in cui le autorità kazake non dovessero fornire le garanzie richieste?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(9 settembre 2013)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente (AR/VP) e la delegazione dell'UE ad Astana seguono con attenzione il caso di Alma Shalabayeva, coniuge di Mukhtar Ablyazov, fin dal suo rimpatrio forzato ad Almaty. Insieme operano per garantire la piena tutela dei diritti giuridici della Shabalayeva durante l'inchiesta in corso. A detta delle autorità kazake, Alma Shalabayeva sarà trattata secondo le «normali prassi giuridiche».

La delegazione dell'UE e il servizio europeo per l'azione esterna (SEAE) sono in stretto contatto con le ONG che prestano sostegno e consulenza legale alla Shalabayeva, tra cui l'Ufficio internazionale per i diritti umani e lo stato di diritto del Kazakistan.

L'AR/VP ha contribuito a portare il caso all'attenzione delle organizzazioni internazionali pertinenti, quali l'UNHCR e l'OSCE. La delegazione dell'UE intrattiene a sua volta uno scambio frequente e regolare d'informazioni con le ambasciate degli Stati membri in Kazakistan. Il caso della Shalabayeva è stato discusso anche durante il consiglio di cooperazione UE-Kazakistan tenutosi a Bruxelles lo scorso 25 luglio.

L'AR/VP e il SEAE continueranno a trattare con le competenti autorità kazake per tutelare i diritti individuali, nella fattispecie di Alma Shalabayeva, in particolare il suo diritto all'assistenza di un avvocato.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008758/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Gianni Pittella (S&D)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU Relations — Kazakhstan

The expulsion to Kazakhstan, subsequently revoked by the Italian authorities, of the Kazakh citizen, Shalabayeva Ablyazov, a political refugee in the United Kingdom, should incite all the European institutions to address the key question of the respect for fundamental human rights within the European Union and the relationship between the EU, its Member States and authoritarian regimes such as Kazakhstan.

The systematic repression of political opponents, the use of torture against them, the refusal to hold free, secret and competitive elections and the lack of separation of powers, characteristic of a State governed by the rule of law, are — according to many international observers — indicative of the authoritarian nature of the Kazakh Government.

Considering the renewed repression carried out by the Kazakh authorities against political dissidents in the European Union, what measures does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to adopt to ensure the safeguarding of fundamental human rights within the European Union, as enshrined in Articles 2 and 6 of the Treaty on European Union, and elsewhere?

Does she intend to take into consideration the adoption of punitive measures such as a request to suspend the application of the partnership and cooperation agreement between the European Union and Kazakhstan should the Kazakh authorities fail to provide the guarantees requested?

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

The HR/VP and the EU Delegation in Astana follow closely the developments of the case of Mrs Alma Shalabayeva, the spouse of Mr Mukhtar Ablyazov, since her forced return to Almaty. They work to ensure that her legal rights are fully observed in the course of the ongoing investigation. As stated by the Kazakhstani authorities, Mrs Shalabayeva is treated in accordance with the 'normal legal practices'.

The EU Delegation and the European External Action Service (EEAS) maintain close contact with NGOs that provide support and legal advice to Mrs Shalabayeva, including the Kazakh International Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law.

The HR/VP has helped to bring the issue to the attention of relevant international organisations such as the UNHCR and the OSCE. Moreover, the EU Delegation regularly and frequently exchanges information with EU Member State Embassies based in Kazakhstan. Mrs Shalabayeva's case was also raised during the EU — Kazakhstan Cooperation Council held in Brussels on 25 July.

The HR/VP and the EEAS will continue to engage with the relevant Kazakhstani authorities to safeguard the individual rights, including the rights of Mrs Shalabayeva, in particular her right to access legal counsel and assistance.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008759/13
do Komisji
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(17 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Deportacja żony i córki kazachskiego dysydenta z Włoch

W trakcie operacji specjalnej, przeprowadzonej pod koniec maja, włoska policja zatrzymała, a następnie deportowała do Kazachstanu, żonę i 6-letnią córkę kazachskiego opozycjonisty, Mukhtara Ablyazova. Bezpośrednio po deportacji z Rzymu do Ałma Aty, Ałma Szałabajewa została osadzona w areszcie domowym. Grozi jej teraz więzienie, ponieważ oskarżono ją o skorumpowanie dwóch urzędników.

Okazuje się, że o decyzji o deportacji nie został poinformowany ani premier Włoch, ani też ministerstwa spraw zagranicznych i sprawiedliwości. Jak informują organizacje praw człowieka, deportację przeprowadzono rażąco łamiąc międzynarodowe normy, m.in. zapisy Konwencji ONZ i Kodeksu Imigracyjnego Włoch, zgodnie z którymi państwo nie powinno wydawać żadnej osoby innemu państwu, jeśli istnieją poważne podstawy, aby przypuszczać, że osoba ta jest zagrożona stosowaniem tortur lub prześladowaniem na tle rasowym, językowym, narodowościowym, religijnym, politycznym, z powodu sytuacji osobistej lub społecznej. Warto również podkreślić, że do zatrzymanej nie dopuszczono adwokatów ani tłumacza, tym samym pozbawiając ją prawa do zakwestionowania deportacji i ponownego rozpatrzenia sprawy. Sama zaś procedura deportacji odbyła się w bezprecedensowo krótkim czasie.

W związku z tym, zwracam się z zapytaniem, czy Komisja zamierza podjąć interwencję w sprawie nielegalnej deportacji żony i córki kazachskiego dysydenta z Włoch i wyrazić zdecydowany sprzeciw wobec lekkomyślnych, niezgodnych z prawem decyzji krajów UE narażających na niebezpieczeństwo opozycjonistów i ich rodziny?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Cecilię Malmström w imieniu Komisji
(26 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Kwestia poruszona przez Szanownego Pana Posła budzi wątpliwości co do zgodności działań podjętych przez włoskie władze z dorobkiem prawnym UE dotyczącym polityki powrotów i azylu.

Po opublikowaniu dnia 16 lipca 2013 r. wyników wewnętrznego dochodzenia przeprowadzonego przez komendanta głównego włoskiej policji oraz oczekując na wyniki trwającego dochodzenia prowadzonego przez prokuratora Rzymu, Komisja zwróciła się do władz włoskich w celu ustalenia, jak we Włoszech realizowana jest dyrektywa w sprawie powrotów i jak realizowano jej przepisy w przypadku opisanej sprawy Ałmy Szałbajewy i jej córki. Komisja wystąpiła także o informacje na temat dostępu do procedur azylowych i przestrzegania zasady *non-refoulement*. Komisja wnikliwie przeanalizuje odpowiedź włoskich władz i będzie z uwagą śledzić dalszy rozwój sytuacji.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008759/13
to the Commission
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Deportation of the wife and daughter of a Kazakh dissident from Italy

During a special operation carried out in late May, the Italian police detained and then deported to Kazakhstan the wife and six-year-old daughter of Mukhtar Ablyazov, a Kazakh opposition activist. Alma Shalabayeva was placed under house arrest immediately after her deportation from Rome to Almaty. She is now facing a possible prison sentence for allegedly corrupting two officials.

Apparently neither the Italian Prime Minister nor the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs or Ministry of Justice were informed of the deportation decision. According to human rights organisations, the deportations were a blatant violation of international standards such as the provisions of the UN Convention and Italy's Immigration Code, according to which an individual may not be handed over to another state if there are serious grounds to believe that he or she would be at risk of torture or persecution on grounds of race, language, nationality, religion or political opinions or due to his or her personal or social situation. It is also worth noting that the detainee was denied access to both lawyers and an interpreter, which deprived her of the right to appeal against the deportation and have the case re-examined. The actual deportation was carried out in an unprecedentedly short space of time.

I should therefore like to ask whether the Commission intends to intervene in respect of the illegal deportation from Italy of a Kazakh dissident's wife and daughter, and to issue a clear condemnation of reckless and unlawful decisions by EU Member States which place opposition activists and their families at risk?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(26 August 2013)

The issues set out by the Honourable Member raise questions as regards the compatibility of the actions taken by the Italian authorities with the EU's return and asylum *acquis*.

Following the publication on 16 July 2013 of the results of internal investigations conducted by the head of the Italian police and pending the results of ongoing investigations by the prosecutor of Rome, the Commission contacted the Italian authorities in order to better understand how the return procedure set out in the Return Directive is usually conducted in Italy and how was implemented in the present case of Alma Shalabayeva and her daughter. The Commission also requested information regarding access to the asylum procedure and the respect of the principle of *non-refoulement*. The Commission will examine carefully the reply from the Italian authorities and closely monitor any further developments.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008762/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(17 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Dia Internacional das Cooperativas — Medidas de apoio e fortalecimento das cooperativas

Assinalou-se este mês, no passado dia 6, o Dia Internacional das Cooperativas. As cooperativas, nas suas diversas áreas de intervenção, têm reconhecidamente um papel fundamental na sociedade, que deve ser reconhecido, estimulado e apoiado. Numa mensagem divulgada no dia 6 de julho, o Secretário-Geral das Nações Unidas exortou à adoção de políticas de apoio e de fortalecimento das cooperativas, de modo a que estas possam contribuir plenamente para o desenvolvimento inclusivo e sustentável.

Perguntamos à Comissão:

1. Que medidas estão previstas, ao nível da UE, para apoiar e fortalecer as cooperativas? Em particular, que enquadramento merecerão no âmbito do próximo Quadro Financeiro Plurianual (2014-2020)?

2. Em resposta à pergunta E-005148/2013, a Comissão refere que «o setor cooperativo pode beneficiar de empréstimos do BEI às PME, desde que as organizações ou associações cooperativas se enquadrem na definição de PME». Tendo em conta as muitas dificuldades que o setor cooperativo tem tido para aceder às linhas de crédito do BEI, não considera que se deveria propor um enquadramento específico para as cooperativas no acesso a financiamentos do BEI, alterando a situação atual?

Resposta dada por Antonio Tajani em nome da Comissão
(3 de setembro de 2013)

A Comissão partilha a posição do Senhor Deputado de que são necessárias ações a nível europeu para continuar a melhorar a competitividade das cooperativas, sobretudo no atual contexto económico. O objetivo da Comissão neste domínio é de alcançar uma situação de concorrência equitativa, para que as cooperativas possam competir em condições iguais às das empresas que se revestem de outras formas jurídicas.

As cooperativas são empresas; como tal, podem beneficiar de todas as políticas e programas financeiros do próximo quadro financeiro plurianual. A Comissão recomendou aos Estados-Membros que apoiassem especificamente o empreendedorismo social através dos programas dos fundos estruturais da UE. No futuro período de programação 2014-2020, o Fundo Social Europeu irá dedicar uma prioridade de investimento à «Promoção da economia social e das empresas sociais». Além disso, o novo programa da UE «Emprego e Inovação Social» (EaSI) (parte do quadro financeiro plurianual para 2014-2020) integra e alarga o âmbito de aplicação de três programas existentes [Progress (Programa para o Emprego e Solidariedade Social), EURES (Serviços Europeus de Emprego) e o Instrumento de Microfinanciamento Europeu Progress] e inclui explicitamente os atores da economia social.

O Conselho Europeu, de 27-28 de junho de 2013 convidou o BEI e a Comissão a servir de alavanca aos investimentos do setor privado e dos mercados de capitais, a fim de reforçar o setor das PME. Tal evolução deverá resultar em recursos adicionais para as PME, incluindo as cooperativas elegíveis para produtos do BEI e do Fundo Europeu de Investimento destinados às PME. No entanto, o BEI não prevê a criação de um programa específico para o setor cooperativo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008762/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: International Day of Cooperatives — measures to support and strengthen cooperatives

The International Day of Cooperatives took place on 6 July 2013. Cooperatives undoubtedly play a fundamental role in society in their various fields of action which should be recognised, encouraged and supported. In a message released on 6 July, the UN Secretary-General called for the adoption of policies to support and strengthen cooperatives, so as to enable them to fully contribute to inclusive and sustainable development.

1. What measures are planned at EU level to support and strengthen cooperatives? In particular, how will they be included in the next multiannual financial framework (2014-2020)?

2. In answer to written question E-005148/2013, the Commission states that 'the "cooperative sector" is eligible for EIB SME loans, provided that those cooperative organisations or associations comply with the SME definition'. Given the numerous difficulties the cooperative sector has had in accessing credit lines from the EIB, does it not believe that it should propose a specific framework to enable cooperatives to access EIB funding, thereby changing the current situation?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

The Commission shares the Honourable Member's view that actions are needed at European level to keep improving the competitiveness of cooperatives, particularly in the current economic context. The Commission's aim in this area is a level playing field so that cooperatives can compete on equal terms with enterprises using other legal forms.

Cooperatives are enterprises; as such, they can benefit from all financial programmes and policies of the next Multiannual Financial Framework. The Commission has recommended to the Member States to specifically support social business via the EU's structural funding programmes. In the future programming period of 2014-2020, the European Social Fund will dedicate an investment priority to 'promoting the social economy and social enterprises'. Furthermore the new EU programme 'Employment and Social Innovation' (EaSI) (part of the 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework), integrates and extends the coverage of three existing programmes [PROGRESS (Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity), EURES (European Employment Services) and the European Progress Microfinance Facility] and explicitly includes social economy actors.

The European Council of 27-28 June 2013 called on the EIB and the Commission to leverage private sector and capital markets investments to strengthen the SME sector. The developments should result in additional resources for SMEs including for those cooperatives eligible for the SME products of the EIB and of the European Investment Fund. However, the EIB does not plan to set-up a specific programme for the cooperative sector.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008763/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(17 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Definição de «Transporte Marítimo de Curta Distância» (COM(2013)0296)

A alínea 15, do artigo 2.°, do Capítulo 1, «*Transporte Marítimo de Curta Distância*», da Proposta de Regulamento relativa ao quadro normativo para o acesso ao mercado dos serviços portuários (COM(2013)0296), vem estabelecer uma nova definição de transporte marítimo de curta distância.

Sendo que atualmente o transporte marítimo de curta distância está associado ao transporte de mercadorias em navios de menores dimensões (Ro-Ro ou feeders), com esta nova definição passa a considerar-se transporte marítimo de curta distância como «*o tráfego marítimo de mercadorias e passageiros entre portos situados na Europa geográfica ou entre esses portos e portos situados em países não europeus com faixa costeira nos mares confinados que banham a Europa*». Ou seja, qualquer navio de 14 000 TEUs, um navio petroleiro de 200 000 TB ou um LNG, poderão passar a ser considerados transporte marítimo de curta distância.

De acordo com associações do setor, o aumento da flexibilização em termos de certificados de isenção de pilotagem, que esta alteração implica, colocará riscos consideráveis e inadmissíveis. Por outro lado, o impacto financeiro motivado pelos descontos que estão atualmente previstos nas tarifas de pilotagem para o transporte marítimo de curta distância não poderá ser descurado.

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

1. Qual o fundamento para a proposta de alteração da definição de «*Transporte Marítimo de Curta Distância*»?

2. Que avaliação e ponderação foram feitas dos riscos apontados pelas organizações do setor?

3. Está disponível para propor correções à sua proposta, em função dos alertas destas organizações?

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(3 de setembro de 2013)

1. A definição de transporte marítimo de curta distância contida na proposta de regulamento sobre o acesso ao mercado e a transparência financeira dos portos ([1]) não é nova. Foi introduzida pela comunicação intitulada «Desenvolvimento do transporte marítimo de curta distância na Europa: Uma alternativa dinâmica numa cadeia de transportes sustentável», de 1999 ([2]), sendo utilizada correntemente na UE.

2. A proposta não aborda a questão dos certificados de dispensa de pilotagem, que está ainda a ser analisada pela Comissão no contexto de um exercício distinto, acordado conjuntamente entre o Parlamento, o Conselho e a Comissão ([3]). Este exercício irá examinar a necessidade de dispor de um enquadramento para a concessão desses certificados. A Comissão comunicará os resultados da sua avaliação às outras instituições e, se for caso disso, proporá novas ações.

A proposta procura antes clarificar as regras relativas ao acesso ao mercado dos serviços portuários, incluindo os serviços de pilotagem. Ela permitirá, nomeadamente, a imposição de requisitos mínimos em matéria de segurança e a imposição de obrigações de serviço público, como a disponibilidade e a continuidade do serviço para todos os utilizadores. Permitirá igualmente, em condições bem justificadas e transparentes, a restrição do número de operadores e o exercício da atividade por operadores internos com direitos exclusivos. Nos casos em que o acesso ao mercado seja limitado, são igualmente propostas disposições para que as taxas de serviço portuário sejam estabelecidas de forma transparente e não discriminatória, após consulta dos utilizadores.

3. A proposta resulta de um longo processo de consulta das partes interessadas, incluindo as organizações de pilotagem, e sobre segurança. No que respeita à questão específica dos certificados de dispensa de pilotagem, a Comissão mantém-se em contacto estreito com as organizações de pilotagem. No entanto, ainda não foi tomada qualquer decisão.

([1]) COM(2013) 296.
([2]) COM(1999) 317 final de 29.6.1999.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2010-0259+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN#BKMD-21

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008763/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Definition of 'short sea shipping' (COM(2013) 0296)

Chapter 1, Article 2(15) of the proposal for a regulation establishing a framework on market access to port services and financial transparency of ports (COM(2013) 0296) establishes a new definition of short sea shipping.

Short sea shipping is currently associated with the movement of cargo in smaller vessels (Ro-Ros or feeders). Under this new definition, short sea shipping will mean 'the movement of cargo and passengers by sea between ports situated in geographical Europe or between those ports and ports situated in non-European countries having a coastline on the enclosed seas bordering Europe'. In other words, any 14 000 TEU vessel, 200 000 tonne oil tanker or LNG may now be used for short sea shipping.

According to sector associations, the increased flexibility in terms of pilotage exemption certificates brought about by this amendment carries considerable and inadmissible risks. Moreover, the financial impact of current discounts on short sea shipping pilotage fees must be taken into account.

1. What is the basis for the proposed amendment of the definition of 'short sea shipping'?

2. What assessment and consideration has been made of the risks highlighted by sector organisations?

3. Is the Commission willing to amend its proposal, in the light of these organisations' warnings?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

1. The definition of Short Sea Shipping contained in the proposal for a regulation on market access and financial transparency of ports ([1]) is not new. It has been introduced by the communication 'The development of Short Sea shipping in Europe: a dynamic alternative in a sustainable transport chain' of 1999 ([2])" and is commonly used in the EU.

2. The proposal does not adress the issue of Pilotage Exemption Certificates which is still being considered by the Commission in the context of a separate exercice agreed jointly between the Parliament, the Council and the Commission ([3]). This exercice is to examine the need for a framework for the granting of Pilotage Exemption Certificates. The Commission will communicate the results of its assessment to the other institutions and, if appropriate, propose futher actions.

The proposal seeks intead to clarify the rules on the access to the market of port services, including pilotage services. It will allow, among others, to impose minimum requirements related to safety and to impose public service obligations such as the availability and continuity of the service for all users. It will also allow, under well justified and transparent conditions, to restrict the number of operators and to rely on in-house operators with exclusive rights. Where the market access is restricted, provisions are also proposed so that port service charges are set in a transparent and non-discriminatory way after consultation of users.

3. The proposal results from a long consultation of stakeholders including the pilotage organisations and on safety. As regards the separate issue of Pilotage Exemption Certificates, the Commission also remains in close contact with the pilotage organisations. No decision has however been taken yet.

([1]) COM(2013) 296.
([2]) COM(1999) 317 final of 29.06.1999.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2010-0259+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN#BKMD-21.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008764/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(17 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Proposta da Comissão Europeia relativa ao acesso ao mercado dos serviços portuários

A Apibarra — Associação dos Pilotos de Barra e Portos, de Portugal, alertou recentemente para alguns aspetos relativos à proposta de regulamento «que estabelece um quadro normativo para o acesso ao mercado dos serviços portuários e a transparência financeira dos portos» (COM(2013)0296).

Na referida proposta a Comissão Europeia refere que «todas as partes interessadas realçaram a necessidade de assegurar condições de concorrência estáveis e equitativas na União Europeia, tanto entre portos como dentro de cada porto». Ora, a EMPA — European Maritime Pilot's Association, da qual a Apibarra é associada, consultada que foi neste processo e referenciada na proposta de regulamento, é claramente contra a competição nos serviços de pilotagem num mesmo porto, ao contrário do que a redação da proposta parece fazer querer ([1]). Estas entidades têm, de forma persistente, vindo a afirmar que a pilotagem não deve ser considerada um serviço comercial.

Por outro lado, a Apibarra recorda que o comportamento dos portos portugueses tem sido exemplar. Nos últimos anos (com exceção de 2009) os portos portugueses evoluíram sempre mais do que o PIB nacional e, mais recentemente, claramente em contraciclo. Assim sendo, não são adequadas aos portos portugueses as menções negativas constantes da proposta — visando justificá-la — relativas a vários portos europeus. Assim como não é adequada à realidade portuguesa a afirmação de que «parte significativa dos utentes dos serviços portuários, companhias de navegação e empresas de exportação-importação considera que os serviços portuários de muitos portos da União não são satisfatórios em termos de preço, qualidade e encargos administrativos».

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

1. Tem conhecimento de que a posição da EMPA, como a da Apibarra, é contrária à competição nos serviços de pilotagem num mesmo porto? Em caso afirmativo, porque foi esse facto ignorado na proposta e porque foi transmitida a ideia contrária?

2. Teve em conta a diversidade de situações nos portos europeus? Como se justifica que a especificidade dos portos portugueses seja, em face do supramencionado, ignorada?

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(3 de setembro de 2013)

A Comissão mantém contactos regulares com a *European Maritime Pilots' Association* (EMPA) e está a par das posições desta associação no referente à concorrência no serviço de pilotagem. As posições da EMPA são tidas em conta e não são ignoradas na proposta a que o Senhor Deputado se refere.

De facto, a proposta da Comissão é neutra quanto à escolha dos Estados-Membros e não impõe nem defende a concorrência intraportuária nos serviços de pilotagem. O projeto de regulamento prevê que os Estados-Membros definam o estatuto de serviço público dos serviços de pilotagem e apliquem a esses serviços os princípios gerais do TFUE de transparência, não discriminação e proporcionalidade.

Aquando da preparação da proposta em questão, a Comissão realizou uma avaliação de impacto exaustiva, que tem em conta as diferentes situações nos portos da UE ([2]), incluindo, no caso específico de Portugal, o programa de ajustamento económico para este Estado-Membro ([3]), que prevê reformas estruturais importantes no setor portuário do país.

([1]) http://www.empa-pilots.org/our-views/
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52013SC0181:PT:NOT
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp153_pt.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008764/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Commission proposal on market access to port services

APIBARRA (Portuguese Inshore and Port Pilots' Association) recently warned against some aspects of the proposal for a regulation 'establishing a framework on market access to port services and financial transparency of ports' (COM(2013)0296).

In this proposal, the Commission states that 'All stakeholders stressed the need for a stable and level playing field both for inter-port (competition between ports) and intra-port (competition between providers of the same port service within a port) competition in the EU'. However, the EMPA (European Maritime Pilots' Association), of which APIBARRA is a member, which was consulted during this process and referenced in the proposal for a regulation, is clearly against intra-port competition in pilotage, despite what the proposal seems to advocate ([1]). These bodies have persistently maintained that pilotage should not be considered a commercial service.

Moreover, APIBARRA points out that the performance of Portuguese ports has been exemplary. Over the last few years (except 2009), Portuguese ports have grown faster than national GDP and, more recently, have clearly bucked the national economic trend. As such, the negative comments on EU ports made throughout the proposal, in an attempt to justify it, do not apply to Portuguese ports, nor does the claim that 'A significant part of the users of port services, shipping companies and export-import industries consider that port services in many EU ports are not satisfactory in terms of price, quality and administrative burden'.

1. Is the Commission aware that the EMPA and APIBARRA are opposed to intra-port competition in pilotage? If so, why has this been overlooked in the proposal and why has the opposite idea been conveyed?

2. Has it taken account of the different situations in EU ports? In view of the aforementioned information, how does it justify overlooking the specific situation of Portuguese ports?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

The Commission maintains regular contacts with the European Maritime Pilots' Association (EMPA) and is aware of its views regarding competition in pilotage. EMPA's views have been taken into account and are not overlooked in the proposal which the Hounorable Member refers to.

In fact, the Commission's proposal is neutral in respect of the choice of Member States and does neither impose nor advocate intra-port competition in pilotage. The draft regulation foresees that Member States define the public service status of pilotage services and apply to those services the general TFEU principles of transparency, non-discrimination and proportionality.

For the preparation of the proposal, the Commission has conducted a comprehensive impact assessment taking account of the different situations in EU ports ([2]) including, in the particular case of Portugal, of the Economic Adjustment Programme for this Member State ([3]), which foresees important structural reforms for the Portuguese port sector.

([1]) http://www.empa-pilots.org/our-views/.
([2]) See http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52013SC0181:EN:NOT
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp153_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008765/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(17 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Apoio a projeto de proteção de minas de água e infraestruturas associadas

Uma associação portuguesa pretende desenvolver um projeto que visa promover a proteção das minas de água em Rio de Vide (Miranda do Corvo), uma aldeia do centro de Portugal, para fazer face ao problema da escassez de água em determinadas épocas do ano, nomeadamente para fins agrícolas, mas não só. O objetivo é conseguir um mais eficiente aproveitamento das águas que se perdem no inverno, para serem aproveitadas no verão para a agricultura e o consumo da população. O projeto envolveria, entre outras ações, a construção de uma represa para armazenamento da água das minas para a atividade agrícola e a recuperação de infraestruturas (fontes e chafarizes) onde as pessoas ainda vão buscar a água para beber, mas que cada vez é mais escassa.

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre que programas e medidas poderão apoiar um projeto com estas características e sobre quais as condições de financiamento associadas.

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloș em nome da Comissão
(5 de setembro de 2013)

A Comissão informa que, no âmbito da política de desenvolvimento rural, o artigo 30.° do Regulamento (CE) n.° 1698/2005 ([1]) estabelece uma medida destinada a apoiar as infraestruturas relacionadas com a evolução e a adaptação da agricultura e da silvicultura, incluindo as operações relacionadas com a gestão dos recursos hídricos. O programa de desenvolvimento rural do Continente (Proder) para o período de 2007-2013 oferece atualmente esta possibilidade, através de medidas específicas relacionadas com o desenvolvimento e a modernização dos sistemas de irrigação.

Ao abrigo do Proder, podem ser concedidas ajudas aos agricultores que preencham os critérios de elegibilidade e cujos pedidos sejam selecionados pela autoridade de gestão após os procedimentos de seleção em vigor.

No âmbito da gestão dos Programas de Desenvolvimento Rural, os Estados-Membros são responsáveis pela seleção e adjudicação dos projectos. Para mais informações, contacte a autoridade de gestão do Proder no seguinte endereço:

Rua Padre António Vieira, 1 — 8.° andar
1099-073 Lisboa
Telefone: 00 351 21 381 9318/19/20
E-mail: gabrielaventura@gpp.pt
Correio eletrónico geral: st.proder@gpp.pt

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008765/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Support for a project designed to protect water reserves and related infrastructure

A Portuguese association intends to develop a project that aims to protect water reserves in Rio de Vide (Miranda do Corvo), a village in central Portugal, with a view to tackling seasonal shortages of water used primarily, but not exclusively, for farming. Its objective is to make more efficient use of the water wasted in winter and use it for farming and drinking water in summer. The project would involve, among other things, constructing a dam to store water for farming and restoring infrastructure (springs and fountains) from which people still fetch drinking water, which is becoming increasingly scarce.

Which programmes and measures could support a project of this nature and what are the related financing conditions?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

The Commission informs that in the framework of the rural development policy, Article 30 of Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 ([1]) provides for a measure aiming to support infrastructures related to the development and adaptation of agriculture and forestry, including operations on water management. The Rural Development Programme of Mainland Portugal (Proder) for the period 2007-2013 currently offers this possibility, through specific measures related to development and modernisation of irrigation systems.

Aid can be granted under Proder to farmers who fulfil the eligibility criteria and whose applications are selected by the managing authority following the selection procedures in force.

In the framework of the management of Rural Development programmes, Member States are responsible for the selection and contracting of projects. Further information should be requested to the Proder Managing Authority at the following address:

Rua Padre António Vieira, 1 — 8º andar
1099-073 LISBOA
Tel.: 00 351 21 381 9318/19/20
Email: gabrielaventura@gpp.pt
Email geral: st.proder@gpp.pt

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

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008766/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(17 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Degradação da prestação de cuidados de saúde em Portugal (II)

Em resposta à pergunta E-005146/2013, sobre a degradação da prestação de cuidados de saúde em Portugal, a Comissão Europeia afirma o seguinte: «As despesas de saúde pública em Portugal, em percentagem do Produto Interno Bruto (PIB), permaneceram estáveis durante o Programa de Ajustamento Económico, apesar de a crise ter tido impacto no PIB do país. Além disso, nos últimos anos, as estatísticas disponíveis sobre o sistema de saúde português mostram uma diminuição significativa na parte da população que indicou cuidados médicos por satisfazer devido a razões económicas (que incluem o preço, a distância e as listas de espera).» A Comissão acrescenta que «não está em condições de avaliar se se registou uma deterioração dos serviços de saúde prestados em Portugal».

Ora, segundo o Instituto Nacional de Estatística (INE), em 2011 e 2012, a despesa corrente em saúde diminuiu a um ritmo muito superior ao do PIB. Por outro lado, em 2011 e 2012 aumentou a proporção da despesa corrente em saúde financiada pelas famílias, representando 28,9 % e 31,7 %, respetivamente (27,4 % em 2010). Em simultâneo, observou-se um decréscimo do financiamento suportado pelo Serviço Nacional de Saúde correspondendo, em 2012, a 54,5 % da despesa corrente (menos 1,1 p.p. face a 2011 e menos 2,8 p.p. face a 2010). Isto quer dizer que foram apenas as famílias portuguesas as únicas a gastar mais em saúde, num quadro em que, entre 2011 e 2012, o peso dos salários na economia portuguesa registou a maior queda desde 1984 e o desemprego registou um brutal agravamento.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. A que estatísticas («disponíveis sobre o sistema de saúde português») se refere na sua resposta? A que anos se referem essas estatísticas?

2. Considera normal que, sendo a Comissão responsável pelo programa UE-FMI, não esteja «em condições de avaliar se se registou uma deterioração dos serviços de saúde prestados em Portugal», na sequência da aplicação deste programa? Porque razões não está a Comissão em condições de o fazer?

3. Como pode assim afirmar ser seu objetivo, através daquilo a que chama «reforma dos sistemas de saúde», assegurar uma «melhoria da relação qualidade/preço»? Como avalia, nesse caso, o fator «qualidade»?

Resposta dada por Tonio Mr Borg em nome da Comissão
(3 de setembro de 2013)

Os dados do Eurostat disponíveis mais recentemente ([1]) revelam que a despesa pública com a saúde em Portugal aumentou ligeiramente, de 6,7 % do PIB em 2010 para 6,8 % em 2011, com um aumento orçamental nominal mesmo quando o PIB e o total dos orçamentos públicos diminuíram.

Os dados do Eurostat sobre o acesso aos cuidados de saúde, medido com base nas necessidades por satisfazer comunicadas, revelam uma diminuição das «necessidades por satisfazer associadas a razões económicas (tais como o preço, a distância e as listas de espera)», em Portugal, entre 2010 e 2011, contrariamente à tendência geral na UE.

A Comissão não está em condições de avaliar se houve uma deterioração da qualidade dos serviços de cuidados de saúde em Portugal, na sequência da introdução do Programa de Ajustamento Económico, em maio de 2011, com base nos dados disponíveis.

([1]) Data de referência: 5 de agosto de 2013.

As reformas do sistema de saúde em Portugal no quadro do Programa de Assistência Económica têm por objetivo melhorar a eficiência e eficácia. As poupanças dizem sobretudo respeito ao domínio dos produtos farmacêuticos e aos custos de exploração dos hospitais. O objetivo consiste em manter o acesso aos cuidados de saúde e a sua qualidade, e aumentar a boa gestão financeira. Medidas adicionais, tais como as relacionadas com o apoio a melhores práticas de prescrição, são suscetíveis de gerar poupanças e melhorar os resultados sanitários, conseguindo, por exemplo, evitar hospitalizações. Essas melhorias podem ser medidas através dos indicadores de saúde da Comunidade Europeia ([2]) e no âmbito do projeto da OCDE «Indicadores da qualidade dos cuidados de saúde ([3])». Em abril de 2012, teve início formal uma ação comum europeia sobre a segurança dos doentes e a qualidade dos cuidados de saúde ([4]).

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/echi/index_pt.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/other_indicators/quality/index_en.htm
([4]) http://www.eu-patient.eu/Press/News-Archive/Joint-Action-on-Patient-Safety-and-Quality-of-Care/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008766/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Deterioration in healthcare services in Portugal (II)

In answer to written question E-005146/2013, on the deterioration in healthcare services in Portugal, the Commission states that 'Portuguese public health expenditure as a percentage of GDP has remained stable during the Economic Adjustment Programme, even though the crisis had an impact on the country's GDP. Furthermore, in recent years, the available statistics on the Portuguese healthcare system show a significant decrease in the share of the population which reported unmet medical needs for economic reasons (including price, distance and waiting lists)'. It adds that it 'is not in a position to judge that there has been a deterioration in the quality of healthcare services provided in Portugal'.

However, according to Statistics Portugal (INE), in 2011 and 2012, current health expenditure declined at a rate much faster than GDP. Moreover, in 2011 and 2012, the proportion of current health expenditure financed by households increased, accounting for 28.9% and 31.7% respectively (27.4% in 2010). At the same time, there was a decrease in funding from the National Health Service which represented 54.5% of current expenditure in 2012 (down 1.1 percentage points on 2011 and 2.8 percentage points on 2010). This means that Portuguese families alone spent more on health, at a time when (between 2011 and 2012) the wage share in the national economy experienced its biggest drop since 1984 and unemployment saw a dramatic rise.

1. Which 'available statistics on the Portuguese healthcare system' does the Commission refer to in its answer? To which years do these statistics refer?

2. Given that it was responsible for the EU-IMF programme, does the Commission think it normal that it is not 'in a position to judge that there has been a deterioration in the quality of healthcare services provided in Portugal' following this programme's implementation? Why is it not in a position to judge?

3. How can it therefore claim that its objective is to increase 'value for money' through so-called 'health system reforms'? How does it evaluate 'quality' in this case?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

The most recently ([1]) available Eurostat data shows that public expenditure on health in Portugal increased slightly from 6.7% of GDP in 2010 to 6.8% in 2011, with a nominal budget increase shown when both GDP and total public budgets decreased.

Eurostat data on access to care, measured as self-reported unmet needs for medical examination, show a decrease in reported 'unmet needs associated with economic reasons (such as price, distance and waiting lists)' in Portugal between 2010 and 2011, contrary to the overall trend for the EU.

The Commission is not in a position to judge whether or not there has been a deterioration in the quality of healthcare services in Portugal following the introduction of the Economic Adjustment Programme in May 2011 on the basis of the available data.

Health system reforms in Portugal in the framework of the Economic Assistance Program aim at improved efficiency and effectiveness. Savings mainly concern the area of pharmaceuticals and hospital operating costs. The objective is to maintain access to care and its quality and to increase value for money. Further measures, such as those in support of better prescribing practices are expected to bring both savings and improved health outcomes, for instance through avoiding hospitalisations. Such improvements can be measured via the European Community health indicators ([2]) and the OECD Health Care Quality Indicators Project ([3]). A European joint action on patient safety and quality of care ([4]) formally started in April 2012.

([1]) Reference date: 5 August 2013.
([2]) See http://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/echi/.
([3]) See http://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/other_indicators/quality/index_en.htm
([4]) See http://www.eu-patient.eu/Press/News-Archive/Joint-Action-on-Patient-Safety-and-Quality-of-Care/.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008767/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(17 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Preços dos combustíveis para o setor da pesca nos Estados-Membros

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre quais os Estados-Membros em que existe um preço mais reduzido (após impostos) para o gasóleo e gasolina destinados à pesca, em comparação com o preço nos restantes consumidores. Dispõe a Comissão de informação comparativa relativa ao preço dos combustíveis (gasóleo e gasolina), após impostos, para o setor da pesca nos vários Estados-Membros?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(12 de setembro de 2013)

A Comissão não dispõe de dados completos suficientes sobre os preços do gasóleo e da gasolina para o setor da pesca que permitam efetuar uma comparação exaustiva de todos os segmentos de frota da UE, dos Estados-Membros e de outros setores. Estas informações são conservadas ao nível dos Estados-Membros e podem variar de umas regiões para outras.

Contudo, o Relatório Económico Anual das frotas de pesca da UE apresenta estimativas anuais do custo e do consumo de combustíveis de diversas frotas da UE. Essas estimativas não incluem todos os Estados-Membros e não distinguem entre o consumo de gasolina e de gasóleo. O relatório, bem como os dados pertinentes, está disponível ao público na página Web do Comité Científico, Técnico e Económico das Pescas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008767/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Fuel prices for the fisheries sector in the Member States

Which Member States have lower diesel and petrol prices (after tax) for the fisheries sector than other consumers? Does the Commission have any comparative information on the price of fuel (diesel and petrol), after tax, for the fisheries sector in the different Member States?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(12 September 2013)

The Commission does not record complete enough data on diesel and petrol prices for the fisheries sector to allow for a comprehensive comparison across all EU fleet segments, Member States and other sectors. This information is retained at Member State level and can vary across regions within different Member States.

However, the Annual Economic Report of the EU fishing fleets provides annual estimates of average fuel cost and fuel consumption for several EU fleets. These estimates do not include all Member States and do not differentiate between petrol and diesel consumption. The report, along with the relevant data, is publicly available on the webpage of the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008769/13
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Bastiaan Belder (EFD)
(17 juli 2013)

Betreft: VP/HR — Verslag van de Europese Rekenkamer over de besteding van financiële steun van de EU aan Egypte

Deelt de Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger de mening dat het onwenselijk is dat steun aan landen met gebrek aan verantwoording niet gekoppeld is aan voorwaarden ten aanzien van bestedingsdoeleinden, wettigheid, regelmatigheid, doeltreffendheid en doelmatigheid, zoals in het geval van Egypte?

Zo ja, op welke wijze en termijn wil de Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger deze onverantwoorde aanpak omzetten in een benadering met robuuste voorwaarden en verantwoordingsplicht, te beginnen met de casus Egypte?

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008770/13
aan de Commissie
Bastiaan Belder (EFD)
(17 juli 2013)

Betreft: Verslag van de Europese Rekenkamer over de besteding van financiële steun van de EU aan Egypte

Deelt de Commissie de mening dat het onwenselijk is dat steun aan landen met gebrek aan verantwoording niet gekoppeld is aan voorwaarden ten aanzien van bestedingsdoeleinden, wettigheid, regelmatigheid, doeltreffendheid en doelmatigheid, zoals in het geval van Egypte?

Zo ja, op welke wijze en termijn wil de Commissie deze onverantwoorde aanpak omzetten in een benadering met robuuste voorwaarden en verantwoordingsplicht, te beginnen met de casus Egypte?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(28 oktober 2013)

Overeenkomstig haar herziene richtsnoeren inzake begrotingssteun stelt de Commissie in Egypte en in andere landen die begrotingssteun ontvangen, de uitbetalingen volledig afhankelijk van de vooruitgang van de hervormingen en de ondubbelzinnige verwezenlijking van de desbetreffende voorwaarden. Bovendien kan in het kader van het Spring-programma, waarvoor Egypte in principe in aanmerking kan komen, aanvullende steun wordt gekoppeld aan democratische hervormingen. Sinds augustus 2011 heeft de Commissie voor Egypte dan ook geen nieuwe begrotingssteun meer vastgesteld.

Om de resultaten van haar hulpprogramma's te meten, beschikt de Commissie over instrumenten die haar in staat stellen lessen te trekken uit opgedane ervaringen. Naast systeemcontroles en financiële controles bij elk project dat zij financiert, verricht de Commissie in overeenstemming met de methode voor projectcyclusbeheer regelmatige onafhankelijke, resultaatgerichte controleoefeningen alsook tussentijdse en eindevaluaties, en evaluaties achteraf. Vijf aspecten worden systematisch beoordeeld: relevantie, doelmatigheid, doeltreffendheid, impact en duurzaamheid.

Voor vragen in verband met het recente Europese jaarverslag van de Rekenkamer over Egypte wordt het geachte Parlementslid verwezen naar het antwoord van de Commissie op de eerdere schriftelijke vragen (E-007098/2013, E-007109/2013, E-007124/2013, E-007261/2013 en E-007646/2013 ([1])).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/nl/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008769/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Bastiaan Belder (EFD)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Court of Auditors' report on granting EU financial aid to Egypt

Does the Vice-President/High Representative agree that it is definitely desirable to link aid to countries displaying a lack of accountability to conditions based on allocation purposes, legality, regularity, effectiveness and efficiency, as in the case of Egypt?

If so, how and by when will the Vice-President/High Representative turn this irresponsible approach into one featuring robust conditions and accountability, starting with Egypt?

Question for written answer E-008770/13
to the Commission
Bastiaan Belder (EFD)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Court of Auditors' report on granting EU financial aid to Egypt

Does the Commission agree that it is definitely desirable to link aid to countries displaying a lack of accountability to conditions based on allocation purposes, legality, regularity, effectiveness and efficiency, as in the case of Egypt?

If so, how and by when will the Commission turn this irresponsible approach into one featuring robust conditions and accountability, starting with Egypt?

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

In line with its overhauled Budget Support guidelines, in Egypt and in other countries that receive budget support, the Commission conditions its financial disbursements entirely on progress in reforms and the unequivocal fulfilment of relevant conditions. Moreover, additional support under the SPRING Programme, for which Egypt could in principle be eligible, would be linked to democratic reforms. Thus, no new Budget Support operation has been decided for Egypt since August 2011.

To measure the performance of its aid programmes the Commission has tools that allow it to draw lessons from past experience. In addition to system and financial audits on each project it funds, the Commission, in line with the Project Cycle Management methodology, conducts regular independent results-oriented monitoring exercises as well as mid-term, final and *ex-post* evaluations. Five dimensions are systematically assessed: Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact and Sustainability.

For questions related to the recent European Court of Auditors' report on Egypt, the Honourable Member is referred to the Commission's reply to previous written questions (E-007098/2013, E-007109/2013, E-007124/2013, E-007261/2013 and E-007646/2013 ([1])).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008771/13
do Komisji
Joanna Katarzyna Skrzydlewska (PPE)
(17 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Masowe wymieranie pszczół

Obecnie alarmującym problemem jest wzrastające zjawisko masowego wymierania pszczół. Jedną z przyczyn odpowiedzialną za śmierć tych owadów są pestycydy pochodzące z grupy neonikotynoidów. Znajdują się one w środkach owadobójczych, używanych do zaprawiania nasion. W styczniu 2013 Europejski Urząd do spraw Bezpieczeństwa Żywności uznał, że te pestycydy przekraczają akceptowalne ryzyko dla pszczół. Okazało się, iż pierwotne badania, prowadzone przez producentów środków mających na celu ochronę roślin, są błędne. W związku z tym, proszę o odpowiedź:

— Kiedy przewiduje się ukończenie badań nad grupą pestycydów – clothianidinem, imidaclopridem i thiamethoxamem? Na jakim stopniu zaawansowania obecnie są badania dotyczące ich szkodliwości dla pszczół?

— Dlaczego został zaproponowany tak długi okres oczekiwania wprowadzenia zakazu stosowania ww. pestycydów – dopiero od 1 grudnia 2013 r.?

— Czy Komisja zamierza podjąć kwestie monitorowania pszczelarstwa, w tym przeprowadzenia miarodajnych badań na temat ilości rodzin pszczelich oraz ich stanu zdrowotnego?

— Czy w przyszłych latach Komisja przewiduje zwiększenie budżetu na wspieranie rozwoju rodzin pszczelich? Drastyczne zmniejszenie się populacji pszczół przekłada się na redukcję zapylenia, a to powoduje obniżenie ilości zbiorów i wzrost cen.

— Czy Komisja zamierza podjąć w najbliższym czasie konsultacje z odpowiednimi organizacjami, reprezentującymi pszczelarzy w celu omówienia aktualnej sytuacji pszczół?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(30 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Informacje na temat działań UE dotyczących zdrowia pszczół zostały przedstawione w odpowiedziach Komisji na pytania wymagające odpowiedzi na piśmie E-010188/2011, E-000160/2012, E-010355/2012 oraz E-003944/2013 ([1]).

1. Badania nad neonikotynoidami trwają… W sprawozdaniach naukowych EFSA oraz w sprawozdaniu z wzajemnej weryfikacji opublikowano niedawno wyniki badań nad trzema substancjami ([2]), ([3]), ([4]), podczas gdy trwa związany z nimi projekt badawczy UE PR7 (STEP ([5])).

2. Komisja nie uważa, żeby termin rozpoczęcia stopniowego odchodzenia od stosowania trzech neonikotynoid, ustanowiony na mocy rozporządzenia (UE) nr 485/2013 ([6]) na 1 grudnia 2013 r., był nierozsądny, w świetle działań administracyjnych i operacyjnych, które muszą zostać podjęte przez władze i przedsiębiorców w celu przestrzegania nowych środków.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/pl/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Wnioski z weryfikacji oceny ryzyka stwarzanego dla pszczół przez pestycydy, dotyczącej substancji czynnej imidachloprydu. Dziennik EFSA 2013;11(1):3068 [55 s.] doi:10.2903/j.efsa.2013.3068. Dostępny online: www.efsa.europa.eu/efsajournal.
([3]) Wnioski z weryfikacji oceny ryzyka stwarzanego dla pszczół przez pestycydy, dotyczącej substancji czynnej chlotianidyny. Dziennik EFSA 2013;11(1):3066 [58 s.] doi:10.2903/j.efsa.2013.3066. Dostępny online: www.efsa.europa.eu/efsajournal.
([4]) Wnioski z weryfikacji oceny ryzyka stwarzanego dla pszczół przez pestycydy, dotyczącej substancji czynnej tiametoksam. Dostępne online: www.efsa.europa.eu/efsajournal.
([5]) http://www.step-project.net/
([6]) Dz.U. L 139 z 25.5.2013.

3. Komisja już obecnie wspiera (pomoc techniczna, współfinansowanie 3,2 mln euro) 17 państw członkowskich, które przeprowadzają dobrowolne badania w zakresie nadzoru nad stratami rodzin pszczelich w latach 2012-2013, między innymi w celu uzyskania wiarygodnych danych na temat śmiertelności rodzin, jak i występowania najważniejszych patogenów ([7]). Oprócz tego Komisja na bieżąco monitoruje sytuację w sektorze pszczelarstwa, jak wynika z jej sprawozdań dla Rady i Parlamentu Europejskiego, dotyczących wdrażania krajowych programów pszczelarskich w państwach członkowskich ([8]).

([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/liveanimals/bees/bee_health_en.htm
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/honey/reports/index_en.htm

4. Na mocy rozporządzenia (WE) nr 1234/2007 UE zapewnia wsparcie w celu usprawnienia produkcji oraz wprowadzania do obrotu produktów pszczelich za pomocą krajowych programów pszczelarskich. W ciągu następnego trzyletniego okresu programowania (2014-2016) każde z 28 państw członkowskich będzie mogło skorzystać z wkładu Unii o całkowitej wartości 33,1 mln euro rocznie.

5. Od kilku lat Komisja regularnie kontaktowała się z organizacjami pszczelarzy ([9]), co czyni nadal, w duchu komunikatu w sprawie zdrowia pszczół miodnych ([10]).

([9]) Np. Grupa Doradcza ds. Pszczelarstwa, Komitet Doradczy ds. Zdrowia Zwierząt, Copa-Cogeca Grupa Robocza ds. Miodu itd.

([10]) KOM(2010) 714 wersja ostateczna, http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/liveanimals/bees/docs/honeybee_health_communication_pl.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008771/13
to the Commission
Joanna Katarzyna Skrzydlewska (PPE)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Mass extinction of bees

The mass extinction of bees is becoming an increasingly alarming problem. One of the reasons why these insects are dying is the use of pesticides from the neonicotinoid group, which are found in seed treatment insecticides. In January 2013, the European Food Safety Authority decided that these pesticides exceeded the maximum acceptable level of harm to bees. It appears that the research originally carried out by the manufacturers of these plant protection products was wrong. I would therefore like to ask the following questions:

— What is the likely end date for the research being carried out into this group of pesticides, which includes clothianidin, imidacloprid and thiamethoxam? What progress has been made with research into their harmfulness to bees?

— Why has it been proposed that the EU should wait so long — until 1 December 2013 — before banning the use of these pesticides?

— Does the Commission intend to look into the issue of monitoring beekeeping, including reliable research into bee populations and bee health?

— Does the Commission intend to increase its future budget for promoting the expansion of bee populations? The drastic drop in bee numbers has resulted in lower pollination levels, which in turn means reduced crop yields and higher prices.

— Does the Commission intend to hold consultations in the near future with the relevant beekeepers' organisations in order to discuss the current situation as regards bees?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(30 August 2013)

Information on EU actions addressing bee health was given in Commission's replies to written questions E-010188/2011, E-000160/2012, E-010355/2012 and E-003944/2013 ([1]).

1. Research on neonicotinoids is ongoing… Research evidence was published recently in the EFSA conclusions and in the Peer Review Report on the three substances ([2]) ([3]) ([4]), while a relevant EU FP7 research project (STEP ([5])) is ongoing.

2. The Commission does not consider phasing-out of the three neonicotionids as from 1 December 2013 by Regulation (EU) No 485/2013 ([6]) to be an unreasonable commencement date, in light of the administrative and operational steps to be taken by authorities and operators to comply with the new measures.

3. The Commission is already providing support (technical assistance, co-financing of 3.2 mEUR) to 17 Member States doing voluntary surveillance studies on colony losses in 2012-2013, *inter alia*, to obtain reliable data on colony mortality and on prevalence of the most important pathogens ([7]). The Commission also regularly monitors the situation in the beekeeping sector in its reports to Council and the European Parliament on the implementation of the national apiculture programmes in the Member States ([8]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Conclusion on the peer review of the pesticide risk assessment for bees for the active substance imidacloprid. EFSA Journal 2013;11(1):3068. [55 pp.] doi:10.2903/j.efsa.2013.3068. Available online: www.efsa.europa.eu/efsajournal.
([3]) Conclusion on the peer review of the pesticide risk assessment for bees for the active substance clothianidin. EFSA Journal 2013;11(1):3066. [58 pp.] doi:10.2903/j.efsa.2013.3066. Available online: www.efsa.europa.eu/efsajournal.
([4]) Conclusion on the peer review of the pesticide risk assessment for bees for the active substance thiamethoxam. Available online: www.efsa.europa.eu/efsajournal.
([5]) http://www.step-project.net/.
([6]) OJ L 139, 25.5.2013.
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/liveanimals/bees/bee_health_en.htm
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/honey/reports/index_en.htm

4. Under Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 the EU provides support to improve the production and marketing of apiculture products through national apicultural programmes. For the next tri-annual programming period (2014-2016) all 28 Member States will benefit from a Union contribution in total of 33.1 mEUR/year.

5. The Commission has regularly consulted beekeepers' organisations for several years ([9]) and continues to do so, in the spirit of its communication on honeybee health ([10]).

([9]) E.g Advisory Group on Beekeeping, Animal Health Advisory Committee, COPA-COGECA Working Party on Honey, etc.
([10]) COM(2010) 714 final, http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/liveanimals/bees/docs/honeybee_health_communication_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008772/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(17 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Procedimentos de infração aos Estados-Membros — Céu Único Europeu

Notícias na imprensa portuguesa dão conta de que a Comissão Europeia admitiu que pode abrir um procedimento de infração contra sete Estados-Membros, entre os quais Portugal, devido ao atraso na concretização do chamado «Céu Único Europeu».

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Confirma a intenção de abrir um procedimento de infração? Em caso afirmativo, quais os países em causa?

2. Que razões concretas podem justificar esse procedimento no caso de Portugal?

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(3 de setembro de 2013)

1. De acordo com a legislação relativa ao Céu Único Europeu, os blocos funcionais de espaço aéreo (FAB) deviam ter sido criados até 4 de dezembro de 2012. Neste momento, a Comissão está a analisar a implementação desses blocos funcionais de espaço aéreo pelos Estados-Membros, o que poderá conduzir a futuros processos por infração.

2. O recurso a eventuais processos por infração contra Portugal ou contra outros Estados-Membros é uma questão que permanece em aberto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008772/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Infringement proceedings against Member States — Single European Sky

According to Portuguese press reports, the Commission has said that it may open infringement proceedings against seven Member States, including Portugal, due to a delay in implementing the so-called 'Single European Sky'.

1. Can the Commission confirm its intention to open infringement proceedings? If so, which countries do they involve?

2. What specific reasons justify these proceedings in the case of Portugal?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

1. According to the Single European Sky legislation, functional airspace blocks (FABs) had to be implemented by 4 December 2012. At the moment, the Commission is in the process of assessing the implementation of FABs by Member States, which may result in forthcoming infringement proceedings.

2. Whether or not infringement proceedings against Portugal or any other Member States are warranted remains to be assessed.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-008773/13
komissiolle
Mitro Repo (S&D)
(17. heinäkuuta 2013)

Aihe: Sukututkimus ja yleinen tietosuoja-asetus

Komissio antoi vastauksessaan kirjalliseen kysymykseen (E-005400/2013) olettaa, että se katsoo sukututkimuksen kuuluvan yleisen tietosuoja-asetuksen soveltamisalaan. Komissio antoi myös ymmärtää sukututkimuksen kuuluvan osaksi historiallista tutkimusta, josta säädetään 83 artiklassa.

Sukututkimusta vaikeuttaisi uuteen tietosuoja-asetukseen sisältyvä vaatimus suostumuksen edellyttämisestä henkilötietojen kohteelta. Sukututkijat pelkäävät uuden vaatimuksen johtavan sukukirjojen tekemisen loppumiseen.

1. Mikäli komissio katsoo sukututkimuksen kuuluvan yleisen tietosuoja-asetuksen soveltamisalaan, miksei se ole tutkinut asetusehdotuksen vaikutuksia sukututkimukselle osana vaikutuksenarviointia?

2. Harkitseeko komissio esittävänsä (ns. trilogi-neuvotteluissa neuvoston ja Euroopan parlamentin välillä) sukututkimuksen lisäämistä asetustekstiin yleisperiaatteesta poikkeavana tietojenkäsittelyn edellytyksenä tai määrittelemällä historiallinen tutkimus niin, että se kattaisi myös sukututkimuksen?

Jälkimmäisessä tilanteessa asetusehdotuksen 6 artiklan 2 kohtaa voitaisiin tarkentaa niin, että siitä kävisi selkeästi ilmi, että historiallinen, tilastollinen ja tieteellinen tutkimus muodostavat poikkeuksen artiklan 1 kohdassa mainituista tietojenkäsittelyedellytyksistä, mm. rekisteröidyn nimenomaisesta suostumuksesta.

3. Harkitseeko komissio vaihtoehtoisesti ehdotusta siitä, että kohtuuton vaiva säilyisi laillisena poikkeuksena ilmoittamisvelvollisuudesta ainakin historiallisen tutkimuksen kohdalla?

4. Harkitseeko komissio vaihtoehtoisesti asetusehdotuksen 83 artiklan 2 kohdan poistamista kokonaisuudessaan?

Viviane Redingin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(2. syyskuuta 2013)

Komission vaikutustenarviointiohjeiden ([1]) mukaisesti ehdotukseen yleiseksi tietosuoja-asetukseksi liitettiin perusteellinen, kolme laajaa vaikutusluokkaa kattava vaikutusten arviointi ([2]), jossa arvioitiin taloudelliset, sosiaaliset ja ympäristöön liittyvät vaikutukset. Vaikutustenarvioinnissa huomioitiin myös tutkimustarkoituksessa tapahtuvaan henkilötietojen käsittelyyn liittyvät näkökohdat. Sukututkimusta ei tässä yhteydessä tarkasteltu erikseen. On korostettava, että direktiivissä 95/46/EY ei ole erityisiä, sukututkimusta koskevia säännöksiä ja että komission tietoon ei ole tullut voimassaolevaan direktiivin liittyviä kyseistä tutkimusalaa koskevia vakavia ongelmia, eikä niitä tullut sen tietoon myöskään tietosuojauudistuksen valmistelua varten järjestetyssä julkisessa kuulemisessa.

Kysymyksiin sukututkimusta koskevien tai muiden säännösten lisäämisestä ehdotukseen tai säännösten poistamisesta siitä voidaan todeta, että lainsäätäjät käsittelevät parhaillaan komission ehdotusta yleiseksi tietosuoja-asetukseksi tavallisessa lainsäätämisjärjestyksessä.

([1]) SEC(2009)92 – Euroopan komission vaikutustenarviointiohjeet, 15.1.2009, http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/commission_guidelines/docs/iag_2009_en.pdf
([2]) SEC(2012)72 final, http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/document/review2012/sec_2012_72_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008773/13
to the Commission
Mitro Repo (S&D)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Genealogical research and the General Data Protection Regulation

In its answer to Written Question E-005400/2013, the Commission indicated that it considers genealogical research to fall within the scope of the General Data Protection Regulation. The Commission also suggested that genealogical research falls under historical research, as provided for in Article 83.

The requirement to obtain consent from the subject for the use of personal data would make genealogical research more difficult. Genealogical researchers fear that the new requirement will put an end to the publication of genealogies.

1. If the Commission considers genealogical research to fall within the scope of the General Data Protection Regulation, why has it not examined the impact that the proposal for a regulation would have on genealogical research as part of the impact assessment?

2. Will the Commission consider proposing (in the so-called trialogue negotiations between the Council and Parliament) the addition of genealogical research to the text of the regulation, either in the form of a data processing condition deviating from the general principle or by defining historical research so that it also covers genealogical research?

In the latter case, Article 6(2) of the regulation could be reformulated to make it clear that historical, statistical and scientific research constitute an exception to the data processing conditions mentioned in paragraph 1 of the article; for example, the explicit consent of the data subject.

3. Alternatively, will the Commission consider a proposal for disproportionate efforts to remain a legitimate exception to the obligation to notify, at least in the case of historical research?

4. Alternatively, will the Commission consider removing Article 83(2) of the proposal for a regulation in its entirety?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

In accordance with the Commission's Impact Assessment Guidelines ([1]), the proposal for a General Data Protection Regulation was accompanied by a thorough impact assessment ([2]) which assessed three broad categories of impacts, namely economic, social and environmental impacts. Aspects pertaining to processing of personal data for research purposes have been touched upon in the impact assessment. The area of genealogical research was not specifically examined in this context. It must be underlined that there is no specific provision concerning genealogical research in Directive 95/46/EC and that the Commission has not been made aware of serious problems under the existing Directive in respect of this area of research nor has it been made aware during the public consultation it conducted in preparation of the work for the data protection reform.

As regards the addition of genealogical research or of other provisions to the text of the regulation or the removal of provisions, the Commission's proposal for a General Data Protection Regulation is currently being examined by the co-legislators in the ordinary legislative procedure.

([1]) SEC(2009)92 — European Commission Impact Assessment Guidelines of 15 January 2009, http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/commission_guidelines/docs/iag_2009_en.pdf
([2]) SEC(2012)72 final, http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/document/review2012/sec_2012_72_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-008774/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(17 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Progetto Transacqua per il Sahel

A causa della siccità e della guerra, oltre 11 milioni di persone sono minacciate dalla carestia nel Sahel. «Il conflitto nel Mali — ha dichiarato il coordinatore umanitario dell'ONU Robert Piper — ha sradicato migliaia di persone e sta avendo un effetto tremendo». L'Onu stessa, a causa della crisi siriana che ha distratto fondi, non è riuscita a fornire aiuti d'emergenza all'altezza dei bisogni. La crisi umanitaria miete vittime e crea grandi sofferenze ai popoli africani che cercano di sopravvivere in quella zona, sofferenza che potrebbe essere alleviata se si potesse far giungere acqua in quelle regioni.

Sviluppato dall'IRI nel 1972, il progetto «Transacqua» consiste in un canale lungo 2.400 Km, che attingendo il 5 % complessivo degli affluenti del fiume Congo, scaricherebbe nel lago Ciad 70/100 miliardi di metri cubi all'anno, sufficienti a ripristinare la dimensione originale del lago, oggi ridotto a meno di un ventesimo di quel che era appena 50 anni fa. Oltre a ricostituire il lago, Transacqua fermerebbe l'avanzata del deserto, creerebbe un'area di sviluppo agricolo ampia come la Lombardia e genererebbe una notevole capacità di produzione idroelettrica. Nel 2010 i paesi del bacino del lago Ciad si riunirono a Ndjiamena per accordarsi su una versione ridotta di trasferimento idrico. Il presidente Gheddafi partecipò all'incontro e offrì la partecipazione della Libia al progetto.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se conosce il progetto di trasferimento idrico denominato «Transacqua»;

2. se questa versione ridotta del progetto ha avuto inizio e a che punto stanno eventualmente i lavori;

3. da cosa dipende il fatto che Transacqua non sia stato preso in considerazione;

4. se dispone di informazioni su eventuali interventi umanitari da parte dell'UE;

5. se, in caso negativo, può spiegarcene le ragioni?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(16 agosto 2013)

L'UE si adopera con impegno per affrontare la questioni attinenti alla desertificazione del Sahel e alla resilienza delle popolazioni e dei paesi, compresa la salvaguardia del lago Ciad.

Attraverso il 9° Fondo europeo di sviluppo (FES), l'UE ha sostenuto la gestione integrata delle risorse idriche del lago erogando 2,5 milioni di euro a favore della Commissione del bacino del lago Ciad (CBLT).

L'UE è al corrente del progetto di trasferimento delle acque dell'Oubangui verso il lago Ciad (Transacqua). Gli studi di fattibilità preliminari indicano tuttavia che il progetto comporterebbe notevoli rischi ambientali.

In occasione del Forum mondiale sull'acqua tenutosi a Marsiglia nel 2012, il presidente ciadiano ha presentato 32 proposte di progetti volti a preservare il lago Ciad. L'UE esamina queste proposte valutandone le potenzialità, la fattibilità e l'impatto ambientale. Una componente degli stanziamenti dell'11° FES per il Ciad sarà destinata alla gestione delle risorse naturali e potrebbe comprendere un contributo alla salvaguardia del lago Ciad, la cui superficie è sempre stata caratterizzata da forti fluttuazioni e che risente attualmente delle inondazioni del 2012. L'UE analizza altresì il potenziale idroelettrico delle zone montuose del bacino del Logone, affluente del lago Ciad.

Nel 2013 è stato concesso un aiuto umanitario di 115 milioni di euro, di cui 22 milioni di euro per il Ciad, in risposta alla crisi alimentare in atto nel Sahel. Sono inoltre stati stanziati 77 milioni di euro in risposta alla crisi nel Mali. L'UE lancia costantemente un appello per la protezione dello spazio umanitario e il rispetto dei principi umanitari affinché sia possibile raggiungere le persone in difficoltà. Gli sviluppi sul fronte della sicurezza ostacolano gli interventi umanitari in varie zone del Sahel.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008774/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Transacqua project for the Sahel

As a result of drought and war, more than 11 million people in the Sahel are threatened with famine. According to the UN Regional Humanitarian Coordinator, Robert Piper, the fighting in Mali has displaced thousands of people and is having a devastating effect. Because funds have been diverted away by the Syrian crisis, even the UN contribution, in terms of emergency aid, has been falling short of what is needed. The humanitarian crisis is claiming its toll of victims and causing great suffering to the African peoples endeavouring to survive in the Sahel. Their suffering could, however, be alleviated if a way were found to bring water to the region.

Developed by IRI in 1972, the Transacqua project consists of a 2 400 km canal spanning 5% of the tributaries of the Congo River that would carry between 70 and 100 billion m^3 of water a year to Lake Chad, enough to restore the lake to its original size: it has shrunk to less than one twentieth of what it was only 50 years ago. In addition to refilling the lake, Transacqua would halt desertification, create an agricultural development area the size of Lombardy, and generate substantial hydropower production capacity. When they met in N'Djamena in 2010, the countries bordering Lake Chad agreed to implement water transfer on a more modest scale. Colonel Gadaffi, who attended the meeting, offered Libya's support for the project.

1. Does the Commission know about the 'Transacqua' water transfer project?

2. Has the scaled-down version of the project got under way, and — assuming that the case applies — how far has the work progressed?

3. Why has Transacqua not been taken into consideration?

4. Does the Commission have information about any humanitarian operations carried out by the EU?

5. If there have been no such operations, can it explain why not?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M Piebalgs au nom de la Commission
(16 août 2013)

L'UE est engagée sur les questions qui touchent la désertification au Sahel, la résilience des populations et des pays, y compris la préservation du Lac Tchad.

Avec le 9e Fonds européen pour le développement (FED), l'UE a soutenu la gestion intégrée des ressources en eau du lac en appuyant la Commission du Bassin du Lac Tchad (CBLT) à hauteur de 2,5 millions d'euros.

L'UE a connaissance du projet de transfert des eaux de l'Oubangui vers le lac Tchad (Transacqua). Cependant, les études préliminaires de faisabilité indiquent que ce projet entrainerait des risques environnementaux importants.

Lors du Forum Mondial pour l'Eau à Marseille en 2012, le Président tchadien a présenté 32 propositions de projet visant la sauvegarde du Lac Tchad. L'UE étudie ces propositions en prenant en compte leurs potentialités, faisabilité et impact environnemental. Le 11e FED pour le Tchad aura une composante dédiée à la gestion des ressources naturelles qui pourrait inclure un appui pour la préservation du Lac Tchad caractérisé historiquement par des grandes fluctuations dans sa surface et souffrant actuellement des impacts des inondations de 2012. L'UE étudie également les potentialités hydroélectriques qui se situent dans des zones montagneuses du Bassin Logone, affluent du Lac Tchad.

En réponse à la crise alimentaire en cours au Sahel, une aide humanitaire de 115 millions d'euros a été allouée en 2013 dont 22 millions d'euros pour le Tchad. 77 millions d'euros ont été alloués par ailleurs pour la crise au Mali. L'UE fait un plaidoyer pour la protection de l'espace humanitaire et les respects des principes humanitaires afin d'accéder aux personnes dans le besoin. L'évolution sécuritaire complique l'action humanitaire dans diverses zones du Sahel.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008775/13
to the Commission
David Martin (S&D)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Single European Sky II+ initiative and possible job losses in the aviation sector

Under its proposals for the Single European Sky II+ initiative the Commission will set EU-wide targets for safety, cost efficiency and environmental standards which national aviation authorities must develop and meet in the Member States. Can the Commission indicate at what stage the discussions are with the Civil Aviation Authority in the UK?

Does the Commission foresee that implementation of the targets may result in job losses in the aviation sector and if so, how does the Commission intend to address this?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

The Single European Sky Performance Scheme, including the setting of EU-wide performance targets for safety, cost-efficiency, capacity and environment, was already introduced in 2009 when the SES II package was adopted by the European Parliament and the Council. The key elements of the Performance Scheme remain unchanged in the SES II+ proposal.

Currently, the Commission is in the process of preparing for the second reference period of the Performance Scheme (RP2) from 2015 to 2019. EU-wide targets for that period will be decided under comitology rules by the end of this year. In this work, the Commission is assisted by the independent Performance Review Body. Furthermore, for the process of RP2 target setting, considerable dialogue and engagement with staff bodies and associations will take place at EU and national level.

More generally, in order to achieve the Single European Sky, changes are necessary on how air traffic management is organised in Europe, which may bring changes to the staff working in this sector. However, for the recent proposal to revise the Single European Sky legal framework (SES II+), it was established that due to growth triggered in the aviation sector a net gain of additional jobs would be created.

In parallel to the process of setting EU-wide targets, preparations for RP2 have already started at national level. In the UK, the Civil Aviation Authority has recently issued a mandate for customer consultation between NATS (En Route) plc and airspace users setting out the CAA's expectations for the review and refinement of NATS (En Route) plc's business plan for RP2.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008776/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Emer Costello (S&D)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU policy in the West Bank and Gaza

On 5 July 2012 Parliament passed a resolution on EU policy in the West Bank and East Jerusalem (P7_TA(2012)0298). The resolution called on the Israeli Government and authorities to meet their obligations under international humanitarian law (IHL), including securing an immediate end to house demolitions, evictions and forced displacement of Palestinians.

Since July 2012, these particular violations of IHL have continued unabated. According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' monthly occupied Palestinian Territory (oPT) humanitarian reports, a major spike in demolitions and displacement occurred in January 2012.

What steps has the EU taken, or what steps is it considering taking, to ensure respect for IHL on these issues given the deterioration of the situation and considering that extensive destruction and forced transfer amount to serious violations of IHL?

How is the EU supporting the occupied population in maintaining their presence in their homes and on their lands? What steps are being taken, or are being considered, to support the return of persons forcibly displaced within the oPT?

What is the EU doing to address the situation of the 2 400 people who remain displaced by the hostilities in Gaza in November 2012, as well as the thousands who remain displaced as a result of Operation Cast Lead in 2008 and 2009?

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

The HR/VP has taken due note of the EP resolution of 5 July 2012 on EU policy on the West Bank and East Jerusalem and, while focused on achieving the resumption of direct final status negotiations between the Palestinians and Israelis, has taken forward EU policy on issues related to the Middle East peace process very much in line with that resolution.

In so doing the EU has maintained state-building assistance to the Palestinian Authority and developed cooperation to address practical consequences of the continuing Israeli occupation as well as raising concerns with the Israeli authorities as and when appropriate. Palestinians have legitimate claims based on both international humanitarian law and human rights law. In the meantime, the EU also continues to condition any 'upgrade' in relations with Israel on respect for international humanitarian law as well as progress in the Middle East peace process.

In the West Bank, the HR/VP welcomes the continuing lull in demolitions reported by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, with none having been recorded in Area C or East Jersualem since the start of Ramadan (10 July) until 13 August, in line with the EU's calls to the Israeli government.

The EU continues to support projects aimed at maintaining the livelihoods of Palestinians across the West bank, including humanitarian support to displaced people in the Gaza Strip. The EU is concerned that continued Israeli restrictions on the import of construction materials, limiting the impact of donor-funded housing self-help programmes. It will continue to raise these matters in discussions with the Israeli government.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008777/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Emer Costello (S&D)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU policy in the West Bank and East Jerusalem

On 5 July 2012 Parliament passed a resolution on EU policy in the West Bank and East Jerusalem (P7_TA(2012)0298). The resolution called on the Israeli Government and authorities to meet their obligations under international humanitarian law (IHL), including facilitating Palestinian planning and building activities and the implementation of Palestinian development projects.

Is the VP/HR aware of the expert legal opinion of Professor Marco Sassoli and Dr Théo Bouthruche ([1]), which holds that IHL requires the transfer of planning authority over Area C back to Palestinian institutions?

What is the VP/HR's assessment of this conclusion? What steps have been taken, or are being considered, by the EU to support the transfer of planning authority in Area C to Palestinian institutions?

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

The HR/VP has duly noted the Parliament resolution referred to by the Honourable Member. The EU itself has always called on all its partners, including Israel, to meet their obligations under international law. Further, the EU holds that Palestinians have legitimate claims based on both international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

Concerning Area C, on more than one occasion, the EU has stated its determination to engage in a gradual, positive and non-confrontational manner with the Israeli counterparts on all related matters. That said, the EU's assistance for Area C envisages a package of measures that include support for the Palestinian Authority's (PA) planning priorities thus also responding to the PA's strategy for Area C. Further, while for instance master plans are being submitted to the village councils of the Israeli Civil Administration, it is considered that any further permits within those submitted master plans would be within the remit of Palestinian institutions.

([1]) http://rhr.org.il/heb/wp-content/uploads/62394311-Expert-Opinion-FINAL-1-February-2011.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008778/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Emer Costello (S&D)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU policy in the West Bank and East Jerusalem

On 5 July 2012 Parliament passed a resolution on EU policy in the West Bank and East Jerusalem (P7_TA(2012)0298). The resolution called on the Israeli Government and authorities to meet their obligations under international humanitarian law (IHL), including facilitating access and movement.

In response to two rockets fired on 21 March 2013, the Israeli Ministry of Defence limited civilian movement out of Gaza, at the only remaining goods crossing, and later announced the reduction of the Gaza fishing zone to only 3 nautical miles ([1]).

What representations has the EU made, or what representations is the EU planning to make, to Israeli interlocutors on this issue?

Does the EU take the view that closing Gaza's only goods crossing (which is subject to Israeli supervision and is relied upon by the civilian population of Gaza), as well as limiting the fishing zone, was justified by military necessity, and proportional in this situation?

Given the apparent causal link between the rocket fire and the abovementioned measures which were taken largely to the detriment of civilians, does the EU concur that these measures may amount to punishing the civilian population for acts they did not commit, i.e. collective punishment, as prohibited by the 1907 Hague Regulations and the Fourth Geneva Convention (Article 33)? What steps will the EU take, or what steps is it considering taking, to hold Israel accountable and ensure that it complies with this rule of IHL in future?

Question for written answer E-008779/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Emer Costello (S&D)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU policy in the West Bank and East Jerusalem

On 5 July 2012 Parliament passed a resolution on EU policy in the West Bank and East Jerusalem (P7_TA(2012)0298). The resolution called on the Israeli Government and authorities to meet their obligations under international humanitarian law, including facilitating the access of Palestinians to farming and grazing locations.

What action has the EU undertaken, or what action is it considering undertaking, in order to ensure that Israel facilitates the access of Palestinians to farming locations in the 'buffer zone' in Gaza?

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

The HR/VP, although not concurring that Israeli policy amounts to a policy of collective punishment, is particularly concerned by the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip and continues to call for the full opening of all crossings, while respecting legitimate Israeli security concerns. It is vital that all parties continue to respect the 21 November ceasefire. Rocket attacks on Israel must cease.

([1]) Gisha,'Minister of Defense ordered closure of Kerem Shalom crossing following rocket fire this morning', 21 March 2013, http://www.gisha.org/item.asp?lang_id=en&p_id=1886

Israel returned to allowing Palestinian fishing up to six nautical miles in May which, while welcome and allowing a 76% increase in the sardine catch compared with the same period in 2012 according to the UN, is still significantly less than the 20 miles set out in the Oslo Accords. Israel has also allowed improved access to farmland close to the Gaza-Israel fence following the ceasefire, although the lack of publicly available information setting out Israeli policy continues to create uncertainty and instability for civilians. The Netherlands has supported the FAO in transforming barren land in formerly restricted areas into arable areas. The EU is determined to build on the ceasefire and work towards a fundamental change in the situation of the Gaza Strip for the benefit of the local population, and will continue to raise these matters with Israel, Egypt and the Palestinian Authority. Meanwhile, the EU also continues to condition any 'upgrade' in relations with Israel on respect for international humanitarian law as well as progress in the Middle East peace process.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008780/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Emer Costello (S&D)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU policy in the West Bank and East Jerusalem

On 5 July 2012 Parliament passed a resolution on EU policy in the West Bank and East Jerusalem (P7_TA(2012)0298). The resolution called on the Israeli Government and authorities to meet their obligations under international humanitarian law, including ensuring a fair distribution of water to meet the needs of the Palestinian population.

What action has the EU taken, or what action is it considering taking, to ensure that Israel removes physical and administrative restrictions on Palestinian access to and use of shared water resources, as well as halting the extraction of water from the Palestinian share of the water resources by actors under Israel's authority?

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

The HR/VP has duly noted the Resolution referred to by the Honourable Member and has constantly urged its partners including Israel to abide by their obligations under international humanitarian law.

The EU is fully cognisant of the challenges concerning the access to and management of water resources shared between Israel and Palestine and has consistently encouraged both parties to address all final status issues including water during negotiations.

In this context, the EU has also earmarked *water* as one of its priority sectors for financial assistance to the Palestinian people. The EU aims to support the Palestinian Water Authority to provide collective sanitation, improve treatment of wastewater and re-use part of it for agriculture purposes.

In the framework of its regular dialogue with the Israeli authorities, the EU has raised its concern regarding the situation of water in Palestine, in particular the destruction of water and sanitation infrastructure during Israeli military incursions. The EU also insists that there should be no obstruction to water-related infrastructure development in Palestine.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008781/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Emer Costello (S&D)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU policy in the West Bank and East Jerusalem

On 5 July 2012 Parliament passed a resolution on EU policy in the West Bank and East Jerusalem (P7_TA(2012)0298). The resolution called on the Council and the Commission to continue to address the issues raised in the resolution at all levels in the EU's bilateral relations with Israel and the Palestinian Authority. It also stressed that Israel's commitment to respect its obligations towards the Palestinian population under international human rights and humanitarian law must be taken into full consideration in the EU's bilateral relations with the country.

What action has the EU taken, or what action is it considering taking, to secure the compliance of Israel with international humanitarian law (IHL) (and particularly the obligations outlined in paragraph 10 of the resolution):

— in the context of bilateral relations with Israel, as called for in paragraph 18?

— in terms of the EU Guidelines on Promotion of Compliance with IHL?

How does the Commission explain the absence of recommendations addressing these IHL obligations in the recently released European Neighbourhood Policy Progress Report on Israel? Will recommendations addressing Israel's IHL obligations be considered in future reports, in line with the EU Guidelines on Promotion of Compliance with IHL?

How were these IHL obligations addressed in the EU-Israel Human Rights Working Group, given that the EU Guidelines on Promotion of Compliance with IHL require IHL to be addressed in all dialogues with third countries where it is relevant?

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

In the context of bilateral relations with Israel, the EU seeks to secure Israel's compliance with the points set out in paragraph 10 of the Parliamentary Resolution of 5 July 2012 primarily through its dialogue with the Government under the EU-Israel Association Council structures, as well as through more regular diplomatic contacts on the ground. However, these issues are not addressed in the EU-Israel informal human rights working group which focuses on issues pertaining to the human rights situation inside Israel only, and those in the EU. It should also be noted that the EU continues to condition any 'upgrade' in relations with Israel on respect for IHL as well as progress in the Middle East peace process.

In terms of the EU Guidelines on Promotion of Compliance with IHL, the HR/VP makes use of many of the 'means of action' set out in Section B of the guidelines in its relations with both Israel and the Palestinian Authority to promote complicance with IHL, including political dialogue, public statements, demarches, and cooperation with other international bodies.

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) progress report on Israel for 2012 did not include any specific recommendations linked to the points set out in paragraph 10 of the Parliamentary Resolution of 5 July 2012. The recommendations, in line with the reports for all ENP countries, were limited in number and largely linked to attaining objectives in bilateral relations under the ENP Action Plan across a range of sectors. Nevertheless, a recommendation linked to combatting settler violence was included and the EU has been active in pursuing the aforementioned points via other means, including those set out in reply to previous written questions E-008776/2013, E-008777/2013 and E-008780/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/redirect-plenary-archive.html?rewrite=parliamentary-questions

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008782/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Emer Costello (S&D)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU policy in the West Bank and East Jerusalem

On 5 July 2012 Parliament passed a resolution on EU policy in the West Bank and East Jerusalem (P7_TA(2012)0298). The resolution encouraged the Palestinian Government and authorities to pay increasing attention to Area C and East Jerusalem in Palestinian national development plans and projects, with the aim of improving the situation and living conditions of the Palestinian population in these areas.

What support has the EU given, or what support is the EU considering giving, to the Palestinian Government and authorities in including Area C and East Jerusalem in Palestinian national development plans and projects? What have been, or are expected to be, the outcomes?

Question for written answer E-008783/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Emer Costello (S&D)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU policy in the West Bank and East Jerusalem

On 5 July 2012 Parliament passed a resolution (P7_TA(2012)0298) on EU Policy in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. The resolution called on the Council and the Commission to continue to support and deliver assistance to Palestinian institutions and development projects in Area C and in East Jerusalem, with the aim of protecting and strengthening the Palestinian population.

Are there any EU projects in Area C and East Jerusalem currently awaiting Israeli approval? If so, for how long? So far what has been the response of the Israeli authorities in respect of these projects?

What levels of assistance have the EU and its Member States currently committed to development projects in favour of the occupied population in Area C and in East Jerusalem?

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(24 September 2013)

Through its bilateral assistance programme the EU has, for a number of years, focused on both East Jerusalem and Area C albeit through different instruments. Both are priority objectives of the recently adopted EU-Palestinian Authority (PA) European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) Action Plan (EU-PA ENP). Concerning their inclusion in Palestinian national development plans, the PA is currently working on the 2013-2016 Palestinian National Development Plan which has not yet been finalised. That said, given the PA's inability to work in East Jerusalem, the EU's main counterpart for East Jerusalem is the Office of the President.

Through an annual EUR 8 million package for East Jerusalem, the EU has been providing support to the Palestinian population with a view to ensuring their access to services in line with the EU's political priority to maintain the conditions for Jerusalem to become the future capital of two states. Through extensive coordination on the ground, EU missions are also defininig a strategy for development in East Jerusalem which should be Palestinian-led. The EU does not recognise the Israeli annexation of East Jerusalem.

The EU, through its representations on the ground, is determined to engage in a gradual, positive and non-confrontational manner with Israeli counterparts on all matters relating to Area C. The programming exercise carried out for 2012 funding for Palestine envisages a package of measures for Area C including support for the PA's planning capacities and some small-scale infrastructure. In parallel, humanitarian assistance will continue to be provided in Area C in line with humanitarian principles.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008784/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Emer Costello (S&D)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU policy in the West Bank and East Jerusalem

On 5 July 2012 Parliament passed a resolution (P7_TA(2012)0298) on EU policy on the West Bank and East Jerusalem. The resolution called on the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Commission to verify on the ground all allegations concerning the destruction of and damage caused to EU-funded structures and projects in the occupied territory, and to submit the results to Parliament.

What progress has been made in verifying the extent of destruction and damage caused to EU- and Member State-funded structures in the occupied Palestinian Territory?

How many EU- and Member State-funded structures in the West Bank were demolished by the Israeli occupation authorities in 2012 and so far in 2013? What was the cost to the EU and Member States? How many EU- and Member State-funded structures remain under demolition orders? If this information has not yet been obtained by the EEAS and the Commission, when can Parliament expect a presentation of these findings?

What steps have been taken to hold Israel accountable for the demolition of EU- and Member State-funded structures? Have guarantees been obtained that such demolition will not occur again? Has compensation been claimed for the donor agencies or on behalf of affected communities? If not, what steps will be taken in this regard, including in the context of the EU Guidelines on Promotion of Compliance with International Humanitarian Law?

In May 2012, Commissioner Füle outlined the EU's plans to safeguard future projects against demolition. This did not mention how the EU plans to ensure the protection of projects currently under demolition orders. What steps are being taken, or are being considered, to have existing demolition orders on EU- and Member State-funded structures revoked, including the stop-work orders on European projects in Susya, as reported in *Haaretz* on Friday, 28 June 2013, shortly after the last Foreign Affairs Council meeting?

What is being done by the EU, or what is it considering doing, to monitor systematically demolition orders against EU aid projects and to take concerted preventive action?

Has there been an assessment of the damage/destruction of EU- and Member State-funded structures in Gaza during the November 2012 escalation of hostilities? If so, what was the outcome? If not, what steps will be taken in this regard?

Question for written answer E-009446/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(5 August 2013)

Subject: EU policy on Area C of the West Bank (V)

How many EU-funded structures have been demolished by the Israeli authorities since May 2012?

What was the value of those structures?

What compensation has been demanded and received from the Israeli authorities?

How many of the demolished structures have been rebuilt?

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

The issue of damage to EU-funded structures is long-standing. Please refer to the reply to Question E-000053/2012 ([1]) for further details on estimated costs for the period 2000-2011.

Since May 2013, the EU has initiated a monthly incident-tracking system for EU-funded projects in Area C and East Jerusalem. According to this report, compiled by OCHA, 79 EU or EU Member State structures were demolished in 2012. As of June 2013, 54 such structures have been demolished in 2013.

In bilateral dialogue with Israel the EU has often raised the issue of the destruction of EU-funded structures. The HR/VP and the Commissioner responsible for Humanitarian Aid have recently written to Israeli Minister of Defence, Mr Moshe Ya'alon, outlining concerns about demolitions of Palestinian residential and livelihood structures in Area C. The case of Susiya was raised during the EU-Israel informal strategic dialogue held in Israel on 1 July 2013.

Following the November 2012 escalation in Gaza, the EU Delegation commissioned an assessment of beneficiaries of the Private Sector Reconstruction Programme for Gaza to determine how they had been affected. According to this, 22 out of the 906 beneficiaries who received funds under this EU programme were affected. The estimated total value of assets destroyed was EUR 112 500 representing 0.5% of the total funds disbursed to date. Nonetheless, these 22 beneficiaries also suffered damages to assets that had not been funded by the EU thus indirectly affecting the objective of the EU-funded programme.

The Commission is not in possession of any information regarding any potential damage to structures/projects funded by EU Member States as a result of the Gaza escalation.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008785/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Emer Costello (S&D)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU policy in the West Bank and East Jerusalem

On 5 July 2012, Parliament passed a resolution on EU policy in the West Bank and East Jerusalem (P7_TA(2012)0298). The resolution called for the protection of the Bedouin communities of the West Bank and in the Negev, and for their rights to be fully respected by the Israeli authorities, and it condemned any violations (e.g. house demolitions, forced displacements, public service limitations). It called also, in this context, for the withdrawal of the Prawer Plan by the Israeli Government.

There has been no ceasing of the plans to build in the E1 area, in spite of objections from the EU and from individual Member States. What steps is the EU taking, or considering, to protect communities within the E1 area, particularly the Bedouin community in the Jerusalem periphery? In particular, what steps are being taken, or considered, to bring a stop to the plan to forcibly transfer the Bedouin communities in the E1 area to a site near Jericho, considering that the forced transfer of civilians is a grave breach of the Geneva Conventions?

Did the EEAS discuss the Prawer Plan in the human rights working group with Israel held in 2012 and what message did the EEAS convey to Israel in relation to it?

How do the Commission and the EEAS explain the absence of any recommendations regarding the approval and/or the implementation of the Prawer Plan in the 2012 European Neighbourhood Policy progress report for Israel? Likewise, how does each institution explain the lack of any call to end the home demolitions (around 1 000 in 2012), or to recognise as many of the unrecognised villages as possible, in line with the Goldberg Commission report?

Does the VP/HR consider that the Prawer Plan is in conformity with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (in particular, Article 12(1) on freedom of movement and residence, and Article 26 on equality), the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (in particular, Article 11(1) on the right to adequate housing) and with the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (in particular, Principles 6(1) and 7)?

Will the VP/HR stand with Parliament by publicly condemning the Prawer Plan and calling for its withdrawal?

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

The EU outlined its extreme concern about potential developments in the E1 area in the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of December 2012 and pledged to act in the event of development being taken forward.

Concerning the so-called Prawer-Begin Plan, this issue was not addressed in depth in the 2012 European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) progress report on Israel as, in line with all other countries, the progress report primarily takes stock of actual legislative or other developments in the year concerned, while the Prawer-Begin Plan was formally adopted by the Israeli Government's ministerial committee on legislative affairs in May 2013 and is now being debated in the Knesset. Nevertheless, the report did draw distinctions between the outline plan and the Goldberg Commission's recommendations.

The EEAS and Israel discussed the plan in the informal human rights working group during 2013. Israel presented the plan in detail, as well as initiatives aimed at promoting the development of Bedouin communities; the HR/VP notably took the opportunity to seek clarifications on various aspects of the plan and understand how Bedouin communities were consulted on it.

The legislation relating to the plan is the subject of an ongoing and active debate in the Knesset. It is not possible to give a final assessment as to whether the ultimate plan will be in conformity with Israel's international obligations. The EU continues actively to monitor developments, including through visits of diplomatic staff to the affected communities.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-008786/13
komissiolle
Nils Torvalds (ALDE) ja Sari Essayah (PPE)
(17. heinäkuuta 2013)

Aihe: Ongelmat tukikelpoisten kustannusten laskentamenetelmän kanssa valtiontuessa ympäristönsuojelulle (pakokaasujen vähentämisteknologia)

Ympäristönsuojeluun myönnettävää valtiontukea ja tukikelpoisten kustannusten laskentamenetelmää koskevassa EU:n suuntaviivojen 82 artiklassa todetaan seuraavasti:

”Tukikelpoiset kustannukset on laskettava ottaen huomioon ylimääräiseen ympäristönsuojeluinvestointiin liittyvät toiminnan tuotot ja toimintakustannukset asianomaisen investoinnin pitoajan viiden ensimmäisen vuoden ajalta. Tämä merkitsee sitä, että tällaiset toiminnan tuotot on vähennettävä ylimääräisistä investointikustannuksista ja tällaiset toimintakustannukset voidaan lisätä niihin.”

Tämä aiheuttaa vaikeuksia merenkulkualalle rahtaussopimusten yhteydessä. Investointikustannukset uuteen päästöjen vähentämisteknologiaan lankeavat aina aluksen omistajalle, mutta polttoaineen kulutuksen vaikutus ja menetetyn lastitilan luvut vaihtelevat eri rahtaussopimusten osapuolten välillä. Joissain tapauksissa lastitilan hinta on kauppasalaisuus, jonka tietää vain rahtaaja.

Erilaisiin meriteitse kuljetettaviin rahteihin ja aluksiin liittyvät sopimukset voidaan jakaa kahteen päätyyppiin: 1) matkarahtaukseen ja 2) aikarahtaukseen.

Matkarahtauksen ehdoilla toimivalle alukselle malli on yhdenmukainen suuntaviivojen mukaisen tukikelpoisten kustannusten laskentamenetelmän kanssa, koska omistaja maksaa kaikki matkakulut, myös polttoaineen.

Kuitenkaan aikarahtauksen ehdoilla toimiville aluksille tämä laskentamalli ei sovi lainkaan. Aikarahtauksen ehtojen mukaan aluksen omistaja elättää upseerit ja miehistön ja maksaa heidän palkkansa sekä aluksen huollon (mukaan lukien pakokaasun vähentämisteknologia), kun taas matkaan (polttoaineen kulutus) ja lastin käsittelyyn (menetetty lastitila) liittyvät kulut maksaa rahtaaja. Tämän vuoksi on mahdotonta määrittää investointikustannukset suhteessa toiminnan tuottoihin ja kustannuksiin.

Miten komissio varmistaa, että kaikilla erilaisilla rahtaussopimuksilla ja siten kaikilla erityyppisillä meritiekuljetuksilla on samat mahdollisuudet saada valtiontukea ympäristönsuojeluun, erityisesti pakokaasujen vähentämisteknologiaan, jota tarvitaan, jotta voidaan saavuttaa päästörajoitukset, jotka on asetettu direktiivissä 2012/33/EU neuvoston direktiivin 1999/32/EY muuttamisesta meriliikenteessä käytettävien polttoaineiden rikkipitoisuuden osalta?

Joaquín Almunian komission puolesta antama vastaus
(9. syyskuuta 2013)

Ympäristönsuojelutuen suuntaviivoissa määritetään ehdot, joiden perusteella komissio arvioi ympäristönsuojelun tason parantamiseksi myönnettävää valtiontukea, myös tukikelpoisten kustannusten laskentamenetelmää. ([1])

Vaikka tiettyjä tilanteita varten on yksityiskohtaisempia ohjeita, aluksiin tehtäviä investointeja ei eritellä sen mukaan, onko kyseessä matkarahtaus- vai aikarahtaussopimus. Tästä syystä komissio soveltaa yleisiä sääntöjä arvioidessaan, voidaanko uuteen saastumisen torjuntatekniikkaan merenkulkualalla myönnettävät investointituet katsoa soveltuviksi sisämarkkinoille.

Tässä vaiheessa komissio ei katso, että yleiset säännöt estäisivät sitä ottamasta huomioon eroja alusten kaupallisissa liikennöintimuodoissa. Kysymyksen erittäin teknisen luonteen vuoksi komissio voi kuitenkin täsmentää kantansa vasta sen jälkeen, kun se on saanut konkreettisia valtiontukiehdotuksia arvoitavakseen.

([1]) Suuntaviivojen 80–84 kohta.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-008786/13
till kommissionen
Nils Torvalds (ALDE) och Sari Essayah (PPE)
(17 juli 2013)

Angående: Problem med metoden för beräkning av stödberättigande kostnader för statligt stöd för miljöskydd (avgasreningsteknik)

I artikel 82 i EU:s riktlinjer för statligt stöd till miljöskydd och metoden för beräkning av stödberättigande kostnader anges följande:

”Stödberättigande kostnader ska … beräknas med avdrag för eventuella driftsfördelar och driftskostnader som sammanhänger med den extra investeringen i miljöskyddssyfte och som uppkommit under de fem första åren av investeringens varaktighet. Det betyder att sådana driftsfördelar måste dras av och att sådana driftskostnader måste läggas till de extra investeringskostnaderna.”

Detta medför problem för sjöfartsnäringen i samband med befraktningsavtal. Investeringskostnaden för ny reningsteknik faller alltid på redaren men inflytandet över bränsleförbrukning och siffrorna över förlorat lastutrymmet varierar mellan olika befraktningsavtal. I vissa fall är priset på lastutrymmet en affärshemlighet som endast befraktaren känner till.

Avtal som hänför sig till olika typer av last och fartyg för sjötransporter kan delas in i två huvudgrupper: 1) resebefraktning och 2) tidsbefraktning.

För ett fartyg som används i enlighet med villkoren för resebefraktning stämmer modellen överens med metoden för beräkning av stödberättigande kostnader enligt riktlinjerna, eftersom ägaren betalar för resans samtliga kostnader, inbegripet drivmedel.

För fartyg som används i enlighet med villkoren för tidsbefraktning fungerar beräkningsmodellen dock inte alls. Enligt villkoren för tidsbefraktning ska redaren tillhandahålla och betala för befäl och besättning samt underhålla fartyget (inbegripet avgasreningstekniken), medan kostnader som hänför sig till resorna (drivmedelförbrukning) och lastnings-/eller lossningsarbetet (förlust av lastutrymme) ska betalas av befraktaren, vilket gör det omöjligt att fastställa investeringskostnaderna i förhållande till driftsfördelar och driftskostnader.

På vilket sätt kommer kommissionen att säkerställa att samtliga olika typer av fraktavtal, och därmed samtliga typer av sjötrafik, har lika möjligheter att beviljas statligt stöd för miljöskydd, särskilt avgasreningsteknik som behövs för att uppfylla de utsläppsgränser som fastställs i direktiv 2012/33/EU om ändring av rådets direktiv 1999/32/EG vad gäller svavelhalten i marina bränslen?

Svar från Joaquín Almunia på kommissionens vägnar
(9 september 2013)

I gemenskapens riktlinjer för statligt stöd till skydd för miljön fastställs de regler för kommissionens bedömning av av statligt stöd för förbättrat miljöskydd, däribland beräkningsmetod för stödberättigande kostnader ([1]).

Mer ingående vägledning ges i vissa specifika situationer, men investeringar i fartyg nämns dock inte särskilt, vare sig om de drivs inom ramen för resebefraktnings- eller tidsbefraktningsavtal. Kommissionen tillämpar därför de allmänna reglerna vid sin bedömning av huruvida investeringsstöd till ny avgasrenande teknik inom sjötransportsektorn är förenligt med reglerna.

I detta skede kan kommissionen inte se varför de allmänna reglerna inte skulle tillåta att hänsyn tas till skillnaderna mellan olika sätt att kommersiellt bedriva fartygstransport. Med tanke på ärendets synnerligen tekniska karaktär kommer kommissionen att kunna lämna sin ståndpunkt först efter att ha fått in konkreta förslag om statligt stöd för bedömning.

([1]) Artiklarna 80–84 i riktlinjerna.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008786/13
to the Commission
Nils Torvalds (ALDE) and Sari Essayah (PPE)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Problems with the method of calculation of eligible costs for state aid for environmental protection (exhaust abatement technology)

Article 82 of the EU guidelines on state aid for environmental protection and the methodology for calculation of eligible costs states the following:

'Eligible costs must be calculated net of any operating benefits and operating costs related to the extra investment for environmental protection and arising during the first five years of the life of the investment concerned. This means that such operating benefits must be deducted and such operating costs may be added to the extra investment costs.'

This creates difficulties for the shipping industry in a charter party context. The investment cost for new abatement technology always falls on the ship owner but the influence over the fuel consumption and the figures over the lost cargo space vary between different charter parties. In some cases the price of the cargo space is a trade secret known only by the charterer.

Contracts relating to different types of cargoes and vessels for shipping transport can be divided into two main types: 1) voyage charter and 2) time charter.

For a vessel engaged under terms of a voyage charter the model is consistent with the methodology for calculation of eligible costs under the guidelines, since the owner pays for all costs for the voyages, including fuel.

However, for vessels engaged under terms of a time charter, the model calculation is not workable at all. According to the time charter terms, the ship owner will provide and pay for officers and crew and maintain the vessel (including exhaust gas abatement technology), whilst costs related to the voyages (fuel consumption) and the cargo operations (loss of cargo space) will be paid by the charterer, rendering it impossible to set the investment costs in relation to operating benefits and costs.

How will the Commission guarantee that all different types of charter contracts, and thereby all types of shipping have the same opportunities to be granted state aid for environmental protection, particularly exhaust abatement technology necessary to meet emission limits laid down in Directive 2012/33/EU amending Council Directive 1999/32/EC as regards the sulphur content of marine fuels?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(9 September 2013)

The Environmental Aid Guidelines (EAG) lay down the conditions on the basis of which the Commission will assess state aid to improve the level of environmental protection, including the methodology for calculating the eligible costs ([1]).

While more detailed guidance is provided in certain specific situations, no specific reference is made to investments in vessels, depending on whether they are operated under voyage charter contracts or time charter contracts. The Commission will therefore apply the general rules when assessing the compatibility of investment aid for new pollution abatement technologies in the maritime transport sector.

At this stage the Commisison does not see why the general rules would not allow it to take into account the differences in the modes of commercial operation of vessels. However, given the highly technical nature of the subject matter, the Commission will be able to specify its position only after having received concrete state aid proposals for its assessment.

([1]) Articles 80-84 of the Guidelines.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008787/13
to the Commission
Kay Swinburne (ECR)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Diffuse water pollution

Recently I have been contacted by a constituent who has alerted me to the damaging effects of diffuse pollution he is witnessing in his local river, where he believes phosphorus is washing out, principally from agricultural activity, into the local river and encouraging the growth of blue-green algae (cyanobacteria).

In order to reassure my constituent that appropriate steps are being taken at European level to reduce such instances of diffuse pollution contributing to the growth of cyanobacteria in our EU waterways and to mitigate the effects of phosphorus discharge on water quality generally, would the Commission be willing to outline the current actions it is taking to address this issue?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

The EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC ([1])) requires Member States to identify pressures — such as nutrient pollution from farming (Article 5, WFD) — and to put in place measures to address such diffuse pollution (Article 11.3. h) along with other relevant measures in a River Basin Management Plan (RBMP).

The Commission assessed all the adopted RBMPs and identified that there is a need for more concerted action on addressing diffuse pollution from agriculture. This was reflected in the Commission's Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources ([2]) of last November, accompanied by a WFD implementation report, including recommendations to Member States for improvements in addressing diffuse water pollution. The Commission will also continue supporting the expert group on WFD and agriculture under the Common Implementation Strategy ([3]) also to promote best use of the available and relevant CAP instruments such as cross -compliance, greening and rural development measures to address water issues.

Additional action at EU level includes the review of Member States Nitrates Action Programmes under the Nitrates Directive (Directive 91/676/EEC ([4])). Although it does not explicitly cover phosphates, measures taken in the context of the obligation to prevent eutrophication have beneficial effects on phosphate pollution. The Commission has also recently consulted on how to treat recycled phosphorus, including manure, as a resource rather than as a pollutant. Greater processing of manure and transport away from saturated zones could help with diffuse pollution ([5]).

([1]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p.1.
([2]) Communication COM(2012)673 and accompanying documents available at http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/blueprint/index_en.htm
([3]) An informal process to provide guidance on WFD implementation. More information at http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/objectives/implementation_en.htm
([4]) OJ L 375, 31.12.1991.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/consultations/pdf/phosphorus/EN.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008789/13
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(17 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Deslocalización de empresas

La empresa Huyck Wagner Spain, perteneciente al fondo de inversión estadounidense Xerium, se ubica en Zizurkil en la comarca de Tolosaldea en Gipuzkoa, País Vasco. Esta planta es una de las cuatro del grupo en la EU y se dedica a la fabricación de telas metálicas transformables para la industria papelera.

La empresa ha presentado un ERE, que afecta al 92 % de sus 81 trabajadores, cerrando la planta productiva y manteniendo solamente la estructura comercial. La producción se trasladará a otras plantas de la UE fuera del País Vasco.

La empresa ha tenido beneficios en los últimos años y ha sido líder de productividad dentro del grupo durante muchos trimestres. Se puede concluir que las razones del cierre no tienen que ver con la productividad de la planta, sino con otros tipos de intereses, por ejemplo las facilidades dadas por la reforma de la legislación laboral española. Nos encontramos ante un caso claro de deslocalización industrial.

Por otra parte, la comarca de Tolosaldea se encuentra en un proceso de desindustrialización y deslocalización de empresas. Tiene una tasa de paro del X % que ha aumentado un Y % en 4 años.

— ¿Ha recibido la empresa Xerium alguna vez fondos de la UE y en qué condiciones?

— ¿Tiene la Comisión la intención de legislar para armonizar la legislación laboral de los Estados miembros con el fin de, entre otros objetivos, evitar el cierre de empresas en algunos Estados de la Unión y el traslado de la producción a otros por resultar más fácil o más barato el proceso de cierre?

— ¿Está considerando la Comisión la posibilidad de establecer políticas de algún tipo para evitar la desindustrialización de Europa, por ejemplo líneas de financiación para la reindustrialización de comarcas y regiones desindustrializadas?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de septiembre de 2013)

A fecha 31 de diciembre de 2012, la empresa a la que se refiere su Señoría no había sido beneficiaria de la financiación concedida por el FEDER en el marco del programa operativo (PO) del País Vasco ([1]) ni se encontraba entre los beneficiarios del FSE en el PO regional «País Vasco» o en el programa operativo nacional de empleo «Adaptabilidad y Empleo» ([2]).

La Comisión no considera la posibilidad de adoptar actos legislativos para armonizar la normativa laboral de los Estados miembros con el fin de evitar el cierre de una empresa en un Estado miembro y su transferencia a otro.Tras su Libro Verde de enero de 2012 ([3]) y la adopción por el Parlamento Europeo el 15 de enero de 2013 del informe Cercas, la Comisión propondrá una Comunicación para la creación de un marco de calidad que englobe la legislación de la UE y las iniciativas que afecten a las reestructuraciones y presentará las mejores prácticas para su aplicación por todas las partes interesadas. Asimismo, el objetivo de la Actualización de la Comunicación sobre política industrial de 2012 es fomentar una industria europea más fuerte ([4]).

La Comisión no tiene previsto presentar nuevas propuestas de líneas de financiación para la reindustrialización que vayan más allá de los acuerdos políticos del MFP y de los distintos programas e instrumentos sobre los que se asienta. En este contexto, los Estados miembros podrán hacer un uso efectivo de los Fondos Estructurales y de Cohesión para conseguir una «especialización inteligente» de la industria. También podrán utilizar el FSE y el FEAG para prestar apoyo a los trabajadores en sus esfuerzos por adaptarse a las nuevas tendencias.

([1]) http://www.dgfc.sgpg.meh.es/sitios/dgfc/es-ES/Paginas/BeneficiariosFederCohesion.aspx
([2]) http://www.empleo.gob.es/uafse/es/beneficiarios/index.html
([3]) Véanse las respuestas y un resumen en: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en
([4]) COM(2012) 582 final de 10.10.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008789/13
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Company relocation

The company Huyck Wangner Spain belongs to the US Investment Fund Xerium, located in Zizurkil in the administrative area of Tolosaldea in Gipuzkoa, in the Basque Country. This plant is one of four in the group within the European Union and manufactures transformable wire cloth for the paper industry.

The company has presented a workforce reduction plan, affecting 92% of its 81 employees, which entails closing down the production plant and leaving just the commercial structure. Production will be transferred to other plants in the EU, outside of the Basque Country.

The company has made a profit in recent years and has led the group in terms of productivity over numerous quarters. It can therefore be concluded that the reasons for the closure do not relate to the productivity of the plant, but to other types of interests such as the concessions provided for the reform of Spanish labour laws. We find ourselves facing a clear case of industrial relocation.

Moreover, the administrative area of Tolosaldea finds itself in the midst of a process of deindustrialisation and company relocation. It has an unemployment rate of X % that has increased by Y % in four years.

— Has the Xerium company ever received EU funds and under what conditions?

— Does the Commission intend to legislate to harmonise the labour laws of Member States with the aim, *inter alia*, of preventing the closure of companies in some Member States and the transfer of production to others in order make the closure easier or cheaper?

— Is the Commission considering establishing any policies to prevent the deindustrialisation of Europe, such as lines of funding for the reindustrialisation of deindustrialised administrative areas and regions?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(11 September 2013)

The company referred to by the Honourable Member has not benefited from ERDF funding under the operational Programme (OP) of Basque Country ([1]), and is not among the ESF beneficiaries in the regional OP 'País Vasco' or the national employment OP 'Adaptabilidad y Empleo', at least till 31 of December 2012 ([2]).

The Commission is not considering adopting legislation to harmonise the labour laws of Member States with the aim of preventing the closure of a company in a Member State and its transfer to another one.Following its January 2012 Green Paper ([3]) and the adoption by the European Parliament on 15 January 2013 of the Cercas report, the Commission will propose a communication establishing a Quality Framework that will frame the EU legislation and initiatives relevant to restructuring and will present the best practices to be implemented by all stakeholders. Moreover, the 2012 Industrial Policy Communication Update intends to promote a stronger European industry. [(4)]

The Commission is not planning new proposals for lines of funding for reindustrialisation beyond the scope of the politically agreed MFF and the various programmes and instruments underpinning it. In this context, Member States will be able to make effective use of cohesion and structural funds to pursue 'smart specialization' in industry. They will also be able to use the ESF and the EGF to support adaptation of workers to new trends.

([1]) http://www.dgfc.sgpg.meh.es/sitios/dgfc/es-ES/Paginas/BeneficiariosFederCohesion.aspx
([2]) http://www.empleo.gob.es/uafse/es/beneficiarios/index.html
([3]) See the replies and a summary under http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en
([4]) COM(2012)582 final of 10.10.2012.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008790/13
a la Comisión
Alejandro Cercas (S&D)
(17 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Protegiendo la salud y seguridad de los trabajadores en la agricultura, ganadería, horticultura y silvicultura

El 11 de junio de 2012, la Comisión publicó en su página web de Empleo, Asuntos Sociales e Inclusión una guía no vinculante para proporcionar información y ejemplos de buenas prácticas referentes a la aplicación de las directivas de salud y seguridad, junto con otros elementos necesarios como explicaciones y ejemplos prácticos sobre los peligros y los riesgos en todas las etapas de los trabajos que se realizan en la agricultura, horticultura y la silvicultura.

La guía se diseñó para ayudar a todas las partes interesadas (a los agricultores en particular), supervisores, empresarios, trabajadores y representantes de los trabajadores entre otros, a hacer efectivas las directivas y para gestionar de una manera más adecuada la prevención de riesgos laborales.

Como podemos leer al final del texto, la versión española de la guía debería estar disponible en formato electrónico ya que la Comisión dispuso: «Esta publicación estará disponible en formato impreso en inglés, francés y alemán y en su formato electrónico en el resto de lenguas oficiales de la UE».

Sin embargo, en la audiencia pública conjunta organizada por la Comisión de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural y la Comisión de Empleo y Asuntos Sociales del Parlamento Europeo titulada «Agricultura: una peligrosa ocupación — Cómo mejorar la salud y seguridad», que tuvo lugar el 20 de marzo de 2013, se pidió a la Comisión una explicación sobre la no disponibilidad de la versión española de la guía, y la Comisión alegó que, debido a restricciones presupuestarias, la traducción sólo se ha dispuesto en inglés, francés y alemán en su formato electrónico.

1. ¿Por qué la Comisión no ha cumplido con lo establecido en su página web para que todos los agricultores, ganaderos, horticultores y silvicultores puedan acceder a esta importante información en todos los idiomas oficiales de la UE?

2. ¿Tiene pensado la Comisión traducir esta Guía a todos los idiomas oficiales de la UE en su formato electrónico y ponerla a disposición de las partes interesadas en su página web?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(9 de septiembre de 2013)

La Comisión confirma a Su Señoría que la guía práctica sobre la protección de la salud y la seguridad de los trabajadores en la agricultura, la ganadería, la horticultura y la silvicultura está disponible, tanto en versión impresa como en formato electrónico, en alemán, francés e inglés.

A pesar de que la Comisión indicó, tanto en la actual versión impresa como en su sitio web ([1]), que publicaría versiones electrónicas de esta guía en todas las lenguas oficiales, esto no se ha llevado a cabo debido a diversas dificultades. La información a este respecto en el sitio web de la Comisión va a ser corregida.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=82&langId=es&furtherPubs=yes

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008790/13
to the Commission
Alejandro Cercas (S&D)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Protecting the health and safety of workers in agriculture, livestock farming, horticulture and forestry

On 11 June 2012, the Commission published on the website of the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion a non-binding guide providing information and examples of good practice in connection with the implementation of health and safety directives, together with other necessary information such as explanations and practical examples of the dangers and risks encountered during all stages of farming, horticulture and forestry work.

The guide was designed to help all stakeholders, in particular, farmers, supervisors, employers, workers and their representatives, as well as others, to implement directives and to properly manage occupational risk prevention.

As stated at the end of the text, the Spanish version of the guide should be available in electronic format as the Commission confirmed: 'This publication will be available in printed format in English, French and German and in electronic format in all other EU official languages'.

However, at the joint public hearing organised by Parliament's Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development and the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs entitled 'Farming: a hazardous occupation — how to improve health and safety', which took place on 20 March 2013, the Commission was asked to explain why no Spanish version of the guide was available, to which the Commission replied that, due to budgetary constraints, only the English, French and German translations had been prepared in electronic format.

1. Why has the Commission not done what it said it would do on its website to give all farmers, livestock farmers, horticulture and forestry workers access to this important information in all EU official languages?

2. Does the Commission intend to translate this guide into all EU official languages in electronic format and to make it available to stakeholders on its website?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(9 September 2013)

The Commission would like to confirm to the Honourable Member that the practical Guide entitled 'Protecting health and safety of workers in agriculture, livestock farming, horticulture and forestry' is available, both in printed version and in electronic format, in English, French and German.

Although the Commission indicated that electronic versions of the guide would be made available in all official languages both in the current published print version and also in the Commission website ([1]), -- it has not done it due to various constraints. Information on this issue will be corrected on the Commission's website.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=82&langId=en&furtherPubs=yes

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008792/13
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(17 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Negación de visado

Desde el pasado 31 de mayo al 4 junio se celebró en Barcelona el Congreso Europeo de Anestesiología.

Según parece, el Gobierno español denegó el visado de entrada a 20 médicos kosovares que pretendían asistir al Congreso. La embajada española en Skopie (Antigua República Yugoslava de Macedonia) argumentó que España no reconoce a Kosovo, por lo que no permite la entrada de sus ciudadanos salvo en casos extraordinarios.

1. ¿Conoce la Comisión estos hechos?

2. ¿Considera la Comisión que estos hechos son compatibles con los principios de la Unión Europea, su defensa de los derechos humanos y la libre circulación de personas?

3. ¿Considera la Comisión adecuada la política de concesión de visados a ciudadanos kosovares que subyace tras las explicaciones de la embajada en Skopie?

4. ¿Tomará alguna acción la Comisión para evitar actuaciones similares del Gobierno de España en un futuro?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de septiembre de 2013)

La Comisión ha sido informada de los dificultades que pueden encontrar los nacionales de Kosovo ([1]) al solicitar un visado Schengen en la sede de la embajada de España en Skopie, debido al hecho de que España no reconoce a Kosovo. La Comisión ha instado a las autoridades españolas a facilitar información detallada sobre las prácticas de la embajada de España en Skopie a este respecto. Esta información permitirá a la Comisión evaluar la compatibilidad de dichas prácticas con el Derecho de la UE y, en particular, con el Código de visados.

Una vez que la Comisión haya recibido y analizado la información solicitada, informará a Su Señoría de los resultados de ese análisis.

([1]) Esta denominación se utiliza sin perjuicio de las posiciones sobre el estatuto de Kosovo, y de acuerdo con la RCSNU 1244/1999 y el dictamen del TIJ sobre la declaración de independencia de Kosovo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008792/13
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Refusal of visas

The European Congress of Anaesthesiology took place in Barcelona from 31 May to 4 June 2013.

The Spanish Government apparently refused to issue entry visas to 20 Kosovan doctors planning to attend the congress. The Spanish embassy in Skopje (in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) maintained that Spain did not recognise Kosovo, so its citizens were not permitted to enter Spain except in exceptional circumstances.

1. Is the Commission aware of these facts?

2. Does the Commission think that these facts are compatible with the European Union's principles as regards defending human rights and the free movement of persons?

3. Does the Commission think that the policy on granting visas to Kosovan citizens, on which the explanations given by the embassy in Skopje were based, is appropriate?

4. Will the Commission take any action to prevent similar actions by the Spanish Government in future?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(27 September 2013)

The Commission has been informed about difficulties Kosovo ([1]) nationals might face when applying for a Schengen visa at the Spanish embassy in Skopje, as a result of Spain not recognising Kosovo. The Commission has invited the Spanish authorities to provide detailed information about the practice of the Spanish embassy in Skopje in this regard; this information would enable the Commission to assess the compatibility of that practice with EC law and in particular with the Visa Code.

Once the Commission has received and analysed the information requested, it will inform the Honourable Member about the results of this analysis.

([1]) This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008793/13
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(17 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Calidad del agua potable

El pantano de Oiola, situado en Bizkaia (País Vasco — España), se utiliza para la captación de agua de consumo humano. En la actualidad abastece a más de 100 000 personas.

En 2008, el Gobierno Vasco detectó una elevada presencia de isómeros de HCH-lindano en las aguas ya tratadas y en el pantano. Se hizo un estudio y se estableció un protocolo, que permite un límite de 25 ng/l del total de isómeros de HCH y 20 ng/l para cada isómero, que no aplica el R.D. 60/2011 sobre calidad ambiental de aguas.

Las autoridades vascas no demuestran interés en resolver la situación y, además, el control del HCH es deficiente: no medición y contabilización de resultados por debajo de 10 ng/l de HCH por isómero, laboratorio no acreditado para medir algunos isómeros de HCH, no se analiza la presencia de HCH en biota y sedimentos, ningún plan de acción para la eliminación del HCH. falta de Registro de Zonas de Protección de agua …

Todo ello puede implicar el incumplimiento de varias Directivas: 1998/83/CE, 2000/60/CE, 2008/105/CE y 2009/90/CE.

¿Considera la Comisión que se está garantizando adecuadamente la calidad del agua de consumo humano con que se abastecen las poblaciones mencionadas?

¿Considera la Comisión que las medidas de control aplicadas en las aguas del embalse de Oiola cumplen correctamente la normativa europea?

¿Considera la Comisión que el embalse de Oiola cumple los requisitos para ser considerado punto de captación de aguas destinadas a la producción de agua de consumo humano?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008794/13
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(17 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Calidad del agua potable y transposición de directivas europeas

El pantano de Oiola está situado en Bizkaia (País Vasco — España) y se utiliza como punto de captación de aguas para producción de agua de consumo humano.

En 2008, el Gobierno Vasco detectó una elevada presencia de isómeros de HCH-lindano en las aguas ya tratadas. Concretamente: 154 ng/l Alfa-HCH; 26 ng/l Beta-HCH y 13 ng/l Delta-HCH, con un total de 193 ng/l HCH. En la misma fecha, en las aguas del pantano se apreciaron máximos de casi 500 ng/l HCH.

Se realizaron varios estudios que no fueron capaces de determinar el foco de contaminación de HCH, pero que llegaron a la conclusión de que las aguas contaminadas procedían del arroyo Gorriga y se incrementaban en caso de fuertes lluvias.

En base a ello, se dictó un protocolo por el que se establecía como límite para usar las aguas del embalse un caudal máximo de 50 l/s en el arroyo y un límite de 25 ng/l del total de isómeros de HCH en esas aguas y de 20 ng/l para cada isómero.

El Gobierno Vasco aplica los límites establecidos en el R.D. 140/2003 por el que se establecen los criterios sanitarios de la calidad del agua de consumo humano, que recogen límites para plaguicidas individuales (100 ng/l) y totales (500 ng/l), sin una referencia expresa al HCH. Dicha normativa no ha sido actualizada para responder a las nuevas exigencias derivadas de la legislación europea.

Todo ello puede implicar el incumplimiento de las Directivas 98/83/CE, 2000/60/CE, 2008/105/CE y 2009/90/CE.

¿Considera la Comisión que se ha producido una correcta transposición y aplicación de las Directivas europeas relativas a la calidad del agua de consumo humano?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión

(23 de septiembre de 2013)

Por lo que se refiere a los plaguicidas, la Directiva 98/83/CE, relativa a la calidad de las aguas destinadas al consumo humano ([1]) (Directiva del Agua Potable), establece un valor paramétrico para cada uno de los plaguicidas: 0,1 µ/l (excluidos cuatro plagicidas organoclorados, cuyo límite es de 0,03 µ/l) y otro valor paramétrico para el total plaguicidas: 5 µ/l.

Estos niveles debían comenzar a cumplirse a partir del 25 de diciembre de 2003 ([2]). Así pues, en virtud de la Directiva 98/83/CE, los Estados miembros tienen ya la obligación general de aplicar las normas de calidad mínimas establecidas en la Directiva (artículo 5) y de emprender las medidas correctivas necesarias para garantizar que el agua destinada al consumo humano no constituya un peligro potencial para la salud humana (artículo 8).

En la actualidad, la exposición del agua potable a los plaguicidas está controlada, asimismo, por el Reglamento (CE) n° 1107/2009, relativo a la comercialización de productos fitosanitarios ([3]), y por la Directiva 2009/128/CE, sobre el uso sostenible de los plaguicidas ([4]).

Además, el HCH se regula también en el marco de la Directiva 2008/105/CE ([5]) (Directiva de Sustancias Prioritarias), que exige la aplicación de una media anual de 0,02 µg/l. No obstante, los requisitos que impone esa Directiva sólo serán obligatorios a partir del 22 de diciembre de 2015.

Pese a no poder detectar ninguna infracción de la normativa de la UE a partir de la información facilitada, la Comisión se pondrá en contacto con las autoridades competentes a fin de obtener una visión más clara de la situación existente en la provincia de Bizkaia.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31998L0083:EN:NOT
([2]) Artículo 14: Calendario de aplicación de la Directiva del Agua Potable.
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32009R1107:en:NOT
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:309:0071:0086:es:PDF
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/priority_substances.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008793/13
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Drinking water quality

The Oiola Reservoir, in Bizkaia province (Basque Country — Spain), is used for the catchment of water for human consumption. It currently supplies water to more than 100 000 people.

In 2008, the Basque Government detected a high level of HCH/Lindane isomers in already treated waters and in the reservoir. A study was made and a protocol set, permitting a limit of 25 ng/l on the total of HCH isomers and 20 ng/l for each isomer, which is not applied by Royal Decree 60/2011 on the environmental quality of waters.

The Basque authorities show no interest in resolving the situation and HCH control is poor: no measurement and accounting for results below 10 ng/l of HCH per isomer; a non-accredited laboratory measures some HCH isomers; no analysis of the presence of HCH in biota and sediments; no action plan for eliminating HCH; no register of water protection zones, etc.

This may involve the infringement of several Directives: 1998/83/EC, 2000/60/EC, 2008/105/EC and 2009/90/EC.

Does the Commission consider that the quality of drinking water for supply to the population mentioned is being adequately guaranteed?

Does the Commission consider the control measures applied to the waters of the Oiola Reservoir to meet European standards correctly?

Does the Commission believe that the Oiola Reservoir meets the requirements to be considered a catchment point for waters used to produce water for human consumption?

Question for written answer E-008794/13
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Drinking water quality and transposition of European directives

The Oiola Reservoir, in Bizkaia province (Basque Country — Spain), is a catchment point for waters used to produce water for human consumption.

In 2008, the Basque Government detected a high level of HCH/Lindane isomers in already treated waters. Specifically: 154 ng/l alpha-HCH; 26 ng/l beta-HCH and 13 ng/l delta-HCH, giving a total of 193 ng/l HCH. On the same date, the reservoir's waters showed maximum levels of almost 500 ng/l HCH.

Several studies conducted were unable to determine the source of HCH contamination, but concluded that the contaminated waters came from the Gorriga stream and increased with heavy rain.

Based on this, a protocol was issued setting a limit on the use of waters from the reservoir to a maximum flow of 50 l/s in the stream and a limit of 25 ng/l on the total of HCH isomers in these waters and 20 ng/l for each isomer.

The Basque Government applies the limits laid down in Royal Decree 140/2003, which establishes health criteria for drinking water quality, including limits on pesticides — both individual (100 ng/l) and total (500 ng/l) — without express reference to HCH. This legislation has not been updated to meet new requirements under European legislation.

This may involve the infringement of Directives 98/83/EC, 2000/60/EC, 2008/105/EC and 2009/90/EC.

Does the Commission consider the European directives on water quality for human consumption to have been correctly transposed and implemented?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(23 September 2013)

As regards pesticides, the Drinking Water Directive 98/83/EC ([1]) sets out a parametric value for individual pesticides of 0.1 µ/l (except for 4 organochloride pesticides for which the limit is 0.03µ/l) and for total pesticides of 0.5 µ/l.

These standards were to be complied with starting 25 December 2003 ([2]). Under this directive, Member States have the general obligation to apply the minimum standards set out in the directive (Article 5) and to undertake remedial measures in order to ensure that the water intended for human consumption does not constitute a potential danger to human health (Article 8).

Currently, exposure to pesticides in drinking water is also controlled by Regulation 1107/2009 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market ([3]) and EU Directive 2009/128/EC on Sustainable Use of pesticides ([4]).

In addition, HCH is relevant under the Priority Substances Directive 2008/105/EC ([5]), which requires an annual average of 0.02 µg/l to be applied. However, the requirements of this directive are to be met only by 22 December 2015.

From the information provided, the Commission cannot at this point detect a breach of EU legislation. However, in order to get a clearer picture of the situation in the Province of Bizkaia, the Commission will contact the competent authorities.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31998L0083:EN:NOT
([2]) Article 14 Timescale for compliance of the DWD
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32009R1107:en:NOT
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:309:0071:0086:en:PDF
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/priority_substances.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008795/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(17 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Integración de los mercados de deuda privada

En los últimos días hemos conocido la efectiva integración de los sistemas de negociación de las bolsas de Tokio y Osaka, lo que convierte a ese mercado en uno de los más voluminosos del mundo. Una operación lógica porque la tendencia económica ha sido la sucesiva integración de los mercados de valores para garantizar una mejor protección de los inversores, unos menores costes de las empresas y una formación de precios más transparentes.

Sin embargo, en Europa se mantiene la fragmentación de muchos mercados de valores, por ejemplo, con relación a las emisiones de deuda privada. Es fácil comprobar la relación de empresas europeas que registran sus emisiones, por ejemplo, en los mercados de Luxemburgo o Irlanda. Lo que a su vez genera otras desventajas, como incrementar una competencia desleal entre los sistemas tributarios de los Estados miembros de la Unión o la distinta protección a los inversores.

De ahí que me interese conocer cuál es la opinión de la Comisión sobre esta materia. En concreto:

1. ¿Ha realizado la Comisión algún análisis sobre el coste económico que supone mantener esos mercados de valores fragmentados?

2. ¿Ha considerado la Comisión favorecer la aparición de una gran plataforma europea para impulsar el mercado interior?

3. ¿No estima la Comisión que esta integración protegería mejor a los inversores y facilitaría la supervisión por parte de la Autoridad Europea de Valores y Mercados?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de septiembre de 2013)

La integración de los mercados es, de hecho, beneficiosa al generar economías de escala, por lo que debería facilitar una negociación menos costosa y más eficiente. Uno de los principales objetivos de la Directiva sobre los mercados de instrumentos financieros (Directiva 2004/39/CE, DMIF) era reducir los costes de negociación, fomentando la competencia entre los centros de negociación y facilitar la negociación paneuropea de instrumentos financieros. La evaluación de impacto adjunta a las propuestas de revisión de la DMIF de la Comisión concluye que los costes de las operaciones han disminuido realmente y que los mercados están más integrados ([1]).

A pesar de estos avances, hace falta seguir trabajando, especialmente en el contexto de la crisis financiera y los acuerdos alcanzados en el G-20 para abordar las carencias globales de la legislación vigente sobre servicios financieros. La DMIF incluye una serie de disposiciones que tratan el problema de la fragmentación, y su revisión reforzará estas disposiciones. En especial, la transparencia de las operaciones es necesaria para proporcionar a los inversores información sobre posibles oportunidades de negociación, facilitar la formación de precios y ayudar a las empresas a prestar los mejores servicios a sus clientes. La DMIF revisada también abordará los posibles efectos negativos de la fragmentación de los mercados y la liquidez al facilitar información consolidada que permita a los usuarios comparar oportunidades de negociación y resultados en todos los centros de negociación.

Esta legislación revisada garantizará que toda la negociación organizada se lleve a cabo en centros regulados, con plena transparencia comercial en relación con todos los instrumentos financieros. También resolverá la fragmentación del mercado mediante la plena armonización de las normas en toda la UE.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/securities/docs/isd/mifid/SEC_2011_1226_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008795/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Integration of private debt markets

In the last few days, we have learned of the effective integration of the Tokyo and Osaka exchange trading systems, making this market one of the world's biggest in terms of volume. This was a logical operation, given the economic trend to integrate securities markets successively in order to guarantee greater protection for investors, lower costs for companies and more transparent price formation.

However, fragmentation continues in many European securities markets, such as, for example, in relation to private debt issues. It is easy to check the list of European companies reporting their issues, for example, on the Irish and Luxembourg markets. This, in turn, generates other disadvantages, such as increasing unfair competition between the tax systems of EU Member States and different levels of protection for investors.

Hence, I am interested to know the Commission's opinion on the matter. In particular:

1. Has the Commission undertaken any analysis of the economic cost of maintaining these fragmented securities markets?

2. Has the Commission considered promoting the emergence of a large European platform to boost the internal market?

3. Does the Commission not believe that this integration would better protect investors and facilitate supervision by the European Securities and Markets Authority?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2013)

Market integration is indeed beneficial since it creates economies of scale and should lead to less costly and more efficient trading. One of the main objectives of the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID, 2004/39/EC) was to reduce trading costs by promoting competition between trading venues and facilitating the trading of financial instruments on a pan-European basis. The impact assessment accompanying the Commission's proposals for the review of MiFID concludes that transaction costs have indeed decreased and that market integration has increased ([1]).

Despite this progress, further action is needed, notably in the context of the financial crisis and the agreements reached at G20 level in terms of addressing the global shortcomings in current financial services legislation. MiFID contains a number of provisions which address the issue of fragmentation, and the review of MiFID will strengthen these provisions. Notably, trade transparency is necessary to provide investors with access to information about potential trading opportunities, to facilitate price formation and assist firms in providing best execution to their clients. The revised MiFID should also address the potential adverse effect of fragmentation of markets and liquidity by providing consolidated information that enables users to compare trading opportunities and results across trading venues.

The revised MiFID legislation will ensure that all organised trading is carried out on regulated venues, providing for full trade transparency regarding all financial instruments. It also addresses market fragmentation by fully harmonising data standards across the EU.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/securities/docs/isd/mifid/SEC_2011_1226_en.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008796/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(17 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Financiación europea de las vías de comunicación

El Tribunal de Cuentas Europeo acaba de publicar un Informe sobre las diferencias significativas de los costes en los proyectos de carreteras financiados por la Unión Europea. En concreto, dentro del periodo 2000-2013, en el que se aportaron cerca de 65 000 millones de euros a través del FEDER y del Fondo de cohesión, el citado Tribunal ha supervisado veinticuatro proyectos en distintos países, cuya financiación conjunta alcanzó los tres mil millones de euros.

Varias son las conclusiones que recoge este Informe ante las diferencias de precios que resultan entre dichas obras públicas. En ocasiones, a mi entender, son diferencias lógicas por la peculiar situación real de cada trazado y las infraestructuras realizadas en el mismo (como los túneles o viaductos).

En todo caso, a raíz de las recomendaciones formuladas por el Tribunal de Cuentas, me interesa conocer la opinión de la Comisión sobre los siguientes aspectos:

1. ¿Piensa analizar la fragmentación de los mercados de materias primas, caso, por ejemplo, del hormigón, o la falta de armonización de algunas estructuras como los denominados «quitamiedos»?

2. Ante la insistencia de ese Informe en destacar como objetivo la reducción de precios en los contratos públicos frente a la regulación en algunos países que tratan de controlar las «bajas temerarias» en las ofertas presentadas, ¿no cree la Comisión que resultan convenientes esas previsiones cautelares como garantía de la razonabilidad económica del proyecto, siempre que con posterioridad no haya modificaciones en los presupuestos que incrementen abusivamente el precio del contrato?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de septiembre de 2013)

1. Los Estados miembros tienen libertad para definir sus procedimientos de contratación pública, pero no se les permite discriminar un sistema de contención frente a otro si los dos cumplen una norma europea, como la EN 1317. Se trata de una norma europea que define procedimientos de ensayo y de certificación comunes para los sistemas de contención para carreteras. El uso del marcado CE en virtud de la parte 5 de dicha norma europea es obligatorio para los sistemas de contención para carreteras que se comercializan en el mercado interior de la UE desde enero de 2011. En la norma EN 1317 no se especifica qué barreras deben utilizarse en las distintas situaciones, pero se indica a qué ensayo debe someterse un producto para estar clasificado en un nivel de comportamiento determinado y cuáles son los niveles de seguridad y de comportamiento (basados en parámetros diferentes).

2. El objetivo de las Directivas de la UE sobre contratación pública es obtener la mejor relación calidad-precio en las inversiones públicas mediante la selección de la oferta más ventajosa, garantizando al mismo tiempo los principios de una competencia leal y abierta y de igualdad de trato de todos los operadores económicos, entre otras cosas sin conceder ventajas indebidas ni crear barreras. La Comisión considera que las Directivas establecen un marco eficaz para la selección de las mejores ofertas, lo cual permite que la ejecución de los contratos sea efectiva y eficaz.

Las Directivas de la UE establecen que, en el caso de las ofertas que parezcan anormalmente bajas, la entidad adjudicadora debe solicitar por escrito las precisiones oportunas sobre la composición de la oferta antes de poder rechazar dichas ofertas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008796/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: European financing of transport routes

The European Court of Auditors has just published a report on significant differences in the cost of road projects financed by the European Union. Specifically, in the period 2000-2013, during which some EUR 65 000 million were provided from the EAFRD and the Cohesion Fund, the Court supervised 24 projects in different countries with total funding of EUR 3 billion.

The report draws several conclusions regarding price disparities in these public works. In my opinion, some are logical differences resulting from the peculiarities of each route and the infrastructure works carried out on them (such as tunnels and viaducts).

In any case, in light of the recommendations made by the Court of Auditors, I would like to know the Commission's opinions on the following:

1. Does it intend to analyse the fragmentation of commodity markets — such as concrete — and the lack of harmonisation of structures such as crash barriers?

2. Given that the report highlights price reduction as an objective for public contracts, contrary to regulations in some countries aimed at controlling 'recklessly low' bids, does the Commission not believe these precautionary forecasts to be necessary in order to guarantee that projects are economically reasonable, provided no subsequent changes to estimates lead to abusive increases in the contract price?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

1. Member States are free to choose how to define their public procurement procedures, but they are not allowed to segregate one restraint system against another where they meet an Europan norm, such as EN 1317. This is a European norm that defines common testing and certification procedures for road restraint systems. The use of the CE marking resulting from the Part 5 of the European Norm is mandatory for road restrain systems commercialised in the EU Internal Market as from January 2011. EN1317 does not state which barriers should be used in one or another situation, but it indicates which test a product should undergo to be in a certain performance class, and what are the safety levels and the classes of performance (based on different parameters).

2. The EU Directives on public procurement aim at obtaining the best value for public money through the selection of the most advantageous offer, while ensuring the principles of fair and open competition, equal treatment of all economic operators without giving undue advantages or creating barriers, etc. The Commission considers that the directives provide an effective framework for the selection of the best offers, which allow the effective and efficient execution of contracts.

The EU Directives provide, in case of tenders appearing to be abnormally low, that the contracting entity should request in writing details on the constituent elements of the tender, before it may reject those tenders.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008797/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(17 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Difusión de análisis comparativos de los alimentos

Una de las políticas más exitosas de la Unión Europea ha sido la protección a los consumidores. Resulta innecesario recordar a la Comisión las numerosas disposiciones que a lo largo de estos años se han aprobado para garantizar mínimamente sus derechos básicos. En el mismo sentido, las instituciones europeas han contribuido a facilitar la máxima información cuando se han producido situaciones de alarma debido a la comercialización de productos, de manera especial, ante riesgos alimentarios.

Las Cortes Generales de España acaban de aprobar una nueva ley que regula múltiples aspectos de lo que comúnmente se denomina «cadena alimentaria» para garantizar un adecuado funcionamiento de la misma. Junto a la regulación de las relaciones comerciales de los distintos interesados, los contratos comerciales, el régimen de las marcas, las buenas prácticas comerciales, etc., el texto incluye una disposición adicional (en concreto, la cuarta) que anuncia la regulación de un procedimiento para admitir la difusión de los estudios y análisis comparativos sobre los productos alimentarios.

Ante la trascendencia que puede tener esta regulación:

¿Podría señalar la Comisión si no considera que la limitación de la difusión de información alimentaria es incompatible con la normativa europea?

¿No cree la Comisión que la existencia de análisis comparativos realizados por las asociaciones de consumidores y usuarios garantiza mejor los derechos de los consumidores?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de agosto de 2013)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a la respuesta dada a la pregunta escrita E-006692/13 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008797/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Dissemination of comparative food analyses

One of the European Union's most successful policies has been consumer protection. The Commission does not need to be reminded of the many provisions approved over the years to ensure consumers' basic rights. The European institutions have also helped to provide maximum information in situations of alarm arising from the marketing of products, especially in cases of food risks.

The Spanish Parliament and Senate have just passed a new law regulating many aspects of what is commonly known as the 'food chain' to ensure that it operates correctly. As well as regulating commercial relations of the various stakeholders, commercial contracts, the brands system, good commercial practices, etc., the text includes an additional provision (specifically, the fourth) announcing regulation of a procedure to allow the dissemination of comparative studies and analyses of food products.

Given the importance that this regulation may have:

Does the Commission not consider limiting the dissemination of food information to be incompatible with European legislation?

Does the Commission not believe that comparative analyses, undertaken by consumer and user associations, provide better guarantees for consumer rights?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(30 August 2013)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-006692/13. ([1])

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

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008798/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(17. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Weiteres Vorgehen in Griechenland

„Griechenland braucht wieder Geld" lautet eine aktuelle Schlagzeile in den Medien; weiter heißt es, die EU-Kommission habe eine neue Finanzlücke in Milliardenhöhe festgestellt.

1. Wie will die Kommission gegebenenfalls eine erneute „Finanzspritze" für Griechenland vor den europäischen Steuerzahlern rechtfertigen?

2. Inwiefern steht ein Schuldenschnitt als Alternative zur Debatte?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(28. August 2013)

Die Behauptung, Griechenland benötige für die Durchführung seines Anpassungsprogramms eine weitere „Finanzspritze", ist unzutreffend. Die Finanzierung des Programms ist bis Ende Juli 2014 in vollem Umfang gesichert. Dass bis Ende 2014 eine relativ geringe Finanzierungslücke im Umfang von 3,8 Mrd. EUR verbleibt, ist keine neue Erkenntnis, wie aus Tabelle 9 des Compliance-Berichts ([1]) hervorgeht, den die Europäische Kommission im Anschluss an die dritte Überprüfungsmission veröffentlicht hat. Es kommen vielerlei Lösungen in Betracht, um die Finanzierungslücke zu schließen. Zur genauen Größe der Lücke werden anlässlich der im Herbst anstehenden nächsten Überprüfung erneute Schätzungen angestellt.

Im November 2012 erklärte die Eurogruppe, dass die Mitgliedstaaten des Euro-Währungsgebiets, falls notwendig, weitere Maßnahmen und Hilfen in Betracht ziehen werden, sobald Griechenland einen jährlichen Primärüberschuss erzielt und sämtliche im Programm festgelegten Bedingungen vollständig erfüllt. Ziel ist es, Griechenland das Erreichen des angestrebten Schuldenstandsziels zu ermöglichen.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/greek_loan_facility/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008798/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Further action in Greece

'Greece needs more money' is a headline currently appearing in the media. It is also reported that the Commission has identified a new financial gap amounting to billions.

1. How, if it comes to it, is the Commission going to justify a new 'injection of finance' for Greece to European taxpayers?

2. To what extent is debt relief being discussed as an alternative?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(28 August 2013)

It is incorrect to say that the adjustment programme for Greece needs a new 'injection of finance'. The programme is fully financed until the end of July 2014. It is not a new fact that there is a relatively small financing gap of EUR 3.8 billion until the end of 2014, as indicated in Table 9 of the compliance report ([1]) published by the European Commission following the 3rd review mission. There are multiple ways to fill this financing gap. Its precise size will be estimated again at the occasion of the next review planned for the autumn.

In November 2012, the Eurogroup stated that euro area Member States will consider further measures and assistance, if necessary, when Greece reaches an annual primary surplus, conditional on full implementation of all conditions contained in the programme in order to ensure that Greece can reach the targeted debt-to-GDP ratio.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/greek_loan_facility/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008799/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(17 Ιουλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Περιοριστικά μέτρα στην Κύπρο και αντίκτυπός τους

Στο πλαίσιο υλοποίησης του προγράμματος ([1]) οικονομικής στήριξης της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας, αλλά και δεδομένων των κινδύνων για την έλλειψη ρευστότητας και εκροής των καταθέσεων, εφαρμόζονται προσωρινά περιοριστικά μέτρα στις συναλλαγές, τα οποία σύμφωνα με το τελευταίο σχετικό διάταγμα ([2]), προβλέπουν, μεταξύ άλλων, μέγιστο ποσό αναλήψεων και απαγόρευση εξαργύρωσης επιταγών. Παρά τη λογική που χαρακτηρίζει τη λήψη των μέτρων αυτών, είναι ξεκάθαρο πως διαμορφώνονται συνθήκες άνισες για τους κύπριους πολίτες έναντι των άλλων ευρωπαίων πολιτών, επηρεάζοντας άμεσα και καθοριστικά την πραγματική οικονομία, την κατανάλωση και τη ζήτηση. Για το λόγο αυτό ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Υπάρχει εκτίμηση για τον συνολικό αντίκτυπο των περιοριστικών μέτρων, τόσο σε επίπεδο Κύπρου όσο και σε επίπεδο ΕΕ, αλλά και για το αναγκαίο χρονικό εύρος εφαρμογής τους;

— Διαθέτει εκτιμήσεις για τις συνέπειες που επέρχονται στις προσπάθειες προσέλκυσης ή και διατήρησης επενδύσεων στην παρούσα φάση αλλά και στο άμεσο μέλλον;

— Πώς αντιλαμβάνεται το γεγονός ότι στο πλαίσιο των ευρωπαϊκών αρχών και κεκτημένων ενθαρρύνεται η δημιουργία ανισοτήτων σε επίπεδο ευκαιριών και συνθηκών μεταξύ των ευρωπαίων πολιτών έστω και σε προσωρινό επίπεδο;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Οι κυπριακές αρχές, σε συνεργασία με την Επιτροπή, την ΕΚΤ και το ΔΝΤ, αξιολογούν σε συνεχή βάση, στο πλαίσιο της οικονομίας της Κύπρου, την ανάγκη ελέγχων κεφαλαίων, τις συνέπειές τους και το επίπεδό τους. Από την θέσπιση των ελέγχων τον Μάρτιο του 2013, έχουν χαλαρώσει ή τροποποιηθεί διάφορα περιοριστικά μέτρα ώστε να προσαρμοστούν και να περισταλούν οι επιπτώσεις από τους περιορισμούς στην κυπριακή οικονομία και τούτο θα συνεχιστεί για όσο διάστημα εφαρμόζονται οι έλεγχοι. Οι έλεγχοι θα διενεργούνται μόνο για το διάστημα που θα κριθεί απολύτως αναγκαίο.

Η διαφοροποιημένη μεταχείριση των καταθετών στην Κύπρο θεωρείται δικαιολογημένη λόγω του σημαντικού κινδύνου ανεξέλεγκτης εκροής καταθέσεων, η οποία θα οδηγούσε στην κατάρρευση των πιστωτικών ιδρυμάτων στην Κύπρο και σε άμεσο κίνδυνο πλήρους αποσταθεροποίησης του χρηματοπιστωτικού συστήματος της Κύπρου. Τα εν λόγω μέτρα έχουν εφαρμοστεί χωρίς διακρίσεις, αναλογικά και η εφαρμογή τους θα συνεχιστεί για το συντομότερο δυνατό χρονικό διάστημα, όπως απαιτείται από τους κανόνες της ΕΕ σχετικά με την ελεύθερη κυκλοφορία των κεφαλαίων.

([1]) http://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/mof.nsf/financial_assistance_gr/financial_assistance_gr?OpenDocument
([2]) http://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/mof.nsf/All/32778CB74E3B2B04C2257B9F00442B91/$file/%CE%94%CE%95%CE%9A%CE%91%CE%A4%CE%9F%20%CE%95%CE%92%CE%94%CE%9F%CE%9C%CE%9F%20%CE%94%CE%99%CE%91%CE%A4%CE%91%CE%93%CE%9C%CE%91%205%20%CE%99%CE%9F%CE%A5%CE%9B%CE%99%CE%9F%CE%A5%202013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008799/13
to the Commission
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Restrictive measures in Cyprus and their impact

Within the framework of the programme ([1]) of economic support for the Republic of Cyprus and given the lack of liquidity and deposit flight risks, provisional currency restrictions are being applied which, according to the last decree issued ([2]), make provision, among other things, for maximum withdrawals and no cashing of cheques. Despite the logic behind these measures, it is clear that they are creating inequalities between Cypriot citizens and other European citizens and are having a direct and decisive impact on the real economy, consumption and demand. In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Has an estimate been made of the total impact of the restrictions, both on Cyprus and at EU level, and of the period of time over which they need to be applied?

— Does it have any estimates of the results of efforts to attract and/or keep investments at the present stage and in the immediate future?

— What is its understanding of the fact that, within the framework of European principles and *acquis*, inequalities between European citizens are being encouraged, albeit temporarily, in terms of opportunities and conditions?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

The Cypriot authorities, in consultation with the Commission, ECB and IMF, are constantly assessing the need for, impact of and level of capital controls within the Cypriot economy. Since the introduction of the controls in March 2013, various restrictive measures have been relaxed or modified to tailor and limit the impact of the restrictions upon the Cypriot economy and this will continue to occur for as long as the controls are in place. The controls will be in place only as long as is strictly necessary.

The differential treatment of depositors in Cyprus appears justified by the significant risk of uncontrollable outflow of deposits which would lead to the collapse of the credit institutions within Cyprus and to the immediate risk of complete destabilisation of Cyprus' financial system. These measures have been applied non-discriminatorily, proportionally and should be applied for the shortest time possible, as required by the EU rules on the free circulation of capitals.

([1]) http://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/mof.nsf/financial_assistance_gr/financial_assistance_gr?OpenDocument.
([2]) http://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/mof.nsf/All/32778CB74E3B2B04C2257B9F00442B91/USD file/%CE%94%CE%95%CE%9A%CE%91%CE%A4%CE%9F%20%CE%95%CE%92%CE%94%CE%9F%CE%9C%CE%9F%20%CE%94%CE%99%CE%91%CE%A4%CE%91%CE%93%CE%9C%CE%91%205%20%CE%99%CE%9F%CE%A5%CE%9B%CE%99%CE%9F%CE%A5%202013.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008800/13
à la Commission
Jean-Pierre Audy (PPE), Françoise Grossetête (PPE) et Gaston Franco (PPE)
(17 juillet 2013)

Objet: REACH — Menace sur les entreprises du secteur du traitement de surface

Le règlement REACH va conduire in fine à l'interdiction dans l'Union européenne des procédés de traitement au Chrome VI. Or, aujourd'hui l'Union autorise l'importation des pièces chromées qui ne présentent pas de toxicité particulière, ce qui, dans certaines régions, entraîne la délocalisation hors d'Europe des sous-traitants et pourrait conduire dans un futur proche à la délocalisation de l'ensemble de la filière (conception et fabrication) afin de limiter les coûts de transports.

Bien que REACH prévoie un mécanisme d'autorisation d'utilisation de la substance, celui-ci n'est que temporaire et difficilement accessible aux PME du fait des coûts qu'il génère. Quant aux solutions de substitution, elles ne sont pas toujours possibles, comme c'est le cas pour le secteur de l'aéronautique, ou lorsque cela est possible, leur mise au point est très coûteuse et nécessite des moyens de recherche et développement (R&D) dont ne disposent pas obligatoirement les PME sous-traitantes.

C'est dans ce contexte que les députés européens soussignés ont l'honneur de demander à la Commission si l'impact socio-économique de la mise en place de la réglementation européenne REACH a bien été pris en compte s'agissant du secteur des traitements de surface et si des mesures d'accompagnement ont été prévues pour faciliter la transition?

Plus largement, la Commission a-t-elle évalué l'impact de la réglementation REACH sur les délocalisations des entreprises européennes et les problèmes de concurrence déloyale?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(3 octobre 2013)

La Commission est consciente des inquiétudes du secteur du traitement de surfaces, relayées par d'autres opérateurs du secteur qui utilisent des composés du chrome (VI), quant à l'éventuelle disparition de cette activité économique dans l'UE et son remplacement par des articles importés de pays tiers.

L'obligation d'obtenir une autorisation REACH n'équivaut pas à une interdiction des processus de traitement à base de chrome (VI), mais permet la poursuite de l'utilisation de certains composés du chrome hexavalent après la date d'expiration, pour autant qu'une autorisation ait été accordée pour chaque usage spécifique.

Une autorisation peut être accordée si le demandeur apporte la preuve que les risques dus à l'utilisation de la substance sont largement compensés par les avantages socio-économiques, et qu'il n'existe pas de substances ou de technologies de substitution appropriées pour cette utilisation ([1]).

REACH ne suppose pas que chaque entreprise introduise individuellement une demande d'autorisation d'utilisation d'une substance soumise à autorisation. Un utilisateur en aval peut être couvert par une telle autorisation accordée à un opérateur situé en amont dans sa chaîne d'approvisionnement. En outre, la Commission a connaissance de l'existence de consortiums mis en place par plusieurs opérateurs dans la chaîne d'approvisionnement afin de coordonner et faciliter l'établissement de demandes d'autorisation. De telles possibilités réduisent l'impact des exigences en matière d'autorisation sur les utilisateurs en aval et peuvent être particulièrement avantageuses pour les PME.

Les délais d'introduction de demandes d'autorisation (date limite pour l'introduction des demandes), pour les composés du chrome (VI) tiennent compte du temps nécessaire pour établir ces demandes dans la chaîne logistique complexe concernée par l'utilisation de ces substances.

Conformément à REACH, l'impact social et économique, y compris sur la compétitivité d'un secteur ou sur l'emploi, est pris en compte lors de l'évaluation de chaque demande d'autorisation.

([1]) Ces exigences ressortent des dispositions de l'article 60, paragraphe 4, du règlement REACH et sont expliquées dans le guide de l'ECHA. Des instructions pour la préparation d'une demande d'autorisation sont disponibles à l'adresse suivante: http://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/13643/authorisation_application_fr.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008800/13
to the Commission
Jean-Pierre Audy (PPE), Françoise Grossetête (PPE) and Gaston Franco (PPE)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: REACH — Threat to firms in the surface treatment sector

The REACH regulation will ultimately lead to an EU-wide ban on treatment processes employing Chromium VI. However, the European Union does currently allow the import of chrome-plated parts which do not exhibit any particular toxicity. In some parts of the EU, this is leading to the relocation of subcontractors outside Europe and could, in the near future, result in the entire industry (including its design and manufacturing sectors) being relocated to limit transport costs.

Although REACH provides for an authorisation mechanism for use of the substance, this is only temporary and is difficult for SMEs to make use of due to the costs involved. As for replacement solutions, these are not always possible, as in the case of the aircraft industry, or where such solutions are possible, they are very costly to develop and require research and development (R&D) which is not necessarily within the means of subcontracting SMEs.

It is in this context that the undersigned Members of the European Parliament have the honour to ask the Commission whether the social and economic impact of the implementation of the EU regulation REACH has in fact been considered as regards the surface treatments sector and whether support measures have been planned to facilitate transition?

More generally, has the Commission assessed the impact of the REACH regulation on the relocation of EU businesses and the problems of unfair competition?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(3 October 2013)

The Commission is aware about the concerns of the surface treatment sector, also raised by other operators in the sector using chromium VI compounds that this economic activity might disappear from the EU and be replaced by imported articles from third countries.

The REACH authorisation requirement does not constitute a ban of treatment processes employing chromium VI, but allows for the possibility of continuing using certain chromium VI compounds after the sunset date, provided that an authorisation has been granted for each specific use.

An authorisation may be granted if the application demonstrates that the risks from the use of the substance are outweighed by the socioeconomic benefits, and that there are no suitable alternative substances or technologies for that use ([1]).

REACH does not require each particular company to apply for an individual authorisation to be able to use a substance subject to authorisation. A downstream user may be covered by the authorisation granted to an actor up his supply chain for that use. Moreover, the Commission is aware of consortia set up by various actors in the supply chain to coordinate and facilitate preparations of applications for authorisation. Such possibilities reduce the impact of the authorisation requirements on downstream users and may be particularly advantageous for SMEs.

The deadlines to apply for authorisation (Latest Application Date) for chromium VI compounds take into account the time needed to prepare the applications in the complex supply chain that involves the use of these substances.

According to REACH, the social and economic impact, including on the competitiveness of a sector or on employment, is considered when assessing the individual applications for authorisation.

([1]) These requirements are laid down in Article 60(4) of the REACH Regulation and are further explained in the ECHA Guidance. Guidance on the preparation of an application for authorisation, available at the following link: http://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/13637/authorisation_application_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008801/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(17 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Condanna all'ergastolo per un cittadino pakistano di religione cristiana

Il 13 luglio scorso è stata emessa dal tribunale di Gojra la sentenza di ergastolo per Sajjad Masih, cittadino pakistano di religione cristiana del distretto di Pakpattan. Nel dicembre 2011, il ragazzo era stato arrestato con l'accusa di aver violato la legge antiblasfemia per aver inviato messaggi telefonici con testi ritenuti offensivi ad alcuni religiosi musulmani. Contro Masih, in questi mesi, hanno testimoniato vari religiosi della zona. Durante le indagini, gli inquirenti hanno ricostruito la vicenda nata dalla lite tra Sajjad Masih e una parente, Roma. Avendo quest'ultima rifiutato la sua proposta di matrimonio, il giovane si sarebbe vendicato inviando messaggi blasfemi con una scheda SIM intestata alla ragazza. Masih dovrà inoltre pagare una multa di 200 000 rupie (circa 2 000 euro), così come stabilito dal tribunale di Toba Tek Singh.

— È la Commissione a conoscenza dei fatti?

— Con riferimento all'episodio avvenuto lo scorso anno a Rimsha Masih, falsamente accusata di blasfemia e vittima di un complotto che voleva sottrarre alla sua famiglia una proprietà terriera, ritiene la Commissione opportuno richiamare l'attenzione della comunità internazionale sull'utilizzo della legge antiblasfemia da parte dei paesi islamici come strumento per colpire le minoranze religiose?

— Può la Commissione far sapere lo stato di attuazione del quadro strategico e del piano d'azione dell'Unione Europea in materia di diritti umani e democrazia adottato il 25 giugno 2012 dal Consiglio «Affari esteri»?

— Con riferimento alla risoluzione del Parlamento europeo del 20 maggio 2010 sulla libertà religiosa in Pakistan (GU C 161 E del 31.5.2011 pag.147), in particolare ai paragrafi 7, 8, 9 e 10, ritiene la Commissione che il governo pakistano abbia accolto l'invito della comunità europea in merito alla questione della tutela delle minoranze religiose nel paese?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(6 settembre 2013)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è a conoscenza del caso di Sajjad Masih. Questo episodio ci ricorda che le leggi sulla blasfemia si prestano ad abusi. L'UE è impegnata in un dialogo regolare con il Pakistan in materia di diritti umani e ha espresso chiaramente il suo parere in merito alle leggi sulla blasfemia (cfr. le risposte alle interrogazioni E-10472/2012 e E-004204/2012).

Il piano d'azione sui diritti umani e la democrazia definisce 97 azioni che l'UE metterà in atto entro il 31 dicembre 2014. La relazione annuale dell'UE sui diritti umani include una sintesi aggiornata sull'attuazione del piano d'azione. Nove azioni previste dal piano d'azione dovevano essere attuate entro la fine del 2012: 6 a), 6 d), 7, 14 a),16 a), 18 c), 23 a), 25 b) e 30b). Sono stati compiuti importanti progressi nel conseguimento di quasi tutti questi obiettivi, mentre si sta lavorando per portare a termine le azioni restanti con scadenze previste nel 2013 e 2014.

Nella risoluzione del maggio 2010, il Parlamento europeo invitava il governo pakistano ad affrontare una serie di questioni relative ai diritti delle minoranze religiose. La situazione delle minoranze religiose in Pakistan continua tuttavia ad essere motivo di grave preoccupazione. Il Consiglio «Affari esteri» del marzo 2013 ha condannato fermamente nelle sue conclusioni tutti gli atti di violenza contro le minoranze religiose vulnerabili in Pakistan e ha sollecitato le autorità ad assicurare i colpevoli alla giustizia. Il Consiglio ha inoltre sottolineato l'intenzione dell'UE di impegnarsi con il neoeletto governo pakistano su temi prioritari, tra cui i diritti umani e la tutela delle minoranze.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008801/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: A Pakistani Christian condemned to life imprisonment

On 13 July 2013, the court of Gojra sentenced Sajjad Masih, a Pakistani Christian in the district of Pakpattan, to life imprisonment. The boy was arrested in December 2011 for violating the blasphemy law by sending text messages whose content was judged offensive by some Muslim clerics. Various religious figures from the area testified against Mr Masih in recent months. During the inquiry, investigators reconstructed the events caused by a dispute between Sajjad Masih and a relative, Roma. Since she had refused his offer of marriage, the young man allegedly took his revenge by sending blasphemous messages using a SIM card registered in the girl's name. The court of Toba Tek Singh also ordered Masih to pay a fine of INR 200 000 (around EUR 2 000).

— Is the Commission aware of these events?

— With reference to the events which occurred last year involving Rimsha Masih, falsely accused of blasphemy and the victim of a plot to obtain land from her family, does the Commission believe it necessary to draw the attention of the international community to the use of the blasphemy law in Islamic countries as an instrument to attack religious minorities?

— Can the Commission indicate the implementation status of the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy adopted on 25 June 2012 by the Foreign Affairs Council?

— With reference to the European Parliament resolution of 20 May 2010 on religious freedom in Pakistan (OJ C 161 E, 31.5.2011 p. 147), particularly paragraphs 7, 8, 9 and 10, does the Commission believe that the Pakistani Government has accepted the European community's invitation concerning the safeguarding of religious minorities in the country?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the case of Sajjad Masih. His case is an important reminder that the blasphemy laws are open to abuse. The EU engages in regular dialogue with Pakistan on human rights, and has made its views on the blasphemy laws clear (see replies to E-10472/2012 and E-004204/2012).

The action plan on Human Rights and Democracy sets out 97 actions that the EU will implement by 31 December 2014. The Annual EU Report on Human Rights comprises a summary of implementation of the action plan to date. Nine actions in the action plan (6(a), 6(d), 7, 14(a),16(a), 18(c), 23(a),25(b) and 30(b)) were to be implemented by the end of 2012. Significant progress has been made in achieving almost all of these objectives, while work is underway on the remaining actions with deadlines in 2013 and 2014.

The EP resolution of 2010 called on the Government of Pakistan to address a range of issues relating to the rights of religious minorities. Nevertheless, the situation for religious minorities in Pakistan continues to be a matter of serious concern. In March 2013 the EU Foreign Affairs Council conclusions strongly condemned all acts of violence against vulnerable religious minorities in Pakistan and urged the authorities to bring the perpetrators to justice. They also underlined EU plans to engage with the newly elected Pakistani government on priority issues including human rights and the protection of minorities.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008802/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(17 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: La diffamazione in internet

Internet, strumento potentissimo per la diffusione di comunicazioni e per lo scambio d'informazioni, viene sempre più spesso abusato da chi intende di diffondere un'offesa o far circolare delle falsità per colpire soggetti terzi.

Le statistiche dimostrano, infatti, che tra i reati commessi sulla rete, spicca, assieme alle violazioni in materia di diritto di autore e privacy, la diffamazione.

Dai social network dedicati ad accogliere le recensioni sulle strutture turistiche come Tripadvisor, a Facebook, dai blog ai quotidiani online, si moltiplicano i luoghi per gli abusi che possono danneggiare irrimediabilmente la reputazione di persone, aziende, prodotti, colpendo qualità personali o professionali e arrecando danni nell'ambito familiare, lavorativo e commerciale. Si passa dai danni economici per chi viene denigrato nella sua operatività commerciale, ai danni morali quando, via internet vengono diffuse offese e menzogne diffamanti su di un soggetto volte a ledere la sua reputazione e il suo onore. Fermare questo fenomeno non è facile: nello spazio virtuale, le parole restano in memoria per un tempo indefinito mentre le autorità di polizia e vigilanza postali, che devono gestire gli illeciti, denunciano le difficoltà e i costi delle indagini.

Se, da un lato, è necessario tutelare la possibilità di tutti i cittadini di esprimersi liberamente, divulgare informazioni e commenti, criticare comportamenti e idee, dall'altro lato occorre assicurare che chi venga colpito da diffamazione si veda assicurata la giusta tutela e che i soggetti diffamatori vengano individuati e perseguiti.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione indicare come intende assicurare alle vittime della diffamazione la possibilità di veder rettificate le informazioni che le riguardano, che ne venga cancellata la traccia da internet e che ci sia la reintegrazione e la riparazione dell'onore e della reputazione offesa?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(11 settembre 2013)

L'Unione non prevede attualmente di regolamentare aspetti di diritto penale relativi alla diffamazione: le leggi e le politiche degli Stati membri differiscono notevolmente per quanto riguarda le norme e le procedure in materia di diffamazione. Le obbligazioni extracontrattuali derivanti da violazioni della vita privata e dei diritti della personalità sono escluse dall'attuale campo di applicazione del regolamento (CE) n. 864/2007 sulla legge applicabile alle obbligazioni extracontrattuali (Roma II). La Commissione prevede tuttavia di adottare nell'ottobre 2013 una relazione in cui valuterà il funzionamento di tale regolamento. La relazione esaminerà in maniera approfondita gli sviluppi relativi al lavoro svolto a livello dell'UE nel settore della legge applicabile alle obbligazioni extracontrattuali che derivano da violazioni della vita privata e dei diritti della personalità.

La direttiva 95/46/CE ([1]) sulla protezione dei dati stabilisce le condizioni per il trattamento legittimo dei dati personali e i conseguenti diritti degli interessati, come il diritto di rettifica e cancellazione di dati personali incompleti o inesatti quando non siano più necessari per finalità legittime. Il «diritto all'oblio» contenuto nella proposta della Commissione per la riforma della protezione dei dati ([2]) si basa su tali diritti già esistenti.

Fatte salve le competenze della Commissione in quanto custode dei trattati, spetta alle autorità nazionali, comprese le autorità di controllo della protezione dei dati, monitorare l'applicazione delle misure nazionali che attuano la direttiva 95/46/CE per quanto riguarda la diffamazione nell'ambito del trattamento dei dati personali.

([1]) Direttiva 95/46/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 24 ottobre 1995, relativa alla tutela delle persone fisiche con riguardo al trattamento dei dati personali, nonché alla libera circolazione di tali dati (GU L 281 del 23.11.1995, pagg. 31-50).

([2]) COM(2012)11 def.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008802/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Internet defamation

The Internet, a very powerful message-sending and information-sharing tool, is increasingly being abused by those who wish to make offensive remarks or spread lies to harm others.

Statistics show, in fact, that defamation is one of the main offences committed online, together with copyright and privacy infringements.

From social networks dedicated to posting reviews of tourist facilities, such as TripAdvisor, to Facebook, blogs and online newspapers, more and more sites are open to abuse that can irreparably damage the reputation of individuals, businesses and products, undermining a person's character or professional standing and causing damage within family, work and commercial environments. Economic damage inflicted on those who are defamed in a business context becomes moral damage when the defamatory remarks or lies that are spread about a person via the Internet are intended to damage his reputation and good name. This phenomenon is difficult to stop: in the virtual space, anything that is written is stored indefinitely, while the Postal and Communications Police Service, which is supposed to deal with these offences, complains that investigations are costly and difficult.

While, on the one hand, every citizen's right to express himself freely, spread information, make comments and criticise others' behaviour and ideas must be protected, on the other hand, it is important to ensure that those who are defamed receive the protection they deserve and that the defamers are identified and prosecuted.

In view of the above, can the Commission say how it will ensure that victims of slander are able to have any information about them corrected, that all traces of that information are removed from the Internet and that the damaged reputation and good name of the victims are repaired and restored?

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

At the moment, there are no plans at Union level to regulate criminal law aspects of defamation: the Member States laws and policies differ considerable with regards to the rules and procedures concerning defamation. Non-contractual obligations arising out of violations of privacy and rights relating to personality are excluded from the current scope of the regulation (EC) No 864/2007 on the law applicable to non-contractual obligations (Rome II) The Commission expects however to adopt a report in October 2013 in which it will evaluate the operation of the Rome II Regulation. The report will take full stock of developments in respect of the work carried out at EU level in the field of the law applicable to non-contractual obligations arising out of violations of privacy and rights relating to personality.

The Data Protection Directive 95/46/EC ([1]) sets out the conditions for legitimate processing of personal data and the ensuing data subject rights, such as the right to rectification and erasure of incomplete or inaccurate personal data if they are no longer needed for any legitimate purpose. The 'right to be forgotten' contained in the Commission's data protection reform proposal ([2]) builds on these existing rights.

Without prejudice to the powers of the Commission as guardian of the Treaties, it is for the national authorities, including the data protection supervisory authorities, to monitor the application of the national measures implementing Directive 95/46/EC when it comes to the processing of personal data in an infamatory manner.

([1]) Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, OJ L 281, 23.11.1995, p. 31-50.
([2]) COM(2012) 11.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008803/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(17 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Tripadvisor: recensioni vere o false

Tripadvisor è il portale che raccoglie recensioni e commenti su hotel e ristoranti di tutto il mondo allo scopo di orientare i turisti nella scelta tra le diverse offerte disponibili. Trentadue milioni di visitatori ogni mese, oltre quindici milioni di membri e circa trenta milioni di giudizi su più di un milione di strutture ricettive fanno di Tripadvisor la «guida turistica virtuale» che esercita, oggi, più influenza sulle decisioni di viaggio di qualunque altro social network operante nel settore.

All'inizio del mese di febbraio 2013, l'Associazione veneziana degli albergatori (AVA) e l'Associazione di categoria Federalberghi Veneto hanno lanciato un serissimo allarme: attraverso la manipolazione fraudolenta del suo meccanismo di funzionamento, che permette di lasciare un commento a chiunque e non necessariamente a un cliente che ha usufruito del servizio, Tripadvisor può causare ingenti danni al turismo veneto e nazionale, esponendo al rischio di truffa numerosi consumatori e a quello di diffamazione numerosi imprenditori. Da un lato, infatti, numerose agenzie di consulenza hanno cominciato a offrire la vendita di pacchetti di recensioni positive che facciano guadagnare alla struttura più attrattività tra i viaggiatori/utenti di Tripadvisor, mentre, dall'altro lato, sfruttando l'interattività anche anonima dei *social network*, Tripadvisor può essere usato per diffondere recensioni negative con il solo scopo di screditare un operatore concorrente.

Può la Commissione dire:

— se è a conoscenza dei problemi e dei fenomeni denunciati dagli albergatori e dagli operatori turistici veneti;

— se è a conoscenza di analoghi problemi denunciati da albergatori, ristoratori e operatori turistici europei

— come intende tutelare il settore e i consumatori contro l'uso distorto e diffamatorio delle recensioni su Tripadvisor;

— se ritiene utile introdurre una regolamentazione trasparente e comune dei portali che offrono recensioni di hotel e ristoranti, agevolando ad esempio la creazione di sistemi chiusi in cui commenti e giudizi possano essere inseriti solo dai possessori di un codice rilasciato al momento del pagamento?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(10 ottobre 2013)

La Commissione è consapevole del problema generale delle false recensioni on line pur non essendo a conoscenza dell'esistenza di un problema specifico relativo al rating di alberghi e ristoranti nella regione del Veneto.

L'onorevole parlamentare dovrebbe sapere che già esiste una normativa dell'Unione che tutela i consumatori contro la pubblicità ingannevole.

La direttiva 2005/29/CE ([1]) prevede l'obbligo per i professionisti di non indurre in errore i consumatori per quanto riguarda una vasta gamma di elementi tra cui i motivi della pratica commerciale. Inoltre, la direttiva vieta (in tutte le circostanze), la prassi di presentarsi falsamente come consumatore (Allegato I n. 22).

Gli Stati membri sono responsabili dell'adozione di mezzi adeguati ed efficaci per combattere le pratiche commercialisleali. Dall'esperienza acquisita è emersa tuttaviala necessità di coordinare meglio l'applicazione delle norme, in particolare laddove si tratti di un problema ricorrente in diversi Stati membri. In linea con la strategia di protezione dei consumatori ([2]), la relazione sull'applicazione della direttiva 2005/29/CE ([3]) adottata il 14 marzo 2013, individua i settori chiave dove intervenire, tra cui il settore online come gli strumenti di controllo a disposizione dei clienti e i siti internet che permettono di confrontare i prezzi ([4]), dove l'applicazione delle norme andrebbe rafforzata.

([1]) GU L 149 dell'11.6.2005.
([2]) COM(2012)225.
([3]) COM(2013)139.
([4]) COM(2013)139, punto 3.4.2 Strumenti di controllo per i clienti e siti web per il confronto dei prezzi, pag. 24.

I partecipanti al dialogo tra tutte le parti interessate sugli strumenti di confronto (MSDCT) hanno inoltre raccomandato ([5]) che i gestori di strumenti di confronto adottino misure per garantire l'autenticità delle recensioni e dei rating dell'utilizzatore che vengono presentati, tra cui misure di natura tecnica che impediscano revisioni e rating automatici. Facendo seguito alla relazione MSCDT, la Commissione sta per avviare uno studio approfondito sugli strumenti di confronto e i relativi sistemi di verifica da parte di terzi. Lo studio dovrà in particolare esaminare come viene garantita la qualità e l'autenticità delle recensioni sugli strumenti di confronto e in che modo le recensioni influenzano il comportamento dei consumatori in materia di acquisti.

([5]) Relazione del dialogo tra tutte le parti interessate sugli strumenti di confronto:. http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/documents/consumer-summit-2013-msdct-report_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008803/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: TripAdvisor: real or fake reviews?

TripAdvisor is the website which gathers reviews and comments on hotels and restaurants from all over the world with the aim of helping tourists choose from the various options available. With 32 million visitors per month, over 15 million members and approximately 30 million opinions on more than 1 million lodgings, TripAdvisor is the virtual tourist guide that currently exerts the most influence on travel decisions out of all social networks in the sector.

At the start of February 2013, the Venetian Association of Hoteliers (AVA) and the hotel trade association Federalberghi Veneto sounded a serious alarm: since the website allows comments to be left by anyone, and not necessarily by a customer who used the service, this mechanism could be fraudulently manipulated. TripAdvisor could therefore cause substantial damage to tourism in the Veneto region and in Italy as a whole, placing countless consumers at risk of being conned, and numerous business owners at risk of defamation. On the one hand, countless consultancy agencies have begun to sell packages of positive reviews which make the accommodation more attractive to travellers/TripAdvisor users, whereas on the other hand, by exploiting the interactivity of social networks and the anonymity they provide, TripAdvisor can be used to publish negative reviews with the sole aim of discrediting a competitor.

— Is the Commission aware of the problems and phenomena reported by hoteliers and operators in the tourist industry in the Veneto region?

— Is the Commission aware of similar problems reported by hoteliers, restaurateurs and operators in the tourist industry in the EU?

— How will it protect the sector and consumers against the misuse and defamatory use of reviews on TripAdvisor?

— Does the Commission believe it would be helpful to introduce transparent, common regulation of websites which offer hotel and restaurant reviews, by facilitating, for example, the creation of closed systems where comments and opinions can only be posted by individuals who have a code issued at the time of payment?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(10 October 2013)

The Commission is aware of the general problem of online fake reviews, although it is not aware of a specific problem with hotels and restaurants' rating in the Veneto region.

The Honourable Member should know that there is already Union legislation which protects consumers against misleading advertising.

Directive 2005/29/EC ([1]) requires traders not to mislead consumers on a wide range of elements including the motives of a commercial practice. Furthermore, the directive prohibits (in all circumstances) the practice of falsely representing oneself as a consumer (Annex I n. 22).

Member States are responsible for setting up adequate and effective means to combat unfair commercial practices. However experience has shown a need for improving coordinated enforcement, in particular where a recurring problem arises in different Member States. In line with the Commission's Consumer Agenda ([2]), the report on the application of Directive 2005/29/EC ([3]) adopted on 14 March 2013 identifies key areas for actions, including the online sector such as customer review tools and price comparison websites ([4]), where enforcement should be stepped up.

([1]) OJ L 149, 11.6.2005.
([2]) COM(2012) 225.
([3]) COM(2013) 139.
([4]) COM(2013) 139, Section 3.4.2 Customer Review Tools and Price Comparison Websites, p. 22-24.

Participants to the Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Comparison Tools (MSDCT) also recommended ([5]) that comparison tools operators take measures to ensure the authenticity of the user reviews and ratings they feature, including technical measures against automated reviews and ratings. As a follow-up to the MSDCT report, the Commission is about to launch an in-depth study on comparison tools and related third-party verification schemes. The study will notably look into how the quality and authenticity of reviews on comparison tools is ensured and how reviews influence consumers' purchasing behaviour.

([5]) Report from the Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Comparison Tools:. http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/documents/consumer-summit-2013-msdct-report_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008804/13
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(17 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Scie chimiche e geo-ingegneria

Una vasta parte della comunità scientifica internazionale ritiene che le scie rilasciate dagli aerei disperdano nell'aria sostanze tossiche, quali alluminio, bario e ferro, e siano pertanto estremamente pericolose. La presenza di queste sostanze nell'atmosfera e gli effetti che hanno sull'uomo — si veda la sindrome di Morgellus, già oggetto d'interrogazione parlamentare (E-002906/2012) —, su fauna, flora e quindi sull'intera catena alimentare sono stati illustrati durante un seminario che si è tenuto in seno al Parlamento europeo nel marzo 2013.

Può la Commissione spiegare su quali basi scientifiche l'inalazione continuata di metalli pesanti e il depositarsi di essi sul suolo (contaminando acqua e cibo) siano del tutto innocui per il mantenimento di elevati standard qualitativi di vita di 500 milioni di europei?

Le informazioni pubbliche riguardo a scie chimiche e geo-ingegneria appaiono inadeguate. Solo sul sito del Parlamento tedesco è possibile trovare documenti che spiegano cosa sia la geo-ingegneria. Come mai questo tipo d'informazioni sono taciute nella gran parte degli Stati europei e dalla Commissione europea? Quale è il livello di coinvolgimento dell'Agenzia europea dell'ambiente?

Nel settembre 2009 (risposta all'interrogazione E-3730/2009 dell'on. Jim Higgins), la Commissione dichiarò di aver intenzione di seguire gli sviluppi scientifici in questo campo e di intervenire una volta che l'impatto fosse più chiaro. Può la Commissione riferire quale sia lo stato di avanzamento di questi sviluppi scientifici da lei seguiti?

Nel settembre 2011 (risposta all'interrogazione E-006621/2011 dell'on. Nessa Childers), la Commissione si impegnò a «indagare sulle ripercussioni climatiche non correlate alle emissioni di CO2 del settore aereo» e a «presentare una proposta in merito, nel quadro delle politiche globali dell'UE in materia di cambiamenti climatici in futuro». Può la Commissione fornire informazioni sullo stato di avanzamento di queste indagini e di tale proposta?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(3 settembre 2013)

Come affermato nella risposta all'interrogazione E-002906/2012, i dati scientifici disponibili indicano che le emissioni degli aeromobili non costituiscono una fonte rilevante di dispersione di metalli pesanti nell'atmosfera o nell'ambiente in generale. Sebbene vari metalli pesanti siano emessi nell'atmosfera da altre fonti, la loro inalazione diretta conta per una percentuale irrilevante nell'esposizione complessiva dell'uomo a tali inquinanti: questa dipende direttamente dai livelli elevati di tali metalli negli alimenti e nell'acqua potabile, la cui contaminazione è dovuta alle concentrazioni presenti in natura o alle emissioni nell'aria, nell'acqua e nel suolo. L'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità (OMS) ha esaminato il rischio sanitario complessivo derivante dall'esposizione ai metalli ([1]) riscontrandone la rilevanza, soprattutto a causa dei livelli elevati di cadmio, piombo e mercurio presenti nell'ambiente: i cittadini dell'Unione risentono quindi di questa situazione.

La Commissione non ha taciuto nessuna informazione in merito alle questioni sollevate nell'interrogazione. Poiché la funzione specifica dell'Agenzia europea dell'ambiente è fornire alle istituzioni dell'UE fatti e dati oggettivi sull'ambiente, le questioni sollevate nell'interrogazione esulano dal suo mandato. Peraltro l'Agenzia ha risposto sul suo forum pubblico ai quesiti che le sono stati sottoposti al riguardo ([2]).

La Commissione intende studiare gli effetti del trasporto aereo sul clima che esulano dalla problematica della CO_2 e sostiene le attività di ricerca in corso volte a quantificarli e a stabilire il modo in cui attenuarli. Al momento, tuttavia, la sua priorità è collaborare con l'Organizzazione per l'aviazione civile internazionale (ICAO) al fine di definire un approccio globale alla riduzione delle emissioni di CO_2 imputabili al trasporto aereo internazionale.

([1]) Relazione dell'OMS sui rischi costituiti dai metalli pesanti in conseguenza dell'inquinamento atmosferico transfrontaliero a grande distanza — http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/78649/E91044.pdf

([2]) Forum dell'AEA — http://community.eea.europa.eu/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008804/13
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Chemtrails and geo-engineering

Many in the international scientific community believe that the trails emitted by aircraft disperse toxic substances such as aluminium, barium and iron into the air, and are therefore extremely dangerous. The presence of these substances in the atmosphere and the effects that they have on humans — causing conditions such as Morgellons syndrome, which is already the subject of a parliamentary question (E-002906/2012) — on flora and fauna and hence on the entire food chain, were illustrated during a seminar held at the European Parliament in March 2013.

Can the Commission explain how, from a scientific point of view, the continuous inhalation of heavy metals and the settling of these on the ground (contaminating water and food) do not adversely affect the efforts of Europe's 500 million citizens to maintain a high quality of life?

Publicly available information on chemtrails and geo-engineering appears to be lacking. Documents explaining what geo-engineering is can only be found on the German Parliament's website. Why is this kind of information being withheld in most of the Member States and by the Commission? What is the extent of the European Environment Agency's involvement?

In September 2009 (answer to Written Question E-3730/2009 by Jim Higgins), the Commission said that it intended to follow scientific developments in this area and to take action once the impacts were better understood. Can the Commission indicate the current status of these scientific developments that it is following?

In September 2011 (answer to Written Question E-006621/2011 by Nessa Childers), the Commission pledged to 'investigate the non-CO2 climate impacts of aviation' and to 'deliver such a proposal as part of comprehensive EU climate change policies in the future'. Can the Commission explain what progress has been made with these investigations and with this proposal?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

As stated in the answer to the parliamentary Question E-002906/2012, the available scientific evidence indicates that aircraft emissions are not a significant source of heavy metals in the atmosphere nor the general environment. Although several of the heavy metals from other sources are emitted to the atmosphere, direct inhalation of heavy metals represents an insignficant fraction of total human exposure by these pollutants. The total human exposure is directly related to elevated levels of these metals in food and drinking water, which have been contaminated by naturally occurring levels or through releases to air, waters and soils. The total health risk of metals' exposure has been evaluated by the WHO ([1]) which finds that the risk is significant, particularly due to elevated levels of cadmium, lead and mercury in the environment and hence adversely affecting EU citizens.

The Commission has not withheld any information related to the issues raised in this parliamentary question. The specific role of the EEA is to provide the EU institutions with objective facts and information on the environment and the issues covered by this parliamentary question would go beyond that remit. In addition,, the EEA has received and answered queries related to these issues on their open EEA forum ([2]).

The Commission is committed to address the non-CO_2 climate impacts of aviation and supports the ongoing scientific research to quantify impacts and to identify how to mitigate the effects. However, at present its focus is to work through the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) to develop a global approach to mitigate the CO_2 emissions of international aviation.

([1]) WHO report Health risks of heavy metals from long-range transboundary air pollution, http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/ 0007/78649/ E91044.pdf
([2]) EEA Forum http://community.eea.europa.eu/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008805/13
alla Commissione
Franco Bonanini (NI)
(17 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Bando della Regione Basilicata Misura 214 — Azione 6 — Introduzione di tecniche di agricoltura conservativa

Il bando relativo alla Misura 214 — Azione 6 «Introduzione di tecniche di agricoltura conservativa» emanato dalla Regione Basilicata il 30 aprile 2013 nell'ambito del programma di sviluppo rurale della Basilicata PSR 2007/2013 riconosce all'articolo 4 che l'agricoltura conservativa «comporta una fase di significativa flessione produttiva, accompagnata ad un incremento sensibile di fitofarmaci e fertilizzanti da impiegare con oculatezza e frazionare in dosi ed epoche appropriate …».

Considerato che l'importo dei pagamenti previsti dal bando regionale per questa azione ha come effetto quello di penalizzare significativamente l'agricoltura biologica, per la quale sono previsti importi inferiori, può la Commissione chiarire se il bando menzionato sia compatibile nelle sue disposizioni con i principi generali del protocollo di Kyoto, con le strategie generali della UE in materia ambientale e con gli obiettivi generali del programma di sviluppo rurale o se non vada piuttosto nella direzione del sostegno a una modalità di agricoltura che utilizza in modo consistente e strutturato diserbanti e fitofarmaci di sintesi invece di incentivarne la progressiva sostituzione unitamente all'abbattimento dei gas a effetto serra?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(11 settembre 2013)

Nel contesto della gestione condivisa dei programmi di sviluppo rurale, la pubblicazione di bandi specifici e l'attuazione di misure previste nei programmi rientrano fra le responsabilità delle autorità nazionali e, nel caso specifico dell'Italia, di quelle regionali.

Desideriamo informare l'onorevole deputato che nel giugno 2013 la Regione Basilicata ha notificato una proposta di modifica del programma di sviluppo rurale, introducendo una nuova azione 6 agroambientale «Agricoltura conservativa» nell'ambito della misura 214. Tuttavia, la proposta è allo studio dei servizi della Commissione e non è ancora stata approvata dalla Commissione europea. I servizi della Commissione valuteranno se la proposta di modifica è conforme ai regolamenti dell'UE in materia di sviluppo rurale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008805/13
to the Commission
Franco Bonanini (NI)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Basilicata Regional Government Invitation to Tender, Measure 214 — Action 6 — Introduction of conservation agriculture techniques

The invitation to tender relating to Measure 214 — Action 6 'Introduction of conservation agriculture techniques', issued by the Basilicata Regional Government on 30 April 2013, within the context of the Basilicata RDP 2007/2013 Regional Development Programme, recognises, in Article 4, that conservation agriculture 'includes a phase of considerably reduced production, combined with a significant increase in pesticides and fertilisers which must be used with caution and applied in appropriate doses and at suitable periods…'

Considering that the amount of the payments stipulated by the regional invitation to tender for this measure heavily penalises organic farming, for which lower payments are stipulated, can the Commission clarify whether the provisions of this invitation to tender are compatible with the general principles of the Kyoto Protocol, the EU's general environmental strategy and the general objectives of the Rural Development Programme, or whether it instead seeks to support a method of agriculture which makes consistent and structured use of synthetic herbicides and pesticides instead of encouraging the progressive replacement of such chemicals together with the reduction of greenhouse gases?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(11 September 2013)

In the context of shared management of rural development programs (RDPs), the launching of specific calls for applications and the implementation of measures foreseen in the programmes belongs to the national authorities, and in the case of Italy, to the regional authorities.

We would like to inform the Honourable Member that in June 2013 the Region Basilicata notified a proposal for a modification to the RDP, introducing a new agro-environmental action 6 'Conservation agriculture' within measure 214. However the proposal is currently under evaluation by the Commission Services, and not yet accepted by the European Commission. The Commission services will assess whether the modification proposal is in line with the EU regulations on rural development.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008806/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(17 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: 2015, Año Europeo del Patrimonio Industrial

La Asamblea Parlamentaria del Consejo de Europa promueve, en su Resolución 1924(2013) ([1]), la protección del patrimonio industrial europeo. En el apartado 3 apoya la campaña iniciada por la Federación Europea de Asociaciones de Patrimonio Industrial y Técnico (E-FAITH) ([2]) para que el año 2015 sea declarado «Año Europeo del Patrimonio Industrial». Adjuntamos la lista de países y asociaciones que han apoyado esta iniciativa ([3]).

En el apartado 5, la Asamblea invita a la Unión Europea y a la Unesco a sumarse a esta campaña de promoción y, en concreto, a apoyar la declaración del año 2015 como «Año Europeo del Patrimonio Industrial».

A la luz de lo anterior:

1. ¿Tiene previsto la Comisión sumarse a esta campaña de protección?

2. ¿Va a apoyar la Comisión la declaración del año 2015 como «Año Europeo del Patrimonio Industrial»?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(3 de septiembre de 2013)

La protección del patrimonio cultural, incluido el patrimonio industrial, es sobre todo competencia de los Estados miembros. Con arreglo al artículo 167 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la UE, la acción de esta se limita a favorecer la cooperación entre EM y a apoyar y completar la acción de estos, a fin de conservar y proteger el patrimonio cultural de importancia europea.

Por lo tanto, hay una financiación importante de la UE disponible para proteger el patrimonio industrial. El Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional [Reglamento (CE) n° 1080/2006], por ejemplo, considera prioritarias a las regiones industriales en crisis. También se han publicado anualmente licitaciones para apoyar el desarrollo o la mejora de las rutas que explotan nuestro patrimonio cultural e industrial europeo. El Premio Unión Europea de Patrimonio Cultural se concede también periódicamente a emplazamientos del patrimonio industrial, como el premio de este año al Puerto de Hidroaviones de Tallin.

La Comisión está trabajando con la Presidencia lituana para poner de relieve el conjunto de iniciativas y programas de la UE que pueden utilizarse para proteger y promover el patrimonio cultural, en una conferencia que se celebrará en Vilna los días 13 y 14 de noviembre.

La Comisión ha examinado con interés la Resolución 1924(2013) del Consejo de Europa, incluida la propuesta para que 2015 sea declarado «Año Europeo del Patrimonio Industrial». Sin embargo, la Comisión ya ha adoptado una propuesta para que 2015 sea declarado Año Europeo del Desarrollo. Este proyecto de Decisión COM(2013) 509 está siendo considerado actualmente por el Parlamento Europeo y el Consejo.

([1]) http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/XRef/X2H-DW-XSL.asp?fileid=19512&lang=en
([2]) http://www.e-faith.org/
([3]) http://www.e-faith.org/home/?q=content/endorsements (19 países y más de 130 asociaciones).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008806/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: 2015, European Industrial Heritage Year

In its resolution 1924(2013) ([1]), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe promotes the protection of European industrial heritage. Paragraph 3 supports the campaign started by the European Federation of Associations of Industrial and Technical Heritage (E-FAITH) ([2]) calling for 2015 to be declared 'European Industrial Heritage Year'. Attached is the list of countries and associations that have lent their support to this initiative ([3]).

In paragraph 5, the Assembly calls on the European Union and Unesco to take part in the promotional campaign and, in particular, to support making 2015 'European Industrial Heritage Year'.

1. Does the Commission intend to take part in this protection campaign?

2. Will the Commission support making 2015 'European Industrial Heritage Year'?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

The protection of cultural heritage, including industrial heritage, is primarily the responsibility of Member States. Under Article 167 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, action by the EU is limited to encouraging cooperation between MS and supporting and supplementing their action, with a view to conserving and safeguarding cultural heritage of European significance.

Significant EU funding is therefore available to protect industrial heritage. The European Regional Development Fund (Regulation EC1080/2006) for instance identifies declining industrial regions as a priority. Calls for proposals have also been launched on an annual basis to support the development or improvement of transnational Routes exploiting our European cultural and industrial heritage. The EU Prize for Cultural Heritage is also regularly awarded to industrial heritage sites, such as this year's award to Tallinn Seaplane Harbour.

The Commission is working with the Lithuanian Presidency to highlight the range of EU policies and programmes which can be used to protect and promote cultural heritage, at a conference in Vilnius on 13-14 November.

The Commission has reviewed with interest Council of Europe resolution 1924(2013), including the proposal to designate 2015 'European Industrial Heritage Year'. However the Commission has already adopted a proposal for 2015 to be designated the European Year of Development. This draft Decision COM(2013) 509 is now being considered by the European Parliament and Council.

([1]) http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/XRef/X2H-DW-XSL.asp?fileid=19512&lang=en
([2]) http://www.e-faith.org/
([3]) http://www.e-faith.org/home/?q=content/endorsements (19 countries and over 130 associations).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008807/13
an die Kommission
Hermann Winkler (PPE)
(17. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Exzellenz-Zeremonie Innovationspartnerschaft „Aktivitäten und Gesundheit im Alter“ am 1.7.2013 in Brüssel

Im Rahmen der Innovationspartnerschaft „Aktivitäten und Gesundheit im Alter“ wurde ein Projekt des Freistaats Sachsen erfreulicherweise mit 2 von 3 Sternen ausgezeichnet. Im Rahmen der Verleihungszeremonie am 1.7.2013 in Brüssel wurde diese Auszeichnung von einem Mitarbeiter des Sächsischen Staatsministeriums für Soziales und Verbraucherschutz entgegen genommen. Angesichts der europaweiten Bedeutung dieser Auszeichnung wäre die Übergabe an einen protokollarisch höherrangigen Verantwortungsträger des Freistaats, auch im Sinne einer größeren Öffentlichkeitswirksamkeit, angemessen gewesen. Auf entsprechende Nachfrage im Sächsischen Staatsministerium für Soziales und Verbraucherschutz hieß es, dass seitens der Europäischen Kommission trotz wiederholtem Ersuchen um Informationen zur Platzierung des Freistaats Sachsen zwecks Vorbereitung der Teilnahme keine Auskunft erteilt wurde. Daraufhin sei mangels notwendiger Entscheidungsgrundlage von der Anreise eines Regierungsmitglieds Abstand genommen worden.

1. Teilt die Kommission die Einschätzung, dass eine rechtzeitige Vorabinformation der Preisträger zu Planungszwecken sowohl organisatorischer als auch protokollarischer Usus gewesen wäre?

2. Wurde dem Sächsischen Staatsministerium für Soziales und Verbraucherschutz die Auskunft verweigert? Falls ja, warum ist dies geschehen?

3. Inwiefern hält die Kommission im Allgemeinen die Teilnahme nationaler oder regionaler Regierungsmitglieder bei hochrangigen Verleihungszeremonien für verzichtbar?

4. Teilt die Kommission die Einschätzung, dass die Teilnahme eines Mitglieds der sächsischen Staatsregierung bei der Zeremonie im Sinne der Öffentlichkeitswirksamkeit wünschenswert und protokollarisch geboten gewesen wäre?

5. Welche Schlussfolgerungen zieht die Kommission aus dem dargelegten Sachverhalt, und wie plant sie, derlei Vorkommnisse künftig zu vermeiden?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(12. September 2013)

Am 1. Juli 2013 nahmen Vertreter 31 europäischer Regionen an der Verleihungszeremonie teil, bei der Referenz-Websites im Rahmen der Innovationspartnerschaft „Aktivität und Gesundheit im Alter“ ausgezeichnet wurden. Alle Referenz-Websites waren Gewinner und wurden mit einem bis drei Sternen als Anerkennung für die Arbeit in ihrer Region ausgezeichnet.

Vertreter aller Referenz-Websites wurden am 3. Mai zu der Veranstaltung eingeladen, wobei die Einladungen über vereinbarte Kontaktstellen übermittelt wurden. Die Eingeladenen wurden darüber informiert, dass die Ergebnisse erst bei der Verleihungszeremonie selbst bekanntgegeben würden. Alle Eingeladenen hatten zuvor ein Papier erhalten, in dem das Verfahren dargestellt wurde, und hatten Gelegenheit, sich dazu zu äußern.

Die Sterne-Einstufung wurde keiner der Referenz-Sites vor der Veranstaltung mitgeteilt, um Unabhängigkeit und Gleichbehandlung sicherzustellen. Außerdem hätte eine frühere Bekanntgabe der Ergebnisse dem zuvor vereinbarten Verfahren widersprochen. An der Veranstaltung nahmen mehrere Vertreter von Regionen auf Ministerialebene sowie Stadtbürgermeister teil.

Die Kommission hatte gegenüber allen Referenz-Websites angeregt, dass sie einen hochrangigen Vertreter, eine für die fachliche Seite zuständige Person und einen Vertreter der lokalen Medien zu der Veranstaltung entsenden.

Angesichts des Interesses, auf das die Veranstaltung gestoßen ist, wird das Vorgehen bei der Einladung für künftige Zeremonien im Lichte der Erfahrungen überprüft. Außerdem wird das Verfahren für die endgültige Beurteilung und die Verleihungszeremonie mit künftigen Referenz-Website-Kandidaten erörtert werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008807/13
to the Commission
Hermann Winkler (PPE)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Excellence Award Ceremony for the Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing, held on 1 July 2013 in Brussels

As part of the Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing, a project from the Federal State of Saxony was fortunate to be awarded two out of three stars. During the award ceremony, which took place on 1 July 2013 in Brussels, this award was accepted by an employee from Saxony's State Ministry of Social Affairs and Consumer Protection. In view of the significance of this award across Europe, it would have been appropriate for the award to have been presented to a formally higher-ranking senior official from Saxony, even if only for the sake of greater publicity. When a relevant enquiry was made to Saxony's State Ministry of Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, it was stated that, in spite of repeated requests for information about Saxony's placing so that preparations could be made to attend the event, no information was forthcoming from the Commission. Subsequently, due to the lack of information required to reach a decision, the idea of a government member travelling to the event was discounted.

1. Does the Commission agree that it would have been customary, both from an organisational and official perspective, to inform the prize-winners beforehand in good time to enable them to plan their arrangements?

2. Was Saxony's State Ministry of Social Affairs and Consumer Protection refused the relevant information? If so, why did this happen?

3. To what extent does the Commission think, in general, that members of national or regional governments need to attend high-level award ceremonies?

4. Does the Commission agree that, in terms of publicity, it would have been desirable and in keeping with protocol for a member of Saxony's State Government to attend the ceremony?

5. What conclusions does the Commission draw from this matter, and how does it intend to prevent such situations from arising in the future?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 September 2013)

On 1 July 2013, representatives of 31 European regions participated in the Reference Sites Star Award Ceremony as part of Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing. All reference sites were winners, receiving between one and three stars in recognition for the work they carry out in their own region.

All Reference Sites were invited to the event on 3 May with invitations sent to agreed contact points. The invitees were informed that this was an awards ceremony whereby the results would be revealed only at the time of the ceremony. All invitees received in advance a Guidance Paper outlining the process and were given the opportunity to comment.

The star ranking results were not revealed to any Reference Site prior to the event to ensure independence and equal treatment. Furthermore, earlier disclosure of the results would have been contradictory to the process agreed upon earlier. Several regional ministerial level representatives or city mayors participated in the event.

The Commission encouraged all Reference Sites to be represented by a high-level representative, a technical representative and a representative of their local media to the event.

Given the interest the event generated, the invitation process for future ceremonies will be revised in view of experience. The final assessment and awards ceremony overall procedure will be also subject to discussions and agreement with the future candidate Reference Sites.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008808/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(17 Ιουλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Νομικό καθεστώς του Κέντρου Ανάλυσης Πληροφοριών της ΕΕ

Η υπόθεση ηλεκτρονικής κατασκοπείας της Εθνικής Υπηρεσίας Ασφαλείας των ΗΠΑ σε βάρος των θεσμών της Ένωσης καθώς και ευρωπαϊκών χωρών, μεταξύ των οποίων και της Ελλάδας, έχει προκαλέσει τις διαμαρτυρίες της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής καθώς και των κυβερνήσεων των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ που φέρεται να αποτέλεσαν στόχοι της αμερικανικής κατασκοπείας. Την ίδια στιγμή, ωστόσο, η νομική ασάφεια που περιβάλλει τη λειτουργία του Κέντρου Ανάλυσης Πληροφοριών (ΚΑΠ) της ίδιας της ΕΕ γεννά ερωτήματα σχετικά με την αξία που προσδίδει η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή στην ανάγκη να υφίσταται αντίστοιχος δημοκρατικός έλεγχος στις δομές της σε ό, τι αφορά τον τομέα της ασφάλειας.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη:

— ότι η απόφαση περί ιδρύσεως της ΕΥΕΔ (Ευρωπαϊκή Υπηρεσία Εξωτερικής Δράσης) δεν εμπεριέχει διατάξεις για την τυπική εγκαθίδρυση του Κέντρου Ανάλυσης Πληροφοριών της ΕΕ (Intelligence Analysis Centre), γεγονός που συνεπάγεται ότι το Κέντρο λειτουργεί χωρίς καταστατικό κείμενο στο οποίο αποτυπώνονται ευκρινώς η εντολή και οι αρμοδιότητές του,

— ότι το ΚΑΠ αρνήθηκε να παράσχει, ύστερα από σχετικό αίτημα της Μη Κυβερνητικής Οργάνωσης Statewatch, ουσιώδη πληροφόρηση σχετικά με τη θεματολογία των διαβαθμισμένων εγγράφων του κατά το πρώτο εξάμηνο του 2012, γεγονός εξαιρετικά ασυνήθιστο δεδομένου ότι σε περιπτώσεις όπου άλλοι θεσμοί της ΕΕ, όπως το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο, αρνούνται να δημοσιοποιήσουν ευαίσθητα έγγραφα, εντούτοις δεν παρέλκουν να αναφέρουν τη θεματολογία των εγγράφων αυτών,

ερωτώ την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

— Προτίθεται να διευκρινίσει το νομικό καθεστώς που διέπει τη λειτουργία του ΚΑΠ και να διευκρινίσει ποια είναι η εντολή αλλά και οι αρμοδιότητές της;

— Προτίθεται να διασφαλίσει τον εποπτικό ρόλο του Κοινοβουλίου, ο οποίος οπωσδήποτε τίθεται εν αμφιβόλω όταν ουσιαστικά αποκλείεται από τη ροή διαβαθμισμένης πληροφόρησης;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Το Κέντρο Ανάλυσης Πληροφοριών της ΕΕ (ΚΑΠ) έχει διαδεχτεί το Κέντρο Επιχειρήσεων της ΕΕ (SITCEN), το οποίο αναφέρεται στο άρθρο 4, παράγραφος 3, στοιχείο α), τρίτη περίπτωση της απόφασης του Συμβουλίου της 26ης Ιουλίου 2010 (απόφαση για τον καθορισμό της οργάνωσης και της λειτουργίας της Ευρωπαϊκής Υπηρεσίας Εξωτερικής Δράσης). Η προαναφερθείσα αναφορά στο SITCEN χρησιμοποιείται ως νομική βάση για το ΚΑΠ που έχει αναλάβει τα καθήκοντα ανάλυσης πληροφοριών του SITCEN.

Επιπλέον, πρέπει να υπενθυμιστεί ότι σε απαντήσεις σε προηγούμενες ερωτήσεις ([1]) η ΥΕ/ΑΠ έχει παράσχει το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο πλήρη επισκόπηση της δομής και των δραστηριοτήτων του ΚΑΠ. Ωστόσο, η παροχή λεπτομερών πληροφοριών σχετικά με το αντικείμενο των εκθέσεών του θα υπονόμευε τον απόρρητο χαρακτήρα των εκθέσεων που συντάσσονται από το ΚΑΠ. Αναλυτικές εκθέσεις του ΚΑΠ, οι οποίες χαρακτηρίζονται διαβαθμισμένες, περιορισμένης χρήσης, εμπιστευτικές ή απόρρητες δεν μπορούν να συγκριθούν από την άποψη αυτή με έγγραφα του Συμβουλίου που δεν είναι διαβαθμισμένα αλλά μόνο φέρουν την ένδειξη LIMITE (και άρα, δεν πρέπει να δημοσιοποιούνται).

Οι εξουσίες και οι αρμοδιότητες του ΚΑΠ (καθώς και του προκατόχου του SITCEN) έχουν αναλυθεί διεξοδικά σε διάφορες απαντήσεις προς το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο, τόσο από το Συμβούλιο (στο οποίο υπαγόταν το SITCEN μέχρι την 1.1.2011), όσο και από την ΥΕ/ΑΠ. Δείγμα των απαντήσεων παρατίθεται ανωτέρω.

([1]) E-009092/2012, E-009091/2012, E-006027/2012, E-006022/2012, E-006020/2012, E-006019/2012, E-006018/2012, E-006017/2012.

Τέλος, πρέπει να τονιστεί ότι, όπως αναφέρεται σε προηγούμενες απαντήσεις προς το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο, το ΚΑΠ είναι υπό τον πλήρη επιχειρησιακό έλεγχο της ΥΕ/ΑΠ και ότι όλοι οι κανόνες της ΕΕ όσον αφορά την προστασία των δεδομένων, την πρόσβαση σε έγγραφα και την ασφάλεια των πληροφοριών εφαρμόζονται πλήρως και στο ΚΑΠ. Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι το ΚΑΠ δεν επεξεργάζεται δεδομένα προσωπικού χαρακτήρα αλλά ασχολείται μόνο με θέματα στρατηγικής ανάλυσης, δεν προβλέπεται περαιτέρω κοινοβουλευτικός έλεγχος.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008808/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Legal status of EU Intelligence Analysis Centre

Electronic spying by the US National Security Agency on the institutions of the Union and its Member States, including Greece, has provoked protests on the part of the European Commission and by the governments of the EU Member States which were apparently the target of US spying. At the same time, however, the lack of legal transparency surrounding the EU Intelligence Analysis Centre (IAC) is giving rise to questions as to the value which the European Commission attaches to the need for democratic scrutiny of its structures in the security sector.

In view of the fact that:

— the decision to establish the European External Action Service (EEAS) contains no provisions governing the formal establishment of the EU Intelligence Analysis Centre, meaning that the Centre operates without any statutes clearly setting out its brief and powers;

— the IAC refused to provide material information on the subject-matter of its classified documents during the first half of 2012 at the request of the non-governmental organisation Statewatch, which is most unusual, given that, in cases where other EU institutions, such as the European Council, refuse to publish sensitive documents, they have no compunction about disclosing the subject-matter of such documents,

will the Commission say:

— Does it intend to investigate the legal status under which the IAC operates and to clarify what its brief and powers are?

— Does it intend to safeguard the supervisory role of Parliament, which is called into question whenever it is basically excluded from the flow of classified information?

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

The EU INTCEN (EU Intelligence and Analysis Centre) is the successor of the EU Situation Centre (EU SITCEN), which is mentioned in Article 4, paragraph 3, sub (a), third indent of the Council Decision of 26 July 2010 (Decision establishing the organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service). The aforementioned reference to the EU SITCEN serves as legal basis for EU INTCEN, which has taken over the intelligence and analytical tasks of EU SITCEN.

It should furthermore be recalled that in answers to previous questions ([1]) the HR/VP has provided the EP a full overview of the structure and activities of EU INTCEN. Providing detailed information regarding the subject-matter of its reports would however undermine the confidentiality of the reports drawn up by EU INTCEN. Analytical reports of EU INTCEN classified, restricted, confidential or secret can in this respect not be compared with Council documents that are not classified but only marked LIMITE (thus not to be disclosed to the public).

The powers and competencies of EU INTCEN (as well as of its predecessor EU SITCEN) have been spelled out in detail in various answers to the EP, both by the Council (to which EU SITCEN belonged until 1.1.2011) as well as by the HR/VP. A sample of the answers is listed above.

Finally, it should be stressed that, as indicated in the previous answers to the European Parliament, EU INTCEN is under full operational control of the HR/VP and that all EU rules regarding data protection, access to documents and security of information apply in full to EU INTCEN. Bearing in mind that EU INTCEN is not handling personal data and only producing strategic analysis, further parliamentary supervision is not foreseen.

([1]) E-009092/2012, E-009091/2012, E-006027/2012, E-006022/2012, E-006020/2012, E-006019/2012, E-006018/2012, E-006017/2012.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008809/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(17 Ιουλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Έντονος κίνδυνος κερδοσκοπίας ξένων funds σε βάρος των υπερχρεωμένων νοικοκυριών

Όπως είναι γνωστό, οι ιδιαίτερα επώδυνες επιπτώσεις της κοινωνικοοικονομικής κρίσης στην Ελλάδα με τη ραγδαία αύξηση της ανεργίας, την καθίζηση της εμπορικής και παραγωγικής δραστηριότητας, καθώς και τις μεγάλες μειώσεις στις εργασιακές αμοιβές, έχουν δημιουργήσει ένα σοβαρό και εκτεταμένο πρόβλημα για χιλιάδες ελληνικά νοικοκυριά που αδυνατούν να ανταποκριθούν στις δανειακές τους υποχρεώσεις με κίνδυνο να απολέσουν σημαντικό μέρος ή και το σύνολο της περιουσίας τους.

Γι' αυτό το λόγο, το Ελληνικό Κράτος προέβη στην απαγόρευση πλειστηριασμού της πρώτης κατοικίας, ενώ οι δανειολήπτες, είτε μέσω της νομικής οδού, είτε μέσα από διμερείς συνεννοήσεις-ρυθμίσεις με τα Τραπεζικά Ιδρύματα, αναζητούν τρόπους για τη βιώσιμη διαχείριση και αντιμετώπιση του εν λόγω κρίσιμου ζητήματος. Σύμφωνα, όμως, με δημοσιεύματα στον εγχώριο Τύπο, παρατηρείται έντονη κινητικότητα των hedge funds ως προς την αγορά των μη εξυπηρετούμενων τραπεζικών δανείων που αγγίζουν το 30%. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Σε αυτήν την περίπτωση και καθώς τα hedge funds δεν διαθέτουν τη δομή των Τραπεζικών Ιδρυμάτων ως προς τη δυνατότητα συνεννοήσεων και διακανονισμών, ποιες εκτιμά ότι μπορεί να είναι οι συνέπειες τόσο στις ρυθμίσεις δανείων, όσο και ως προς τη συνολικότερη αποδυνάμωση της προστασίας των δανειοληπτών;

— Πώς κρίνει το ενδεχόμενο ανάπτυξης έντονων κερδοσκοπικών πρακτικών σε βάρος των Ελλήνων δανειοληπτών από την εμπλοκή των hedge funds στη διαχείριση των μη εξυπηρετούμενων ενυπόθηκων δανείων, με δεδομένη και τη μεγάλη υποτίμηση της αξίας των ακινήτων που παρατηρείται στην Ελλάδα;

— Διαθέτει στοιχεία από προηγούμενη εμπειρία για τις επιπτώσεις από ανάλογη μαζική εμπλοκή των hedge funds στην αγορά μη εξυπηρετούμενων ενυπόθηκων δανείων εντός ή εκτός ΕΕ;

— Υπάρχουν πληροφορίες για αντίστοιχες τάσεις από hedge funds και σε άλλες χώρες της ΕΕ (π.χ. Ισπανία, Πορτογαλία) που καταγράφονται υψηλά ποσοστά μη εξυπηρετούμενων δανείων;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Αυγούστου 2013)

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή γνωρίζει τη δυσχερή οικονομική κατάσταση στην οποία έχουν περιέλθει τα νοικοκυριά εξαιτίας της οικονομικής κρίσης στην Ελλάδα και έχει εξετάσει το συγκεκριμένο θέμα στο πλαίσιο του δεύτερου προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα. Κατά την αξιολόγηση της προόδου του προγράμματος αυτού τον Μάιο του 2013 και προκειμένου να βρεθεί μια εύλογη λύση για τα νοικοκυριά που βρίσκονται σε δυσχερή κατάσταση, το Μνημόνιο Οικονομικής και Χρηματοπιστωτικής Πολιτικής προβλέπει στην παράγραφο 25 ([1]) (σελίδα 134) ότι οι αρχές, σε διαβούλευση με το προσωπικό των ΕΕ/ΕΚΤ/ΔΝΤ, θα καταρτίσουν ένα νέο «Πρόγραμμα Διευκόλυνσης» για άτομα με χαμηλό εισόδημα που αντιμετωπίζουν μεγάλες οικονομικές δυσχέρειες, έτσι ώστε να διευκολυνθεί η τακτοποίηση του μη βιώσιμου χρέους των νοικοκυριών. Η αναγκαία νομοθεσία για αυτό το νέο «Πρόγραμμα Διευκόλυνσης» θεσπίστηκε τον Ιούνιο του 2013. Η τακτική συμμετοχή στο πρόγραμμα θα επιτρέψει στα νοικοκυριά να αποφύγουν εξώσεις, ούτως ώστε να εξασφαλιστεί η προστασία της ιδιοκτησίας τους.

Η σχέση ανάμεσα στον ενυπόθηκο δανειολήπτη και τον δανειοδότη διέπεται από την εκάστοτε μεμονωμένη σύμβαση ενυπόθηκου δανείου. Ακόμη και στην περίπτωση που το ενυπόθηκο δάνειο μεταφερθεί σε hedge fund, τα δικαιώματα του δανειολήπτη διέπονται από τη σύμβαση αυτή. Εάν ο δανειολήπτης συμμετέχει στο προαναφερθέν «Πρόγραμμα Διευκόλυνσης», προστατεύεται από τις διατάξεις του νόμου αυτού.

Οι ελληνικές αρχές δεν παρέχουν λεπτομερείς πληροφορίες όσον αφορά το μερίδιο των εκκρεμών ενυπόθηκων δανείων που έχουν μεταφερθεί σε hedge funds τελευταία. Κατά συνέπεια, είναι δύσκολο να κρίνει την έκταση του ζητήματος.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp148_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008809/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Serious risk of speculation by foreign funds to the detriment of over-indebted households

As we all know, the very painful repercussions of the socioeconomic crisis in Greece, with spiralling unemployment, the collapse of commercial and productive activity and huge wage cuts, have caused a serious and prolonged problem for thousands of Greek households, which are unable to service their loans and risk losing a large part and/or all of their property.

The Greek Government has therefore banned auctions of primary residences and borrowers are looking for ways of viably managing and addressing this crucial issue, either via legal channels or under bilateral agreements/regulation with the banks. However, according to articles in the Greek press, there has been a great deal of activity by hedge funds, which have bought up close to 30% of non-performing bank loans. In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— In such cases and as hedge funds are not structured in the same way as banks in terms of the facility to enter into agreement and regulation, what does it consider may be the impact both on loan regulation and on the overall reduction in protection for borrowers?

— How does it rate the likelihood of seriously speculative practices developing to the detriment of Greek borrowers from the involvement of hedge funds in the management of non-performing mortgages, given the massive drop in value of property in Greece?

— Does it have information from previous experience from the repercussions of mass involvement by hedge funds in buying up non-performing mortgages inside or outside the EU?

— Does it have information on similar action by hedge funds in other EU countries (such as Spain or Portugal) with high rates of non-performing loans?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(27 August 2013)

The European Commission is aware of the difficult financial situation of households due to the economic crisis in Greece, and has addressed this issue in the context of the Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece. In the context of the second programme review in May 2013, and in order to find a sensible solution for households in distressed situations, the Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies (MEFP) stipulated in paragraph 25 ([1]) (page 134) that the Authorities, in consultation with the EC/ECB/IMF staff, would introduce a new 'Facilitation Programme' targeted to low-income individuals in financial distress to facilitate the resolution of unsustainable household debt. The necessary legislation for this new 'Facilitation Programme' has been introduced in June 2013. Regular participation in the scheme will allow households to avoid evictions, thus providing protection to their property.

The relationship between mortgage borrower and lender is governed by the individual mortgage loan agreement. Even in the event of a mortgage transfer to a hedge fund, the borrower`s rights are determined by this agreement. If the borrower participates in the "Facilitation Programme", as described above, he/she is protected by the provisions of this law.

The Greek Authorities do not provide detailed information on what part of outstanding mortgage loans have been acquired by hedge funds lately. Therefore, it is difficult to judge the scope of the issue.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp148_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008810/13
al Consiglio
Franco Bonanini (NI)
(17 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Attuazione negli Stati membri della legislazione europea in materia di cooperazione di polizia e giudiziaria in campo penale adottata prima del trattato di Lisbona

A partire dal 1° dicembre 2014 si applicherà il regime ordinario (controllo della Commissione e della Corte di giustizia) anche alle misure europee in materia di cooperazione di polizia e giudiziaria in campo penale adottate prima dell'entrata in vigore del trattato di Lisbona (ad esempio, la convenzione del 2000 in materia di cooperazione giudiziaria in campo penale, le decisioni quadro in materia di squadre investigative comuni, terrorismo, mandato d'arresto europeo, blocco dei beni, procedure «in absentia», nonché misure quali la direttiva sulla tutela penale dell'ambiente, la cosiddetta «iniziativa svedese», la decisione di Prüm, ecc.).

La verifica della trasposizione effettiva di queste misure nella legislazione nazionale spetta tuttora al Consiglio, ma pur trattandosi di norme che ricadono ormai nei campi di responsabilità del Parlamento europeo, nessuna informazione è mai stata trasmessa al colegislatore, che è quindi privato delle informazioni minime necessarie all'esercizio del suo ruolo.

Alla luce di ciò, non ritiene il Consiglio che una forma di leale cooperazione fra istituzioni dell'UE prevedrebbe di:

— inviare al Parlamento europeo, per ciascuna delle misure di cui all'articolo 10 del protocollo 36, una relazione sullo stato di attuazione negli Stati membri con l'indicazione delle difficoltà sinora riscontrate?

— mettere in opera, dopo quattro anni dall'entrata in vigore dell'articolo 70 del TFUE, una sistematica e neutrale valutazione reciproca di queste misure d'intesa con la Commissione e coinvolgendo i parlamenti nazionali, sulla falsariga del meccanismo recentemente adottato per la valutazione della cooperazione di Schengen?

— indicare d'urgenza al Parlamento europeo i problemi emersi in caso di sovrapposizione o non coordinamento reciproco fra le misure di cui al protocollo 36?

— informare il Parlamento europeo sul possibile impatto dell'annunciato opt-out inglese dalle misure di cui al protocollo 36?

Non ritiene il Consiglio che misure adottate in un contesto istituzionale totalmente differente debbano essere riviste e che tale revisione comporti una valutazione a partire da dati reali relativi all'impatto delle misure già adottate e all'effettiva interoperabilità a livello di UE delle misure decise a livello nazionale?

Risposta
(5 novembre 2013)

Il Consiglio riceve notifiche da parte degli Stati membri e pubblica documenti pubblici (cfr., ad es., doc. 6298/12 (Notifica dell'attuazione della decisione quadro 2008/909/GAI del Consiglio da parte della Danimarca) e doc. 8437/12 (Notifica dell'attuazione della decisione quadro 2009/948/GAI del Consiglio da parte della Repubblica federale di Germania)). Il Parlamento europeo dovrebbe ricevere dalla Commissione europea relazioni riguardanti la verifica e la valutazione delle misure in vigore (cfr., ad es., l'articolo 34 della decisione quadro 2002/584/GAI e l'articolo 23 della decisione quadro 2008/978/GAI).

Sinora, la Commissione europea non ha presentato alcuna proposta ai sensi dell'articolo 70 del TFUE. Tuttavia, nell'ambito dell'azione comune del 5 dicembre 1997 (GU L 344 del 15 dicembre 1997, pag. 7), sono stati effettuati cinque cicli di valutazioni, che riguardavano l'assistenza giudiziaria in materia penale, l'applicazione della legge e il suo ruolo nella lotta contro il narcotraffico, lo scambio di informazioni e di intelligence rispettivamente tra Europol e Stati membri e tra Stati membri, l'applicazione pratica del mandato di arresto europeo e delle corrispondenti procedure di consegna tra Stati membri, nonché la criminalità finanziaria e le indagini finanziarie. Il sesto ciclo di valutazione concerne l'attuazione pratica e il funzionamento della decisone 2002/187/GAI del Consiglio, del 28 febbraio 2002, che istituisce l'Eurojust per rafforzare la lotta contro le forme gravi di criminalità e della decisone 2008/976 del Consiglio relativa alla Rete giudiziaria europea in materia penale. Il Parlamento europeo ha ricevuto le relazioni finali sulle valutazioni reciproche (cfr., ad es., doc. 8302/4/09 REV 4 (Relazione finale sul quarto ciclo di valutazioni reciproche: l'applicazione pratica del mandato di arresto europeo e delle corrispondenti procedure di consegna tra Stati membri)).

Il Consiglio non è a conoscenza di problemi emersi in caso di sovrapposizione o non coordinamento reciproco fra le misure di cui al protocollo 36. I registri di tali difficoltà si possono tuttavia trovare nelle relazioni di Eurojust o di Europol, che sono periodicamente pubblicate (ad es. doc. 8179/13 (Relazione annuale sulle attività di EUROJUST 2012) e doc. 10182/13 (Rapporto generale sulle attività svolte da Europol nel 2012)).

Il Consiglio ha ricevuto la notifica dell'intenzione del governo del Regno Unito di avvalersi della clausola di esclusione dalle misure di cui al protocollo 36. Quando la posizione del Regno Unito sarà definitiva, il Consiglio ne esaminerà approfonditamente l'impatto per quanto concerne le misure connesse a Schengen. L'esame delle questioni non connesse a Schengen sarà effettuato dalla Commissione europea.

In base all'articolo 5 del protocollo 2, sull'applicazione dei principi di sussidiarietà e di proporzionalità, i progetti di atti legislativi dovrebbero essere accompagnati da una scheda contenente elementi circostanziati che consentano di valutare il rispetto dei principi di sussidiarietà e di proporzionalità. Tale scheda dovrebbe includere, tra l'altro, una valutazione delle implicazioni derivanti dalle norme che gli Stati membri devono introdurre e, ove possibile, indicatori quantitativi in grado di argomentare le ragioni che hanno portato a concludere che un obiettivo dell'Unione può essere conseguito meglio a livello di quest'ultima. Il Consiglio constata che la proposta della Commissione europea soddisfa gli obblighi relativamente a questa valutazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008810/13
to the Council
Franco Bonanini (NI)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Implementation in the Member States of EU legislation on police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters adopted prior to the Treaty of Lisbon

As from 1 December 2014, the ordinary regime (supervision by the Commission and the Court of Justice) will also apply to EU measures in the field of police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters adopted before the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty (such as the 2000 Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, framework decisions on joint investigation teams, terrorism, the European Arrest Warrant, freezing of assets, procedures in absentia, as well as measures such as the directive on the protection of the environment through criminal law, the so-called Swedish Initiative and the Prüm Decision).

Verification of the actual implementation of these measures into national legislation is still incumbent on the Council, but even though such legislation is now the responsibility of the European Parliament, no information has ever been sent to the co-legislator, which is therefore deprived of the minimum information needed to exercise its role.

In light of this, does the Council not consider that a form of sincere cooperation between EU institutions would mean:

— submitting a report to the European Parliament on the current status of implementation in the Member States of each of the measures referred to in Article 10 of Protocol 36, with an indication of the difficulties encountered so far;

— four years after the entry into force of Article 70 TFEU, carrying out a systematic and neutral mutual evaluation of these measures, in agreement with the Commission and with the involvement of national parliaments, on the model of the mechanism recently adopted for the evaluation of Schengen cooperation;

— urgently informing the European Parliament of any problems identified in cases of overlap or non-mutual coordination among the measures set out in Protocol 36;

— informing the European Parliament of the possible impact of the announced British opt-out from the measures referred to in Protocol 36?

Does the Council not consider that measures taken in a totally different institutional context should be revised and that such a revision should involve an assessment based on real data on the impact of the measures that have already been adopted and on the actual interoperability at EU level of measures decided at national level?

Reply
(5 November 2013)

The Council receives notifications from Member States and issues public documents (see e.g. 6298/12 (Notification of the implementation of the Council Framework Decision 2008/909/JHA by Denmark) and 8437/12 (Notification of the implementation of the Council Framework Decision 2009/948/JHA by Federal Republic of Germany). The European Parliament should receive reports concerning the verification and assessment of the existing measures from the European Commission (see e.g. Article 34 of Framework Decision 2002/584/JHA and Article 23 of Framework Decision 2008/978/JHA).

There has as yet been no proposal from the European Commission under Article 70 TFEU. However, five cycles of evaluations have been conducted on the basis of the Joint Action of 5 December 1997 (OJ L 344 of 15 December 1997, p. 7); they concerned mutual legal assistance in criminal matters, law enforcement and its role in the fight against drug trafficking, exchange of information and intelligence between Europol and the Member States and among the Member States respectively, the practical application of the European Arrest Warrant and corresponding surrender procedures between Member States, and financial crime and financial investigations. The sixth evaluation round concerns the practical implementation and operation of Council Decision 2002/187/JHA of 28 February 2002 setting up Eurojust with a view to reinforcing the fight against serious crime and of Council Decision 2008/976/JHA on the European Judicial Network in criminal matters. The European Parliament has received final reports from the mutual evaluations (see e.g. 8302/4/09 REV 4 (Final report on the fourth round of mutual evaluations: the practical application of the European Arrest Warrant and corresponding surrender procedures between Member States)).

The Council has not received any information concerning problems identified in cases of overlap or non-mutual coordination among the measures set out in Protocol 36. However, records of such difficulties might be found in the regularly published Eurojust or Europol reports (e.g. 8179/13 (EUROJUST Annual Report 2012) and 10182/13 (General Report on Europol's activities in 2012)).

The Council has received notification of the intention of the British Government to opt out from the measures referred to in Protocol 36. Once the position of the UK is final, the Council will carefully study its impact as regards Schengen-related measures. The examination of non-Schengen-related matters will be carried out by the European Commission.

According to Article 5 of Protocol 2, on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, draft legislative acts should contain a detailed statement making it possible to appraise compliance with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. This statement should *inter alia* contain some assessment of implications for the rules to be put in place by Member States and, wherever possible, quantitative indicators substantiating the reasons for concluding that a Union objective can be better achieved at Union level. The Council notes that the European Commission in its proposals fulfils the obligations concerning this assessment.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008811/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(17 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per la realizzazione di un documentario su padre Ernesto Balducci

Padre Ernesto Balducci (1922-1992) è stato uno dei personaggi di maggior spicco nella cultura del mondo cattolico italiano nel periodo che accompagnò e seguì il Concilio Vaticano II.

La Fondazione Balducci e il Comune di Fiesole insieme all'Associazione «Percorsi d'arte» (editoria nel settore dell'arte e della cultura) vorrebbero realizzare un documentario a valenza storica, politica, religiosa e sociale per divulgare il pensiero e le azioni di padre Balducci, la cui aspirazione era quella di fondare un'autentica cultura della pace, in una prospettiva di superamento del sistema basato sulla centralità degli Stati sovrani, vedendo nella crescita della dimensione cosmopolita un aspetto fondamentale per realizzare una fase più avanzata della civiltà umana.

In questo quadro, diventa importante la costruzione dell'Unione europea come grande democrazia sovranazionale.

Per realizzare il documentario, che si articolerà in tre parti, si utilizzeranno gli scritti, le omelie e le interviste rese da Padre Balducci, oltre che materiale di repertorio. Il documentario avrà come curatori principali il Prof. Andrea Cecconi (come responsabile scientifico) e il regista Adolfo Lippi. Occorrerà iniziare con una serie di sopralluoghi e ricerche, per poi procedere alle riprese vere e proprie, montaggio, edizione e distribuzione.

Considerato che il settore audiovisivo è uno strumento essenziale per la trasmissione e lo sviluppo dei valori culturali europei, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. se la realizzazione del documentario descritto è ammissibile al sostegno finanziario europeo,

2. quali interventi sono previsti nel settore audiovisivo e della cultura per il periodo 2014-2020 con particolare riferimento al programma Europa Creativa;

3. se è in grado di fornire il quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(30 agosto 2013)

Nel quadro dell'attuale programma MEDIA 2007 e del suo successore, il sotto-programma MEDIA nell'ambito del programma «Europa creativa», la Commissione europea erogherà finanziamenti al settore audiovisivo europeo. In tale contesto è possibile concedere un sostegno, tra l'altro, allo sviluppo di opere audiovisive, compresi i documentari.

Le regole che disciplinano il sostegno finanziario dei programmi della Commissione europea, compreso il programma «Europa creativa», stabiliscono che la Commissione non può concedere finanziamenti diretti ai progetti. Tutti i finanziamenti sono erogati sulla base di specifici inviti a presentare proposte cui fa seguito un processo di selezione indipendente. Le organizzazioni che soddisfano le condizioni stabilite in tali inviti e nelle rispettive linee guida possono candidarsi a una sovvenzione.

Tutte le necessarie informazioni sull'attuale programma MEDIA e sul futuro programma «Europa creativa» sono disponibili sul sito EUROPA all'indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/media/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008811/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Possible funding to make a documentary about Father Ernesto Balducci

Father Ernesto Balducci (1922-1992) was a leading figure in Italian Catholic culture during the Second Vatican Council and the following period.

The Balducci Foundation and the Municipal Government of Fiesole, together with the Percorsi d'arte association (which produces publications in the arts and culture sector) would like to make a historical, political, religious and social documentary to disseminate the ideas and actions of Father Balducci. He aspired to found a true culture of peace with a view to overcoming the system based on the centrality of sovereign States, and viewed the growth of cosmopolitanism as essential to the achievement of a more advanced stage of human civilisation.

In this context, the building of the European Union as a great supranational democracy becomes important.

This documentary, which will be in three parts, will use Father Balducci's writings and sermons, interviews with him, and archive material. The main documentary makers will be Professor Andrea Cecconi (scientific expert) and the producer Adolfo Lippi. It will be necessary to undertake a series of visits and research before carrying out the actual filming, editing, production and distribution.

Considering that the audiovisual sector is an essential vehicle for conveying and developing European cultural values, can the Commission clarify:

1. whether the above documentary is eligible for European financial support;

2. what interventions are planned in the audiovisual and culture sector for the period 2014-2020 with particular reference to the Creative Europe programme;

3. whether it is able to provide an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(30 August 2013)

In the framework of the current MEDIA 2007 Programme and its successor the MEDIA Sub-programme of the Creative Europe Programme, the European Commission will provide funding for the European audiovisual sector. In this context support will be given *inter alia* for the development of audiovisual works including documentaries.

The rules governing the financial support programmes of the European Commission, including the Creative Europe Programme, state that the Commission cannot grant direct funding to projects. All grants are awarded on the basis of specific calls for proposals followed by an independent selection process. Organisations that comply with the conditions laid down in these calls and in the respective guidelines can apply for a grant

All the necessary information on the current MEDIA programme and the future Creative Europe programme is available on the Europa website at: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/media/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008812/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(17 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Riconoscimento della sensibilità chimica multipla

La sensibilità chimica multipla (MCS) è una sindrome organica complessa, che porta reazioni multiorgano a seguito della esposizione a sostanze chimiche anche in percentuali minime (subtossiche), normalmente tollerate dalla popolazione generale. Il malato di MCS sviluppa una sensibilità/intollerabilità a più sostanze chimiche, oltre che a campi elettromagnetici di diversa frequenza, che non gli consentono di vivere negli ambienti comunemente frequentati nella vita ordinaria: case, uffici, scuole, mezzi di trasporto. Si tratta di una patologia irreversibile e progressiva e non esiste al momento una cura per il ritorno allo stato originario: il suo evolversi e cronicizzarsi possono essere limitati mediante cure in strutture altamente specializzate. Simili strutture esistono già in alcuni Stati membri dove i malati possono ricevere accoglienza, cura e tutela giuridica, ma non in Italia, dove i malati risultano essere privi di riconoscimento giuridico e mancano strutture di ricezione e di cura. Le strutture ospedaliere non sono dotate di stanze deputate a accogliere e assistere tali malati. Solo alcune Regioni hanno riconosciuto l'MCS come malattia, mediante l'istituzione di Centri di riferimento regionali (CRR) con funzione, tuttavia, sostanzialmente amministrativa in quanto accreditati solo a rilasciare la certificazione di diagnosi della malattia. Ne deriva una situazione discriminatoria a livello europeo nella diagnosi e nel trattamento dei malati di MCS.

Poiché le malattie rare sono patologie potenzialmente letali o cronicamente debilitanti, da tempo l'UE si impegna, tra l'altro, per migliorarne il riconoscimento e la visibilità, assicurarne una codificazione e tracciabilità adeguate in tutti i sistemi di informazione sanitaria, nonché preservare la qualità di vita e la capacità dei pazienti di contribuire alla società.

Tutto ciò premesso e nel rispetto dell'articolo 168 TFUE, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se sono stati finanziati progetti europei nel settore della MCS;

2. quali azioni sono previste nella nuova programmazione 2014-2020 a favore della ricerca sulle malattie rare;

3. se è prevista l'istituzione di un ufficio di coordinamento di esperti europei o comitato scientifico di ricerca quale strumento di ricerca, confronto, condivisione scientifica e supporto alle politiche UE in merito alla MCS;

4. se è in grado di fornire un quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(2 settembre 2013)

La sensibilità chimica multipla (MCS) non figura nell'elenco della Classificazione statistica internazionale delle malattie e dei problemi sanitari correlati (ICD 10) né è attualmente annoverata tra le malattie rare.

1. Sebbene nessun progetto dedicato specificamente all'MCS abbia ottenuto fondi dal settimo programma quadro, la Commissione ha comunque finanziato altri progetti pertinenti, volti ad esempio a studiare l'eventuale rapporto di causa-effetto tra esposizione a sostanze chimiche e rischi per la salute. Come esempio si può citare l'attuale finanziamento di un progetto sui disturbi dello spettro autistico collegati all'esposizione a sostanze chimiche neurotossiche ([1]). Una panoramica dei progetti finanziati è disponibile al pubblico ([2]).

2. Nella proposta relativa a Orizzonte 2020, il programma quadro di ricerca e innovazione (2014-2020), la Commissione prospetta il proseguimento del sostegno alla ricerca volta a migliorare la salute e il benessere in tutto l'arco della vita ([3]). In questa fase del processo legislativo, tuttavia, non è possibile prevedere lo stanziamento di eventuali fondi a quest'area di ricerca.

([1]) DENAMIC — Developmental neurotoxicity assessment of mixtures in children (Studio della neurotossicità delle miscele nello sviluppo infantile) — www.denamic-project.eu.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/environment/pdf/european_research_on_environment_and_health_fp6.pdf; http://ec.europa.eu/research/environment/pdf/fp7_catalogue_eh.pdf; http://ec.europa.eu/research/environment/pdf/fp7_catalogue_eh_projects_february_2012.pdf
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0811:FIN:it:PDF.

3. Al momento la Commissione non prevede l'istituzione di un ufficio dedicato all'MCS che ricalchi il modello citato dalla Onorevole deputata nell'interrogazione.

4. Il quadro generale della situazione è esposto supra.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008812/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Recognition of multiple chemical sensitivity

Multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS) is a complex organic syndrome involving multi-organ reactions following exposure to chemicals, even at minimal (sub-toxic) concentrations which are normally tolerated by the general population. An MCS sufferer develops a sensitivity/intolerance to several chemicals, as well as to electromagnetic fields of varying frequency, which means that they are unable to live in environments commonly frequented in the course of normal life: homes, offices, schools and means of transport. This is an irreversible, progressive disorder for which there is currently no cure to restore the body to its original state: its development and chronic nature can be limited by treatment in highly specialised facilities. Such facilities already exist in some Member States where sufferers can be admitted, treated and receive legal protection, but not in Italy, where sufferers have no legal recognition and there are no centres where they can be admitted and treated. Hospitals are not equipped with rooms suitable for admitting and taking care of these sufferers. Only a few regions in Italy have recognised MCS as a disease, by establishing Regional Reference Centres. However, these centres have an essentially administrative function since they are only accredited to issue certificates diagnosing the disease. This gives rise to a discriminatory situation at EU level with regard to the diagnosis and treatment of MCS sufferers.

Since rare diseases are potentially life-threatening or chronically debilitating, the EU has been committed for some time to improving their recognition and visibility, to ensuring that they are adequately coded and traceable in all health information systems, as well as to maintaining patients' quality of life and their ability to contribute to society.

In light of the above and in accordance with Article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, can the Commission state:

1. whether funding has been provided for European projects in the MCS sector;

2. what actions are envisaged in the new programming period 2014-2020 to promote research into rare diseases;

3. whether there are any plans to establish an office to coordinate European experts or a scientific research committee as an instrument for research, dialogue, scientific exchange and support for EU policies with regard to MCS;

4. whether it is able to provide an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) is not listed as a disease in the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD 10) and it is not currently referred to as a rare disease.

1. Although projects with a specific focus on MCS have not been funded through FP7, the Commission has funded other relevant projects, for example, aiming to assess the linkage between exposure to chemicals and potential health risks. For example, it is currently funding a project on autism-spectrum disorders related to exposure to neurotoxic chemicals ([1]). An overview of funded projects is available ([2]).

2. The Commission proposal for Horizon 2020, the framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020), envisages further support for research to improve lifelong health and wellbeing ([3]). At this stage of the legislative process, however, it is not possible to predict the possible allocation of funds to this area of research.

3. At the moment the Commission does not foresee the establishment of an office focused on MCS, as the one the Honourable Member is enquiring about.

4. An overview of the situation is given above.

([1]) DENAMIC — Developmental neurotoxicity assessment of mixtures in children- www.denamic-project.eu
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/environment/pdf/european_research_on_environment_and_health_fp6.pdf; http://ec.europa.eu/research/environment/pdf/fp7_catalogue_eh.pdf; http://ec.europa.eu/research/environment/pdf/fp7_catalogue_eh_projects_february_2012.pdf
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0811:FIN:en:PDF

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008813/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(17 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per raccolta e stoccaggio dei rifiuti plastici

Una piccola impresa con sede legale nella regione Lazio si occupa, da oltre 30 anni, di recupero e riciclaggio di materiale plastico, proveniente soprattutto da circa 3000 aziende agricole (teloni per coperture, pacciamatura, tubi per irrigazioni e contenitori in plastica in genere) in diverse regioni italiane. In effetti i prodotti a supporto della pratica agricola diventano, al termine del loro utilizzo, dei rifiuti da smaltire, incidendo sul bilancio ambientale ed economico dell'azienda agricola.

L'impresa vorrebbe attuare un piano di investimento destinato a tre principali macro-aree:

— rafforzamento della struttura produttiva, tra cui l'acquisto di terreni industriali (ove insediare un nuovo sito di recupero e riciclaggio) e ammodernamento infrastrutturale (incluso l'acquisto di nuovi macchinari per la lavorazione e il processo aziendale);

— miglioramento dell'impatto ambientale;

— sviluppo occupazionale, con conseguente aumento della stabilità finanziaria dell'impresa e miglioramento della competitività.

Il recente Libro verde «Una strategia europea per i rifiuti di plastica nell'ambiente» ha avviato un'ampia riflessione su possibili risposte alle sfide politiche pubbliche poste dai rifiuti di plastica, visto il diffuso utilizzo di questo materiale. Inoltre, ha evidenziato come una migliore gestione dei rifiuti di plastica sia una sfida che può costituire anche un'opportunità per contribuire a raggiungere gli obiettivi della tabella di marcia verso un'Europa efficiente nell'impiego delle risorse, oltre ad aiutare a ridurre le emissioni di gas a effetto serra e le importazioni di materie prime e combustibili fossili. Infine, l'adozione di misure specifiche per il riciclaggio della plastica può giovare anche alla competitività, oltre a creare opportunità economiche e posti di lavoro.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. il progetto descritto è ammissibile a finanziamenti europei?

2. Quali azioni sono previste in tale settore nell'ambito della programmazione 2014-2020?

3. Qual è il quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(2 settembre 2013)

1. Le sovvenzioni assegnate dalla Commissione europea possono essere richieste nell'ambito di una serie di programmi ([1]), alcuni dei quali potrebbero essere rilevanti per la raccolta e lo stoccaggio dei rifiuti di plastica. I finanziamenti per progetti tecnologici innovativi che offrono vantaggi ambientali significativi, comprese soluzioni per quanto concerne la raccolta, il trattamento e lo smaltimento dei rifiuti nell'Unione europea, sono messi a disposizione attraverso il programma LIFE+ Politica e governance ambientali ([2]).

2. Il 19 febbraio 2013 ([3]) è stato pubblicato l'ultimo invito nell'ambito dell'attuale programma LIFE + il cui termine ultimo di presentazione era il 26 giugno 2013. I regolamenti LIFE per il periodo per 2014/2020 sono ancora in fase di discussione a livello interistituzionale. Pertanto, allo stadio attuale, non è possibile fornire una risposta sui criteri di ammissibilità che saranno applicati.

Informazioni circa altri programmi di finanziamento dell'UE che riguardano gli investimenti in materia ambientale, sono reperibili qui ([4]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/index_it.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/index.htm
([3]) Gazzetta ufficiale (2013/C 47/21).
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/otherfunding.htm

3. Il Libro verde sui rifiuti di plastica pubblicato dalla Commissione nel marzo 2013 ([5])indica che nel 2008 nell'UE sono stati prodotti circa 25 milioni di tonnellate di rifiuti di plastica . Di questi 12,1 milioni di tonnellate (48,7 %) sono stati smaltiti in discarica, mentre 12,8 milioni di tonnellate (51,3 %) sono stati recuperati, e solo 5,3 milioni di tonnellate sono sono stati riciclati (21,3 %). Per il 2015 si prevede un aumento globale del 30 % del riciclaggio meccanico (da 5,3 a 6,9 milioni di tonnellate), ma la messa in discarica e l'incenerimento con recupero di energia dovrebbero rimanere le principali soluzioni di gestione dei rifiuti.

([5]) COM(2013)123 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008813/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Possible funding for collection and storage of waste plastic

For more than 30 years, a small enterprise based in the Lazio region has been recovering and recycling plastics, the majority of which come from some 3 000 farms (tarpaulins for vineyard cover, plastic mulch, irrigation pipes and plastic containers in general) in various Italian regions. Once they have been used, agricultural support products become waste that needs to be disposed of, thus impacting on the farm's financial and environmental balance sheet.

The company wishes to implement an investment plan in three main macro-areas:

— strengthening its production structure, including the purchase of industrial land (where a new collection and recycling site will be installed) and infrastructure modernisation (including the purchase of new materials-processing and business-process machinery);

— improving its environmental impact;

— creating jobs, so that it has more financial stability and can compete better.

The recent Green Paper 'A European Strategy on Plastic Waste in the Environment' has prompted a broad debate about possible ways of addressing the public policy challenges posed by plastic waste, given the widespread use of this material. It has also highlighted how better management of plastic waste is a challenge that can also be an opportunity to help achieve the objectives of the Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe, as well as helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and imports of raw materials and fossil fuels. Lastly, the adoption of specific measures for the recycling of plastics could also benefit competitiveness, as well as creating economic opportunities and jobs.

In view of the above, can the Commission:

1. say whether the above project is eligible for EU funding;

2. say what actions are envisaged in this area in the 2014-2020 programming period;

3. provide an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

1. European Commission grants can be sought under a number of programmes ([1]), some of which might be of relevance for the collection and storage of waste plastic. Funding for innovative technological projects that offer significant environmental benefits, including solutions concerning the collection, treatment and disposal of waste in the EU, has been available through the LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance programme ([2]).

2. The last call under the current LIFE+ Programme was published on 19 February 2013 ([3]) with a deadline for submission on 26 June 2013. The LIFE Regulations for 2014/2020 is still being discussed at interinstitutional level. Therefore, at this point in time, it is not possible to formulate an answer on the eligibility criteria which will be applied.

Information about other EU funding programmes which target investment in the environment can be found here ([4]) .

3. The Green Paper on plastic waste published by the Commission in March 2013 ([5]) indicates that around 25 Mt of plastic waste was generated in the EU in 2008. Of this 12.1 Mt (48.7%) was landfilled while 12.8 Mt (51.3%) went to recovery, and only 5.3 Mt (21.3%) was recycled. A projection to 2015 assumes an overall increase of 30% in the level of mechanical recycling (from 5.3 Mt to 6.9 Mt), but landfilling and incineration with energy recover are expected to remain the predominant waste management pathways.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/index.htm
([3]) Official Journal (2013/C 47/21).
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/otherfunding.htm
([5]) COM(2013) 123 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008814/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(17 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Realizzazione di scuole calcio per ragazzi diversamente abili

Il progetto pilota dell'Associazione sportiva dilettantistica Total Sport affiliata ad A.S.C. (Attività Sportive Confederate, ente riconosciuto dal CONI), sviluppato sul territorio di Torino, prevede la creazione di una rete di scuole calcio dislocate sul territorio nazionale, denominate TOTAL SPORT ACADEMY.

L'obiettivo di realizzare un torneo di calcio italiano per ragazzi con disabilità cognitiva, relazionale, affettivo-emotiva e comportamentale vedrà il primo progetto pilota sul territorio piemontese a partire da ottobre 2013.

Il progetto si prefigge di garantire ai ragazzi diversamente abili un servizio di qualità direttamente presso le loro città e coinvolge ragazzi e ragazze diversamente abili. È strutturato in gruppi di lavoro composti da 6 ragazzi, supervisionati da coach sia dell'area tecnica che medico-psicologica. Il rapporto tecnico-iscritto sarà di 1 a 3.

Lo sport può contribuire positivamente alla crescita europea, alle possibilità di occupazione per i cittadini, alla coesione sociale, riducendo al contempo la spesa sanitaria.

Considerando inoltre che lo sport, anche a livello agonistico, non dovrebbe essere precluso a ragazze e ragazzi diversamente abili e che le attività fisiche, oltre a portare grandi benefici per la salute, sono anche uno strumento di socializzazione e inclusione sociale, può la Commissione:

1. chiarire se esistano finanziamenti per la realizzazione del progetto descritto;

2. indicare quali misure e azioni sono previste nel settore dello sport; e

3. fornire un quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(27 agosto 2013)

Il progetto cui fa rifermento l'onorevole parlamentare è incentrato sull'inclusione sociale attraverso lo sport. Conformemente alla strategia europea sulla disabilità 2010-2020, l'inclusione sociale, così come l'accessibilità e le pari opportunità per le persone con disabilità costituiscono temi centrali dell'approccio strategico della Commissione in materia di sport. La loro importanza è stata sottolineata nel Libro bianco sullo sport del 2007 e nella comunicazione «Sviluppare la dimensione europea dello sport» del 2011.

In linea di principio il contributo finanziario della Commissione a progetti specifici è accessibile solo nell'ambito di inviti aperti a presentare proposte. I progetti relativi allo sport devono inoltre avere una dimensione transnazionale per essere ammissibili al contributo finanziario della Commissione.

Dal 2009 al 2013 sono state organizzate azioni preparatorie relative allo sport mediante inviti annuali a presentare proposte che prevedevano un'ampia gamma di priorità. Nel 2009 sono stati finanziati due progetti a titolo della priorità «Promozione dei valori fondamentali dell'Europa favorendo lo sport per le persone disabili»; nel 2010 sono stati finanziati cinque progetti a titolo della priorità «Promozione dell'inclusione sociale nello sport e attraverso di esso». La Commissione continuerà a garantire un sostegno a questo tipo di progetti nel quadro del futuro programma Erasmus+ che avrà inizio nel 2014.

L'articolo 11 del futuro programma comprende in effetti la priorità «promuovere l'inclusione sociale, le pari opportunità e l'attività fisica a vantaggio della salute aumentando la partecipazione alle attività sportive». La Commissione desidera inoltre richiamare l'attenzione dell'onorevole parlamentare sulle sue risposte alle interrogazioni E-008248/2013 ed E-008168/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008814/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Creation of football schools for young people with disabilities

The pilot project being launched in Turin by the amateur sports association Total Sport, which is affiliated to the ASC ('Attività Sportive Confederate', an agency recognised by the Italian National Olympic Committee), involves setting up a network of football schools across the country, known as the Total Sport Academy.

The aim is to start up an Italian football tournament for young people with cognitive, relational, affective/emotional and behavioural disabilities, and the first pilot project is set to take place in the Piedmont area in October 2013.

The project aims to provide young people with disabilities with a quality service in their own home towns and involves both boys and girls with disabilities. The boys and girls are divided into groups of six, and are supervised by coaches with technical and medical/psychological skills. The ratio of coaches to players will be 1:3.

Sport can make a positive contribution to growth in Europe, to employment opportunities for citizens and to social cohesion, while at the same time reducing healthcare costs.

In addition, considering that sport, even at a competitive level, should also be made available to girls and boys with disabilities and that physical activity, as well as providing great health benefits, promotes socialisation and social inclusion, can the Commission:

1. clarify whether any funding is available for the above project;

2. indicate what measures and actions are envisaged in the sports sector; and

3. provide an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(27 August 2013)

The project referred to by the Honourable Member focuses on social inclusion through sport. In line with the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, social inclusion as well as accesibility and equal opportunities for people with a disability are key themes in the Commission's sport policy approach. Their importance has been underlined in the 2007 White Paper on Sport and the 2011 Communication 'Developing the European Dimension in Sport'.

As a matter of principle, Commission funding for specific projects is only available within the context of open calls for proposals. Moreover, projects in the field of sport have to have a transnational dimension in order to be eligible for Commission funding.

Preparatory actions in the field of sport were organised from 2009 to 2013 through annual calls for proposals including a wide range of priorities. In 2009, two projects were funded under the priority 'Promoting European fundamental values by encouraging sport for persons with disabilities'; in 2010, five projects were funded under the priority 'Promoting social inclusion in and through sport'. The Commission will continue ensuring the support for this type of projects under the future Erasmus+ programme which will start in 2014.

In fact, Article 11 of the future programme includes the priority 'to promote social inclusion, equal opportunities and health-enhancing physical activity through increased participation in sport'. The Commission would also like to draw the Honorouble Member's attention to its replies given to questions E-008248/2013 and E-008168/2013 ([1]).

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

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008815/13
do Komisji
Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR)
(17 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Propozycja prywatyzacji oczyszczalni ścieków „Czajka" w Warszawie, zbudowanej ze środków UE

Jak informują organizacje pozarządowe, władze Warszawy rozważają możliwość prywatyzacji miejskiego przedsiębiorstwa będącego właścicielem oczyszczalni ścieków Czajka, wybudowanej w 62 % ze środków Unii Europejskiej.

Wobec powyższego zwracam się do Komisji z zapytaniem, czy w świetle przepisów Unii Europejskiej możliwa jest sytuacja, w której Unia Europejska w znacznym stopniu współfinansuje budowę obiektu użyteczności publicznej będącego własnością Skarbu Państwa lub samorządu terytorialnego, a następnie obiekt ten zbywany jest podmiotowi prywatnemu?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Johannesa Hahna w imieniu Komisji
(5 września 2013 r.)

Zgodnie z art. 57 ust. 1 rozporządzenia Rady (WE) nr 1083/2006 ([1]) państwa członkowskie muszą zagwarantować, że „operacja zachowuje wkład funduszy, wyłącznie jeżeli operacja ta, w terminie pięciu lat od zakończenia operacji (…) nie zostanie poddana zasadniczym modyfikacjom: a) mającym wpływ na jej charakter lub warunki jej realizacji lub powodującym uzyskanie nieuzasadnionej korzyści przez przedsiębiorstwo lub podmiot publiczny; oraz b) wynikającym ze zmiany charakteru własności elementu infrastruktury albo z zaprzestania działalności produkcyjnej". Zgodnie z art. 57 ust. 2 tego samego rozporządzenia „państwo członkowskie i instytucja zarządzająca informują Komisję o wszelkich zmianach, o których mowa w ust. 1".

W odniesieniu do oczyszczalni ścieków Czajka w Warszawie, która korzystała ze środków UE w okresie przedakcesyjnym oraz w latach 2007-2013, Komisja nie otrzymała dotychczas żadnych oficjalnych informacji na temat zmiany charakteru jej własności.

([1]) Rozporządzenie Rady (WE) nr 1083/2006 z dnia 11 lipca 2006 r. ustanawiające przepisy ogólne dotyczące Europejskiego Funduszu Rozwoju Regionalnego, Europejskiego Funduszu Społecznego oraz Funduszu Spójności i uchylające rozporządzenie (WE) nr 1260/1999, Dz.U. L 210 z 31.7.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008815/13
to the Commission
Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Proposal to privatise the Czajka wastewater treatment plant in Warsaw, built using EU funds

Non-governmental organisations have revealed that the authorities in Warsaw are weighing up the possibility of privatising the municipal enterprise which owns the Czajka wastewater treatment plant. The construction of this plant was 62% co-financed by the EU.

I should therefore like to ask the Commission whether a situation of this kind, where the European Union has provided a significant level of co-financing for the construction of a public utilities facility owned by the state treasury or a local authority only for the facility then to be sold to a private entity, is compatible with EU regulations?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

1. In accordance with Article 57 (1) of Council Regulation 1083/2006 ([1]), Member States have to ensure that 'an operation retains the contribution from the Funds only if that operation does not, within five years from the completion of the operation (…), undergo a substantial modification (a) affecting its nature or its implementation conditions or giving to a firm or a public body an undue advantage; and (b) resulting either from a change in the nature of ownership of an item of infrastructure or the cessation of a productive activity'. Article 57 (2) of the same Regulation also requires that 'the Member State and the managing authority shall inform the Commission (…) of any modification referred to in paragraph 1'.

2. With respect to the Czajka wastewater treatment plant in Warsaw, which benefited from EU funds in the pre-accession period, and in the 2007-2013 period, the Commission has not received so far any official information about a change in the nature of its ownership.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999,OJ L 210, 31.7.2006.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-008816/13
aan de Commissie
Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(17 juli 2013)

Betreft: Identiteitskaartencrisis in Bosnië

Sinds 1 februari 2013 worden in Bosnië geen nieuwe identiteitskaarten uitgereikt omdat de wet op persoonlijke identiteitsnummers verlopen is. Door het ontbreken van de nummers krijgen Bosnische kinderen die na die datum geboren zijn geen identiteitsnummer meer. Dit heeft inmiddels tot een aantal ernstige situaties geleid waarbij o.a. een zieke baby niet tijdig in een buitenlands ziekenhuis geholpen kon worden — vanwege het ontbreken van een geldig reisdocument — en overleed. Het uitblijven van een oplossing gaat rechtstreeks in tegen de rechten van het kind. Duizenden Bosniërs zijn inmiddels de straat opgegaan om van de politiek een snelle oplossing te eisen.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de situatie in Bosnië?

2. Welke acties heeft de Commissie tot nu toe ondernomen?

3. Is de Commissie bereid om een actieve rol te spelen en haar invloed aan te wenden om het Bosnische parlement ervan te overtuigen zo snel mogelijk een oplossing te vinden opdat nog deze zomer weer identiteitsnummers kunnen worden uitgegeven?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(3 september 2013)

De Commissie bevestigt dat er problemen zijn met de afgifte van identiteitskaarten in Bosnië en Herzegovina als gevolg van een impasse met betrekking tot de wet inzake unieke identiteitsnummers. De kwestie wordt nauwlettend gevolgd door de Commissie, onder andere via specifieke vergaderingen in het kader van het monitoringmechanisme na visumliberalisering. In dit verband ziet de Commissie toe op de duurzaamheid van alle hervormingen die van belang zijn voor de visumdialoog, waaronder vraagstukken met betrekking tot mensenrechten en documentbeveiliging.

In de tussentijd heeft de Raad van Ministers van Bosnië en Herzegovina op 5 juni tijdelijke maatregelen vastgesteld voor een periode van 180 dagen, waardoor opnieuw in het hele land unieke identiteitsnummers kunnen worden toegekend aan pasgeborenen. Deze maatregelen verlopen begin december. Ook na de vaststelling van deze maatregelen heeft de Commissie demarches ondernomen om erop te wijzen dat een stabiele juridische oplossing moet worden gevonden, met name door vaststelling van wetsamendementen die in overeenstemming zijn met de uitspraken van het grondwettelijk hof van Bosnië en Herzegovina. Medio juli heeft de Raad van Ministers van Bosnië en Herzegovina een serie amendementen voorgesteld, die door middel van een spoedprocedure zijn goedgekeurd door het parlement. De wettelijke procedure in de senaat loopt momenteel. De Commissie blijft de ontwikkelingen volgen.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008816/13
to the Commission
Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Crisis over identity cards in Bosnia

Since 1 February 2013, no new identity cards have been issued in Bosnia, because the law on ID numbers has lapsed. Because there are no such numbers, Bosnian children born since that date are no longer being assigned ID numbers. This has brought about a number of serious situations, for example because it was impossible for a sick baby to be treated promptly enough at a hospital abroad for lack of a valid travel document, and the baby consequently died. The absence of a solution is a flagrant breach of the rights of the child. Thousands of Bosnians have demonstrated in an attempt to induce politicians to find a solution quickly.

1. Is the Commission aware of the situation in Bosnia?

2. What action has the Commission taken so far?

3. Will the Commission play an active role and bring its influence to bear to persuade the Bosnian Parliament to find a solution as quickly as possible so that the assignment of ID numbers can resume this summer?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

The Commission confirms that there were indeed problems regarding the issuing of identity cards in Bosnia and Herzegovina because of an impasse related to the law on Single Reference Numbers. The issue is monitored closely by the Commission, including through targeted meetings organised in the framework of the Post-Visa Liberalisation Monitoring Mechanism. Within that context, the Commission monitors the sustainability of all reforms relevant for the visa dialogue, which includes issues of human rights and document security.

In the meantime the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina has adopted on 5 June temporary measures valid for 180 days which allowed to resume the issuance of Single Reference Numbers to newborn children throughout the country. These will expire in early December. Even after the adoption of these measures, the Commission made demarches to emphasise that a stable legal solution needs to be guaranteed, particularly through the adoption of amendments to the legislation that are in line with the relevant rulings of the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In mid-July, a set of amendments was adopted by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and was passed in urgent procedure by the House of Representatives. The legal procedure in the House of Peoples is ongoing. The Commission will continue to monitor the situation.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008817/13
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(17 juli 2013)

Betreft: VP/HR — Identiteitskaartencrisis in Bosnië

Sinds 1 februari 2013 worden in Bosnië geen nieuwe identiteitskaarten uitgereikt omdat de wet op persoonlijke identiteitsnummers verlopen is. Door het ontbreken van de nummers krijgen Bosnische kinderen die na die datum geboren zijn geen identiteitsnummer meer. Dit heeft inmiddels tot een aantal ernstige situaties geleid waarbij o.a. een zieke baby niet tijdig in een buitenlands ziekenhuis geholpen kon worden — vanwege het ontbreken van een geldig reisdocument — en overleed. Het uitblijven van een oplossing gaat rechtstreeks in tegen de rechten van het kind. Duizenden Bosniërs zijn inmiddels de straat opgegaan om van de politiek een snelle oplossing te eisen.

1. Is de High Representative op de hoogte van de situatie in Bosnië?

2. Welke acties heeft de High Representative tot nu toe ondernomen?

3. Is de High Representative bereid om een actieve rol te spelen en zijn invloed aan te wenden om het Bosnische parlement ervan te overtuigen zo snel mogelijk een oplossing te vinden opdat nog deze zomer weer identiteitsnummers kunnen worden uitgegeven?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(9 oktober 2013)

De EU ziet nauwlettend toe op de situatie met betrekking tot de wet op persoonlijke identiteitsnummers in Bosnië en Herzegovina. Het geachte parlementslid wordt verwezen naar het antwoord van de Commissie op de eerdere vraag E-008816/2013 ([1]). Bovendien volgt de speciale vertegenwoordiger van de EU/hoofd van de delegatie in Sarajevo, Peter Sorensen, deze kwestie ook ter plaatse.

De EU blijft alle politieke krachten in Bosnië en Herzegovina oproepen hun verantwoordelijkheid op te nemen en in het belang van alle burgers van Bosnië en Herzegovina te handelen. De EU blijft zich krachtig inzetten voor Bosnië en Herzegovina en moedigt alle nodige politieke en sociaaleconomische hervormingen aan, maar de uiteindelijke verantwoordelijkheid voor vooruitgang ligt in handen van het land zelf.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008817/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Crisis over identity cards in Bosnia

Since 1 February 2013, no new identity cards have been issued in Bosnia, because the law on ID numbers has lapsed. Because there are no such numbers, Bosnian children born since that date are no longer being assigned ID numbers. This has brought about a number of serious situations, for example because it was impossible for a sick baby to be treated promptly enough at a hospital abroad for lack of a valid travel document, and the baby consequently died. The absence of a solution is a flagrant breach of the rights of the child. Thousands of Bosnians have demonstrated in an attempt to induce politicians to find a solution quickly.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the situation in Bosnia?

2. What action has the Vice-President/High Representative taken so far?

3. Will the Vice-President/High Representative play an active role and bring her influence to bear to persuade the Bosnian Parliament to find a solution as quickly as possible so that the assignment of ID numbers can resume this summer?

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

The EU is following closely the situation regarding the law on Single Reference Number in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). The Honorable Member is referred to the reply provided by the Commission to previous Question E-008816/2013 ([1]). Moreover, the EU Special Representative/Head of Delegation in Sarajevo, Peter Sorensen, is also following this issue on the ground.

The EU continues to call upon all political forces in BiH to act responsibly and in the interest of all BiH citizens. The EU maintains its strong commitment towards BiH and encourages all necessary political and socioeconomic reforms; however the ultimate responsibility for progress is in the hands of BiH.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-008818/13
komissiolle
Liisa Jaakonsaari (S&D)
(17. heinäkuuta 2013)

Aihe: Tietoturvauudistuksen riittävyys ja ECHELON-raportin suositusten toteuttaminen

Eurooppalaisten tietoturva ja sen tämän hetkinen taso ovat nousseet uudella ja merkittävällä tavalla esille Edward Snowdenin kerrottua julkisuudessa NSA:n harjoittamasta törkeästä vakoilusta EU:n jäsenvaltioissa ja sen edustustoissa. Vielä vahvistamattomien tietojen mukaan NSA olisi vakoillut 38:a eri kohdetta, joihin lukeutuu monia EU-maiden lähetystöjä, yksityisiä kansalaisia ja eurooppalaisia yrityksiä. Tietoturvalainsäädännön saaminen ajan tasalle on ensimmäinen askel tässä asiassa. Myös Saksan liittokansleri Angela Merkel on painokkaasti ottanut kantaa tietoturvan saattamiseksi riittävälle tasolle.

1. Kokeeko komissio, että nyt valmisteilla oleva Euroopan unionin tietoturvauudistus on riittävä iso askel, jotta unionin kansalaiset voivat kokea olevansa lain puitteissa turvattuja vastaavissa urkintatilanteissa tulevaisuudessa?

2. Euroopan parlamentin ECHELON-päätöslauselmassa P5_TA(2001)0441 nostettiin esille lukuisia merkittäviä suosituksia, jotka suurilta osin jätettiin toteuttamatta vuoden 2001 terroristi-iskujen ja sitä seuranneen terrorisminvastaisen sodan seurauksena. Onko komissio nyt vihdoin aikeissa toteuttaa annettuja suosituksia?

3. Miten komissio aikoo varmistaa, ettei EU olisi näin riippuvainen kolmansien valtioiden tietojärjestelmistä, erityisesti pilvipalveluista, ja näin ollen turvaisi paremmin kansalaistensa tietoturvan tulevaisuudessa?

Viviane Redingin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(3. lokakuuta 2013)

Komissio kehottaa arvoisaa parlamentin jäsentä tutustumaan vastauksiin, jotka komissio on antanut kirjallisiin kysymyksiin E-007934/2013 ja E-006932/13.

Pilvipalveluja koskevassa EU:n strategiassa ja yleistä tietosuoja-asetusta koskevassa ehdotuksessa todetaan, että pilvipalveluista saatavat hyödyt ja niiden käytön yleistyminen riippuvat pitkälti EU:n tietosuojan ja verkko- ja tietoturvallisuuden tasosta. Oikeusvarmuus tietosuojakysymyksissä on sekä unionin kansalaisten että yritysten kannalta elintärkeä asia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008818/13
to the Commission
Liisa Jaakonsaari (S&D)
(17 July 2013)

Subject: Adequacy of reform of data security and implementation of the recommendations in the Echelon report

In a new and important manner, the spotlight has fallen on the data security of the Europeans and on its current level, after Edward Snowden blew the whistle on the outrageous spying by the NSA in EU Member States and representations. According to unconfirmed reports, the NSA spied on 38 victims, including the embassies of many EU Member States, individual citizens and European businesses. The first step to be taken here is to bring data security legislation up to date. Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel too has emphasised the need to attain an adequate level of data security.

1. Does the Commission consider the European Union's reform of security, which is currently being prepared, to be a sufficiently large step to enable citizens of the Union to feel that the law safeguards them adequately against such prying in future?

2. The European Parliament resolution on Echelon (P5_TA(2001)0441) made many important recommendations, most of which have not been implemented because of the terrorist attacks of 2001 and the war on terror that followed. Will the Commission now finally implement recommendations made in it?

3. How will the Commission ensure that the EU becomes less dependent on the IT systems of third countries, particularly cloud services, thus protecting the data security of citizens better in future?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(3 October 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-007934/2013 and E-006932/13.

The European Cloud Computing Strategy and the proposed General Data Protection Regulation acknowledge that the benefits and take-up of cloud computing will rely to a great extent on the high level of the EU data protection and network and information security. Indeed, legal certainty when it comes to data protection is vital for companies and EU citizens.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008819/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Grenzwerte bei Lebensmitteln (Fisch)

Die Grenzwerte für diverse gesundheitsschädliche Stoffe in Fischen werden von der EU immer wieder angehoben. Laut Medienberichten wurden bereits 2011 (nach der Nuklearkatastrophe von Fukushima) die Grenzwerte kurzfristig erhöht (Bequerel/kg Lebensmittel). Nun gibt es erneut Mitteilungen in den Medien, dass der Grenzwert für das Pestizid Endosulfan in Zuchtlachs auf das Zehnfache angehoben wurde.

1. Für Lebensmittel aus Fukushima besteht bis Ende März 2014 eine Importbeschränkung. Ist für diese eine Verlängerung geplant, und wenn ja, in welchem Ausmaß und aus welchem Grund? Wie kann sichergestellt werden, dass jene Lebensmittel auch wirklich ungefährlich sind?

2. Ist die Entscheidung der EU, Grenzwerte von gesundheitsschädlichen Stoffen heraufzusetzten, wirtschaftlich motiviert? Wenn ja, warum wird der Verbraucherschutz in diesem Kontext nicht stärker berücksichtigt?

3. In 80 Ländern der Welt ist der Einsatz von Endosulfan verboten; NGOs warnen vor einer Falschberechnung der verträglichen Menge. Es gibt noch keine einheitliche Methode, um die entsprechende Eigenschaft nachzuweisen. Plant die EU, eine geeignete Messmethode einzuführen, und wenn ja, warum ist dies noch nicht geschehen?

4. Für frischen Fisch gibt es verbindliche Herkunftsangaben. Warum werden diese nicht auch für tiefgekühlte, verarbeitete Fischerzeugnisse eingeführt, so dass sich der Verbraucher selbstständig über den Ursprung seines Lebensmittels informieren kann?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(11. September 2013)

1. Die in der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 996/2012 ([1]) vorgesehenen Beschränkungen gelten bis zum 31. März 2014. Bis dahin werden die Vorschriften einer Überprüfung unterzogen. Die geltenden Maßnahmen gewährleisten, dass Lebensmittel aus Japan sicher sind, was durch die Kontrollen bei der Einfuhr nachzuweisen ist.

2. Die Gründe für eine Änderung bestehender Höchstgehalte in den EU-Rechtsvorschriften sind in den Erwägungsgründen des Rechtsakts klar aufgeführt. In dem fraglichen Fall wurde die Erhöhung des Wertes zugelassen, um das schrittweise Ersetzen von Fischöl durch pflanzliche Öle in Fischfutter zu ermöglichen und dadurch die Nachhaltigkeit der Fischzucht und der Meeresumgebung günstig zu beeinflussen. Die Folgen für die Gesundheit von Mensch und Tier wurden angemessen berücksichtigt. Auf der Grundlage eines wissenschaftlichen Gutachtens der EFSA ([2]) kann gewährleistet werden, dass die fragliche Anhebung die Gesundheit von Mensch und Tier nicht gefährdet.

3. Für den Nachweis von Endosulfan in Futtermitteln und Lebensmittel gibt es verschiedene CEN ([3])-Normen, wie EN 1528:1996, EN 15741:2009 und EN 15742:2009. Mit diesen Methoden kann das Vorhandensein von Endosulfan in Futtermitteln und Lebensmitteln in geringen Dosen zuverlässig gemessen werden, so dass hier kein weiterer Handlungsbedarf besteht.

4. Der Vorschlag der Kommission zur Gemeinsamen Marktorganisation im Fischereibereich sah die Erweiterung bestimmter Kennzeichnungsvorschriften für verarbeitete und haltbar gemachte Fischerzeugnisse um die Herkunftsbezeichnung vor. Damit reagierte die Kommission auf die Nachfrage der Bevölkerung nach verlässlichen Angaben zu den Inhaltsstoffen der genannten Produkte. Bei der kürzlich erzielten politischen Einigung zwischen den gemeinsamen Gesetzgebern wurden diese Anforderungen jedoch wieder gestrichen. Die Kommission bedauert, dass die Verbraucherinnen und Verbraucher daher nicht ordnungsgemäß über haltbar gemachte und verarbeitete Produkte informiert werden können.

([1]) Durchführungsverordnung (EU) Nr. 996/2012 der Kommission mit besonderen Bedingungen für die Einfuhr von Lebens- und Futtermitteln, deren Ursprung oder Herkunft Japan ist, nach dem Unfall im Kernkraftwerk Fukushima (ABl. L 299 vom 27.10.2012, S. 31), geändert durch die Durchführungsverordnung (EU) Nr. 495/2013 (ABl. L 143 vom 30.5.2013, S. 3).
([2]) Europäische Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit.
([3]) Europäisches Komitee für Normung.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008819/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Limit values for foodstuffs (fish)

The limit values for various harmful substances found in fish are continuously being raised by the EU. According to reports in the media, limit values (Becquerels/kg of foodstuff) were raised at short notice back in 2011 following the Fukushima nuclear disaster. There are now reports that the limit value for the pesticide Endosulfan has undergone a tenfold increase for farmed salmon.

1. An import restriction on foodstuffs from Fukushima will be in place until the end of March 2014. Have plans been made to extend this restriction? If so, to what extent and why? How can we ensure that such food is truly safe?

2. Is the EU's decision to increase the limit values of harmful substances economically motivated? If so, why is greater attention not paid to consumer protection in this context?

3. Endosulfan is banned in 80 countries and NGOs warn that the acceptable level has been miscalculated. There is still no uniform method for confirming the existence of the relevant property. Does the EU plan to introduce an appropriate measurement method? If so, why has this not yet been done?

4. Binding requirements on the provision of information regarding provenance apply to fresh fish. Does the Commission not think that such requirements should also be put in place for frozen processed fish products, enabling consumers to find out about the origin of their food?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 September 2013)

1. The restrictive measures provided for in Regulation (EU) No 996/2012 ([1]) are applicable until 31 March 2014. A review of the measures will take place before that date. The measures in place ensure that the food originating from Japan is safe, which is demonstrated by the favourable control results at import.

2. The reason(s) for a change of an existing maximum level (ML) in EU legislation is clearly mentioned in the recitals of the legal act. In the case referred to, the increase was adopted to enable the progressive replacement of fish oil by vegetable oils in fish feed and thereby influence favourably the sustainability of the fish farming and of the marine environment. The consequences for animal and public health have been duly considered and, based on a scientific opinion of the EFSA ([2]), it can be ensured that this increase does not endanger animal and public health,

3. There are different CEN ([3]) standards for the determination of endosulfan in feed and food available, such as EN 1528:1996, EN 15741:2009 and EN 15742:2009. With these methods the presence of endosulfan can be reliably measured in feed and food at low levels and therefore there is no need for further action in this regard.

4. The Commission proposal on the Fish Common Market Organisation extends certain labelling requirements to prepared and preserved products including provenance. This responds to the public demand for reliable information on the content of the above products. However, the recent political agreement between the co-legislators removed those requirements. The Commission regrets that this will prevent consumers from being properly informed about preserved and prepared products.

([1]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 996/2012 imposing special conditions governing the import of feed and food originating in or consigned from Japan following the accident at the Fukushima nuclear power station (OJ L 299, 27.10.2012, p. 31) as amended by Implementing Regulation (EU) 495/2013 (OJ L 143, 30.5.2013, p. 3).
([2]) European Food Safety Authority.
([3]) European Standardisation Committee.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008820/13
an die Kommission
Renate Sommer (PPE)
(18. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Auslegung von „größter Oberfläche“ im Rahmen der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1169/2011

Die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1169/2011 nimmt kleine Verpackungen von bestimmten Informationspflichten aus. Dennoch ergeben sich gerade in Hinblick auf die Definition der „größten Oberfläche“ einige wichtige Fragen, die einer Klarstellung bedürfen. Dies gilt insbesondere für zylindrische Gegenstände. Auffallend ist auch, dass hinsichtlich der „größten Oberfläche“ in den vorbereitenden Arbeiten zu der Verordnung kein Standpunkt der EU-Institutionen enthalten ist und dass in der im Januar 2013 veröffentlichten Endfassung der Verordnung ein Teil der Fragen und Antworten gegenüber der Fassung vom Oktober 2012 gestrichen wurde. Dort war ursprünglich vorgesehen, wie „größte Oberfläche“ auszulegen ist.

Kann die Kommission vor diesem Hintergrund folgender Fragen beantworten:

1. Kann die Kommission Auskunft darüber erteilen, wie „größte Oberfläche“ im Sinne der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1169/2011 bei zylindrischen Gegenständen auszulegen ist? Ist mit „größter Oberfläche“ die größte Einzeloberfläche gemeint oder nur ein Teil der größten Oberfläche?

2. Gibt es einen Gemeinsamen Standpunkt der EU-Institutionen, und kann die Kommission diesen zur Verfügung stellen?

3. Kann die Kommission bestätigen, dass in der Endfassung von Januar 2013 ein Teil der Fragen und Antworten gestrichen wurde, und kann sie dies erklären? Wenn nur ein Teil der größten Oberfläche relevant wäre, sind dann 1/3 der Oberfläche oder sind 40 % maßgeblich?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(3. September 2013)

Die Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1169/2011 betreffend die Information der Verbraucher über Lebensmittel ([1]), die ab 13. Dezember 2014 gilt, verwendet den Begriff der „größten Oberfläche“ in Bezug auf die Mindestschriftgröße für die Darstellung der verpflichtenden Angaben, die Weglassung bestimmter verpflichtender Angaben und Ausnahmen von der Nährwertdeklaration. Dieser Begriff wird in der Verordnung nicht explizit definiert. Er ist jedoch keineswegs neu, da bereits in der Richtlinie 2000/13/EG darauf Bezug genommen wird([2]).

Am 31. Januar 2013 hat die Generaldirektion Gesundheit und Verbraucher auf ihrer Website ein Dokument mit dem Titel „Fragen und Antworten zur Anwendung der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1169/2011 betreffend die Information der Verbraucher über Lebensmittel“ veröffentlicht, das im Rahmen einer Arbeitsgruppe aus Sachverständigen der Mitgliedstaaten erstellt wurde. Dieses Dokument soll allen an der Lebensmittelkette Beteiligten sowie den zuständigen Behörden in den Mitgliedstaaten dabei helfen, die Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1169/2011 richtig anzuwenden. Die Frage der Bestimmung der „größten Oberfläche“ wurde in dieser Unterlage angesprochen. Darin wird vorgeschlagen, für die Bestimmung der „größten Oberfläche“ von zylinder- oder flaschenförmigen Verpackungen mit oft ungleichmäßiger Form bei Dosen Deckel, Boden und Kanten und bei Flaschen und Gläsern Hals und Schulter von der Fläche abzuziehen.

Dieses Dokument hat keinen formalrechtlichen Status, da für die Auslegung des EU-Rechts in letzter Instanz der Gerichtshof der Europäischen Union zuständig ist.

([1]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1169 betreffend die Information der Verbraucher über Lebensmittel und zur Änderung der Verordnungen (EG) Nr. 1924/2006 und (EG) Nr. 1925/2006 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates und zur Aufhebung der Richtlinie 87/250/EWG der Kommission, der Richtlinie 90/496/EWG des Rates, der Richtlinie 1999/10/EG der Kommission, der Richtlinie 2000/13/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates, der Richtlinien 2002/67/EG und 2008/5/EG der Kommission und der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 608/2004 der Kommission, ABl. L 304 vom 22.11.2011, S. 18.

([2]) Artikel 13 Absatz 4 der Richtlinie 2000/13/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zur Angleichung der Rechtsvorschriften der Mitgliedstaaten über die Etikettierung und Aufmachung von Lebensmitteln sowie die Werbung hierfür, ABl. L 109 vom 6.5.2000, S. 29.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008820/13
to the Commission
Renate Sommer (PPE)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Interpretation of 'largest surface' in Regulation (EC) No 1169/2011

Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 exempts small packaging from certain labelling requirements. However, with regard to the definition of 'largest surface' in particular, there are some important questions which require clarification. This is particularly the case for cylindrical objects. It is also of note that no position of the EU institutions regarding the 'largest surface' is found in the preparatory work for the regulation and that the final version of the regulation published in January 2013 was missing part of the question and answer section which was in the text in October 2012. This section included information on the interpretation of 'largest surface'.

1. How should 'largest surface' within the meaning of Regulation (EC) No 1169/2011 be interpreted in the case of cylindrical objects? Does the term 'largest surface' refer to the largest individual surface or just part of the largest surface?

2. Have the EU institutions agreed on a common position? If so, could the Commission make this available?

3. Could the Commission confirm whether part of the question and answer section was deleted from the final version published in January 2013 and, if this is the case, could the Commission explain why this action was taken? If just part of the largest surface was relevant, is the key figure 1/3 of the surface area or 40% thereof?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers ([1]), which will apply as of 13 December 2014, refers to the concept of the 'largest surface area' with respect to the minimum font size for the presentation of mandatory particulars, the omission of certain mandatory particulars and the nutritional declaration exemption. This concept is not explicitly defined in the regulation. However, it is not new as it is already referred to in the existing Directive 2000/13/EC ([2]).

On 31 January 2013, the Commission's Health and Consumer Directorate General published on its website a document titled 'Questions and Answers on the application of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers', which has been developed in the context of a Working Group with experts from Member States. It aims at assisting all players in the food chain as well as the competent national authorities to correctly apply Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011. The issue of the determination of the 'largest surface area' has been raised in that document. It is proposed to consider as the 'largest surface area' for cylindrical- or bottle-shaped packaging, with often uneven shapes, the area excluding tops, bottoms, flanges at the top and bottom of cans, shoulders as well as necks of bottles and jars.

This document has no formal legal status, as the ultimate responsibility for the interpretation of Union law lies with the Court of Justice of the European Union.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.

([2]) Article 13(4) of Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs, OJ L 109, 6.5.2000, p. 29.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008821/13
to the Commission
David Martin (S&D)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Need for awareness of the dangers of natural rubber latex balloons

As I am sure the Commission is aware, a severe latex allergy can quickly cause a potentially life-threatening reaction if a sufferer should come in contact with the substance. The Latex Allergy Support Group, the UK's support organisation for those with a natural rubber latex (NRL) allergy, has found that NRL balloons are a major problem for sensitised individuals, with members reporting symptoms ranging from wheezing to potentially life-threatening anaphylactic shock on exposure. Symptoms are experienced both from direct touch and by simply being in the vicinity of balloon displays.

As large quantities of latex balloons are frequently released for marketing and promotional purposes in public spaces throughout Europe, does the Commission consider there to be a greater need for latex-free balloon policies to help to eliminate the potentially serious health consequences for people with latex allergies?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(19 September 2013)

The Commission is aware of allergies to natural latex as mentioned by the Honourable Member. Latex is a common component of many medical and dental supplies and is also found in a wide range of consumer products, including balloons.

Avoiding contact with latex and with latex aerosols is the only effective measure to avoid allergic reactions. It is in the exclusive competence of Member States' authorities to follow-up on the use of latex-containing rubber balloons in publicly accessible private premises such as supermarkets.

In addition, the Toy Safety Directive ([1]) requires those balloons which are 'designed or intended, whether or not exclusively, for use in play by children under 14 years of age' not to jeopardise the safety or health of users or third parties when used as intended or in a foreseeable way, bearing in mind the behaviour of children. European standard EN 71-1 requires the wording 'Made of natural rubber latex' to appear on the packaging of toy natural rubber latex ballons, on the balloons themselves or on a leaflet accompanying the balloons. Toy balloons which comply with this harmonised European standard are presumed to meet the applicable safety requirements for toys.

([1]) Directive 2009/48/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 on the safety of toys, OJ L 170, 30.6.2009, p.1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008822/13
to the Commission
Phil Prendergast (S&D)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: 112 emergency calls from private networks

In the context of the handling of emergency calls, what is the Commission's position with respect to the increasing deployment of private networks and the obligation to provide caller location information to the authority handling the calls when such caller location information is not being provided by the private network provider?

What is the Commission's assessment of the risks to the citizen and the impact on the emergency service organisations when caller location information from private networks is not provided or when it is grossly and knowingly inaccurate?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(29 August 2013)

Article 2 of the framework Directive defines 'end-user' and 'user' as a person using or requesting 'publicly available electronic communications service'. Persons who call within 'private' networks would not qualify as persons who use publicly available electronic communications services. Accordingly, the scope of the Universal Service Directive does not extend to 'private' networks. Therefore the Universal Service Directive does not oblige Member States to ensure the right to access to the 112 emergency number for persons using 'private' networks.

These private networks often have, however, their own emergency numbers and personnel which serve as an interface with the public emergency services.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008823/13
aan de Commissie
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(18 juli 2013)

Betreft: Duurzaamheidscriteria voor biomassa

Het gebruik van vaste en gasvormige biomassa voor elektriciteit, verwarming en koeling neemt snel toe in de EU. De richtlijn hernieuwbare energie (2009/28/EG) bevat verplichte duurzaamheidscriteria voor vloeibare biobrandstoffen, maar dit is nog niet het geval voor vaste en gasvormige biomassa voor elektriciteit, verwarming en koeling.

Wanneer vaste en gasvormige biomassa op een niet-duurzame manier worden geproduceerd, kan dit leiden tot een verlies aan biodiversiteit, bosdegradatie en een stijging van de emissie van broeikasgassen, net als bij vloeibare biobrandstoffen. Het Gemeenschappelijk centrum voor onderzoek van de Commissie heeft er recent op gewezen dat de klimaatvoordelen van het gebruik van houtachtige bosbiomassa voor energieproductie kunnen variëren van positief tot slechter dan bij fossiele brandstoffen, omwille van de initiële koolstofschuld die wordt gecreëerd door het verbranden van houtachtige biomassa en aangezien er concurrentie is tussen verschillende economische sectoren voor dezelfde biomassagrondstoffen. Wanneer hout dat normaal gezien zou worden gebruikt voor houtpanelen wordt gebruikt voor bio-energie, is er geen vermindering van de uitstoot van broeikasgassen in vergelijking met het verbranden van fossiele brandstoffen.

Bovendien wordt biogas vaak geproduceerd uit dezelfde voedselgewassen die worden gebruikt voor de productie van biobrandstoffen, maar biogas voor elektriciteit, verwarming en koeling dient niet te voldoen aan de duurzaamheidseisen die zijn opgenomen in de richtlijn hernieuwbare energie.

1. Wanneer is de Commissie van plan een voorstel in te dienen voor de vaststelling van verplichte criteria voor vaste en gasvormige biomassa voor elektriciteit, verwarming en koeling?

2. Hoe zal de Commissie de bevindingen die zijn opgenomen in het verslag van het Gemeenschappelijk centrum voor onderzoek betreffende de initiële koolstofschuld van bio-energie opnemen in de duurzaamheidscriteria voor vaste biomassa?

3. Hoe zal de Commissie de trapsgewijze benutting (cascadering) van biomassa opnemen in de duurzaamheidscriteria, opdat de productie van bio-energie niet leidt tot concurrentie voor biomassa met de productie van voedsel en materialen?

Antwoord van de heer Oettinger namens de Commissie
(9 september 2013)

1. De Commissie analyseert momenteel de duurzaamheidskwesties in verband met het toegenomen gebruik van vaste en gasvormige biomassa voor elektriciteit, verwarming en koeling in de EU, om na te gaan of aanvullende actie door de EU nodig en passend is.

2. Volgens de bestaande wetenschappelijke literatuur, waaronder het rapport van het Gemeenschappelijk Centrum voor onderzoek waaraan de geachte afgevaardigde refereert, zorgen de meeste biomassavoorzieningsketens die momenteel in de EU worden gebruikt, voor een aanzienlijk lagere koolstofuitstoot dan fossiele brandstoffen. Slechts een beperkt aantal biomassagrondstoffen heeft wellicht een onzeker of mogelijk negatief effect op het klimaat. De vergelijkingen zijn echter gedeeltelijk afhankelijk van de methodologische aannames die zijn gemaakt. De Commissie onderzoekt momenteel de wetenschappelijke basis hiervan, bekijkt welke voorzorgsmaatregelen mogelijk zijn, en houdt daarmee rekening bij haar analyse. In die analyse worden ook potentiële biomassagrondstoffen meegenomen die op dit moment niet in de EU worden gebruikt. Het is in dit opzicht belangrijk de beperking van de broeikasgasemissies te verbeteren door: i) duurzame bosbeheerpraktijken die de productiviteit van de bossen bevorderen; ii) beperking tot een minimum van de productieketenemissies; en iii) efficiënt gebruik van biomassa om broeikasgasintensieve brandstoffen te vervangen.

3. In die analyse wordt ook nagegaan welke mogelijkheden er zijn om de „trapsgewijze benutting van biomassa" (cascadering) te bevorderen, mede rekening houdend met de tot dusverre door de Commissie verrichte werkzaamheden op het gebied van de beschikbaarheid van biomassa en het gebruik ervan op de meest duurzame en efficiënte manier.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008823/13
to the Commission
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Sustainability criteria for biomass

The use of solid and gaseous biomass for electricity, heating and cooling in the EU is rapidly increasing. The Renewable Energy Directive (2009/28/EC) contains mandatory sustainability criteria for liquid biofuels, but not yet for solid and gaseous biomass for electricity, heating and cooling.

However, when produced in an unsustainable way, solid and gaseous biomass can lead to biodiversity loss, forest degradation and an increase in greenhouse gas emissions, just like liquid biofuels. The Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) recently pointed out that the climate benefit of using woody biomass from forests for energy production can vary from positive to worse than fossil fuels, because of the up-front carbon debt that is created when burning woody biomass and because there is competition between different economic sectors for the same biomass feedstock. If wood that would have been otherwise used for wood panels is used for bioenergy, there is no greenhouse gas reduction compared to burning fossil fuel.

Furthermore, biogas is often produced from the same food crops that are used for biofuel production, but biogas for electricity, heating and cooling does not have to fulfil to any sustainability requirement in the Renewable Energy Directive.

1. When will the Commission publish a proposal for mandatory sustainability criteria for solid and gaseous biomass for electricity, heating and cooling?

2. How is the Commission going to integrate the findings of the JRC report on the up-front carbon debt of bioenergy into sustainability criteria for solid biomass?

3. How is the Commission going to integrate the cascading use of biomass into these sustainability criteria, so that bioenergy production does not lead to competition for biomass with the production of food and materials?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(9 September 2013)

1. The Commission is currently analysing the sustainability issues associated with increased use of solid and gaseous biomass for electricity, heating and cooling in the EU, with the view to consider whether additional EU action is needed and appropriate.

2. According to existing scientific literature, including the JRC report referred to by the Honourable Member, most of the biomass supply chains currently used in the EU provide significant carbon emission reductions compared to fossil fuels. Only a limited number of biomass feedstock may have uncertain or potentially negative climate benefits. However, the comparisons depend partly on the methodological assumptions made. The Commission is reviewing the scientific basis and possible safeguards and will take this into account in its analysis. This analysis will also include potential biomass feedstocks currently not in use in the EU today. It is important in this regard to improve the greenhouse gas mitigation benefits of biomass through: (i) sustainable forest management practices that enhance forest productivity; (ii) minimisation of process chain emissions; and (iii) efficient use of biomass to displace greenhouse gas-intensive fuels.

3. The analysis will also assess possible means for promoting 'cascading use of biomass', taking also into account the work done so far by the Commission on the availability and use of biomass in the most sustainable and efficient manner.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008824/13
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(18 juli 2013)

Betreft: VP/HR — Onwettige arrestatie en gevangenneming van twee Ahmadi-moslims

De heer Sultan Hamid Marzouk Al-Anzi en de heer Sudi Faleh Awad Al-Anzi zijn twee in Saudi-Arabië levende Ahmadi-moslims. Beide mannen zijn op onwettige wijze gearresteerd en opgesloten op beschuldiging van afvalligheid en bekering tot een ander geloof, hetgeen in Saudi-Arabië als een misdaad wordt beschouwd. Er is bovendien geen procesdatum vastgesteld en beide mannen zijn door geestelijken onder druk gezet om hun Ahmadi-geloof af te zweren.

1. Is de vicevoorzitter/hoge vertegenwoordiger op de hoogte van deze zaak en van de huidige toestand van de heer Sultan Hamid Marzouk Al-Anzi en de heer Sudi Faleh Awad Al-Anzi?

2. Heeft de vicevoorzitter/hoge vertegenwoordiger actie ondernomen om de heer Sultan Hamid Marzouk Al-Anzi en de heer Sudi Faleh Awad Al-Anzi te beschermen en, zo ja, wat voor actie?

3. Is de vicevoorzitter/hoge vertegenwoordiger tevens bereid Saudi-Arabië te herinneren aan zijn uit het internationaal recht voortvloeiende verplichtingen inzake de vrijheid van godsdienst en overtuiging, zoals bijvoorbeeld verankerd in de Universele Verklaring van de Rechten van de Mens?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(17 september 2013)

De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter is op de hoogte van de door het geachte Parlementslid genoemde kwestie met betrekking tot Saoedi-Arabië.

Vrijheid van godsdienst of overtuiging is een hoge prioriteit van het mensenrechtenbeleid van de EU, een onvervreemdbaar mensenrecht en een essentiële pijler van de samenleving.

De EU-delegatie en de diplomatieke vertegenwoordigingen van de EU in Riyad volgen de mensenrechtensituatie nauwlettend, ook met betrekking tot de vrijheid van godsdienst en overtuiging, in het kader van hun regelmatige rapportage en diplomatieke contacten met lokale autoriteiten. De EU-Raad Buitenlandse Zaken heeft op 27 juli 2013 zijn goedkeuring gehecht aan de richtsnoeren voor de bevordering en bescherming van de vrijheid van godsdienst en overtuiging ([1]), die een extra referentiepunt voor hun actie zijn.

De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter en haar diensten hebben alle beschikbare mogelijkheden en instrumenten gebruikt, waaronder talrijke verklaringen en diplomatieke demarches, om de mensenrechten en de fundamentele vrijheden regelmatig ter sprake te brengen in hun contacten met de Saoedische ambtenaren, zowel op bilateraal of multilateraal niveau.

De EU zal dergelijke kwesties met de Saoedische gesprekspartners blijven bespreken en volledig gebruik maken van de mogelijkheden waarover zij beschikt.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/137585.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008824/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Unlawful arrest and imprisonment of two Ahmadi Muslims

Mr Sultan Hamid Marzouk Al-Anzi and Mr Sudi Faleh Awad Al-Anzi are two Ahmadi Muslims living in Saudi Arabia. Both men have been unlawfully arrested and imprisoned on apostasy charges for having converted their religion, which is considered to be a crime in Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, no trial date has been set and both men have been intimidated by clerics to renounce their Ahmadi belief

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this case and of the current situation of Mr Sultan Hamid Marzouk Al-Anzi and Mr Sudi Faleh Awad Al-Anzi?

2. Has the Vice-President/High Representative taken any action to protect Mr Sultan Hamid Marzouk Al-Anzi and Mr Sudi Faleh Awad Al-Anzi and, if so, what action?

3. Is the Vice-President/High Representative also willing to remind Saudi Arabia of its obligations under international law regarding freedom of religion and belief, as enshrined, for example, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?

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

The HR/VP is well aware of the issue raised by the Honourable Member with regard to Saudi Arabia.

Freedom of religion or belief is a high priority of the EU's human rights policy, an inalienable human right and an essential pillar of society.

The EU Delegation and EU diplomatic missions in Riyadh are closely following the human rights situation, including freedom of religion and belief, as part of their regular reporting and diplomatic outreach towards local authorities. The EU Foreign Affairs Council has just adopted Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief ([1]) on 27 July 2013 , which will constitute an additional reference point for their action.

The HR/VP and her services have been using the full range of opportunities and instruments available, including numerous statements and diplomatic demarches, to raise human rights and fundamental freedoms regularly in their contacts with Saudi officials, be it at bilateral or multilateral level.

The EU will continue to raise such cases with its Saudi interlocutors, making full use of the opportunities at its disposal.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/137585.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008825/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Registration tax in Spain for boats belonging to foreign nationals

A constituent in Scotland has recently informed me that there is the possibility in Spain of a registration tax being applied to boats belonging to foreign nationals, when the boat is in Spanish waters.

Can the Commission confirm whether or not the registration tax applies in this instance?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2013)

Currently under EC law, Member States remain free to apply a registration tax on means of transport, which includes boats. There is no harmonisation on this matter and this means that, provided they respect some basic EU rules, Member States may levy a registration tax on means of transport on the occasion of their first entry into use within their territory and to set the tax rates at the level they see fit. This explains the fact that these taxes are levied in some Member States (for example, Spain) and not in others, and also the fact that even among those which apply them, significant differences exist as regards their structure and rates.

However, Member States' rights in this respect are restricted by certain EU rules. Thus, for instance, as regards the leasing or hiring of means of transport, Member States must respect the requirements flowing from the principle of freedom to provide services as interpreted by the Court of Justice of the European Union. Concerning the Spanish registration tax, this is a matter which is being assessed within the framework of the ongoing contacts referred to by the Commission in its written answers to E-11079/2012 and E-7534/2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008826/13
alla Commissione
Susy De Martini (ECR), Cristiana Muscardini (ECR) e Lara Comi (PPE)
(18 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Inquinamento siderurgico e crescita di manifestazioni tumorali

In una lettera inviata dal commissario governativo straordinario dell'acciaieria ILVA al presidente della Regione Puglia Nichi Vendola sulla situazione sanitaria della zona del tarantino, dove l'ILVA ha la sua piattaforma, si dichiara che non vi è nessuna correlazione tra gli inquinamenti siderurgici e la crescita esponenziale di tumore ai polmoni nella zona.

Si insinua pertanto che l'aggravarsi della nefasta malattia sia dovuto al consumo di sigarette di contrabbando.

1. Ha la Commissione effettuato degli studi sulla correlazione tra la crescita di manifestazioni tumorali e l'inquinamento siderurgico?

2. Non ritiene di dover promuovere un'azione di controllo sui possibili inquinamenti atmosferici e delle falde acquifere nelle zone siderurgiche europee?

3. Quali sono i requisiti da rispettare per la messa in funzione e l'installazione di piattaforme siderurgiche in Europa?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(26 settembre 2013)

1. Attraverso il 7° programma quadro dell'UE per la ricerca, la Commissione ha finanziato due progetti di ampia portata ([1]) per verificare gli effetti sulla salute di inquinanti atmosferici, inclusi quelli che possono essere emessi dall'industria dell'acciaio. Il progetto ESCAPE ha rilevato come in Europa l'inquinamento atmosferico dovuto a particolato contribuisca all'incidenza dei tumori ([2]). Tuttavia, non ha finanziato la ricerca sui tumori connessi all'inquinamento specifico dovuto all'industria dell'acciaio.

2. La direttiva 2008/50/CE relativa alla qualità dell'aria ambiente ([3]) garantisce la valutazione della qualità dell'aria e prevede una serie di criteri per l'istituzione delle stazioni di monitoraggio, nonché un numero minimo di punti di campionamento.

Nell'ambito della direttiva quadro in materia di acque ([4]), gli Stati membri sono tenuti a monitorare lo stato chimico dei corpi idrici sotterranei e superficiali nei rispettivi paesi e a riferire in proposito. Entro il 2015 è necessario conseguire uno stato chimico buono e quindi conformarsi alla normativa.. Gli Stati membri sono inoltre tenuti a garantire che i corpi idrici per l'acqua potabile rispettino in linea di massima i requisiti della direttiva concernente la qualità delle acque destinate al consumo umano ([5]).

3. La direttiva 2008/1/CE sulla prevenzione e la riduzione integrate dell'inquinamento ([6]) si applica agli impianti che producono ferro e acciaio. Impone agli Stati membri di garantire che gli impianti siano gestiti in modo che, tra l'altro, vengano adottate le opportune misure di prevenzione dell'inquinamento, applicando segnatamente le migliori tecniche disponibili, e non si verifichino fenomeni di inquinamento significativi. A partire dal 7 gennaio 2014 questa direttiva sarà sostituita dalla direttiva 2010/75/UE relativa alle emissioni industriali ([7]), la quale contiene disposizioni più severe sull'applicazione delle migliori tecniche disponibili e sul controllo e l'attuazione delle condizioni di autorizzazione e la verifica della conformità alle stesse.

([1]) ESCAPE European study of cohorts for air pollution effects (studio europeo di coorti sugli effetti dell'inquinamento atmosferico) — www.escapeproject.eu; TRANSPHORM Transport related air pollution and health impacts — integrated methodologies for assessing particulate matter (inquinamento atmosferico derivante dai trasporti e impatti sulla salute: metodologie integrate per valutare il particolato) — www.transphorm.eu.
([2]) The Lancet Oncology, volume 14, numero 9, pp. 813-822, agosto 2013.
([3]) GU L 142 dell'11.6.2008.
([4]) GU L 327 del 22.12.2000.
([5]) GU L 330 del 5.12.1998.
([6]) GU L 24 del 29.1.2008.
([7]) GU L 334 del 17.12.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008826/13
to the Commission
Susy De Martini (ECR), Cristiana Muscardini (ECR) and Lara Comi (PPE)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Steel industry pollution and increased rates of cancer

According to a letter sent by the government commissioner appointed to run the ILVA steelworks to Nichi Vendola, Governor of the Apulia region, regarding the health situation in the Taranto area, where ILVA has its plant, there was no link between pollution from the steelworks and the rapidly rising levels of lung cancer in the region.

It is implied that the increasing levels of this terrible disease are attributable to the consumption of smuggled cigarettes.

1. Has the Commission carried out any research into a possible correlation between increased levels of tumours and pollution from the steel industry?

2. Should it not see to it that checks are carried out in order to establish whether there is any air pollution and groundwater contamination in European steel-producing areas?

3. What requirements must be met in order to set up a steel plant in Europe?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(26 September 2013)

1.The Commission has funded through its Seventh EU Research Framework Programme two large-scale projects ([1]) looking at various health effects of air pollutants, including those that can be emitted from steel industry. The ESCAPE project did find that particulate matter air pollution contributes to lung cancer incidence in Europe. ([2]) However, it has not funded research on tumours linked to specific pollution from steel industry.

2. Directive 2008/50/EC on ambient air quality ([3]) ensures that ambient air quality is assessed and provides a number of criteria for setting up monitoring stations as well as the minimum number of sampling points.

Under the Water Framework Directive ([4]), Member States are required to monitor and report on the chemical status of surface and groundwater bodies in their countries. Good chemical status, which requires meeting those standards, is to be reached by 2015. Member States must also ensure that water bodies used for drinking water generally meet the requirements of the Drinking Water Directive ([5]).

3. Directive 2008/1/EC concerning integrated pollution prevention and control ([6]) (IPPC) applies to installations producing iron and steel. It requires Member States to ensure that installations are operated such that, *inter alia*, all the appropriate preventive measures are taken against pollution, in particular through the application of the Best Available Techniques (BAT), and that no significant pollution is caused. The IPPC Directive will be replaced from 7 January 2014 by Directive 2010/75/EU on industrial emissions ([7]) that contains strengthened provisions concerning the application of BAT as well as on monitoring, compliance checking and enforcement of permit conditions.

([1]) ESCAPE European study of cohorts for air pollution effects — www.escapeproject.eu ; TRANSPHORM Transport related air pollution and health impacts — integrated methodologies for assessing particulate matter — www.transphorm.eu.
([2]) The Lancet Oncology, Volume 14, Issue 9, Pages 813 — 822, August 2013.
([3]) OJ L 142, 11.6.2008.
([4]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.
([5]) OJ L 330, 5.12.1998.
([6]) OJ L 24, 29.1.2008.
([7]) OJ L 334, 17.12.2010.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008827/13
aan de Commissie
Ria Oomen-Ruijten (PPE)
(18 juli 2013)

Betreft: Medische zorg buiten de EU

Een Nederlander met een pensioen uit Nederland woont in Frankrijk. De Nederlander is verplicht verzekerd voor zorg in Nederland. In Frankrijk heeft hij recht op zorg, ten financiële laste van Nederland, omdat hij daar woont (via de CPAM — Caisse Primaire d'Assurance Maladie). Wanneer deze Nederlander op vakantie gaat naar een land buiten de EU en gebruik moet maken van de medische zorg, ontstaan er problemen. Geen enkele instantie, noch de Nederlandse, noch de Franse, wil de kosten op zich nemen. De CPAM wil alleen de medische kosten gemaakt in Frankrijk vergoeden. Kosten gemaakt in andere landen, binnen of buiten de EU, komen volgens hen voor rekening van Nederland. De Nederlandse CVZ wil alleen de medische kosten gemaakt in een EU-land vergoeden. Medische kosten buiten de EU komen volgens hen voor rekening van de CPAM. Wanneer hij een reisverzekering afsluit wordt het probleem niet opgelost: deze betaalt alleen als ook de onderliggende verzekering als eerste uitkeert, dus CPAM of CVZ. Dit probleem ontstaat als Nederland geen socialezekerheidsverdrag heeft afgesloten met landen.

1. Indien een in Frankrijk wonende gepensioneerde tijdelijk verblijft in een lidstaat waarmee Nederland een socialezekerheidsverdrag heeft afgesloten, moet Nederland (pensioenland) dan de kosten vergoeden?

2. Indien een in Frankrijk wonende gepensioneerde tijdelijk verblijft in een lidstaat waarmee Nederland geen socialezekerheidsverdrag verdrag heeft afgesloten, moet Nederland (pensioenland) dan de kosten vergoeden op grond van het principe „werelddekking"?

3. Indien het antwoord op vraag 1 en/of 2 „ja" is, op welke administratieve wijze moeten de kosten dan vergoed worden? Moet betrokkene de kosten declareren bij het woonland (Frankrijk) of bij het pensioenland (Nederland)?

4. Indien het antwoord op vraag 1 en/of 2 „neen" is, moeten de kosten dan door de Franse ziektekostenverzekering — overeenkomstig de Franse wetgeving — vergoed worden?

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(5 september 2013)

De Administratieve Commissie voor de coördinatie van de socialezekerheidsstelsels bespreekt momenteel de tekst van een ontwerpaanbeveling om duidelijkheid te scheppen in het in de vraag aan de orde gestelde vraagstuk. Binnen de Administratieve Commissie bestaat algemene overeenstemming dat de verantwoordelijkheid voor medische zorg in derde landen voor personen die buiten de bevoegde lidstaat woonachtig zijn, bij de bevoegde lidstaat blijft berusten. Dit betekent dat een in Frankrijk wonende Nederlandse gepensioneerde voor wie Nederland de bevoegde lidstaat is, voor alle medische zorg die in een niet-EU land is verstrekt, wordt vergoed overeenkomstig de Nederlandse wetgeving of overeenkomstig de bepalingen van een bilaterale overeenkomst (in het geval Nederland een bilaterale overeenkomst met het derde land is overeengekomen). De Franse zorgverzekeraars daarentegen hoeven op grond van de artikelen 17 en 24, lid 1, tweede zin, van Verordening (EG) nr. 883/2004 slechts medische zorg te verstrekken aan personen die in Frankrijk zijn ingeschreven door middel van een door een Nederlands orgaan in overeenstemming met de wettelijke voorschriften afgegeven meeneembaar S1-document. Zij verstrekken deze zorg voor rekening van het bevoegde Nederlandse orgaan.

Dit betekent ook dat aanvragen voor de vergoeding van in derde landen verstrekte medische behandelingen door de betrokkene rechtstreeks bij zijn of haar bevoegde orgaan moeten worden ingediend.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008827/13
to the Commission
Ria Oomen-Ruijten (PPE)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Medical care outside the EU

A Netherlands national who is drawing a pension from the Netherlands lives in France. The Netherlands national has compulsory care insurance in the Netherlands. In France, he is entitled to care at the expense of the Netherlands because he lives in France (through the CPAM — Caisse Primaire d'Assurance Maladie). If this person goes on holiday to a country outside the EU and has to seek medical care, problems arise. Neither the Dutch nor the French authority is prepared to cover the cost. The CPAM is only prepared to reimburse medical costs incurred in France. It considers that costs incurred in other countries, inside or outside the EU, should be paid by the Netherlands. The Dutch CVZ is only prepared to meet the cost of medical care received in an EU Member State. It says that medical costs incurred outside the EU should be reimbursed by the CPAM. If the person concerned takes out medical insurance, this does not solve the problem: the insurance company will only pay up if the body responsible for the underlying insurance does so first — i.e. the CPAM or CVZ. This problem arises where the Netherlands has not concluded a social security agreement with other countries.

1. If a pensioner living in France visits a Member State with which the Netherlands has concluded a social security agreement, must the Netherlands (the country which pays the pension) reimburse the costs?

2. If a pensioner living in France visits a Member State with which the Netherlands has not concluded a social security agreement, must the Netherlands (the country which pays the pension) reimburse the costs on the basis of the 'worldwide cover' principle?

3. If the answer to question 1 and/or 2 is 'yes', how — administratively — must the costs be reimbursed? Must the individual declare the costs to his country of residence (France) or to the country from which he draws his pension (the Netherlands)?

4. If the answer to question 1 and/or 2 is 'no', must the costs be reimbursed by the French health insurer, in accordance with French law?

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

The Administrative Commission for the Coordination of Social Security Systems is currently discussing the text of a draft recommendation in order to clarify the issue raised in the question. There is general agreement within the Administrative Commission that the responsibility for medical care in third countries for persons who reside outside of the competent State still lies with the competent State. This means that a Dutch pensioner living in France for whom the Netherlands are the competent State will get reimbursement for any medical care provided in a third country outside of the EU in accordance with the Dutch legislation or, as the case may be, in accordance with the provisions of a bilateral agreement concluded by the Netherlands with the third country. In contrast, the French health insurance institutions are only required by virtue of Articles 17 and 24 (1) second sentence of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 to provide healthcare to a person who is registered in France by means of a PD S1 issued by a Dutch institution in accordance with its legislation and at the expense of the competent Dutch institution.

This also means that claims for reimbursement of medical treatment received in a third country have to be submitted by the person concerned directly to his or her competent institution.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-008828/13
za Komisijo
Romana Jordan (PPE)
(18. julij 2013)

Zadeva: Uporaba izdelkov iz svinčevega kristalnega stekla

Predstavniki steklarske industrije so me obvestili, da trenutno poteka komitološko posvetovanje v okviru zakonodaje REACH o omejitvi uporabe izdelkov splošne rabe iz svinčevega kristalnega stekla.

Steklarska industrija trdi, da naj bi bilo tveganje pri svinčevem kristalnem steklu zaradi njegovih kemičnih in fizikalnih lastnosti ter zaradi načina uporabe zanemarljivo. Poleg tega opozarjajo, da nimajo ustreznega materiala, ki bi enakovredno nadomestil svinčevo steklo, zato bi sprejetje predlogov za omejeno uporabo svinca v predmetih splošne rabe negativno vplivalo na konkurenčnost in razvoj industrije kristalnega stekla v EU.

Komisijo zato sprašujem:

1. Ali se res pripravljajo spremembe zakonodaje REACH na področju uporabe svinca in njegovih spojin v izdelkih splošne rabe?

2. Ali se bodo omejitve uporabe svinca in njegovih spojin nanašale tudi na kristalno steklo?

3. Katere spremembe glede uporabe izdelkov splošne rabe iz svinčevega kristalnega stekla Komisija načrtuje v prihodnosti?

4. Kakšen zakonodajni postopek sprejemanja novih ureditev glede uporabe svinčevega kristalnega stekla je v teku?

Odgovor g. Tajanija v imenu Komisije
(11. oktober 2013)

V okviru Uredbe REACH je trenutno v obravnavi možnost omejitve uporabe izdelkov splošne rabe iz svinca in njegovih spojin. Predlagana omejitev je namenjena zmanjšanju izpostavljenosti otrok svincu pri dajanju izdelkov, ki vsebujejo svinec, v usta. Zato je omejitev namenjena le za tiste izdelke, katerim so otroci verjetno izpostavljeni in pri katerih se tveganje šteje za nesprejemljivo.

Predlog obravnavata dva odbora agencije ECHA, RAC ([1]) in SEAC ([2]), ki naj bi svoje dokončno mnenje pripravila decembra 2013 oziroma marca 2014.

Šele ko bosta oba odbora ECHA oblikovala svoje mnenje in ga posredovala Komisiji, bo slednja pripravila osnutek spremembe Priloge XVII. Končna odločitev bo sprejeta v skladu s pravili postopka v odboru. Običajno obdobje med predložitvijo dokumentacije in sprejetjem spremembe traja 15 mesecev.

Deležnike se spodbuja k sodelovanju v javnih posvetovanjih, ki jih omogoča postopek omejevanja iz Uredbe REACH. Prvo javno posvetovanje o tem predlogu omejitve se je končalo 21. septembra 2013, drugo javno posvetovanje pa je predvideno na podlagi osnutka mnenja SEAC decembra 2013 ali januarja 2014.

Ločeno od predlagane omejitve v okviru Uredbe REACH Komisija proučuje potrebo po posebnih ukrepih za kristal v okviru Uredbe (ES) št. 1935/2004 o materialih in izdelkih, namenjenih stiku z živili.

([1]) Odbor za oceno tveganja.
([2]) Odbor za socialno-ekonomsko analizo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008828/13
to the Commission
Romana Jordan (PPE)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Use of lead crystalware

Glass industry representatives have informed me that consultation is currently taking place at committee level, under the REACH legislation, on the subject of restricting the use of consumer products made of lead crystal.

According to the glass industry, given the chemical and physical properties of lead crystal and the way in which it is used, any risk involved would be negligible. The industry also points out that it has no substitute material as good as lead glass. If, therefore, the proposals were accepted and the use of lead in consumer goods restricted accordingly, the EU crystal glass industry would suffer in terms of its competitiveness and development.

1. Is it the case that the REACH legislation is being amended as regards the use of lead and its compounds in consumer products?

2. Will the restrictions on the use of lead and its compounds also apply to crystal glass?

3. What kind of changes is the Commission planning to make in the future regarding the use of consumer products made of lead crystal?

4. What sort of legislative procedure is being employed to adopt the new rules on the use of lead crystal?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(11 October 2013)

A restriction under the REACH regulation is currently being considered for lead and its compounds in articles intended for consumer use. The proposed restriction aims at minimising children's exposure to lead from mouthing articles containing lead. Therefore only those articles to which children are likely to be exposed and from which a risk is considered unacceptable are intended to be covered by the restriction.

The proposal is being assessed by the two ECHA Committees, the RAC ([1]) and the SEAC ([2]) who are expected to deliver their final opinions in December 2013 and March 2014 respectively.

Only once the two ECHA Committees opinions will be finalised and forwarded to the Commission, this latter will draft an amendment to Annex XVII. The final decision will be taken according to the rules of the Comitology procedure. Usually the timeframe between the submission of the dossier and the adoption of the amendment is of the order of 15 months.

Stakeholders are encouraged to participate to the public consultations allowed by the REACH restriction procedure. A first public consultation on this restriction proposal ended on 21 September 2013 and a second one will take place on the draft SEAC opinion, in December 2013/January 2014.

Separately from the proposed restriction under the REACH regulation, the Commission is reflecting on the need for a specific measure for crystal under Regulation (EC) No 1935/2004 on materials and articles intended to come into contact with food.

([1]) Risk Assessment Committee.
([2]) Socioeconomic Analysis Committee.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008830/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(18 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Impianto per la produzione di conglomerati bituminosi denominato «Torre Ascon», causa della produzione di ingenti quantitativi di polveri

In località Busche, nel comune di Cesiomaggiore (BL), è stato realizzato un nuovo impianto per la produzione di conglomerati bituminosi per l'edilizia denominato «Torre Ascon», raddoppiamento di un analogo impianto già esistente nella medesima area.

L'impianto è ubicato a circa 60 metri dalla sponda destra del fiume Piave all'interno di un SIC (sito di interesse comunitario, ai sensi della direttiva «Habitat» 92/43/CEE) e ai confini di una ZPS (zona di protezione speciale, ai sensi della direttiva «Uccelli» 2009/147/CE) ([1]); in ragione di ciò, prima della realizzazione dell'opera è stato effettuato lo screening VINCA (valutazione dell'incidenza ambientale) sul progetto, conclusosi con l'assenza di significativi effetti negativi per l'area.

Tale impianto si caratterizza tuttavia per una cospicua dispersione di polveri durante il suo funzionamento, fonte di grande apprensione e disagio per la popolazione residente in loco. In quasi tre anni, inoltre, non sono ancora state realizzate da parte della società proprietaria dell'impianto le opere di mitigazione ambientale previste (indicate nello stesso screening VINCA), tra cui il completamento della piantumazione di alberi ad alto fusto e il mascheramento della torre asfalti e del frantoio per inerti, volti a fare da barriera alle polveri. Non sarebbero a oggi state adeguatamente adottate, inoltre, le altre misure prescritte a tal fine, quali, ad esempio, l'irrigazione delle strade e il regolare spazzamento di accessi e uscite del cantiere ([2]). Sempre in relazione alle opere di mitigazione, secondo quanto appreso dalla stampa e quanto dichiarato dal sindaco di Cesiomaggiore, detta società vorrebbe essere autorizzata ad adottare accorgimenti meno onerosi dal punto di vista finanziario in sostituzione dell'originaria «vela» prevista, i quali, anche secondo l'amministrazione comunale, sarebbero inoltre più gradevoli dal punto di vista estetico; eventualità, questa, che scatena una serie di polemiche, legate al sospetto che tale soluzione potrebbe comportare un minore imbrigliamento delle polveri e un ridotto contenimento del rumore ([3]). Tutto ciò premesso:

— come giudica la Commissione il recente raddoppiamento dell'impianto e le problematiche che esso comporta in un'area, il nord-est d'Italia, oggetto della recente condanna dell'Italia da parte della Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea del 19.12.2012 (causa C-68/11) per la continua violazione della direttiva «Aria» 2008/50/CE?

— quali iniziative intende intraprendere al fine di verificare il rispetto della normativa UE in settore?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(13 settembre 2013)

La Commissione non è in grado di verificare, sulla base delle informazioni fornite dall'onorevole parlamentare, se le condizioni previste nella VIA alla quale si fa riferimento siano state correttamente rispettate. Inoltre, è in primo luogo competenza delle pertinenti autorità nazionali di garantire la conformità con le disposizioni della direttiva 1992/43/CEE ([4]) («direttiva Habitat»), che dispone, all'articolo 6, che gli effetti negativi sui siti Natura 2000 di qualsiasi piano o progetto devono essere evitati e attenuati, o che, in determinate condizioni, sia necessaria l'adozione di misure compensative. In caso di chiare prove di una possibile violazione della legislazione dell'UE, la Commissione agirà allo scopo di verificare la corretta attuazione dell'acquis.

La Commissione, quando riceverà la relazione annuale sulla qualità dell'aria ambiente, attesa entro il 30 settembre 2013, verificherà se — nell'area in questione — le concentrazioni di particelle nell'aria ambiente sono conformi ai valori limite stabiliti dalla direttiva 2008/50/UE ([5]).

([1]) SIC IT3230088 «Fiume Piave dai Maserot alle grave di Pederobba» e ZPS IT3230032 «Lago di Busche — Vincheto di Cellarda — Fontane».
([2]) Come rilevato dall'ARPAV (Agenzia regionale per la prevenzione e protezione ambientale del Veneto) nella relazione stilata in seguito a un sopralluogo all'impianto effettuato in data 22.11.2012; sono inoltre state rilevate altre criticità.
([3]) Articolo de «Il Corriere delle Alpi»: http://goo.gl/pRfg9
([4]) Direttiva sulla conservazione degli habitat naturali e seminaturali e della flora e della fauna selvatiche, GU L 206 del 22.7.1992.
([5]) Direttiva relativa alla qualità dell'aria ambiente e per un'aria più pulita in Europa, GU L 152 dell'11.6.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008830/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: 'Torre Ascon' bituminous mixture plant producing large volumes of dust

A new plant producing bituminous mixtures for the construction industry has been built in Busche, in the municipality of Cesiomaggiore in north-eastern Italy. It is the second such plant in the area.

The 'Torre Ascon' plant is located approximately 60 metres from the banks of the River Piave in a site of Community importance (SIC, as designated under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)) and borders on a Special Protection Area (SPA, as designated under the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)) ([1]). For this reason, prior to the works commencing, an environmental impact assessment (EIA) was carried out, and it was concluded that the project would not have a significant negative impact on the surrounding area.

However, local people living close to the plant are very concerned about the large volume of dust that is produced when the plant is in operation. Although three years have now passed, the company operating the plant has still not carried out the environmental mitigation works specified in the EIA conclusions, such as the planting of tall trees and the screening off of the aggregates crusher in order to form a dust barrier. The other measures specified — such as hosing down the roads and sweeping up at the site entrances and exits — have not been adequately implemented either ([2]). With regard to the mitigation works, according to press reports and statements by the mayor of Cesiomaggiore the company would like to be given authorisation to install a less costly form of screening, which, as the municipal authorities have also stated, would have the added advantage of looking better. This possibility has sparked a lot of controversy, as people suspect that it could result in less efficient dust containment and noise abatement.

— What are the Commission's views on the recent construction of a second plant and the problems that this brings for north-eastern Italy — an area in respect of which, on 19 December 2012 (Case C-68/11), the Court of Justice found against Italy for failure to meet its obligations under the Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC)?

— What steps does it intend to take in order to ensure that EU standards are upheld in this industry?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

On the basis of the information provided by the Honorable Member, the Commission is not in a position to ascertain whether the conditions included in the EIA referred to are being properly respected. Moreover, it is in the first place the responsibility of the relevant national authorities to ensure compliance with the provisions of Directive 1992/43/EEC ([3]) ('Habitats Directive') which establishes in its Article 6 that negative impacts of plans or projects on Natura 2000 sites are to be avoided, mitigated or under certain conditions compensated. In case of clear evidences of a possible breach of EU legislation the Commission will act in order to verify the correct implementation of the EU acquis.

The Commission will check whether the ambient air concentrations of particulate matter in the area comply with the limit values laid down by Directive 2008/50/EU ([4]) when it receives the annual ambient air quality report, which is due by 30 September 2013.

([1]) SIC IT3230088 — 'Fiume Piave dai Maserot alle grave di Pederobba' and SPA IT3230032 — 'Lago di Busche — Vincheto di Cellarda — Fontane'.
([2]) As stated by the ARPAV (Agenzia regionale per la prevenzione e protezione ambientale del Veneto) in a report drawn up following an inspection of the plant carried out on 22 November 2012. Other problems were also identified.
([3]) On the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, OJ L 206 , 22.7.1992.
([4]) On ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe, OJ L 152, 11.6.2008.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008831/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(18 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Controverso itinerario ciclo-pedonale in cemento in fase di realizzazione lungo l'argine del fiume Monticano in provincia di Treviso, nell'area della rete Natura 2000

Lungo il fiume Monticano, in provincia di Treviso, è attualmente in fase di realizzazione un percorso ciclo-pedonale denominato «GiraMonticano», che avrà una lunghezza pari a circa 25 chilometri, 16 dei quali sulla sommità dell'argine del fiume. In base al progetto, l'itinerario verrà realizzato andando a ricoprire la parte superiore dell'argine con «materiale stabilizzato», consistente in un impasto di materiali cementizi, costruendo una pista larga 120 centimetri (dei quali appena 80 effettivamente praticabili) e profonda 25 centimetri.

L'opera incontra la ferma opposizione delle locali associazioni ambientaliste e dei cittadini ([1]), che la ritengono inutile, costosa e soprattutto pericolosa. Come rilevato dal naturalista Michele Zanetti, infatti, la cementificazione della sommità dell'argine del fiume metterà a rischio la sicurezza idraulica del territorio ([2]). Gli argini svolgono di fatto la primaria ed essenziale funzione di contenere le acque in occasione di fenomeni di piena; privarli della cotica erbosa superficiale equivale a indebolirne la struttura, con un conseguente incremento del rischio di alluvione. L'esigua larghezza progettata per la pista, inoltre, rende la stessa con tutta evidenza inadeguata a consentire il transito in sicurezza non solo di due velocipedi per senso di marcia, ma persino di uno solo di essi che proceda a senso unico; la scelta di costruire sulla sommità dell'argine, ancora, non consente l'installazione di tutte le opportune strutture di protezione.

L'area interessata dal progetto, infine, è tutelata all'interno della rete Natura 2000 ai sensi di quanto previsto dalla direttiva «Habitat» 92/43/CEE ([3]); il progetto, pertanto, è stato sottoposto a screening VINCA (valutazione dell'incidenza ambientale), che ha però escluso la possibilità che esso possa produrre significativi effetti negativi sul sito; valutazione che viene anch'essa contestata dagli oppositori alla sua realizzazione, per i quali, invece, l'opera andrà a perturbare il fragile ecosistema fluviale. Tutto ciò premesso:

— è la Commissione a conoscenza del progetto e della netta opposizione allo stesso da parte di associazioni ambientaliste e cittadini?

— può chiarire se il progetto sia destinatario di finanziamenti comunitari?

— come giudica la pericolosa scelta di cementificare l'argine del Monticano e il possibile incremento del rischio di alluvioni, ricordando che il secondo «considerando» della direttiva «Alluvioni» 2007/60/CE precisa che tali fenomeni, pur essendo impossibili da prevedere, possono verificarsi con maggiore probabilità e avere impatti ancor più negativi a causa dell'intervento dell'uomo?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(18 settembre 2013)

La Commissione non dispone di informazioni in merito a questo progetto. In linea con il principio della gestione condivisa della politica di coesione, la selezione e l'attuazione dei progetti FESR ([4]) è di competenza delle autorità nazionali. Per maggiori informazioni occorre consultare l'autorità di gestione del programma operativo FESR per il Veneto ([5]).

La direttiva sulle alluvioni (direttiva 2007/60/CE) ([6]) non impone obblighi in merito ai livelli di rischio di cui tenere conto, di conseguenza spetta a ciascuno Stato membro determinare il livello di rischio accettabile e gli obiettivi che intendono conseguire. Sulla base delle informazioni fornite dall'onorevole parlamentare, la Commissione non ha rilevato alcuna prova di una violazione della direttiva sulle alluvioni.

([1]) Sono state raccolte oltre mille firme di cittadini contrari al progetto: cfr. http://goo.gl/BpiYf
([2]) Cfr. la relazione del naturalista Michele Zanetti, che sottolinea questo e altri aspetti negativi legati al progetto: http://www.cerchio-aperto.it/ArticoliLocali/RelazioneMicheleZanetti.pdf
([3]) SIC IT3240029 «Ambito fluviale del Livenza e corso inferiore del Monticano».
([4]) Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale.
([5]) http://www.regione.veneto.it/web/programmi-comunitari/nuova-programmazione-2007-2013.
([6]) Direttiva 2007/60/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 23 ottobre 2007, relativa alla valutazione e alla gestione dei rischi di alluvioni, GU L 288 del 6.11.2007.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008831/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Controversial shared cycle/pedestrian path under construction along the banks of the Monticano River in the Province of Treviso, in a Natura 2000 Protected Area

A shared cycle and pedestrian path, to be known as the 'GiraMonticano', is currently under construction along the Monticano River in the Province of Treviso. The path will be about 25 km long, and a 16 km stretch will run along the river bank. According to the plans, the path will be built on the top of the river bank, using cement-based 'stabilised materials', and will be 120 cm wide (only 80 cm of which will be useable) and 25 cm deep.

The works have met with strong opposition from local environmental associations and local people ([1]), who believe that the path is unnecessary, expensive and above all, dangerous. As pointed out by the naturalist Michele Zanetti, building a concrete path along the river bank would put the surrounding area at risk of flooding ([2]). The primary function of river banks is to contain rivers when water levels rise. In this instance, removing the vegetation along the top of the bank could weaken its structure and result in an increased risk of flooding. What is more, the planned track is so narrow that two bicycles will not be able to pass by each other safely; in fact, there is barely enough space for a single bicycle to travel along it. Also, the decision to build on the top of the bank means that the necessary safety structures cannot be put in place.

The site is in a Natura 2000 Protected Area coming under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) ([3]). The project accordingly underwent environmental impact assessment (EIA) screening, and it was found that it would not have significant negative effects on the area. This assessment has been challenged by opponents to the path's construction, who maintain that it will upset the fragile river eco-system.

— Is the Commission aware of this project and of the strong opposition to it from environmental groups and local people?

— Can it say whether any EU funding has been granted for the project?

— What view does it take of the dangerous decision to build a concrete path on the banks of the Monticano River and the fact that it could increase the risk of flooding, given that the Floods Directive (2007/60/EC states that, although floods are natural phenomena which cannot be prevented, human activity can increase the likelihood and adverse impacts of flood events?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(18 September 2013)

The Commission has no information regarding this project. In line with the shared management principle of the Cohesion Policy, selection and implementation of ERDF ([4]) projects is the responsibility of the national authorities. More information can be obtained from the Managing Authority of the ERDF operational programme for Veneto ([5]).

The Floods Directive 2007/60/EC ([6]) is not prescriptive in the levels of risk that need to be addressed, hence it is for each Member State to set the acceptable level of risk and the objectives they want to achieve. Based on the information provided by the Honourable Member, the Commission could not identify any evidence of a breach of the Floods Directive.

([1]) More than 1 000 signatures have been collected from opponents to the project — http://goo.gl/BpiYf
([2]) Report from naturalist Michele Zanetti, highlighting the flood risk and other negative aspects of the project: http://www.cerchio-aperto.it/ArticoliLocali/RelazioneMicheleZanetti.pdf.
([3]) SIC (site of Community importance) IT3240029 — 'Ambito fluviale del Livenza e corso inferiore del Monticano'.
([4]) European Regional Development Fund.
([5]) http://www.regione.veneto.it/web/programmi-comunitari/nuova-programmazione-2007-2013.
([6]) Directive 2007/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on the assessment and management of flood risks, OJ L 288, 6.11.2007.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008833/13
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(18 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Impuestos a las emisiones de CO_2

El profesor de la universidad de Oxford y antiguo asesor de la Comisión en la preparación de la Hoja de Ruta de la Energía 2050, Dieter Helm, ha opinado en los últimos meses de forma no positiva sobre la política de la Unión respecto del cambio climático.

Señala que el protocolo de Kioto no ha servido para gran cosa y que las emisiones de CO_2 por año han aumentado en un 50 % entre 1997 y 2012, de 2 a 3 ppm/año. Añade que, si por los estándares de Kioto parece que Europa va bien, ello es debido a que se mide la producción de CO_2 del país y no el consumo. Pone por ejemplo que la producción de CO_2 de Gran Bretaña ha caído un 15 % entre 1995 y 2005, pero al mismo tiempo su consumo ha aumentado un 19 % debido a la desindustrialización del país y a sus importaciones de manufacturas. Señala que para medir las emisiones reales de un país se debería de medir el CO_2 consumido.

Indica también que la opción de las energías renovables actuales no servirá para avanzar hacia una economía de bajas emisiones y aconseja invertir en nuevas tecnologías en vez de malgastar dinero en la eólica y los biocarburantes. Además propone establecer un impuesto por emisión de CO_2 que incluya a las mercancías importadas a la Unión. Esto último impulsaría a los productores a producir con energías más limpias.

¿Qué opinión le merece a la Comisión la propuesta del Sr. Helm respecto a la necesidad de contabilizar el CO_2 consumido en vez del producido para determinar las emisiones reales de un país?

En la Hoja de Ruta hacia una Economía Baja en Carbono 2050 desarrollada por la Comisión, al establecer los objetivos a lograr, ¿qué tipo de emisión se ha tenido en cuenta: la producida o la consumida?

¿Qué opinión tiene la Comisión sobre las afirmaciones del profesor Helm respecto a las energías renovables actuales?

¿Ha considerado alguna vez la Comisión la posibilidad de gravar con impuestos sobre la emisión de CO_2 la importación de bienes producidos en terceros países, especialmente de aquellos grandes emisores de gases de efecto invernadero? ¿Tiene la Comisión previsto estudiar en un futuro la viabilidad e interés de dicha propuesta?

Respuesta de la Sra. Hedegaard en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de septiembre de 2013)

La UE disminuyó sus emisiones en un 18,4 % respecto a los niveles de 1990 e incrementó su PIB en un 44,9 % de 1990 a 2011 ([1]). Las políticas de la UE son fundamentales para reducir la intensidad de carbono de la economía de la UE.

Dada la tendencia observada en las emisiones mundiales, todos los países acordaron limitar el aumento de la temperatura a un máximo de 2° C y coincidieron en la necesidad urgente de actuar con firmeza para luchar contra el cambio climático a nivel mundial ([2]).

Los inventarios de emisiones son esenciales para una acción por el clima global. Todos los países deben presentarlos según las directrices de la CMNUCC sobre información y revisión ([3]). Esos inventarios se basan en datos de las emisiones directas como fuente de información más sólida, que suele ser la producción.

La Hoja de ruta hacia una economía hipocarbónica competitiva en 2050 estudia distintas vías para mantener el aumento de la temperatura por debajo de los 2° C ([4]). Se basa en la mejor información disponible, incluidos los inventarios de emisiones.

([1]) Véanse el inventario anual de los gases de efecto invernadero en la Unión Europea 1990-2011 y el informe sobre el inventario de 2013. Agencia Europea de Medio Ambiente 2013. Informe técnico n° 8/2013 http://www.eea.europa.eu/pressroom/publications/european-union-greenhouse-gas-inventory-2013

([2]) Decisiones de la Conferencia de las Partes en la CMNUCC celebrada en Doha: 2/CP.18 Promoción de la Plataforma de Durban http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2012/cop18/spa/08a01s.pdf#page=

([3]) La UE recopila su inventario con arreglo al Reglamento (UE) n° 525/2013, sobre la base del Documento FCCC/CP/2002/8 de la CMNUCC.

([4]) COM(2011) 112 final.

La Hoja de Ruta de la Energía 2050 destaca el papel clave de las energías renovables para garantizar la seguridad y la competitividad energéticas y reducir las emisiones de conformidad con el objetivo climático de la UE para 2050.

La Comisión apoya la investigación sobre los datos de emisiones, consumo y comercio ([5]), lo que puede contribuir a la realización de la Hoja de ruta hacia un uso eficiente de los recursos y de sus medidas sobre consumo sostenible.

En el paquete de medidas sobre clima y energía se contemplaba el establecimiento de aranceles como una posible medida indirecta. Diversos análisis demuestran que es un instrumento insuficiente. La UE se esfuerza por garantizar un acuerdo mundial jurídicamente vinculante para luchar contra el cambio climático en 2015 en el marco de la CMNUCC y aumentar el nivel de ambición antes de 2020 como medio más eficaz para reducir las emisiones y generar beneficios a escala mundial.

([5]) Véase, por ejemplo, el proyecto financiado por el Séptimo Programa Marco de Investigación de la UE, www.wiod.org

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008833/13
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Tax on CO_2 emissions

Dieter Helm, a Professor at the University of Oxford and a former adviser to the Commission during the preparation of the Energy Roadmap 2050, has in recent months criticised the EU's climate change policy.

He says that the Kyoto Protocol has had little effect and that annual CO_2 emissions increased by half between 1997 and 2012, from 2 to 3 ppm/year. He adds that, if it seems that Europe is doing well by the Kyoto Protocol's standards, it is because the Protocol measures countries' CO_2 production rather than consumption. He cites the United Kingdom as an example, where CO_2 production fell by 15% between 1995 and 2005, while CO_2 consumption increased by 19% owing to the country's deindustrialisation and the rise in imports of manufactured goods. He says that only by measuring a country's CO_2 consumption can we measure its actual emissions.

He also states that current renewable energy sources will bring us no further towards a low-emissions economy and recommends investing in new technologies instead of wasting money on wind energy and biofuels. He also suggests introducing a tax on CO_2 emissions, including on goods imported into the EU. This would encourage manufacturers to use cleaner sources of energy.

What view does the Commission take on Dieter Helm's remark regarding the need to measure a country's CO_2 consumption rather than production in order to determine its actual emissions?

What kind of emissions were taken into account when setting the targets in the Commission's Roadmap for moving to a low-carbon economy by 2050, emissions produced or emissions consumed?

What view does the Commission take on Professor Helm's remarks regarding current renewable sources of energy?

Has the Commission ever considered introducing a tax on the CO_2 emissions of manufactured goods imported from non-EU countries, especially those from the biggest emitters of greenhouse gases? Does the Commission intend to explore the feasibility and appeal of such a policy?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(11 September 2013)

The EU cut its emissions by 18.4% below 1990 levels and grew its GDP by 44.9% from 1990 to 2011 ([1]). The EU policy framework is key to lower the carbon intensity of the EU economy.

Given global emissions trends, all countries agreed to stay below 2°C temperature increase, and on the urgent need for strong and global climate action ([2]).

Emission inventories are essential to global climate action. All countries should present inventories following the UNFCCC guidelines on reporting and review ([3]). These are based on direct emission data as most robust data source, which is often production.

The Roadmap for moving to a competitive low carbon economy in 2050 analyses pathways to stay below 2°C ([4]). It is based on best available information, including emission inventories.

The Energy Roadmap 2050 outlines the key role of renewable energy to ensure energy security and competitiveness and to cut emissions in line with the EU's 2050 climate objective.

The Commission supports research on emissions, consumption, and trade data ([5]). This can be an input to deliver the Resource efficiency roadmap, and its actions on sustainable consumption.

([1]) See Annual European Union greenhouse gas inventory 1990-2011 and inventory report 2013, European Environmental Agency 2013, Technical report No 8/2013 http://www.eea.europa.eu/pressroom/publications/european-union-greenhouse-gas-inventory-2013
([2]) UNFCCC Conference of the parties decisions in Doha: 2/CP.18 Advancing the Durban Platform http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2012/cop18/eng/08a01.pdf
([3]) The EU compiles its inventory according to Regulation (EU)525/2013, based on UNFCCC Document FCCC/CP/2002/8.
([4]) COMM(2011) 112 final.
([5]) See for instance a project funded by the EU 7th Research Framework Programme, www.wiod.org

The climate and energy package indicated border taxes as one possible side measure. Analysis has demonstrated this instrument is sub-optimal. The EU works to secure a legally-binding global agreement to tackle climate change in 2015 under the UNFCCC and to enhance ambition before 2020 as this is the most effective way to cut emissions and deliver benefits worldwide.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008834/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: UK Safer Internet Centre

The UK Safer Internet Centre has previously been a recipient of EU funding. When will confirmation of funding under the framework of the Commission's Safer Internet Programme be available?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(30 August 2013)

Under the current Safer Internet Programme which runs to end 2013, the contract with the three organisations (South West Grid for Learning Trust, Childnet and Internet Watch Foundation) that comprise the UK Safer Internet Centre foresees funding until its stated end date of 31 October 2014. There is no further funding available under this Programme nor is a successor independent Safer Internet Programme proposed. Any future funding for Safer Internet Centres would be through the provisions for digital services infrastructures under the Connecting Europe Facility. The political agreement on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) has led to an amended proposal from the Commission for a regulation on guidelines for trans-European telecommunications networks, including for digital services infrastructures. The safer Internet is identified therein as an eligible digital services infrastructure but as the amended proposal makes it clear the available budget will not allow the Commission to support activities either under the core platform or generic services at the level of financial support and service provision as was originally proposed. This proposal is currently under discussion in the European Parliament and in Council.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008835/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(18 juillet 2013)

Objet: Alternatives au perchloroéthylène dans les pressings

Le perchloroéthylène, utilisé comme solvant pour le nettoyage à sec, est un produit toxique dangereux pour les reins et le système nerveux, irritant pour les yeux et les voies respiratoires. Il est classé cancérogène probable pour l'homme par le Centre international de recherche contre le cancer (groupe 2A) et cancérogène possible (catégorie 3) par l'Union européenne. En France, la question de la substitution du perchloroéthylène est devenue cruciale depuis la décision du ministère de l'écologie d'interdire progressivement ce solvant utilisé dans la majorité des pressings français, exigeant une véritable mutation du secteur. Concrètement, plus aucun pressing au perchloroéthylène n'ouvre actuellement sur le territoire français et les machines fonctionnant avec ce solvant commenceront à être remplacées dès septembre 2014 de telle sorte qu'en 2016, plus de 50 % du parc aura été changé.

Néanmoins, le CTTN-IREN, Institut de recherche sur l'entretien et le nettoyage, vient de dévoiler les premiers résultats d'une étude menée depuis 2010 sur l'impact environnemental des principales technologies de nettoyage alternatives au perchloroéthylène, montrant que toutes ont des inconvénients significatifs. Selon cette étude, aucune «technologie miracle» ne s'est distinguée: alors que la production du D5 (décaméthylcylopentasiloxane) nécessite plusieurs procédés chimiques successifs et requiert une grosse quantité d'énergie, le nettoyage à l'eau apparaît comme le procédé le plus écologique de tous, mais son efficacité est limitée. Ces alternatives sont moins efficaces et plus onéreuses.

— Quel regard porte la Commission sur cette étude?

— Dispose-t-elle d'une analyse comparative de l'utilisation du perchloroéthylène dans lespressings de l'Union européenne?

— Dispose-t-elle d'études complètes sur la toxicité du perchloroéthylène, notamment sur satoxicité suspectée pour la reproduction?

— Comment la Commission compte-t-elle garantir que les produits de substitution ne soientpas pires que le perchloroéthylène?

— Quelles alternatives techniquement et économiquement acceptables préconise-t-elle auxprofessionnels?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(3 octobre 2013)

La Commission n'a pas reçu l'étude du CTTN-IREN sur les solutions de remplacement du perchloroéthylène dans les pressings.

La Commission tient à souligner qu'il n'existe pas de législation de l'UE réglementant l'utilisation du perchloroéthylène dans les pressings. La France a réglementé cette utilisation au niveau national en restreignant l'emploi, dans les locaux contigus à des locaux occupés par des tiers, de machines de nettoyage à sec utilisant du perchloroéthylène ou tout autre solvant dont la tension de vapeur à 20 °C est supérieure ou égale à 1900 Pa.

La France n'a pas remis d'analyse des solutions de remplacement dans sa notification de projet de mesure nationale. Par conséquent, la Commission n'a pas eu la possibilité de déterminer s'il existait des solutions techniquement et économiquement viables pour remplacer le perchloroéthylène dans les pressings.

Le perchloroéthylène a été enregistré au titre de REACH et le résumé des études concernant sa toxicité pour la reproduction est donc accessible au public sur le site de l'Agence européenne des produits chimiques (ECHA) ([1]).

([1]) http://echa.europa.eu/fr/information-on-chemicals/registered-substances

Le perchloroéthylène fait l'objet d'une classification et d'un étiquetage harmonisés conformément au règlement (CE) n° 1272/2008 relatif à la classification, à l'étiquetage et à l'emballage des substances et des mélanges (CLP), en tant que cancérogène de catégorie 2 («effet cancérogène suspecté — preuves insuffisantes»). La Commission n'a connaissance d'aucune action de la part des États-membres visant à classer le perchloroéthylène dans la catégorie des substances toxiques pour la reproduction.

Pour restreindre, au niveau de l'UE, l'utilisation de toute substance au titre de REACH, un dossier doit être préparé conformément à l'annexe XV de REACH et contenir une évaluation des propriétés dangereuses des solutions de remplacement disponibles.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008835/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Alternatives to perchloroethylene in the dry-cleaning industry

Perchloroethylene is as a solvent used in the dry-cleaning industry. It is a toxic chemical and can be damaging to the kidneys and the nervous system, as well as a cause of irritation to the eyes and the respiratory tract. It is classified as 'probably carcinogenic to humans' (group 2a) by the International Agency for Research on Cancer and as 'possibly carcinogenic' (category 3) by the European Union. In France, where perchloroethylene is used in most dry-cleaner's, finding a substitute for the solvent has become a priority since the Ministry of Ecology decided to phase out its use, requiring real changes to be made in the sector. Specifically, no new dry-cleaner's that use perchloroethylene are able to open in France and any existing equipment that uses this solvent will start to be replaced from September 2014, such that in 2016 almost half of the country's dry-cleaning equipment will have been replaced.

Nevertheless, the CTTN-IREN, the French research institute for care and cleaning, recently revealed the first results of a study conducted since 2010 on the environmental impacts of the main alternatives to perchloroethylene as cleaning technologies, which show that they all have significant disadvantages. This study found no 'miracle technology': whereas several successive chemical processes and a large amount of energy are needed to produce D5 (decamethylcyclopentasiloxane), cleaning with water alone, which seems to be the most eco-friendly of all the processes, has limited effectiveness. It therefore seems that the alternatives to perchloroethylene are either less effective or more expensive.

— What view does the Commission take on this study?

— Does it have a comparative analysis on the use of perchloroethylene in the dry-cleaning industry in the EU?

— Does it have complete studies on the toxity of perchloroethylene and, specifically, on its suspected reproductive toxicity?

— How does the Commission intend to ensure that the alternatives to perchloroethylene are not worse than it?

— What technically and economically feasible alternatives would it like to see the industry use?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(3 October 2013)

The Commission has not received the study by CTTN-IREN on the alternatives to perchloroethylene in dry cleaning.

The Commission would like to underline that there is no EU legislation to regulate the use of perchloroethylene in dry cleaning. France has regulated this use at national level, by restricting the use of dry-cleaning machines using any solvents with vapour pressure at 20°C higher or equal to 1900 Pa (which include perchloroethylene) in workshops adjacent to premises occupied by third parties.

An analysis of the alternatives was not submitted by France in its notification of the draft national measure and therefore the Commission did not have the possibility to assess if there are technically and economically feasible alternatives to perchloroethylene in dry cleaning.

Perchloroethylene has been registered under REACH and therefore the summary of the studies concerning the toxicity for reproduction of perchloroethylene are publicly available on the website ([1]) of the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA).

Perchloroethylene is subject to harmonised classification and labelling under Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008 on the classification, labelling and packaging of chemicals (CLP) as carcinogen Category c ('limited evidence of a carcinogen effect'). The Commission is not aware of any action from Member States related to a classfication as toxic for reproduction.

([1]) http://echa.europa.eu/information-on-chemicals/registered-substances

In order to restrict the use of any substance at EU level under REACH, a dossier in accordance with Annex XV of REACH should be prepared and should also contain an assessment of the hazardous properties of the available alternatives.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008836/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(18 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Uwięzienie pastora Saida Abediniego

Pastor Said Abedini został oficjalnie oskarżony o próbę podważenia autorytetu rządu irańskiego poprzez stworzenie sieci chrześcijańskich kościołów domowych. W lutym 2013 r. rozpoczął się jego proces. Skazano go na 8 lat więzienia między innymi za to, że świadomie wywierał wpływ na irańską młodzież, kierując ją ku chrześcijaństwu i nastawiając przeciwko islamowi oraz nawracał dorosłych na chrześcijaństwo.

1. Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel zna sprawę pastora Saida Abediniego?

2. Czy podejmowała interwencję w sprawie jego uwolnienia? Jaka była odpowiedź republiki irańskiej?

3. Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel zamierza poruszyć temat skazania na więzienie pastora Saida Abediniego oraz sytuacji chrześcijan w Iranie podczas rozmów z nowym prezydentem republiki Hasanem Rowhani?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(7 października 2013 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca zdaje sobie sprawę z dramatycznego przebiegu sprawy pastora Saida Abediniego. Uważnie śledzi rozwój sytuacji, a jej niepokój wzbudziły doniesienia o tym, że pastor Said Abedini został skazany na osiem lat więzienia za swoje przekonania, co jest kolejnym dowodem ograniczenia wolności przekonań w Iranie. Unia Europejska jest w dalszym ciągu zaangażowana w działania na rzecz poprawy praw mniejszości w Iranie, a także ochronę praw człowieka w szerszym rozumieniu. Jednym z aspektów jest nakładanie sankcji na tych, którzy są odpowiedzialni – bezpośrednio lub w drodze zarządzenia – za poważne naruszenia praw człowieka na terytorium Iranu. Islamska Republika Iranu musi przestrzegać międzynarodowych zobowiązań w zakresie praw człowieka, które podjęła, między innymi w zakresie wolności religii i przekonań. Przy każdej możliwej okazji UE będzie podejmować rozmowy dotyczące tych zagadnień ze swoimi irańskimi partnerami, przypominając władzom irańskim o ich międzynarodowych zobowiązaniach wynikających z Międzynarodowego paktu praw obywatelskich i politycznych, który został przez Iran podpisany.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008836/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Imprisonment of Pastor Saeed Abedini

Pastor Saeed Abedini was charged with attempting to undermine the authority of the Iranian government by setting up a network of Christian house churches. His trial began in February 2013. He has been sentenced to eight years in prison for, among other things, wilfully exerting an influence on young Iranians, steering them towards Christianity and turning them against Islam, and converting adults to Christianity.

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

2. Has she made representations to secure his release? If so, what was the response of the Republic of Iran?

3. Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to raise the matter of the imprisonment of Pastor Saeed Abedini and the situation of the Christians in Iran during talks with the new President of the Republic, Hasan Rowhani?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the dramatic case of Pastor Saeed Abedini. She is closely following this case and is concerned with reports informing that he has been sentenced to eight years in prison for his beliefs, which is yet another manifestation of the restrictions on religious freedoms in Iran. The European Union remains committed to improving the rights of minorities in Iran, alongside with the protection of human rights more generally. One aspect of this is the imposition of sanctions on those who are responsible, directly or by order, for grave human rights violations inside Iran. The Islamic Republic of Iran must respect and live up to the international obligations on human rights that it has itself signed up to, *inter alia* on freedom of religion and belief. The EU will discuss these matters with Iranian counterparts whenever possible and remind the Iranian authorities of their international obligations under the Covenant of Civil and Political Rights, to which Iran has subscribed.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008837/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(18 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Niemiecki system wspierania ekoprądu a prawo UE

Dzięki systemowi dopłat do OZE 2 262 niemieckie firmy oszczędzają 2,4 mld euro rocznie. Do tej pory ulgi umożliwiały im ochronę przed znacznym wzrostem cen prądu w związku z wprowadzaniem OZE do systemu.

System dopłat powoduje znaczne straty u producentów energii elektrycznej w krajach sąsiadujących z Niemcami.

1. Czy dofinansowani projektów OZE przez rząd Niemiec jest zgodne z prawem unijnym? Czy nie zaburza ono konkurencyjności na wspólnym rynku energii?

2. Jakie kroki zamierza podjąć Komisja, aby zapewnić równość pomiędzy producentami OZE w różnych krajach UE?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Günthera Oettingera w imieniu Komisji
(16 września 2013 r.)

1. Dyrektywa w sprawie odnawialnych źródeł energii 2009/28/WE ([1]) obejmuje wiążące krajowe cele w zakresie zużycia energii ze źródeł odnawialnych. Umożliwia ona również państwom członkowskim wprowadzanie systemów wsparcia mających na celu rozwój technologii umożliwiających wykorzystywanie energii ze źródeł odnawialnych. W zakresie, w jakim systemy wsparcia państw członkowskich na rzecz odnawialnych źródeł energii stanowią pomoc państwa, podlegają one kontroli pomocy państwa i muszą być zgodne z przepisami art. 107 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej oraz z Wytycznymi wspólnotowymi w sprawie pomocy państwa na ochronę środowiska ([2]). Komisja przeprowadza obecnie ocenę tego, czy istniejący w Niemczech system wsparcia dla energii ze źródeł odnawialnych, w tym jego mechanizm finansowania, stanowi pomoc państwa, i jeżeli tak jest w istocie, to czy pomoc ta może zostać uznana za zgodną z rynkiem wewnętrznym.

2. Komisja ma zamiar przyjąć wytyczne w sprawie najlepszych praktyk w zakresie systemów wsparcia dla odnawialnych źródeł energii oraz opracowywania takich systemów, a także w sprawie mechanizmów współpracy między państwami członkowskimi, które to mechanizmy mają doprowadzić do dalszej konwergencji systemów wsparcia w całej UE. Wytyczne będą stanowiły część komunikatu Komisji, który ma również dotyczyć innych form interwencji rządowych na rynkach energii oraz zminimalizowania powodowanych przez nie zakłóceń.

Komisja dokonuje również przeglądu Wytycznych wspólnotowych w sprawie pomocy państwa na ochronę środowiska, tak by były one zgodne z przedstawionymi powyżej celami.

([1]) Dyrektywa Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady 2009/28/WE z dnia 23 kwietnia 2009 r. w sprawie promowania stosowania energii ze źródeł odnawialnych zmieniająca i w następstwie uchylająca dyrektywy 2001/77/WE oraz 2003/30/WE, Dz.U. L 140 z 5.6.2009.
([2]) Wytyczne wspólnotowe w sprawie pomocy państwa na ochronę środowiska, Dz.U. C 82 z 1.4.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008837/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: German green electricity support scheme and EC law

The RES (renewable energy source) subsidies scheme in place in Germany saves 2262 firms in the country EUR 2.4 billion per year. To date, this support has protected those firms against the significant electricity price increases caused by the introduction of RES targets.

The subsidies scheme is resulting in significant losses for electricity generators in neighbouring countries.

1. Is the German Government's funding of RES projects consistent with EC law? Is it not distorting competition on the EU energy market?

2. How does the Commission intend to ensure that there is a level playing field for green electricity generators across the EU?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(16 September 2013)

1. The Renewable Energy Directive 2009/28/EC ([1]) includes binding national targets for the consumption of renewable energy. It also allows Member States to introduce support schemes for the development of renewable energy. However, in so far as Member States' support schemes for renewable energy constitute state aid they are subject to state aid control and have to comply with the provisions of Article 107 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the Environmental Aid Guidelines ([2]). The Commission is assessing whether the current system of supporting energy from renewable sources in Germany including its financing mechanism constitutes state aid and, if so, whether the aid can be considered compatible with the internal market.

2. The Commission intends to adopt guidance on the best practice and design of support schemes for renewable energy and on the use of the cooperation mechanisms between Member States which are intended to lead to further convergence of support schemes across the EU. This will form part of a Commission Communication in which it also intends to adress other forms of government intervention in the energy markets and how their distortive effects can be minimised.

The Commission is also in the process of revising the Environmental Aid Guidelines in a manner which is consistent with the objectives cited above.

([1]) Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and amending and subsequently repealing Directives 2001/77/EC and 2003/30/EC (Text with EEA relevance), OJ L 140, 5.6.2009.

([2]) Community Guidelines on state aid for Environmental Protection, OJ C82 of 1.4.2008.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008839/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(18 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Metoda wskaźnikowo-aukcyjna oparta na tzw. benchmarkach wielopaliwowych

Alternatywnym rozwiązaniem, zmniejszającym koszty polityki klimatycznej i respektującym zasadę solidarności może być przydział darmowych uprawnień do emisji w elektroenergetyce na podstawie wskaźnika emisyjności w produkcji w kg CO/MWh. W tym systemie, jak wskazują eksperci, przydział uprawnień danej jednostce wytwórczej miałby miejsce do poziomu emisyjności najlepiej dostępnej technologii wytwarzania energii elektrycznej w oparciu o dane paliwo. Oddzielnie dla węgla brunatnego, kamiennego, gazu lub oleju. Taki system zapewniłby mniejszy wzrost cen energii elektrycznej oraz spowodował nagromadzenie darmowych przydziałów.

1. Czy Komisja rozważała zmianę w metodzie obliczania darmowych emisji oraz wykorzystanie metody wskaźnikowo-aukcyjnej opartej na tzw. benchamarkach wielopaliwowych?

2. Jak Komisja ocenia metodę wskaźnikowo-aukcyjną opartą na tzw. benchmarkach wielopaliwowych?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Hedegaard w imieniu Komisji
(28 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Zmieniając dyrektywę o systemie handlu uprawnieniami do emisji ([1]), współustawodawcy zdecydowali, że wytwarzanie energii elektrycznej nie powinno, co do zasady, korzystać z przydziału bezpłatnych uprawnień do emisji, ponieważ taki bezpłatny przydział zaskutkowałby nadzwyczajnymi zyskami dla producentów energii, którzy w każdym przypadku przekazują koszty emisji konsumentom energii elektrycznej. Zdecydowano również przydzielić uprawnienia dla przemysłu w oparciu o wskaźniki niezależne od rodzaju paliwa, aby nie faworyzować instalacji wysokoemisyjnych.

W powyżej opisanym kontekście:

1) Komisja Europejska nie wzięła pod uwagę zmiany zasad przyznawania uprawnień do emisji instalacjom należącym do unijnego systemu handlu emisjami.

2) Dotychczas zdobyte doświadczenie pokazuje, że sprzedaż uprawnień wyłącznie w drodze aukcji sektorowi produkcji energii elektrycznej funkcjonuje tak, jak powinna.

Istnieją inne środki służące rozwiązywaniu kwestii związanych z kosztami energii elektrycznej. Na podstawie zmienionej dyrektywy duża część dochodów ze sprzedaży uprawnień na aukcji jest rozdzielana miedzy państwa członkowskie z uwzględnieniem PKB na mieszkańca w ramach solidarności. Ten dochód może być wykorzystany np. do poprawy efektywności energetycznej. Ponadto nowe państwa członkowskie mogą nadal przejściowo otrzymywać bezpłatne przydziały dla elektrowni w zamian za inwestycje o tej samej wartości mające na celu modernizację sektora energii elektrycznej i zróżnicowanie koszyka energetycznego.

([1]) Dyrektywa 2003/87/WE Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady z dnia 13 października 2003 r. ustanawiająca system handlu przydziałami emisji gazów cieplarnianych we Wspólnocie oraz zmieniająca dyrektywę Rady 96/61/WE (Dz.U. L 25 z 25.10.2003, s. 32) zmienioną dyrektywą 2009/29/WE Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady z dnia 23 kwietnia 2009 r.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008839/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Benchmarking-auctioning method based on fuel-specific benchmarks

An alternative method involving the allocation of free CO_2 allowances for electricity generation on the basis of emission benchmarks (in $kgCO_2/MWh$) could lower the cost of implementing the EU's climate policy and would be in keeping with the principle of solidarity. Under this system, allowances would be allocated free of charge for generation facilities up to the level of emissions produced by the least carbon-intensive generation technologies available for the type of fuel used at each facility. The benchmarks would be set separately for each type of fuel (hard coal, brown coal, natural gas and fuel oil). This system would minimise electricity price rises and make it possible to accumulate free allowances.

1. Has the Commission considered changing its approach to calculating free allowances and using the benchmarking-auctioning method based on fuel-specific benchmarks?

2. What view does it take of the benchmarking-auctioning method?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(28 August 2013)

When revising the ETS Directive ([1]), the co-legislators decided that electricity generation should, as a matter of principle, not benefit from free allocation of emission allowances, as such free allocation would result in windfall profits for the power generators, which in any case pass on the emissions costs to the electricity consumers. It was also decided to allocate allowances to industry based on fuel neutral benchmarks, in order not to favour high emitting installations.

Against this background:

1) The European Commission has not considered changing the principles for allocation of allowances to installations included in the EU ETS.

2) Experience acquired so far has shown that full auctioning to the electricity generation sector functions as intended.

Other means exist to address any concerns about electricity costs. On the basis of the revised Directive, large amounts of auctioning revenue are redistributed to Member States taking into account GDP per capita for the purposes of solidarity. This revenue can be used to e.g. improve energy efficiency. Furthermore, newer Member States can continue to provide some transitional free allocation for power plants in return for investment of an equivalent value to modernise their electricity sectors and diversify their energy mix.

([1]) Directive 2003/87/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 13 October 2003 establishing a scheme for greenhouse gas emission allowance trading within the Community and amending Council Directive 96/61/EC, OJ L 25, 25.10.2003, p. 32 as amended by Directive 2009/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008840/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(18 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Powodzie w Europie Środkowej

Ulewne deszcze spowodowały wezbranie rzek oraz powodzie w kilku krajach europejskich. W Polsce doszło do zalania oraz podtopień w województwie Lubelskim, Dolnośląskim, Opolskim, Podkarpackim, Świętokrzyskim i Małopolskim. Po przejściu powodzi część tych regionów została dotknięta przez gradobicia oraz gwałtowne burze. Zniszczenia są znaczne. Do 13 czerwca 2013 r. w Małopolsce straty zgłosiło 29 jednostek samorządu terytorialnego, w tym: 24 gminy, 4 powiaty i samorząd województwa. Do tej pory Komisja Wojewódzka zweryfikowała straty na kwotę ponad 10 mln zł. Równocześnie trwa ocena strat w rolnictwie. Według zgłoszeń gmin oraz rolników szacowane są na ponad 2,5 tys. gospodarstw rolnych (powierzchnia uszkodzonych upraw przekracza 12 tys. ha). Do tego olbrzymia część upraw została zniszczona przez opady gradu.

1. Czy Komisja przewiduje dodatkowe fundusze dla regionów szczególnie dotkniętych powodziami w 2013 r.?

2. W jaki sposób Komisja zamierza pomóc poszkodowanym regionom? Czy planuje się uruchomienie środków z Europejskiego Funduszu Solidarności?

3. Czy planowane jest wsparcie rolników, którzy w Małopolsce stracili przez grad znaczną część swoich upraw?

4. Czy w nowej perspektywie finansowej Komisja zamierza wyodrębnić specjalne środki dla regionów często dotykanych przez powodzie i podtopienia takich jak np.: Małopolska, Podkarpacie, Świętokrzyskie czy Dolnośląskie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Johannesa Hahna w imieniu Komisji
(5 września 2013 r.)

1. Zgodnie z art. 33 rozporządzenia Komisji 1083/2006 ([1]) programy operacyjne mogą zostać poddane powtórnej analizie z inicjatywy państwa członkowskiego lub Komisji działającej w porozumieniu z zainteresowanym państwem członkowskim, w szczególności w celu usunięcia trudności w ich realizacji. Ponieważ władze polskie nie zgłosiły Komisji wspomnianych trudności związanych z tegorocznymi powodziami, nie wprowadzono dotychczas żadnych zmian w planowanych programach operacyjnych w tym zakresie.

2. Środki z Europejskiego Funduszu Solidarności mogą zostać uruchomione tylko na wniosek władz krajowych państwa dotkniętego klęską żywiołową, który to wniosek należy złożyć w przeciągu 10 tygodni od wystąpienia klęski żywiołowej. Władze polskie nie powiadomiły do tej pory o zamiarze złożenia wniosku o pomoc z Funduszu Solidarności.

3. Europejski Fundusz Rolny na rzecz Rozwoju Obszarów Wiejskich zapewnia wparcie w zakresie przywrócenia potencjału produkcji rolnej nadwerężonego przez klęski żywiołowe oraz wprowadzenia środków zapobiegawczych.

W następstwie niedawnych opadów deszczu i gradu, które spowodowały znaczące szkody, Polska zaproponowała przesunięcie 31,5 mln EUR w ramach obecnego programu rozwoju obszarów wiejskich w celu zwiększenia wsparcia przeznaczonego na przywrócenie potencjału produkcji rolnej oraz wprowadzenie środków zapobiegawczych. Komisja przyjęła ten wniosek w dniu 30 lipca 2013 r. Zostanie ogłoszone nowe zaproszenie do składania wniosków, które będzie miało na celu zrekompensowanie strat powstałych na skutek niedawnych niekorzystnych warunków pogodowych.

4. Komisja rzeczywiście uznała zagrożenie powodziowe w Polsce za jeden z obszarów, w których konieczne jest przyznanie unijnego wsparcia finansowego w okresie 2014-2020. Jeżeli władze polskie złożą wnioski o przyznanie przedmiotowych środków, regiony wymienione przez Szanownego Pana Posła zostaną z pewnością uwzględnione w zbliżających się rozmowach.

([1]) Rozporządzenie Rady (WE) nr 1083/2006 z dnia 11 lipca 2006 r. ustanawiające przepisy ogólne dotyczące Europejskiego Funduszu Rozwoju Regionalnego, Europejskiego Funduszu Społecznego oraz Funduszu Spójności i uchylające rozporządzenie (WE) nr 1260/1999, Dz.U. L 210 z 31.7.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008840/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Flooding in Central Europe

Torrential rain has caused a rise in river levels and flooding in a number of European countries. In Poland flooding has occurred in the provinces of Lubelskie, Dolnośląskie, Opolskie, Podkarpackie, Świętokrzyskie and Małopolskie. After the floods subsided, parts of these regions were battered by hailstorms and huge storms, causing considerable destruction. By 13 June 2013, damage reports had been sent in by 29 administrative authorities in Małopolskie: 24 local and four county authorities, and the provincial authority. The Provincial Commission has confirmed losses so far of over PLN 10 million, whilst the cost of the damage suffered by agriculture is still being assessed. Reports by local authorities and farmers suggest that more than 2 500 farms have been affected, with damage to crops over an area in excess of 12 000 ha. In addition, hailstorms have caused the wholesale destruction of crops.

1. Does the Commission intend to increase funding to regions particularly affected by flooding in 2013?

2. How does the Commission plan to help regions which have suffered damage? Does it intend to mobilise the European Solidarity Fund for this purpose?

3. Are their plans to assist farmers in Małopolskie who have lost a large proportion of their crops because of hail?

4. Does the Commission intend to earmark special funds in the new multiannual financial framework for regions such as Małopolskie, Podkarpackie, Świętokrzyskie and Dolnośląskie, which are frequently affected by flooding?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

1. In accordance with Article 33 of Council Regulation 1083/2006 ([1]), operational programmes may be re-examined at the initiative of the Member State or the Commission in agreement with the Member State, in particular in order to address implementation difficulties. Since the Polish authorities have not communicated such difficulties related to this year's floods to the Commission, there is currently no modification of operational programmes planned related to these floodings.

2. The EU Solidarity Fund can only be mobilised following an application from the national authorities of the affected country to be submitted within 10 weeks of the start of the disaster. The Polish authorities have not communicated their intention to submit an application for Solidarity Fund aid.

3. European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development provides for support for restoring agricultural production damaged by natural disasters and for introducing prevention steps.

Following the recent rainfalls and hailstorms causing significant damage, Poland proposed a transfer of EUR 31.5 million, within the current Rural Development Programme, to strengthen support for restoration of agriculture potential and prevention measures. The Commission approved the proposal on 30 July 2013. A new call for applications will be launched which will address losses due to recent adverse weather conditions.

4. The Commission has indeed identified flood risks in Poland as one of the areas which need to be supported with EU funds in the 2014-2020 period. Taken into account that the Polish authorities need to submit their proposals for allocation of these funds, the regions mentioned by the Honourable Member will most certainly be taken into account in the forthcoming discussions.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999,OJ L 210, 31.7.2006.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse P-008841/13
til Kommissionen (Næstformand / Højtstående repræsentant)
Søren Bo Søndergaard (GUE/NGL)
(18. juli 2013)

Om: VP/HR — Sombath Somphones forsvinding

Den 7. februar 2013 vedtog et stort flertal af Europa-Parlamentet en beslutning ang. den laotiske civilsamfundsleder Sombath Somphones forsvinding ([1]).

Siden vedtagelsen har flere parlamentariske delegationer — som bl.a. har inkluderet MP professor Walden Bello (Filippinerne) og MP Tuur Elzinga (Holland) — mødtes med de laotiske myndigheder for at efterforske Sombath Somphones forsvinding.

I lyset af, at en ny parlamentarisk delegation — som bl.a. vil inkludere medlemmer af Europa-Parlamentet — rejser til Laos den 25.-28. august 2013, bedes den Højtstående Repræsentant orientere om følgende:

1. Hvad er status på situationen omkring Sombath Somphones forsvinding?

2. Hvad har den Højtstående Repræsentant gjort for at efterleve Europa-Parlamentets beslutning?

3. Hvad er den Højtstående Repræsentants næste skridt?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Den højtstående repræsentant og næstformand Catherine Ashton
(11. september 2013)

Sombath Somphone er ikke blevet fundet. Politiet har heller ikke fundet de ansvarlige for hans forsvinden. De laotiske myndigheder har ikke givet grundige oplysninger om efterforskningen og har afvist bistand fra udlandet til efterforskningen af bortførelsen. Grundlæggende spørgsmål i forbindelse med kameraovervågningsoptagelser af bortførelsen er fortsat ubesvarede.

Den højtstående repræsentant/næstformanden var igennem sin talsmands erklæring den 21. december 2012 den første fremtrædende internationale person, der reagerede offentligt på Sombath Somphones forsvinden. Mange har siden efterfulgt, og den offentlige bekymring for Sombath Somphone viser sig fortsat stor både nationalt og internationalt.

EU-Udenrigstjenesten har løbende arbejdet på denne sag både i hovedsædet og i marken i Laos. Der blev indgivet en formel henvendelse til udenrigsministeren den 1. februar 2013. Det var især Sombath Somphones samt andre udsatte personers situation, der blev taget op med de relevante myndigheder i Laos i forbindelse med menneskerettighedsdialogen mellem Laos og EU, som fandt sted i Vientiane den 4. februar. Siden er sagen ved adskillige lejligheder blevet rejst formelt og uformelt med højtstående laotiske embedsmænd.

Delegationen holder tæt kontakt til Sombath Somphones hustru og med andre interesserede parter, såvel offentlige som private. EU arbejder fortsat med de mange lande i og uden for Asien, der er bekymrede over Sombath Somphones forsvinden. Besøgende parlamentsmedlemmer har udtrykt dyb bekymring over de skuffende resultater af efterforskningen.

EU-Udenrigstjenesten vil blive ved med at tage spørgsmålet op ved alle passende lejligheder.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P7-TA-2013-0058&format=XML&language=DA.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008841/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Søren Bo Søndergaard (GUE/NGL)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Disappearance of Sombath Somphone

On 7 February 2013 the European Parliament adopted by a large majority a resolution on the disappearance of the Laotian civil society leader Sombath Somphone ([1]).

Since the adoption of this resolution, several parliamentary delegations — whose members included the parliamentarians Prof. Walden Bello (Philippines) and Tuur Elzinga (Netherlands) — have met the Laotian authorities to investigate Sombath Somphone's disappearance.

Given that a new parliamentary delegation — including Members of the European Parliament — will be travelling to Laos on 25-28 August 2013, can the Vice-President/High Representative please indicate:

1. What is the status of the situation concerning the disappearance of Sombath Somphone?

2. What has the Vice-President/High Representative done to implement Parliament's resolution?

3. What will be the Vice-President/High Representative's next move?

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

Mr Somphone has not been found. Nor have the police found those responsible for his disappearance. The Lao authorities have not communicated thoroughly on the investigation, and have declined assistance from abroad for the investigation into the disappearance. Basic questions deriving from the CCTV footage of the abduction remain unanswered.

The HR/VP was the first major international figure to react publicly to the disappearance of Mr Somphone, by way of a spokesman's statement of 21 December 2012. Many have since followed and public concern for Mr Somphone continues to be in strong evidence, also internationally.

The EEAS has continuously been working on this case, both in Headquarters and on the ground in Laos. A formal demarche was delivered to the Minister of Foreign Affairs on 1 February 2013. In particular, Mr Somphone's situation and that of other Persons of Concern were raised with the relevant Lao authorities in the context of the Laos-EU human rights dialogue, which took place in Vientiane on 4 February. Since then, the case has been raised formally and informally at numerous occasions with high Lao officials.

The Delegation keeps close contact with Mr Somphone's wife and with other interested parties, both public and private. The EU also continues to work with the many countries in Asia and beyond, which are concerned by Mr Somphone's disappearance. Visiting MPs have expressed their deep concerns at the disappointing results of the investigation.

The EEAS will continue to raise the issue at all appropriate opportunities.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P7-TA-2013-0058&format=XML&language=EN.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-008842/13
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(18 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Blocco dei finanziamenti europei alla Regione Toscana

In questi giorni è apparsa la notizia che la Commissione europea avrebbe bloccato la concessione di finanziamenti comunitari alla Regione Toscana a causa di alcune irregolarità.

Può la Commissione europea confermare se e per quali programmi o progetti abbia adottato tale misura?

In caso affermativo, quali sarebbero i motivi alla base di tale decisione?

A quanto ammonta l'entità delle erogazioni bloccate, sia come valore assoluto sia come percentuale rispetto al totale dei finanziamenti europei alla Regione Toscana?

Quali azioni può e deve intraprendere la Regione Toscana per risolvere questa situazione?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(20 agosto 2013)

Con lettera del 13 giugno 2013 la Commissione ha sospeso un pagamento intermedio al programma 2007-2013 del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR) per la Toscana. L'importo del FESR così bloccato è pari a 18,9 milioni di euro, corrispondenti al 5,6 % dell'assistenza complessiva del FESR stanziata per il programma.

I motivi principali di questa sospensione sono dovuti a carenze nell'espletamento dei compiti a carico dell'autorità di audit del programma, compresa anche l'eventualità che certe irregolarità palesi non siano state identificate. Per porre rimedio alla situazione la regione Toscana deve accrescere l'organico delle autorità di audit del programma, organizzare azioni di formazione per il personale così assunto, migliorare le liste di controllo usate per le verifiche, meglio verificare la qualità dei lavori dei revisori esterni e ricontrollare diverse operazioni, oltre ad applicare le rettifiche finanziarie del caso.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008842/13
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Frozen EU funding to the Tuscany region

There have recently been reports that the Commission has frozen Community funding to the Tuscany region owing to irregularities.

Can the Commission confirm if this is the case and, if so, can it say which programmes and projects will be affected by this measure?

What are the reasons behind such a decision?

How much funding has been frozen both in terms of its absolute value and of the percentage it represents of the total EU funding for the Tuscany region?

What measures can and must the Tuscany region take to remedy this situation?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

By letter of 13 June 2013 the Commission has interrupted an interim payment to the 2007-2013 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programme for Tuscany. The interrupted ERDF amount is EUR 18.9 million, which equals 5.6% of the total ERDF assistance allocated to the programme.

The main reasons for this interruption are insufficiencies as regards the tasks carried out by the audit authority of the programme, including the possibility that some apparent irregularities may not have been identified. In order to remedy the situation the Tuscany region has to reinforce the personnel of the audit authority of the programme, organise training actions for such reinforcements, improve the checklists used for its controls, better control the quality of the work of external auditors, and re-verify a number of operations and apply any financial corrections as may be appropriate.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-008843/13
aan de Commissie
Toine Manders (ALDE)
(18 juli 2013)

Betreft: Aanpakken van voedselverspilling

De Europese Commissie heeft berekend dat 180 kg voedsel per jaar per persoon wordt verspild in de Europese Unie, en ze heeft de ambitie uitgesproken om deze voedselverspilling tegen 2020 te halveren. Van die 180 kilogram wordt ruim 40 procent weggegooid door consumenten. Één van de oorzaken is dat veel consumenten het verschil tussen houdbaarheidslabels (bijvoorbeeld de „tenminste houdbaar tot" en de „te gebruiken tot" labels) niet kunnen onderscheiden en elke datum op een verpakking vaak (te) letterlijk nemen. Daarom de volgende vragen:

1. Is de Commissie bereid om de houdbaarheidslabels te herzien en te zorgen voor één duidelijk houdbaarheidslabel op een beperkt aantal producten waarvoor een houdbaarheidsdatum echt nodig is?

2. Welke andere concrete maatregelen op het gebied van overbodige regelgeving gaat de Commissie nemen om haar doelstelling te bereiken om voedselverspilling te halveren in 2020?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(14 augustus 2013)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-0003732/2013 ([1]).

De Commissie is op 9 juli 2013 van start gegaan met de openbare raadpleging over duurzaam voedsel („Sustainable Food") ([2]), die ook een hoofdstuk over voedselverspilling bevat. De raadpleging loopt tot en met 1 oktober 2013.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/nl/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/food.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008843/13
to the Commission
Toine Manders (ALDE)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Tackling food wastage

The Commission has calculated that 180 kg of food per person per annum is wasted in the European Union, and has expressed the ambition to halve this wastage by 2020. Of this 180 kg, more than 40% is thrown away by consumers. One of the reasons is that many consumers cannot distinguish between different perishability indications on the labelling (e.g. 'best before' and 'use by' dates) and tend to take each date on the packaging too literally.

1. Will the Commission review perishability labelling and arrange for a single unambiguous perishability label on a limited number of products which genuinely require a date to be indicated?

2. What other practical measures will the Commission take in the field of superfluous regulation in order to attain its objective of halving food wastage by 2020?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 August 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-003732/2013 ([1]).

The public consultation on 'Sustainable Food' ([2]), including a chapter on food waste, was launched by the Commission on 9 July 2013 and will be open till 1 October 2013.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/food.htm

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. P-008844/13
Komisijai
Justas Vincas Paleckis (S&D)
(2013 m. liepos 18 d.)

Tema: Bendra ES radijo stotis

Esu gavęs laiškų, kuriuose ES piliečiai rašo, kad pasigenda bendro Europos Sąjungos naujienas transliuojančio radijo. Informacija apie ES juos pasiekia per vietinę žiniasklaidą, tačiau papildomas informacinis šaltinis, dar labiau vienijantis ES, pabrėžia jie, galėtų būti ir europinis radijas.

Toks projektas galėtų būti daug pigesnis nei „Euronews“ televizijos kanalas, kuris taip pat reikalingas. Be to, radijas turi savo pranašumų: labiau pasiektų ES šalių piliečius kelionėse automobiliu ar kitomis transporto priemonėmis, dirbant mechaninius darbus, vietovėse, kur nėra galimybės naudotis internetu, silpnaregius.

Jei Komisija susidomėtų šiuo projektu, būtų logiška pradėti nuo radijo anglų kalba, o vėliau, pagal galimybę, transliuoti laidas ir kitomis labiausiai paplitusiomis ES kalbomis.

Kokia Komisijos nuomonė dėl šio pasiūlymo? Kokių veiksmų pirmiausiai reikėtų imtis, siekiant įkurti ES radijo stotį?

V. Reding atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. rugpjūčio 20 d.)

Komisija labai vertina radiją, kuris yra populiari ir – kaip rodo Eurobarometro apklausų duomenys ([1]) – iš tiesų didžiausią Europos piliečių pasitikėjimą pelniusi žiniasklaidos priemonė.

Atsižvelgdama į tai, Komisija nuo 2012 m. gruodžio mėn. finansuoja Europos radijo tinklą „Euranet Plus“ ([2]), kuris tęsia panašią iniciatyvą, pradėtą prieš penkerius metus. Pagrindinis jo tikslas – artimiau supažindinti Europos piliečius su ES politika ir veikla.

Šis visos Europos tinklas jungia 13 tarptautinių, nacionalinių ir regioninių radijo stočių 12 ES valstybių narių. „Euranet Plus“ transliuoja laidas 12 oficialiųjų ES kalbų, informuoja apie ES reikalus iš Europos perspektyvos ir jo redakcija yra visiškai nepriklausoma. „Euranet Plus“ dėl savo pobūdžio gali priimti naujus narius ir išplėsti savo veiklos aprėptį.

Atsižvelgiant į šią informaciją bei į Komisijos patiriamus griežtus biudžeto suvaržymus tolesnės šios srities iniciatyvos nenumatomos.

([1]) Standartinė „Eurobarometro 76“ apklausa – „Žiniasklaidos priemonių naudojimas ES 2011 m. rudenį“, p. 13, ir standartinė „Eurobarometro 78“ apklausa, 2012 m. ruduo, p. 12. Pastarojoje apklausoje teigiama, kad radijas iki šiol „kelia didžiausią pasitikėjimą“ lyginant su kitomis žiniasklaidos priemonėmis. http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb76/eb76_media_en.pdf; http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb78/eb78_media_en.pdf

([2]) http://www.euranetplus.eu

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008844/13
to the Commission
Justas Vincas Paleckis (S&D)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Common EU radio station

I have received letters in which EU citizens write that there is no common European Union radio broadcasting news. Information about the EU only reaches them via local media, but they stress that European radio could also be an additional source of information, bringing the EU even closer together.

Such a project could be much cheaper than the 'Euronews' television channel, which is also essential. Furthermore, radio has its own advantages: it would better reach citizens of EU Member States travelling by car or other means of transport, doing physical work in places where it is not possible to use the Internet, as well as the partially sighted.

If the Commission is interested in this project, it would make sense to begin with radio in English, and then later to also broadcast programmes in the other most common EU languages where possible.

What is the Commission's opinion about this proposal? What actions should be taken to establish an EU radio station?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

The Commission attaches great importance to radio which is a popular and — indeed — the most trusted medium for providing information to European citizens, according to the Eurobarometer surveys ([1]).

With this in mind, the Commission has been funding since December 2012 the European radio network Euranet Plus ([2]), as the continuation of a similar concept started five years earlier. Its overarching aim is to bring EU policies and activities closer to citizens.

This pan-European network brings together 13 international, national and regional radio stations from 12 EU Member States. Broadcasting in as many official EU languages, Euranet Plus covers EU affairs from a European perspective and with full editorial independence. Euranet Plus is by nature open to the inclusion of new members in order to further extend its outreach.

Against this background and with regard to the severe budgetary restrictions it is facing, the Commission does not envisage any further initiatives in the field.

([1]) Standard Eurobarometer 76 — Media Use in the EU Autumn 2011, pg. 13 and Standard Eurobarometer 78 — autumn 2012, pg. 12. The latter states that radio 'still inspires the most trust' compared with the other media.
http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb76/eb76_media_en.pdf;
http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb78/eb78_media_en.pdf

([2]) http://www.euranetplus.eu

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008845/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Situation of female entrepreneurs in Pakistan

In October 2012 the World Bank published a study detailing the extent of discrimination against Pakistani female entrepreneurs in the microfinance sector. The findings revealed that around 68% of female borrowers required the permission of a male relative to qualify for a loan.

With this in mind, could the Commission detail whether the issue of female entrepreneurship in Pakistan has been addressed in any of the EU-Pakistan bilateral dialogues that have been held?

Furthermore, what is the European External Action Service doing to improve the rights of women in Pakistan and in other countries, such as Afghanistan, Nepal and Bangladesh?

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

Female entrepreneurship is not a specific topic under EU-Pakistan bilateral dialogues. But women's rights are among the EU's priorities in the annual EU-Pakistan human rights dialogue. The EU supports the work of Pakistan's National Commission on the Status of Women and the provincial commissions where already set up. In addition to dialogue, the EU funds a number of projects to assist women in Pakistan under the EIDHR ([1]) including combatting harassment in the workplace and supporting elimination of discrimination and violence against women. Member States — Finland and Sweden — are also supporting projects to protect and enhance women workers' rights.

In Afghanistan, safeguarding the rights of women is an EU priority. Both dialogue and development cooperation are used to press for the enforcement of women's rights with Afghanistan. The EU was one of the driving forces in ensuring commitments on women's rights were central to the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF), which governs future aid received by Afghanistan from the international community.

In Nepal, the EU finances projects with a view to promoting rights awareness among women. The EU's development programmes ([2]) pay strong attention to the gender dimension. The need for active participation of women as voters and candidates in the forthcoming November 2013 elections has been a key message by the EU.

Regarding Bangladesh, the EU engages in dialogue with government on women's rights, and finances programmes to *inter alia*, promote education, economic empowerment of women, and the free exercise of their sexual and reproductive rights.

In all these countries EU representatives maintain a substantive dialogue on gender with civil society.

([1]) European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights.
([2]) Such as education and peace building.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008846/13
to the Commission
Struan Stevenson (ECR)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: European radio navigation plan

Is the Commission aware that the present space in the North Sea shipping area which is navigable for maritime vessels is scheduled to be reduced by 32 914 km^2 by 2020, due to new constraints relating to wind farms and marine protected areas? Over 375 000 ships pass through the North Sea shipping area per annum, with one ship passing though the Dover Strait every four minutes, making this the busiest shipping lane in the world.

While satellite navigation, in particular the global positioning system (GPS), is most frequently used for navigation purposes by maritime industries, this system remains vulnerable to signal failure, signal jamming, and deliberate criminal or terrorist attack. With the reduced navigable space in the North Sea region, the risk of such a signal failure or attack would be exacerbated.

The latest draft of the European radio navigation plan, which was first proposed in 1994, sets out the need for a comprehensive back-up to radio satellite navigation for maritime vessels, but has still not been implemented. More recently, the Fisheries Committee agreed in its report on the common organisation of the market that an integrated system of e-logs and other market shipping systems should be devised.

In the spirit of this agreement, may I therefore ask the Commission what the current status of the European radio navigation plan is, along with the planned timescale for its adoption and implementation by Member States?

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

The Commission concurs with the Honourable member's analysis that radio-navigation is increasingly becoming a pivotal service. While the Commission shares your concerns about possible 'cyber attacks' with the potential to undermine the robustness of the satellite based navigation tools such as GPS, the first line of responsibility is with the Master and the crew on the bridge actually navigating the vessel. Their training and experience remain of utmost importance in any situation.

The expected growth of commercial traffic and the trend towards larger vessels pose both opportunities and challenges. A number of sophisticated aids, which are used onboard, including GPS (and in the future GALILEO), Automatic Identification Systems (AIS), etc support handling increased maritime transport, but keep the prime purpose of enhancing safety, security and environmental protection. In this context, for maritime transport, improved reliability and resilience of any positioning and navigation (PNT) systems is looked at the level of shipowners and at the European and international level under the auspices of the International Maritime Organisation. There is however as yet no strong call for any backup system(s) to be introduced.

While priorities are and have been geared to the succesfull functioning and exploitation of prime systems, like GALILEO, the efforts for robust and resilient systems must indeed also be included in the development. However, the technology is still developing and the approach taken by the Commission is to follow these developments carefully, take contingency into account and encourage viable solutions, before taking the discussions on a need for a European Radio Navigation Plan or Contingency further.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008847/13
an die Kommission
Martin Kastler (PPE)
(18. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Abhörskandal und kartellrechtliche Maßnahmen der EU-Kommission

Berichte über ein umfassendes Ausspähen privater Kommunikation von EU-Bürgern durch das Überwachungsprogramm PRISM der US-amerikanischen National Security Agency und die aktive Kooperation bzw. teilweise verpflichtende Einbindung amerikanischer Konzerne verunsichern unsere Bürger. Sie stehen vollkommen konträr zu den Datenschutzregeln der EU und den in der Grundrechte-Charta gefassten Rechten.

1. Sind der Kommission Fälle bekannt, in denen europäische Anbieter von Kommunikationstechnologien und VPN-Softwareprodukten von US-amerikanischen Firmen benachteiligt bzw. durch die verweigerte Offenlegung von Schnittstelleninformationen zum Vorteil amerikanischer Anbieter, die ggf. mit der NSA kooperieren, vom Markt ferngehalten bzw. aus dem Markt gedrängt werden?

2. Was unternimmt die Kommission, um innovative Unternehmen und Technologien aus EU-Mitgliedstaaten zu fördern und kartellrechtlich zu unterstützen, die eine größere Abhörsicherheit und höhere Datenschutzstandards garantieren als andere, amerikanische Anbieter? Ist dieses Anliegen eine im Sinne des Unionsinteresses liegende Priorität der kartellrechtlichen Maßnahmen der GD Wettbewerb?

3. Ist die Kommission bereit, ihr Engagement in diesem Bereich in Zusammenhang mit dem aktuellen Abhörskandal zu intensivieren?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(16. September 2013)

Die Europäische Kommission ist besorgt angesichts der jüngsten Medienberichte über Programme wie PRISM, die in großem Stil den Zugriff auf und die Verarbeitung von Daten von Europäern, die die großen US-amerikanischen Anbieter von Online-Diensten nutzen, zu ermöglichen scheinen. Die Kommission hat die US-amerikanischen Behörden sowohl im Rahmen der Tagung der Justiz- und Innenminister der EU und der USA am 14. Juni 2013 als auch schriftlich um Klarstellungen zu diesen Berichten gebeten, insbesondere im Hinblick auf die Auswirkungen für Europäer. Ferner hat die Kommission gemeinsam mit der Präsidentschaft des Rates eine Ad-hoc-Arbeitsgruppe EU-USA ins Leben gerufen, um diesen Fragen weiter nachzugehen. Die Kommission erstattet dem Europäischen Parlament und dem Rat im Oktober Bericht.

Die Kommission hat bisher noch keine Fälle behandelt, die die Nutzung von Daten als potenziell wettbewerbswidrige Praktiken zum Gegenstand gehabt hätten. Dies bedeutet jedoch nicht, dass solche Fälle nicht nach dem EU-Wettbewerbsrecht geprüft werden könnten.

Marktbeherrschende Unternehmen, die nach dem EU-Wettbewerbsrecht dazu verpflichtet sind, Interoperabilitätsinformationen bereitzustellen, dürfen bei der Bereitstellung dieser Informationen nicht zwischen US-amerikanischen und europäischen Unternehmen unterscheiden.

Der Kommission liegen zum gegenwärtigen Zeitpunkt keinerlei Hinweise dafür vor, dass bestimmte US-amerikanische Unternehmen andere amerikanische Unternehmen bevorzugt behandelt haben könnten, indem sie europäischen Unternehmen die Bereitstellung von Interoperabilitätsinformationen verweigert haben.

Bei der Durchsetzung der EU-Wettbewerbsvorschriften räumt die Kommission der Innovationsförderung, einem zentralen Ziel des EU-Wettbewerbsrechts, Priorität ein. Sie sorgt für Einhaltung des EU-Wettbewerbsrechts durch alle Marktteilnehmer und unterscheidet dabei nicht zwischen US-amerikanischen und europäischen Unternehmen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008847/13
to the Commission
Martin Kastler (PPE)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Eavesdropping scandal and measures taken by the Commission under competition law

Reports about the widespread eavesdropping on the private communication of EU citizens under the US National Security Agency's PRISM surveillance programme and the active cooperation and/or compulsory involvement of American companies are unnerving our citizens. They are in clear breach of EU data protection rules and the rights enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

1. Is the Commission aware of cases in which European providers of communication technology and VPN software products have been placed at a disadvantage by US firms and/or prevented from accessing markets or forced out of a market as a result of refusal to disclose interfacing information, thereby giving an advantage to US providers which may have been cooperating with the NSA?

2. What steps is the Commission taking to promote and support, by means of competition law, innovative companies and technologies from the EU which guarantee greater security against interception and higher data protection standards than other — US — providers? Is this matter considered a priority of the Union as regards measures taken under competition law within DG Competition?

3. Is the Commission willing to step up its commitment in this area in connection with the current eavesdropping scandal?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(16 September 2013)

The European Commission is concerned regarding the recent media reports about programs such as PRISM which appear to enable access and processing, on a large scale, of data of Europeans using major US online service providers. It has requested clarifications from its US counterparts regarding these reports, in particular regarding the impact on Europeans, during the EU-U.S. Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial meeting of 14 June 2013, as well as in writing. The Commission has also set up, together with the Presidency of the Council, an ad-hoc EU-US working group to examine these issues further. The Commission will report back to the European Parliament and the Council in October.

The Commission has so far not dealt with cases involving the use of data as a potentially anti-competitive practice. This does not mean that such cases could not be examined under EU competition law.

Dominant companies that are subject to an obligation to provide interoperability information under EU competition law are not allowed to discriminate between US and EU companies when providing such information.

The Commission has, at this stage, no evidence that certain US companies might have privileged other US companies by refusing to provide interoperability information to European companies.

Promoting innovation is one of the core objectives of EU competition law. The Commission therefore treats the promotion of innovation as a priority when enforcing the EU competition rules. It ensures the respect of EU competition rules by all market players and does not discriminate between US and EU companies in this regard.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008848/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(18. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Kontrolle von Tierschutz und Tiertransporten

Bei dem Treffen von Kommissar Borg mit Mitgliedern des Europäischen Parlaments sowie Vertretern von Animal Angels am 11. Juli 2013, bei dem es um die 8-Stunden-Kampagne sowie legislative Vorschläge zur Verbesserung des Tierschutzes beim Transport ging, wurde von der Kommission der Mangel an Kontrolle in Bezug auf die aktuelle legislative Situation als Hauptgrund angeführt, weshalb keine weiter gehenden legislativen Vorschläge geprüft werden.

In anderen Worten: Solange die jetzige Situation nicht gemeistert werde, solle auch nichts erschwert werden. Da somit der wesentliche Punkt, laut Aussage von Kommissar Borg, der Mangel an Kontrolle bei den jetzigen Regularien ist, beziehen sich auch die folgenden Fragen auf diesen Aspekt:

1. Die Kommission verfügt über 100 FVO-Inspekteure, welche auf verschiedene Überwachungsbereiche aufgeteilt sind. Derzeit sind fünf für den Tierschutz zuständig. Gerade hier gibt es aber laut Aussage der Kommission wesentliche Kontrollprobleme. Sieht die Kommission Optimierungsmöglichkeiten bei der Allokation der FVO-Inspekteure auf die verschiedenen Aufgabenfelder, um die erkannten Schwachstellen besser bekämpfen zu können, oder befindet sie die derzeitige Aufteilung bereits als optimal?

2. Wäre bereits ohne jedwede Budgetveränderung eine jeweils nach Bedarf und den akuten Gegebenheiten veränderbare und flexible Allokation der FVO-Inspekteure auf ihre verschiedenen Kontrollbereiche aus Sicht der Kommission sinnvoll?

3. Wenn ja, wäre eine teilweise Berufung von FVO-Inspekteuren mit mehr als einem Schwerpunktbereich aus Sicht der Kommission sinnvoll, da diese so nach Bedarf kurzerhand auch einem anderen Teilgebiet zugeteilt werden könnten, womit sich ihre Einsatzflexibilität und die des FVO als Ganzes erhöhen würde?

4. Wie ist die Einschätzung der Kommission zur Feststellung von Vertragsverletzungen (Infringements) der Mitgliedstaaten, wenn die Anzahl der FVO-Inspekteure für Tierschutz (übergangsweise) um 40 % oder 60 % erhöht würde und somit mehr oder auch intensivere Audits durchgeführt werden könnten? Könnte dies aus Sicht der Kommission zudem auch noch eine verstärkte abschreckende Wirkung entfalten?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(2. September 2013)

Wie von dem Herrn Abgeordneten richtig angemerkt, wies das für Gesundheit zuständige Mitglied der Europäischen Kommission bei dem Treffen vom 11. Juli darauf hin, dass das Hauptproblem im Zusammenhang mit dem Tierschutz während des Transports darin begründet liegt, dass die Mitgliedstaaten die geltenden Vorschriften nicht wirksam durchsetzen. Zu den einzelnen Fragen des Herrn Abgeordneten ist Folgendes zu sagen:

1. Das für Tierschutz zuständige Inspektorenteam des Lebensmittel- und Veterinäramtes hat bereits auf die Probleme bei der Durchsetzung der Rechtsvorschriften über den Schutz von Tieren beim Transport hingewiesen; eine Umverteilung der Inspekteure würde an diesem Sachverhalt nichts ändern.

2. Die Kommission stimmt mit dem Herrn Abgeordneten überein, dass ein flexibler Einsatz ihrer Mitarbeiter wünschenswert ist, und tatsächlich arbeiten die Mitarbeiter des Lebensmittel- und Veterinäramtes in verschiedenen Aufgabenbereichen. Audits auf anderen Gebieten, insbesondere Fleischhygiene, umfassen auch Fragen des Tierschutzes.

3. Die Inspektoren des Lebensmittel- und Veterinäramtes haben oft mehr als ein Fachgebiet. So sind viele von ihnen Tierärzte mit Fachkenntnissen und Erfahrungen in den Bereichen Tiergesundheit, Lebensmittelsicherheit und Tierschutz.

4. Die Kommission ist der Auffassung, dass ihre derzeitigen Audits sehr gründlich durchgeführt und die einschlägigen Ressourcen wirksam eingesetzt werden, und zwar unter Berücksichtigung neuer prioritärer Bereiche wie auch der Notwendigkeit, angesichts des aktuellen Wirtschaftsklimas effizient zu agieren.

Das Lebensmittel- und Veterinäramt organisiert zurzeit einen Wissensaustausch zwischen den Sachverständigen der Mitgliedstaaten, die mit der Anwendung der Rechtsvorschriften befasst sind, um den Austausch bewährter Verfahren anzuregen und Bereiche zu ermitteln, in denen die Durchsetzung verbessert werden kann.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008848/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Monitoring of animal welfare and transport

At the 11 July 2013 meeting between Commissioner Borg, Members of the European Parliament and representatives of Animal Angels about the eight hour campaign and legislative proposals to improve animal welfare during transport, the Commission said that a lack of compliance with current legislation was the main reason why no further legislative proposals were being considered.

In other words, until the current situation can be brought under control, nothing should be done to complicate matters. According to Commissioner Borg, therefore, the main issue is a lack of enforcement of the current rules. The following questions thus relate to this aspect:

1. The Commission has 100 FVO inspectors at its disposal in various monitoring fields. Five of these currently work in the field of animal protection. This, however, is the very same area in which the Commission stated that there were significant problems related to monitoring. Does the Commission believe that there is room for improvement in terms of the way in which the FVO inspectors are distributed among the different fields, in order to be in a position to better deal with the weak points already highlighted, or does it believe that the current distribution is ideal?

2. Does the Commission believe that, without any change to the budget, it would be wise to distribute the FVO inspectors among the various monitoring fields in a flexible manner allowing for changes to the distribution to be made to adapt to current needs and any critical changes in the circumstances?

3. If so, would it be sensible to be able to appoint some FVO inspectors with more than one area of expertise, which would enable the Commission to act quickly to reassign inspectors to another area, improving the versatility of the individual inspector and of the FVO as a whole?

4. How does the Commission believe the identification of infringements committed by Member States would evolve, should the number of FVO inspectors for animal protection be (temporarily) increased by 40% or 60%, enabling more thorough audits to be conducted? Does the Commission believe that this would also serve to strengthen the deterrent effect?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

As noted by the Honourable Member, at the meeting of 11 July 2013 the Member of the Commission responsible for Health pointed out that the main issue affecting the welfare of animals during transport is a lack of effective enforcement by the Member States of the current rules. In reply to the specific questions posed by the Honourable Member:

1. The team of FVO inspectors dealing with animal welfare has already highlighted the problems of enforcement of the legislation on the protection of animals during transport, so a re-distribution of the inspectorate would not affect this situation.

2. The Commission agrees that flexibility in the deployment of its staff is desirable, and the staff of the FVO do indeed move between different areas of responsibility. Audits carried out in other areas, notably meat hygiene, include animal welfare issues within their scope.

3. FVO inspectors often have more than one area of expertise. For example, many of them are veterinarians with expertise and experience in animal health, food safety and animal welfare.

4. The Commission considers that its current audits are carried out in a very thorough manner, and that resources are deployed effectively, both to cater for our new priority areas and to the need to find efficiencies in the current economic climate.

The FVO is currently undertaking a knowledge-sharing exercise in bringing together the experts from the Member States who are involved in the application of the legislation in order to share best practices and identify areas where enforcement can be improved.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008849/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(18 Ιουλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Πετρελαιοκηλίδα/οικολογική καταστροφή στο κατεχόμενο τμήμα της Κύπρου

Όπως μεταδίδεται από τα ΜΜΕ, μεγάλη ποσότητα πετρελαίου διέρρευσε από αγωγό που μετέφερε πετρέλαιο από δεξαμενόπλοιο σε ηλεκτροπαραγωγό σταθμό στο κατεχόμενο από την Τουρκία τμήμα της Κύπρου δημιουργώντας τεράστια πετρελαιοκηλίδα στην περιοχή της κατεχόμενης Καρπασίας, σε μια εξαιρετικά σημαντική από οικολογικής απόψεως περιοχή της Κύπρου. Το κατοχικό καθεστώς, στη Βόρεια Κύπρο, με τις υποτυπώδεις υπηρεσίες του, παρουσιάζεται ανίκανο να παρέμβει αποτελεσματικά για αντιμετώπιση της κατάστασης. Αντ' αυτού, αρνείται βοήθεια από την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία, ενώ αναζητά βοήθεια από την κατοχική Τουρκία και τα Ηνωμένα Έθνη.

Ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς μπορεί να προστατεύσει έμπρακτα το φυσικό περιβάλλον στο κατεχόμενο τμήμα της Κύπρου, το οποίο υφίσταται τεράστια καταπόνηση λόγω της αλόγιστης και ληστρικής εκμετάλλευσής του από κάθε λογής κερδοσκόπους;

2. Πώς μπορεί να δράσει καίρια και αποτελεσματικά στη συγκεκριμένη περίπτωση για αντιμετώπιση της διαρκώς διογκούμενης πετρελαιοκηλίδας;

3. Αν και η εφαρμογή του κοινοτικού κεκτημένου έχει ανασταλεί στο κατεχόμενο τμήμα της Κύπρου, γιατί η ΕΕ ανέχεται διαρκείς παραβιάσεις, τη στιγμή που παρέχει μάλιστα, πακτωλούς οικονομικής και άλλης βοήθειας στην Τουρκία και στους Τουρκοκύπριους; Γιατί δεν τερματίζει πάραυτα αυτή τη βοήθεια ως μέτρο πίεσης για να συμμορφωθεί το κατοχικό καθεστώς;

4. Δεδομένου ότι πλείστα των προβλημάτων που δημιουργούνται στο κατεχόμενο τμήμα της Κύπρου οφείλονται στην παράνομη και ετσιθελική συμπεριφορά της κατοχικής Τουρκίας, μέχρι πότε η ΕΕ θα ανέχεται την κορυφούμενη επιθετικότητα της Τουρκίας έναντι της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή εκφράζει την ανησυχία της για τη διαρροή πετρελαίου στο βόρειο τμήμα της Κύπρου και για τις επιπτώσεις που ενδέχεται να έχει στο περιβάλλον.

Το πρόγραμμα βοήθειας της ΕΕ προς την τουρκοκυπριακή κοινότητα δεν αποτελεί μηχανισμό αντιμετώπισης καταστάσεων έκτακτης ανάγκης. Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή έχει παράσχει βοήθεια στην τουρκοκυπριακή κοινότητα με σκοπό να συμβάλει στην πρόληψη των καταστροφών και την ετοιμότητα για την αντιμετώπιση κρίσεων. Η Επιτροπή συνέδραμε επίσης την τουρκοκυπριακή κοινότητα στην κατάρτιση σχεδίων διαχείρισης για τις επτά «Προστατευόμενες Περιοχές Ειδικής Περιβαλλοντικής Προστασίας» (Special Environmental Protection Areas (SEPAs)) με σκοπό την προστασία του ευαίσθητου αυτού περιβάλλοντος.

Το θέμα που έθεσε το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου καταδεικνύει για μία ακόμη φορά τον επείγοντα χαρακτήρα της συνολικής διευθέτησης του Κυπριακού.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008849/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Oil slick/ecological disaster in occupied part of Cyprus

As reported in the media, a large quantity of oil leaked from a pipeline carrying oil from a tanker to a power station in the part of Cyprus occupied by Turkey, causing a huge oil slick in the area of occupied Karpasia, a very important area of Cyprus from an ecological point of view. The occupying regime in northern Cyprus and its undeveloped services appear to be unable to take effective action to deal with the situation. Instead, they are refusing help from the Republic of Cyprus and seeking assistance from occupying Turkey and the United Nations.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. How can the natural environment be protected in practice in the occupied part of Cyprus, which is under massive strain from the unaccountable and savage exploitation of it by all manner of speculators?

2. How can it act in a timely and efficient manner in this particular case, in order to deal with the continuously expanding oil slick?

3. Even though application of the Community *acquis* has been suspended in the occupied part of Cyprus, why does the EU tolerate repeated infringements, especially as it is giving Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots huge packages of economic and other aid? Why does it not immediately stop the aid in order to put pressure on the occupying regime to comply?

4. Given that most of the problems caused in the occupied part of Cyprus are due to the illegal and arbitrary conduct of the Turkish occupiers, how long will the EU tolerate the spiralling aggression of Turkey towards the Republic of Cyprus?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(23 September 2013)

The Commission is concerned by the oil spillage that happened in the northern part of Cyprus and the impact it might have on the environment.

The EU aid programme to the Turkish Cypriot community is not an emergency response tool. The Commission has, however, provided assistance to the Turkish Cypriot community to contribute to disaster prevention and crisis preparedness. The Commission also provided assistance to the Turkish Cypriot community to prepare management plans for the seven 'Special Environment Protected Areas' (SEPAs) with a view to protecting this sensitive environment.

The issue raised by the Honourable Member emphasises once again the urgency of reaching a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008850/13
aan de Commissie
Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE) en Ria Oomen-Ruijten (PPE)
(18 juli 2013)

Betreft: De EU, gezamenlijke democratie en burgerschapsvorming

Nederlandse studenten hebben de toekenning van de Nobelprijs voor de vrede aan de EU gevierd door deel te nemen aan de EU *Peace Prize Tour*. Tijdens de laatste etappe van de tour, die op 5 juni 2013 plaatsvond in het Parlementarium, hebben ze het Parlement, vertegenwoordigd door EP-lid Lambert van Nistelrooij, een geschenk van de burgers voor Europa aangeboden. De essentie van het geschenk bestaat in de suggestie om de EU te omschrijven als een „gezamenlijke democratie" (common democracy).

1. Stemt de Commissie ermee in dat het begrip „gezamenlijke democratie" een op de burgers gericht alternatief is om de EU na Lissabon te omschrijven?

2. Is de Commissie bereid de haalbaarheid te overwegen van het gebruik van de term „gezamenlijke democratie", die werd geïntroduceerd door Jaap Hoeksma op een blog op de Peace Palace Library website ([1]) en daarin werd gedefinieerd als een model van democratisch bestuur voor een transnationale bestuursvorm waarbij burgers zowel kunnen deelnemen aan de nationale democratieën van hun lidstaten als aan de gezamenlijke democratie van de Unie?

3. Is de Commissie eveneens van mening dat Europese burgerschapsvorming een essentieel onderdeel is van een levende Europese democratie? Is de Commissie bijgevolg bereid de mogelijkheden te onderzoeken die worden geboden door artikel 165, lid 2, van het VWEU voor de ontwikkeling van programma's voor Europese burgerschapsvorming in de hele Unie?

4. Is de Commissie bereid academische en opleidingsinitiatieven te stimuleren om de perceptie van de EU als een gezamenlijke democratie te onderzoeken en te verspreiden?

5. Zou de Commissie eventueel bereid zijn de term „gezamenlijke democratie" te gebruiken in haar eigen communicatie met de burgers van de Unie?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(27 september 2013)

De Commissie juicht bijdragen van de burgers aan het debat over de Europese Unie en haar toekomst van harte toe. Daarom organiseert zij in de gehele Unie burgerdialogen ([2]).

In het kader van het programma „Een leven lang leren" heeft de Commissie het initiatief „Leren over de EU op school" ontwikkeld. Er is een studie uitgevoerd naar de regels en gewoontes op het gebied van onderwijs over de EU. Op basis van een jaarlijkse oproep tot het indienen van voorstellen hebben universiteiten en scholen projecten opgezet voor lesprogramma's over de EU voor het algemeen onderwijs.

In het kader van het programma „Europa voor de burger" 2014-2020 zullen projecten worden gefinancierd over het ontstaan van de democratie in de Europese Unie en de grondbeginselen van de EU.

([1]) http://www.peacepalacelibrary.nl/2013/05/the-european-union-as-a-common-democracy/.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/debate-future-europe/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008850/13
to the Commission
Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE) and Ria Oomen-Ruijten (PPE)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: The EU, common democracy and citizenship education

Dutch students have celebrated the award of the Nobel Prize for Peace to the EU by participating in the EU Peace Prize Tour. During the final stage of the tour, which was held in the Parlamentarium on 5 June 2013, they presented Parliament, represented by Lambert van Nistelrooij MEP, with a Citizens' Gift for Europe. The essence of the gift lies in the suggestion of describing the EU as a 'common democracy'.

1. Does the Commission agree that the term 'common democracy' constitutes a citizen-oriented alternative for the description of the EU post-Lisbon?

2. Is the Commission willing to consider the feasibility of the use of the term 'common democracy', introduced by Jaap Hoeksma in a blog on the Peace Palace Library website ([1]) and defined therein as a model of democratic governance for a transnational polity, in which the citizens can participate both in the national democracies of their Member States and in the common democracy of the Union?

3. Does the Commission share the view that European citizenship education forms an essential requirement for a living European democracy? Is the Commission therefore prepared to investigate the opportunities which Article 165(2) TFEU may offer for the development of Union-wide programmes for EU citizenship education?

4. Is the Commission prepared to stimulate academic and educational initiatives to examine and propagate the perception of the EU as a common democracy?

5. Might the Commission eventually be willing to use the term 'common democracy' in its own communications with the citizens of the Union?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(27 September 2013)

The Commission welcomes and promotes citizens' contribution to the wider debate on the European Union and its future. To that effect, the Commission is holding Citizens' Dialogues across the European Union ([2]).

In the context of the Lifelong Learning Programme, the Commission launched the initiative 'Learning EU at School'. A study analysed the rules and practices on how the EU is taught at school. Following an annual call for proposals, universities and schools developed projects on teaching the EU in general education.

The Europe for Citizens programme 2014-2020 will support projects which reflect on the origins of European Union democracy and the founding values of the EU.

([1]) http://www.peacepalacelibrary.nl/2013/05/the-european-union-as-a-common-democracy/
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/debate-future-europe/

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008851/13
à Comissão
Alda Sousa (GUE/NGL) e Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL)
(18 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Negociações do TTIP face ao escândalo PRISM

Na sequência das revelações de Edward Snowden sobre a espionagem realizada pelo governo dos Estados Unidos, em comunicações e tráfego de informações através do programa de vigilância PRISM dos Estados Unidos, vários Estados-Membros sugeriram a suspensão das negociações do Acordo de Livre Comércio (TTIP) entre a União Europeia e os Estados Unidos da América. Em resposta, a Comissão Europeia anunciou que iria manter negociações em paralelo.

Neste contexto, gostaríamos que a Comissão informasse:

1. Quais os resultados destas negociações paralelas?

2. Como pensa a Comissão negociar estando a ser alvo de espionagem?

3. Porquê negociar de uma forma que não é transparente para os cidadãos europeus, quando até a contraparte já tem acesso a todos os documentos da negociação através do PRISM?

4. Os acordos PNR e Swift serão suspensos?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(30 de setembro de 2013)

Resposta conjunta aos pontos 1 e 4.

As negociações UE-EUA sobre a Parceria Transatlântica de Comércio e Investimento (TTIP) já foram iniciadas e estão a decorrer. Para examinar as revelações feitas pelos meios de comunicação social sobre os programas de informação americanos, foi criado um grupo de trabalho de alto nível para a proteção de dados. Com base nas informações recolhidas, a Comissão apresentará em outubro um relatório ao Parlamento Europeu e ao Conselho.

Resposta conjunta aos pontos 2 e 3.

No que diz respeito às alegações de espionagem sobre as instituição e representações da UE divulgadas pelos meios de comunicação social, a Comissão e a Alta Representante exprimiram as suas mais sérias preocupações e procuraram obter esclarecimentos pormenorizados e imediatos junto dos EUA sobre a alegada vigilância das instalações das instituições da UE e suas delegações no estrangeiro. A questão foi especificamente debatida pela Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton diretamente com o Secretário de Estado John Kerry. É óbvio que as negociações com os EUA, designadamente sobre a Parceria Transatlântica de Comércio e Investimento (TTIP) só poderão ser bem sucedidas se existir confiança, transparência e clareza entre os parceiros.

Os acordos PNR e TFTP com os EUA promovem e protegem os interesses comuns de segurança da União Europeia e os direitos fundamentais dos seus cidadãos. A revisão do acordo PNR foi iniciada recentemente e o seu relatório será apresentado ao Parlamento Europeu em tempo oportuno. Duas revisões periódicas conjuntas do Acordo TFTP UE-EUA em 2011 e 2012 avaliaram a situação da aplicação das garantias ao tratamento de dados fornecidos, tendo as medidas adotadas sido consideradas adequadas. O relatório conjunto que deve ser elaborado em conformidade com o artigo 6.°, n.° 2, do Acordo, está em fase de preparação. A Comissão solicitou a realização de consultas ao abrigo do artigo 19.° do Acordo TFTP.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008851/13
to the Commission
Alda Sousa (GUE/NGL) and Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: TTIP negotiations following the PRISM scandal

Following Edward Snowdon's revelations that the US Government has been spying on communications and data traffic through its PRISM surveillance programme, several Member States suggested that negotiations on the EU-US Free Trade Agreement (TTIP) be suspended. In response, the Commission announced that it would hold parallel negotiations.

1. What are the outcomes of these parallel negotiations?

2. How will the Commission negotiate, given that it is the target of espionage?

3. Why keep EU citizens in the dark about negotiations, when even the US has access to all the relevant documents through PRISM?

4. Will the PNR and Swift agreements be suspended?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(30 September 2013)

1. and 4. The EU-U.S. negotiations on Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) have been launched and are ongoing. With regards to the media revelations on U.S. intelligence programs, an ad-hoc high-level working group on data protection has been established; based on the information gathered, the Commission will report back to the European Parliament and the Council in October.

2. and 3. With regards the media allegations of espionnage of EU institution and representations, the Commission and the High Representative have expressed their strong concerns and have sought a full and immediate clarification from the U.S. on the alleged surveillance of EU institutions premises and delegations abroad. The issue was notably discussed by Vice-President Ashton directly with State Secretary Kerry. It is clear that for negotiations with the U.S. such as the current ones on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) to succeed, there need to be confidence, transparency and clarity among the negotiating partners.

PNR and TFTP Agreements with the US promote and protect the European Union's common security interests and the fundamental rights of EU citizens. Review of the PNR Agreement was undertaken recently and its report will be submitted to the European Parliament in due time. Two regular joint-reviews of the EU-US TFTP Agreement in 2011 and 2012 assessed the implementation of the safeguards applicable to the processing of Provided Data and considered the measures taken as adequate. A joint report pursuant to Article 6(6) of the agreement is under preparation. The Commission has requested consultations under A 19 TFTP.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008852/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Diffusione del virus HIV/AIDS nel Sud Est asiatico. Il caso di Taipei

Il governo di Taiwan ha recentemente pubblicato i dati relativi ai nuovi contagi da virus HIV. Dai dati emerge che la fascia più a rischio è quella compresa tra i 20 e i 29 anni di età.

Nonostante le campagne di prevenzione della Nuova Taipei, il numero dei contagiati è triplicato raggiungendo quota 147 nuovi casi solo lo scorso anno.

Inoltre, per quanto riguarda la manifestazione dei sintomi dell'AIDS, dal 1984 ad oggi, sull'isola quasi 25.000 persone hanno dimostrato di esserne affette e nel 25,2 % dei casi il contagio è avvenuto tramite lo scambio di siringhe infette.

Infine, la comunicazione della Commissione COM(2009)0569 «incoraggia la presa in considerazione delle questioni collegate all'HIV/AIDS nell'insieme delle politiche, degli atti legislativi e degli accordi dell'UE» ed è «favorevole al controllo dell'attuazione degli impegni internazionali ai livelli nazionale ed europeo e sostiene le organizzazioni internazionali (…)».

Alla luce di quanto sopra può la Commissione far sapere :

— Se disponga di dati recenti sulla diffusione del virus dell'HIV/AIDS nei paesi in via di sviluppo nonché entro i confini dell'Unione europea stessa e

— quali ulteriori azioni intenda promuovere per contrastare nuovi casi di contagio?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(25 settembre 2013)

La Commissione europea non elabora dati recenti propri sui nuovi casi di HIV («incidenza dell'HIV») e si basa su quelli generati nei vari paesi e raccolti da agenzie specializzate.

Per quanto riguarda la situazione all'esterno dell'UE, la Commissione si basa essenzialmente sui dati forniti dall'OMS e da UNAIDS ([1]). Conformemente alla strategia di cooperazione in materia di salute per i paesi in via di sviluppo, la Commissione europea continuerà a rafforzare i sistemi sanitari nazionali nei paesi in via di sviluppo in modo che i servizi sanitari di base siano accessibili anche ai gruppi più vulnerabili della popolazione, spesso i più colpiti dall'HIV/AIDS. Le attività che hanno dato prova di efficacia devono essere adeguate alle situazioni epidemiologiche specifiche e includere approcci orientati ai gruppi a rischio in materia di informazione e istruzione, uso dei preservativi, circoncisione maschile, programmi di attenuazione dei danni per i tossicodipendenti che fanno uso di droghe intravenose e altri obiettivi simili. L'UE fornisce consistenti risorse finanziarie a titolo dell'FES e del bilancio per programmi di prevenzione dell'HIV mediante i programmi per i singoli paesi, il Fondo globale per la lotta all'AIDS, alla tubercolosi e alla malaria e l'OMS.

La situazione nell'UE è descritta nella recente relazione di sorveglianza sull'HIV/AIDS in Europa, prodotta congiuntamente dal Centro europeo per la prevenzione e il controllo delle malattie (ECDC) e dall'OMS/EURO ([2]). Un'altra relazione recente pubblicata dall'ECDC verifica l'attuazione della dichiarazione di Dublino sul partenariato per la lotta contro l'HIV/AIDS in Europa e nell'Asia centrale ([3]). In futuro, l'azione della Commissione nel settore della prevenzione dell'HIV si baserà su una valutazione della comunicazione della Commissione «La lotta contro l'HIV/AIDS nell'Unione europea e nei paesi vicini, 2009-2013 ([4])» e il relativo piano di azione ([5]).

([1]) Cfr. per esempio: http://www.unaids.org/en/dataanalysis/knowyourepidemic/epidemiologicalfactsheets/.
([2]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/20121130-Annual-HIV-Surveillance-Report.pdf
([3]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Forms/ECDC_DispForm.aspx?ID=1132.
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0569:FIN:EN:PDF.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/sti_prevention/hiv_aids/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008852/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Spread of HIV/AIDS in South-East Asia: the case of Taipei

The Taiwanese Government recently published data on the number of new HIV infections. The data show that people aged between 20 and 29 are most at risk.

Despite the prevention campaigns carried out in New Taipei, the number of people infected has trebled, with 147 new cases recorded last year alone.

Moreover, as regards the presence of AIDS symptoms, since 1984 some 25 000 people on the island have shown signs of being infected, and in 25.2% of cases the infection was transmitted through the exchange of infected syringes.

Lastly, the Commission Communication COM(2009) 0569 'promotes the mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS-related issues across EU policies, legislation and agreements' and 'supports monitoring the implementation of international commitments at country and European level, and supports international organisations […]'.

In view of the above, can the Commission say:

— whether it is in possession of any recent data on the spread of HIV/AIDS in developing countries and within the European Union itself; and

— what further action it will take to prevent new cases of infection?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(25 September 2013)

The European Commission does not generate its own new data on new HIV cases ('HIV incidence'), and relies on data generated in countries and reported by specialised agencies.

For the situation outside the EU, the Commission relies mainly on data provided by the WHO and UNAIDS ([1]). In line with its strategy for cooperation on health for developing countries, the European Commission will continue to help strengthen national health systems in developing countries so that basic health services also reach the most vulnerable parts of the population that are often particularly affected by HIV/AIDS. Activities whose effectiveness has been proven need to be tailored to specific epidemiological situations and include risk-group oriented approaches on information and education, condom use, male circumcision, harm reduction programmes for intravenous drug users and others. The EU provides substantial financial resources from the EDF and the budget for such HIV prevention programmes through country programmes, via the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and the WHO.

The situation within the EU is described in the recent HIV/AIDS surveillance in Europe report jointly produced by the European Centre of Disease Control ECDC and WHO/EURO ([2]). Another recent report published by the European Centre of Disease Prevention and Control monitors the implementation of the Dublin Declaration on Partnership to Fight HIV/AIDS in Europe and Central Asia ([3]). The Commission has commissioned an evaluation of action under the Commission Communication on Combating HIV/AIDS in the European Union and the neighbouring countries 2009-2013 and its Action Plan ([4]) and is currently contemplating a revision of the existing Action Plan ([5]).

([1]) See for instance: http://www.unaids.org/en/dataanalysis/knowyourepidemic/epidemiologicalfactsheets/
([2]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/20121130-Annual-HIV-Surveillance-Report.pdf
([3]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Forms/ECDC_DispForm.aspx?ID=1132
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0569:FIN:EN:PDF
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/sti_prevention/hiv_aids/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008853/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Abbandono di minori in Cina — il caso di Nanjing

A inizio luglio una bambina di quattro anni è stata immortalata da un fotografo anonimo mentre, nuda, chiedeva l'elemosina per le strade di Nanjing, nella provincia cinese di Jiangsu. Postata sul sito di microblogging Sina Weibo, in poche ore la foto ha fatto il giro della rete, e solo dopo tale atto di denuncia online le forze di polizia locali si sono fatte carico della piccola togliendola dalla strada.

— Considerando che alla bambina, figlia di un malato psichico, non sono state garantite finora né le cure mediche di base né vitto e alloggio in quanto sprovvista di *hukou*, ossia il certificato di nascita e di residenza che consente ai cittadini cinesi di ottenere l'assistenza primaria;

— osservando inoltre come a Nanjing, negli stessi giorni in cui la piccola mendicava, altri due bambini di uno e tre anni siano morti di stenti rinchiusi nella loro casa, dopo che la madre tossicodipendente li aveva abbandonati;

— sottolineando altresì che, in entrambi i casi, le autorità cittadine hanno confermato l'accaduto solo dopo che la notizia era stata fatta trapelare dai media su Internet;

— Evidenziando infine che la Convenzione sulla protezione dei minori e sulla cooperazione in materia di adozione internazionale, firmata a L'Aja il 29 maggio 1993, sottolinea che «per lo sviluppo armonioso della sua personalità, il minore deve crescere in un ambiente familiare, in un clima di felicità, d'amore e di comprensione» specificando pertanto che «l'adozione internazionale può offrire l'opportunità di dare una famiglia permanente a quei minori per i quali non può essere trovata una famiglia idonea nel loro Stato di origine»,

si pongono alla Commissione i quesiti di seguito elencati.

— Di quali dati dispone in relazione al fenomeno dell'abbandono infantile in Cina?

— Quali progetti prevede di avviare, entro i confini dell'UE, per migliorare il sistema del perfezionamento delle adozioni internazionali di minori stranieri in stato di abbandono?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(24 settembre 2013)

Si rammenta all'onorevole parlamentare che l'adozione non è disciplinata a livello UE e resta di competenza degli Stati membri. A livello internazionale, la Commissione sostiene la corretta applicazione della convenzione dell'Aia del 1993 sulla tutela dei minori e la cooperazione in materia di adozione internazionale, a cui tutti gli Stati membri dell'Unione europea hanno aderito, partecipando regolarmente alle commissioni speciali organizzate nell'ambito della conferenza dell'Aia di diritto internazionale privato. Tali riunioni sono finalizzate allo scambio delle migliori pratiche al fine di migliorare il funzionamento della convenzione e di rafforzare la cooperazione internazionale in questo settore. La convenzione è stata ratificata dalla Repubblica popolare cinese nel 2005 ed è entrata in vigore in quel paese il 1° gennaio 2006.

Dato che l'UE non è una parte contraente della convenzione e non esiste legislazione dell'UE in materia di adozione, la Commissione non dispone dei poteri istituzionali per valutare in che misura gli Stati membri partecipanti rispettino la convenzione stessa. Inoltre, come è noto all'onorevole parlamentare, la Commissione non raccoglie dati sul fenomeno dell'abbandono dei minori in Cina. In base alla relazione del 2013 sulla politica della Cina in materia di benessere dei minori, presentata congiuntamente dall'Università normale di Pechino e dall'UNICEF, il numero totale degli orfani in Cina nel 2012 è stato stimato pari a 628 000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008853/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Child abandonment in China — the case of Nanjing

At the start of July 2013 a four-year-old girl was immortalised in a photograph taken by an anonymous photographer while she was begging, naked, in the streets of Nanjing, in China's Jiangsu province. A few hours after being posted on the microblogging site Sina Weibo the photograph had gone viral, and it was only after that online act of condemnation that the local police force took charge of the girl, taking her off the streets.

— The girl, whose father is mentally disabled, has so far not received any basic medical treatment or subsistence expenses because she lacks a *hukuo*, the birth and residence certificate that entitles Chinese citizens to primary care.

— Moreover, during the same period in which the girl was begging, two more children, aged one and three, were found dead in their home in Nanjing. They had died of starvation, after their drug-addicted mother had abandoned them.

— In both cases, the local authorities confirmed what had happened only after the news had been leaked by the media via the Internet.

— Finally, the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption, signed at The Hague on 29 May 1993, stresses that 'the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding' and accordingly points out that 'intercountry adoption may offer the advantage of a permanent family to a child for whom a suitable family cannot be found in his or her State of origin'.

— What figures does the Commission have with regard to child abandonment in China?

— What projects does it plan to launch, within the EU, to improve the system for processing intercountry adoptions of abandoned children from overseas?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(24 September 2013)

The Honourable Member should be aware that adoption is not regulated at EU level and remains within the competence of the Member States. At international level, the Commission supports the correct implementation of the 1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Inter-country Adoption, to which all the Member States of the European Union are party, by participating on a regular basis to the Special Commissions organised in the context of the Hague Conference on Private International Law. These meetings are aimed at exchanging best practises at thus improving the functioning of the Convention and strengthening international cooperation in this matter. The Convention was ratified by the People's Republic of China in 2005 and entered there into force on 1 January 2006.

As the EU is not a Party to this Convention and there is no EU legislation on adoption, the Commission has no institutional powers to assess the level of compliance by the Member States participating in the said Convention. Furthermore the Honourable Member should be also informed that the Commission does not collect data in respect of child abandonment in China. The 'China Child Welfare Policy Report 2013', which was jointly produced by Beijing Normal University and Unicef, estimates the total number of orphans in China in 2012 to 628 000.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008854/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Impiego di bambini in competizioni sportive a rischio — il caso della Mongolia

È notizia recente la protesta di un gruppo di attivisti, in Mongolia, contro la partecipazione dei bambini alle gare ippiche del Naadan, una competizione sportiva nazionale consistente nel superamento di prove di lotta, equitazione e tiro con l'arco. Secondo le stime, le gare in cui corrono bambini dai sette anni in su (per non affaticare il cavallo, grazie al loro peso inferiore rispetto a quello dei fantini adulti) sarebbero circa 30 000. L'impiego di bambini comporta inoltre una spesa quasi irrisoria per gli organizzatori.

— Considerando che, nel 2012, ben 326 bambini mongoli sono stati vittima di infortunio durante gare ufficiali del Naadan e che, secondo l'Agenzia nazionale per i bambini, negli ultimi decenni gli spettacoli hanno visto aumentare il loro grado di pericolosità;

— osservando inoltre che, se da un lato tale competizione porta con sé il mercato delle scommesse illegali, che possono raggiungere un valore massimo di circa 60 000 dollari, dall'altro i giovani fantini gareggiano senza beneficiare di alcuna assicurazione stipulata a loro tutela dall'ente organizzatore;

— evidenziando infine la portata dell'articolo 24 della Convenzione UNICEF sui diritti dell'infanzia, in virtù del quale «Gli Stati parti riconoscono il diritto del minore di godere del miglior stato di salute possibile e di beneficiare di servizi medici e di riabilitazione. Essi si sforzano di garantire che nessun minore sia privato del diritto di avere accesso a tali servizi.»,

si pongono alla Commissione i quesiti di seguito elencati.

— È a conoscenza dello sfruttamento dei bambini mongoli ai fini della loro partecipazione alle gare in oggetto?

— Intende avviare un dialogo con il paese al fine di assicurare maggiore protezione ai minori vittima delle citate competizioni?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(13 settembre 2013)

I cavalli hanno un'importanza fondamentale nella cultura mongola e le gare ippiche sono fra le attività sportive al centro della festività del naadam nel mese di luglio. Le corse ippiche si svolgono in tutto il paese e nel corso dell'intero anno, sia come manifestazioni pubbliche che come eventi privati. Spesso i fantini sono minorenni e molti di loro rimangono feriti, anche mortalmente, durante le gare.

Avendo sottoscritto strumenti internazionali, quali la Convenzione ONU sui diritti del fanciullo e le convenzioni dell'OIL 182 e 183, la Mongolia ha l'obbligo di tutelare i diritti dei minori, eliminare le forme più gravi di lavoro minorile e rispettare l'età minima per l'ammissione al lavoro.

La mobilitazione della comunità internazionale, inclusi l'OIL e l'UNICEF, ha portato ad una revisione della legislazione da parte del Parlamento nazionale allo scopo di regolamentare l'età, la copertura dell'assicurazione infortuni e l'equipaggiamento di sicurezza dei fantini.

La comunità internazionale dovrà continuare a monitorare la situazione e l'UE solleverà la questione dei minori impiegati come fantini in occasione del prossimo comitato misto UE-Mongolia del settembre 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008854/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Use of children in high-risk sports competitions — the case of Mongolia

It was recently reported that a group of activists in Mongolia had protested against the use of children in horse races during Naadam, a national sports festival consisting of wrestling, horse-racing and archery competitions. Children aged seven and over (their light weight in comparison to that of adult jockeys means that they do not tire the horses) compete in an estimated 30 000 races. Using children also allows the organisers to reduce their costs to the bare minimum.

In 2012, as many as 326 Mongolian children were the victims of accidents during the official Naadam races, and according to the National Agency for Children, the events have become more dangerous in recent decades.

While, on the one hand, the competition gives rise to an illegal betting market, which may be worth as much as USD 60 000, on the other hand, the child jockeys who compete are not covered by any insurance policies taken out by the organising body to protect them.

Finally, according to Article 24 of the Unicef Convention on the Rights of the Child, 'States Parties recognise the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. States Parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such healthcare services.'

— Is the Commission aware that Mongolian children are being exploited as jockeys in the races in question?

— Does it intend to establish a dialogue with the country to ensure that child victims of the above competitions are better protected?

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

Horses are at the core of Mongolian culture and Horseracing is one of the sports that make up the Naadam celebrations, held in July. Horse races take place throughout the country and throughout the year, some of them as public events and others as private events. Many of the races involve child jockeys, leading to many injuries, some of them fatal.

As Mongolia is signatory to international legislations such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the ILO Conventions 182 and 138, Mongolia has an obligation to protect the rights of children, eliminate the worst forms of child labour and respect the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment."

The mobilisation of the International Community, including the ILO and Unicef, has led to a review of the legislation by the Mongolian Parliament, with a view to regulating the age of jockeys, accident insurance coverage, and safety equipment.

The International Community will need to continue monitoring the situation and the EU will raise the issue of child jockeys at the forthcoming EU-Mongolia Joint Committee in September 2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008855/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Trasporto di componenti missilistiche dall'isola di Cuba alla Corea del Nord

È notizia recente la scoperta di alcune componenti missilistiche rinvenute dalle autorità panamensi su di una nave fermata presso il porto di Manzanillo, in corrispondenza del versante atlantico del canale di Panama.

L'ispezione, iniziata per verificare che il carico non nascondesse sostanze stupefacenti, ha portato alla luce alcune parti di missili, celate all'interno dei contenitori impiegati per il trasporto di 220mila quintali di zucchero.

La nave era partita dall'isola di Cuba in direzione della Corea del Nord.

Si osservi inoltre che, a seguito del fermo disposto dalle autorità panamensi, i 35 membri dell'equipaggio hanno messo in atto una rivolta contro il personale che ha effettuato l'ispezione, mentre il capitano della nave avrebbe tentato invano il suicidio.

Si evidenzia altresì come Cuba sia paese alleato al regime nord-coreano di Pyongyang, il quale ha inaugurato il 2013 con una serie di esercitazioni nucleari condannate espressamente dalla Comunità internazionale ma mai cessate del tutto.

Si sottolinea infine il contenuto della dichiarazione della Presidenza a nome dell'Unione europea sui test missilistici della Repubblica popolare democratica di Corea (6 luglio 2006), in particolare laddove si afferma: «L'UE condanna fermamente i lanci missilistici di collaudo provocatoriamente effettuati dal governo della RPDC. Tali test, riguardanti anche sistemi missilistici a lungo raggio che possono essere utilizzati per trasportare armi di distruzione di massa, indeboliscono ulteriormente la stabilità regionale in un momento in cui l'irrisolta questione nucleare nella penisola coreana richiede un rafforzamento della fiducia reciproca».

Alla luce di quanto precede, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Quali sono stati gli sviluppi del dialogo nucleare tra l'UE e Pyongyang dal 2006 ad oggi?

2. Quale atteggiamento intende assumere l'Unione europea con riferimento ai recenti sviluppi della questione missilistica?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(19 settembre 2013)

L'UE e la Repubblica popolare democratica di Corea non hanno un dialogo nucleare in quanto tale. Tuttavia la questione del programma nucleare della Corea del Nord e la relativa violazione delle pertinenti risoluzioni del Consiglio di sicurezza delle Nazioni Unite emerge sistematicamente in occasione degli incontri di dialogo politico dell'UE con il paese, l'ultimo dei quali si è tenuto nel dicembre 2011. L'UE esprime inoltre le proprie preoccupazioni durante le riunioni internazionali e regionali cui partecipa anche la Corea del Nord, in particolare in occasione dell'ultima riunione regionale dei ministri dell'ASEAN a Brunei.

L'UE e l'AR/VP hanno condannato pubblicamente i lanci di missili balistici effettuati dalla Corea del Nord, compreso l'ultimo del 12 dicembre 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008855/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Shipping of missile parts from the island of Cuba to North Korea

According to recent news reports, a number of missile parts have been discovered by the Panamanian authorities aboard a ship docked at the port of Manzanillo, on the Atlantic side of the Panama Canal.

The inspection, carried out to check that no drugs were hidden in the cargo, uncovered a number of missile parts concealed in containers used to transport 10 000 tonnes of sugar.

The ship had left the island of Cuba bound for North Korea.

Moreover, following the seizure by the Panamanian authorities, the 35 crew members staged a revolt against the officials who carried out the inspection, while the ship's captain made a failed suicide attempt.

It should also be pointed out that Cuba is a country allied to the Pyongyang regime in North Korea, which ushered in 2013 with a series of nuclear tests that were explicitly condemned by the international community but which have never stopped completely.

Lastly, the content of the Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on missile tests by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) of 6 July 2006 should be borne in mind, particularly the part which states: 'The EU strongly condemns the provocative missile test-launches performed by the government of the DPRK. These tests, which also included long-range missile systems that can be used to deliver weapons of mass destruction, place additional strains on regional stability at a time when the unresolved nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula requires mutual confidence building.'

1. Can the Vice-President/High Representative report on the developments in the EU-Pyongyang nuclear dialogue from 2006 until now?

2. What stance will the European Union adopt with regard to the recent missile-related developments?

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

The EU and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) do not have a nuclear dialogue as such. Nevertheless, the issue of the DPRK's nuclear programme and its breach of relevant UN Security Council Resolutions is brought up systematically in the EU's political dialogue meetings with the country, the last of which took place in December 2011. The EU also voices its concerns at international and regional meetings where the DPRK is present, in particular the recent ASEAN Regional Forum Ministerial meeting in Brunei.

The EU and the HR/VP have publicly condemned the DPRK's missile launches, including the most recent one on 12 December 2012.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008856/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Discriminazione nell'accesso all'istruzione dei bambini cinesi portatori di handicap

Secondo un recente rapporto divulgato dall'organizzazione *Human Rights Watch*, il 40 % della popolazione cinese colpita da handicap (circa 83 milioni di persone) non avrebbe alcun accesso all'istruzione di base e risulterebbe pertanto analfabeta.

— Considerando che, in oltre 60 interviste a bambini diversamente abili e ai loro genitori, è emerso come il paese neghi il principio di eguaglianza nell'accesso agli studi, non aiutando in alcun modo gli allievi che presentano difficoltà di apprendimento;

— sottolineando inoltre come siano le stesse linee guida dei regolamenti governativi a rendere impossibile, o comunque difficile, l'iscrizione alle scuole dell'obbligo di allievi «portatori di difetti fisici o mentali»;

— evidenziando poi che alcuni genitori di figli diversamente abili sono costretti, una volta ottenuta l'iscrizione del minore a un istituto pubblico, ad assentarsi più volte al giorno dal lavoro per andare presso la scuola e assisterlo nel salire o scendere le scale oppure quando si reca ai servizi;

— considerando infine che l'articolo 7 della Dichiarazione universale dei diritti dell'uomo recita «Tutti sono eguali dinanzi alla legge e hanno diritto, senza alcuna discriminazione, ad una eguale tutela da parte della legge» e che l'articolo 26, in particolar modo il suo secondo comma, prevede quanto segue: «L'istruzione deve essere indirizzata al pieno sviluppo della personalità umana ed al rafforzamento del rispetto dei diritti umani e delle libertà fondamentali. Essa deve promuovere la comprensione, la tolleranza, l'amicizia fra tutte le Nazioni, i gruppi razziali e religiosi, e deve favorire l'opera delle Nazioni Unite per il mantenimento della pace.»,

si pongono alla Commissione i quesiti di seguito elencati.

— Qual è il livello di armonizzazione raggiunto dalle legislazioni nazionali degli Stati membri in tema di parità di accesso, per le persone diversamente abili, all'istruzione primaria, secondaria e superiore?

— Intende l'Unione europea attuare programmi di sensibilizzazione in tema di pari opportunità per i portatori di handicap, anche in paesi terzi?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(1º ottobre 2013)

Gli Stati membri dell'UE hanno sottoscritto una serie di accordi internazionali sui bisogni educativi speciali, tra cui il più recente è la convenzione delle Nazioni Unite sui diritti delle persone con disabilità ([1]), che comprende un impegno a favore di un'istruzione inclusiva.

Tutti gli Stati membri sono tenuti ad attuare una legislazione nazionale che vieti la discriminazione nei confronti dei disabili. La direttiva 2000/78/CE offre una protezione contro la discriminazione basata sull'handicap nell'accesso all'occupazione, nelle condizioni di lavoro e nella formazione professionale. In quest'ultimo aspetto può rientrare l'istruzione superiore se fornisce le conoscenze richieste per una particolare professione. Nei diversi sistemi nazionali esistono ancora profonde differenze riguardo al modo in cui si affrontano i bisogni educativi speciali. Informazioni sull'istruzione per paese sono disponibili nello strumento online della Commissione relativo alla disabilità (DOTCOM) ([2]) e nel rapporto *Inclusive education for young disabled people in Europe: trends, issues and challenges* (Istruzione inclusiva per i giovani disabili in Europa: tendenze, problematiche e sfide) ([3]) elaborato dall'*Academic Network of European Disability Experts* (Rete accademica degli esperti europei sulla disabilità).

L'azione della Commissione nel settore dell'istruzione si limita a misure di sostegno. La politica della Commissione di promuovere l'istruzione inclusiva e l'apprendimento permanente è delineata nella strategia europea sulla disabilità 2010-2020 ([4]).

([1]) http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=150.
([2]) http://www.disability-europe.net/dotcom.
([3]) http://www.disability-europe.net/content/aned/media/ANED%202010 %20Task%205 %20Education%20final%20report%20-%20FINAL%20 %282 %29_0.pdf
([4]) COM(2010)636 definitivo.

La Commissione finanzia quasi 300 progetti tematici destinati in modo specifico a persone con disabilità nei paesi in via di sviluppo, alcuni dei quali sono in corso di attuazione in Cina. Molti di questi progetti comprendono azioni di sensibilizzazione. Anche il nuovo programma Erasmus+ offrirà opportunità in tal senso.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008856/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Discrimination in respect of access to education for Chinese children with disabilities

According to a recent Human Rights Watch report, 40% of China's disabled population (approximately 83 million people) have no access to basic education and are therefore illiterate.

— During more than 60 interviews conducted with disabled children and their parents, it emerged that the country disregards the principle of equal access to education and provides no help at all to pupils with learning difficulties.

— The government's official guidelines themselves make it impossible, or difficult at any rate, for pupils 'with physical or mental disabilities' to access compulsory education.

— Some parents of disabled children, once they have secured a place for their child in a state school, are forced to leave work several times a day to go to the school to help their child get up and down the stairs or go to the toilet.

— Lastly, Article 7 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that: 'All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law.' Moreover, according to Article 26, and particularly paragraph 2 thereof, 'Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.'

— Can the Commission say what level of harmonisation has been reached by the Member States' national legislations with regard to equal access for disabled persons to primary, secondary and higher education?

— Does the European Union plan to carry out awareness programmes on equal opportunities for disabled persons, including in third countries?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(1 October 2013)

EU Member States have signed up to a number of international agreements on special educational needs, most recently the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ([1]), which includes a commitment to inclusive education.

All Member States are expected to implement domestic legislation prohibiting discrimination against disabled people. Directive 2000/78/EC offers protection against discrimination on grounds of disability in access to employment, occupation and vocational training. The latter can include higher education if it provides knowledge required within a particular profession. As a result of different national systems, there are still major differences with regard to how special educational needs are addressed. Information on education by country can be found in the disability online tool of the Commission (DOTCOM) ([2]) and in the report 'Inclusive education for young disabled people in Europe: trends, issues and challenges' ([3]) produced by the Academic Network of European Disability Experts.

The action of the Commission in the field of education is limited to supportive measures. The Commission policy to promote inclusive education and lifelong learning is outlined in the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 ([4]).

The Commission is funding nearly 300 thematic projects specifically targeting persons with disabilities in developing countries, several of them being implemented in China. Many of these projects are oriented towards awareness-raising. The new Erasmus+ programme will also provide opportunities in that sense.

([1]) http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=150
([2]) http://www.disability-europe.net/dotcom
([3]) http://www.disability-europe.net/content/aned/media/ANED%202010%20Task%205%20Education%20final%20report%20-%20FINAL%20%282%29_0.pdf
([4]) COM(2010) 636 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008857/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Nuove violenze sui cristiani del Kandhamal in occasione dell'anniversario del pongrom del 2008

Il distretto del Kandhamal ha visto riaccendersi, nelle ultime settimane, le violenze contro la minoranza cristiana. In particolare, si è diffusa la notizia dello stupro subito da una religiosa trasferitasi a Chennai per motivi di studio ed è stata comunicata la morte del reverendo Jainsankar, medico e pastore presso la Blessing Youth Mission. Secondo quanto riportato dal Consiglio globale dei cristiani indiani (GCIC), in quest'ultimo caso la polizia locale avrebbe subito archiviato la morte come incidente, mentre sul corpo dell'uomo sono stati rinvenuti chiari segni di aggressione.

La Conferenza episcopale indiana (CBCI) condanna entrambi gli episodi e il suo Vicepresidente, il cardinale Oswald Gracias, ha altresì sottolineato l'apatia delle agenzie governative nel ristabilire l'ordine pubblico nella regione di Kandhamal assicurando i colpevoli alla giustizia.

Inoltre, nell'ottobre 2012 altre due ragazze, di soli 13 anni, hanno subito la stessa violenza sofferta dalla giovane suora, attuata ancora da estremisti indù, che le hanno minacciate di morte qualora avessero denunciato l'accaduto.

I testimoni di molti di questi avvenimenti confermano la presenza delle forze di polizia sul luogo del crimine, ma ne riportano la contrarietà ad intervenire a difesa dei cristiani, sottoposti a trattamenti inumani e degradanti.

Infine, occorre ricordare che, nell'agosto 2008, il Kandhamal ha visto l'attuarsi di un vero e proprio genocidio ai danni dei cristiani, pianificato e realizzato dalla maggioranza indù.

— È la Commissione a conoscenza degli ultimi eventi nella regione del Kandhamal?

— Quali programmi intende attivare l'Unione europea, al di fuori dei suoi confini, per tutelare le comunità cristiane vittime di soprusi, e in particolare le donne?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(9 settembre 2013)

L'Unione europea sorveglia gli atti di intolleranza religiosa e di discriminazione contro le minoranze in India e sta monitorando la situazione già dagli episodi di violenza collettiva contro i cristiani a Orissa del dicembre 2007 e dell'agosto 2008.

La questione è stata sollevata a più riprese con le autorità indiane, anche ai più alti livelli, e viene puntualmente discussa nel quadro del dialogo locale UE-India sui diritti umani. La stessa revisione periodica universale dell'India del 2012 è stata l'occasione per fare il punto della situazione generale in ordine alla libertà di religione o convinzione.

Inoltre, la delegazione dell'UE e le ambasciate degli Stati membri a Nuova Delhi hanno contatti regolari con interlocutori locali della società civile, con enti governativi e con le organizzazioni non governative (ONG) europee in diversi Stati dell'India al fine di monitorare la situazione delle minoranze nel paese, compresi i cristiani. L'UE segue attentamente anche gli sviluppi per quanto riguarda la sensibilizzazione al tema dei diritti umani, la riforma delle forze di polizia e la legislazione, tra cui l'atteso disegno di legge sulla prevenzione della violenza collettiva, tutti elementi che hanno un impatto sul benessere e sulla sicurezza delle minoranze.

Un progetto ancora in corso e finanziato dallo strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani mira a consolidare le commissioni statali per i diritti umani, compresa la commissione dello Stato di Orissa, affinché funzionino come istituzioni efficaci, efficienti, trasparenti e responsabili per la salvaguardia delle libertà e dei diritti fondamentali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008857/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Further violence against Christians in Kandhamal on the anniversary of the 2008 pogrom

In recent weeks, there have been fresh outbreaks of violence against the Christian minority in the Kandhamal district. In particular, it is reported that a nun, who moved to Chennai to train, has been raped, and Reverend Jainsankar, a doctor and pastor at the Blessing Youth Mission, has been killed. According to the Global Council of Indian Christians (GCIC), in the latter case, local police immediately filed the death as an accident, whereas there were clear signs of violence on the body.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI) has condemned both episodes and its vice-president, Cardinal Oswald Gracias, has also highlighted the apathy of government agencies in re-establishing public order in the Kandhamal district and bringing those guilty to justice.

Furthermore, in October 2012, another two girls, aged just 13 years, suffered the same fate as the young nun, again at the hands of Hindu extremists who threatened to kill them if they reported what had happened.

Witnesses of many of these episodes confirm the presence of the police at the scene of the crime, but describe their reluctance to intervene to defend the Christians who are subjected to inhumane, degrading treatment.

Lastly, it should be remembered that, in August 2008, a true genocide of Christians, planned and perpetrated by the Hindu majority, took place in Kandhamal.

— Is the Commission aware of the latest events in the Kandhamal district?

— What programmes does the EU plan to launch, outside its borders, to protect Christian communities, and women in particular, who are the victims of injustice?

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

The EU closely monitors acts of religious intolerance and discrimination against minorities in India, and has been following this situation particularly since the outbreaks of communal violence against Christians in Orissa in December 2007 and August 2008.

Concerns in this regard have been raised repeatedly with the Indian authorities, including at the highest possible level, and the subject is systematically discussed during the periodic local EU-India Human Rights Dialogue. India's 2012 Universal Periodic Review also provided an opportunity to take stock of the overall situation regarding freedom of religion or belief.

The EU Delegation and Member States' Embassies in Delhi are furthermore in regular contact with local interlocutors from civil society and governmental bodies as well as with European non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in a number of Indian states in order to monitor the situation of minorities in India, including the situation of Christians. The EU is also closely following developments on rights awareness, police reform, and legislation such as the still-awaited Communal Violence Prevention Bill, which all have a bearing on the well-being and safety of minorities.

A project funded under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights currently ongoing, aims at strengthening State Human Rights commissions including the Orissa State Human Rights Commission to function as effective, efficient, transparent and accountable institutions in the safeguard of fundamental rights and freedoms.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008858/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Krzysztof Lisek (PPE) oraz Paweł Zalewski (PPE)
(18 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Wyrok na Aleksieja Nawalnego

Rosyjski sąd skazał dziś Aleksieja Nawalnego na 5 lat kolonii karnej.

Uważamy, że zarzuty wobec popularnego opozycjonisty, sfingowany proces i dzisiejszy wyrok to działania Kremla, które ma na celu pozbycie się ze sceny politycznej aktywisty (dokumentującego korupcję w szeregach rządzącej ekipy) i groźnego kandydata w mających się niebawem odbyć wyborach na mera Moskwy.

W Rosji pojawił się kolejny więzień polityczny. Wyrok na Aleksieja Nawalnego to tylko wierzchołek góry lodowej, na którą składa się prześladowanie niesankcjonowanej przez Kreml opozycji, administracyjne niszczenie niezależnych organizacji społecznych i zmiany w prawie, mające na celu eliminację zalążków społeczeństwa obywatelskiego.

Unia Europejska od wielu lat konsekwentnie dąży do zacieśniania współpracy z Rosją. Jej warunkiem, powinno być jednak wyznawanie wspólnych wartości i zasad w tym przede wszystkim rządów prawa, demokracji, praw człowieka i wolności obywatelskich. Wyrok na Aleksieja Nawalnego jest jaskrawym pogwałceniem reguły rządów prawa.

W związku z powyższym zwracam się z prośbą o udzielenie odpowiedzi na następujące pytania:

1. Czy i kiedy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel ds. Polityki Zagranicznej i Bezpieczeństwa potępi wyrok?

2. Czy wobec powyższego oraz innych licznych przykładów braku poszanowania podstawowych zasad demokratycznego państwa prawa przez władze Federacji Rosyjskiej, Unia Europejska nie powinna zmodyfikować swojej polityki wobec Rosji?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(18 września 2013 r.)

Rzecznik Wysokiej Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącej Komisji wydał oświadczenie, w którym potępił wyrok na Aleksandra Nawalnego. Oświadczenie to zostało wydane w dniu 18 lipca 2013 r., czyli w dniu ogłoszenia wyroku. We wspomnianym oświadczeniu Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca wyraziła zaniepokojenie faktem wydania przez sąd w Kirowie wyroku skazującego na karę pozbawienia wolności Aleksandra Nawalnego, członka rady koordynacyjnej rosyjskiej opozycji i działacza piętnującego korupcję, a także współoskarżonego Piotra Oficerowa. Zauważyła ona, że zarzuty przeciwko tym osobom nie zostały potwierdzone w trakcie rozprawy, oraz wyraziła nadzieję, że sprawy te zostaną ponownie rozpoznane w ramach postępowania odwoławczego.

Poszanowanie praw człowieka i zdolność społeczeństwa obywatelskiego do odgrywania spoczywającej nań roli to zasadnicze elementy stosunków łączących UE z Rosją, która jest jej strategicznym partnerem. Niedawne wydarzenia w Federacji Rosyjskiej, a w szczególności sytuacja społeczeństwa obywatelskiego i liderów opozycji, zostały omówione z Rosją podczas ostatniego szczytu i były ważnym punktem porządku obrad w trakcie konsultacji UE-Rosja na temat praw człowieka, które miały miejsce w dniu 17 maja 2013 r. w Brukseli. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca będzie w dalszym ciągu uważnie śledzić rozwój wydarzeń w tym obszarze.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008858/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Krzysztof Lisek (PPE) and Paweł Zalewski (PPE)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Sentencing of Alexei Navalny

A Russian court today sentenced Alexei Navalny to five years in a corrective labour colony.

We believe that the Kremlin is behind the charges against the popular opposition activist, the rigged trial and today's sentence as it aims to remove from the political arena an activist documenting corruption in government and a candidate seen as a threat in the forthcoming mayoral elections in Moscow.

Alexei Navalny is Russia's latest political prisoner. His sentencing is merely the tip of the iceberg built on the persecution of any opposition not sanctioned by the Kremlin, the destruction by the administration of independent social organisations and changes to the law aimed at suffocating Russia's fledgling civil society.

The EU has been trying to achieve closer cooperation with Russia for a number of years. This should, however, be conditional on the upholding of common values and principles, primarily the rule of law, democracy, human rights and civil liberties. Today's sentence is a blatant violation of the rule of law.

In connection with the above, would the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative going to condemn this sentence, and if so, when?

2. In view of this and the many other instances of the Russian authorities' failure to observe fundamental democratic principles and the rule of law, should the EU not change its policy towards the Russian Federation?

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

The spokesperson of the HR/VP issued a statement condemning the sentence against Mr Navalny on 18 July 2013, the day the verdict was issued. In that statement, the High Representative/Vice-President said she was concerned about the guilty verdict and the prison sentences handed down by the Kirov Court against Alexey Navalny, member of the Russian opposition coordination council and anti-corruption campaigner, and his co-defendant Pyotr Ofitserov. She noted that the charges against them had not been substantiated during the trial and expressed hope that their sentences would be reconsidered in the appeal process.

Respect for human rights and the capacity of civil society to fulfil its role are essential elements of the EU's relationship with Russia, a strategic partner. The recent developments in the Russian Federation and in particular the situation of civil society and of opposition leaders have been discussed with Russia during the last Summit, and were high on the agenda of the EU-Russia human rights consultations which took place on 17 May 2013 in Brussels. The HR/VP will keep on following these developments closely.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008859/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(18 Ιουλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Δράσεις για την προστασία της δημόσιας υγείας από τους ενδοκρινικούς διαταράκτες

Οι βλαβερές συνέπειες των ενδοκρινικών διαταρακτών στο περιβάλλον, στην άγρια ζωή, αλλά και στον άνθρωπο, έχουν αποδειχτεί σε πληθώρα επιστημονικών δημοσιεύσεων ([1]), και έχουν παρουσιαστεί και σε άρθρα στα ΜΜΕ ([2]). Το 1999 η Επιτροπή παρουσίασε μία στρατηγική για την επείγουσα αντιμετώπιση του προβλήματος ([3]), που περιλάμβανε θέσπιση προγραμμάτων επιτήρησης με στόχο την εκτίμηση της έκθεσης στις ουσίες αυτές όσον αφορά τη δόση, τη διάρκεια της έκθεσης κ.λπ., ή τον προσδιορισμό συγκεκριμένων περιπτώσεων καθώς και την πλήρη ενημέρωση του κοινού. Το θέμα επανήλθε πιο πρόσφατα το 2013 στο Ευρωκοινοβούλιο, με ψήφισμα ([4]) όπου αναγνωρίζονται οι αδυναμίες που παρουσιάζουν τα κράτη μέλη τόσο στην παρακολούθηση της διασποράς των ουσιών αυτών, στην ανάληψη συγκεκριμένων δράσεων για την προστασία της δημόσιας υγείας από αυτές, όσο και στην ενημέρωση των πολιτών για τη δράση τους και τους τρόπους αποφυγής της έκθεσής τους σε αυτές. Το πρόβλημα είναι ιδιαίτερα οξυμένο σε περιοχές με έντονη αγροτική ή βιομηχανική δραστηριότητα, όπου τόσο η ποικιλία των ουσιών που έχουν τον ρόλο ενδοκρινικών διαταρακτών, όσο και η συγκέντρωσή τους στο νερό παρουσιάζονται αυξημένες ([5]) ([6]).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει ενσωματώσει τα θέματα που σχετίζονται με τους ενδοκρινικούς διαταράκτες και τις συνδυαστικές επιπτώσεις τους, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της ανάπτυξης νέων μεθόδων δοκιμών και ανάλυσης in vitro και in silico με σκοπό να ελαχιστοποιηθούν οι δοκιμές σε ζώα, στις προτεραιότητες του προγράμματος πλαισίου έρευνας και ανάπτυξης, όπως προτείνει το ψήφισμα;

2. Σε τι επιπλέον ενέργειες προτίθεται να προβεί στο άμεσο μέλλον για την ενίσχυση της έρευνας όσον αφορά τις ενδοκρινικές διαταραχές που είναι δυνατόν να προκαλέσουν μεμονωμένες χημικές ουσίες, ιδιαίτερα σε περιοχές με έντονη αγροτική ή βιομηχανική δραστηριότητα;

3. Προτίθεται να καταρτίσει έναν Οδικό Χάρτη με ειδικές δράσεις και στόχους για τη μείωση της έκθεσης σε ενδοκρινικούς διαταράκτες και συστηματική ενημέρωση των ευρωπαίων πολιτών;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Ερωτήσεις 1 και 2

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει τον κ. βουλευτή στην απάντησή της στις γραπτές ερωτήσεις E-003913/2013 και E-006150/2013 ([7]) όσον αφορά έρευνα σχετικά με τις διαταραχές της ενδοκρινικής λειτουργίας.

Επιπλέον για την ερώτηση 1, το σχέδιο CONTAMED ([8]), επικεντρώθηκε στη συνδυασμένη έκθεση στις διαταραχές της ενδοκρινικής λειτουργίας στα έμβρυα και τις καθυστερημένες δυσμενείς επιδράσεις στην αναπαραγωγική υγεία του ανθρώπου. Επίσης, εκτός από το ερευνητικό πρόγραμμα για τις εναλλακτικές μεθόδους δοκιμών, το οποίο χρηματοδοτείται από το ερευνητικό πρόγραμμα στον τομέα της υγείας ([9]), πολλά από τα σχέδια που επικεντρώνονται στις διαταραχές της ενδοκρινικής λειτουργίας περιελάμβαναν την ανάπτυξη μεθόδων δοκιμής in vitro και in silico.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/endocrine/background_health_en.html
([2]) http://www.enet.gr/?i=news.el.article&id=146779
([3]) http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/internal_market/single_market_for_goods/chemical_products/l21277_el.htm
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2013-0091+0+DOC+XML+V0//EL
([5]) http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/FS-081-98/pdf/fs-081-98.pdf
([6]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3138025/
([7]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([8]) Μείγματα ρύπων και αναπαραγωγική υγεία — Καινοτόμες στρατηγικές για τις επιπτώσεις των διαταρακτών και για την εκτίμηση των σχετικών κινδύνων για την υγεία — http://www.contamed.eu/
([9]) www.axlr8.eu/eu-funded-3rs-research

Επιπλέον για την ερώτηση 2, η νομοθεσία της ΕΕ απαιτεί στους κανονισμούς για τα φυτοπροστατευτικά προϊόντα ([10]), για τα βιοκτόνα ([11]) και για την καταχώριση, την αξιολόγηση, την αδειοδότηση και τους περιορισμούς των χημικών προϊόντων (REACH) ([12]), να εξετάζεται για κάθε ειδική ουσία που πρέπει να εγκριθεί αν έχει πιθανές ιδιότητες ενδοκρινικού διαταράκτη. Στη διαδικασία αυτή περιλαμβάνεται επίσης, κατά περίπτωση, η παραγωγή επιστημονικών δεδομένων σχετικά με τις ειδικές χημικές ουσίες.

Το πρόγραμμα πλαίσιο «Ορίζοντας 2020» (2014-2020) ([13]) προβλέπει περαιτέρω υποστήριξη για τη μελέτη της έκθεσης σε χημικές ουσίες και των επιπτώσεών τους στην ανθρώπινη υγεία ([14]). Στο στάδιο αυτό, ωστόσο, δεν είναι δυνατό να προβλεφθεί η παροχή χρηματοδότησης σε αυτόν τον τομέα έρευνας.

Ερώτηση 3

Η νομοθεσία της ΕΕ αποσκοπεί ήδη στη μείωση της έκθεσης στους ενδοκρινικούς διαταράκτες: ήδη σύμφωνα με τους κανονισμούς REACH, για τα φυτοπροστατευτικά προϊόντα και για τα βιοκτόνα απαιτείται υπό ορισμένες προϋποθέσεις η εξάλειψη των ενδοκρινικών διαταρακτών. Για περισσότερες πληροφορίες η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει τον κ. βουλευτή στην απάντησή της στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-003913/2013[1].

([10]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1107/2009 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 21ης Οκτωβρίου 2009, ΕΕ L 309/1 της 24.11.2009.

([11]) Κανονισμός (ΕΕ) αριθ. 528/2012 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 22ας Μαΐου, ΕΕ L 167/1 της 27.6.2012.

([12]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1907/2006 για την καταχώριση, την αξιολόγηση, την αδειοδότηση και τους περιορισμούς των χημικών προϊόντων (REACH), ΕΕ L 396/1 της 30.12.2006.

([13]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm

([14]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0811:FIN:en:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008859/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Action to protect public health from endocrine disruptors

The damage caused by endocrine disruptors to the environment, wildlife and man has been illustrated in numerous scientific papers ([1]) and articles in the media ([2]). In 1999, the Commission presented a strategy of emergency measures to address the problem ([3]), which included the adoption of monitoring programmes designed to estimate the exposure to these substances in terms of dosage, length of exposure and so forth or to determine specific cases and ensure the public was fully informed. The issue was raised again more recently (2013) in the European Parliament, in a resolution ([4]) acknowledging the inability of the Member States either to monitor the dissemination of such substances and take specific action to protect public health from them or to inform the public of their action and how to avoid exposure to them. The problem is especially acute in areas with intensive agricultural or industrial activity, where there is both a larger variety of endocrine disruptors and a higher concentration of them in the water ([5]) ([6]).

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Has it incorporated endocrine disruptors and their combination effects and related subjects, including the development of new *in vitro* and *in silico* testing and analysis methods, in order to minimise animal tests, in the priorities for the framework research and development programme, as proposed in the resolution?

2. What additional action does it intend to take in the immediate future in order to increase research into isolated chemical substances with endocrine-disrupting properties, especially in areas with intensive agricultural or industrial activity?

3. Does it intend to prepare a roadmap with specific actions and targets in order to reduce exposure to endocrine disruptors and systematically provide European citizens with the relevant information?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 September 2013)

Questions 1 and 2

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-003913/2013 and E-006150/2013 ([7]) concerning research related to endocrine disruption.

Further to question 1, the project CONTAMED ([8]),focused on combined exposure to endocrine disrupters in foeti and on adverse delayed impacts on human reproduction. Further, in addition to the research programme on alternative testing methods funded by the Health research programme ([9]), many of the projects focusing on endocrine disruption included the development of *in vitro* and in silico testing methods.

Further to question 2, the EU legislation requires under the regulations for Plant Protection Products ([10]), for Biocidal Products ([11]) and REACH ([12]), the consideration of potential endocrine disrupting properties for each specific substance to be authorised. This includes, if applicable, also the generation of scientific data about the particular chemical substances.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/endocrine/background_health_en.html
([2]) http://www.enet.gr/?i=news.el.article&id=146779
([3]) http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/internal_market/single_market_for_goods/chemical_products/l21277_el.htm
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2013-0091+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN
([5]) http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/FS-081-98/pdf/fs-081-98.pdf
([6]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3138025/
([7]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([8]) Contaminant mixtures and human reproductive health — novel strategies for health impact and risk assessment of endocrine disrupters — http://www.contamed.eu/
([9]) www.axlr8.eu/eu-funded-3rs-research
([10]) Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009, OJ L 309/1, 24.11.2009.
([11]) Regulation (EU) No 528/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 May 2012, OJ L 167/1, 27.6.2012.
([12]) Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and restriction of Chemicals, OJ L 396/1, 30.12.2006.

The framework Programme 'Horizon 2020' (2014-2020) ([13]) envisages further support for studying exposure and impact of chemicals on human health ([14]). At this stage, however, it is not possible to predict the allocation of funds to this area of research.

Question 3

The EU legislation already aims to reduce exposure to endocrine disruptors: the regulations on REACH, Plant Protection Products and Biocidal Products already require under certain conditions the phasing out of endocrine disruptors. For more details, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-03913/2013[1].

([13]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm
([14]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0811:FIN:en:PDF

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008860/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD) e Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(18 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Diffusione del gioco d'azzardo sul territorio italiano

Le stime italiane riguardanti il gioco d'azzardo indicano la sua progressiva diffusione sul territorio nazionale. Se nel 2000 nel solo settore delle slot machine e in altri giochi simili si spendevano 14 miliardi di euro, lo scorso anno si è arrivati a quota 85 miliardi. Questi numeri rendono l'Italia il terzo paese al mondo per denaro speso nel gioco d'azzardo e il primo a livello di Unione.

Osservando come un recente studio, «Azzardopoli 2.0», pubblicato da un'organizzazione dedita alla lotta contro le mafie e riconosciuta dal ministero dell'Interno italiano come associazione Libera, evidenzi il coinvolgimento di almeno 49 diversi clan mafiosi nella gestione delle bische illegali e, talvolta, anche nella direzione occulta di case da gioco autorizzate;

sottolineando inoltre che nel corso dell'ultimo anno, in Italia, dieci diverse procure della Repubblica hanno indagato sul legame tra gioco d'azzardo e criminalità organizzata;

considerando poi che il fenomeno del gioco alle slot machine ha finora prodotto circa 800 000 giocatori patologici e che altri due milioni di persone si trovano in una situazione di rischio e necessitano di cure, attività di prevenzione e sostegno sociale da parte delle autorità locali civili e sanitarie;

evidenziando infine il contenuto del Libro verde (COM(2011)0128), in particolare laddove la Commissione si prefigge di dare avvio «ad una consultazione pubblica sulla regolamentazione dei servizi di gioco d'azzardo on-line nel mercato interno […] per giungere ad una migliore comprensione delle problematiche specifiche legate allo sviluppo dell'offerta di servizi di gioco d'azzardo on-line, sia legale che "non autorizzata" […]»;

si chiede alla Commissione:

1. se sia a conoscenza delle gravi conseguenze di ordine criminale, sociale e sanitario che la proliferazione del gioco d'azzardo sta creando in ambito italiano;

2. se, pur riconoscendo le competenze legislative di ciascuno Stato membro, intenda assumere provvedimenti urgenti per promuovere una forte azione di contrasto contro le infiltrazioni della criminalità organizzata nel gioco d'azzardo e contro la diffusione delle patologie legate al gioco.

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(4 settembre 2013)

La Commissione è consapevole del fatto che le slot machine rappresentano un segmento importante dei prodotti per il gioco d'azzardo offerti in Italia. La Commissione non è in possesso di dati specifici riguardo alla portata dei possibili effetti di ordine pubblico e sociale del gioco d'azzardo in Italia.

Attualmente, la Commissione non intende avviare una campagna a livello europeo sulle infiltrazioni della criminalità organizzata nel gioco d'azzardo o in altri settori. Tuttavia, riconosce la pertinenza della questione sollevata dall'onorevole deputato e prevede di adottare una serie di misure.

Per quanto riguarda la tutela dei consumatori, come annunciato nella sua comunicazione sul gioco d'azzardo on-line ([1]), la Commissione adotterà due raccomandazioni al fine di offrire un elevato livello di protezione dei consumatori di servizi di gioco d'azzardo e garantire una pubblicità del gioco d'azzardo socialmente responsabile. La Commissione riconosce inoltre che occorrono ulteriori ricerche per comprendere meglio i modelli comportamentali e i fattori alla base delle patologie legate al gioco d'azzardo. Il progetto «ALICE RAP», finanziato attraverso il 7° programma quadro, studia i fenomeni di dipendenza in Europa, compresa quella da gioco d'azzardo ([2]).

([1]) COM(2012)596 def.

([2]) ALICE RAP (Ridefinire la dipendenza e gli stili di vita nell'Europa di oggi) è un progetto quinquennale transitorio e interdisciplinare avviato l'1.4.2011. È finanziato nell'ambito delle scienze socio-economiche e umanistiche tramite il 7° programma quadro dell'UE per le attività di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione (2007-2013). Il progetto mira a contribuire al dibattito sulle norme attuali e le future implicazioni delle dipendenze e degli stili di vita in Europa nei prossimi 20 anni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008860/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD) and Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Spread of gambling in Italy

According to surveys carried out in Italy, gambling is gradually spreading across the country. While EUR 14 billion was spent on slot machines and similar games alone in 2000, that figure rose to EUR 85 billion last year. These figures mean that Italy has the third largest gambling spend in the world and the largest gambling spend in the EU.

According to a recent study, 'Azzardopoli 2.0', published by an anti-mafia organisation recognised by the Italian Ministry of the Interior as a free association, at least 49 different mafia groups are involved in the running of illegal gambling dens. In some cases, legal casinos are also secretly run by these groups.

Last year, 10 different public prosecutors in Italy investigated the link between gambling and organised crime.

Some 800 000 people have so far become addicted to gambling on slot machines, and a further 2 million people are at risk and require treatment, prevention programmes and social support from their local social services and health authorities.

Lastly, in the Green Paper (COM(2011)0128) the Commission states, in particular, that it will launch 'a public consultation on the regulation of online gambling services in the internal market […] in order to get a better understanding of the specific issues arising from the development of both legal and "unauthorised" offers of online gambling services […]'.

1. Is the Commission aware of the serious effects that the spread of gambling is having in Italy from a crime, social and health point of view?

2. While recognising the legislative powers of each Member State, will it take urgent action in support of a powerful campaign to prevent the infiltration of organised crime into the gambling sector and the spread of gambling disorders?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2013)

The Commission is aware that slot machines represent a large segment of the gambling products that are offered in Italy. The Commission is not in possession of specific information regarding the scale of the possible public and social order effects of gambling in Italy.

Currently, the Commission does not intend to undertake an EU-wide campaign on the infiltration of organised crime into the gambling sector nor any other sector. However, the Commission recognises the pertinence of the issue raised by the Honourable Member and a series of actions are envisaged.

As regards protection of consumers, as announced in its communication on online gambling ([1]), the Commission will adopt two recommendations with the aim of providing a high level of common protection of consumers of gambling services and ensuring that gambling advertising remains socially responsible. The Commission also understands that further research is required for a better understanding of the behavioural attitudes and the factors and causes linked to gambing disorders. The 'ALICE RAP' project, funded through the 7th Framework Programme, is studying addictions in Europe, including gambling ([2]).

([1]) COM(2012) 596 final.

([2]) ALICE RAP (Addiction and Lifestyles in Contemporary Europe, Reframing Addictions Project) is a 5-year transitional and interdisciplinary project started on 01/04/2011, funded under the Socioeconomic Sciences and Humanities theme through the 7th Framework Programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities (2007-2013). The project aims at contributing to the debate on current norms and future implications of addiction and lifestyles in Europe over the next 20 years.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008862/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Nuova politica ispirata alla «rivoluzione culturale» maoista in Cina

I giornali indipendenti *People's Daily*, *Ming Pao* e *China Times* sottolineano come il governo di Xi Jinping abbia lanciato in questi mesi una campagna ispirata al tema del «dna rosso», plasmata cioè sul «ritorno alla linea dell'educazione e alla pratica della massa». Si tratterebbe di misure volte a ottenere una rieducazione del pensiero dei giovani cinesi che costituiranno la futura classe dirigente del paese, nonché della popolazione civile nel suo complesso.

Considerando come, nelle sue dichiarazioni pubbliche, il rappresentante di governo Xinhua abbia evidenziato il ruolo positivo delle riforme, volte ad «accrescere la coesione dei cuori del partito e del popolo, consolidando il legame nella carne e nel sangue» (slogan tipici della rivoluzione culturale maoista e giustificativi dei pongrom che ne conseguirono);

osservando inoltre come, nella maggior parte dei suoi discorsi, il segretario generale del partito Jinping non abbia mai fatto riferimento alla necessità di colpire la corruzione diffusa tra i governanti cinesi, né abbia precisato quale sarà la sorte delle misure anti-corruzione proposte dall'ala liberale dei pensatori cinesi;

evidenziando poi che alcuni esponenti del governo, quali il viceministro alla Commissione per lo sviluppo nazionale e le riforme, l'ex vicegovernatore del Sichuan e l'ex segretario del PCC, sono attualmente gravati da capi d'imputazione attinenti a reati economici;

può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se sia in possesso di dati relativi alla percezione e alla diffusione della corruzione tra i pubblici funzionari in Estremo Oriente?

2. quale atteggiamento intenda assumere nei riguardi della nuova «rivoluzione culturale» cinese e della propaganda che ne consegue?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(10 settembre 2013)

Sebbene non disponga di dati precisi circa il livello di corruzione dei funzionari pubblici in Cina, l'AR/VP segue da vicino, in particolare mediante le dettagliate relazioni della delegazione dell'UE a Pechino, gli sviluppi dell'attuale campagna cinese anticorruzione, ivi compresi l'arresto e l'azione penale nei confronti dei più alti funzionari. Stando ai dati più recenti pubblicati dalla Suprema Corte del Popolo, nel primo trimestre del 2013 i pubblici ministeri cinesi hanno gestito 3 657 casi di corruzione relativi a inadempimento degli obblighi e violazione dei diritti.

Estirpare la corruzione è una delle principali priorità perseguite dagli attuali leader cinesi. Da quando è diventato segretario generale del partito comunista cinese, nel novembre 2012, Xi Jinping cita sempre nei suoi discorsi la campagna contro la corruzione, l'uso di fondi pubblici a vantaggio personale e altre forme di abuso d'ufficio, tema affrontato anche a giugno nella recente riunione del Politburo.

La campagna deve essere considerata nel contesto della preparazione della terza riunione plenaria del PCC, che avrà luogo ad ottobre, e della riunione sull'attività economica di dicembre, durante la quale presumibilmente verrà annunciato l'avvio della riforma socioeconomica. Sebbene l'accento sulla lotta alla corruzione rappresenti uno sviluppo positivo, l'UE ritiene che per essere efficace tale azione debba essere accompagnata da un maggiore rispetto dello Stato di diritto e del principio di trasparenza.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008862/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: New policy inspired by the Maoist 'cultural revolution' in China

According to the independent newspapers *People's Daily*, *Ming Pao* and *China Times*, Xi Jinping's government has recently launched a campaign inspired by the concept of 'red DNA', based on a return to mass line education and practice. The campaign involves measures to re-educate young Chinese people who will make up the country's future ruling class, as well as the general public as a whole.

In its public statements, the government's news agency, Xinhua, has stressed that the reforms are positive, as they are intended to unite the hearts of the party and the people more closely, strengthening the flesh and blood relationship (typical slogans of the Maoist cultural revolution, used to justify the pogroms that followed).

Moreover, in most of his speeches, Communist Party General Secretary Jinping has never mentioned the need to combat the widespread corruption in the Chinese government, or specified what will become of the anti-corruption measures proposed by liberal Chinese thinkers.

Several government representatives, such as the Deputy Minister for the Committee for National Development and Reform, the former Governor of Sichuan and the former Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party are currently charged with financial crimes.

1. Does the Commission have any figures on the detection and extent of corruption among public officials in the Far East?

2. What stance will it adopt in relation to the new Chinese 'cultural revolution' and the resulting propaganda?

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

The HR/VP follows closely, in particular through extensive reporting from the EU Delegation in Beijing, the developments in China's current anti-corruption campaign, including the arrest and prosecution of the most senior officials. The HR/VP does not have exact data concerning the extent of corruption among public officials in China. Latest published data by the Supreme People's Procuratorate indicate that China's prosecutors handled 3,657 corruption cases involving dereliction of duty and rights violations during the first quarter of 2013.

Rooting out corruption is a major stated priority for the current Chinese leadership. Since Xi Jinping became Secretary General of the Chinese Communist Party in November 2012, the campaign targeting corruption, abuse of public funds for private material gain and other self-interested use of official positions has been a consistent element in his speeches, most recently at the June Politburo meeting.

The campaign should be seen against the background of the preparation of the third plenum of the CCP in October and the Economic Work meeting in December, where announcement of the start of economic and social reform is expected. While the focus on fight against corruption is a welcome development, in order to be effective the EU considers that it should be accompanied by greater adherence to the rule of law and the principle of transparency.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008863/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Pressioni da parte cinese per attuare una previa selezione dei candidati premier eleggibili sull'isola di Hong Kong

Zhang Xiaoming, direttore dell'ufficio di Hong Kong per le relazioni con la Cina, ha recentemente espresso l'intenzione di avviare una selezione tra tutti i candidati premier alle prossime elezioni che si terranno sull'isola con suffragio universale.

Considerando che, secondo la *Basic Law* (la Costituzione del territorio vigente fino al 2047) la popolazione ha il diritto di eleggere i propri rappresentanti tramite «voto popolare aperto a tutti», ma che il governo cinese ha più volte osteggiato la concreta attuazione della norma, dimostrando di preferirvi il ricorso ai Grandi Elettori;

osservando inoltre come ogni anno, alla marcia del primo luglio, migliaia di persone si oppongano al ritorno sotto la sovranità di Pechino, invocando riforme democratiche considerate necessarie anche dai gruppi politici liberali e dalle confessioni religiose perseguitate;

evidenziando infine la portata universale dell'art. 21 della Dichiarazione universale dei diritti dell'uomo, in particolare dei commi 1 e 3 che prevedono che ogni individuo abbia il diritto di partecipare al governo del proprio paese «sia direttamente, sia attraverso rappresentanti liberamente scelti» e che il governo si fondi sulla libera espressione della volontà popolare «espressa attraverso periodiche e veritiere elezioni, effettuate a suffragio universale ed eguale, e a voto segreto, o secondo una procedura equivalente di libera votazione»;

può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se sia a conoscenza della vicenda e dei suoi ulteriori sviluppi?

2. se e con che programmi intenda promuovere il processo di democratizzazione al di fuori dei suoi confini?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(5 settembre 2013)

1. L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente segue da vicino l'introduzione del suffragio universale in vista delle elezioni del capo dell'esecutivo di Hong Kong (HK) nel 2017. Ai sensi della Costituzione della Regione ad amministrazione speciale (RAS) di Hong Kong, il governo dovrà proporre una modalità di elezione e ottenere sia il sostegno di almeno i 2/3 dell'attuale Consiglio legislativo che l'approvazione di Pechino. Secondo la nostra valutazione i punti chiave per il futuro sistema elettorale sono a) l'analisi dei candidati, b) la composizione del comitato di nomina e c) la soglia per l'ammissione dei candidati. Sarà difficile creare un accordo tra le tre parti — governo centrale, governo di Hong Kong e gruppi pandemocratici all'opposizione, considerando che questi ultimi detengono una minoranza di blocco nel Consiglio legislativo (LegCo).

2. L'UE promuove lo Stato di diritto e la democrazia in tutti gli aspetti delle sue azioni esterne. L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha più volte confermato il sostegno dell'UE a favore di importanti progressi volti al raggiungimento di un autentico suffragio universale. L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente sta studiando nuovi modi per rafforzare i legami interistituzionali con i poteri esecutivo, legislativo e giudiziario di Hong Kong. Gli scambi dell'UE a livello accademico, di società civile e commerciale contribuiscono inoltre a una migliore comprensione dei suoi valori democratici.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008863/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Pressure from China to preselect candidates running for election as prime minister in Hong Kong

Zhang Xiaoming, director of the Hong Kong office for relations with China, recently said that he intended to introduce preselection of all candidates running for prime minister in the next elections there, which will be held with universal suffrage.

According to the Basic Law (the constitution of Hong Kong in force until 2047), the people have the right to elect their representatives by means of a popular vote open to all, but the Chinese Government has repeatedly hindered the proper implementation of the law, preferring the use of electoral colleges.

Every year, at the 1 July march, thousands of people protest against Hong Kong's return to Chinese sovereignty, calling for democratic reforms, which are considered necessary also by liberal political groups and by persecuted religious groups.

Article 21 of the Universal Declaration Human Rights applies universally and in particular paragraphs 1 and 3 thereof lay down that everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, 'directly or through freely chosen representatives' and that the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government 'expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.'

1. Is the Commission aware of the situation and further developments in it?

2. Does it plan to promote the process of democratisation beyond the EU's borders and with what programmes?

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

1. The HR/VP is closely monitoring the introduction of universal suffrage for the election of the Hong Kong (HK) Chief Executive in 2017. Under HK Special Administrative Region (SAR) Basic Law, the HK Government needs to propose a method of election, gain the support of at least 2/3 of the current Legislative Council and obtain endorsement by Beijing. In our assessment, the key issues for the future electoral system are a) screening of candidates b) composition of the nomination committee and c) the threshold for admitting candidates. It will be difficult to forge an agreement between all three parties — Central Government, HK Government and HK pan-democratic opposition groups, with the latter holding a blocking minority in the LegCo.

2. The EU promotes the rule of law and democracy in all aspects of its external actions. The HR/VP has repeatedly expressed the EU's support for substantial progress towards the goal of genuine universal suffrage. The HR/VP is looking into ways of strengthening interinstitutional ties with HK executive, legislature and judiciary. The EU's exchanges at the academic, civil society and business level also contribute to better understanding of its democratic values.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008864/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Versamento dei diritti connessi al diritto d'autore

È notizia recente che un'emittente radiofonica di Verona (Veneto, Italia) è stata destinataria di una sanzione per l'omissione del versamento, reclamato da un consorzio fonografico, del corrispettivo relativo ai diritti connessi al diritto d'autore sui brani musicali. L'emittente radiofonica in questione si lamenta, in questo caso, di aver sempre corrisposto le somme dovute per i diritti d'autore SIAE (Società Italiana degli Autori ed Editori).

La direttiva 2001/29/CE, conosciuta come la legge sul diritto d'autore dell'Unione europea, specifica che «è necessario garantire che le società di gestione collettiva dei diritti raggiungano un livello di razionalizzazione e di trasparenza più elevato» e che «dovrebbe ovviarsi all'incertezza giuridica relativa alla natura e al grado di protezione degli atti di trasmissione su richiesta, su rete, di opere protette dal diritto d'autore e di materiali protetti dai diritti connessi, prevedendo una protezione armonizzata a livello comunitario».

Inoltre la raccomandazione della Commissione 2005/737/CE sulla gestione transfrontaliera collettiva dei diritti d'autore e dei diritti connessi nel campo dei servizi musicali on-line autorizzati indica in particolare che «nell'era dell'utilizzo on-line delle opere musicali, gli utilizzatori commerciali hanno bisogno di una politica di concessione delle licenze che si adatti all'ubiquità del mondo on-line e multiterritoriale».

Infine, l'ordinamento italiano (cfr. la legge n. 633/41, articolo174) non fa riferimento nei suoi atti normativi ai consorzi fonografici, con ciò rendendo difficile la conoscenza delle prerogative di questi ultimi, e l'attuale normativa sul diritto d'autore e i diritti connessi risulta di difficile applicazione rispetto alle nuove forme di business commerciale dei brani musicali, rese possibili dal progresso tecnologico.

Considerato quanto sopra, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza di analoghe multe comminate, in altri Stati membri, a emittenti radiofoniche, provider musicali, ecc. per mancato pagamento dei diritti connessi al diritto d'autore?

2. se intende intervenire sulla questione, al fine di chiarificare gli aspetti caratterizzanti i diritti connessi al diritto d'autore?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(9 settembre 2013)

1. È prassi generalmente diffusa negli Stati membri dell'UE che società di gestione collettiva diverse riscuotano i diritti d'autore per conto di categorie diverse di titolari. Gli autori appartengono ad una categoria di titolari dei diritti diversa da quella dei produttori di fonogrammi, che sono quindi rappresentati da una diversa società di gestione collettiva. In linea di massima, è quindi possibile che i diritti d'autore debbano essere pagati alle società di gestione collettiva che rappresentano le due categorie.

2. Nel luglio 2012 la Commissione ha adottato la proposta di direttiva sulla gestione collettiva dei diritti d'autore e dei diritti connessi e sulla concessione di licenze multiterritoriali per i diritti su opere musicali per l'uso online, volta, tra l'altro, a migliorare la governance e la trasparenza delle società di gestione collettiva in tutta Europa. Una volta adottata dal Parlamento europeo e dal Consiglio, la direttiva imporrà alle società di gestione collettiva di migliorare qualitativamente la gestione finanziaria e di informare meglio i titolari dei diritti, gli utilizzatori e il pubblico delle attività da esse svolte.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008864/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Payment of copyright fees

Recently, a radio station in Verona (Veneto, Italy) was fined for non-payment of music copyright fees claimed by a phonographic collecting society. The radio station in question is complaining, in this case, that it had always paid copyright fees to the SIAE (Italian Society of Authors and Publishers).

Directive 2001/29/EC, otherwise known as the European Union Copyright Law, specifies that 'it is necessary to ensure that collecting societies achieve a higher level of rationalisation and transparency' and that 'the legal uncertainty regarding the nature and the level of protection of acts of on-demand transmission of copyright works and subject-matter protected by related rights over networks should be overcome by providing for harmonised protection at Community level.'

In addition, Commission Recommendation 2005/737/EC on collective cross-border management of copyright and related rights in the field of legitimate online music services indicates in particular that 'in the era of online exploitation of musical works, commercial users need a licensing policy that corresponds to the ubiquity of the online environment and which is multi-territorial'.

Finally, the Italian legal system (see Article 174 of Italian Law No 633/41) does not refer in its legislative acts to phonographic collecting societies, thereby making it difficult to know what the latter's prerogatives are, while current legislation on copyright and related rights is difficult to apply to the new forms of music business, made possible by technological advances.

In light of the above, can the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of similar fines imposed in other Member States, on radio stations, music providers, etc. for non-payment of copyright fees;

2. whether it intends to intervene in the matter, in order to clarify the copyright-related issues?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(9 September 2013)

1. It is general practice in the EU Member States that different collecting societies collect royalties on behalf of different categories of rightholders. Authors and phonogram producers belong to different categories of rightholders, hence they are represented by separate collecting societies. In principle, therefore, a royalty payment may be payable to collecting societies representing both categories of rightholders.

2. In July 2012 the Commission adopted a proposal for a directive on collective rights management and multi-territorial licensing of rights in musical works for online uses. One of its objectives is to improve the governance and transparency of collective societies all over Europe. Once adopted by the European Parliament and the Council, the directive will require that collecting societies improve the quality of their financial management and that they provide rightholders, users and the public with better information on their activities.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008865/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Fuga dei cristiani dalle persecuzioni islamiche — Il caso del Sinai

Le stime ufficiali parlano di almeno un centinaio di famiglie costrette a fuggire dalla penisola sinaitica dopo la caduta del governo dell'ex presidente Morsi. Il Sinai, infatti, è sempre stato abitato in prevalenza da gruppi islamici, molti dei quali legati ad Hamas e ai guerriglieri della striscia di Gaza.

Dopo la caduta del governo Morsi, si sono registrate decine di rappresaglie contro le autorità, colpevoli di sostenere il regime, e repressioni contro i cristiani, accusati a loro volta di aver fomentato la repressione contro il governo islamico.

Inoltre, lo scorso 5 luglio, un movimento jihadista conosciuto come Ansar al-Sharia ha diffuso la notizia che si starebbe preparando a rispondere con la violenza «a chi persevera nel fare guerra all'Islam in Egitto» e, tra i vari nemici alla fede musulmana, elenca anche laici e cristiani.

Infine, dato che l'UE si impegna a prevenire le repressioni contro le diverse fedi religiose e che, al riguardo, la risoluzione del 20 gennaio 2011 sulla situazione dei cristiani nel contesto della libertà religiosa (P7_TA(2011)0021) chiama l'Europa a ribadire «il proprio sostegno a tutte le iniziative volte a promuovere il dialogo e il rispetto reciproco tra comunità religiose e di altro tipo», può l'Alto Rappresentante indicare se l'Unione europea intende avviare progetti di cooperazione con i paesi colpiti dall'emergenza dell'estremismo religioso, soprattutto l'Egitto, al fine di promuovere il ristabilimento della pace?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(18 settembre 2013)

L'Unione europea è conscia e preoccupata della situazione esistente nel Sinai. L'UE condanna tutte le forme di intolleranza, discriminazione e violenza nei confronti delle persone a motivo della loro religione o del loro credo, ovunque esse avvengano e a prescindere dalla religione interessata, come riaffermato con forza nelle conclusioni del Consiglio Affari esteri del 21 agosto 2013.

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha ripetutamente fatto appello alle autorità egiziane affinché garantiscano libertà di religione o di credo nel loro paese.

La delegazione dell'UE sta seguendo da vicino vari casi di violenza settaria e, nei suoi contatti con le autorità egiziane, sottolinea l'importanza di evitare discriminazioni per motivi religiosi. Per sostenere il miglioramento della libertà religiosa in Egitto, l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è pronta a dialogare con tutti i soggetti interessati del paese, nonché con le organizzazioni regionali e internazionali che condividono i valori e gli obiettivi dell'Unione in questo ambito.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008865/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Christians fleeing Islamic persecution — the case of Sinai

According to official estimates, at least 100 families have been forced to flee Sinai after the fall of the government of former President Morsi. Sinai has always been inhabited primarily by Islamic groups, many of which have links to Hamas and guerrillas in the Gaza Strip.

Since the fall of the Morsi government, there have been dozens of retaliatory attacks against the authorities, guilty of supporting the regime, and instances of oppression of Christians, accused of having incited violence against the Islamic government.

Moreover, on 5 July 2013, a Jihadist movement, Ansar al-Sharia, announced that it was preparing to use violence against those who continued to wage war against Islam in Egypt, listing secular people and Christians among the various enemies of the Muslim faith.

Lastly, given that the EU is committed to preventing oppression of the various religious faiths and that, in that regard, the resolution of 20 January 2011 on the situation of Christians in the context of freedom of religion (P7_TA(2011)0021) calls on Europe to reiterate 'its support for all initiatives aimed at promoting dialogue and mutual respect between religious and other communities', can the High Representative say whether the EU will launch cooperation projects with countries affected by the emergence of religious extremism, particularly Egypt, in order to promote a return to peace?

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

The EU is well aware and concerned about the situation on Sinai. The EU condemns all forms of intolerance, discrimination and violence against persons because of their religion or belief, wherever it takes place and regardless of the religion, as strongly reaffirmed by the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 21st August 2013.

Repeatedly, the HR/VP called on the Egyptian authorities to ensure freedom of religion or belief in the country.

The EU delegation is closely following cases of sectarian violence and emphasises the importance of avoiding discrimination on religious grounds in its contacts with Egyptian authorities. In order to support the improvement of freedom of religion or belief in Egypt, the HR/VP is keen to engage with all the relevant stakeholders in the country as well as with the regional and international organisations sharing EU's values and objectives in this respect.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008866/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Professore universitario cinese arrestato per aver chiesto la pubblicazione dei dati sulla ricchezza nel Partito comunista cinese

Il professore universitario cinese Xu Zhiyong, fondatore del movimento *Gongmeng* che promuove il rispetto per la legge e per i diritti fondamentali nel paese, è stato arrestato a Pechino «per aver tentato di radunare le folle e disturbare l'ordine pubblico».

Secondo l'organizzazione *Human Rights in China*, Xu avrebbe subìto da tempo ripetute intimidazioni per aver chiesto di rendere noto l'ammontare dei singoli patrimoni personali dei membri del Partito comunista. In almeno un'altra occasione, era stato costretto agli arresti domiciliari, venendo prelevato all'aeroporto mentre si accingeva a partire per Hong Kong.

La richiesta di una maggiore trasparenza da parte della classe politica è stata avanzata alcuni anni fa da Hu Jintao, per poi essere discussa dall'Assemblea nazionale del popolo lo scorso mese di marzo, ma da allora il dibattito si è fermato e gli arresti di liberi pensatori si sono moltiplicati.

La pubblicazione delle ricchezze dei singoli esponenti del Partito comunista è utile anche per prevenire la corruzione, obiettivo che l'UE si è prefissa anche nel documento COM(2011)0308, laddove afferma che: «L'Unione europea deve inoltre continuare, come parte di un approccio globale, a combattere la corruzione servendosi di tutte le sue politiche rilevanti — sia interne che esterne».

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza delle attuali condizioni di salute di Xu Zhiyong;

2. se intende intercedere per il rilascio dell'attivista presso i rappresentanti istituzionali cinesi e ritiene possibile avviare un dialogo con il paese in tema di lotta alla corruzione?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(24 settembre 2013)

Il 28 agosto 2013 l'AR/VP ha rilasciato una dichiarazione a nome dell'Unione europea per esprimere la sua profonda preoccupazione relativamente all'arresto del dott. Xu Zhiyong nonché alla detenzione di numerosi altri attivisti della società civile cinese che negli ultimi mesi hanno pubblicamente militato a favore dello stato di diritto, della trasparenza e della giustizia sociale e contro la corruzione. Nella dichiarazione si chiede inoltre alle autorità cinesi di rispettare il diritto alla libertà di espressione sancito dalla Dichiarazione universale dei diritti dell'uomo e dal Patto internazionale relativo ai diritti civili e politici, come pure dalla Costituzione della Repubblica Popolare cinese, e di liberare Xu Zhiyong e tutti gli altri attivisti che si trovano in stato di detenzione o agli arresti domiciliari per aver espresso pacificamente la loro opinione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008866/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Chinese university professor detained for calling for the disclosure of data on wealth in the Chinese Communist Party

Chinese university professor Xu Zhiyong, founder of the Open Constitution Initiative which aims to promote respect for the law and for fundamental rights in China, has been detained in Beijing on suspicion of attempting to 'gather crowds to disrupt public order'.

According to the organisation Human Rights in China, Xu has been suffering for some time from repeated threats for calling for the individual personal assets of Communist Party members to be disclosed. On at least one other occasion, he was placed under house arrest, after being detained at the airport as he was about to leave for Hong Kong.

The call for greater transparency among the political class was made some years ago by Hu Jintao, and was later debated by the National People's Congress in March 2013, but since then the debate has petered out and arrests of free thinkers have multiplied.

Publication of the wealth of individual Communist Party members is also a useful way of preventing corruption, a goal which the EU also set itself in COM(2011)0308, where it states that: 'The EU should also continue, as part of a comprehensive approach, to address corruption through all relevant EU policies — internal as well as external.'

Can the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of Xu Zhiyong's current state of health;

2. whether it will intercede with Chinese institutional representatives for the release of the activist, and whether it considers it possible to initiate a dialogue with China regarding the fight against corruption?

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

On 28 August 2013, the HR/VP released a statement on behalf of the European Union to express its deep concern over the arrest of Dr Xu Zhiyong, as well as the detention of several other Chinese civil society activists who have in recent months publicly advocated the rule of law, transparency and social justice and campaigned against corruption. The statement also calls on the Chinese authorities to respect the right to freedom of expression as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, as well as in the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, and to release Xu, as well as all other activists who have been detained or put under house arrest for peacefully expressing their views.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008867/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Conseguenze del tifone Soulik sull'isola di Taiwan

L'isola di Taiwan è stata recentemente colpita dal tifone Soulik, in previsione del quale il governo locale aveva già provveduto ad evacuare circa 13mila persone. Grazie alle misure di prevenzione attuate, si sono registrati solo quattro decessi, ma la gravità della situazione permane con riguardo alla devastazione dei raccolti agricoli, dei macchinari produttivi e degli edifici pubblici colpiti.

Secondo le stime attualmente disponibili, i danni ammonterebbero ad almeno 15 miliardi di dollari taiwanesi, ossia 40 milioni di dollari statunitensi, con grave pregiudizio delle produzioni agricole (100 milioni di danno economico complessivo) e degli allevamenti e del settore ittico (10 milioni).

Si osservi inoltre il regolamento (CE) n. 2012/2002 del Consiglio che istituisce il Fondo di solidarietà dell'Unione europea, in particolare laddove si afferma che: «In occasione di gravi catastrofi, la Comunità dovrebbe dimostrare la propria solidarietà alla popolazione delle regioni colpite apportando un sostegno finanziario per contribuire a ripristinare rapidamente condizioni di vita normale in tutte le regioni sinistrate. Il sostegno dovrebbe principalmente essere mobilizzato in caso di catastrofi naturali» e che «dovrebbe essere considerata grave catastrofe, ai sensi del presente regolamento, qualsiasi catastrofe che, in almeno uno degli Stati interessati, provochi danni considerevoli in termini finanziari o di percentuale del reddito nazionale lordo (RNL)».

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione dire se l'UE intende avviare programmi di cooperazione alla ricostruzione nelle zone di Taiwan maggiormente colpite dall'uragano, in proporzione alle risorse disponibili?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(6 settembre 2013)

Il Fondo di solidarietà dell'Unione europea si applica esclusivamente agli Stati membri e ai paesi in via di adesione all'Unione europea. Esso pertanto non può intervenire nel caso descritto dall'onorevole deputato.

Nel 2009 in seguito alla catastrofe causata dal tifone Morakot, su richiesta di Taiwan e nel quadro del meccanismo di protezione civile dell'Unione europea, sono stati inviati esperti della protezione civile per valutare il fabbisogno taiwanese in materia di protezione civile, coordinare l'assistenza unionale in arrivo e, di concerto con l'Ufficio europeo di rappresentanza economica e commerciale a Taipei, assicurare il collegamento con le controparti taiwanesi.

Finora non è pervenuta nessuna richiesta di assistenza unionale in seguito al tifone Soulik.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008867/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Consequences of Typhoon Soulik for Taiwan

Taiwan was recently struck by Typhoon Soulik; in anticipation of the typhoon, the local government had already evacuated around 13 000 people. Thanks to the preventive measures put in place, only four people were killed, but the situation remains serious with agricultural crops, production facilities and public buildings devastated.

According to current estimates, at least TWD 15 billion (USD 40 million) of damage has been caused, with severe damage to agricultural production (a total of TWD 100 million in damage), farms and the fisheries sector (TWD 10 million).

Council Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002 establishing the European Union Solidarity Fund lays down that: 'In the event of major disasters, the Community should show its solidarity with the population of the regions concerned by providing financial assistance to contribute to a rapid return to normal living conditions in the disaster-stricken regions. The assistance should mainly be mobilised in case of natural disasters', and that 'a "major disaster" within the meaning of this regulation should mean any disaster, in at least one of the States concerned, resulting in important damage express in financial terms or as a percentage of the gross national income (GNI).'

Does the EU plan to launch cooperation programmes to rebuild areas of Taiwan seriously affected by the typhoon, in line with available resources?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(6 September 2013)

The European Union Solidarity Fund applies exclusively to Member States and countries in the process of negotiating their accession to the European Union. It may therefore not intervene in the case described by the Honourable Member.

In 2009, in the wake of the devastating Typhoon Morakot, at Taiwan's request and in the framework of the European Commission's Community Mechanism for Civil Protection, EU relief experts were sent to assess Taiwan's requirements in the field of civil protection, coordinate incoming EU assistance and, together with the European Economic and Trade Office in Taipei, to liaise with Taiwanese counterparts.

No request for EU assistance has so far been received in the aftermath of Typhoon Soulik.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008868/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Epidemia di MERS in Medio Oriente

Quest'anno il governo saudita ha deciso di rilasciare, anche in vista dei pellegrinaggi musulmani dell'Hajj e dell'Umra, un numero di visti inferiore rispetto agli anni scorsi. Si tratterebbe di una misura necessaria, dovuta alla rapida diffusione del virus MERS (*Middle East Respiratory Syndrome*) in tutto il Medio Oriente.

Considerando che il virus, vicino al ceppo della SARS, ha finora provocato la morte di almeno 45 persone, di cui 38 nel solo Regno islamico dell'Arabia Saudita;

osservando inoltre come l'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità abbia raccomandato ai turisti e ai pellegrini musulmani di fare attenzione ad evitare le zone ad alto rischio di contagio, senza tuttavia chiedere alle autorità locali di limitarne gli spostamenti (ogni provvedimento, in tal senso, è frutto di iniziativa autonoma);

considerando infine la strategia comune approvata dal Parlamento europeo lo scorso 3 luglio e concernente il sistema di allarme per la lotta alle epidemie, anche in considerazione del fatto che la pandemia da influenza A, nel 2009, mise a rischio la salute di 7 milioni di malati cronici in Italia, con costi elevati per l'acquisto di vaccini da parte dei servizi sanitari in tutti gli Stati membri;

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. di quali informazioni disponga in merito alla diffusione dell'epidemia di MERS in Medio Oriente?

2. come intenda tutelare i turisti che, durante il periodo estivo, si recano in paesi a rischio?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(11 settembre 2013)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputato alla propria risposta alle interrogazioni scritte E-7735/13, E-6654/13, E-5826/13, E-5637/13, E-5614/13, E-5434/13, E-5413/13 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008868/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: MERS epidemic in the Middle East

This year, the Government of Saudi Arabia, also in view of the Muslim pilgrimages of Hajj and Umrah, has decided to issue fewer visas than in previous years. This is a necessary measure because of the rapid spread of the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) virus throughout the Middle East.

The virus, which is close to the SARS strain, has killed at least 45 people to date, including 38 in the Islamic Kingdom of Saudi Arabia alone.

The World Health Organisation has advised tourists and Muslim pilgrims to be cautious and to avoid areas where there is a high risk of contagion, though it has stopped short of requiring local authorities to restrict people's movements (any such measure is up to the local authorities).

Lastly, on 3 July 2013 Parliament adopted a joint strategy on the alert system for combating epidemics. The influenza A pandemic of 2009 put the health of 7 million chronically ill people in Italy at risk and buying vaccines was very costly for health services in all Member States.

1. What information does the Commission have on the spread of the MERS epidemic in the Middle East?

2. How will it protect tourists who travel to at-risk countries over the summer?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 September 2013)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written questions E-7735/13, E-6654/13, E-5826/13, E-5637/13, E-5614/13, E-5434/13, E-5413/13 ([1]).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008869/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Morte di venti bambini in seguito ad avvelenamento da «pasto gratuito» in una scuola del Bihar

È notizia recente la morte di almeno 20 bambini in una scuola primaria dello stato del Bihar, nella penisola indiana. Altri 27, secondo le fonti d'informazione on-line, sarebbero ricoverati in gravi condizioni negli ospedali di Patna, la capitale, e Chhapra.

L'istituto dove si sono verificati i fatti beneficia del programma nazionale Midday Meal, che prevede la distribuzione gratuita di cibo nelle scuole pubbliche, in modo da incoraggiare le famiglie a garantire ai figli un'istruzione di base.

Il Midday Meal rappresenta il più vasto programma alimentare al mondo e ogni anno consente la distribuzione di cibo a oltre 120 milioni di allievi, per un totale di circa 1,2 milioni di scuole che beneficiano del servizio in tutto il paese.

Inoltre, i funzionari amministrativi locali hanno riconosciuto la presenza di insetticidi nelle verdure e nel riso distribuiti presso le mense scolastiche e sarebbero proprio questi ad aver causato l'ultimo avvelenamento letale.

Infine, l'art. 24 della Convenzione UNICEF sui diritti dell'infanzia, in tema di diritto alla salute, specifica che: «Gli Stati parti si impegnano a favorire e a incoraggiare la cooperazione internazionale in vista di ottenere gradualmente una completa attuazione del diritto riconosciuto nel presente articolo. A tal fine saranno tenute in particolare considerazione le necessità dei paesi in via di sviluppo.»

Alla luce di quanto sopra può la Commissione far sapere se l'UE intenda avviare progetti di cooperazione internazionale per il controllo della sicurezza igienico-sanitaria degli alimenti, in particolare nei luoghi ad alto rischio quali le mense scolastiche?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(10 settembre 2013)

L'UE ha appreso con dolore la tragica notizia della morte di oltre 20 bambini nel Bihar, deceduti dopo aver mangiato cibo avvelenato durante il pasto di mezzogiorno.

L'UE sta attuando numerosi programmi a favore dei bambini in India tramite il sostegno bilaterale al bilancio settoriale per l'istruzione e l'assistenza sanitaria di base, nonché tramite le linee di bilancio tematiche rivolte ai progetti gestiti da ONG. Nel quadro del programma educativo indiano «Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan», il sostegno dell'UE, incentrato principalmente sull'accesso all'istruzione primaria in distretti con scarsi tassi di alfabetizzazione femminile, ha dato particolare rilievo allo sviluppo dei programmi di studio, alla formazione degli insegnanti e al contrasto dell'abbandono scolastico. Tuttavia, la misurazione della qualità alimentare nell'ambito del programma Midday Meal non rientra nell'attuale portafoglio di aiuti dell'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008869/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Twenty children dead after being poisoned by a 'free meal' at a school in Bihar

According to recent news reports, at least 20 children have died at a primary school in the Indian state of Bihar. According to online sources, another 27 seriously ill children have been admitted to hospital in the capital, Patna, and Chhapra.

The school where the poisoning took place is enrolled in the national Midday Meal programme, which provides free food in public schools in order to encourage families to ensure their children receive a basic education.

The Midday Meal programme is the largest food programme in the world and involves the distribution of food to over 120 million pupils every year, with a total of around 1.2 million schools benefiting from the service across India.

Moreover, local officials have found traces of insecticide in the vegetables and rice distributed to school canteens and it seems that these are to blame for the latest lethal poisoning.

Finally, Article 24 of the Unicef Convention on the Rights of the Child, on the right to health, lays down that: 'State Parties undertake to promote and encourage international cooperation with a view to achieving progressively the full realisation of the right recognised in the present article. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.'

Does the EU intend to launch international cooperation projects to monitor hygiene and food safety, particularly in high-risk places such as school canteens?

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

The EU learnt with sadness the news that more than 20 children died in a tragedy linked to a poisoned midday meal in Bihar.

The EU is implementing numerous programmes in favour of children in India through bilateral budget sector support in basic health and education, as well as through its thematic budget lines targeting non-governmental organisation (NGO)-driven projects. Under the umbrella of India's national 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan' education programme, EU support has mainly focused on providing elementary education in targeted districts with low female literacy rates, with particular emphasis on curriculum development, teacher training and pupil retention. However, food quality testing in the framework of the midday meal scheme is not part of the EU's ongoing aid portfolio.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008870/13
aan de Commissie
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(18 juli 2013)

Betreft: Commissie staat Frans protectionisme van auto-industrie toe

In een mediabericht van vandaag valt te lezen dat de Europese Commissie toestaat dat Frankrijk zijn auto-industrie verregaand beschermt: de Commissie staat toe dat Frankrijk de verkoop en registratie van nieuwe Mercedes-Benz-auto's blokkeert. De protectionistische houding die Frankrijk kennelijk altijd vrij kan aannemen, is inmiddels een bekend fenomeen; Frankrijk heeft bijvoorbeeld meerdere malen haar auto-industrie met staatssteun beschermd.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht dat de Europese Commissie een Franse ban op Mercedes-Benz-auto's toestaat ([1])?

2. Klopt het bericht dat de Commissie toestaat dat Frankrijk haar markt dichtgooit voor de Duitse Mercedes-Benz-auto's vanwege een vergezocht argument van niet door de EU goedgekeurde koelvloeistof?

Volgens de Duitse autofabrikant is de koelvloeistof die Brussel in de auto wil stoppen, niet veilig genoeg.

3. Vindt de Commissie de veiligheid van auto's ondergeschikt aan een niet bestaand klimaatprobleem?

4. Is de Commissie met de PVV eens dat de Duitse auto-industrie groot gelijk heeft als zij veiligheid voor alles laat gaan?

Volgens het artikel heeft Brussel gedreigd met een rechtszaak tegen Duitsland wegens het schenden van Europese regels, oftewel het gebruiken van een andere koelvloeistof omdat de door de EU goedgekeurde koelvloeistof de veiligheidstests niet heeft doorstaan.

5. Is de Commissie nu eindelijk doordrongen van de waanzin van de Brusselse wetgeving en regelzucht?

6. Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat het EU-project mislukt is en de zeggenschap terug moet naar de lidstaten? Zo nee, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Tajani namens de Commissie
(10 september 2013)

Op 26 juli stelde Frankrijk de Commissie ervan in kennis dat het gebruik zou maken van de bij artikel 29 van Kaderrichtlijn 2007/46/EG ([2]) ingestelde vrijwaringsclausule in verband met bepaalde door Daimler vervaardigde voertuigen, die op basis van de uitbreiding van twee specifieke door de KBA ([3]) verleende typegoedkeuringen in de handel zijn gebracht. Frankrijk is van oordeel dat die voertuigen het milieu ernstig kunnen schaden doordat Daimler Richtlijn 2006/40/EG inzake klimaatregelingsapparatuur in voertuigen ([4]) niet correct toepast. De Commissie volgt nu de in de EU-wetgeving vastgelegde procedures en raadpleegt momenteel de betrokken partijen overeenkomstig de procedure van het genoemde artikel 29 van Kaderrichtlijn 2007/46/EG.

De MAC-richtlijn is neutraal wat de gebruikte technologieën betreft en schrijft niet voor dat een specifiek koelmiddel moet worden gebruikt om aan de verplichtingen ervan te voldoen. De keuze voor een koelmiddel is de uitsluitende verantwoordelijkheid van de voertuigfabrikanten, die hebben besloten om het nieuwe koelmiddel R1234yf te gebruiken.

([1]) http://www.nu.nl/economie/3527904/brussel-staat-franse-ban-mercedes-benz-toe.html
([2]) Richtlijn 2007/46/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 5 september 2007 tot vaststelling van een kader voor de goedkeuring van motorvoertuigen en aanhangwagens daarvan en van systemen, onderdelen en technische eenheden die voor dergelijke voertuigen zijn bestemd (Kaderrichtlijn), PB L 263 van 9.10.2007, blz. 1.
([3]) De Duitse typegoedkeuringsinstantie.
([4]) MAC-richtlijn — Richtlijn 2006/40/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 17 mei 2006 betreffende emissies van klimaatregelingsapparatuur in motorvoertuigen en houdende wijziging van Richtlijn 70/156/EEG van de Raad (PB L 161 van 14.6.2006, blz. 12). Daarin worden koelmiddelen die grote gevolgen voor de klimaatverandering hebben, verboden.

Na een grondige veiligheidsbeoordeling werd het gebruik van R1234yf in klimaatregelingsapparatuur door de Society of Automotive Engineers International ([5]) veilig bevonden. Onlangs maakte de KBA de voorlopige resultaten bekend van een risicobeoordeling die zij naar aanleiding van door Daimler geuite bezorgdheid uitvoert met betrekking tot het gebruik van R1234yf in klimaatregelingsapparatuur in voertuigen. Volgens de KBA bieden deze tests onvoldoende bewijs voor het bestaan van een ernstig gevaar in de zin van de Duitse wet inzake productveiligheid ([6]) voor wat het gebruik van R1234yf in de geteste voertuigtypes betreft. Er zal verder onderzoek plaatsvinden en in het najaar zal een eindverslag worden gepubliceerd. Veiligheid is een topprioriteit en daarom heeft de Commissie technische en wetenschappelijke ondersteuning geboden bij de herziening van de testprocedures en -resultaten.

([5]) http://www.sae.org/servlets/pressRoom?OBJECT_TYPE=PressReleases & PAGE=showRelease & RELEASE_ID=2146.
([6]) Gesetz über die Neuordnung des Geräte- und Produktsicherheitsrechts vom 8.11.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008870/13
to the Commission
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: The Commission's toleration of France's protection of the car industry

According to a report in the media today, the Commission is allowing France to protect its car industry to a considerable extent: it is permitting France to block the sale and registration of new Mercedes-Benz cars. The protectionist attitude which France is evidently always free to adopt is a well-known phenomenon by now: for example, France has on several occasions protected its car industry by means of state aid.

1. Is the Commission aware of the report that the Commission is permitting France to ban Mercedes-Benz cars ([1])?

2. Is it true that the Commission is permitting France to close its market to Mercedes-Benz cars from Germany on the far-fetched pretext that a coolant is being used which has not been approved by the EU?

According to the German vehicle manufacturer, the coolant which Brussels wishes to see used in the car is not safe enough.

3. Does the Commission consider that the safety of cars is less important than a non-existent climate problem?

4. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that the German car industry is absolutely right to regard safety as paramount?

According to the article, Brussels has threatened to bring legal action against Germany for breaching European rules by using a different coolant because the coolant approved by the EU has not passed the safety tests.

5. Has the Commission finally come to appreciate that Brussels' legislation and its mania for regulation are sheer madness?

6. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that the EU project has failed and that powers of decision should be returned to the Member States? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2013)

The Commission received on 26 July a notification by France which decided to make use of the safeguard clause established by Article 29 of the framework Directive 2007/46/EC ([2]) in relation to certain vehicles manufactured by Daimler, which have been put on the market on the basis of the extension of two specific type-approvals granted by the KBA ([3]). France considers that those vehicles may generate a serious harm to the environment due to incorrect application by Daimler of Directive 2006/40/EC on mobile air-conditioning ([4]). The Commission is now following the procedures established in the EU legal framework and is currently consulting the parties concerned in accordance with the procedure of the said Article 29 of the framework Directive 2007/46/EC.

The MAC Directive is technology neutral and does not prescribe any specific refrigerant to be used to fulfil its obligations. The choice of the refrigerant is the sole responsibility of vehicle manufacturers, who decided to use of the new refrigerant R1234yf.

([1]) http://www.nu.nl/economie/3527904/brussel-staat-franse-ban-mercedes-benz-toe.html
([2]) Directive 2007/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 September 2007 establishing a framework for the approval of motor vehicles and their trailers, and of systems, components and separate technical units intended for such vehicles (Framework Directive), OJ L 263, 09.10.2007, p. 1.
([3]) The German type-approval authority.
([4]) MAC Directive -Directive 2006/40/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2006 relating to emissions from air conditioning systems in motor vehicles and amending Council Directive 70/156/EEC, OJ L 161, 14.06.2006, p 12. It bans refrigerants that have a high impact on climate change.

After a thorough safety assessment, the use of R1234yf in MACs was confirmed safe by the Society of Automotive Engineers International ([5]). Recently, the KBA published preliminary results of a risk assessment it is conducting regarding the use of R1234yf in MAC systems, following concerns raised by Daimler. According to the KBA, these tests did not provide sufficient evidence of a serious danger in the meaning of the German Product Safety Law ([6]) regarding the use of R1234yf in the tested vehicle types. Further examinations will be carried out and a final report will be published in the autumn. Safety is a top priority, which is why the Commission has offered technical and scientific support in reviewing the testing procedures and results.

([5]) http://www.sae.org/servlets/pressRoom?OJCT_TYPE=PressReleases&PAGE=showRelease& RELEASE_ID=2146

([6]) Gesetz über die Neuordnung des Geräte- und Produktsicherheitsrechts vom 8.11.2011.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008871/13
alla Commissione
Paolo De Castro (S&D)
(18 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Restrizioni all'export dei pomodori europei negli USA

Premesso che:

— a seguito della diffusione del parassita denominato Tuta absoluta in molti paesi produttori di pomodoro, gli Stati Uniti, con il Federal Order del 5 maggio 2011, reiterato il 14 agosto 2012, hanno imposto forti restrizioni all'ingresso nel territorio statunitense dei pomodori provenienti da alcuni paesi, tra i quali numerosi Stati membri dell'Unione;

— la diffusione del parassita Tuta absoluta è in via di riduzione in molti Stati membri dell'UE;

— il negoziato in corso per il partenariato transatlantico su commercio e investimenti (TTIP) tra l'Unione europea e gli Stati Uniti ha l'obiettivo di eliminare gli ostacoli commerciali in una vasta gamma di settori economici, compreso il comparto agricolo.

Si chiede alla Commissione quali misure intenda adottare per rispondere a tale restrizione all'ingresso di pomodori europei nel mercato degli Stati Uniti, anche in vista dell'intensificarsi dei rapporti commerciali UE-USA nella prospettiva del negoziato TTIP.

Risposta di Karel De Gucht a nome della Commissione
(24 settembre 2013)

La Commissione è perfettamente consapevole dei provvedimenti presi dagli Stati Uniti (USA) in forza dei quali alle importazioni di pomodori originari dell'UE si applicano disposizioni particolari. La questione è oggetto di discussione con le competenti autorità statunitensi dal 2010. La Commissione ha formulato osservazioni sui pertinenti *Federal Order*, alle quali ha fatto seguito in occasione di diversi incontri tecnici. La Commissione è consapevole degli effetti dei provvedimenti in argomento sul commercio; la questione è stata pertanto inserita nell'elenco degli ostacoli di natura sanitaria e fitosanitaria (SPS) agli scambi nell'ambito dei negoziati in corso per la TTIP. La Commissione intende inoltre continuare ad affrontare tale problematica con gli Stati Uniti in seno al gruppo di lavoro bilaterale in materia di salute dei vegetali ed in ogni altra sede appropriata.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008871/13
to the Commission
Paolo De Castro (S&D)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Restrictions on European tomato exports to the United States

In response to the spread of the pest *Tuta absoluta* in many tomato-producing countries, the United States adopted the Federal Order of 5 May 2011, as superseded on 14 August 2012, to impose tight restrictions on the import into the United States of tomatoes from several countries, including many EU Member States.

The spread of *Tuta absoluta* is currently being curbed in many EU Member States.

The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations under way between the European Union and the United States are intended to remove trade barriers in a wide range of economic sectors, including the agricultural sector.

What steps will the Commission take in response to this restriction on the access of European tomatoes to the US market, also in view of the strengthening of EU-US trade relations in the TTIP negotiations?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(24 September 2013)

The Commission is well aware of the United States (US) measures imposing requirements on imports of EU tomatoes and has been discussing the issue with the relevant US authorities since 2010. The Commission has provided comments to the Federal Orders and followed these up in several technical meetings. The Commission is aware of the trade impact of the measures and consequently the issue has been included in the list of Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) trade barriers in the context of the TTIP negotiations. The Commission also intends to continue raising the issue with the US at the bilateral Plant Health Technical Working Group and at any another appropriate fora.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008872/13
to the Commission
Phil Bennion (ALDE)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Landmines in Myanmar/Burma

A recent publication I read highlighted the continuing issue of landmines in Myanmar/Burma, which cause many casualties every year. I am aware that gradual progress is being made as the country opens up, particularly with the opening of the EU-financed Myanmar Peace Centre earlier this year. However, it appears that the country's ethnic groups, whilst being willing in theory to allow surveying and de-mining in the most heavily contaminated regions, are reluctant to trust the government and commit to work of this kind.

As no humanitarian agency will act until the formal agreement of any local insurgents has been obtained, and the production of landmines by the government continues, what, if any, action does the Commission intend to take in order to facilitate the de-mining process?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the situation and shares the Honourable Member's concerns. In May, the Commission signed a EUR 3.5 million mine action project which is the first large-scale civilian mining project in Myanmar/Burma which also includes de-mining activities. The Commission has for a number of years supported the International Committee of the Red Cross' (ICRC) orthopaedic workshop and physical rehabilitation programme which will benefit 4.800 victims in 2013. In addition, EUR 900,000 has been provided this year to Fondation Suisse de Deminage (FSD) for their landmine awareness activities in conflict affected ethnic states.

Being aware of the increased risk of land-grabbing in demined areas because current ceasefires do not address land management issues, the EU continues to promote de-mining, not as an isolated exercise but a as an accompanying measure to the peace process, both with the Non State Armed Groups (NSAG) and the Army.

Finally, while the EU is negotiating potential de-mining areas with both the Army and NSAG the Commission is, at the same time, assisting with the creation of the Myanmar Mine Action Centre (MMAC) and intends to start de-mining training for both MMAC and NSAG soon.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-008873/13
an die Kommission
Monika Hohlmeier (PPE)
(18. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Mangelnde Transparenz und Schwerpunkt auf Qualifikationen beim Ernennungsverfahren für den bulgarischen Sicherheitsdienst

Die umstrittene Ernennung von Deljan Peewski zum neuen Direktor der staatlichen Agentur für nationale Sicherheit (SANS) und die anschließende Rücknahme der Ernennung aufgrund schwerer sozialer Unruhen, haben Anlass zu ernsthafter Besorgnis über die Führung der SANS gegeben, welche auch im Bereich der europäischen Sicherheit eine Rolle spielt. Des Weiteren gibt die Tatsache, dass die Umstrukturierung der SANS ohne parlamentarische Debatte oder angemessene Aufsicht erfolgte, Anlass zur Sorge über die Funktionsfähigkeit des Bulgarischen Sicherheitsdienstes insgesamt. Deljan Peewski, der als Medienmogul Bekanntheit erlangte, ist in zahlreiche umstrittene Geschäfte verwickelt gewesen, darunter große Korruptionsskandale, wegen denen der strafrechtlich verfolgt wurde. Im Jahr 2007 wurde er wegen Erpressung angeklagt und aufgrund „mangelnder Moral" seines Amtes enthoben. Er wurde von dem damaligen Ministerpräsidenten Sergei Stanischew entlassen und des Amtsmissbrauchs beschuldigt.

Die Kommission bestätigte in ihrer Erklärung vom 17. Juni 2013, dass die Vergabe von Führungspositionen in EU-relevanten Agenturen in transparenter Weise erfolgen und auf Qualifikationen gestützt sein sollte, um die Einhaltung der EU-Normen im Sicherheitssektor zu gewährleisten.

— Hat die Kommission in dieser Angelegenheit von den bulgarischen Behörden Informationen angefordert? Wenn nein, warum nicht?

— Welche praktischen Maßnahmen gedenkt die Kommission zu ergreifen, um künftige Gefahren für die Sicherheit der EU und ihrer Bürger, die sich aus der Vergabe von Schlüsselpositionen an unqualifizierte bzw. vorbestrafte Personen ergeben, zu vermeiden.

— Wie wird die Kommission die Integrität des Sicherheitssystems der EU gewährleisten? Wie wird sie für gegenseitiges Vertrauen und eine wirksame Zusammenarbeit zwischen den nationalen Sicherheitsagenturen und den Sicherheitsagenturen auf EU-Ebene sorgen?

— Wie gedenkt die Kommission, für die Rückkehr zur Rechtsstaatlichkeit und der Achtung der Grundrechte — beispielsweise Medienpluralismus — zu sorgen?

— Hat die Kommission vor, ein Vertragsverletzungsverfahren gegen Bulgarien einzuleiten?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(4. September 2013)

Im Rahmen des Kooperations- und Kontrollverfahrens (CVM) überwacht die Kommission die Fortschritte Bulgariens in den Bereichen Justizreform und Bekämpfung von organisierter Kriminalität und Korruption. Sie hat stets betont, dass Ernennungsverfahren, die eine Führung auf der Grundlage von Verdiensten gewährleisten, für die Effizienz der Institutionen und das Vertrauen der Bürger von zentraler Bedeutung sind.

Der letzte Bericht der Kommission im Rahmen des Kooperations- und Kontrollverfahrens an das Europäische Parlament und den Rat wurde im Juli 2012 angenommen.

Die Kommission äußert ihre Bedenken, wann immer dies zweckmäßig erscheint, wie im Fall des Verfassungsgerichts im vergangenen Herbst oder der SANS im Juni. In beiden Fällen haben die bulgarischen Behörden die Ernennungen zurückgezogen. Im Rahmen des Kooperations- und Kontrollverfahrens stehen die Kommission und die bulgarischen Behörden in einem kontinuierlichen Dialog über alle einschlägigen CVM-Angelegenheiten, einschließlich der Ernennungen und der Besetzung von diesbezüglichen Schlüsselpositionen. Die Kommission berichtet im Rahmen des CVM-Verfahrens gegen Ende des Jahres. Sie unterhält zudem eine Reihe anderer Kontakte mit den bulgarischen Behörden, u. a. auf Kommissarebene.

Die Kommission bleibt wachsam im Hinblick auf die Wahrung des EU-Besitzstands in allen Bereichen, einschließlich der Fragen, die die Medien betreffen. Medienfreiheit und -pluralismus bilden die Grundpfeiler der Demokratie in Europa, die in der Europäischen Charta der Grundrechte verankert sind. Das für die digitale Agenda verantwortliche Mitglied der Kommission hat die staatlichen Behörden wiederholt nachdrücklich aufgefordert, unter anderem durch Gewährleistung der Transparenz von Medieneigentum dafür zu sorgen, dass bulgarische Bürger die vielfältige und pluralistische Medienlandschaft, auf die sie Anspruch haben, nutzen können.

Die Kommission misst der Achtung der Rechtsstaatlichkeit, die zu den Grundprinzipien der EU-Verträge gehört, größte Bedeutung bei.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008873/13
to the Commission
Monika Hohlmeier (PPE)
(18 July 2013)

Subject: Lack of transparency and of emphasis on qualifications in the appointment procedure in Bulgaria's security service

The controversial appointment of Delyan Peevski as the new director of Bulgaria's State Agency for National Security (SANS) and his withdrawal shortly thereafter owing to major social unrest have given rise to serious concern about the leadership of the SANS, which also plays a role in the field of European security. Furthermore, the recent restructuring of SANS without any parliamentary debate or adequate oversight raises concern about the functioning of Bulgaria's security service in general. Known as a media mogul, Delyan Peevski has been involved in numerous controversial transactions and schemes, including major corruption scandals for which he has been prosecuted. In 2007 he was sued for blackmail and was dismissed from his position for 'lack of morals'. He was fired by the erstwhile Prime Minister, Sergei Stanishev, and accused of malpractice.

As the Commission confirmed in its statement of Monday, 17 June 2013, appointments to senior posts in EU-relevant agencies should be based upon transparency and with an emphasis on qualifications in order to guarantee EU standards in the security sector.

— Did the Commission request information from the Bulgarian authorities on this matter? If not, why not?

— What practical steps will the Commission take to avoid further risks to the security of the EU and its citizens through the appointment of non-qualified people, or people with convictions, to key positions?

— How will the Commission guarantee the integrity of the EU's security system? How will it ensure that there is mutual trust and effective cooperation between national and EU security agencies?

— How does the Commission plan to reinstate the rule of law and fundamental rights such as media pluralism in Bulgaria?

— Is the Commission planning to initiate an infringement procedure against Bulgaria?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2013)

Under the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism (CVM), the Commission monitors progress in Bulgaria on judicial reform and the fight against organised crime and corruption. The Commission has consistently underlined that appointment procedures which secure leadership based on merit are of central importance to the effectiveness of institutions and to citizens' confidence.

The Commission's most recent report under the CVM to the European Parliament and the Council was adopted in July 2012.

The Commission voices its concerns whenever appropriate, as in the case of the Constitutional Court last autumn, or of the SANS in June. In both cases, the Bulgarian authorities retracted the nominations. Under the CVM, the Commission and the Bulgarian authorities carry out a continuing dialogue on all CVM related matters, including nominations and appointments to key positions relevant to CVM issues. The Commission will report under the CVM around the end of the year. The Commission also maintains a variety of other contacts with the Bulgarian authorities at Commissioner and other levels.

The Commission remains vigilant with regard to respect of the EU *acquis* in all areas, including issues concerning the media. Media freedom and pluralism are fundamental pillars of democracy in Europe, enshrined in the European Charter of Fundamental Rights. The Digital Agenda Commissioner has urged public authorities on several occasions to ensure that Bulgarian citizens be able to benefit from the diverse and pluralistic media environment they deserve, including by ensuring transparency of ownership.

The Commission also fully recognises the importance of respect for the rule of law as one of the fundamental principles underlying the EU Treaties.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008874/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(19 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Gli sprechi nelle strutture sanitarie: come intervenire

Diagnosticare una malattia, prescrivere farmaci giusti e corretti esami clinici, sono valutazioni in capo ai medici. Alcune volte, però, tali valutazioni sono suscettibili di errori. In situazioni del genere, dunque, oltre agli sviluppi negativi sulle cure dei pazienti, possono subentrare anche dei costi, a carico dei sistemi sanitari nazionali o dei pazienti stessi, a seconda che ci si rivolga a strutture mediche pubbliche o private. Ad esempio una certa tipologia di esame diagnostico potrebbe essere prescritta senza aver esaminato più accuratamente lo stato di salute del paziente, in strutture pubbliche così come in luoghi di cura privati. In Italia, ad esempio, il costo è a carico del servizio sanitario nazionale (SSN) e, quindi, spesso la spesa grava sulla collettività piuttosto che sul richiedente la prestazione. Numerosi sono stati i casi scoperti dagli organi di vigilanza che avevano come oggetto un inadeguato iter di rimborso con conseguenti danni al SSN e quindi ai cittadini di uno Stato. Le situazioni presentate a titolo di esempio non sono improbabili e, anzi, è verosimile che incidano pesantemente sui costi della pubblica amministrazione e dei pazienti.

Considerato che: negli Stati Uniti l'*American Board of Internal Medicine* (ABIM) *Foundation* ha chiesto a 17 associazioni scientifiche di redigere una lista di esami diagnostici e farmaci prescritti con una certa assiduità il cui utilizzo dovrebbe essere rivisto, ed è stata ottenuta una lista con 130 voci; stime non accurate riportano che in Europa gli sprechi ammontano a più di 50 miliardi di euro e in Italia la cifra si attesta tra i 5 e i 10 miliardi di euro; con la legge italiana n. 189/2012 si sono poste le prime basi per riformare i *livelli essenziali di assistenza*, ossia quei servizi e attività a cui i cittadini avrebbero diritto in condizioni di uniformità su tutto il territorio, nell'ottica di una rivisitazione della spesa sanitaria, può la Commissione rispondere al seguente quesito:

— qual è il quadro a livello europeo e quali misure sono state adottate o s'intendono adottare per limitare gli sprechi riconducibili a una gestione non commisurata alla realtà socio-culturale-economica che stiamo vivendo, in particolare nel caso delle prestazioni mediche, sia nelle strutture pubbliche che in quelle private?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(16 settembre 2013)

Prendendo in esame il panorama dell'intero settore sanitario, la Direzione generale Affari economici e finanziari della Commissione europea, in collaborazione con il comitato di politica economica, ha pubblicato nel 2010 una relazione congiunta sui sistemi sanitari ([1]), che individua dieci settori di riforma, nell'ambito dei quali le misure, se attuate, possono contribuire ad incrementare l'efficienza. Queste vanno dall'efficace messa in comune dei fondi ad una migliore promozione della salute, includendo un più ampio ricorso alla valutazione delle tecnologie sanitarie. Il capitolo 6 della relazione presenta l'elenco completo di tali misure, insieme ad esempi di buone prassi.

Più di recente, la relazione sulle finanze pubbliche nell'UEM — 2013 riporta una breve rassegna delle recenti misure avviate o previste dagli Stati membri. ([2]) Tale rassegna attinge ampiamente a recenti analisi dell'OMS ([3]) e dell'OCSE ([4]) e l'onorevole parlamentare è pertanto invitato a consultare queste due organizzazioni per ulteriori informazioni.

Prendendo in considerazione in particolare i prodotti farmaceutici, il documento «Cost-containment policies in public pharmaceutical spending in the EU» (politiche di contenimento dei costi relativi alla spesa farmaceutica pubblica nell'UE) ([5]) fornisce un'analisi completa dell'attuale situazione negli Stati membri dell'UE. Nel capitolo 13 esso presenta inoltre raccomandazioni specifiche allo scopo di migliorare il rapporto costo/efficacia delle prescrizioni effettuate dai medici.

([1]) European Economy — Occasional Papers 74 / dicembre 2010 — http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2010/pdf/ocp74_en.pdf
([2]) Economia europea. 4 luglio 2013 — http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2013/public-finances-in-emu-2013_en.htm
([3]) Cfr. ad esempio la pagina dell'OMS http://www.who.int/topics/financial_crisis/en/
([4]) Cfr. ad esempio la pagina dell'OCSE http://www.oecd.org/els/health-systems/
([5]) European Economy — Economic Papers 461 / settembre 2012 — http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/economic_paper/2012/pdf/ecp_461_en.pdf

Infine, si rimanda l'onorevole parlamentare ai memorandum d'intesa siglati dalla Commissione e dagli Stati membri nell'ambito dei programmi di adeguamento economico ([6]), che presentano misure più dettagliate dirette a incrementare l'efficienza e a ridurre gli sprechi nel settore sanitario in tali Stati membri.

([6]) Per Cipro: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/cyprus/index_en.htm
Per la Grecia: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/greek_loan_facility/index_en.htm
Per l'Irlanda: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/ireland/index_en.htm
Per il Portogallo: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/portugal/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008874/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Waste in healthcare — action to be taken

Doctors are responsible for diagnosing diseases and prescribing the appropriate medication and clinical examinations. Sometimes, however, they can make mistakes in their assessments. In such situations, therefore, in addition to the negative effect on the treatment of patients, there can also be additional costs, to be borne by the national health service or by the patients themselves, depending on whether they have used public or private medical facilities. For example, a certain type of diagnostic examination can be prescribed without a doctor having first carefully examined the patient's state of health, in both public and private healthcare. In Italy, for example, the cost is borne by the National Health Service (NHS) and thus by the taxpayer rather than by the person requesting the examination. Supervisory bodies have discovered numerous cases in which reimbursement procedures have been inappropriate, resulting in damage to the NHS and thus to the general public. These situations, given by way of example, are fairly common and are likely to have a major impact on general government costs and on costs for patients.

In the United States, the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) Foundation asked 17 scientific associations to draw up a list of frequently prescribed diagnostic tests and medicines the use of which needed to be reviewed. It obtained a list of 130 such tests/medicines. Vague estimates show that in Europe waste amounts to over EUR 50 billion, while in Italy the figure is between EUR 5 and 10 billion.

With a view to reviewing healthcare spending, Italian law No 189/2012 paved the way for reforming 'basic levels of care', i.e. those services and activities to which citizens would be uniformly entitled throughout the country.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following question:

— What is the situation in the rest of Europe and what measures have been taken, or areto be taken, to limit the wastage due to management of expenditure that is not commensurate with the current social, cultural and economic situation, particularly in the case of medical services, both in the public and private sector?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(16 September 2013)

With a broader view to the whole health sector, the Directorate-General Economic and Financial Affairs of the European Commission together with the Economic Policy Committee, published, in 2010, a Joint report on health systems ([1]), which identifies ten policy areas for reform, where measures, if implemented, can help increase efficiency. They range from good pooling of funds to better health promotion, encompassing a broader use of health technology assessment. Chapter 6 of the report presents the full list of these measures, together with good practice examples.

More recently, the 2013 Report on Public finances in EMU provides a brief review of recent measures undertaken or planned by Member States. ([2]) This review draws extensively on recent analysis by the WHO ([3]) and the OECD ([4]) and the Honourable Member is referred to these two organisations for more information.

Looking at the pharmaceuticals specifically, the paper 'Cost-containment policies in public pharmaceutical spending in the EU' ([5]) provides a comprehensive analysis of the current situation in EU Member States. In Chapter 13 it also specifically deals with recommendations to improve the cost-effectiveness of prescription behaviour by physicians.

([1]) European Economy — Occasional Papers 74 / December 2010 — http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2010/pdf/ocp74_en.pdf
([2]) European Economy. 4. July 2013 — http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2013/public-finances-in-emu-2013_en.htm
([3]) See for example the WHO page http://www.who.int/topics/financial_crisis/en/
([4]) See for example the OECD page http://www.oecd.org/els/health-systems/
([5]) European Economy — Economic Papers 461 / September 2012 — http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/economic_paper/2012/pdf/ecp_461_en.pdf

Finally, the Honourable Member is referred to the memoranda of understanding signed by the Commission and Member States under economic adjustment programmes ([6]), where more detailed measures to increase efficiency and reduce wastage in the health sector in these Member States are presented.

([6]) For Cyprus: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/cyprus/index_en.htm
For Greece: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/greek_loan_facility/index_en.htm
For Ireland: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/ireland/index_en.htm
For Portugal: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/portugal/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008875/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(19 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Smog e polveri sottili causa di tumore al polmone e scompenso cardiaco

Nonostante interventi e piani anti-smog, i killer silenziosi come particolato (PM_{10}), biossido di azoto (NO_2) e ozono (O_3), rimangono un pericolo comune nelle maggiori città europee e troppo spesso con livelli al di sopra dei limiti europei. Le direttive europee contenenti le strategie per migliorare e combattere l'inquinamento sono appannaggio delle autorità locali e quindi variano da una nazione all'altra.

Da una ricerca eseguita per tredici anni su un campione di 313mila persone in tutta Europa è emerso che il nesso tra inquinamento atmosferico e cancro ai polmoni è forte e inequivocabile, in particolare si registrano casi di adenocarcinoma. Ad ogni incremento di 5 $\mu g/m^3$ di $PM_{2,5}$ il rischio di tumore al polmone aumenta del 18 %, e del 22 % a ogni aumento di 10 $\mu g/m^3$ di PM_{10}. Nel periodo di studio, secondo i ricercatori ben 2.000 casi di tumore al polmone sono stati conseguenza diretta dell'inquinamento atmosferico: una persona su 150 è colpita da cancro al polmone inquinamento-correlato.

Un secondo studio ha messo in relazione l'inquinamento atmosferico e lo scompenso cardiaco. Ed è emerso che il rischio di finire in ospedale per una crisi d'insufficienza cardiaca o di morirne cresce del 3,5 % all'aumentare di una parte su un milione di monossido di carbonio, del 2,3 % all'aumento di 10 parti per miliardo di biossido di zolfo, dell'1,7 % per uno stesso aumento di biossido di azoto e di circa il 2 % per ogni incremento di 10 $\mu g/m^3$ di polveri.

Considerato che: bisogna colmare con urgenza il deficit di attuazione delle norme sui limiti delle emissioni integrandole con le esperienze emerse nella revisione della politica UE sull'aria in programma per l'autunno 2013; la Commissione europea ha condotto una consultazione pubblica sul modo più efficace per migliorare la qualità dell'aria in Europa, con un breve questionario rivolto a vari soggetti; più le polveri sono sottili, più sono nocive; e che vi è correlazione tra smog e tumori al polmone e scompenso cardiaco, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. come intende convogliare i risultati scientifici ottenuti con le sue indagini nella revisione globale delle politiche europee in materia di inquinamento dell'aria, prevista in autunno?

2. Ritiene opportuno inasprire la regolamentazione prevedendo delle linee guida in merito all'attuazione delle direttive sulla qualità dell'aria, considerando anche le realtà geografiche e orografiche degli Stati membri?

3. Intende proporre linee guida per una maggiore prevenzione per i cittadini, in caso di elevati livelli di polveri sottili nell'aria?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(5 settembre 2013)

1. Nel riesaminare la politica sulla qualità dell'aria, la Commissione tiene conto di tutti i risultati scientifici disponibili, tra cui quelli dell'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità e dell'Agenzia europea dell'ambiente, come illustrato sul sito Europa ([1]). Le prove scientifiche, insieme alle altre considerazioni quali i vantaggi e i costi delle varie opzioni politiche per attuare l'attuale normativa sulla qualità dell'aria e ridurre ulteriormente l'inquinamento atmosferico e le risposte alle consultazione pubblica, costituiscono la base per le azioni proposte dalla Commissione.

2. La Commissione ha sviluppato, in cooperazione con gli Stati membri, una serie di documenti orientativi per facilitare l'attuazione della normativa sulla qualità dell'aria ([2]) e continuerà a operare in tal senso ([3]).

La Commissione è consapevole del fatto che in alcune regioni europee le caratteristiche climatiche e geografiche rendono più difficile ridurre i livelli di inquinamento atmosferico rispetto ad altre regioni d'Europa. L'articolo 20 della direttiva 2008/50/CE ([4]) autorizza gli Stati membri a tener conto di alcuni di questi fattori nel valutare il rispetto dei valori limite della qualità dell'aria. Per aiutare gli Stati membri a conformarsi, la Commissione ha già predisposto una serie di attività di sostegno (linee guida, workshop, progetti, ecc.).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/review_air_policy.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/quality/legislation/assessment.htm,.
([3]) http://www.eionet.europa.eu/aqportal.
([4]) Direttiva 2008/50/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 21 maggio 2008, relativa alla qualità dell'aria ambiente e per un'aria più pulita in Europa, GU L 152/1 dell'11.6.2008, http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/quality/legislation/existing_leg.htm

3. In base alla direttiva 2008/50/CE (articolo 24), spetta ai singoli Stati membri adottare misure adeguate in caso di elevate concentrazioni di particolato nell'aria, in particolare riguardo ai gruppi sensibili di popolazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008875/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Smog and particulate matter: causes of lung cancer and heart failure

Despite measures and plans to combat smog, silent killers such as particulate matter (PM_{10}), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) and ozone (O_3) remain a common hazard in major European cities, all too often at levels exceeding EU limits. European directives containing strategies to improve and counter pollution are the responsibility of local authorities, and therefore vary from one country to the next.

A 13-year study on a sample of 313 000 people across Europe has found a clear link between air pollution and lung cancer, with cases of adenocarcinoma in particular being recorded. For every 5 μg/m^3 increase of $PM_{2.5}$, lung cancer risk increases by 18%, and for every 10 μg/m^3 increase of PM_{10}, it increases by 22%. During the study period, according to researchers, as many as 2 000 cases of lung cancer were the direct consequence of air pollution: 1 person in 150 suffers from pollution-related cancer.

A second study linked air pollution to heart failure. It also emerged that the risk of being hospitalised for heart failure or dying from it increases by 3.5% for every increase of 1 part per million of carbon monoxide, by 2.3% for every increase of 10 parts per billion of sulphur dioxide, by 1.7% for every increase of 10 parts per billion of nitrogen dioxide and by approximately 2% for every 10 μg/m^3 increase of particulate matter.

Given that we must urgently eliminate the implementation deficit with regard to legislation on emission limits, supplementing it with the experience gained as a result of the review of EU air policy, to be published in autumn 2013; that the European Commission conducted a public consultation on the most effective way to improve European air quality, with a brief questionnaire put to the various parties; that the finer the particles, the more harmful they are; and that there is a correlation between smog and lung cancer and heart failure, can the Commission say:

1. how it plans to harness the scientific results obtained for its investigations in the context of the comprehensive review of EU air pollution policies, to be published in the autumn;

2. whether it believes it appropriate to tighten up the rules by providing guidelines on the implementation of air quality directives, also in view of the geographical and orographical situations in the Member States;

3. whether it will propose guidelines for greater protection of the public in the event of high levels of particulate matter in the air?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

1. In carrying out the review of air quality policy, the Commission is taking into account all available scientific evidence, for example from the World Health Organisation and the European Environment Agency, as illustrated on the Europa site ([1]). The scientific evidence, together with other considerations such as benefits and costs of various policy options to achieve implementation of existing air quality legislation and to further reduce air pollution, and the responses to the public consultation, provides the basis for any action the Commission will be proposing.

2. The Commission, in cooperation with the Member States, has developed a number of guidance documents to facilitate the implementation of air quality legislation ([2]), and will continue to do so ([3]).

The Commission is aware that in some European regions, there are singularities in weather and geography that make it harder to bring down air pollution levels than in other parts of Europe. Directive 2008/50/EC ([4]), Article 20, foresees possibilities for Member States to take some of such factors into consideration when assessing compliance with air quality limit values. To help Member States reach compliance, the Commission has already provided a number of support activities (e.g. guidelines, workshops, projects).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/review_air_policy.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/quality/legislation/assessment.htm,.
([3]) http://www.eionet.europa.eu/aqportal.
([4]) Directive 2008/50/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2008 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe, OJ L 152/1, 11.6.2008, http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/quality/legislation/existing_leg.htm

3. According to Directive 2008/50/EC (Article 24), it is the responsibility of the Member State to take appropriate measures in the event of high concentrations of particulate matter in the air, in particular with regard to sensitive population groups.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008876/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(19 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Traffico di farmaci illegali ed e-pharmacies: nuovi progetti e più sicurezza

Attraverso l'operazione internazionale «Pangea» sono stati sequestrati 9 milioni di unità di prodotti illegali e potenzialmente nocivi, di cui oltre 25mila farmaci illegali in Italia già pronti per essere immessi nel mercato italiano. I farmaci illegali sono stati trovati in confezioni stipate in pacchetti postali di piccole dimensioni o nascoste in valigie di passeggeri provenienti da paesi stranieri, soprattutto extra UE. I farmaci non riportavano alcuna indicazione sul produttore, sugli ingredienti, sui processi produttivi. Tra questi vi erano medicinali per la cura di disfunzioni erettili, antitumorali e una serie di prodotti per la perdita di peso, spacciati come naturali. La partecipazione attiva e costante dei paesi a queste operazioni, unitamente all'attività costante e capillare delle forze dell'ordine, ha avuto una duplice valenza: ha garantito la sicurezza del mercato farmaceutico e lo ha difeso da tentativi di infiltrazione operati da organizzazioni criminali e ha monitorato, talvolta anticipandole, le evoluzioni del fenomeno assicurando, in tal modo, efficaci interventi in termini di prevenzione e contrasto.

La Commissione europea, inoltre, finanzierà il progetto «Prevention of and fight against crime» con l'obiettivo di coordinare e ottimizzare le iniziative di contrasto portate avanti dai singoli Stati membri, garantendo la gestione condivisa delle attività di monitoraggio sulle e-pharmacies, operanti spesso da server dislocati fuori Unione europea, attraverso sistemi di Information Technology. L'iniziativa prende le mosse dalla necessità di contrastare il crescente fenomeno del commercio online di farmaci illegali e pericolosi, anche alla luce del recepimento della direttiva 2011/62/UE, che introdurrà negli Stati membri alcune rilevanti novità in relazione alle modalità di vendita dei farmaci attraverso il web.

Può la Commissione far sapere quali misure intenda adottare per poter indagare la realtà produttiva farmaceutica extraeuropea, che continuamente mina il mercato farmaceutico europeo, regolamentato e controllato a tutela del consumatore, e se intenda promuovere ulteriori programmi che possano informare i consumatori di quelli che possono essere i rischi per la salute umana nel caso di assunzione di farmaci non controllati e per i quali il produttore non è rintracciabile, come nel caso dei farmaci immessi nel mercato europeo in maniera illecita?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(4 settembre 2013)

1) Sono già in atto disposizioni in merito al controllo della produzione farmaceutica al di fuori dell'UE. La direttiva 2001/83/CE ([1]) modificata dalla direttiva 2011/62/UE ([2]) fa obbligo agli Stati membri di assicurare che le disposizioni legali dell'UE che disciplinano i prodotti medicinali siano rispettate ricorrendo ad ispezioni, se del caso senza preavviso, presso i produttori e i grossisti di medicinali siti anche in paesi terzi. Tale direttiva fa inoltre obbligo ai produttori di medicinali unionali di sottoporre a audit i produttori e distributori di sostanze attive da cui si approvvigionano, anche se stabiliti al di fuori dell'UE, per verificarne il rispetto delle norme di qualità unionali.

2) La direttiva summenzionata prevede anche la promozione, ad opera della Commissione in cooperazione con l'Agenzia europea per i medicinali e le autorità degli Stati membri, di campagne d'informazione sui pericoli dei medicinali contraffatti, in particolare quelli venduti via internet. La Commissione ha già realizzato due video nel merito ([3]).

([1]) GU L 311 del 28.11.2011, pag. 67.
([2]) GU L 174 dell'1.7.2011, pag. 74.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/human-use/videos/videos/fake_medicines_en.mp4.
http://ec.europa.eu/health/human-use/videos/videos/counterfeit_med_en.mp4.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008876/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Trafficking of illegal medicines and online pharmacies: new projects and greater safety

As part of the international operation 'Pangea', 9 million units of illegal, and potentially harmful, products have been seized, including over 25 000 illegal medicines in Italy ready to be placed on the Italian market. The illegal medicines were found in boxes crammed into small parcels or hidden in the luggage of travellers arriving from abroad, especially from non-EU countries. The medicines did not bear any indication of the manufacturer, ingredients or manufacturing processes. They included medicines to treat erectile dysfunction and cancer, as well as a range of weight-loss products, passed off as natural. The active and continued participation of countries in these operations, together with the constant, widespread activity of law enforcement agencies, had a dual benefit: it guaranteed the safety of the pharmaceutical market, defending it from attempts at infiltration by criminal organisations, and monitored, and at times pre-empted, development of the phenomenon, thereby ensuring effective action would be taken to prevent and fight it.

Moreover, the European Commission will be funding the 'Prevention of and fight against crime' project with the aim of coordinating and optimising initiatives to fight the phenomenon, implemented by the individual Member States. This will ensure the joint management of activities to monitor online pharmacies, which often operate from servers located outside the EU, via IT systems. The initiative stems from the need to tackle the growing phenomenon of online sales of illegal and dangerous medicines, including in light of the transposal of Directive 2011/62/EU, which will introduce into Member States certain important innovations with regard to procedures for selling medicines over the Internet.

Can the Commission state what action it plans to take to investigate pharmaceutical production outside the EU, which continually undermines the European pharmaceutical market, regulated and controlled to safeguard consumers? Will it promote further programmes to inform consumers of the possible risks to human health in the event that they take unregulated medicines, the manufacturer of which cannot be traced, as in the case of medicines placed on the EU market illicitly?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2013)

1) Provisions for the control of pharmaceutical production outside the EU are already in place. Directive 2001/83/EC ([1]) as amended by Directive 2011/62/EU ([2]) requires Member States to ensure that the EU legal requirements governing medicinal products are complied with, by means of inspections, if necessary unannounced, to manufacturers and wholesale distributors of medicinal products located also in third countries. This directive also obliges EU medicine manufacturers to audit the manufacturers and distributors of active substances they supply from, even when located outside the EU, so to verify their compliance with EU quality standards.

2) The abovementioned Directive also provides for the promotion by the Commission, in cooperation with the European Medicines Agency and Member State authorities, of information campaigns on the dangers of falsified medicinal products, in particular those sold over the Internet. Two videos have already been produced by the Commission ([3]).

([1]) OJ L 311, 28.11.2011, p. 67.
([2]) OJ L 174, 1.7.2011, p. 74.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/human-use/videos/videos/fake_medicines_en.mp4
http://ec.europa.eu/health/human-use/videos/videos/counterfeit_med_en.mp4

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008877/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(19 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Allergie nei bambini: prevenzione con l'analisi del sangue del cordone ombelicale

Da una recente ricerca condotta dall'Università di Svezia è emerso che dal sangue del cordone ombelicale si potrebbe predire con ampio margine se il neonato soffrirà di allergie. In particolare è stato dimostrato che il rischio è elevato se nel sangue cordonale ci sono concentrazioni alte di grassi omega-3 e omega-6. L'alta presenza di questi grassi denuncia o determina uno scorretto sviluppo del sistema immunitario dell'infante: il sistema si indebolisce e l'esposizione al rischio di allergie è potenzialmente più alta. I ricercatori hanno preso in esame quasi 800 bambini nati nel biennio 1996-97 e raccolto dati su eventuali diagnosi di allergie in un primo follow-up all'età di tredici anni. In particolare hanno studiato 44 casi di allergie respiratorie, 37 con allergie cutanee croniche e 48 bambini (gruppo di controllo) che non soffrivano di allergie.

È stato riscontrato che i bambini che a tredici anni soffrivano di qualche allergia, avevano avuto già alla nascita alte concentrazioni di grassi omega-3 e omega-6 nel sangue cordonale. Il rischio di sviluppare un'allergia a tredici anni, se è presente un'elevata concentrazione di grassi polinsaturi nel sangue del cordone ombelicale, è alto quanto quello noto di avere una mamma già allergica.

Questi risultati potrebbero senza dubbio essere molto utili per prevedere se i bambini potrebbero sviluppare allergie in età adulta. I bambini con alte proporzioni di acidi grassi polinsaturi (Pufa) nel sangue del cordone ombelicale alla nascita hanno una maggiore probabilità di sviluppare allergie respiratorie e dermatologiche nei primi quindici anni di vita.

Alla luce di quanto sopra può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. concorda che in molti casi sarebbe effettivamente utile poter prevedere se una persona è soggetta ad allergie grazie all'analisi del sangue del cordone ombelicale, in modo da evitare l'esposizione a determinate sostanze/alimenti e

2. se e come intende approfondire gli studi che permettano di supportare la ricerca scientifica per tutelare la popolazione da allergie che spesso possono avere gravi implicazioni?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(4 settembre 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza dello studio congiunto, citato dall'onorevole deputato e condotto da diversi istituti svedesi, che conclude che un'elevata concentrazione di acidi grassi polinsaturi a lunga catena (LCPUFA) nei fosfolipidi del siero del cordone può predisporre allo sviluppo dell'allergia mediante un meccanismo ancora sconosciuto ([1]).

La Commissione concorda sull'importanza di elaborare strategie di prevenzione e previsione contro le malattie di natura allergica. Tuttavia, occorrono ricerche più approfondite per confermare il potenziale uso del'analisi del cordone ombelicale come strumento di predizione della predisposizione alle allergie.

La ricerca sulle allergie, comprese quelle infantili, è una delle priorità del settimo programma quadro dell'Unione europea per le attività di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione (PQ7, 2007-2013). Attualmente l'UE stanzia 82 milioni di euro per sostenere la ricerca in questo settore. Di questi, 22,1 milioni di euro sono destinati alla prevenzione e alla cura delle allergie infantili ([2]), ([3]), ([4]), ([5]).

Orizzonte 2020, il programma quadro per la ricerca e l'innovazione (2014-2020) proposto dalla Commissione, potrà offrire nuove opportunità per la ricerca su questo tipo di allergie ([6]).

([1]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23874467, PLOS One, volume 8, numero 7, luglio 2013.
([2]) EFRAIM, http://www.efraim-online.com
([3]) EFRAIM, http://www.efraim-online.com
([4]) MEDALL, medall-FP7.eu
([5]) HYGIENEANDIMMUNITY, http://erc.europa.eu/erc-funded-projects
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008877/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Child allergies: prevention by testing umbilical cord blood

A recent study conducted by the University of Sweden has found that umbilical cord blood could be used to predict, far in advance, whether a newborn will suffer from allergies. In particular, it has been shown that the risk is greater if the cord blood contains high concentrations of omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids. A high amount of these fatty acids indicates or causes the improper development of the child's immune system: this system is weakened and exposure to the risk of allergies is potentially increased. Researchers studied almost 800 children born in the period 1996-1997 and gathered data on any diagnoses of allergies at an initial follow-up at age 13. In particular, they studied 44 cases of respiratory allergies, 37 cases of chronic skin allergies and 48 children (control group) who did not suffer from any allergies.

They found that the children who suffered from allergies at the age of 13 had high concentrations of omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids in their cord blood when they were born. The risk of an individual going on to develop an allergy by the age of 13 if there is a high concentration of polyunsaturated fats in his umbilical cord blood is the same as the case in which his mother is already allergic.

These results could no doubt be very useful to predict whether babies may develop allergies as adults. Babies with a high proportion of polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs) in umbilical cord blood at birth are more likely to develop respiratory and dermatological allergies in their first 15 years of life.

In light of the above, can the Commission state:

1. whether it agrees that in many cases it would be of real practical use to be able to predict whether someone is susceptible to allergies by testing umbilical cord blood, in order to avoid exposure to given substances/foodstuffs, and

2. whether and how it plans to carry out more detailed studies to support the scientific research, in order to protect the population from allergies which can often have serious implications?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2013)

The Commission is aware of the joint study mentioned by the Honourable Member performed by several Swedish institutions, which concludes that a high proportion of long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids (LCPUFAs) among cord serum phospholipids may predispose to allergy developments by a yet unknown mechanism ([1]).

The Commission agrees on the importance of developing prevention and prediction approaches against allergic diseases. However, further research is needed to confirm the potential use of umbilical cord testing as a tool for the prediction of allergies susceptibility.

Research on allergies, including during childhood is one of priorities of the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013). EUR 82 million are currently devoted to support research on this area of which EUR 22.1 million address the prevention, and treatment of childhood allergies ([2])[3], [4], [5].

The Commission's proposal for Horizon 2020, the framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020), is likely to offer further opportunities for research on childhood allergies ([6]).

([1]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23874467, PLOS One Volume 8, Issue 7, July 2013.
([2]) EFRAIM, http://www.efraim-online.com/
([3]) CHICOS, http://www.chicosproject.eu/the-project/
([4]) MEDALL, medall-FP7.eu/.
([5]) HYGIENEANDIMMUNITY, http://erc.europa.eu/erc-funded-projects
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008878/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Alemanha : Relatório sobre o Mecanismo de Alerta 2013

O relatório da Comissão sobre o Mecanismo de Alerta 2013 indicou que, quanto à Alemanha «No futuro, o investimento no imobiliário deverá aumentar fortemente.»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Existem riscos associados a este forte aumento? Quais?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(28 de agosto de 2013)

Na Alemanha, o investimento no mercado habitacional a preços ajustados aumentou fortemente em 2010 e 2011, após o abrandamento da atividade verificado nos anos anteriores. Embora o crescimento tenha diminuído significativamente em 2012, o investimento na habitação manteve-se a um nível elevado, apesar de bastante inferior aos níveis registados durante o período de forte expansão que se seguiu à reunificação alemã.

A recente tendência ascendente em matéria de oferta de habitação tem de ser considerada no contexto do crescimento da procura, que se explica em grande medida por um aumento da imigração e pela existência de condições de financiamento favoráveis. Os preços da habitação, que tal como o investimento no setor, se mantiveram a níveis comparativamente baixos, têm vindo a aumentar em termos agregados, embora segundo um padrão regional muito heterogéneo e centrado nas zonas urbanas. Até à data, os fluxos de crédito para a habitação permaneceram contidos, mantendo o endividamento das famílias a níveis moderados.

De um ponto de vista macroeconómico, os riscos relacionados com o mercado habitacional resultam de uma expansão exagerada não assente em bases sólidas. Além disso, os ciclos de crédito têm tendência para evoluir em paralelo com o setor habitacional, reforçando-se mutuamente nas fases de retoma e de correção. Neste momento, esses riscos não se materializaram na economia alemã, embora a evolução recente em segmentos urbanos específicos deva ser acompanhada com especial atenção.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008878/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Germany: Alert Mechanism Report 2013

The Commission's Alert Mechanism Report 2013 said that in Germany's case, 'Looking forward, investment in housing is expected to grow at a strong rate'.

Are there risks associated with this strong growth? What are they?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(28 August 2013)

Price adjusted housing investment in Germany increased at strong rates in the years 2010 and 2011 following subdued activity in the previous years. Growth significantly slowed down in 2012, but housing investment remained at a high level, even though well below those recorded during the boom period after the German reunification.

The recent upward movement in housing supply needs to be seen against the background of rising housing demand, which is explained to a large extent by an increase in immigration and favourable financing conditions. House prices, which like housing investment stood at a comparatively low level, have been on the rise in aggregate terms, although with a very heterogeneous regional pattern concentrating on urban areas. Credit flows for housing purposes have remained contained so far, keeping household debt at moderate levels.

From a macroeconomic point of view, risks related to the housing market arise from exaggerated developments that are not supported by fundamentals. Moreover, credit cycles tend to go hand in hand with housing developments, reinforcing each other in the upswing and the correction phases. At this point, such risks have not materialized in the German economy, although recent developments in specific urban segments warrant special attention.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008879/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Dinamarca: Relatório sobre o Mecanismo de Alerta 2013

O relatório da Comissão sobre o Mecanismo de Alerta 2013 indicou que em «maio de 2012, a Comissão concluiu que a Dinamarca apresentava desequilíbrios macroeconómicos, nomeadamente no que respeita à evolução da competitividade externa e ao endividamento das famílias. No painel atualizado, alguns indicadores estão acima dos limiares indicativos, nomeadamente a variação das quotas de mercado no setor das exportações e a dívida do setor privado» e que «Numa apreciação global, a Comissão considera ser útil, tendo também em conta que foi detetado um desequilíbrio em maio, analisar mais aprofundadamente a persistência de desequilíbrios ou a sua correção».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Mantém esta avaliação?

2. Quais os principais riscos que impendem sobre este país?

3. Antevê melhorias na Dinamarca?

4. Desenvolveu alguma análise aprofundada acerca da persistência de desequilíbrios e da sua correção?

5. A que conclusões chegou?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(26 de setembro de 2013)

O Relatório sobre o Mecanismo de Alerta 2013, publicado em novembro de 2012, conclui em relação à Dinamarca que «a Comissão considera ser útil (…) analisar mais aprofundadamente a persistência de desequilíbrios ou a sua correção».

Em consonância com o procedimento relativo aos desequilíbrios macroeconómicos, estes últimos foram analisados com rigor no âmbito da Apreciação Aprofundada da Situação na Dinamarca, publicada em abril de 2013. Remete-se o Senhor Deputado para o sítio Web específico sobre a Estratégia Europa 2020 na Dinamarca, que inclui igualmente a referida apreciação aprofundada ([1]).

O Relatório sobre o Mecanismo de Alerta é publicado numa base anual. A edição de 2014, acompanhada de uma perspetiva atualizada da persistência dos desequilíbrios ou da sua correção, será publicada mais tarde neste outono.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-your-country/danmark/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008879/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Denmark: Alert Mechanism Report 2013

The Commission's Alert Mechanism Report 2013 said that 'In May 2012, the Commission concluded that Denmark was experiencing macroeconomic imbalances, in particular, as regards developments related to external competitiveness and household indebtedness. In the updated scoreboard, some indicators are above the indicative threshold, namely, the change in export market shares and private sector debt'. It added that 'Overall, the Commission finds it useful, also taking into account the identification of an imbalance in May, to examine further the persistence of imbalances or their unwinding'.

1. Does the Commission maintain this view?

2. What are the main risks facing Denmark?

3. Does the Commission expect improvements in Denmark?

4. Has it examined further the persistence of imbalances and their unwinding?

5. What conclusions has it reached?

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

The Alert Mechanism Report 2013 published in November 2012 concludes for Denmark that 'the Commission finds it useful (…) to examine further the persistence of imbalances or their unwinding'.

In line with the Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure, these imbalances were thoroughly analysed in the In-Depth Review for Denmark, published in April 2013. The Honourable Member is referred to the dedicated Website regarding Europe 2020 in Denmark which also includes the In-Depth Review ([1]).

The Alert Mechanism Report is published on an annual basis. The 2014 edition — with an updated view on the persistence or unwinding of imbalances — will be published later this autumn.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-your-country/danmark/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008880/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Bulgária: Relatório sobre o Mecanismo de Alerta 2013

O relatório da Comissão sobre o Mecanismo de Alerta 2013 indicou que «em maio de 2012, a Comissão concluiu que a Bulgária apresentava desequilíbrios macroeconómicos, nomeadamente no que respeita à evolução da dívida externa, da desalavancagem do setor empresarial e do processo de ajustamento do mercado de trabalho. No painel atualizado, alguns indicadores excedem os limiares indicativos, nomeadamente a posição de investimento internacional líquida e o custo unitário do trabalho, ao passo que o indicador da dívida do setor privado passou a ser inferior ao limiar» e que dado «que o ajustamento dos desequilíbrios externos resultou, em parte, da contração da procura interna, nomeadamente de investimento, existe o risco de a economia ficar presa a uma trajetória de crescimento reduzido, o que tornaria mais problemática a redução dos níveis de endividamento, incluindo a posição de investimento internacional líquida. Os receios relativos ao crescimento potencial a longo prazo do país devem-se também às insuficiências do mercado de trabalho, que se traduzem no seu fraco desempenho, com um crescimento negativo, no aumento da taxa de desemprego e no elevado nível de desemprego estrutural. Numa apreciação global, a Comissão considera ser útil, tendo também em conta que foi detetado um desequilíbrio em maio, analisar mais aprofundadamente a persistência de desequilíbrios ou a sua correção.»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Mantém esta avaliação?

Quais os principais riscos que impendem sobre este país?

Antevê melhorias no mercado de trabalho da Bulgária?

Desenvolveu alguma análise aprofundada acerca da persistência de desequilíbrios e da sua correção?

A que conclusões chegou?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(27 de agosto de 2013)

Com base nas conclusões do relatório sobre o Mecanismo de Alerta 2013, a Comissão procedeu a uma análise aprofundada dos desequilíbrios macroeconómicos verificados na Bulgária. Esta análise ([1]), bem como a Comunicação de 10 de abril de 2013 ([2]) identificavam desequilíbrios macroeconómicos que exigiam um acompanhamento e uma ação a nível político. Em especial, o impacto da redução do endividamento no setor empresarial, bem como o ajustamento contínuo das posições externas, a competitividade e os mercados de trabalho, devem ser objeto de uma vigilância constante. No futuro, os desafios com que a Bulgária se defronta incluem a necessidade de reforçar a capacidade de ajustamento do mercado de trabalho, de permitir uma redução harmoniosa do endividamento no setor empresarial e de evitar o ressurgimento de desequilíbrios insustentáveis.

Com base no Programa Nacional de Reformas da Bulgária, e no seu Programa de Convergência, o Conselho, em 29 de maio de 2013, baseando-se numa recomendação da Comissão, adotou recomendações no âmbito do Semestre Europeu, algumas das quais são também relevantes para dar resposta aos desequilíbrios identificados e aos problemas associados ao mercado de trabalho em particular ([3]).

([1]) «Desequilíbrios macroeconómicos — Bulgária 2013», European Economy — Occasional Papers, 132, disponível em:. http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp117_en.pdf

([2]) Resultados das apreciações aprofundadas realizadas no âmbito do Regulamento (UE) n.° 1176/2011 sobre prevenção e correção dos desequilíbrios macroeconómicos, COM(2013) 199 final.

([3]) Recomendação do Conselho de 9 de julho de 2013 relativa ao Programa Nacional de Reformas de 2013 da Bulgária e que emite um parecer do Conselho sobre o Programa de Convergência da Bulgária para o período 2012-2016 (JO C 217 de 30.7.2013, p. 10).

De acordo com as previsões da Comissão da primavera de 2013 ([4]), o desemprego na Bulgária deverá atingir um máximo de 12,5 % em 2013, para começar a declinar apenas ligeiramente em 2014. Além disso, a fragilidade do mercado de trabalho caracteriza-se por uma contração da população em idade ativa em virtude de uma tendência demográfica desfavorável e da emigração.

([4]) «European Economic Forecast Spring 2013,» European Economy 2/2013, disponível em:. http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2013/pdf/ee2_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008880/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Bulgaria: Alert Mechanism Report 2013

The Commission's Alert Mechanism Report 2013 said that 'In May 2012, the Commission concluded that Bulgaria was experiencing macroeconomic imbalances, in particular, as regards developments related to external indebtedness, corporate sector deleveraging and the labour market adjustment process. In the updated scoreboard, some indicators exceed their indicative thresholds, namely, the net international investment position and unit labour costs, while the private sector debt indicator is now below the threshold'. It added that 'Since the adjustment in the external imbalances has partly come about through a compression of domestic demand, including investment, there is a risk of locking the economy into a low-growth path, thereby making the reduction in debt levels, including the net international investment position, more challenging. Concerns over the country's long-term potential growth are also due to labour market weaknesses, which are reflected in a weak labour market performance with negative growth, increasing unemployment rates and high structural unemployment. Overall, the Commission finds it useful, also taking into account the identification of an imbalance in May, to examine further the persistence of imbalances or their unwinding'.

1. Does the Commission maintain this view?

2. What are the main risks facing Bulgaria?

3. Does the Commission expect improvements in the Bulgarian labour market?

4. Has it examined further the persistence of imbalances and their unwinding?

5. What conclusions has it reached?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(27 August 2013)

Based on the conclusions of the Alert Mechanism Report 2013, the Commission conducted an in-depth review of the macroeconomic imbalances in Bulgaria. This review ([1]) and the communication of 10 April 2013 ([2]) identified macroeconomic imbalances, which deserve monitoring and policy action. In particular, the impact of deleveraging in the corporate sector as well as the continuous adjustment of external positions, competitiveness and labour markets deserve continued attention. On the way forward, the challenges for Bulgaria include the need to increase the adjustment capacity of the labour market, to enable smooth corporate sector deleveraging and to avoid re-emergence of unsustainable imbalances.

On the basis of the Bulgarian National Reform Programme and Convergence Programme, on 29 May 2013, the Council, on a recommendation of the Commission, adopted policy recommendations under the European Semester, several of which are also relevant as a response to the identified imbalances and labour market issues in particular ([3]).

According to the Commission's spring 2013 forecast ([4]), unemployment in Bulgaria is expected to peak at 12.5% in 2013 and to edge down only slightly in 2014. In addition, labour market weakness is characterised by a contraction in the working-age population due to unfavourable demographic trends and emigration.

([1]) 'Macroeconomic Imbalances — Bulgaria 2013,' European Economy — Occasional Papers, 132, available at:. http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp132_en.pdf

([2]) Results of in-depth reviews under Regulation (EU) No 1176/2011 on the prevention and correction of macroeconomic imbalances, COM(2013) 199 final.

([3]) Council Recommendation of 9 July 2013 on the National Reform Programme 2013 of Bulgaria and delivering a Council opinion on the Convergence Programme of Bulgaria, 2012-2016 (OJ C 217, 30.7.2013, p. 10).

([4]) 'European Economic Forecast Spring 2013,' European Economy 2/2013, available at:. http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2013/pdf/ee2_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008881/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Bélgica: Relatório sobre o Mecanismo de Alerta 2013

O relatório da Comissão sobre o Mecanismo de Alerta 2013 indicou que em «maio de 2012, a Comissão concluiu que a Bélgica apresentava desequilíbrios macroeconómicos, nomeadamente no que respeita à evolução da competitividade externa e ao endividamento. No painel atualizado, vários indicadores excedem os limiares indicativos, nomeadamente o da variação das quotas de mercado no setor das exportações, o da dívida bruta do setor privado e o da dívida das administrações públicas.» e que «Os preços no setor da habitação aumentaram rapidamente antes da crise, devendo estudar-se melhor a eventualidade de uma correção e, designadamente, o eventual impacto dessa correção na sustentabilidade do crédito hipotecário das famílias»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Mantém esta avaliação?

2. Quais os principais riscos que impendem sobre este país?

3. Desenvolveu algum estudo quanto ao eventual impacto de uma correção no setor da habitação na sustentabilidade do crédito hipotecário das famílias?

4. A que conclusões chegou?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(3 de setembro de 2013)

Na sequência das conclusões do relatório de 2013 sobre o mecanismo de alerta, na sua apreciação aprofundada ([1]) a Comissão voltou a analisar os desequilíbrios macroeconómicos que a Bélgica enfrenta.

As principais conclusões desta análise foram as seguintes. Em primeiro lugar, a Bélgica continuou a perder quotas nos mercados de exportação devido à perda de competitividade em termos de custos e de outros fatores. A especialização em produtos sensíveis aos custos torna a evolução dos custos unitários do trabalho uma questão fundamental para a competitividade da Bélgica. A Bélgica também deve promover a produtividade total dos fatores de produção, dado que os ganhos de produtividade do trabalho esperados são limitados. Em segundo lugar, o elevado nível da dívida pública torna a Bélgica vulnerável a tensões nos mercados financeiros, que poderiam resultar numa espiral crescente da dívida. Além disso, a margem de manobra orçamental para abordar o problema da dívida é limitada, e existe um risco elevado para a sustentabilidade orçamental a médio e a longo prazo, devido ao impacto orçamental do envelhecimento da população. Por último, o nível de endividamento das sociedades não financeiras, que é elevado em termos de dívida não consolidada, não aponta para riscos emergentes dado o nível razoável de dívida consolidada.

A análise aprofundada incluiu um estudo sobre o mercado belga da habitação. Este estudo concluiu que uma eventual correção em baixa dos preços da habitação teria efeitos limitados sobre a sustentabilidade do crédito imobiliário das famílias, uma vez que os salários crescem mais rapidamente do que os reembolsos, as taxas de juro ainda são baixas, o financiamento a taxa fixa é prática comum e a grande maioria dos imóveis são ocupados pelos proprietários.

([1]) Occasional Papers n.° 144, de abril de 2013, disponível em: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp144_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008881/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Belgium: Alert Mechanism Report 2013

The Commission's Alert Mechanism Report 2013 said that 'In May 2012, the Commission concluded that Belgium was experiencing macroeconomic imbalances, in particular, as regards developments related to external competitiveness and indebtedness. In the updated scoreboard, a number of indicators exceed their indicative thresholds, namely, the change in export market shares, gross private sector debt and general government debt'. It added that 'House prices increased rapidly prior to the crisis and the likelihood of a correction needs to be further explored, including the impact such a correction could have on the sustainability of mortgage-related household debt'.

1. Does the Commission maintain this view?

2. What are the main risks facing Belgium?

3. Has the Commission developed a study on the impact a correction in house prices could have on the sustainability of mortgage-related household debt?

4. What conclusions has it reached?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

Following the findings of the Alert Mechanism Report 2013, the Commission examined further the macroeconomic imbalances facing Belgium in its In-Depth Review ([1]).

The main conclusions of this analysis were the following. First, Belgium continued to lose export market shares due to losses in cost and non-cost competitiveness. The specialisation in cost-sensitive products makes the evolution of unit labour costs a key issue for Belgium's competitiveness. Belgium also needs to foster total factor productivity as gains to be expected from labour productivity are limited. Second, the high level of public debt makes Belgium vulnerable to tensions in financial markets that could result in an upward debt spiral. Moreover, the remaining fiscal space to address the debt burden is limited, while the fiscal sustainability risk is high in the medium to long-term due to the budgetary impact of ageing of its population. Finally, the indebtedness level of non-financial corporations, which is high in terms of non-consolidated debt, does not point to emerging risks given the reasonable consolidated level.

The In-Depth Review included a study on the Belgian housing market. It concluded that a possible downward correction of housing prices would have limited effects on the sustainability of mortgage-related household debt, given that wages grow more rapidly than repayment, interest rates are still low, financing at fixed rates is the common practice and the vast majority of property are owner-occupied.

([1]) Occasional Papers. 144. April 2013, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp144_en.pdf.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008882/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Timor-Leste: contributo europeu para reforço das capacidades de gestão eleitoral

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-006113/2013, a Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente declarou, em nome da Comissão, que a «UE apoia os progressos democráticos em Timor-Leste desde a restauração da independência.» e que «Atualmente, através da programação regional PALOP-TL, a UE contribui para reforçar as capacidades de gestão eleitoral dos órgãos de gestão eleitoral nacionais: o Secretariado Técnico de Administração Eleitoral (STAE) e a Comissão Nacional das Eleições (CNE).»

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente:

1. Como avalia os resultados do contributo europeu para reforçar as capacidades de gestão eleitoral dos órgãos de gestão eleitoral timorenses?

2. Qual o valor deste contributo? Até quando se manterá?

3. Quais os principais desafios que ainda se colocam à gestão eleitoral em Timor-Leste?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(10 de setembro de 2013)

1. A UE tem vindo a apoiar o processo de gestão eleitoral em Timor-Leste através de diferentes projetos, nomeadamente o apoio ao ciclo eleitoral timorense de 2007, que visava os órgãos de gestão eleitoral: o Secretariado Técnico de Administração Eleitoral (STAE) e a Comissão Nacional de Eleições (CNE). O projeto atingiu os resultados que se propunha alcançar, a saber, reforçar a capacidade dos órgãos de gestão eleitoral, desenvolver a participação nas eleições, promover eleições livres e credíveis e melhorar as capacidades institucionais dos partidos políticos.

O atual apoio no âmbito do programa PALOP-TL, no montante de 6 milhões de EUR, deverá manter-se até dezembro de 2013. O principal valor acrescentado deste projeto, tal como indicado por ambos os órgãos de gestão eleitoral, consiste na interação e na partilha de conhecimentos entre os órgãos eleitorais do PALOP-TL. Ao mesmo tempo, o principal desafio no âmbito do projeto, relacionado com a fraca capacidade no domínio dos recursos humanos, prende-se com o conhecimento insuficiente da língua portuguesa.

2. O apoio da UE tem sido valorizado por estas instituições, já que a experiência da UE neste domínio específico é muito apreciada por todas as partes interessadas em Timor-Leste, tanto governamentais como não governamentais.

A prossecução do apoio dependerá dos resultados das consultas em curso sobre a programação do 11.º FED, bem como da divisão do trabalho com outros parceiros.

3. O principal desafio continua a ser a falta de capacidade, que foi identificada como um grande obstáculo, mas que não se limita a estas instituições. Trata-se de um desafio geral em Timor-Leste. A nível institucional, não foi manifestada relutância quanto à aplicação das nossas recomendações, antes pelo contrário.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008882/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — East Timor: the EU's contribution to strengthening electoral management capacities

In answer to my written question E-006113/2013, the Vice-President/High Representative said, on behalf of the Commission, that 'The EU has been supportive of the Timor-Leste democratic progress since the very early days of restored independence' and that 'At present, through the regional PALOP-TL programming, the EU contributes to strengthening the electoral management capacities of National Electoral Management Bodies: the *Secretariado Técnico de Administração Eleitoral* (STAE) and the *Comissão Nacional das Eleições* (CNE)'.

1. How does the Vice-President/High Representative view the outcome of the EU's contribution to strengthening the electoral management capacities of East Timorese electoral management bodies?

2. How valuable is this contribution? How long will it continue?

3. What are the main challenges still facing electoral management in East Timor?

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

1. The EU has been supporting the electoral management process in Timor-Leste through different projects, including the 2007 Support to the Timorese Electoral Cycle which targeted the Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs): the Technical and Administrative Secretariat for Elections (STAE) and the National Electoral Commission (CNE). The project achieved its intended outcomes of enhancing EMBs' capacity, developing participation and free and credible elections and improving institutional capacity of political parties.

The current support under the PRO-PALOP-TL, of EUR 6 million, will run until December 2013. The main added value of this project, as pointed out by both EMBs, are the interactions and knowledge sharing among PALOP-TL's EMBs. At the same time, the main challenge in the framework of the project, which is related to the weak human resources' capacity, is the lack of Portuguese skills.

2. The EU support has been valued by these institutions, as the EU expertise in this specific field is highly regarded by all stakeholders in Timor-Leste, both governmental and non-governmental.

Continuation will depend on outcomes of the ongoing programming consultations for the 11th EDF, as well as the Division of Labor with other partners.

3. The key challenge remains lack of capacity, which has been identified as a major constraint but is not limited to these institutions. It is a general challenge in TL. We have not been faced by institutional reluctance to implement our recommendations, on the contrary.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008883/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Diálogo Estados-Membros, RUP, PTOM e ACP

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005095/2013, o senhor Comissário Johannes Hahn declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «A Comissão continuará a acompanhar os Estados-Membros, as RUP, os PTOM e os ACP neste exercício de diálogo com os Estados vizinhos. A Comissão espera que este diálogo reforçado possa contribuir para diversificar as economias das RUP e dos PTOM e que favoreça a coesão social entre os atores de uma mesma região geográfica. Em última instância, este diálogo permitirá ainda realizar economias de escala, ao permitir partilhar os meios humanos e financeiros existentes em benefício dos projetos de interesse comum para a Europa e as suas regiões.»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que projetos, fundos, iniciativas ou medidas visando o reforço do diálogo preconizado pela Comissão estão ou estarão à disposição das RUP portuguesas?

2. Crê ser possível vencer os obstáculos burocráticos que normalmente obstam a que o referido diálogo possa decorrer com a necessária fluidez?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(25 de setembro de 2013)

Tal como indicado na Comunicação da Comissão de junho de 2012 ([1]) sobre as regiões ultraperiféricas (RUP), estas regiões precisam de se integrar melhor não só no mercado único, como nas suas vizinhanças regionais para poderem desenvolver o seu potencial e concretizar o pleno valor acrescentado que representam para a UE. Para o efeito, a Comissão irá propor planos regionais de vizinhança, por bacia geográfica (Macaronésia, Oceano Índico e Caraíbas), em estreita parceria com as RUP e os seus Estados-Membros. Tais planos destinam-se a refletir uma abordagem integrada e global da inserção regional das RUP em cada bacia e incluirá aspetos que vão da cooperação territorial cofinanciada pelo Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional a questões com incidência sobre o reforço das relações económicas e sociais entre as RUP e seus vizinhos. Deverão ainda incluir um diálogo reforçado com todas as partes em causa, incluindo as RUP portuguesas.

A Comissão tudo fará para assegurar que o diálogo decorra com a maior fluidez possível, mas este dependerá, em última análise, da vontade política de todas as partes envolvidas.

([1]) As regiões ultraperiféricas da União Europeia: estratégia para um crescimento inteligente, sustentável e inclusivo — COM(2012) 287 final de 20.6.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008883/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Dialogue between the Member States, ORs, OCTs and ACPs

In answer to my written question E-005095/2013, Commissioner Hahn said, on behalf of the Commission, that it will continue to monitor the dialogue between neighbouring Member States, outermost regions (ORs), Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) and African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries (ACPs). He added that the Commission hopes that this enhanced dialogue will help to diversify the economies of the ORs and OCTs and to foster social cohesion among actors in the same geographical region. The Commissioner went on to say that, in the last instance, this dialogue will also trigger economies of scale by enabling existing human and financial resources to be shared for the benefit of projects of common interest to the EU and its regions.

1. Which of the projects, funds, initiatives or measures aimed at enhancing dialogue proposed by the Commission are, or will be, available to the Portuguese outermost regions?

2. Does the Commission believe that the bureaucratic obstacles that usually prevent such dialogue from running smoothly can be overcome?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(25 September 2013)

As stated in the Commission communication of June 2012 ([1]) on the outermost regions (ORs), these regions need to integrate better not only within the single market, but also within their respective regional neighbourhoods to develop their potential and bring their full added value to the EU. To this end, the Commission will propose regional neighbourhood plans per geographical basin (Macaronesia, the Indian Ocean and the Caribbean) in close partnership with the ORs and their Member States. Such plans are intended to reflect an integrated and holistic approach to the regional integration of the ORs in each basin and will contain aspects raging from territorial cooperation co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund to other issues having an impact on the reinforcement of the economic and social relationship between the ORs and their neighbours. This should cover an enhanced dialogue with all parties at stake, including the Portuguese ORs.

The Commission will do its utmost to ensure that such dialogues run as smoothly as possible but this will ultimately depend on the political will of all the parties involved.

([1]) The outermost regions of the European Union: towards a partnership for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (COM(2012) 287 final, 20.06.2012).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008884/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Cabo Verde — compromisso europeu com a pesca sustentável

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005080/2013, a senhora Comissária Maria Damanaki, em nome da Comissão, declarou que «A Comissão assumiu o compromisso para com Cabo Verde de assegurar uma gestão sustentável da atual atividade de pesca.».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Em termos concretos, como se verifica o cumprimento de semelhante compromisso?

2. Quais são, em seu entender, os principais desafios e obstáculos ao seu cumprimento?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(10 de setembro de 2013)

As atividades de pesca dos navios da UE na Zona Económica Exclusiva de Cabo Verde são regidas pelo protocolo do Acordo de Parceria no domínio da Pesca (APP) entre a UE e aquele país. Para garantir a plena sustentabilidade das referidas atividades, o protocolo estabelece disposições relativas à transparência do esforço de pesca, à comunicação regular das capturas e à utilização de dados VMS, ao quadro de controlo e inspeção e a um programa de observação dos navios de pesca.

Uma Comissão Mista instituída pelo APP, que se reúne pelo menos uma vez por ano, acompanha as atividades de pesca dos navios da UE, confrontando-as sistematicamente com as referidas disposições.

Atualmente, observam-se algumas discrepâncias entre, por um lado, os dados relativos às capturas calculados pelas autoridades de Cabo Verde e, por outro, os dados declarados à Comissão pelos Estados-Membros. Para resolver este problema, a Comissão acordou com as autoridades cabo-verdianas no desenvolvimento de um novo sistema, aperfeiçoado, de transmissão de dados. A Comissão está igualmente a ponderar a possibilidade de utilizar um sistema eletrónico de comunicação das capturas no âmbito do futuro protocolo, cujas negociações deverão ser iniciadas até ao final do ano.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008884/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Cape Verde — the EU's commitment to sustainable fishing

In answer to my written question E-005080/2013, Commissioner Damanaki, on behalf of the Commission, said that 'The Commission has been engaged with Cape Verde to ensure sustainable management of current fishing activities'.

1. How will compliance with this commitment be verified, in practical terms?

2. What are the main challenges and obstacles to fulfilling this commitment?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2013)

The fishing activities of EU vessels within the Exclusive Economic Zone of Cap Verde are governed by the protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement (FPA) between the EU and Cape Verde. To ensure that such activities are fully sustainable, the protocol lays down provisions regarding the transparency of the fishing effort, regular catch reporting and use of VMS data, the control and inspection framework and a fishing vessels observation programme.

A Joint Committee established by the FPA, which meets at least once a year, monitors our vessels' fishing activity and checks it systematically against these provisions.

At present there are some discrepancies between the catch data calculated by Cap Verde authorities on one hand and the catch data reported to us by the Member States on the other. The Commission has agreed with Cap-Verdean authorities to work on a new and improved data workflow with the aim of solving the issue. We are also considering shifting to an electronic catch reporting system for the future protocol, which is up for negotiation later this year.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008885/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Eventual plano de conservação destinado a proteger os tubarões em Cabo Verde

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005080/2013, a senhora Comissária Maria Damanaki, em nome da Comissão, declarou que «Um plano de conservação destinado a proteger os tubarões em Cabo Verde deveria cobrir uma vasta gama de espécies».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Considera viável e desejável o estabelecimento de semelhante plano?

2. Em caso afirmativo, quais seriam as espécies a proteger e quais as principais características de semelhante plano?

3. Crê que existirá interesse por parte de Cabo Verde em avaliar conjuntamente com a União a possibilidade de levar a efeito um plano desse teor?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(2 de outubro de 2013)

Nos últimos dez anos, a Comissão elaborou e pôs em prática nas águas da UE planos de gestão a longo prazo para diversas espécies. Tais planos, elaborados com base em pareceres científicos sólidos, constituem instrumentos adequados para garantir o exercício de uma pesca sustentável.

A Comissão está disposta a colaborar com as autoridades de Cabo Verde, a fim de as ajudar a definir medidas de gestão para as pescarias de tubarão (entre as quais se poderiam incluir limitações do esforço ou das quotas e/ou especificações técnicas), a aplicar, de forma não discriminatória, a todas as frotas ativas nas águas desse país e colaborará com as autoridades de Cabo Verde com vista a determinar os instrumentos mais adequados. Tais medidas completariam as recomendações já adotadas ao nível regional pela Comissão Internacional para a Conservação dos Tunídeos do Atlântico (ICCAT). A remoção das barbatanas de tubarões já é proibida pelas legislações da UE e de Cabo Verde.

Cabo Verde manifestou o seu interesse na proteção dos tubarões. Em 2012 foi realizada uma reunião científica conjunta e esta questão será analisada de forma mais aprofundada durante as próximas negociações com vista à renovação do Acordo de Parceria no domínio da pesca com Cabo Verde.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008885/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Possible conservation plan to protect sharks in Cape Verde

In reply to my Question E-005080/2013, Commissioner Maria Damanaki said on behalf of the Commission that 'a shark conservation plan to protect shark species in Cape Verde should cover a wide range of species'.

1. Does the Commission consider it feasible and desirable to introduce such a plan?

2. If so, which species will be protected and what will the main characteristics of the plan be?

3. Does the Commission believe that Cape Verde will be willing to join with the EU in considering the possibility of carrying out a plan of this kind?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(2 October 2013)

Over the last decade, the Commission has developed and implemented in EU waters long term management plans for several species. These plans, developed on the basis of sound scientific advice, provide appropriate tools to ensure sustainable fisheries.

The Commission is ready to cooperate with Cape Verdean authorities to help them develop management measures for shark fisheries that would apply to all fleets active in Cape Verdean waters, on a non-discriminatory basis. These measures could include effort or quota limitations and/or technical specifications and we will work with Cape Verdean authorities to determine the most appropriate instruments. They would supplement recommendations already adopted at the regional level by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). Shark finning is already forbidden both by EU and Cape-Verdean legislations.

Cape Verde has expressed its interest in protecting sharks. A joint scientific meeting was held in 2012 and this issue will be discussed further during coming negotiations on the renewal of the FPA with Cape Verde.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008886/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Respeito dos direitos políticos e civis do povo cubano

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005076/2013, a Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente declarou que «A UE reiterou de forma contínua a importância de as autoridades cubanas respeitarem plenamente todos os direitos políticos e civis do povo cubano, incluindo a liberdade de expressão e de circulação. Estas questões são abordadas no contexto do diálogo político UE-Cuba. Embora as autoridades cubanas não considerem existir atualmente presos políticos em Cuba, outras fontes contam até 90 prisioneiros (Comité Cubano para os Direitos do Homem) e a Amnistia Internacional contabiliza um prisioneiro por motivos de opinião (Marcos Lima, detido em dezembro de 2010)».

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente:

1. Que apreciação faz do diálogo político recentemente desenvolvido com Cuba?

2. Que resultados assinala?

3. Que principais obstáculos reconhece?

4. Como avalia a evolução do respeito dos direitos políticos e civis do povo cubano por parte das autoridades deste país?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Ashton em nome da Comissão
(3 de outubro de 2013)

O diálogo político com Cuba desenvolve-se numa base regular. Constitui um canal de comunicação, através do qual ambas as partes podem trocar informações e/ou manifestar preocupações. A UE procura manter um diálogo constante como meio de promover o respeito dos direitos humanos, incluindo a liberdade de informação e de expressão.

As questões relacionadas com os direitos humanos têm sido sisematicamente abordadas no âmbito deste diálogo e, tal como salientado pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente na sua resposta à questão E-005076/2013 ([1]), a UE tem reiterado a importância de serem plenamente respeitados todos os direitos políticos e civis do povo cubano, incluindo a liberdade de expressão e de circulação. De salientar ainda que a Amnistia Internacional contabiliza atualmente cinco prisioneiros de consciência em Cuba.

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente congratulou-se com a adoção da nova Lei sobre a migração em 2012, a qual constitui um passo importante com vista à liberdade de circulação dos cidadãos cubanos. Manifestou no entanto a sua preoupação quanto às limitações dos direitos políticos e civis, sobretuto no que se refere à prática de prisão temporária.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008886/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Respect for the political and civil rights of the Cuban people

In answer to my written question E-005076/2013, the Vice-President/High Representative said that 'The EU has constantly reiterated the importance for the Cuban authorities to fully respect all political and civil rights of the Cuban people, including freedom of speech and movement. These questions are addressed in the context of the EU-Cuba political dialogue. While the Cuban authorities do not consider that there are, at this stage, political prisoners in Cuba, and other sources count up to 90 (Cuban Human Rights Commission), Amnesty International lists one prisoner of conscience (Mr Marcos Lima, detained in December 2010)'.

1. How does the Vice-President/High Representative view the recent EU-Cuba political dialogue?

2. What are the outcomes of this dialogue?

3. What are the main obstacles to this process?

4. How does she view the development of the Cuban authorities' respect for the political and civil rights of the Cuban people?

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

Political dialogue with Cuba takes place on a regular basis. It serves as a communication channel, through which both parties can exchange information and/or express concerns. The EU sees continued dialogue as a means to promote respect for human rights including freedom of information and expression.

Human rights questions have been systematically addressed in this dialogue, and as the HR/VP pointed out in her answer to Question E-005076/2013 ([1]), the EU has reiterated the importance of full respect of all political and civil rights of the Cuban people, including freedom of speech and movement. We also note that Amnesty International now counts five prisioners of conscience in Cuba.

The HR/VP welcomed the adoption of the new Migration Law in 2012 as an important step towards freedom of movement of Cuban citizens.However, the HR/VP has also expressed concern over the limitations on political and civil rights and in particular the practise of temporary arrests.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008887/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Fundos afetados à Birmânia

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005037/2013, a Alta Representante declarou que a «UE presta uma assistência substancial aos esforços de paz na Birmânia. Em 2013, mais de 30 milhões de euros dos fundos afetados a este país serão consagrados ao apoio ao processo de paz em curso.»

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

1. Qual o montante total de fundos afetados à Birmânia e a que se destinam?

2. Como avalia a forma como estes fundos têm sido aplicados?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(3 de setembro de 2013)

1) O montante total autorizado para a Birmânia/Mianmar em 2013 ascendeu a 35 milhões de EUR, dos quais 25 milhões de EUR foram financiados ao abrigo do ICD e 10 milhões de EUR ao abrigo do Instrumento de Estabilidade. A componente ICD financiará o «Programa de apoio à paz, à reconciliação e ao desenvolvimento», que ajudará as comunidades e as instituições governamentais a participarem no processo de paz e reconciliação. Os serviços básicos também serão melhorados graças à criação de meios de subsistência para a população e ao repatriamento seguro dos refugiados e das pessoas deslocadas no interior do país. A ação do Instrumento de Estabilidade i) promoverá os cessar-fogo, os acordos políticos e outras estratégias de consolidação da paz, incluindo o apoio aos partidos políticos (8,1 milhões de EUR); ii) reforçará o enquadramento da informação, incluindo o apoio aos meios de comunicação social (0,7 milhões de EUR) e iii) aplicará a justiça reparadora no que diz respeito aos casos de trabalhos forçados nas zonas de conflito e promoverá a proteção dos direitos dos trabalhadores (1,2 milhões de EUR).

2) Nesta fase não é possível avaliar o desempenho dos projetos, já que se encontram ainda numa fase inicial. Serão instituídos mecanismos de controlo normalizados para avaliar a utilização dos fundos.

Estas ações são complementadas por um programa humanitário que ascende a 19 milhões de EUR, que cobre as necessidades humanitárias básicas nos Estados com conflitos étnicos, bem como nos campos de refugiados birmaneses na Tailândia. Neste caso também existem processos de controlo para assegurar a distribuição da ajuda aos grupos mais vulneráveis.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008887/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Funds committed to Myanmar/Burma

In reply to my Question E-005037/2013, the High Representative said that 'the EU is providing substantial assistance to the peace efforts in Myanmar/Burma. More than EUR 30 million of the funds committed this year to Myanmar/Burma will be devoted to support the ongoing peace process.'

1. What is the total amount of the funds committed to Myanmar/Burma, and for what purposes have they been earmarked?

2. How does the High Representative assess the way in which these funds have been used?

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

1) The total amount committed to Myanmar/Burma in 2013 has been 35 million EUR , of which 25 million funded under the DCI and 10 million under the IFS. The DCI component will finance the 'Support to Peace, Reconciliation and Development Programme' which will help communities and government institutions to participate in the peace and reconciliation process. Basic services will also be improved by creating livelihood opportunities for the population and safe returns for refugees and internally displaced people. The IFS action will i) promote ceasefires, political settlements and other peace building strategies including the support to political parties (8,1 million); ii) enhance the information environment including support to media — (0,7 million) and iii) implement restorative justice with regard to forced labour cases in conflict areas and promotion of protection of labour rights (1,2 million).

2) It is not possible at this stage to assess the performance of the projects since they are still at an initial stage. Standard monitoring mechanisms on the use of funds will be put in place.

These actions are complemented by a 19 million EUR humanitarian programme which covers basic humanitarian needs in the ethnic conflict states as well as in Burmese refugee camps in Thailand. Again monitoring processes are in place to ensure that the most vulnerable groups are targeted.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008888/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: Apoio dos países da zona euro à moeda única

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-005059/2013, o senhor Comissário Olli Rehn declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «todos os países da zona euro estão fortemente empenhados no euro como moeda comum» e, também, que em «dezembro de 2012, um inquérito Eurobarómetro revelou que o apoio a uma União Económica e Monetária Europeia com uma moeda única, o euro, não sofreu alterações significativas: mais de metade dos europeus (53 %, o que corresponde a um aumento de 1 ponto percentual em relação à primavera de 2012) declaram-se a favor e 40 % contra (percentagem inalterada) ».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Que ações tem desenvolvido no sentido de procurar granjear apoio adicional para o euro? Que resultados obteve?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(27 de agosto de 2013)

Desde a última e recente resposta ao Senhor Deputado, a Comissão Europeia, com o apoio de outras instituições europeias, como o Parlamento Europeu e o Conselho, desenvolveu novas ações para reforçar a governação económica da UE com vista a uma união económica e monetária sustentável e sólida. A fim de granjear um apoio reforçado para o euro, a Comissão prossegue o esforço de comunicação sobre as reformas até agora realizadas, desempenha plenamente o seu papel de garante da implementação, tanto a nível nacional como da UE, e continua a dedicar-se às demais reformas necessárias para promover um crescimento sustentável e o emprego na Europa.

As recomendações específicas por país adotadas pela Comissão em 29 de maio ([1]), subsequentemente adotadas pelo Conselho, em 9 de julho, em conclusão do Semestre Europeu deste ano ([2]), constituem um marco importante neste sentido. Um outro marco importante consistiu na entrada em vigor, em 30 de maio, de um conjunto de regulamentos, integrados no pacote legislativo «Two-pack» ([3]), destinados a reforçar a supervisão orçamental na área do euro. Por último, na sequência do acordo tripartido sobre o reforço do quadro regulamentar e de supervisão, sob a forma do Mecanismo Único de Supervisão (MUS), a Comissão adotou, em 10 de julho, uma proposta relativa a um Mecanismo Único de Resolução ([4]). As negociações com vista à criação de uma plena União Bancária, tal como previsto no plano pormenorizado da Comissão, estão ainda em curso.

([1]) Consultar: http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index_pt.htm
([2]) Consultar: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/137928.pdf
([3]) Consultar: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-457_en.htm
([4]) Consultar: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finances/banking-union/index_en.htm?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=e-news82

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008888/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Support for the single currency in euro area Member States

In reply to my Question E-005059/2013, Commissioner Olli Rehn, speaking on behalf of the Commission, maintained that 'all euro area Member States are strongly committed to the euro as their common currency', adding that 'The December 2012 Eurobarometer opinion survey found that support for European economic and monetary union with a single currency, the euro, has remained almost stable: more than half of Europeans (53%, +1 percentage point since spring 2012) are for, and 40% against (unchanged)'.

What action has the Commission been taking to garner additional support for the euro? What results has it achieved?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(27 August 2013)

Since the last and recent reply to the Honourable Member, the European Commission has, with the support of other European institutions such as the European Parliament and the Council, further delivered on strengthening EU economic governance for a sustainable and robust economic and monetary union. To garner additional support for the euro, the Commission pursues communicating on the reforms achieved so far, fully plays its role to ensure implementation both on the national and EU level and continues focusing on further necessary reforms to boost sustainable growth and jobs in Europe.
One recent milestone in this sense were the Country-specific recommendations adopted by the Commission on 29 May ([1]), subsequently adopted by the Council on 9 July in conclusion of this year's European Semester ([2]). Another milestone was the entering into force on 30 May of the 'Two-pack' ([3]) set of Regulations designed to further strengthen budgetary surveillance in the euro area. Finally, following the Trilogue agreement on a reinforced regulatory and supervisory framework in the form of the Single Supervisory Mechanism (SSM), the Commission on 10 July adopted a proposal for a Single Resolution Mechanism ([4]). Negotiations for a full Banking Union, as laid down in the Commission Blueprint, are ongoing.

([1]) See http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm
([2]) See http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/137928.pdf
([3]) See http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-457_en.htm
([4]) See http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finances/banking-union/index_en.htm?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=e-news82

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008889/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Agravio comparativo en la producción animal frente a terceros países

Recientemente la Comisión ha rechazado la posibilidad de incorporar harinas de cerdo en la alimentación de aves de corral y a la inversa, respetando el principio de no canibalismo, esgrimiendo argumentos técnicos, o ante la supuesta imposibilidad de garantizar que no hay ningún tipo de contaminación cruzada para respetar el principio antes mencionado. Las expectativas que había en torno a esta flexibilización eran elevadas, ya que implicaban unas importantes reducciones de costes de alimentación y una menor dependencia de proteaginosas importadas como la soja.

Pero actualmente el único uso que se le puede dar a las proteínas de monogástricos, aparte de la fabricación de piensos de animales de compañía, es la elaboración de piensos para la piscicultura.

Nos encontramos ante una situación de agravio entre los Estados miembros de la UE y los países terceros, lo cual se traduce en una distorsión de la competencia. Los países terceros que exportan carne de ave y de cerdo a la UE no tienen restricciones en cuanto a la alimentación de su ganado, el coste de alimentación es inferior y por tanto pueden ser más competitivos.

Teniendo en cuenta el Reglamento (CE) n° 999/2001 y el artículo 16.6 del Reglamento (CE) n° 999/2001, ¿cómo piensa actuar la Comisión para liberar a los Estados miembros de este agravio comparativo frente a terceros países?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de septiembre de 2013)

El Reglamento (UE) n° 56/2013 ([1]) de la Comisión volvió a autorizar a partir del 1 de junio de 2013 la utilización de proteínas animales transformadas derivadas de animales de granja no rumiantes (es decir, principalmente procedentes de cerdos y aves de corral) en los piensos para peces de piscifactoría y otros animales de la acuicultura.

En consonancia con los últimos dictámenes de la EFSA, que indican que el riesgo de transmisión de la encefalopatía espongiforme bovina (EEB) entre animales no rumiantes es insignificante siempre que se evite el reciclado dentro de la misma especie (canibalismo), la Comisión se comprometió en su hoja de ruta para las encefalopatías espongiformes transmisibles de 2 de julio de 2010 a promover la flexibilidad cuando estén validados los ensayos analíticos adecuados.

1. La reintroducción de las proteínas animales transformadas procedentes de aves de corral en los piensos para cerdos está siendo debatida a nivel técnico con los Estados miembros. Se les podría proponer un texto formal tan pronto como queden validados los ensayos para detectar materiales procedentes de los cerdos, lo cual podría lograrse en los próximos meses.

2. La reintroducción de las proteínas animales transformadas procedentes del cerdo en los piensos para aves de corral es una cuestión que todavía no está lista para un debate con los Estados miembros, ya que aún es necesario avanzar en el desarrollo del método científico para la detección de material de aves de corral en los piensos.

La Comisión no tiene previsto proponer que vuelva a autorizarse el uso de proteínas animales transformadas para la alimentación de rumiantes (bovinos, ovinos o caprinos), ni que las proteínas animales transformadas procedentes de rumiantes se reutilicen para la alimentación de animales no rumiantes destinados a la producción de alimentos.

La Comisión ha decidido proceder así sobre la base de los dictámenes científicos de la EFSA. Se considera que este planteamiento es realista y prudente para la UE como entidad única, atendiendo a los riesgos conocidos de la EEB y a las normas internacionales vigentes.

([1]) DO L 21 de 24.1.2013, p. 3.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008889/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Comparative disadvantage vis-à-vis third countries in relation to animal production

The Commission recently rejected the possibility of including porcine meal in poultry feed and vice versa, citing the non-cannibalism principle, using technical arguments, or because it was deemed unfeasible to rule out the possibility of cross-contamination in order to comply with the non-cannibalism principle. There had been high hopes that a more flexible approach could be adopted, as it would have led to significant reductions in the cost of feed and less dependence on imported protein crops such as soya.

Currently, however, monogastric proteins may only be used to produce feed for farmed fish (and pet food).

This means that EU Member States are placed at a disadvantage by comparison with third countries, resulting in a distortion of competition. Third countries which export poultry and pig meat to the EU are not subject to any restrictions as regards animal feed, so the cost of feed is lower and they are better able to compete.

Bearing in mind the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 999/2001, and specifically Article 16(6) thereof, what action will the Commission take to put an end to this comparative disadvantage suffered by Member States by comparison with third countries?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

Commission Regulation (EU) No 56/2013 ([1]) reauthorised from 1 June 2013 the use of processed animal proteins (PAPs) derived from non-ruminant farmed animals (i.e. mainly from pigs and poultry) in feed for farmed fish and other aquaculture animals.

In line with the latest EFSA opinions which indicate that the risk of transmission of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) between non-ruminant animals is negligible provided that intra-species recycling (cannibalism) is prevented, the Commission committed in its TSE Roadmap 2 of July 2010 — when the appropriate analytical tests are validated — to promote the following flexibility:

1. The reintroduction of PAPs of poultry origin in pig feed: this is under discussion at technical level with Member States. A formal text could be proposed to the Member States after the tests allowing the detection of pig material will be validated, which is expected to take place in the coming months.

2. The reintroduction of PAPs of pig origin in poultry feed: this issue is not yet ripe for discussion with Member States given that progress is still to be made with respect to the development of the scientific method for the detection of poultry material in feed.

The Commission does not intend to propose the re-authorisation of PAPs for feeding ruminant animals (i.e. cattle, sheep or goats) or to propose to re-use PAPs from ruminants for feeding non-ruminant food producing animals.

The Commission has decided upon the above approach on the basis of the expert scientific advice provided by EFSA. This is considered to be both a realistic and prudent approach for the EU as a single entity, in light of known BSE risks and prevailing international standards.

([1]) OJ L21, 24.1.2013, p. 3.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008890/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Importación de carne de aves de corral y porcino de países terceros

En el Reglamento (CE) n° 999/2001, una de las reglas que ha tenido más impacto económico es la prohibición del uso de proteínas de origen animal para la alimentación de rumiantes, así como la de alimentar monogástricos con proteínas animales diferentes de las harinas de pescado. El artículo 16, apartado 6, del Reglamento (CE) n° 999/2001 establece las condiciones que deben cumplir los productos de origen animal para poder ser importados de países terceros. Pero este Reglamento sólo regula las condiciones para los productos de animales rumiantes y, por tanto, no se regulan las condiciones para la importación de productos de animales monogástricos (cerdos y aves de corral) en relación con las encefalopatías espongiformes transmisibles. Dicho de otro modo, si en la EU está prohibido alimentar monogástricos con proteínas transformadas de monogástricos, sí está permitida la importación de estos productos de países terceros en los que no se impone ninguna restricción al respecto, independientemente del estatus sanitario para EEB del país tercero de origen.

Recientemente la Comisión ha rechazado la posibilidad de incorporar harinas de cerdo en alimentación de aves de corral y a la inversa, respetando el principio de no canibalismo, esgrimiendo argumentos técnicos, o ante la supuesta imposibilidad de garantizar que no hay ningún tipo de contaminación cruzada para respetar el principio antes mencionado. Las expectativas que había en torno a esta flexibilización eran elevadas, ya que implicaban unas importantes reducciones de costes de alimentación, y una menor dependencia de proteaginosas importadas como la soja.

Pero actualmente el único uso que se le puede dar a las proteínas de monogástricos (aparte de la fabricación de piensos de animales de compañía) es la elaboración de piensos para la piscicultura.

¿Cuáles son los requisitos que impone para la importación de carne de aves de corral y porcino de países terceros, en concreto en relación con la alimentación de los animales?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de septiembre de 2013)

Las disposiciones relativas a la prohibición con respecto a los piensos a fin de prevenir las encefalopatías espongiformes transmisibles se establecen en el Reglamento (CE) n° 999/2001 ([1]).

Las recomendaciones de la Organización Mundial de Sanidad Animal (OIE) al respecto se refieren únicamente a la alimentación de rumiantes. En consonancia con estas normas internacionales, las disposiciones de la UE relativas a los piensos suministrados a especies distintas de los rumiantes se aplican únicamente a los Estados miembros y no a cerdos y aves de corral criados en terceros países.

([1]) DO L 147 de 31.5.2001, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008890/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Poultry and pig meat imports from third countries

One of the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 which has had the greatest economic impact is the ban on the use of animal-derived proteins in feed for ruminants, as well as the ban on feeding monogastric animals with animal-derived protein other than fishmeal. Article 16(6) of Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 sets out the requirements for products of animal origin imported from third countries. This regulation, however, only lays down the conditions for ruminant animal products, which means that no TSE-related import requirements are set. In other words, while monogastric animals may not be fed processed proteins from monogastric animals in the EU, these products can be imported from third countries in which no such restriction exists, irrespective of the BSE health status of the third country of origin.

The Commission recently rejected the possibility of including porcine meal in poultry feed and vice versa, citing the non-cannibalism principle, using technical arguments, or because it was deemed unfeasible to rule out the possibility of cross-contamination in order to comply with the non-cannibalism principle. There had been high hopes that a more flexible approach could be adopted, as it would have led to significant reductions in the cost of food and less dependence on imported protein crops such as soya.

Currently, however, monogastric proteins may only be used to produce feed for farmed fish (and pet food).

What requirements are imposed on imported poultry and pig meat from third countries, specifically as regards animal feed?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

The feed-ban provisions regarding the prevention of transmissible spongiform encephalopathies are laid down in Regulation (EC) No. 999/2001 ([1]).

The feed-ban recommendations of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) pertain only to the feeding of ruminants. In line with these international standards, the EU feed-ban provisions regarding non-ruminant species apply only to EU Member States and are not applicable to the pigs and poultry raised in third countries.

([1]) OJ L 147, 31.5.2001, p. 1.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008891/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Equiparación de privilegios en la lista de material especificado de riesgo

En el Reglamento (CE) n° 999/2001, una de las reglas que ha tenido más impacto económico es la prohibición del uso de proteínas de origen animal para la alimentación de rumiantes, así como la de alimentar monogástricos (cerdos, aves, etc) con proteínas animales diferentes de las harinas de pescado. También dispone la lista de material especificado de riesgo (MER). Entre los tejidos que hay que eliminar se encuentran «los intestinos, desde el duodeno hasta el recto, y el mesenterio de los animales de todas las edades» de la especie bovina (artículo 8, y anexo V del Reglamento (CE) n° 999/2001). Por otra parte, el anexo II del mismo Reglamento describe la «Determinación de la calificación sanitaria respecto la encefalopatía espongiforme bovina (EEB)». Este anexo dispone los requisitos que deben cumplir los «Estados miembros, terceros países, o sus regiones». Esta definición de territorio da una idea de que la calificación sanitaria se puede regionalizar dentro de un mismo Estado miembro, aunque en la práctica esto no sea una realidad.

A la luz de lo anterior, ¿por qué no se equiparan los privilegios de los terceros países y de los Estados miembros de la Unión en cuanto a las encefalopatías espongiformes transmisibles (EET), especialmente en materia de MER?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de septiembre de 2013)

La Organización Mundial de Sanidad Animal (OIE) es el organismo normativo competente a escala internacional encargado de la clasificación de los países en función de su nivel de riesgo con respecto a las encefalopatías espongiformes bovinas (EEB).

Hasta la fecha, solo ocho Estados miembros (Austria, Bélgica, Dinamarca, Italia, Países Bajos, Eslovenia, Finlandia y Suecia) están clasificados oficialmente como países con riesgo insignificante de EEB de conformidad con la Decisión 2007/453/CE ([1]) de la Comisión, modificada por la Decisión de Ejecución 2013/429/CE de la Comisión ([2]). La actual legislación de la Unión, que obliga a todos los Estados miembros —independientemente de su situación con respecto a las EEB— a extraer y eliminar el material especificado de riesgo tiene por objeto racionalizar la aplicación de los controles oficiales por los Estados miembros en este contexto heterogéneo.

Como se ha señalado en la segunda hoja de ruta contra las EET adoptada por la Comisión en julio de 2010, la obligación de extraer y eliminar los materiales específicos de riesgo podría revisarse si aumenta el número de Estados miembros con un nivel de riesgo insignificante.

Los Estados miembros y la Comisión están debatiendo actualmente esta cuestión.

Habida cuenta de que la OIE no recomienda la extracción de los materiales específicos de riesgo en los países en los que existe un nivel de riesgo insignificante, la UE no puede ampliar sus normas actuales sobre esta cuestión específica a sus socios comerciales clasificados con un nivel de riesgo insignificante.

([1]) DO L 172 de 30.6.2007, p. 84.
([2]) DO L 217 de 13.8.2013, p. 37.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008891/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Creating a level playing field for specified risk material

One of the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 which has had the greatest economic impact is the ban on the use of animal-derived proteins in feed for ruminants, as well as the ban on feeding monogastric animals (pigs, poultry etc.) animal-derived protein other than fishmeal. The regulation also contains a list of specified risk material (SRM). Included in the list of tissues which must be discarded are the 'intestines from the duodenum to the rectum, and mesentery of [bovine] animals of all ages' (Article 8 and Annex V of Regulation (EC) No 999/2001). Meanwhile, Annex II of the same regulation describes the 'Determination of BSE status.' This annex lays down requirements with which 'Member States, third countries, or their regions' must comply. This definition of territory implies that the BSE status may vary within a Member State, although in practice this is not the case.

Why is a level playing field not created as regards the privileges of third countries and Member States as regards transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSE), in particular concerning SRM?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) is the relevant international standard setting body responsible for classifying countries according to their level of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) risk.

To date, only eight Member States (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Finland and Sweden) are officially classified as negligible BSE risk countries according to Commission Decision 2007/453/EC [1], as amended by Commission implementing Decision 2013/429/EC [2]. Current Union legislation providing that all Member States, regardless of their BSE status, have to remove and destroy specified risk material (SRM) aims at streamlining the implementation of official controls by Member States in this heterogeneous context.

As stated in the TSE Roadmap 2 adopted by the Commission in July 2010, the obligation to remove and destroy SRM could be reviewed if an increasing number of Member States achieves a negligible risk status.

Discussions between the Member States and the Commission on this matter are ongoing.

Considering that the OIE does not recommend the withdrawal of SRM in countries with negligible risk, the EU is not in a position to extend its current rules on this specific issue to those of its trading partners classified as having a negligible risk.

[1] OJ L 172, 30.6.2007, p. 84.
[2] OJ L 217, 13.8.2013, p. 37.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008892/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Calificación sanitaria

En la Decisión 2007/453/CE se establece la situación de los Estados miembros, de terceros países o de sus regiones, respecto a la encefalopatía espongiforme bovina (EEB). En función del riesgo de EEB que presentan, aparece la calificación sanitaria de cada país (o región), según las resoluciones adoptadas por la OIE. En el Reglamento (CE) n° 999/2001, en el anexo V, se define cuáles son los materiales especificados de riesgo (MER). Nos encontramos en él una anomalía muy poco habitual y que es por sí misma un agravio comparativo que afecta a los Estados miembros frente a los países terceros. Concretamente, el punto 1, «Definición de material especificado de riesgo» dice textualmente: «Los siguientes tejidos serán designados como material especificado de riesgo si proceden de animales originarios de un Estado miembro o de un tercer país, o de una de sus regiones, con un riesgo controlado o indeterminado de EEB». Llama la atención que hay una excepción en el punto 2 que curiosamente va en contra de los Estados miembros, y dice lo siguiente: «No obstante lo dispuesto en el punto 1, los tejidos enumerados en dicho punto originarios de un Estado miembro con un riesgo insignificante de EEB seguirán siendo considerados material especificado de riesgo».

Por otra parte, en el artículo 16,6 del anexo IX, se describen explícitamente las condiciones para la importación de intestinos de las especies bovina, caprina y ovina originarios de países terceros con calificación sanitaria de riesgo insignificante. Esto, en la realidad, tiene como consecuencia que países como Dinamarca o Bélgica deban importar tripas de vacuno de países terceros como Brasil. Es decir, Dinamarca y Brasil tienen la misma calificación sanitaria (riesgo insignificante) y por tanto, de acuerdo con el apartado 1 del anexo V no deben retirar el MER, pero debido al apartado 2, Dinamarca no puede aprovechar los intestinos de los bovinos, sus operadores deben pagar por su destrucción y, además, deben importar de Brasil.

1. ¿Por qué los Estados miembros cualificados con riesgo insignificante de EEB siguen estando obligados a retirar el MER cuando es posible importar productos como intestinos de bovino de países terceros con la misma situación sanitaria?

2. ¿Piensa la Comisión llevar a cabo regionalización dentro de determinados Estados miembros cuando la situación epidemiológica de ciertas regiones lo permita, de manera que dentro de un Estado miembro pueda haber territorios con diferentes estatus sanitarios?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de septiembre de 2013)

1. La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta 08891/2013 ([1]).

2. La Comisión no piensa introducir la regionalización de la EEB en determinados Estados miembros, ya que los principios de la regionalización no pueden aplicarse a la EEB. En efecto, los estudios epidemiológicos indican que esta se distribuye homogéneamente en toda la población bovina de un Estado miembro, por lo que no cabe definir diferentes subpoblaciones bovinas con estatus diferentes con respecto a la EEB en un Estado miembro. El nivel adecuado para tratar la EEB es, por tanto, el nivel nacional y no el regional.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008892/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: BSE status of Member States and third countries

Decision 2007/453/EC establishes the bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) status of Member States, third countries or their regions. It gives each country or region a 'BSE status' indicating the level of BSE risk according to the resolutions adopted by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). Annex V to Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 states which tissues are considered specified risk material (SRM). This Annex contains a very unusual anomaly which has the effect of placing Member States at a disadvantage by comparison with third countries. Specifically, point 1 ('Definition of specified risk material') states: 'The following tissues shall be designated as specified risk material if they come from animals whose origin is in a Member State or third country or of one of their regions with a controlled or undetermined BSE risk'. Surprisingly, point 2 establishes the following exception, which runs counter to Member States' interests: 'By way of derogation from point 1, tissues listed in that point whose origin is in Member States with a negligible BSE risk shall continue to be considered as specified risk material'.

Meanwhile, Annex IX sets out explicit criteria for importing intestines of bovine, caprine and ovine species originating from third countries with negligible BSE risk. In reality, this results in countries such as Denmark and Belgium having to import beef tripe from third countries such as Brazil. In other words, even though Denmark and Brazil are considered to have the same BSE status (negligible risk) and, in accordance with point 1 of Annex V, those countries do not need to remove SRM, Denmark is preventing from using beef intestines by point 2, and its operators must pay to have them destroyed and instead import them from Brazil.

1. Why are Member States at negligible risk of BSE still forced to remove SRM when it is possible to import products such as beef intestines from third countries with the same BSE status?

2. Does the Commission intend to introduce regionalisation in certain Member States when the epidemiological situation in specific regions allows, so that different regions within a Member State could each be given a different status?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(16 September 2013)

1. The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its reply to Question 008891/2013 ([1]).

2. The Commission does not intend to introduce BSE regionalisation in certain Member States as the regionalisation principles cannot be applied to BSE because epidemiological studies have shown that the BSE is homogenously distributed through the cattle population of a Member State. Therefore, it is not possible to define different bovine subpopulations of distinct BSE status within a Member State. The appropriate level for assessing the BSE status is therefore the national level and not the regional level.

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008893/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Asociación Transatlántica de Comercio e Inversión (ATCI)

El Modelo Europeo de Producción (MPE) de carne es la forma de producción de alimentos desarrollada por la Unión Europea. Se basa en promover la sostenibilidad medioambiental, los más altos nivel de bienestar y sanidad animal y de seguridad alimentaria, todo ello dando satisfacción a las demandas de unos consumidores cada vez más exigentes. Los requisitos legislativos que deben cumplir las empresas para estar dentro de este MEP son, pues, muy exigentes y, a menudo, los más exigentes a nivel mundial, cumpliendo así unos altísimos estándares de calidad en todos los aspectos.

Ante el acuerdo relativo a una Asociación Transatlántica de Comercio e Inversión (ATCI) que se está negociando entre la Unión Europea y los Estados Unidos:

1. ¿Qué medidas piensa tomar la Comisión para asegurar que los productos cárnicos provenientes de este país cumplan los mismos estándares en cuanto al producto final del MPE?

2. ¿Exigirá la Comisión que los productos que puedan entrar en la Unión gracias a este acuerdo se hayan producido, tanto en el proceso primario como posteriormente en su transformación, con las mismas normas que los productos producidos en la EU?

3. ¿Está dispuesta la Comisión a rebajar el nivel de seguridad alimentaria de los productos ofrecidos a los consumidores europeos ya sean provenientes de los Estados Unidos gracias a los acuerdos ATCI o producidos en la propia Unión?

4. ¿Cómo piensa garantizar la Comisión la competitividad de los productos cárnicos producidos en la Unión ante la entrada de productos procedentes de Estados Unidos producidos con unos costes muy inferiores debido en gran parte a la aplicación de la regulación comunitaria que implica el MPE?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(18 de septiembre de 2013)

1. Los alimentos importados en la EU deben cumplir los requisitos de la UE sobre seguridad y etiquetado de los alimentos (o, como mínimo, los requisitos considerados equivalentes, cuando proceda), así como las normas de comercialización. Las autoridades de los EE.UU. deben garantizar el cumplimiento de estas disposiciones. Asimismo, las autoridades competentes de los Estados miembros controlarán el cumplimiento de las citadas condiciones en los Puestos de Inspección Fronterizos de la UE, que son sometidos periódicamente a auditorías de la Oficina Alimentaria y Veterinaria de la Comisión.

2. La Comisión remite a las respuestas que dio a la pregunta E-1348/2013 ([1]).

3. La Comisión remite a las respuestas que dio a la pregunta E-1348/2013 ([1]).

4. Estas negociaciones no irán en detrimento del elevadísimo nivel establecido por las normas sanitarias de la UE, de cumplimiento obligatorio en todos los productos cárnicos ofrecidos a los consumidores de la UE. La Comisión es plenamente consciente de la sensibilidad del sector agrario y la tendrá en cuenta en el marco de la negociación.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008893/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)

Food production in the European Union is based on the European Production Model (EPM) with regard to meat, which is intended to promote environmental sustainability and the highest possible standards of animal health and welfare and food safety, while satisfying increasingly exacting consumer requirements. The statutory requirements for the inclusion of undertakings within the EPM are also very stringent and in many case the most demanding in the world, thereby ensuring the highest possible quality standards in every respect.

In view of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership currently being negotiated between the European Union and the United States:

1. How does the Commission intend to ensure that meat products from the US meet the same final product quality standards as those laid down in accordance with the European Production Model?

2. Will the Commission demand that any products imported into the EU under the agreement meet the same standards as those produced in the EU both before and after processing?

3. Would the Commission be willing to countenance any lowering of safety standards in respect of food products for European consumers imported from the US into the EU under the TTIP?

4. How does the Commission intend to guarantee the competitiveness of EU meat products with imports from the US, given that, largely as a result of EPM rules, US production costs are much lower?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(18 September 2013)

1. Food imported in the EU must fulfil the EU food safety and labelling requirements (or at least requirements considered equivalent to them, when applicable), as well as marketing standards. US authorities must ensure the respect of these provisions. The respect of these conditions is controlled also by the Member States' competent authorities at EU Border Inspection Posts which are regularly audited by the Commission's Food and Veterinary Office.

2. The Commission would like to refer to its answers to Question E-1348/2013 ([1]).

3. The Commission would like to refer to its answers to Question E-1348/2013([1]).

4. These negotiations will not undermine the highest standards provided by the EU sanitary rules that must be respected by all meat products offered to the EU consumers. The Commission is fully aware of sensitivities in the agricultural sector and will take them into consideration in the framework of the negotiation

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008894/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(19 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: C.S.I./Findus Italia di Cisterna di Latina: possibile violazione delle norme a tutela dei lavoratori e dei livelli occupazionali in caso di dismissioni

Nelle scorse settimane la società C.S.I./Findus Italia di Cisterna di Latina, azienda leader nella produzione di alimenti surgelati, ha annunciato la volontà di licenziare ben 99 lavoratori diretti, mettendo così a rischio l'occupazione di tutti coloro che sono impegnati anche nell'indotto. Già lo scorso anno lo stabilimento in questione era stato oggetto di una ristrutturazione che aveva portato alla soppressione di 130 posti, che si erano aggiunti a quelli di altri 154 lavoratori messi in cassa integrazione l'anno prima, portando il numero odierno dei lavoratori a solo 350 unità, rispetto alle 1.300 degli anni 2000.

Eppure, lo stabilimento di Cisterna, che è presente dal 1964, ha standard qualitativi di altissimo livello, anche grazie all'alta produttività, la scrupolosa osservanza delle norme ambientali e igienico-sanitarie che posizionano la struttura tra le prime in Europa. Per questo rappresenta un polo fondamentale in termini economici, sociali ed occupazionali per tutto il territorio pontino.

Nonostante la già dimostrata disponibilità delle organizzazioni sindacali e quella espressa dalle autorità locali a sostenere la produzione e ricercare soluzioni alternative, dal momento che la società ha un giro d'affari di circa 450 milioni di euro e un margine operativo lordo intorno agli 85 milioni che fa ben sperare per un rilancio, la Findus nei giorni scorsi è rimasta sulle proprie posizioni, ribadendo la volontà di licenziare i 99 lavoratori e confermando la cassa integrazione per tutti gli altri lavoratori in mobilità. Tutto ciò porterà anche a un ridimensionamento della realtà produttiva di tutta l'area di Cisterna, già duramente colpita da altre dismissioni aziendali avvenute negli ultimi anni a causa dell'attuale congiuntura economica sfavorevole.

Alla luce di quanto sopra può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se la Findus ha rispettato le disposizioni della direttiva 98/59/CE in materia di licenziamenti collettivi e in particolare l'articolo 2;

2. se sono state rispettate le previsioni della direttiva 94/45/CE, modificata dalla direttiva 2009/38/CE, la direttiva 2002/14/CE relativa alla procedura d'informazione e di consultazione dei lavoratori, la direttiva 2001/23/CE sul mantenimento dei diritti dei lavoratori e la direttiva 2008/94/CE;

3. se la Findus ha rispettato le disposizioni della direttiva 2006/54/CE che vieta, tra le altre misure, le discriminazioni dirette e indirette tra uomini e donne per quanto riguarda le condizioni di licenziamento;

4. quali azioni possono essere intraprese a tutela e salvaguardia dei posti di lavoro oggi in pericolo;

5. qual è la strategia generale che intende adottare la Commissione nella prossima programmazione finanziaria 2014-2020 per fronteggiare tali situazioni?

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

1.-2. Diverse direttive dell'UE in merito all'informazione e alla consultazione dei lavoratori possono essere d'applicazione allorché le imprese contemplano la chiusura o la ristrutturazione ([1]). Queste direttive fanno obbligo di informare e consultare tempestivamente i lavoratori in merito alle decisioni dei datori di lavoro per mitigare le conseguenze negative dei licenziamenti collettivi. Spetta alle autorità nazionali accertare se Findus Italia abbia ottemperato al disposto delle direttive menzionate.

([1]) In particolare la direttiva 2002/14/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, dell'11 marzo 2002, che istituisce un quadro generale relativo all'informazione e alla consultazione dei lavoratori (GU L 80 del 23.3.2002) e la direttiva 98/59/CE del Consiglio, del 20 luglio 1998, concernente il ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri in materia di licenziamenti collettivi (GU L 225 del 12.8.1998).

3. La direttiva 2006/54/CE ([2]) definisce un quadro generale in merito all'attuazione del principio delle pari opportunità e della parità di trattamento di uomini e donne nel campo dell'occupazione. L'articolo 14, paragrafo 1, vieta ogni discriminazione diretta e indiretta a motivo del sesso nei settori pubblico o privato in relazione, tra l'altro, ai licenziamenti.

4. Nessuno strumento legislativo dell'UE assicura la protezione di posti di lavoro ritenuti in esubero dai datori di lavoro. La Commissione ha ripetutamente ribadito la necessità che le ristrutturazioni siano gestite in modo socialmente responsabile.

In seguito al Libro verde della Commissione ([3]) sulle ristrutturazioni e all'adozione, ad opera del Parlamento, della relazione Cercas la Commissione emanerà una comunicazione volta a istituire un quadro di qualità per la gestione proattiva delle ristrutturazioni ([4]).

5. I Fondi strutturali e di investimento europei sostengono la crescita e l'occupazione, promuovendo anche la competitività delle PMI ([5]). Il Fondo sociale europeo contribuisce a promuovere l'adattabilità delle imprese e dei lavoratori e l'investimento nel capitale umano. I lavoratori colpiti dalla ristrutturazione possono essere ammissibili al sostegno di tale Fondo e del Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione ([6]). La Commissione fornisce inoltre opportunità per incentivare e promuovere la ricerca e l'innovazione industriali per il tramite del programma Orizzonte 2020.

([2]) Direttiva 2006/54/CE, del 5 luglio 2006, riguardante l'attuazione del principio delle pari opportunità e della parità di trattamento fra uomini e donne in materia di occupazione e impiego (rifusione) (GU L 204 del 26.7.2006).

([3]) Le risposte alla consultazione lanciata dal Libro verde «Ristrutturare e anticipare i mutamenti: quali insegnamenti trarre dall'esperienza recente?» (COM(2012)7 final del 17.1.2012) sono riportate in forma sintetica all'indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en.

([4]) Essa conterrà la legislazione e le iniziative pertinenti dell'UE in materia di ristrutturazioni.

([5]) Cfr. il documento di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione «Open, dynamic and inclusive labour markets» (SWD(2012) 97 final del 18.4.2012) che accompagna la comunicazione «Verso una ripresa fonte di occupazione» (COM(2012)173 final del 18.4.2012).

([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=326&langId=en.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008894/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Findus Italia in Cisterna di Latina: possible breach of rules to protect workers and safeguard employment in the events of redundancies

Findus Italia, a leading producer of frozen foods, recently announced its intention to lay off 99 direct employees at its Cisterna di Latina plant, thus also jeopardising numerous ancillary jobs. The factory also underwent restructuring last year, when 130 jobs were shed in addition to the 154 lay-offs made the previous year under the 'cassa integrazione' income support scheme, bringing the total number of employees at the plant down to 350, as compared to 1300 during the 2000s.

The Cisterna factory, which opened in 1964, maintains impeccably high quality standards, and its high productivity levels and strict observance of environmental and hygiene standards make it one of Europe's top performers in the sector. The plant is of key importance in economic, social and employment terms to the Pontine region as a whole.

Despite the willingness shown by trade unions and local authorities to keep production going and look for alternative solutions, Findus has stood its ground, reiterating its intention to make 99 workers redundant and confirming that the workers already laid off will continue under the income support scheme. However, given that the company has a turnover of approximately EUR 450 million and a gross operating margin of around EUR 85 million, there is hope for a turnaround. Findus's plans would further shrink the production base in the Cisterna area, which has already been seriously affected by other business closures that have occurred in recent years as a result of the economic downturn.

1. Can the Commission say whether Findus has complied with the provisions laid down in Directive 98/59/EC on collective redundancies, in particular Article 2 thereof?

2. Has Findus complied with the provisions of Directive 94/45/EC, as amended by Directive 2009/38/EC, and with Directive 2002/14/EC establishing a general framework for informing and consulting employees, Directive 2001/23/EC on safeguarding employees' rights and Directive 2008/94/EC?

3. Has it complied with the provisions of Directive 2006/54/EC prohibiting direct or indirect discrimination between men and women in matters of dismissal?

4. What can be done to protect the jobs currently under threat?

5. What general strategy does the Commission intend to adopt in the 2014-2020 financial programming period with a view to addressing this type of situation?

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

1 and 2. Several EU directives on informing and consulting employees could apply when companies contemplate closure or restructuring ([1]). These require workers to be informed and consulted in time about employers' decisions in order to mitigate negative consequences of collective redundancies. National authorities are responsible for determining whether Findus Italia has complied with the mentioned directives.

3. Directive 2006/54/EC ([2]) lays down a general framework on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation. Article 14(1) prohibits direct and indirect discrimination on grounds of sex in the public or private sectors in relation to, *inter alia*, dismissals.

4. No EU legislation ensures that jobs considered redundant by employers are protected. The Commission has repeatedly highlighted the need for restructuring to be managed in a socially responsible way.

([1]) In particular, Directive 2002/14/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2002 establishing a general framework for informing and consulting employees in the European Community (OJ L 80, 23.3.2002) and Council Directive 98/59/EC of 20 July 1998 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to collective redundancies (OJ L 225, 12.8.1998).

([2]) Directive 2006/54/EC of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast) (OJ L 204 of 26 July 2006).

Following the Commission's Green Paper ([3]) on restructuring and Parliament's adoption of the Cercas report, the Commission will issue a communication establishing a quality framework for anticipation and restructuring ([4]).

5. The European Structural and Investment Funds will support growth and jobs, including stepping up SMEs' competitiveness ([5]). The European Social Fund will help promoting company and worker adaptability and investing in human capital. Workers affected by restructuring may qualify for support from that Fund and from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund ([6]). Furthermore, the Commission will provide opportunities to incentivise and enable industrial research and innovation through Horizon 2020.

([3]) The consultation responses to the Green Paper 'Restructuring and anticipation of change: what lessons from recent experience?' (COM(2012) 7 final of 17 January 2012) are summarised at: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en

([4]) It will contain the relevant EU legislation and initiatives with regards to restructuring.

([5]) See Commission Staff Working Document 'Open, dynamic and inclusive labour markets' (SWD(2012) 97 final of 18 April 2012) accompanying the communication 'Towards a job-rich recovery' (COM(2012) 173 final of 18 April 2012).

([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=326&langId=en

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008897/13
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(19. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Entwicklung der Verbindlichkeiten in Zusammenhang mit dem Rentensystem für EU-Bedienstete

Die jüngste Einigung über die Änderung des Statuts der Beamten und der Beschäftigungsbedingungen für die sonstigen Bediensteten der Europäischen Union umfasst eine Reihe von Maßnahmen, mit denen die Kosten für das Rentensystem an die demografischen Gegebenheiten angepasst werden sollen. Darüber hinaus hat die vorangegangene Reform im Jahr 2004 nach Angaben von Eurostat zu einer Reduzierung der Rentenzahlungsverbindlichkeiten (Rücklagen für künftige Rentenzahlungen bis 2060) geführt, in Höhe von 24,785 Mrd. EUR ([1]) geführt. Abgesehen von der Angabe in einem Kommissionsbericht ([2]), wonach sich die Rentenzahlungsverbindlichkeiten Ende 2010 auf 37,7 Mrd. EUR beliefen, sind keine Informationen über die fortlaufende Entwicklung dieser Verbindlichkeiten verfügbar.

1. Kann die Kommission Auskunft darüber geben, wie viel von den Rentenzahlungsverbindlichkeiten in Höhe von 37,7 Mrd. EUR sich auf Ansprüche bezieht, die bereits am 1. Mai 2004 erworben wurden?

2. Kann die Kommission Auskunft darüber geben, wie viel der zwischen dem 1. Mai 2004 und heute entstandenen Verbindlichkeiten auf Ansprüche von Bediensteten entfällt, die nach der Reform von 2004 eingestellt wurden?

3. Kann die Kommission unter Berücksichtigung der jüngsten Reform des Beamtenstatuts die Höhe der Rentenzahlungsverbindlichkeiten auf ihrem höchsten Punkt sowie den Zeitpunkt des Beginns ihres Rückgangs berechnen?

4. Kann die Kommission Auskunft darüber geben, wie sich das Verhältnis zwischen dem Dienstzeitaufwand für die Rentenzahlungen und den Kosten für Löhne und Gehälter (Kapitel 5 des EU-Haushaltsplans) von heute bis 2060 unter Berücksichtigung der jüngsten Reform des Beamtenstatuts schrittweise entwickeln wird?

5. Kann die Kommission Auskunft darüber geben, wie sich das Verhältnis zwischen des durchschnittlichen Kosten für die Rentenzahlungen und den durchschnittlichen Kosten für Löhne und Gehälter von heute bis 2060 unter Berücksichtigung der jüngsten Reform des Beamtenstatuts schrittweise entwickeln wird?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(21. Oktober 2013)

Eine von Eurostat herausgegebene Studie aus dem Jahr 2010 geht davon aus, dass die Rentenaufwendungen ab 2047 rückläufig sein werden. Bei der Versorgungsordnung der Beamten und sonstigen Bediensteten der Europäischen Union (Pension Scheme of Officials and Other Servants of the European Union — PSEO) handelt es sich um einen „fiktiven“ Fonds: Die Beiträge der Bediensteten werden nicht in einen tatsächlich bestehenden Fonds eingezahlt, sondern dem EU-Haushalt gutgeschrieben. Es werden keine Arbeitgeberbeiträge eingezogen. Stattdessen hat sich die EU zur Auszahlung der künftigen Renten verpflichtet.

Somit leiht sich der Haushalt die entsprechenden Gelder auf dauerhafter Basis bei PSEO-Mitgliedern. Als Gegenleistung erhalten diese eine Zusage der Mitgliedstaaten über die Auszahlung der künftigen Versorgungsleistungen in Höhe der bestehenden Verbindlichkeiten.

1./2. Die Höhe der Verbindlichkeiten wird alljährlich neu berechnet. Sie hängt von verschiedenen Faktoren ab, die sich gegenseitig beeinflussen, wie etwa der jährlichen Entwicklung des Personalbestands in allen EU-Institutionen, der Höhe der im Laufe des Jahres in das System eingezahlten bzw. fällig gewordenen Beiträge und der Entwicklung der Zinssätze.

Daher variiert die Höhe des jährlichen Betrags. Im Jahr 2003 beliefen sich die nominalen Verbindlichkeiten auf 25,6 Mrd. EUR, im Jahr 2011 auf 35,2 Mrd. EUR. Die Differenz spiegelt die Entwicklung der vorgenannten Faktoren wider.

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st12/st12921.en10.pdf
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0037:FIN:DE:PDF

Um einen Orientierungswert zu nennen, kann die Kommission mitteilen, dass im Jahr 2011 3,8 Mrd. EUR auf Ansprüche von Bediensteten entfielen, die nach 2004 eingestellt wurden, und der Rest auf Ansprüche von Bediensteten, die zwischen 1958 und 2004 eingestellt wurden. Die genauen Zahlen hängen von den oben genannten Faktoren ab.

Eine exakte Kalkulation würde eine weitere Studie erfordern. Dies wäre auch nötig, um eine Antwort auf Frage Nr. 3 zu liefern.

4./5. Die Beitragssätze sind so bemessen, dass das Gleichgewicht der PSEO gewahrt bleibt. Die Beiträge richten sich nicht nach den derzeitigen Rentenzahlungen, sondern nach den erworbenen Rentenansprüchen, die ab Renteneintritt ausgezahlt werden. Dieses Konzept unterscheidet sich vom Konzept eines jährlichen Cash-flow-Gleichgewichts und den in einigen Mitgliedstaaten, wie z. B. Deutschland, bestehenden Systemen für den öffentlichen Dienst. Die Berechnung und Bereitstellung der gewünschten Zeitreihen würde somit Parameter in Beziehung bringen, die innerhalb des Systems gar nicht miteinander verknüpft sind, und ein verzerrtes Bild ergeben.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008897/13
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Evolution of the liability associated with the EU staff pension scheme

The recent agreement amending the Staff Regulations of Officials and the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union provides for a number of measures to adapt the cost of pensions to the demographic reality. In addition, the previous reform of 2004 has, according to Eurostat, generated a reduction in the pension liability (savings on future pensions until 2060) of EUR 24 785 million ([1]). Apart from the fact that the liability is quantified in a Commission report ([2]) to have been EUR 37.7 billion at the end of 2010, no information is available on the evolution of the pension liability over time.

1. Can the Commission indicate how much of the EUR 37.7 billion pension liability corresponds to rights that had already been acquired on 1 May 2004?

2. Can the Commission indicate, for the part of the liability acquired between 1 May 2004 and today, how much of it has been acquired by staff recruited after the 2004 reform?

3. Can the Commission calculate, taking into account the new reform of the Staff Regulations, what the pension liability will be at its highest point and when it will start decreasing?

4. Can the Commission provide a time-series of the evolution of the ratio 'service cost of pensions/cost of salaries' (Title 5 of the EU budget), between now and 2060, taking into account the new reform of the Staff Regulations?

5. Can the Commission provide a time-series of the evolution of the ratio 'average cost of pensions/average cost of salaries' between now and 2060, taking into account the new reform of the Staff Regulations?

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

In 2010 ESTAT issued a study which, based on assumptions, showed that pension cost would decrease as of 2047. The pension scheme (PSEO) is a notional fund: staff contributions have not been set aside in an actual fund, but credited to the EU budget. The employer's contribution has not been collected; instead, the EU undertook to pay future pensions.

The budget therefore continuously borrows this money from PSEO members, in exchange for a Member States' guarantee to pay future benefits which corresponds to the liability.

1 and 2. The liability is recalculated annually and depends on a number of interdependent factors, e.g. annual evolution of staff numbers in all EU bodies, amounts paid/owed as contributions to the scheme during the year, evolution of interest rates.

Therefore, the amount varies annually. In 2003, the nominal liability was EUR 25.6 billion, in 2011 EUR 35.2 billion. The difference corresponds to the factors mentioned before.

As indication, the Commission can say that, in 2011, EUR 3.8 billion. were due to rights acquired by staff recruited after 2004, while the rest was due to staff recruited between 1958 and 2004. The figure depends on the factors mentioned above.

A precise calculation would require another study just like a reply to question 3.

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st12/st12921.en10.pdf
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0037:FIN:EN:PDF.

4 and 5. The contribution rate maintains the PSEO in balance. Contributions are not linked to current pension payments, but to the acquisition of pension rights which result in payments once staff is entitled to their pension. This is a different concept from a yearly cash-flow balance or systems in some national civil services, e.g. the German civil service. Therefore, computing and providing time-series as requested would link parameters that are not inter-linked in the scheme and give a distorted picture of the scheme.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008898/13
an die Kommission
Marie-Christine Vergiat (GUE/NGL), Cecilia Wikström (ALDE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE), Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL), Sylvie Guillaume (S&D), Hélène Flautre (Verts/ALE), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE) und Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)
(19. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Versuch der Abschiebung somalischer Migranten nach Libyen durch die maltesische Regierung am 9. Juli 2013

Der Versuch der maltesischen Regierung vom 9. Juli 2013, somalische Migranten nach Libyen abzuschieben bzw. gegen ihren Willen dorthin rückzuführen, hat gezeigt, dass diese Aktion ausgeführt worden wäre, hätte es nicht konzertierte Proteste der Zivilgesellschaft auf unterschiedlichen Ebenen dagegen gegeben.

— Welche Maßnahmen wird die Kommission ergreifen, um dafür Sorge zu tragen, dass sich Mitgliedstaaten nicht derartiger Rückführungen bedienen, die gegen EU-Rechtsvorschriften und das Völkerrecht verstoßen, worauf Kommissionsmitglied Malmström in ihrer Stellungnahme vom 9. Juli 2013 hingewiesen hat?

— Welche spezifischen Maßnahmen würde die Kommission gegen ein Mitgliedsland ergreifen, das Migranten in ein bekanntermaßen unsicheres Drittland abschiebt (oder einen entsprechenden Versuch unternimmt), ohne die Schutzansprüche der Migranten vorher angemessen zu prüfen? Kommt für die Kommission ein Vertragsverletzungsverfahren infrage? Wird die Kommission die Möglichkeit erwägen, Mitgliedstaaten zu verwarnen, wenn Pläne für derartige Abschiebungen bekannt werden? Hat die Kommission seit dem Zwischenfall diese Frage mit der maltesischen Regierung erörtert?

— Welche Schutzmaßnahmen sind ergriffen worden bzw. können ergriffen werden, um sicherzustellen, dass von Frontex koordinierte Einsätze nicht an solchen Maßnahmen beteiligt sind und dass keine EU-Mittel für deren Umsetzung verwendet werden?

— Welche Maßnahmen gedenkt die Kommission zu ergreifen, um zu gewährleisten, dass Migranten, die um Schutz nachsuchen, umgehend ungehinderten Zugang zu Anwälten, nichtstaatlichen Organisationen und dem UNHCR sowie zu angemessenen (Asyl)-Verfahren und Aufnahmebedingungen erhalten?

— Kann die Kommission angesichts der Tatsache, dass Malta immer wieder eine größere Solidarität der Europäischen Union bei der Bewältigung der aktuellen Situation eingefordert hat, Auskunft darüber geben, welche Maßnahmen Malta gegenwärtig zur Verfügung stehen und welche zusätzlichen Maßnahmen sie gegebenenfalls vorschlägt, um Malta bei seinen Anstrengungen zur Bewältigung des Zustroms von Migranten ohne Ausweispapiere zu unterstützen?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(26. September 2013)

Nach EU-Recht sind alle Drittstaatsangehörigen, die in das Gebiet der Europäischen Union gelangen, dazu berechtigt, einen Asylantrag zu stellen, der von dem betreffenden Mitgliedstaat angemessen und umfassend zu prüfen ist. Das EU-Recht garantiert den Anspruch auf Information, Rechtsberatung und -vertretung sowie die Möglichkeit zur Kontaktaufnahme mit dem UNHCR und stellt sicher, dass gegen abschlägige Bescheide ein wirksamer Rechtsbehelf eingelegt werden kann. Selbst wenn ein Drittstaatsangehöriger kein Asyl beantragt, kann ein Mitgliedstaat keine Rückführungsmaßnahme durchführen, solange nicht feststeht, dass der Grundsatz der Nichtzurückweisung gewahrt bleibt.

Die uneingeschränkte Einhaltung dieser Verpflichtungen ist unabdingbar, damit die Achtung des Asylrechts gewährleistet und sichergestellt wird, dass niemand, dem ein ernsthafter Schaden oder Verfolgung drohen, aus einem Mitgliedstaat zurückgeschickt wird. Die Kommission beobachtet genau, ob die Mitgliedstaaten die Asyl- und Migrationsvorschriften der EU einhalten und steht in engem Kontakt mit ihnen, auch mit den maltesischen Behörden. Als Hüterin der Verträge wird die Kommission nicht zögern, geeignete Schritte zu ergreifen, wenn ein Mitgliedstaat nachweislich gegen EU-Recht verstoßen sollte.

Malta ist an keinem gemeinsamen Frontex-Einsatz beteiligt. Bei Feststellung von Grundrechtsverletzungen werden gemeinsame Frontex-Operationen an den Grenzen ausgesetzt oder eingestellt. Was die von Frontex koordinierten Rückführungsmaßnahmen anbelangt, so arbeitet die Agentur zurzeit einen spezifischen Verhaltenskodex aus, der den einschlägigen EU- und völkerrechtlichen Vorschriften Rechnung trägt.

Die Kommission schöpft alle Möglichkeiten aus, um Malta bei der Bewältung der besonderen Belastung, der es ausgesetzt ist, solidarisch zu unterstützen; hierzu sei auf die Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-008245/2013 verwiesen.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008898/13
à la Commission
Marie-Christine Vergiat (GUE/NGL), Cecilia Wikström (ALDE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE), Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL), Sylvie Guillaume (S&D), Hélène Flautre (Verts/ALE), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE) et Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)
(19 juillet 2013)

Objet: Tentative de refoulement vers la Libye de migrants somaliens par le gouvernement maltais (9 juillet 2013)

La tentative du gouvernement maltais de procéder à des rapatriements et des retours forcés d'immigrés somaliens en direction de la Libye, le 9 juillet 2013, ne laisse aucun doute quant au fait que de telles actions auraient abouti en l'absence d'un mouvement de protestation concertée de la part de la société civile à tous les niveaux.

— Quelles mesures la Commission compte-t-elle prendre pour s'assurer que les États membres ne procèdent pas à de tels retours, qui constituent une violation du droit international et européen, comme l'a souligné la commissaire Malmström dans sa déclaration sur ce sujet le 9 juillet 2013?

— Quelles dispositions spécifiques la Commission prendra-t-elle à l'égard des États membres qui refoulent (ou tentent de refouler) des immigrants vers un pays tiers, dont la situation d'insécurité est avérée, sans avoir correctement examiné leur demande de protection? La Commission envisage-t-elle de lancer des procédures d'infraction? Envisage-t-elle la possibilité d'adresser des avertissements aux des États membres ayant l'intention manifeste de procéder à de tels renvois? A-t-elle pris contact avec le gouvernement maltais à ce sujet depuis les événements susmentionnés?

— Quelles garanties ont été apportées, ou peuvent l'être, afin de s'assurer que les opérations coordonnées par Frontex ne sont pas associées à ce type d'actions et que les fonds européens n'ont pas servi à exécuter de telles mesures?

— Quelles dispositions la Commission compte-t-elle prendre afin de garantir aux migrants qui déclarent avoir besoin d'une protection, l'accès immédiat et libre aux avocats, aux organisations non gouvernementales et au Haut Commissariat des Nations unies pour les réfugiés, et afin de rendre les procédures (d'asile) et les condition d'accueil des immigrés plus adéquates?

— Étant donné que Malte a appelé à une plus grande solidarité de la part de l'Union européenne dans la gestion de la situation actuelle, la Commission peut-elle renseigner Malte sur les mesures disponibles actuellement et sur les nouvelles mesures qu'elle propose, le cas échéant, afin de soutenir le gouvernement maltais dans ses efforts pour faire face à l'arrivée de migrants sans papiers?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Malmström au nom de la Commission
(26 septembre 2013)

Conformément à la législation de l'Union européenne, tous les ressortissants de pays tiers arrivant sur le territoire de l'UE ont le droit d'introduire une demande d'asile qui doit être examinée correctement et intégralement par l'État membre concerné. La législation de l'Union européenne garantit le droit à l'information, à l'assistance judiciaire et à la représentation, la possibilité de communiquer avec le HCR, ainsi que le droit à un recours effectif contre les décisions négatives. Même s'il n'introduit aucune demande d'asile, un ressortissant d'un pays tiers ne peut être contraint au retour par un État membre tant que ce dernier ne s'est pas assuré qu'il ne risque pas de violer le principe de non-refoulement.

Le plein respect de ces obligations est essentiel afin de garantir le respect du droit d'asile et de s'assurer qu'aucune personne n'est expulsée d'un État membre au risque de subir un préjudice grave ou d'être persécutée. La Commission surveille étroitement les États membres pour s'assurer qu'ils respectent la législation de l'UE en matière d'asile et de migration et entretient des contacts étroits avec eux, y compris avec les autorités maltaises. En tant que gardienne des traités, la Commission n'hésitera pas à prendre les mesures qui s'imposent lorsqu'il est clairement établi qu'un État membre a violé la législation de l'Union européenne.

Aucune opération conjointe de l'agence Frontex ne se déroule à Malte. L'agence Frontex suspend les opérations conjointes aux frontières ou y met un terme en cas de violation des droits fondamentaux. En ce qui concerne les opérations de retour coordonnées par Frontex, l'agence élabore actuellement un code de conduite spécifique tenant compte des législations européenne et internationale.

La Commission a tout mis en œuvre afin de faire preuve de solidarité envers Malte à tout moment en gérant la pression particulière qu'elle subit, et renvoie, à cet égard, à la réponse à la question écrite E-008245/2013.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008898/13
aan de Commissie
Marie-Christine Vergiat (GUE/NGL), Cecilia Wikström (ALDE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE), Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL), Sylvie Guillaume (S&D), Hélène Flautre (Verts/ALE), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE) en Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)
(19 juli 2013)

Betreft: Intentie van de Maltese regering om Somalische migranten terug te sturen naar Libië (9 juli 2013)

De Maltese regering heeft op 9 juli 2013 getracht Somalische migranten terug te drijven en gedwongen terug te sturen naar Libië. Het is duidelijk dat dergelijke acties plaatsgevonden zouden hebben indien er geen gecoördineerd protest van het maatschappelijk middenveld op verschillende niveaus was geweest.

— Welke stappen zal de Commissie ondernemen om ervoor te zorgen dat de lidstaten niet overgaan tot dergelijke terugkeermaatregelen, die in strijd zijn met de Europese en internationale regelgeving, zoals aangegeven door commissaris Malmström in haar verklaring van 9 juli 2013?

— Welke specifieke maatregelen zou de Commissie nemen tegen een lidstaat die migranten terugdrijft (of probeert terug te drijven) naar een derde land waarvan geweten is dat het onveilig is, zonder de vraag om bescherming van de migranten naar behoren te hebben onderzocht? Zou de Commissie overwegen inbreukprocedures op te starten? Zou ze eventueel waarschuwingen geven aan lidstaten wanneer plannen voor gedwongen terugkeer aan het licht komen? Heeft de Commissie contact opgenomen met de Maltese regering over deze kwestie sinds het voorval?

— Welke waarborgen bestaan er of zouden kunnen worden ingevoerd om ervoor te zorgen dat door Frontex gecoördineerde operaties niet betrokken zijn bij dergelijke maatregelen en dat EU-middelen niet worden gebruikt om ze uit te voeren?

— Welke maatregelen neemt de Commissie om ervoor te zorgen dat migranten die beweren bescherming nodig te hebben onmiddellijk en onbelemmerde toegang hebben tot advocaten, ngo's en het UNHCR, alsook tot passende (asiel-)procedures en opvangvoorzieningen?

— Malta heeft voortdurend om meer solidariteit gevraagd van de Unie om de huidige situatie aan te pakken. Kan de Commissie verduidelijken welke maatregelen er momenteel bestaan voor Malta en welke eventuele bijkomende maatregelen ze voorstelt om Malta te helpen om te gaan met de instroom van migranten zonder papieren?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(26 september 2013)

Volgens de EU-wetgeving heeft elke onderdaan van een derde land die het grondgebied van de EU binnenkomt, het recht om asiel aan te vragen. Elke aanvraag moet door de betrokken lidstaat grondig en volledig worden onderzocht. De EU-wetgeving garandeert het recht van asielzoekers op informatie, rechtsbijstand en vertegenwoordiging in rechte, de mogelijkheid om contact op te nemen met de UNHCR en het recht op een doeltreffende voorziening in rechte tegen afwijzende beslissingen. Ook als een onderdaan van een derde land geen asiel aanvraagt, mag deze pas worden teruggestuurd als vaststaat dat het non-refoulementbeginsel daardoor niet wordt geschonden.

Deze verplichtingen moeten volledig worden nageleefd om de eerbiediging van het asielrecht te garanderen en te zorgen dat niemand die door een lidstaat wordt teruggestuurd, blootstaat aan ernstig onrecht of vervolging. De Commissie let er sterk op dat de lidstaten de asiel- en migratiewetging van de EU naleven en onderhoudt daarover nauw contact met hen, dus ook met de Maltese autoriteiten. De Commissie zal als hoedster van de verdragen niet aarzelen om passende maatregelen te nemen als er duidelijk sprake is van schending van de EU-wetgeving.

Op Malta vinden geen door Frontex gecoördineerde acties plaats. Bij inbreuken op de grondrechten worden dergelijke gezamenlijke acties door Frontex opgeschort of beëindigd. Frontex werkt momenteel aan een specifieke gedragscode voor operaties die het coördineert, waarbij rekening wordt gehouden met de Europese en internationale regelgeving.

De Commissie doet al het mogelijke om solidariteit te blijven tonen met Malta wat het opvangen van de migratiedruk betreft. Zij verwijst in dit verband naar haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-008245/2013.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-008898/13
till kommissionen
Marie-Christine Vergiat (GUE/NGL), Cecilia Wikström (ALDE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE), Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL), Sylvie Guillaume (S&D), Hélène Flautre (Verts/ALE), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE) och Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)
(19 juli 2013)

Angående: Den maltesiska regeringens avsikt att skicka tillbaka somaliska migranter till Libyen (9 juli 2013)

Det står klart att den maltesiska regeringen med tvång verkligen skulle ha skickat tillbaka somaliska flyktingar till Libyen den 9 juli 2013 om det inte hade varit för den samordnade protest på olika nivåer inom det civila samhället som skedde.

— Vilka åtgärder kommer kommissionen att vidta för att se till att medlemsstaterna inte beordrar sådana återsändanden som bryter mot EU-lagstiftningen och internationell rätt, vilket kommissionsledamot Malmström betonade i sitt uttalande av den 9 juli 2013?

— Vilka specifika åtgärder skulle kommissionen vidta mot en medlemsstat som skickar (eller försöker skicka) tillbaka migranter till ett tredjeland som betraktas som osäkert, utan att i vederbörlig ordning ha utrett migranternas ”ansökningar om skydd”? Planerar kommissionen att använda sig av överträdelseförfaranden? Kommer kommissionen att överväga möjligheten att utfärda varningar till medlemsstater när planer på sådana återsändanden uppdagas? Har kommissionen varit i kontakt med den maltesiska regeringen för att diskutera denna fråga sedan händelsen ifråga inträffade?

— Vilka garantier kan ställas/har ställts för att säkerställa att Frontex-samordnade insatser inte utnyttjas för sådana åtgärder och att EU-medel inte används för att verkställa dem?

— Vad gör kommissionen för att se till att migranter som hävdar att de är i behov av skydd omedelbart och obehindrat kan ta kontakt med advokater, icke-statliga organisationer och UNHCR samt får tillgång till lämpliga (asyl-)förfaranden och mottagningsförhållanden?

— Malta har gång på gång efterlyst större solidaritet från EU för att hantera den pågående situationen. Kan kommissionen ange vilka åtgärder som för närvarande är tillgängliga för Malta och vilka – eventuella – ytterligare åtgärder den föreslår för att hjälpa Malta i landets ansträngningar för att hantera ankomsten av papperslösa migranter?

Svar från Cecilia Malmström på kommissionens vägnar
(26 september 2013)

I linje med EU-lagstiftningen har alla tredjelandsmedborgare som reser in i EU rätt att lämna in en asylansökan som måste granskas på ett tillfredsställande och fullständigt sätt av den berörda medlemsstaten. EU-lagstiftningen garanterar rätten till information, juridiskt bistånd och representation, möjlighet att meddela sig med UNHCR samt rätten till ett effektivt rättsmedel mot negativa beslut. Även om en tredjelandsmedborgare inte ansöker om asyl kan inget återförande utföras av en medlemsstat innan den har dragit slutsatsen att det inte finns någon risk för brott mot principen om non-refoulement.

Att till fullo leva upp till dessa skyldigheter är väsentligt eftersom det säkerställer respekten för rätten till asyl och på så sätt garanterar att ingen skickas tillbaka från en medlemsstat om personen löper risk att utsättas för förföljelse eller allvarlig skada. Kommissionen följer noga medlemsstaternas efterlevnad av EU:s asyl- och migrationslagstiftning och har nära kontakt med dem, inklusive med de maltesiska myndigheterna. Som fördragens väktare kommer kommissionen inte att tveka att vidta lämpliga åtgärder om det finns tydliga bevis på att en medlemsstat har brutit mot EU:s lagstiftning.

Malta är inte värd för någon gemensam Frontexoperation. Frontex ska tillfälligt upphäva eller avsluta gemensamma insatser vid gränserna i fall av kränkningar av de grundläggande rättigheterna. När det gäller återförandeinsatser som samordnas av Frontex, utformar byrån för närvarande en specifik uppförandekod som tar hänsyn till både EU-lagstiftning och internationell lagstiftning.

Kommissionen har satt in alla insatser för att visa solidaritet med Malta i arbetet med att hantera de särskilda påfrestningar som landet utsätts för och hänvisar i detta sammanhang till svaret på den skriftliga frågan E-008245/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008898/13
to the Commission
Marie-Christine Vergiat (GUE/NGL), Cecilia Wikström (ALDE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE), Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL), Sylvie Guillaume (S&D), Hélène Flautre (Verts/ALE), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE) and Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Intended pushback by the Maltese Government of Somali migrants to Libya (9 July 2013)

It is clear from the Maltese Government's attempt to carry out pushbacks and forced returns of Somali migrants to Libya on 9 July 2013 that such actions would have occurred had it not been for a concerted civil society protest at multiple levels.

— What steps will the Commission take to ensure that Member States do not engage in such returns, which violate EU and international law as pointed out by Commissioner Malmström in her statement of 9 July 2013?

— What specific measures would the Commission take against a Member State which pushes (or attempts to push) migrants back to a third country known to be unsafe, and without having properly assessed the migrants' protection claims? Does the Commission envisage the use of infringement proceedings? Will it consider the possibility of issuing warnings to Member States when plans for such pushbacks come to light? Has it engaged with the Maltese Government on this issue since the incident?

— What guarantees have been and/or can be put in place to ensure that Frontex- coordinated operations are not involved in such measures and that EU funds are not being used to implement them?

— What measures is the Commission taking in order to ensure that migrants who claim to be in need of protection have immediate and unimpeded access to lawyers, NGOs and the UNHCR, as well as to adequate (asylum) procedures and reception conditions?

— Given that Malta has consistently called for greater solidarity from the Union in dealing with the ongoing situation, can the Commission clarify what measures are currently available to Malta and what further measures, if any, it proposes in order to support Malta's efforts in dealing with the arrival of undocumented migrants?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(26 September 2013)

In line with EC law, all third-country nationals arriving on EU territory have the right to make an application for asylum which must be adequately and completely examined by the Member State concerned. EC law guarantees the right to information, legal assistance and representation, the opportunity to communicate with the UNHCR as well as the right to an effective remedy against negative decisions. Even if a third-country national does not apply for asylum, no return can be carried out by a Member State until it has concluded that there is no risk of violating the principle of non-refoulement.

Full compliance with these obligations is essential in view of guaranteeing respect for the right to asylum and ensuring that nobody is sent back from a Member State to face serious harm or persecution. The Commission is closely monitoring Member States' compliance with EU asylum and migration law and is in close contact with them, including the Maltese authorities. As guardian of the Treaties, the Commission will not hesitate to take the appropriate steps where there is clear evidence that a Member State has violated EC law.

Malta is not hosting any Frontex joint operation. Frontex shall suspend or terminate joint operations at the borders in cases of breaches of fundamental rights. As far as return operations coordinated by Frontex are concerned, the Agency currently prepares a specific code of conduct taking into accout EU and international legislation.

The Commission has put all efforts in place in view of continuously showing solidarity to Malta in dealing with the particular pressure confronting it and refers in this respect to the answer to Written Question E-008245/2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008899/13
an die Kommission
Hermann Winkler (PPE)
(19. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Maßnahmen für die Zielgruppe der älteren Menschen im Rahmen des ESF 2014-2020

Sachsen ist in besonderer Weise von der demografischen Entwicklung und dem damit einhergehenden stark ansteigenden Altenquotienten vor allem im ländlichen Raum betroffen. Ursachen sind neben der gestiegenen Lebenserwartung der starke Geburtenrückgang zu Beginn der 1990er Jahre und vor allem das negative Bevölkerungssaldo, d. h. die nach wie vor anhaltende Abwanderung von Männern und Frauen im erwerbsfähigen Alter aus Sachsen. Nur die Städte Dresden und Leipzig weisen ein positives Bevölkerungssaldo auf. Hinzu kommt, dass eine bestimme Zahl von Männern und Frauen in den ostdeutschen Ländern auf gebrochene Erwerbsbiografien zurückschauen oder inzwischen auch altersbedingt aus dem Arbeitsmarkt ausgegrenzt werden. Es steht zu befürchten, dass diesen Menschen Armut und soziale Ausgrenzung drohen.

1. Teilt die Kommission die Einschätzung, dass der ESF zur Unterstützung von Männern und Frauen nach Erreichen des gesetzlichen Renteneintrittsalters für Maßnahmen der aktiven Eingliederung eingesetzt werden kann?

2. Beispielhaft sei auf Programme hingewiesen,

— die niedrigschwellige Beschäftigungsangebote mit Qualifizierungsanteil und einen Zuverdienst für Menschen im Ruhestand bieten;

— die Lohnkostenzuschüsse oder Weiterbildungsmaßnahmen bei der Einstellung von Menschen aus dem Ruhestand in ein reguläres Beschäftigungsverhältnis fördern.

Ist die Kommission der Auffassung, dass es die Absicht dieser Programme sein soll, den Folgen der demografischen Entwicklung entgegenzutreten und der Altersdiskriminierung vorzubeugen?

3. Teilt die Kommission die Auffassung, dass diese Projekte einer Entlastung des Arbeitsmarktes, vor allem im Bereich der sozialen Berufe (z. B. Altenbetreuung und auch -pflege) dienen, bei denen sich bereits jetzt ein deutlicher Arbeitskräftemangel abzeichnet?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(5. September 2013)

1. Im Programmzeitraum 2014-2020 wird der Europäische Sozialfonds (ESF) das Hauptinstrument sein, mit dem die EU die Mitgliedstaaten bei der Armutsbekämpfung und bei der Förderung von Sozialinvestitionen und Inklusion unterstützt. Aus dem ESF können Initiativen gefördert werden, die Arbeitslosen unabhängig von ihrem Status oder Alter Gelegenheit zur Verbesserung ihrer Qualifikationen oder zum (Wieder-)Einstieg ins Erwerbsleben geben. Der ESF kann auch einen Beitrag leisten zur Bekämpfung von Diskriminierungen, u. a. durch Investitionen in die allgemeine und berufliche Bildung; ferner kann benachteiligten Menschen die Möglichkeit zur Integration in den Arbeitsmarkt und zur gesellschaftlichen Teilhabe verschafft werden. Von den Mitgliedstaaten wird erwartet, dass ihre vom ESF kofinanzierten Programme den im Rahmen des Europäischen Semesters gemeinsam ermittelten Herausforderungen begegnen; bei dieser Gelegenheit hat die Kommission im Übrigen betont, welche Bedeutung der Arbeitsmarktbeteiligung älterer Arbeitnehmer zukommt ([1]).

2. Der ESF unterstützt die Mitgliedstaaten bei der Bewältigung der Auswirkungen des demografischen Wandels und bei der Bekämpfung von Diskriminierungen auf dem Arbeitsmarkt. Dies geschieht durch Hilfen für Langzeitarbeitslose, ältere Arbeitnehmer und Menschen, deren Zugang zum Arbeitsmarkt eingeschränkt ist, weil sie eine Behinderung haben, diskriminiert werden oder unzureichend ausgebildet sind. Sie sollen in die Lage versetzt werden, die angesichts des wirtschaftlichen und industriellen Wandels erforderlichen Qualifikationen zu erwerben oder auszubauen. Für die vom Herrn Abgeordneten beschriebenen Maßnahmen könnten besonders die ESF-Investitionsprioritäten „aktives und gesundes Altern“ und „aktive Eingliederung“ relevant sein ([2]).

([1]) Das Ziel der Strategie Europa 2020, nämlich die Beschäftigungsquote von Männern und Frauen (im Alter von 20-64 Jahren) auf 75 % anzuheben, kann nur erreicht werden, wenn der Prozentsatz der Menschen steigt, die auch in höherem Alter noch arbeiten.

([2]) Siehe den Vorschlag der Kommission für eine Verordnung des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates über den Europäischen Sozialfonds und zur Aufhebung der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1081/2006 des Rates (KOM(2011)607 endg./2 vom 14. März 2012).

Die Richtlinie 2000/78/EG ([3]) verbietet Diskriminierungen aus Gründen des Alters im Bereich Beschäftigung und Beruf. Im Jahr 2013 plant die Kommission, dem Parlament und dem Rat einen Bericht zur Durchführung der Richtlinie vorzulegen, in dem sie besonders auf das Problem der Altersdiskriminierung eingehen will.

3. Ein guter Ansatz für die Entwicklung von Finanzierungsprogrammen könnte darin bestehen, das Problem der für die Zukunft erwarteten Arbeitskräfteengpässe anzugehen.

([3]) Richtlinie 2000/78/EG des Rates vom 27. November 2000 zur Festlegung eines allgemeinen Rahmens für die Verwirklichung der Gleichbehandlung in Beschäftigung und Beruf, ABl. L 303 vom 2.12.2000, S. 16. In Artikel 4 ist festgelegt, dass eine Ungleichbehandlung wegen des Alters dann keine Diskriminierung darstellt, wenn das betreffende Merkmal aufgrund der Art einer bestimmten beruflichen Tätigkeit oder der Bedingungen ihrer Ausübung eine wesentliche und entscheidende berufliche Anforderung darstellt, sofern es sich um einen rechtmäßigen Zweck und eine angemessene Anforderung handelt. Nach Artikel 6 stellen Ungleichbehandlungen wegen des Alters keine Diskriminierung dar, sofern sie objektiv und angemessen sind und durch ein legitimes Ziel gerechtfertigt sind und die Mittel zur Erreichung dieses Ziels angemessen und erforderlich sind.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008899/13
to the Commission
Hermann Winkler (PPE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Measures for the benefit of older people under the ESF 2014-2020

Saxony has been particularly badly affected by demographic change and the sharp increase in the old-age dependency ratio associated with this, especially in rural areas. This is the result of increased life expectancy, a big fall in the birth rate in the early 1990s and, in particular, net emigration, i.e. the sustained exodus of men and women of working age from Saxony. The only places in Saxony where the population is growing are the cities of Dresden and Leipzig. Furthermore, a number of men and women in the former East Germany have interruptions in their employment histories or have since been pushed out of the labour market as a result of their age. It is feared that these people are at risk of poverty and social exclusion.

1. Does the Commission agree that the ESF can be used to implement active inclusion measures supporting men and women who are above the statutory retirement age?

2. By way of example, reference is made to programmes such as those which

— offer retired persons readily accessible jobs with opportunities to retrain and additional income;

— promote wage subsidies or training measures when bringing pensioners into regular employment.

Does the Commission believe that these programmes ought to counteract the consequences of demographic change and prevent discrimination on the grounds of age?

3. Does the Commission agree that these projects serve to ease pressure on the labour market, particularly in the social care sector (e.g. care for the elderly), which is already showing clear signs of a shortage of workers?

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

1. For the 2014-20 programming period, the European Social Fund (ESF) will be the EU's main tool for helping Member States combat poverty and promote social investments and inclusion. Regardless of the beneficiaries' status or age, the ESF can support initiatives that help the unemployed to improve their skills and opportunities for getting (back) into work. It can also help to combat discrimination, including by investing in training and education, and to enable disadvantaged people get into the labour market and become active in society. Member State programmes co-financed by the ESF are expected to address the challenges identified jointly under the European Semester, during which the Commission stressed the importance of older workers' participation in the labour market ([1]).

2. The ESF helps Member States cope with the effects of demographic change and combat discrimination on the labour market by providing support for the long-term unemployed, older workers and people whose access to work is limited by disability, discrimination or a lack of training. It enables them to acquire or adapt their skills to economic and industrial changes. The ESF investment priorities on 'active and healthy ageing' and 'active inclusion' could be particularly relevant for the measures outlined by the Honourable Member. ([2])

Directive 2000/78/EC ([3]) prohibits discrimination on grounds of age in the area of employment and occupation. In 2013 the Commission plans to present a report to Parliament and the Council on the implementation of the directive, which will pay special attention to discrimination on grounds of age.

3. Tackling expected future labour-supply bottlenecks may be a good starting point for developing funding programmes.

([1]) The Europe 2020 target for raising the employment rate of men and women (20-64 years old) to 75% can only be met if a higher percentage of the population remains in employment until a later age.

([2]) See the Commission proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Social Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006 (COM(2011) 607 final /2 of 14 March 2012.

([3]) Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, OJ L 303, 2.12.2000, p. 16. Article 4 specifies that a difference in treatment based on age does not constitute discrimination where such a characteristic constitutes a genuine and determining occupational requirement, provided that the objective is legitimate and the requirement is proportionate. Article 6 states that differences in treatment on grounds of age are not considered discriminatory if they are objectively and reasonably justified by a legitimate aim and the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008900/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(19 Ιουλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Τουρκοκυπριακή σημαία στον Πενταδάκτυλο

Στις 6 Απριλίου 2010, κατάθεσα γραπτή ερώτηση προς την Επιτροπή (E-002001/2010) αναφορικά με την τοποθέτηση μιας τεραστίων διαστάσεων τουρκοκυπριακής σημαίας στις πλαγιές του βουνού Πενταδάκτυλος, στην κατεχόμενη Κύπρο, ζητώντας απαντήσεις σε σειρά ερωτημάτων που έθετα. Στην απάντηση της Επιτροπής προς τα ερωτήματά μου, ημερομηνίας 18 Μαΐου 2010 και με στοιχεία E-2001/2010, αναφέρονται μεταξύ άλλων και τα ακόλουθα:

«Η Επιτροπή έχει απευθύνει επιστολή προς τους υπεύθυνους για τα περιβαλλοντικά ζητήματα στο βόρειο τμήμα της Κύπρου ζητώντας πληροφορίες για τις περιβαλλοντικές επιπτώσεις που προκλήθηκαν από τη σημαία και τη διατήρησή της, αλλά δεν έχει λάβει ακόμη απάντηση.»

Η Επιτροπή καλείται να απαντήσει στα ακόλουθα:

1. Έχει η Επιτροπή λάβει απάντηση στην επιστολή που έχει αποστείλει στις αρχές του ψευδοκράτους, όπως αναφέρεται πιο πάνω; Αν ναι και η απάντηση είναι καταφατική, μπορεί η Επιτροπή να με ενημερώσει αναφορικά με το περιεχόμενο της απαντητικής επιστολής των αρχών του ψευδοκράτους;

2. Είναι ικανοποιημένη η Επιτροπή από την ανταπόκριση του ψευδοκράτους στην επιστολή και τα διαβήματά της; Αν όχι, τι προτίθεται να πράξει ώστε να υπάρξει συμμόρφωση του ψευδοκράτους προς τις πολιτικές της ΕΕ αναφορικά με το περιβάλλον και ειδικά για να τερματιστούν τα αρνητικά συναισθήματα που προκαλεί στη συντριπτική πλειοψηφία των πολιτών της Κύπρου η κατοχική σημαία στον Πενταδάκτυλο;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή έθεσε επανειλημμένως υπόψη της τουρκοκυπριακής κοινότητας τις ανησυχίες της σχετικά με τον περιβαλλοντικό αντίκτυπο που θα έχει η σημαία για τον Πενταδάκτυλο και έλαβε διαβεβαιώσεις ότι δεν θα έχει σημαντικές συνέπειες για την υγεία ή το περιβάλλον.

Υπογραμμίζεται ότι, αφού το κεκτημένο της ΕΕ παραμένει υπό αναστολή στο βόρειο τμήμα της Κύπρου, η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει νομικά μέσα για την επιβολή της συμμόρφωσης με τη σχετική περιβαλλοντική νομοθεσία της ΕΕ σε αυτό το τμήμα του νησιού. Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή εξακολουθεί να ενθαρρύνει τα ενδιαφερόμενα μέρη να εφαρμόσουν τα κατάλληλα μέτρα προστασίας του περιβάλλοντος στο βόρειο τμήμα της Κύπρου.

Το ζήτημα που έθεσε το Αξιότιμο Μέλος καταδεικνύει για μία ακόμη φορά τον επείγοντα χαρακτήρα της συνολικής διευθέτησης του Κυπριακού, πράγμα που θα επέτρεπε την εφαρμογή της νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ στον τομέα του περιβάλλοντος.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008900/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Turkish Cypriot flat on Mount Pentadaktylos

On 6 April 2010, I tabled a written question to the Commission (E-002001/2010) about the raising of a huge Turkish Cypriot flag on the slopes of Mount Pentadaktylos in occupied Cyprus, in which I asked for replies to a series of questions. In its reply to my questions dated 18 May 2010 (E-2001/2010), the Commission stated, *inter alia*:

'The Commission has addressed a letter to those responsible for environmental issues in the northern part of Cyprus requesting information on the environmental impact caused by the flag and its maintenance. A reply is still outstanding.'

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Has the Commission received a reply to the letter which it sent to the authorities of the pseudo-state, as stated above? If so and if the reply was affirmative, can the Commission tell me what was said in the letter in reply from the authorities of the pseudo-state?

2. Is the Commission satisfied with the response by the pseudo-state to its letter and demarches? If not, what does it intend to do in order to obtain compliance by the pseudo-state with EU environmental policies and, in particular, an end to the negative sentiments provoked in the overwhelming majority of Cypriot citizens by the occupying flat on Mount Pentadaktylos?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

The Commission has raised several times with the Turkish Cypriot community its concerns regarding the environmental impact of the flag on Mount Pentadaktylos and was given assurance that no significant health or environmental effects arise from it.

It should be noted that since the EU *acquis* is currently suspended in the northern part of Cyprus, the Commission does not have any legal tool to enforce compliance with the relevant environmental EU legislation in that part of the island. However, the Commission continues to encourage interested parties to apply appropriate conservation measures in the northern part of Cyprus.

The issue raised by the Honourable Member emphasises once again the urgency of reaching a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem, which would allow for the application of the EU legislation in the field of environment.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008901/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(19 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per la manutenzione delle ville storiche di Roma

La città di Roma possiede un ricco patrimonio ambientale, essendo il 68 % del suo territorio ricoperto di parchi, giardini e pinete. Per la bellezza dei giardini, l'originalità delle soluzioni architettoniche e la ricchezza di contenuti artistici, i parchi e le ville di Roma spesso rappresentano veri e propri musei all'aperto.

Tale patrimonio ha bisogno non solo di essere mantenuto, ma anche implementato e reso maggiormente fruibile dai cittadini e dai turisti. Vi è un progetto di recupero e valorizzazione che mira ad attuare un unico sistema di manutenzione globale e sistematico di tutte le ville storiche di Roma. Il progetto prevede quindi un *pool* di imprese specializzate che si occupino in modo completo e organizzato del funzionamento di giardini, parchi e ville storiche della capitale.

Il progetto prevede una serie di interventi innovativi:

— utilizzo di attrezzature ecologiche a zero emissioni per le operazioni di manutenzione;

— utilizzo di mezzi ecologici (elettrici) per lo spostamento del personale addetto all'interno dei parchi e giardini;

— sistema di compostaggio attraverso il riciclo dei rifiuti prodotti nelle ville;

— monitoraggio attraverso un sistema di controllo GPS;

— valorizzazione di aree attraverso dei totem informativi multimediali.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione chiarire:

— se la realizzazione del progetto descritto è ammissibile al sostegno finanziario europeo;

— quali interventi sono previsti per il periodo 2014-2020 nel settore della valorizzazione del patrimonio ambientale e culturale;

— il quadro generale della situazione.

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(4 settembre 2013)

La Commissione europea attribuisce grande importanza alla tutela del patrimonio culturale. Sebbene il trattato UE affermi che si tratta in primo luogo di una responsabilità nazionale, sono disponibili vari programmi di finanziamento dell'UE ([1]).

Nel settore dell'ambiente i finanziamenti per i progetti innovativi che offrono vantaggi ambientali significativi sono disponibili mediante il programma LIFE+ «Politica e *governance* ambientali» ([2]). In funzione del rispetto di altri criteri e di una procedura competitiva di selezione, potrebbero ricevere un sostegno le azioni che prevedono l'uso di attrezzature a emissioni zero per le operazioni di manutenzione, l'uso di veicoli ecocompatibili per il trasporto, il riciclaggio dei rifiuti e il monitoraggio per mezzo di un sistema di controllo GPS.

Il settimo invito a presentare proposte per il programma LIFE+ è stato pubblicato il 19 febbraio 2013 ([3]), con termine il 26 giugno 2013. Questo è stato l'ultimo invito previsto dall'attuale programma LIFE+ e il regolamento LIFE per il periodo 2014/2020 è in fase di discussione a livello interistituzionale. Pertanto non è ancora possibile confermare i criteri di ammissibilità che saranno applicati.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/index_it.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/index.htm
([3]) Gazzetta ufficiale C 47 del 19.2.2013, pag. 21.

Informazioni circa altri programmi di finanziamento dell'UE che hanno ad oggetto investimenti nell'ambiente sono reperibili sul sito internet della Commissione ([4]).

Il futuro programma dell'UE «Europa creativa» dedicherà una particolare attenzione al patrimonio culturale. Fra le misure saranno compresi: il sostegno a progetti transnazionali (http://ec.europa.eu/culture), il premio del patrimonio culturale dell'Unione europea, le giornate europee del patrimonio e il marchio del patrimonio europeo, adottato di recente.

Pure il Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale offre possibilità di finanziamenti a favore del patrimonio culturale, che rimane uno dei suoi obiettivi tematici, anche nella proposta della Commissione per il periodo 2014-2020.

([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/otherfunding.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008901/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Possible funding to maintain historical villas in Rome

Rome has a rich natural heritage, with 68% of the city consisting of parks, gardens and pine forests. Rome's parks and villas are often true open-air museums, given the beauty of their gardens, their original architecture and their wealth of art.

This heritage needs to be maintained, but also developed and made more citizen- and tourist-friendly. A restoration and development project aims to institute a single system for the comprehensive and systematic maintenance of all of Rome's historical villas. The project envisages a pool of specialised businesses which will ensure the full functioning, in an organised way, of the Italian capital's gardens, parks and historical villas.

The project provides for a number of innovative measures:

— use of zero-emission environmentally friendly equipment for maintenance operations;

— use of environmentally friendly vehicles (electric) to transport personnel within parks and gardens;

— a composting system which recycles waste produced in the villas;

— monitoring by means of a GPS control system;

— enhancement of areas by means of multimedia information points.

In light of the above, can the Commission:

— clarify whether the above project is eligible for European financial support;

— state what interventions are planned for the period 2014-2020 with regard to the promotion of natural and cultural heritage;

— provide an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2013)

The European Commission attaches great importance to the preservation of cultural heritage. Although the EU Treaty states that this is primarily a national responsibility, a number of EU funding programmes are available ([1]).

For the environment, funding for innovative projects that offer significant environmental benefits is available through the LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance programme ([2]). Subject to other criteria and a competitive selection process, actions supported might include the use of zero-emission equipment for maintenance operations, the use of environmentally friendly vehicles, recycling of waste, and monitoring by means of a GPS control system.

The seventh LIFE+ call for proposals was published on 19 February 2013 ([3]) with a deadline for submission on 26 June 2013. This was the last call under the current LIFE+ Programme and the LIFE Regulation for 2014/2020 is still being discussed at interinstitutional level. Therefore, it is not yet possible to confirm the eligibility criteria that will apply.

Information about other EU funding programmes which target investment in the environment can be found on the Commission website. ([4])

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/index.htm
([3]) Official Journal (2013/C 47/21).
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/otherfunding.htm

The EU's future Creative Europe programme will pay special attention to cultural heritage. Measures will include support for cross-border projects (http://ec.europa.eu/culture); the EU Prize for Cultural Heritage; European Heritage Days; and the newly-adopted European Heritage Label.

The European Regional Development Fund also offers opportunities for cultural heritage, which remains one of the Fund's thematic objectives, including in the Commission's proposal for 2014-2020.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008902/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(19 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per la realizzazione di una pista ecologica

La realizzazione della pista ecologica all'interno del Parco di Veio è una proposta che nasce da un'analisi del contesto e dal desiderio di fornire uno strumento di riqualificazione ambientale, urbana e ad uso sportivo. Si tratta di un percorso di attraversamento dell'area sud del Parco di Veio destinata all'uso esclusivo di biciclette e veicoli elettrici che, sviluppandosi in parallelo rispetto alla Via Cassia, permetterebbe in parte la decongestione della strada statale e creerebbe un'arteria di collegamento con la pista ciclabile di Ponte Milvio. L'idea di base è quella di sfruttare i sedimi presenti lungo le sponde del Fosso Valchetta o Cremera.

L'intervento sarebbe caratterizzato da principi di alta compatibilità ambientale, ricercata sia nella scelta dei materiali per la pavimentazione della pista (pavimentazioni ecologiche e/o prodotte da materiali riciclati) sia nelle misure di sostegno per la fruibilità della pista (illuminazione con lampioni fotovoltaici, segnaletica prodotta con materiali naturali certificati). Inoltre la realizzazione dell'opera comporterebbe, come utile conseguenza, la messa in sicurezza delle sponde del Fosso Valchetta o Cremera, un significativo passo avanti nell'implementazione delle politiche di prevenzione e riduzione del rischio di dissesto ecologico.

In breve, l'ipotesi di realizzazione di un itinerario ecologico sul sedime di un fosso presuppone:

— la facilità di manutenzione dei corsi d'acqua;

— la bonifica di aree dismesse ed abbandonate;

— la rifunzionalizzazione di percorsi potenzialmente praticabili attraverso il territorio.

L'intervento presenta quindi, di per sé, qualità di tipo paesaggistico, ambientale e funzionale di pregio. Allo stesso tempo si avrà una ricaduta anche sull'economia del parco, in quanto la pista contribuisce alla sostenibilità di piccole attività economiche connesse al sistema dell'accoglienza e della vivibilità del sistema parco.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione chiarire:

— se la realizzazione del progetto descritto è ammissibile al sostegno finanziario europeo;

— quali interventi sono previsti per il periodo 2014-2020 nel settore della valorizzazione del patrimonio ambientale e per la promozione di attività nel settore del turismo;

— il quadro generale della situazione.

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(23 settembre 2013)

1. Il programma 2007-2013 per il Lazio, cofinanziato dal Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR), prevede la possibilità di cofinanziare interventi per la protezione e la valorizzazione del patrimonio naturale, il miglioramento della qualità dell'aria e la promozione della biodiversità, tra i quali potrebbe rientrare il progetto descritto dall'onorevole parlamentare. In linea tuttavia con il principio di gestione condivisa, che si applica alla politica di coesione, spetta alle autorità nazionali la responsabilità per la selezione e l'attuazione dei progetti. La Commissione invita pertanto l'onorevole parlamentare a contattare direttamente l'autorità di gestione del programma:

Autorità di gestione POR Lazio
Direzione Generale per lo Sviluppo economico e le Attività produttive
Via Rosa Raimondi Garibaldi 7
00145 Roma
adgcomplazio@regione.lazio.it

2. Tra le priorità di investimento proposte per la politica di coesione del periodo 2014-2020 più di una potrebbe fornire un sostegno diretto o indiretto ai programmi e ai progetti nei settori del patrimonio naturale e/o del turismo, ad esempio mediante opportunità di investimento nella biodiversità, nei servizi ecosistemici e nelle infrastrutture verdi, nel patrimonio culturale o nell'innovazione e competitività delle PMI.

3. Esempi delle tipologie di investimenti cofinanziati dalla politica di coesione in Italia nel periodo 2007-2013 sono disponibili al seguente sito web: http://www.opencoesione.gov.it/. Analoghe informazioni a livello di UE sono reperibili al seguente indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/projects/stories/index_it.cfm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008902/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Possible funding to create a cycle path

The proposal to create a cycle path in Parco di Veio is the result of a study of the area and the desire to provide an instrument for environmental and urban regeneration and for sports purposes. It consists of a path through the southern part of Parco di Veio intended for use exclusively by bicycles and electrical vehicles which, by running parallel to the Via Cassia, would partly reduce traffic congestion on the latter main road and would create a link to the Ponte Milvio cycle path. The basic idea is to use the land along the Fosso Valchetta, or Cremera, river banks.

The project would comply with principles of high environmental compatibility, both with regard to the choice of materials to surface the path (surfacing materials which are eco-friendly and/or produced from recycled materials) and with regard to support measures for the path's usability (lighting with photovoltaic lampposts, signs made from certified natural products). Furthermore, the realisation of this project would have a positive consequence, namely making the banks of the Fosso Valchetta, or Cremera, safe, a significant step forwards in the implementation of policies to prevent or reduce the risk of environmental degradation.

In brief, requirements for the creation of a green itinerary along a water channel are:

— the maintainability of watercourses;

— the reclamation of disused and abandoned areas;

— the restoration of potentially usable paths through the area.

Therefore the project, in itself, has high landscape, environmental and functional value. At the same time, it will also have an effect on the park's economy, since the path will contribute to the sustainability of small economic activities associated with visitor services and the user-friendliness of the park system.

In light of the above, can the Commission:

— clarify whether the above project is eligible for European financial support;

— state what interventions are planned for the period 2014-2020 with regard to the promotion of natural heritage, and to promote activities in the tourism sector;

— provide an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(23 September 2013)

1. The 2007-2013 programme for Lazio, co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), provides for the possibility to co-finance interventions for the protection and exploitation of natural heritage, air-quality improvement and the promotion of biodiversity which might include the project described by the Honourable Member. However, in line with the shared management principle used for cohesion policy, project selection and implementation is the responsibility of the national authorities. The Commission therefore suggests that the Honourable Member contact directly the managing authority of the programe:

Autorità di gestione POR Lazio
Direzione Generale per lo Sviluppo economico e le Attività produttive
Via Rosa Raimondi Garibaldi 7
00145 Roma
adgcomplazio@regione.lazio.it

2. Among the proposed investment priorities for 2014-2020 cohesion policy are several which may provide direct or indirect support to programmes and projects in the areas of natural heritage and/or tourism such as through opportunities for investment in biodiversity, ecosystem services and green infrastructure, cultural heritage or innovation and the competitiveness of SMEs.

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

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008903/13
aan de Commissie
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(19 juli 2013)

Betreft: Registratie auto's in andere lidstaat, discussie over „gewone verblijfplaats"

Onlangs werd ik door een Europese burger gewezen op een probleem dat hij ondervindt met de registratie van zijn auto.

De burger heeft zijn officiële verblijfplaats in België (omdat hij in België in het bevolkingsregister is ingeschreven), maar zijn gewone verblijfplaats in Frankrijk (omdat hij meer dan 185 dagen per jaar in Frankrijk verblijft). De burger heeft zijn auto officieel in Frankrijk ingeschreven maar de Belgische staat eist dat hij zijn auto in België registreert, aangezien hij in het Belgische bevolkingsregister is ingeschreven.

De burger diende bij de Commissie al een klacht in onder referentie CHAP-1883 — D2615699. Ook SOLVIT heeft de zaak onderzocht, onder referentie 163891/12/BE. SOLVIT gaat er vanuit dat er sprake is van een verkeerde toepassing en misschien zelfs van verkeerde implementatie van de Europese regels in België.

De Europese en Belgische definitie van „gewone verblijfplaats" is niet volledig gelijk. Beide definities verwijzen naar de plaats waar de persoon gedurende ten minste 185 dagen per jaar verblijft, maar in België is die definitie gekoppeld aan de verplichting om zich in het bevolkingsregister in te schrijven, terwijl Europa enkel de 185 dagen als criterium aanziet.

Vandaar volgende vragen aan de Commissie:

1. Ziet de Commissie in bovenstaande zaak een probleem met de toepassing van het Europees recht?

2. Indien er sprake is van verkeerde toepassing van Europese wetgeving door België, is de Commissie dan van plan daar tegen op te treden? Zal zij een onderzoek naar de bewuste wetgeving in België openen?

3. Ziet de Commissie een oplossing voor het probleem van deze burger via het voorstel voor een Verordening tot vereenvoudiging van de overbrenging van in een andere lidstaat ingeschreven motorvoertuigen binnen de interne markt [COM(2012)0164)]? Artikel 3 van het Commissievoorstel stelt immers dat de auto geregistreerd moet worden daar waar de burger zijn gewone verblijfplaats heeft.

Antwoord van de heer Tajani namens de Commissie
(3 september 2013)

1. Vooralsnog bestaan er geen geharmoniseerde regels voor de registratieprocedure voor auto's op EU-niveau. De Europese definitie van gewone verblijfplaats waarnaar het geachte Parlementslid verwijst, is vastgelegd in Richtlijn 83/182/EEG, waarin enkel naar de gewone verblijfsplaats wordt verwezen om na te gaan of de tijdelijke invoer van voertuigen voor bepaalde belastingvrijstellingen in aanmerking komt.

Uit de jurisprudentie van het Europees Hof van Justitie (zaak C-262/99, Louloudakis) waarin de richtlijn wordt geïnterpreteerd, volgt dat een persoon slechts één gewone verblijfplaats kan hebben. Wanneer de gewone verblijfplaats van de persoon wordt betwist, moet daarover een besluit worden genomen door de nationale rechtbank, die daarbij alle omstandigheden van het individuele geval in aanmerking neemt.

2. De Commissie is niet van mening dat de richtlijn in dit geval verkeerd door België is toegepast.

3. Het voorstel voor een verordening tot vereenvoudiging van de overbrenging van in een andere lidstaat ingeschreven motorvoertuigen binnen de interne markt zou, wanneer het wordt aangenomen, voorzien in een oplossing voor soortgelijke gevallen. In dit voorstel wordt bepaald dat een lidstaat alleen inschrijving op zijn grondgebied van een in een andere lidstaat ingeschreven voertuig mag eisen indien de houder van het kentekenbewijs zijn gewone verblijfplaats op het grondgebied van eerstgenoemde lidstaat heeft. In artikel 3 van het voorstel worden de criteria vastgesteld voor het bepalen van de gewone verblijfplaats met het oog op de registratie van voertuigen ([1]).

Dit voorstel wordt momenteel besproken in het kader van de gewone wetgevingsprocedure.

([1]) In het voorstel wordt bepaald dat onder de „gewone verblijfplaats" voor natuurlijke personen die niet handelen in de uitoefening van hun beroepsactiviteit wordt verstaan: i) de plaats waar iemand gewoonlijk verblijft, dat wil zeggen gedurende ten minste 185 dagen per kalenderjaar, wegens persoonlijke en beroepsmatige bindingen, of, voor personen zonder beroepsmatige bindingen, wegens persoonlijke bindingen waaruit nauwe banden blijken tussen hemzelf en de plaats waar hij woont en ii) voor iemand die zijn beroepsmatige bindingen op een andere plaats heeft dan zijn persoonlijke bindingen en daardoor afwisselend verblijft op verschillende plaatsen gelegen in twee of meer lidstaten: de plaats van zijn persoonlijke bindingen, op voorwaarde dat hij daar op geregelde tijden terugkeert. De voorwaarde van punt ii) vervalt wanneer de betrokkene in een lidstaat verblijft voor een opdracht van een bepaalde duur. Het feit dat een universiteit of een school wordt bezocht, houdt niet in dat de gewone verblijfplaats wordt verplaatst.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008903/13
to the Commission
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(19 July 2013)

Subject: Registration of motor vehicles in another Member State: debate concerning 'normal residence'

A European citizen recently drew my attention to a problem which he has encountered with the registration of his car.

He is officially resident in Belgium (as he is entered in the population register there), but has his normal residence in France (because he lives in France for more than 185 days of the year). He has officially registered his car in France, but the Belgian State requires him to register it in Belgium because he is entered in the Belgian population register.

He has already complained to the Commission (ref. CHAP-1883 — D2615699). Solvit has also investigated the case (ref. 163891/12/BE. Solvit), taking the view that the European rules are being applied wrongly, and perhaps even implemented wrongly, in Belgium.

The European and Belgian definitions of 'normal residence' are not entirely the same. Both definitions refer to the place where the person lives for at least 185 days of the year, but in Belgium the definition is linked to an obligation to have oneself entered in the population register, whereas Europe regards the 185 days as the only criterion.

1. Does the Commission consider there to be a problem in applying European law in this case?

2. If European law is being wrongly applied by Belgium, will the Commission take action to deal with this? Will it investigate the relevant legislation in Belgium?

3. Does the Commission consider that this problem could be solved by the proposal for a regulation simplifying the transfer of motor vehicles registered in another Member State within the Single Market [COM(2012) 0164)]? Article 3 of the Commission proposal stipulates that the vehicle must be registered where the holder usually lives.

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

1. For the time being, there are no harmonised rules for the registration procedure of cars at EU level. The European definition of normal residence to which the Honourable Member refers is laid down in Directive 83/182/CEE, which refers to the place of normal residence only for the purpose of ascertaining whether the temporary importation of vehicles can benefit from certain tax exemptions.

It follows from the case-law of the European Court of Justice (C-262/99, Louloudakis) interpreting the directive that an individual can have only one normal residence. Where the place of the normal residence of the person is disputed, the decision to that effect is to be made by the national tribunal considering all the circumstances of the individual case.

2. The Commission does not consider that the directive has been wrongly applied by Belgium in the present case.

3. The proposal for a regulation simplifying the transfer of motor vehicles registered in another Member State within the single market, if adopted, would provide for a solution in similar cases. This proposal foresees that a Member State may only require registration on its territory of a vehicle registered in another Member State if the holder of the registration certificate has his 'normal residence' on its territory. Article 3 of the proposal sets the criteria to determine the 'normal residence' for the purpose of vehicle registration ([1]).

This proposal is currently being discussed under the ordinary legislative procedure.

([1]) For natural persons not acting in the course of their business activity, the proposal states that 'normal residence' is: (i) the place where a person usually lives, that is for at least 185 days in each calendar year, because of personal and occupational ties, or, in the case of a person with no occupational ties because of personal ties which show close links between that person and the place where he is living; (ii) for a person whose occupational ties are in a different place from his personal ties and who consequently lives in turn in different places situated in two or more Member States, the place of his personal ties, provided that such person returns there regularly. The condition set out in point (ii) shall not apply when the person is living in a Member State in order to carry out a task of a definite duration. Attendance at a university or school shall not imply transfer of normal residence.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008904/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Despilfarro de fondos europeos en Galicia

El pasado 13 de mayo, László Ándor, Comisario de Empleo y Asuntos Sociales, participó en un debate celebrado por la Fundación Fuhem en el que afirmó que España ha despilfarrado los fondos europeos de cohesión por haber aplicado políticas poco inteligentes.

El Comisario llegó a sostener que este despilfarro se encuentra en la base de los problemas de competitividad que arrastra la economía española. En España, los fondos de cohesión se han despilfarrado en la construcción de infraestructuras inútiles o duplicadas que no han mejorado en nada la competitividad. Estas infraestructuras tan solo han beneficiado a las grandes empresas de construcción, que, en última instancia, han sido las grandes receptoras de los fondos europeos.

Durante años, estos fondos se han empleado para beneficiar a estas empresas y ahora ha aparecido información sobre los pagos que dichas compañías supuestamente realizaban a la cúpula del partido que gestionaba los proyectos. Esto podría explicar la lógica con la que las autoridades españolas han estado elaborando los proyectos financiados con fondos europeos, por lo que resulta necesario recabar la mayor información posible sobre la evaluación de dichos proyectos por la Comisión.

En vista de las críticas lanzadas por el Comisario y a propósito de la utilización de dichos fondos, consideramos necesario saber qué proyectos, a la luz de las evaluaciones que la Comisión ha debido realizar, son considerados como «poco inteligentes» y cuáles son las alternativas que la Comisión Europea entiende que podrían haber sido ejecutadas en su lugar. Galicia es una de las regiones europeas con mayor desempleo y por eso urge saber cómo evalúa el Comisario los proyectos realizados en la región.

¿Qué proyectos financiados con los fondos de cohesión suponen para la Comisión proyectos que no han servido para el impulso económico de Galicia y un despilfarro de los fondos europeos?

¿Qué alternativas considera que habrían podido ser financiadas en Galicia para generar un incremento de la actividad económica y un descenso del desempleo?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de septiembre de 2013)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a las preguntas escritas E-5454/13, E-5885/13 y E-6360/13 del Sr. Meyer ([1]), así como a su respuesta a las preguntas escritas E-006691/2013, E-007043/2013, E-007662/2013 y E-008153/2013, presentadas también por el Sr. Meyer.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008904/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Wasting of European funds in Galicia

On 13 May 2013, László Andor, the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, took part in a debate held by the FUHEM Foundation in which he stated that Spain had wasted European cohesion funds by implementing policies that were not very smart.

The Commissioner even claimed that such waste was at the root of the competitiveness problems hanging over the Spanish economy. In Spain, cohesion funds have been wasted on building useless or duplicated infrastructure that has not led to any improvement in competitiveness at all. Such infrastructure has only benefited the large construction companies, which ultimately have been the main recipients of European funds.

These funds have been used to benefit these companies for years, and information has recently come to light on the payments that they have allegedly made to the leaders of the party administering the projects. That could account for the thinking behind the way the Spanish authorities have been drafting projects funded with European money, so it is vital to gather as much information as possible on the Commission's evaluation of those projects.

In the light of the Commissioner's scathing remarks about the use of said funds, we believe we should be told which projects are regarded as not very smart, based on the evaluations that the Commission must have carried out, and what alternatives the Commission thinks could have been put into practice instead. Galicia is among the regions with the highest unemployment in Europe and we therefore need to know how the Commissioner rates the projects carried out in the region.

Which projects financed from cohesion funds does the Commission believe have not helped to boost Galicia's economy and have been a waste of European funds?

What alternatives does it think could have been financed in Galicia so as to increase economic activity and cut unemployment?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written questions E-5454/13, E-5885/13 and E-6360/13 by Mr Meyer ([1]) and its answer to written questions E-006691/2013, E-007043/2013, E-007662/2013, E-008153/2013 by Mr Meyer.

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008905/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Minería en Colombia y responsabilidad de las empresas europeas

En el pasado mes de mayo de 2013, la Controlaría General de la República de Colombia informó acerca de las graves violaciones a los derechos humanos en las zonas mineras y alertó de que «el 80 % de las violaciones a los derechos humanos que ocurren en Colombia se presentan en los municipios mineros-petroleros» *con la agravante de que el 78 % de las mismas son contra sindicalistas*.

Según el mismo informe, el 86 % de la producción minera se hace en unidades de producción minera que no cuentan con título minero y, de los títulos mineros existentes, menos del 10 % cuentan con licencia ambiental. Además, desde el mes de mayo de 2013, volvió a regir la Ley minera del 2001, menos protectora que la Ley del 2010 en materia ambiental, debido a que el Gobierno colombiano no presentó un nuevo proyecto de Ley en el plazo establecido por la Corte Constitucional. Asimismo, el Gobierno colombiano declaró como «Área Estratégica Minera» un territorio de 17 089 085 hectáreas ubicado, en buena parte, en la Amazonia.

Teniendo en cuenta que el 80 % de las violaciones de derechos humanos se cometen en los municipios con un importante peso de los sectores minero y/o petrolero, aunque éstos solo representan el 35 % del total de municipios, ¿piensa la Comisión establecer algún mecanismo o herramienta de control del cumplimiento de los derechos humanos en estos municipios y solicitar al Gobierno colombiano un refuerzo de los mecanismos que garantice los derechos humanos en esas condiciones? ¿Piensa la Comisión tener en cuenta y consultar a la sociedad civil en el marco de este diálogo?

En el marco del Acuerdo Comercial entre la UE y Colombia, ¿qué mecanismos de control y sanción piensa ejecutar la Comisión para asegurar que las empresas europeas y sus filiales no estén involucradas en violaciones a los derechos humanos o daños al medioambiente?

¿Cómo piensa la Comisión plantear el tema de las violaciones a los derechos humanos y de la protección del medioambiente ligado a las industrias extractivas en el marco del diálogo UE-Colombia?

¿Piensa la Comisión establecer mecanismos para asegurar que productos o materias primas relacionadas con violaciones de los derechos humanos o daños al medioambiente no entren al mercado europeo?

Respuesta conjunta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de septiembre de 2013)

La protección de los derechos humanos, medioambientales y laborales en el fomento de las industrias extractivas ocupa un lugar destacado en las negociaciones entre la UE y Colombia y ha sido uno de los temas de debate de la última reunión celebrada en el contexto del diálogo político bilateral de alto nivel. La UE prestará ayuda al Gobierno colombiano para la organización de una conferencia sobre el mundo empresarial y los derechos humanos, que incluirá temas relacionados con la responsabilidad social de las empresas, durante el segundo semestre de 2013. También será posible abordar estas cuestiones en el marco institucional previsto por el Acuerdo Comercial UE-Colombia, que se está aplicando con carácter provisional desde el 1 de agosto de 2013.

La UE espera que todas las empresas europeas asuman su responsabilidad a la hora de respetar los derechos humanos y de cumplir la legislación nacional. Corresponde a las autoridades nacionales competentes, incluidos los tribunales, garantizar que la legislación nacional se aplique de forma correcta y efectiva.

La UE ha adoptado en fecha reciente una serie de iniciativas para mejorar la extracción responsable, el desarrollo sostenible y la gobernanza por parte de las empresas europeas. Cabe resaltar al respecto la consulta pública sobre una posible iniciativa de la UE para la extracción responsable de minerales procedentes de zonas afectadas por conflictos y de alto riesgo, que concluyó el 26 de junio de 2013. Esta iniciativa también es pertinente en el caso específico de Colombia.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008951/13
à la Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(22 juillet 2013)

Objet: Industrie minière en Colombie

L'Union européenne est un consommateur important de matières premières, dont un certain nombre provient d'Amérique latine et de Colombie. En 2009, l'Union a importé 56 % de toutes les ventes de carbone de la Colombie.

Un rapport de la *Contraloría General de la República* de Colombie démontre que certaines entreprises ne respectent pas le droit des populations locales. L'étude souligne la coïncidence entre les zones minières — pétrolières et les zones de violations de Droits de l'homme: déplacements forcés, non-consultation des populations autochtones, épuisement des ressources d'eau et pollution ayant un impact sur la santé de la population locale. Ainsi, 80 % des violations des Droits de l'homme en Colombie ont lieu dans ces zones qui représentent 35 % du territoire.

L'Union européenne exige des entreprises européennes qu'elles déclarent leurs revenus tant dans les pays dans lesquels elles opèrent que dans leur pays d'origine. La *Contraloría* révèle cependant que, en Colombie, certaines entreprises extractives ont fait de l'évasion fiscale.

1. Comment la Commission s'assure-t-elle que les entreprises européennes d'extraction et de commerce de matières premières se conforment à leurs obligations de transparence et fiscales en Colombie?

2. La Commission et le SAE ont-ils connaissance des violations des Droits de l'homme liées aux agissements des entreprises européennes d'extraction minière?

3. Comment comptent-ils faire respecter les Droits de l'homme, les droits syndicaux et la protection de l'environnement dans le cadre du commerce avec la Colombie?

Réponse commune donnée par M^me^ la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante Ashton au nom de la Commission
(13 septembre 2013)

La protection des Droits de l'homme, de l'environnement et du travail en rapport avec le développement de l'industrie extractive occupe une place de premier ordre dans les relations entre l'UE et la Colombie, et a entre autres été évoquée lors de la dernière session du dialogue politique bilatéral de haut niveau. L'UE aidera le gouvernement colombien à organiser une conférence sur les entreprises et les Droits de l'homme, qui abordera les questions relatives à la responsabilité sociale des entreprises, au cours du deuxième semestre de l'année 2013. Il sera également possible de traiter ces questions dans le cadre institutionnel prévu par l'accord commercial entre l'Union européenne et la Colombie, qui est appliqué à titre provisoire depuis le 1^er^ août 2013.

L'UE s'attend à ce que toutes les entreprises européennes s'acquittent de leurs obligations en matière de respect des Droits de l'homme et de la législation nationale. Il appartient aux autorités nationales compétentes, y compris les tribunaux, de veiller à ce que la législation nationale soit correctement et effectivement appliquée.

L'UE a récemment lancé une série d'initiatives pour améliorer la responsabilité de l'approvisionnement, le développement durable et la gouvernance, de la part des entreprises européennes. Il convient de souligner en particulier la consultation publique sur une éventuelle initiative de l'UE pour l'approvisionnement responsable en minerais provenant de zones de conflit et des régions à haut risque, qui a été conclue le 26 juin 2013. Une telle initiative serait également pertinente dans le cas spécifique de la Colombie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008905/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Mining in Colombia and responsibility of European companies

In May 2013, the Court of Auditors of the Republic of Colombia reported on serious human rights violations in mining areas and warned that 80% of human rights violations in Colombia were in mining/oil communities, made worse by the fact that 78% of such violations were against union members.

According to the same report, 86% of mining takes place in mines that do not have mining rights and fewer than 10% of existing mines with mining rights have an environmental permit. Moreover, the Mining Law of 2001, which guarantees less environmental protection than the 2010 law, has been back in force since May 2013, because the Colombian Government failed to present a new draft law within the time set by the Constitutional Court. The Colombian Government has also declared an area of 17 089 085 hectares a 'Strategic Mining Area', most of which is located in Amazonia.

Considering that 80% of human rights violations are committed in municipalities where mining and/or oil are the predominant industries, despite these only accounting for 35% of all municipalities, does the Commission plan to introduce any mechanism or tool to monitor respect for human rights in these municipalities and to call on the Colombian Government to strengthen its mechanisms to safeguard human rights in these circumstances? Does the Commission plan to listen to civil society and consult it in connection with this dialogue?

With regard to the trade agreement between the EU and Colombia, what monitoring and sanction mechanisms does the Commission plan to implement to ensure that European companies and their subsidiaries are not complicit in human rights violations or harming the environment?

Does the Commission plan to raise the issue of human rights violations and environmental protection associated with extractive industries as part of the dialogue between the EU and Colombia?

Does the Commission plan to introduce mechanisms to ensure that products or raw materials linked to human rights violations or environmental damage do not enter the European market?

Question for written answer E-008951/13
to the Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Mining in Columbia

The European Union is a major consumer of raw materials, some of which come from Latin America and, more specifically, from Colombia. In 2009, the EU imported 56% of all Colombia's coal sales.

A report by the Office of the Comptroller General of Colombia (*Contraloría General de la República*) shows that some coal mining companies do not respect the rights of local communities. The report stresses the link between mining and oil extraction areas and areas in which human rights are being violated through forced relocation, non-consultation of indigenous peoples, draining of water resources and pollution detrimental to the health of the local population. 80% of human rights violations in Colombia are committed in these areas, which cover just 35% of the country.

The EU requires that European companies declare the income they have made both in the countries in which they operate and in their country of origin. However, the *Contraloría* states that, in Colombia, some extraction companies have engaged in tax evasion.

1. How is the Commission ensuring that European mining companies and companies trading in raw materials meet their transparency and tax obligations in Colombia?

2. Are the Commission and the EAS aware of the human rights violations linked with the activities of European mining companies?

3. How do they intend to ensure respect for human rights, trade union rights and environmental protection measures in the context of trade with Colombia?

Joint answer given by High-Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

The protection of human, environmental and labour rights in relation to the development of extractive industries is high on the agenda between the EU and Colombia, and has *inter alia* been discussed in the last session of the bilateral High-Level Policy Dialogue. The EU will assist the Colombian Government in organising a conference on business and human rights, including issues relating to corporate social responsibility, during the second half of 2013. It will also be possible to address such issues within the institutional framework provided by the EU-Colombia Trade Agreement, which is being provisionally applied since 1 August 2013.

The EU expects all European enterprises to meet their responsibility to respect human rights and to comply with national law. It is for the competent national authorities, including the courts, to ensure that domestic law is correctly and effectively applied.

The EU has recently taken a series of initiatives to improve responsible sourcing, sustainable development and governance, on the part of European companies. Of particular interest is the public consultation on a possible EU initiative for responsible sourcing of minerals originating in conflict-affected and high-risk areas, which was concluded on 26 June 2013. Such an initiative would also be relevant in the specific case of Colombia.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008906/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Informe de Intermón Oxfam «La empresa española y los derechos humanos»

En el reciente informe publicado por Intermón Oxfam titulado «La empresa española y los derechos humanos» se documentan las violaciones de los derechos humanos que cometen numerosas compañías españolas con explotaciones localizadas en países del tercer mundo.

Este informe muestra los resultados de un intenso trabajo de investigación, documentación y denuncia que la ONG ha realizado para tratar de documentar todas las violaciones que las empresas españolas cometen mientras tratan de mostrar una imagen de que respeta la Responsabilidad Social Corporativa. En numerosas ocasiones hemos denunciado que no es posible que las empresas respeten una RSC si no existen mecanismos legales vinculantes.

Este informe es una prueba más de cómo mantener mecanismos de adhesión voluntaria a la RSC es absolutamente inútil para incrementar el respeto de los derechos humanos y ambientales y la responsabilidad por parte de las empresas en todo el mundo. Mantener mecanismos de adhesión voluntaria a la RSC solo sirve para favorecer el engaño y la farsa a los que los ciudadanos europeos están expuestos, viendo cada día publicidad «socialmente responsable» de compañías que cometen los peores crímenes y violaciones en los países del tercer mundo.

En la medida que la Unión Europea no desarrolle mecanismos vinculantes que fuercen a las empresas europeas a cumplir su RSC en todos los países del mundo, las instituciones europeas serán cómplices de esta farsa.

¿Conoce la Comisión este informe? ¿Consiente las prácticas documentadas? ¿Considera que las empresas europeas que violan los derechos humanos en terceros países perjudican la imagen exterior de la UE? ¿Cómo valora la aplicación de la RSC por las empresas europeas? ¿Piensa exigir a las empresas documentadas en este informe que tomen medidas para no perjudicar a terceros países ni la imagen exterior de la UE? ¿Piensa establecer un observatorio de las violaciones de los derechos por parte de las empresas europeas? ¿Está pensando en desarrollar una legislación vinculante que obligue a las empresas europeas a cumplir su RSC?

Respuesta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de septiembre de 2013)

La Comisión no supervisa el comportamiento de las empresas de la UE en terceros países. Por principio, la UE no puede hacer cumplir su normativa fuera de su territorio.

En su última Comunicación, de 2011, sobre la responsabilidad social de las empresas (RSE), la Comisión insta a todas las empresas europeas a adherirse a las directrices sobre RSE reconocidas internacionalmente.

En consonancia con la aplicación de los principios rectores de las Naciones Unidas sobre empresas y derechos humanos, que también inciden en remediar las consecuencias negativas sobre estos, la Comisión ha publicado orientaciones para tres sectores empresariales.

Los países que han adoptado las directrices de la OCDE para las empresas multinacionales deben establecer puntos de contacto nacionales que contribuyan a su aplicación y al establecimiento de un mecanismo de denuncia y de mediación.

La Comisión, en todas sus políticas, promueve la ratificación y aplicación efectiva de los convenios fundamentales de la OIT, considerados instrumentos de derechos humanos.

De todas las empresas europeas se espera que tengan la responsabilidad de respetar los derechos humanos y cumplir la legislación nacional. Corresponde a las autoridades nacionales competentes garantizar la aplicación correcta y efectiva de tal legislación.

En abril de 2013, la Comisión adoptó una propuesta legislativa para reforzar los actuales requisitos de información no financiera. Según ella, algunas grandes empresas tendrían que revelar información relevante sobre políticas, riesgos y resultados en lo que respecta a: cuestiones medioambientales, aspectos sociales y relacionados con los trabajadores, el respeto de los derechos humanos, la lucha contra la corrupción y el soborno, y la diversidad en los consejos de administración. Si las empresas no han definido una política en una de estas áreas, tendrían que explicar razonadamente por qué.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008906/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Intermón Oxfam report on Spanish companies and human rights

A recent report published by Intermón Oxfam entitled 'La empresa española y los derechos humanos' ('Spanish companies and human rights') documents human rights violations committed by a number of Spanish companies with holdings in developing countries.

The report presents the results of the non-governmental organisation's hard work investigating, recording and reporting incidents in an attempt to document all violations committed by Spanish companies that at the same time seek to portray themselves as complying with their corporate social responsibility (CSR) obligations. We have repeatedly claimed that it is impossible for companies to comply with their corporate social responsibility obligations if no binding legal mechanisms are in place.

The report is yet further proof of how keeping CSR schemes voluntary is totally useless for ensuring greater respect for human and environmental rights and corporate responsibility worldwide. All voluntary CSR schemes do is encourage the deception and sham to which European citizens are exposed, as they see 'socially responsible' adverts every day for companies that commit the worst crimes and violations in developing countries.

Until the European Union develops binding mechanisms that force European companies to comply with their CSR obligations in all countries around the world, the European institutions will be complicit in this sham.

Is the Commission aware of this report? Does it approve of the practices documented in it? Does it believe that European companies that violate human rights in third countries damage the EU's image abroad? How well does it think European companies implement CSR? Does it plan to require the companies mentioned in the report to take action to avoid doing damage to third countries and to the EU's image abroad? Does it plan to set up an observatory to monitor rights violations by European companies? Is it planning to develop binding legislation that requires European companies to comply with their CSR obligations?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(19 September 2013)

The Commission does not monitor the behaviour of EU companies in third countries. As a matter of principle, the EU cannot enforce its regulations outside EU territory.

In its latest Communication on CSR of 2011 the Commission urges all European companies to adhere to internationally agreed CSR guidelines. .

In line with the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, which also refer to remediation, the Commission has published human rights guidance for three business sectors.

Countries adhering to the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises have to establish National Contact Points tasked with assisting the implementation and with setting up a complaint and mediation mechanism.

The Commission promotes the ratification and effective implementation of ILO fundamental Conventions, considered as human rights instruments, in all its policies.

All European enterprises are expected to comply with the corporate responsibility to respect human rights and to comply with national law. It is for the competent national authorities to ensure that this law is correctly and effectively applied.

In April 2013 the Commission adopted a legislative proposal strengthening the existing requirements on non-financial reporting. Certain large companies would be required to disclose material information on policies, risks and results as regards environmental matters, social and employee-related aspects, respect for human rights, anti-corruption and bribery issues, and diversity in their boards of directors. When companies do not have a policy in one of the given areas, they would be required to provide a reasoned explanation.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008907/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Incumplimiento de la normativa europea en el pantano de Olaia (País Vasco — España)

El pantano de Oiola está situado en Bizkaia (País Vasco — España). Desde 1967 se utiliza como punto de captación de aguas para la producción de agua de consumo humano, previa potabilización en estación de tratamiento de aguas potables (ETAP). En la actualidad este agua se destina a una red que abastece a más de 100 000 personas en Barakaldo, Sestao y Alonsotegi.

En julio de 2008, el Departamento de Sanidad del Gobierno vasco detectó en un control rutinario una elevada presencia de isómeros de HCH-lindano en las aguas ya tratadas de la ETAP. Concretamente: 154 ng/l Alfa HCH; 26 ng/l Beta HCH y 13 ng/l Delta HCH, con un total de 193 ng/l HCH. En la misma fecha, en las aguas del pantano se apreciaron máximos de casi 500 ng/l HCH.

En base a ello, en octubre de 2010 se estableció un «Procedimiento de actuación para el uso del agua del embalse Oiola para uso humano», por el que se establecía como límite para usar las aguas del embalse un caudal máximo de 50 l/s en el arroyo y un límite de 25 ng/l del total de isómeros de HCH en esas aguas. En septiembre de 2011 ese límite se fijó en 20 ng/l para cada isómero individual de HCH.

En julio de 2011 se volvió a autorizar el uso del embalse hasta la actualidad.

Todo ello puede implicar el incumplimiento de la Directiva 98/83/CE, de 3 de noviembre de 1998, relativa a la calidad de las aguas destinadas al consumo humano, la Directiva 2000/60/CE, de 23 de octubre de 2000, por la que se establece un marco comunitario de actuación en el ámbito de la política de aguas, la Directiva 2008/105/CE, de 16 de diciembre de 2008, relativa a las normas de calidad ambiental (NCA) en el ámbito de la política de aguas y la Directiva 2009/90/CE, de 31 de julio de 2009, por la que se establecen las especificaciones técnicas del análisis químico y del seguimiento del estado de las aguas.

Ante esta situación, ¿considera la Comisión que se ha dado una correcta transposición y aplicación de las directivas europeas relativas a la calidad de las aguas de consumo humano y la calidad ambiental de las aguas superficiales y subterráneas? ¿Cree que las medidas de control aplicadas en las aguas del embalse de Oiola cumplen correctamente la normativa europea y que se está garantizando la sanidad y calidad del agua de consumo humano con que se abastecen las poblaciones mencionadas?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de septiembre de 2013)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a la respuesta que dio a las preguntas escritas E-008793/2013 y E-8794/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008907/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Failure to comply with European legislation at the Oiola reservoir in the Basque Country, Spain

The Oiola Reservoir is located in the province of Biscay in the Basque Country, Spain. Since 1967, it has been used as an abstraction point for water for human consumption, after it has been purified at a water treatment plant. This water is currently fed into a network that supplies over 100 000 people in Barakaldo, Sestao and Alonsotegi.

During routine a inspection in July 2008, the Basque Department of Health detected high levels of HCH/lindane isomers in water that had been treated at the water treatment plant, namely: 154 ng/l α-HCH; 26 ng/l β-HCH and 13 ng/l δ-HCH, making a total of 193 ng/l HCH. On the same date, HCH levels in the water from the reservoir peaked at almost 500 ng/l.

In view of this, a procedure for action was drafted in October 2010 for using water for human consumption from the Oiola reservoir, which set a maximum flow of 50 l/s in the stream as a limit for using water from the reservoir and a limit of 25 ng/l for all HCH isomers in the water. In September 2011, this limit was set at 20 ng/l for each individual HCH isomer.

The reservoir has now been re-authorised for use since July 2011.

This may mean that the reservoir does not comply with Council Directive 98/83/EC of 3 November 1998 on the quality of water intended for human consumption, Directive 2000/60/EC of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, Directive 2008/105/EC of 16 December 2008 on environmental quality standards in the field of water policy, and Directive 2009/90/EC of 31 July 2009 laying down technical specifications for chemical analysis and monitoring of water status.

In view of this situation, does the Commission think that EU directives on the quality of water for human consumption and the environmental quality of surface water and groundwater have been properly transposed and implemented? Does it believe that the controls put in place for water from the Oiola reservoir duly comply with EU legislation and that the health quality of the water for human consumption supplied to the abovementioned towns is being guaranteed?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(23 September 2013)

The Commission would kindly refer the Honourable Member to its reply to written questions E-008793/2013 and E-8794/2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008908/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Espacios de la Red Natura 2000 en España sin planes ni herramientas de gestión oportunos

Según una queja presentada a principios de este año 2013 por la organización ecologista WWF a la Comisión Europea, en el 89 % de los espacios inscritos en la Red Natura 2000 en España se han incumplido los plazos establecidos por la Directiva 92/43/CEE («Directiva hábitats»).

Así, según apuntan desde esta organización ecologista, de los 1 445 lugares de importancia comunitaria (LIC) propuestos por España, sólo 166 de estos LIC declarados zona especial de conservación (ZEC) cuentan con los oportunos planes o herramientas de gestión.

¿Está la Comisión investigando esta queja? ¿Qué medidas tiene intención de adoptar la Comisión para que el Gobierno español subsane con carácter de urgencia este grave y masivo incumplimiento de la normativa medioambiental comunitaria? ¿Dispone la Comisión de un listado con información sobre los espacios LIC declarados ZEC que no cuentan con planes o herramientas de gestión? ¿Puede facilitarme dicha información?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(3 de septiembre de 2013)

La Comisión está examinando el asunto a que se refiere Su Señoría en el marco de un procedimiento de investigación en el que recientemente se ha recibido una respuesta de las autoridades españolas. Cuando haya estudiado esa respuesta, la Comisión podrá decidir adoptar nuevas acciones legales para garantizar la correcta aplicación de la Directiva 1992/43/CEE ([1]) («Directiva de Hábitats»)

Su solicitud de acceso a la lista de Zonas Especiales de Conservación españolas que no cuentan con planes o herramientas de gestión ha sido registrada como solicitud de acceso a documentos y será tramitada por separado.

([1]) DO L 206 de 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008908/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Natura 2000 network areas in Spain with no appropriate management plans or tools in place

According to a complaint submitted to the Commission in early 2013 by the environmental organisation the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), 89% of Natura 2000 network areas in Spain have not complied with the time limits laid down by Directive 92/43/EEC (the 'Habitats Directive').

According to the WWF, of the 1 445 sites of Community importance (SCIs) proposed by Spain, only 166 of those SCIs declared special areas of conservation (SACs) have the appropriate management plans or tools in place.

Is the Commission looking into this complaint? What steps does the Commission intend to take so that the Spanish Government urgently rectifies this serious and massive failure to comply with EU environmental law? Does the Commission have a list of which SCIs declared as SACs do not have management plans or tools in place? Can it share this information?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

The issue reported by the Honourable Member is currently being examined by the Commission in the framework of an investigation to which the Spanish authorities have recently replied. Depending on the outcome of the evaluation of that reply, the Commission may decide to take further legal steps to ensure the correct implementation of Directive 1992/43/EEC ([1]) ('Habitats Directive').

The request of the Honourable Member for access to the list of Special Areas of Conservation in Spain which do not have management plans or tools in place has been registered as a request for access to documents. This request will be dealt with separately.

([1]) OJ L 206 , 22.07.1992.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008909/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Fracaso de la política de responsabilidad social corporativa de las empresas multinacionales: necesidad de regulación estricta y vinculante por parte de las autoridades

Como denuncié en mi pregunta escrita E-004788/2013, las pésimas condiciones de higiene y seguridad laboral en las que subcontratan las empresas textiles europeas fueron las causas principales del trágico accidente al colapsar un taller de costura en Daca, la capital de Bangladés, que costó la vida a más de 1 127 personas.

A pesar de cuestionar claramente a la Comisión sobre si piensa legislar para dotarse de instrumentos legales vinculantes que permitan un control efectivo de las condiciones laborales de subcontratación en terceros países por parte de empresas europeas, en su respuesta la Comisión no aclara que haya iniciado ninguna revisión de esta política de responsabilidad social corporativa voluntaria y fracasada o si tiene pensado hacerlo.

Recientemente, hemos conocido que, más de dos meses después de este grave accidente, ninguna de las empresas españolas involucradas se ha comprometido a ningún tipo de indemnizaciones con las víctimas o sus familias. Así, transcurridos más de dos meses del derrumbe de la fábrica textil bangladesí, ni las familias de los fallecidos ni los heridos han recibido compensación económica por parte de las multinacionales que, además, no han expresado un compromiso firme ni han concretado cómo participarían en el fondo común de indemnización.

En este caso, la ausencia de indemnizaciones es muy grave, ya que, tal y como alertan desde Setem en su campaña «Ropa Limpia», se está llegando al punto de que muchas de las víctimas están endeudándose para poder hacer frente a los costes de los servicios sanitarios que necesitan a consecuencia del accidente.

Ante la evidencia de un sistema basado en la voluntariedad de la responsabilidad social de las empresas en su actividad en terceros países, el dumping social y la escalada de reducción de derechos laborales que está suponiendo:

¿Piensa la Comisión legislar para dotarse de instrumentos legales vinculantes que permitan un control efectivo de las condiciones laborales de subcontratación en terceros países por parte de empresas europeas?

En su respuesta a mi pregunta anterior, la Comisión celebra y hace referencia a una serie de proyectos en el marco de la cooperación al desarrollo encaminados a mejorar la situación de explotación laboral en que se encuentran los trabajadores en estos países, ¿considera la Comisión que el control y el seguimiento de las actividades de las multinacionales de capital europeo en terceros países es una función de los programas de cooperación al desarrollo?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de septiembre de 2013)

La Comisión no tiene la intención de proponer instrumentos legales vinculantes en este ámbito, aunque el 16 de abril de 2013 adoptó una propuesta legislativa destinada a reforzar los requisitos existentes con respecto a las obligaciones de información no financiera. Con arreglo a dicha propuesta, podría exigirse a algunas grandes empresas que incluyan en sus informes de gestión información material sobre las políticas, los riesgos y los resultados relativos a cuestiones medioambientales, los aspectos sociales y laborales, el respeto de los derechos humanos, la lucha contra la corrupción y el soborno y la diversidad en sus juntas directivas. Las empresas que no persigan una política en uno de dichos ámbitos deberán presentar una explicación motivada.

Por otra parte, en lo concerniente a Bangladés, los representantes de la Comisión Europea, el Gobierno de Bangladés y la Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT), junto con representantes de la industria, empleadores, sindicatos y otras partes interesadas clave presentaron el 8 de julio de 2013 en Ginebra el documento «Staying engaged: A Sustainability Compact for continuous improvements in labour rights and factory safety in the Ready-Made Garment and Knitwear Industry in Bangladesh» ([1]), que presenta compromisos en tres ámbitos: 1) respeto de los derechos laborales; 2) integridad estructural de los edificios y salud y seguridad en el trabajo y 3) comportamiento empresarial responsable. Este último incluye compromisos por parte de las empresas que subcontratan en Bangladés, entre otras las firmantes del Acuerdo sobre Incendios y Seguridad de los Edificios (*Accord on Fire and Building Safety)* ([2]). Algunas de las actividades acordadas también recibirán ayudas financieras de los fondos de desarrollo de la UE.

([1]) Véase http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/july/tradoc_151601.pdf

([2]) Puede obtener más información sobre el Acuerdo y su aplicación en http://www.industriall-union.org/bangladesh-safety-accord-implementation-moving-forward.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008909/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Failed corporate social responsibility policy of multinational firms: need for strict, binding regulation by the authorities

As I reported in my Written Question E-004788/2013, the terrible health and safety conditions in the factories to which European textiles companies subcontract work were the main cause of the tragic accident in which a textile factory in the Bangladeshi capital, Dhaka, collapsed, killing more than 1 127 people.

Despite clearly asking the Commission if it planned to legislate to equip itself with binding legal instruments allowing for the effective monitoring of the working conditions of subcontractors in non-EU countries with which European companies deal, the Commission's reply fails to shed any light on whether it has initiated proceedings to revise its voluntary and failed policy on corporate social responsibility, or whether it has any plans to do so.

It has recently been noted that, more than two months after this terrible accident, none of the Spanish firms involved has committed to providing any sort of compensation to victims or their families. This means that, more than two months after the collapse of the textile factory in Bangladesh, the injured and families of the deceased have yet to receive any financial compensation from the multinational companies who have not even pledged to contribute to the joint compensation fund or stated how much they will contribute.

The lack of compensation is particularly serious in this case given that, as the Setem foundation has been pointing out in its 'Clean clothes' campaign, many of the victims of the accident are now getting into debt in order to meet the costs of the healthcare required as a consequence of the accident.

In the light of the lessons learned from a system based on the voluntary social responsibility of firms operating in third countries, social dumping and rapidly diminishing workers' rights:

Does the Commission intend to legislate to equip itself with binding legal instruments allowing for the effective monitoring of working conditions among subcontractors in non-EU countries with which European companies deal?

In its reply to my previous question, the Commission highlights a series of development cooperation projects which aim to improve conditions for workers in these countries and end exploitation. Does the Commission believe that one of the functions of development cooperation programmes is to control and monitor the activities of European multinationals in third countries?

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

The Commission does not intend to propose binding legal instruments in this area but has adopted a legislative proposal on 16 April 2013 strengthening the existing requirements on non-financial reporting. According to the proposal, certain large companies would be required to disclose in their management reports material information on policies, risks and results as regards environmental matters, social and employee-related aspects, respect for human rights, anti-corruption and bribery issues, and diversity in their boards of directors. When companies do not pursue any policy in one of the given areas, they would be required to provide a reasoned explanation.

In addition, as regards Bangladesh, on 8 July 2013, in Geneva, the representatives of the European Commission, the Government of Bangladesh and International Labour Organisation (ILO) accompanied by representatives of industry, employers, trade unions and other key stakeholders, launched a document 'Staying engaged: A Sustainability Compact for continuous improvements in labour rights and factory safety in the Ready-Made Garment and Knitwear Industry in Bangladesh' ([1]). It outlines commitments in three areas: 1) respect for labour rights; 2) Structural integrity of buildings and occupational safety and health; and 3) Responsible business conduct. The latter includes commitments of companies sourcing in Bangladesh, including signatories of the Accord on Fire and Building Safety. ([2]) Some of the agreed activities will be financially support by EU development funds, too.

([1]) See: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/july/tradoc_151601.pdf
([2]) For details concerning Accord and its implementation see: http://www.industriall-union.org/bangladesh-safety-accord-implementation-moving-forward.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008911/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Reformas y desprotección laboral en España: causas del incremento del desempleo

Un reciente informe de la Organización para la Cooperación y el Desarrollo Económico (OCDE) alerta de que, tras la última reforma laboral impuesta por el Gobierno del Partido Popular, el nivel de protección laboral en España ha caído por debajo de la media de los países que forman parte de esta organización.

Mientras que países como Alemania, Suecia, Francia o los Países Bajos, con tasas de desempleo más bajas que la media europea, mantienen altos grados de protección de los trabajadores y trabajadoras y restricciones al despido (como indemnización, tiempo de prueba, o preaviso), países como España, Grecia o Portugal, con una inaceptable tasa de desempleo cercana al 30 %, no solo están por debajo de la media, sino que ven cómo la Comisión Europea sigue presionando para que desmantelen cualquier protección en su regulaciones laborales.

Hasta ahora, las diferentes reformas laborales hechas fervorosamente por los Gobiernos neoliberales de estos Estados miembros, bajo recomendación —cuando no el chantaje— de la troika (Comisión Europea, Banco Central Europeo y FMI), han conllevado, al contrario de lo afirmado por la troika y por estos Gobiernos, un incremento del desempleo y el empeoramiento de las condiciones de trabajo.

Así, las reformas laborales impuestas en España por los gobiernos del PSOE y el PP, que han dinamitado la protección ante los despidos de los y las trabajadoras, han llevado a España a una tasa de desempleo histórica, cercana al 30 %, y han alejado el sistema de protección laboral español de otros que, como el francés, el sueco o el noruego, se han mostrado mucho más efectivos a la hora de enfrentar el desempleo en época de crisis.

A la luz del fracaso de las medidas recomendadas, cuando no impuestas, por la Comisión Europea —fracaso que atestigua el incremento del desempleo y los numerosos ERE ejecutados tras la aprobación de las reformas laborales:

¿Piensa la Comisión recomendar a los Estados miembros que mejoren la protección de los trabajadores ante los despidos poniendo fin a la recomendación de llevar a cabo reformas laborales para facilitar el despido como medida fracasada para luchar contra el desempleo?

¿Qué conclusiones saca la Comisión del hecho de que los Estados con mayor protección de los trabajadores ante el despido tengan un desempleo muy inferior a los que han desmantelado las pocas medidas de protección laboral que tenían?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de septiembre de 2013)

No existe una correlación exacta entre los niveles de protección del empleo y el desempleo. Otros muchos factores influyen en el desempleo a nivel macroeconómico: el ciclo económico, la política monetaria, la política fiscal general, el sistema fiscal y de prestaciones, el modelo de protección social, los niveles de cualificación de los trabajadores y su correspondencia con las necesidades del mercado de trabajo, etc.

En el caso de España, como se ha indicado en la respuesta a la pregunta E-011347/2012 ([1]) de Su Señoría, la necesidad de corregir grandes desequilibrios externos e internos acumulados durante el período de bonanza ha frenado el crecimiento económico. El ajuste ha sido extraordinariamente costoso en términos de empleo, debido, entre otras cosas, a la importante dualidad (segmentación) del mercado laboral español; otros factores, como el prolongado proceso de desapalancamiento de los sectores privados y financieros y las dificultades de las empresas para acceder a la financiación, también han tenido como consecuencia una disminución de la demanda interna que ha contribuido a agravar aún más el desempleo masivo.

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

Datos relativos a varios países muestran que antes de que estallara la crisis, en 2008, las reformas a dos niveles de la protección del empleo (flexibilización de la regulación únicamente de los contratos temporales y mantenimiento sin cambios de la de los contratos indefinidos) tendían a aumentar la tasa de empleo temporal respecto al empleo total ([2]). La dualidad de los mercados de trabajo empeora los resultados en tiempos de crisis en la medida en que los trabajadores temporales son los primeros despedidos, independientemente de sus méritos relativos y su productividad.

([2]) El Empleo en Europa 2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008911/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Reform and the lack of worker protection in Spain: causes of increased unemployment

A recent report drafted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) warns that, following the latest labour market reform passed by the Spanish Government led by the People's Party, worker protection in Spain has fallen below the OECD average.

While countries such as Germany, Sweden, France and the Netherlands, with high levels of worker protection and restrictions on redundancy (severance pay, probation period, period of notice etc.) have unemployment rates below the European average, countries such as Spain, Greece and Portugal, with unacceptably high unemployment rates of around 30%, are not only below the average, but are forced by the Commission to dismantle any ounce of protection left in their labour legislation.

As yet, the various labour market reforms fervently pushed through by these Member States' neoliberal governments under the recommendation of — if not extortion by — the troika (European Commission, European Central Bank and IMF) have, contrary to the expectations of the troika and the governments involved, led to an increase in unemployment and a worsening of working conditions.

The labour market reforms implemented in Spain by the PSOE and PP governments, blowing worker protection against redundancy to smithereens, have taken Spain to record levels of unemployment close to 30%, and have created a gap between Spain's worker protection system and others such as the French, Swedish and Norwegian systems, which have proven much more effective at combating unemployment in times of crisis.

The measures recommended — and/or imposed — by the Commission have failed, as evidenced by unemployment rate increases and the many labour force adjustment plans (ERE) implemented following the adoption of the labour market reforms.

Does the Commission intend to urge Member States to improve worker protection against redundancy, ending the recommendation to implement labour market reforms which facilitate redundancy in a futile attempt to combat unemployment?

What conclusions does the Commission draw from the fact that those Member States with the highest level of worker protection against redundancy have unemployment rates much lower than those of Member States which have dismantled the few worker protection measures they had?

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

There is no simple one-to-one correspondence between the levels of employment protection and unemployment. Many other factors influence unemployment at macroeconomic level: the economic cycle; monetary policy; the overall fiscal policy stance; the tax-benefit system; the design of social protection; workers' skills levels and their match with labour market needs, etc.

In the case of Spain, as mentioned in the reply to the Honourable Member's question number E-011347/2012 ([1]), economic growth has been held back by the need to correct very large external and internal imbalances accumulated during the boom period. The adjustment has been extraordinarily costly in terms of employment due *inter alia* to the high degree of duality (segmentation) of the Spanish labour market, while other factors such as protracted deleveraging of the private and financial sectors and poor access of companies to financing have also led to contracting domestic demand which further fuelled mass unemployment.

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

There is evidence for several countries that before the crisis started in 2008, two-tier reforms of employment protection (relaxation of regulation for temporary contracts only while maintaining it for regular contracts) tended to lead to higher shares of temporary employment in total employment ([2]). Duality of labour markets contributes to weaker performance in times of crisis to the extent that temporary workers are dismissed at first, regardless of their relative merits and productivity.

([2]) Employment in Europe 2010.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008912/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Redadas orientadas a personas homosexuales en Barcelona

El pasado 29 de junio la Guardia Urbana de Barcelona y los Mossos de Esquadra pusieron en marcha una operación policial a altas horas de la madrugada asaltando numerosos bares de ambiente de la ciudad en plena noche del día del Orgullo gay. Numerosos colectivos de la ciudad han denunciado esta acción policial como un intento de amenazar a la comunidad gay de Barcelona.

No se trata de la primera redada simultánea, según algunas personas, pero sí una de las más intensas y amenazantes que la policía de Barcelona haya realizado en contra de la comunidad gay. Esta acción represiva supone un intento fracasado de persecución y criminalización del colectivo de personas lesbianas, gays, transexuales y bisexuales (LGTB) por parte de las autoridades barcelonesas y catalanas.

El Parlamento Europeo ha instado, a través de diferentes resoluciones, al resto de instituciones europeas a que empleen su iniciativa legislativa para desarrollar normativa vinculante que obligue a los Estados miembros de la Unión Europea a proteger a las comunidades LGTB. Sin embargo, estos esfuerzos no han producido efecto alguno en la Comisión Europea y el Consejo de la Unión Europea.

Debido a esta inacción por parte de las instituciones europeas, los Estados miembros continúan realizando este tipo de acciones discriminatorias y criminalizadoras de las personas LGTB. La criminalización por parte de las fuerzas de seguridad del Estado sirve como dedo acusador que trata de presentar a este tipo de personas como criminales ante el resto de la sociedad. Más tarde se producen asesinatos por parte de los grupos de extrema derecha, como el asesinato recientemente acaecido en Lyon (Francia) de un joven homosexual miembro de organizaciones de la izquierda francesa.

¿Conoce la Comisión las redadas realizadas en diferentes bares de ambiente de la ciudad de Barcelona por las fuerzas de seguridad durante la noche del día del Orgullo gay? A la luz de las resoluciones aprobadas en el Parlamento Europeo sobre la discriminación LGTB, ¿está desarrollando la Comisión legislación para evitar los actos discriminatorios contra las personas LGTB por parte de los Estados miembros?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de octubre de 2013)

La Comisión Europea condena todas las formas y manifestaciones de intolerancia, como la homofobia, por ser incompatibles con los valores y principios en los que se fundamenta la Unión Europea. La Comisión Europea reitera su compromiso de luchar contra la homofobia y la discriminación por razones de orientación sexual en toda la medida de lo posible, en virtud de las atribuciones que le confieren los Tratados.

La Comisión está garantizando la correcta transposición y aplicación de la legislación de la UE pertinente para el colectivo LGBT, como la Directiva 2000/78/CE, que prohíbe la discriminación por motivos de orientación sexual en el empleo, la Directiva sobre las víctimas de delitos (Directiva 2012/29/UE) o la Directiva sobre normas mínimas (2004/83/CE y 2011/95/UE). Además, en 2008 la Comisión presentó una propuesta de Directiva del Consejo relativa a la aplicación del principio de igualdad de trato entre las personas independientemente de su religión o convicciones, discapacidad, edad u orientación sexual ([1]), que extendería el alcance de la protección más allá del ámbito del empleo. La propuesta aún no ha sido aprobada por el Consejo.

([1]) COM(2008) 0426 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008912/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Raids on homosexuals in Barcelona

On 29 June, Barcelona's Guardia Urbana police force and the Mossos de Esquadra police force launched a police operation in the early hours of the morning attacking various gay bars in the middle of the night during Gay Pride. Many groups in the city have denounced this police action as an attempt to threaten Barcelona's gay community.

This is not the first simultaneous raid, according to some people, but it is one of the most intense and threatening raids that the police in Barcelona have carried out against the gay community. This repressive action represents a failed attempt by the authorities in Barcelona and Catalonia to persecute and criminalise lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people.

In various resolutions, Parliament has urged the rest of the European institutions to use their legislative initiative to develop binding legislation that would oblige the EU Member States to protect LGBT communities. However, these efforts have had no effect on the Commission and the Council.

Due to this inaction by the European institutions, Member States are continuing to carry out this kind of discriminatory and criminalising action against LGBT people. Criminalisation by State security forces is a form of finger pointing aimed at presenting these people to the rest of society as criminals. The next step is murders perpetrated by right-wing extremist groups, such as the recent murder which took place in Lyon (France) of a young gay man who was a member of French left-wing organisations.

Is the Commission aware of the raids carried out in various gay bars in the city of Barcelona by security forces during the night following Gay Pride? In the light of the resolutions approved in Parliament on LGBT discrimination, is the Commission developing legislation to prevent acts of discrimination against LGBT people by Member States?

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

The European Commission condemns all forms and manifestations of intolerance such as homophobia, as they are incompatible with the values and principles upon which the European Union is founded. The European Commission reiterates its commitment to combat homophobia and discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation to the full extent possible based on the powers conferred on it by the Treaties.

The Commission is ensuring the correct transposition and application of EU legislation relevant for LGBT people, such as Directive 2000/78/EC prohibiting discrimination on ground of sexual orientation in employment, the Victims Crime Directive (2012/29/EU) or the Qualification Directive (2004/83/EC and 2011/95/EU). Moreover, in 2008 the Commission tabled a Proposal for a Council Directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation ([1]), which would extend the scope of protection beyond the field of employment. The proposal has not yet been approved by the Council.

([1]) COM(2008) 0426 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008913/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Lucha contra el secreto bancario y los privilegios fiscales a los grandes capitales

Desde la década de los 70, los conocidos como paraísos fiscales han proliferado de manera exponencial: existen actualmente más de 75 «paraísos fiscales» que acrecientan problemas tan graves como el blanqueo de dinero, la corrupción o la evasión fiscal, y debilitan gravemente las arcas públicas del resto de los Estados.

Los paraísos fiscales son lugares donde empresas e individuos con grandes riquezas depositan sus ganancias para evitar el pago de impuestos en sus países de origen. Igualmente, la oscuridad, opacidad y desregulación de la que gozan los agentes financieros de estos lugares conllevan que sean utilizados como mecanismo para el blanqueo de grandes cantidades de dinero procedentes de actividades ilegales como el narcotráfico, la corrupción o el tráfico ilegal de armas. Por ello, organismos internacionales como las Naciones Unidas han criticado en diversos informes la existencia de estos paraísos fiscales por «tener controles financieros que permiten lavar dinero».

En ese contexto, Suiza podría ser considerada como la capital mundial del sistema de ocultación de capitales y se ha convertido, junto con Liechtenstein, en el paraíso fiscal preferido de las grandes riquezas europeas, llegando incluso a promocionar el propio Gobierno federal suizo y los de los diferentes cantones esta industria del blanqueo, la evasión y la ocultación de capitales.

El principal escudo protector de estos paraísos fiscales son las denominadas leyes de secreto bancario y la defensa que hacen de ella por propio interés los grandes capitales y sus representantes políticos. En ese contexto, las ciudadanas y ciudadanos honrados y comprometidos que, como Hervé Falciani**,** facilitan datos a la justicia e intentan luchar contra este secreto bancario y los crímenes que oculta, están siendo tratados como delincuentes en lugar de ser protegidos.

Ante las dramáticas consecuencias que supone la existencia de estos centros financieros para la necesaria redistribución de la riqueza, la igualdad y la solidaridad, valores básicos para el funcionamiento de los sistemas democráticos, ¿qué medidas concretas implementa la Comisión para luchar contra el secreto bancario? ¿No considera necesario la Comisión replantear las relaciones con Suiza hasta que garantice este país el fin de los privilegios fiscales que ofrece a los grandes capitales de otros países? ¿Considera oportuno la Comisión establecer unos límites mínimos de fiscalización comunes entre los Estados miembros de la UE y terceros países con los que mantiene relaciones preferenciales?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(18 de septiembre de 2013)

La Comisión está al corriente de los problemas generados por los llamados paraísos fiscales y comparte la inquietud expresada por Su Señoría. El 6 de diciembre de 2012, la Comisión adoptó una serie de medidas contra el fraude fiscal, entre las que se cuentan un plan de acción para reforzar la lucha contra el fraude fiscal ([1]) y dos recomendaciones ([2]), una en relación con los paraísos fiscales, que contempla medidas para incitar a los terceros países a que apliquen normas mínimas de buena gobernanza en materia fiscal, y otra sobre la planificación fiscal agresiva. Mediante la aplicación de estas medidas, los Estados miembros pueden demostrar hasta qué punto se toman en serio la solución de estos problemas.

En cuanto al secreto bancario, la Directiva de cooperación administrativa dispone claramente que un Estado miembro no puede negarse a facilitar información solo porque dicha información obre en posesión de un banco, otra entidad financiera, una persona designada o que actúe como agente o fiduciario, o porque afecte a los intereses de propiedad de una persona.

La Comisión también ha abordado la cuestión del secreto bancario en las negociaciones en curso con vistas a modificar las cláusulas de salvaguardia de los acuerdos celebrados entre la UE y Suiza, Liechtenstein, Andorra, Mónaco y San Marino. En estas negociaciones, el objetivo de la Comisión es acordar un sistema de intercambio automático de información bancaria a efectos fiscales en consonancia con la evolución de la situación internacional.

La eficacia del intercambio automático de información depende, por supuesto, de que las entidades financieras mantengan registros correctos y fidedignos de sus clientes; se están introduciendo mejoras en este ámbito mediante el refuerzo de la legislación de la UE contra el blanqueo de capitales.

([1]) COM(2012) 722.
([2]) COM(2012) 8806; COM(2012) 8805.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008913/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Measures to combat banking secrecy and tax privileges enjoyed by big business

Since the 1970s, there has been a veritable proliferation of tax havens, which now number more than 75, aggravating major problems such as money laundering, corruption and tax evasion and seriously depleting public funds in other countries.

Tax havens are places to which large corporations and the very rich channel their profits to avoid payment of tax in their countries of origin. The lack of transparency and deregulation surrounding their financial operators allows them to be used as a means of laundering large sums of money originating in illegal activities such as drug trafficking, corruption or arms dealing. For this reason, international organisations such as the United Nations have produced a number of reports expressing concern at the existence of tax havens with lax financial controls facilitating money laundering.

In this connection, Switzerland could be considered as the world capital of fund concealment and, together with Liechtenstein, it has become the European tax haven of choice to such an extent that the Swiss Federal Government and various cantonal administrations are actually encouraging money laundering, tax evasion and fundconcealment.

These tax havens are shielded principally by banking secrecy laws which big businesses and those representing it at political level have a vested interest in defending. As a result, honest citizens with the courage of their convictions, such as Hervé Falciani, who seek to combat banking secrecy and the criminal activity it conceals by bringing the facts to the attention of the judicial authorities, are treated as criminals instead of being protected.

Given the serious impact of such financial centres, which are undermining efforts to achieve the basic wealth redistribution, equality and solidarity necessary for the functioning of democratic systems, what specific measures will the Commission take to combat banking secrecy? Does the Commission not consider it necessary to rethink its relations with Switzerland until it is willing to guarantee an end to the tax privileges it is offering to big business in other countries? Does the Commission consider it appropriate to introduce minimum common control standards applicable to the EU Member States and third countries with which it has preferential relations?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(18 September 2013)

The Commission is aware of the problems arisen due to so called tax havens and shares the concerns expressed by the Honourable Member. On 6 December 2012 the Commission adopted a tax fraud package including an Action Plan ([1]) to strengthen the fight against tax fraud as well as two recommendations ([2]), one regarding tax havens, with measures to encourage third countries to apply minimum standards of good governance in tax matters, and one on aggressive tax planning. By implementing these measures Member States can demonstrate how serious they are about tackling these problems.

With regard to banking secrecy, the Administrative Cooperation Directive clearly states that a Member State may not decline to supply information solely because this information is held by a bank, other financial institution, nominee or person acting in an agency or a fiduciary capacity or because it relates to ownership interests in a person.

The Commission is also addressing the matter of banking secrecy in the ongoing negotiations to amend the Savings Agreements between the EU and Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Andorra, Monaco and San Marino. In these negotiations, the aim of the Commission is to agree a system of automatic exchange of bank information for tax purposes in line with international developments.

The effectiveness of automatic exchange of information is, of course, dependent on financial institutions having good and reliable records on their clients and improvements in this area are being made through the enhancement of the EU Anti-Money-Laundering legislation.

([1]) COM(2012)722.
([2]) C(2012)8806; C(2012)8805.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008915/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Violación de la Convención sobre los Derechos del Niño por parte de Marruecos

La experta independiente de Naciones Unidas, Farida Shahid, ha denunciado la postura de las autoridades marroquíes de no aceptar el registro de los nombres de niños bajo la práctica en lengua hassanía de utilizar nombres compuestos, típica en el pueblo saharaui.

Esta postura de las autoridades marroquíes viola la Convención de Derechos del Niño de 1989, ratificada por Marruecos, y que en su artículo 8.1 estipula: «los Estados Partes se comprometen a respetar el derecho del niño a preservar su identidad, incluidos la nacionalidad, el nombre y las relaciones familiares de conformidad con la ley sin injerencias ilícitas». Ya en 2009 Marruecos tuvo una denuncia en este sentido por no aceptar nombres bereberes.

Marruecos es la potencia ocupante de los territorios saharauis, según el Derecho internacional, y esta práctica de no permitir el empleo de los nombres compuestos supone una nueva forma de ataque al pueblo saharaui. Según Marruecos no existe dicho pueblo, que se supone sería una parte del pueblo marroquí, pero la Organización de las Naciones Unidas no lo considera así, manteniendo la postura de que Marruecos está invadiendo los territorios que legítimamente pertenecen al pueblo del Sáhara Occidental.

¿Conoce la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante la práctica marroquí de no permitir nombres compuestos, típicos de la cultura hassanía, en sus registros?

¿Considera que Marruecos incumple la citada Convención de los Derechos del Niño, la soberanía del pueblo saharaui, así como su propia Constitución, que afirma la defensa de la cultura hassanía?

¿Piensa exigir al Gobierno de Marruecos que permita y proteja el registro de nombres compuestos, típicos de la cultura hassanía, en sus registros oficiales?

¿No considera a la luz de estos hechos que Marruecos está incumpliendo la cláusula segunda del Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Marruecos que obliga a ambas partes a respetar los derechos humanos?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de septiembre de 2013)

La UE tiene constancia del informe de la experta de las Naciones Unidas, que se remonta a 2011, citado por su Señoría. Al margen de la cuestión de los nombres compuestos relacionados con la cultura hassanía, el informe se centra en el derecho de los padres a elegir nombres poco comunes para sus hijos. Estas y otras cuestiones importantes relativas a los derechos culturales y los derechos del niño, son abordadas regularmente en el marco del Subcomité UE/Marruecos de Derechos Humanos, Gobernanza y Democratización. La UE seguirá tratando estas cuestiones en el contexto de la aplicación de la constitución marroquí de 2011 y del nuevo Plan de Acción UE/Marruecos 2013-2017 de la Política Europea de Vecindad (PEV). Además, la UE invitará a Marruecos a seguir colaborando con el mecanismo pertinente de las Naciones Unidas y con los relatores especiales de dicha organización, también en el ámbito de los derechos culturales y los derechos del niño.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008915/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Breach of the Convention of the Rights of the Child by Morocco

United Nations independent expert, Fareeda Shahid, has criticised the position of the Moroccan authorities whereby they will not accept the registration of children's names according to the Hassaniya practice of using compound names, which is typical among the Sahrawi people.

The Moroccan authorities' stance violates the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by Morocco, as Article 8(1) thereof lays down: 'States Parties undertake to respect the right of the child to preserve his or her identity, including nationality, name and family relations as recognised by law without unlawful interference.' Morocco received another similar complaint in 2009 for not accepting Berber names.

Morocco is the occupying power in Sahrawi territory, according to international law, and this practice of not allowing the use of compound names is a new way of attacking the Sahrawi people. Morocco does not acknowledge the Sahrawi as a people, which would make them Moroccan, but the United Nations does not share that view and maintains that Morocco is invading land that legitimately belongs to the people of Western Sahara.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the Moroccan practice of not allowing compound names, which are typical of the Hassaniya culture, in its registers?

Does she think that Morocco is violating the aforementioned Convention on the Rights of the Child, the sovereignty of the Sahrawi people, as well as its own constitution, which lays down that the Hassaniya culture should be defended?

Does she plan to call on the Moroccan Government to allow and protect the registration of compound names, which are typical of the Hassaniya culture, in its official registers?

Does she not think that, in view of these facts, Morocco is in breach of Article 2 of the EU-Morocco Association Agreement, which requires both parties to respect human rights?

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

The EU is aware of the report by the UN expert dating back to 2011 refered to by the Honourable Member. This report, apart from the issue of compound names related to the Hassaniya culture, does focus on the right of the parents to choose first names of amazigh origin for their children. These issues, as well as other important issues of cultural rights and childrens' rights are regularly addressed in the relevant EU/Morocco Sub-committee on human rights, governance and democratisation. The EU will continue addressing these issues in the overall context of the implementation of the 2011 Constitution of Morocco and of the new EU/Morocco European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) Action Plan for the period 2013-2017. Furthermore, the EU will invite Morocco to continue working with the relevant UN mechanism and cooperating with UN special rapporteurs, including in the area of cultural rights and childrens' rights.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008916/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Proyectos eólicos en territorio del Sáhara Occidental Ocupado

El Gobierno marroquí ha aprobado recientemente un proyecto de construcción de un parque eólico de 300 megavatios de potencia en la localidad de Tiskrad, cercana a El Aaiún. Este proyecto supone una nueva agresión a la soberanía del Sáhara Occidental ya que Marruecos decide unilateralmente en un territorio cuya soberanía reside en el pueblo saharaui.

La Oficina Nacional Marroquí de Electricidad y Agua (ONEE) ha presentado el proyecto que está compuesto por cinco parques eólicos diferentes, dos de ellos situados claramente en territorio del Sáhara Occidental Ocupado. El proyecto se presenta junto con los situados en territorio marroquí y la ONEE ha aprobado las primeras muestras de interés de empresas internacionales para su construcción.

Pese al conocimiento y la responsabilidad que el resto de países del mundo tienen de respetar el Derecho internacional, dieciséis empresas internacionales han mostrado su interés en un proyecto que a todas luces viola la legalidad internacional y la soberanía del Sáhara Occidental. Entre estas dieciséis compañías internacionales que han mostrado su interés se encuentran cuatro compañías españolas, dos francesas, una italiana, una alemana, una británica y una danesa. Este caso merece especial atención por parte de las autoridades europeas para que las compañías de la Unión no violen el Derecho internacional ni la soberanía de otros pueblos.

¿Conoce la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante el proyecto de construcción de parques eólicos en el territorio del Sáhara Occidental Ocupado? ¿Y la muestra de interés por parte de empresas europeas en la licitación de dichos proyectos?

¿Piensa permitir que estas empresas puedan participar en la construcción de este tipo de proyectos en territorios ocupados, incumpliendo de esta manera el Derecho internacional?

¿Considera que las empresas europeas que no se atienen al Derecho internacional deben ser sancionadas?

¿Considera que se debe modificar la Directiva 2004/18/CE para que las empresas europeas que no se atengan al Derecho internacional no puedan presentarse posteriormente a licitaciones en los Estados miembros de la UE?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de octubre de 2013)

La UE está perfectamente al corriente de los planes de proyectos eólicos indicados por Su Señoría, los cuales se sitúan en parte, efectivamente, en el Sáhara Occidental. El Sáhara Occidental es un territorio no autónomo objeto de disputa administrado *de facto* por Marruecos.

Según la información de que disponemos, no se han puesto todavía en marcha los procedimientos de licitación para los proyectos situados en el Sáhara Occidental. La Comisión cree que una posible participación de empresas de la UE en esas licitaciones no constituye una violación del Derecho internacional, ya que este no prohíbe en general la explotación de los recursos del Sáhara Occidental. Si Marruecos no aplicara los mismos procedimientos de licitación para los proyectos en el Sáhara Occidental que para los demás proyectos situados en su territorio nacional, excluyendo a las empresas de la UE, correría el riesgo de ser acusado de discriminación y de infringir los instrumentos internacionales pertinentes, que se pueden aplicar en la medida en que la licitación la convocan las autoridades marroquíes, independientemente de la ubicación exacta del proyecto.

En lo que respecta a la Directiva 2004/18/CE, que se está revisando en la actualidad, la UE no considera aceptable ampliar los motivos de exclusión de forma que contemplen el comportamiento que nos ocupa, tal como sugiere Su Señoría. La participación en contrataciones públicas constituye el ejercicio de una libertad básica de los agentes económicos y los motivos de exclusión se deben limitar a los casos claros de violación de las normas jurídicas y profesionales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008916/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Wind power projects in the occupied Western Sahara

The Moroccan Government recently approved a plan to build a 300-megawatt wind farm in Tiskrad, near El-Aaiún. The project is a further attack on the sovereignty of Western Sahara, as the Moroccan Government has acted unilaterally with regard to an area whose sovereignty belongs to the Sahrawi people.

The Moroccan National Electricity and Water Office (ONEE) presented the project, which consists of five separate wind farms, two of which are clearly located in the occupied Western Sahara. The project also comprises those located in Morocco and the ONEE has accepted the first expressions of interest in its construction submitted by international companies.

Despite other countries around the world knowing they have a responsibility to respect international law, 16 international companies have expressed interest in a project that clearly violates international law and the sovereignty of Western Sahara. Among the 16 international companies that have expressed interest are four Spanish companies, two French, one Italian, one German, one British and one Danish. The European authorities need to pay close attention to this case to ensure that EU companies do not violate international law or the sovereignty of other peoples.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the project to build wind farms in the occupied Western Sahara and the expressions of interest by European companies in tendering for these projects?

Does she intend to allow these companies to participate in the construction of projects of this kind in occupied territories, in breach of international law?

Does she think that European companies that do not comply with international law should be penalised?

Does she think that directive 2004/18/EC should be amended so that European companies that do not comply with international law cannot subsequently take part in tender procedures in EU Member States?

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

The EU is well aware of the plans for wind farm projects raised by the Honourable Member of EP and which are in part indeed located in the Western Sahara. The Western Sahara is a disputed Non-Self- Governing Territory administered de facto by Morocco.

According to our knowledge, the tender procedures for those projects located in the Western Sahara have not yet been launched. The Commission is of the view that a possible participation of EU companies in these tenders does not constitute a violation of international law, since international law does not generally prohibit the exploitation of resources of Western Sahara. If Morocco was not applying the same tender procedures for the projects in Western Sahara as for other projects situated on its national territory, thereby excluding EU companies, it would risk being accused of discrimination in breach of relevant international instruments, which may apply insofar as the tender is launched by Moroccan authorities, regardless of the precise location of the project.

As regards Directive 2004/18/EC, currently under revision, the EU takes the view that it would not be acceptable to extend the grounds for exclusion to cover behaviour at hand, as suggested by the Honourable Member of Parliament. Participation in public procurement is an exercise of the economic operators' basic freedom and grounds for exclusion shall be limited to clear cut cases of violation of legal and professional rules.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008917/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Despliegue del escudo antimisiles de los EE.UU. en Rota (España)

El Gobierno de España autorizó en 2011 el despliegue de parte de su escudo antimisiles en la base militar que el ejército estadounidense tiene en Rota, España. Dicho despliegue está comenzando a traer parte de la armada estadounidense a la citada base, lo que conllevará un incremento de los riesgos para la población local.

El ejército estadounidense está implementando el desarrollo del escudo antimisiles con el desplazamiento a la citada base de más de 1 100 efectivos y cuatro destructores. La base naval debe ser reestructurada para poder alojar dicha flota, lo que requiere unas obras que supondrán un coste de más de 40 millones, de los cuales el Gobierno Español deberá aportar un significativo porcentaje. El Gobierno deberá acometer diferentes trabajos de adaptación de la base en cofinanciación con los Estados Unidos, lo que tendrá un fuerte impacto en las arcas públicas.

Localizar un operativo tan importante en la base naval de Rota incrementa los riesgos que asume dicha región al albergar la flota de unos de los países más beligerantes del mundo que viola sistemáticamente el Derecho internacional, como en los recientes escándalos de su espionaje. La instalación de un dispositivo de estas características puede comprometer la seguridad de la práctica totalidad de la Unión Europea para beneficiar a un escudo protector de los Estados Unidos de América. Este Estado, tradicionalmente aliado de la Unión Europea, ha demostrado una completa falta de confianza en los Estados miembros de la Unión Europea, países a los que espía habitualmente

¿Considera la Comisión que el Gobierno de los EE.UU. puede dejar de ser un «aliado» militar, si es que alguna vez lo ha sido, y por tanto convertirse en un potencial enemigo de la Unión Europea?

¿Considera la Comisión que una base de tales características en Rota, territorio de un Estado miembro, puede comprometer la seguridad del conjunto de la Unión Europea?

¿Puede garantizar la Comisión que dicha base militar en territorio de un Estado de la UE no será empleada para llevar a cabo acciones contrarias al Derecho europeo, el Derecho internacional humanitario, los derechos humanos o el Derecho internacional? ¿Puede garantizar asimismo que dicha base no se emplee para minar los intereses de la UE en su conjunto?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de octubre de 2013)

El emplazamiento y las operaciones de instalaciones militares de los Estados Unidos de América o de cualquier otro tercer Estado en el territorio de los Estados miembros se contemplan en los acuerdos bilaterales entre el tercer país de que se trate y el Estado miembro de acogida.

En virtud de los Tratados, la Unión Europea no tiene competencias para intervenir en este asunto, en la medida en que el Estado miembro de acogida respete las disposiciones pertinentes del Derecho de la UE en los ámbitos del medio ambiente y de las demás políticas pertinentes de la UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008917/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Deployment of the US missile shield in Rota (Spain)

In 2011, the Spanish Government authorised the deployment of part of its missile shield in the US army's military base in Rota, Spain. This deployment is starting to draw part of the US army to this base, which will lead to increased risks for the local population.

The US army is implementing the development of the missile shield by moving more than 1 100 soldiers and four destroyers to this base. The naval base has to be restructured in order to accommodate this fleet, which requires works at a cost of more than EUR 40 million, a significant proportion of which will have to be provided by the Spanish Government. The government will have to undertake various works to adapt the base with co-financing from the United States, which will have a significant impact on public finances.

Setting up such an important operation in the naval base in Rota increases the risks for this region associated with accommodating the fleet of one of the most belligerent countries in the world which systematically violates international law, for example, in its recent spying scandals. The installation of such a system could put the safety of practically the whole European Union at risk to benefit a US shield. This State, which has traditionally been an ally of the European Union, has shown a complete lack of trust in the EU Member States, countries which it regularly spies on.

Does the Commission believe that the US Government could cease to be a military 'ally', if it ever was one, and therefore become a potential enemy of the European Union?

Does the Commission consider that a base such as Rota, on the territory of a Member State, could put the safety of the whole European Union at risk?

Can the Commission guarantee that this military base on the territory of an EU Member State will not be used to carry out activities which contradict European law, international humanitarian law, human rights or international law? Can it also guarantee that this base will not be used to undermine the interests of the EU as a whole?

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

The placement and operations of United States of America or any other third country's military installations on the territories of Member States are dealt with in bilateral arrangements between the relevant third country and the host Member State.

According to the Treaties, the European Union has no competence to intervene in the matter, inasmuch as the host Member State respects the relevant provisions of EC law in the fields of environment and in the other concerned EU policies.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008918/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Desacreditación de la protesta social en Catatumbo y acusaciones en contra del defensor de los derechos humanos César Jerez

Asociaciones y organismos nacionales e internacionales han hecho un llamamiento sobre la gravedad de los acontecimientos registrados durante las protestas del campesinado en la región del Catatumbo (Colombia) y el papel que están desempeñando las fuerzas policiales y militares, quienes habrían disparado en varias ocasiones con armas de fuego contra las personas que protestaban, en un momento marcado por la búsqueda de una solución política al conflicto armado en el marco de un proceso de negociaciones en el que, supuestamente, el Gobierno colombiano está fuertemente comprometido.

Además de esta inaceptable represión criminal de unas protestas legítimas, de la que alertaba en mi pregunta E-007694/2013, el Gobierno colombiano ha puesto en marcha un preocupante proceso de desacreditación de la protesta y, más concretamente, de la labor de las organizaciones y personas defensoras de los derechos humanos que supervisan la labor del gobierno en este ámbito.

Así, solo durante las últimas dos semanas, numerosos medios de comunicación están amplificando y repitiendo constantemente las declaraciones del Ministro de Defensa de Colombia en las que acusa sin ningún fundamento a César Jerez, dirigente de la Asociación de Campesinos del Valle de Cimitarra (ACVC), ganadora del Premio Nacional por la Paz en 2010, y de la Asociación Nacional de Zonas de Reservas Campesinas (Anzorc), de mantener vínculos con las FARC-EP.

Estas declaraciones, junto con la amplificación que están haciendo los medios de comunicación, y en un Estado como el colombiano, ponen en serio riesgo la vida y la integridad de César Jerez, así como de numerosos dirigentes campesinos de la región.

En cumplimiento de la supuesta defensa de los derechos humanos por parte de la Alta Representante, como pilar que inspira, supuestamente, las relaciones de la UE con otros países: ¿piensa la Vicepresidenta, a través de la Delegación de la UE en Bogotá, hacer un llamamiento para proteger a las personas defensoras de los derechos humanos y recalcar la importante labor que realizan en un momento como el actual? En el marco de la necesaria garantía de los derechos humanos que recoge el Acuerdo Comercial Multipartes entre la UE, Colombia y Perú, ¿tiene previsto la Alta Representante que la Delegación de la UE en Colombia visite el Catatumbo y las sedes de la ACVC en Barrancabermeja, así como hacer una condena pública de la desacreditación de la labor en defensa de estos derechos realizada por personas y asociaciones?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de septiembre de 2013)

En sus esfuerzos constantes por aplicar el Plan de Acción de la UE para los derechos humanos y las directrices para los defensores de los derechos humanos, la Delegación de la UE en Colombia presta estrecha atención a la situación en Catatumbo, incluido el caso de César Jerez. El grupo local de trabajo de derechos humanos formado por la Delegación de la UE y las embajadas de los Estados miembros en Bogotá ha decidido seguir atentamente el caso, junto con las organizaciones internacionales presentes en Colombia. La Delegación de la UE ha recibido a representantes de las diferentes organizaciones de Catatumbo y continuará recabando información de todas las partes, incluidos los funcionarios del Gobierno, acerca de la evolución de la situación sobre el terreno.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008918/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Discrediting the social protest in Catatumbo and accusations against human rights defender César Jerez

National and international associations and bodies have made an appeal regarding the seriousness of the events which took place during protests by farmers in the region of Catatumbo (Colombia) and the role of the police and armed forces who, on numerous occasions, have opened fire on protesters at a time marked by the search for a political solution to the armed conflict within the framework of a negotiation process to which the Colombian Government is apparently strongly committed.

In addition to this unacceptable criminal clampdown on legitimate protests, which I highlighted in my Question E-007694/2013, the Colombian Government has set in motion a worrying process discrediting the protest and, more specifically, the work of the human rights organisations and defenders who oversee the government's work in this area.

As a result, in the last two weeks alone, many media sources have been constantly amplifying and repeating the Colombian Defence Minister's statements in which he makes unfounded accusations that César Jerez, leader of the Cimitarra Valley Farmers' Association (ACVC), which won the National Peace Prize in 2010, and the National Association of Farmers' Reserve Zones (ANZORC), is maintaining links with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia — People's Army (FARC-EP).

These statements, together with the media's amplification, and in a State such as Colombia, represent a serious risk to the life and integrity of César Jerez, as well as many farming leaders in the region.

In accordance with the High Representative's supposed defence of human rights, as a pillar meant to inspire the EU's relations with other countries: does the Vice-President, through the EU Delegation in Bogotá, intend to make an appeal to protect human rights defenders and highlight the important work they carry out at times such as this? Within the framework of the necessary human rights guarantee included in the Multipart Trade Agreement between the EU, Colombia and Peru, does the High Representative have plans for the EU Delegation in Colombia to visit Catatumbo and the headquarters of the ACVC in Barrancabermeja, and to publicly condemn the discrediting of the work of individuals and associations in defence of these rights?

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

The EU Delegation in Colombia, in its constant efforts to implement the EU's Action plan for human rights and the guidelines for human rights defenders, follows the situation in Catatumbo closely, including the case of César Jerez. The local human rights working group comprised by the EU Delegation and Member States' embassies in Bogotá has decided to continue monitoring the case closely, together with the international organisations present in Colombia. The EU delegation has received representatives from the various organisations in Catatumbo and will continue seeking information from all parties, including government officials, regarding developments on the ground.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008919/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Financiación de la campaña electoral de Severo Moto en Guinea Ecuatorial por parte del Partido Popular español

En estos días se está destapando el que podría ser el mayor caso de corrupción, financiación ilegal de un partido político y cohecho de la historia reciente de España y de la Unión Europea.

Entre otros asuntos, el ex tesorero del Partido Popular, Luis Bárcenas, en prisión preventiva desde el 27 de junio, acaba de afirmar ante la justicia que el Partido Popular aportó ingentes cantidades de dinero a la campaña electoral del principal dirigente de la oposición de Guinea Ecuatorial, Severo Moto, en un claro caso de injerencia externa.

El anterior Gobierno del PP mantuvo relaciones muy estrechas con Severo Moto y el hecho de que financiara su campaña electoral puede dar luz al intento de golpe de Estado que hubo en 2004 con el supuesto apoyo —posteriormente desmentido por el Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores— y participación del Gobierno español presidido por José María Aznar.

Así, en marzo de 2004, 50 personas armadas fueron detenidas en el aeropuerto de Harare, en Zimbabue, cuando se dirigían a Guinea Ecuatorial con la intención de derrocar al dictador Obiang. El plan que no pudo culminar —y que supuestamente contaba con el apoyo de los Gobiernos de España, el Reino Unido y los EE.UU., que esperaban obtener a cambio contratos millonarios para empresas multinacionales en explotaciones petrolíferas y de gas— consistía en derrocar del poder al dictador Obiang y trasladar a Severo Moto en avión desde España para que se hiciera con el poder.

Tanto el plan de colocar al opositor Severo Moto en el poder a través de la fuerza y con mercenarios supuestamente pagados por Gobiernos extranjeros como la financiación de su campaña electoral, revelada hoy por el ex tesorero Luis Bárcenas, suponen el incumplimiento de uno de los principios fundamentales del Derecho internacional: la no injerencia.

¿Está al corriente la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante de este tipo de actividades de los Gobiernos de los Estados miembros de la UE que suponen la violación de lo que establece el Derecho internacional respecto de la injerencia en asuntos de otros Estados? ¿Está al corriente la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante de que actualmente Gobiernos de Estados miembros de la UE estén financiando a partidos o líderes opositores en terceros países?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(29 de noviembre de 2013)

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta entiende que la cuestión que plantea Su Señoría es actualmente objeto de procedimientos judiciales en los tribunales competentes en España.

Ni la Comisión ni la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta tienen poder para tratar la cuestión que plantea, ya que es un asunto que corresponde únicamente a las autoridades nacionales competentes. Por tanto, sugeriríamos a Su Señoría que se pusiera en contacto directo con dichas autoridades para recibir más información al respecto.

La UE vigila de cerca la situación en Guinea Ecuatorial, ya que sus relaciones con ese país representan una zona muy específica de África. Guinea Ecuatorial no ratificó el Acuerdo de Cotonú revisado y, consecuentemente, no es beneficiaria del Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo (FED). La UE no tiene representación en Malabo, pero se ocupa del país desde Libreville (Gabón). La Unión continúa trabajando por el desarrollo democrático pacífico de Guinea Ecuatorial a tenor de las normas internacionales y del Derecho Internacional.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008919/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Financing of Severo Moto's electoral campaign in Equatorial Guinea by the Spanish Partido Popular [People's Party]

At present, we are uncovering what could be the worst case of corruption, illegal financing of a political party and bribery in the recent history of Spain and the European Union.

Among other things, the former treasurer of the *Partido Popular* (PP), Luis Bárcenas, who has been in remand since 27 June, has just stated before the court that the party donated huge sums of money to the electoral campaign of the main leader of the opposition in Equatorial Guinea, Severo Moto, in a clear case of external intervention.

The former PP Government maintained very close relations with Severo Moto and the fact that it financed his electoral campaign could shine a light on the attempted *coup d'état* which took place in 2004, allegedly with the support — which the Minister for Foreign Affairs subsequently denied — and participation of the Spanish Government headed by José María Aznar.

In March 2004, 50 people carrying arms were arrested in Harare airport in Zimbabwe while on their way to Equatorial Guinea with the intention of overthrowing Dictator Obiang. The plan, which never came to fruition — and which supposedly had the support of the Spanish, British and US Governments, who were hoping to obtain in exchange million-dollar oil and gas extraction contracts for multinationals — entailed overthrowing Dictator Obiang and flying Severo Moto in from Spain to take power.

Both the plan to put the opposition's Severo Moto in power by force using mercenaries allegedly paid by foreign governments and the financing of his electoral campaign revealed today by former treasurer Luis Bárcenas represent a failure to comply with one of the fundamental principles of international law: non-intervention.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of these kinds of activities by the governments of EU Member States, which represent a violation of the provisions of international law with regard to intervention in the affairs of other States? Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware that the governments of EU Member States are currently financing opposition parties or leaders in third countries?

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

The understanding of the High Representative/Vice-President is that the issue raised by the Honourable Member is currently the subject of judicial processes in the competent courts in Spain.

Neither the Commission nor the HR/VP has the power to deal with the question put, which is a matter solely for the national authorities concerned. We would therefore suggest to the Honourable Member to contact directly the competent Spanish authorities for further information.

The EU closely monitors the situation in Equatorial Guinea, as its relations with Equatorial Guinea represent a very specific area in Africa. Equatorial Guinea did not ratify the Revised Cotonou Agreement and subsequently does not benefit from European Development Fund (EDF). The EU does not have a representation in Malabo but covers the country from Libreville, Gabon. The EU continues to work for the peaceful democratic development of Equatorial Guinea, in line with international standards and with respect for international law.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008921/13
aan de Commissie
Philip Claeys (NI)
(22 juli 2013)

Betreft: EU-Zuid-Afrika top in Pretoria op 18 juli

De voorzitter van de Europese Commissie nam samen met o.m. de voorzitter van de Europese Raad deel aan de zesde EU-Zuid-Afrika top in Pretoria op 18 juli.

Werd met president Zuma en/of andere regeringsvertegenwoordigers het probleem van de criminaliteit in het algemeen in Zuid-Afrika, en van het geweld tegen Afrikaners in het bijzonder besproken? Zo ja, wat waren de conclusies? Zo neen, waarom niet?

O.a. via de „Black Empowerment Act" worden Zuid-Afrikanen van Europese origine openlijk gediscrimineerd in het onderwijs, in overheidsfuncties enzovoort. Werd deze geïnstitutionaliseerde en systematische discriminatie van Zuid-Afrikanen van Europese oorsprong besproken met de Zuid-Afrikaanse regering? Zo ja, wat waren de conclusies? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Is de discriminatie die onder meer met de „Black Empowerment Act" beoogd en georganiseerd wordt, in overeenstemming met de voorwaarden die de Europese Unie stelt voor het afsluiten en in stand houden van akkoorden met derde landen?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(3 oktober 2013)

Het onderwerp criminaliteit is niet aan bod gekomen tijdens de zesde top tussen de EU en Zuid-Afrika, aangezien economische kwesties en buitenlandse zaken prioritair waren. Toch werd de kwestie wanneer het nodig was reeds meermaals behandeld in het kader van de politieke dialoog tussen de EU en Zuid-Afrika.

Wat racistisch geweld betreft, wordt het geachte Parlementslid onder meer verwezen naar de antwoorden op de eerdere schriftelijke vragen E-3506/2010, E-3505/2010, E-5051/2011 en E-631/2012 ([1]).

De Zuid-Afrikaanse grondwet biedt sterke garanties om schendingen van mensenrechten te voorkomen en de rechten van de minderheden te waarborgen. De EU en Zuid-Afrika onderhouden een intensieve politieke dialoog, onder meer over de mensenrechten, die de EU de mogelijkheid biedt om eventuele zorgwekkende kwesties, zoals misdaad en discriminatie, te bespreken met de Zuid-Afrikaanse autoriteiten.

De versterking van de economische positie van de zwarte bevolking (Black Economic Empowerment (BEE)) maakt integraal deel uit van het in 1994 in Zuid-Afrika opgestarte programma om het hoofd te bieden aan de economische erfenis van de apartheid en de deelname van de zwarte bevolking aan de economie te vergroten. De EU steunt de algemene agenda voor sociaal-economische verandering en is via de politieke en beleidsdialoog, ontwikkelingssamenwerking, handel en investeringen betrokken bij de uitvoering ervan.

In juni 2013 heeft het Zuid-Afrikaanse parlement een wijziging van de Broadly Based BEE (B-BBEE)-wet goedgekeurd met het oog op de verbetering van de vorige wet van 2003 door middel van betere handhavingsmaatregelen en stimulansen. Daardoor kunnen nu de komende maanden ook nieuwe uitvoeringsvoorschriften worden vastgesteld. In hun gesprekken met de Zuid-Afrikaanse regering hebben de EU en haar lidstaten gewezen op een aantal punten van zorg in verband met deze voorschriften, met name wat betreft de zware sancties voor niet-naleving, de eisen inzake opleiding en vaardigheden en inzake de ontwikkeling van ondernemingen.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008921/13
to the Commission
Philip Claeys (NI)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: EU-South Africa summit in Pretoria on 18 July

The President of the Commission, together with — *inter alia* — the President of the European Council, attended the sixth EU-South Africa summit in Pretoria on 18 July.

Was the subject of crime in general, and that of violence against Afrikaners in particular, in South Africa discussed with President Zuma and/or other government representatives? If so, what were the conclusions? If not, why not?

By means, *inter alia*, of the Black Empowerment Act, South Africans of European origin are openly discriminated against in education, public employment, etc. Was this institutionalised and systematic discrimination against South Africans of European origin discussed with the South African Government? If so, what were the conclusions? If not, why not?

Does the discrimination which the Black Empowerment Act, among other instruments, aims to bring about and organise accord with the conditions imposed by the European Union for the conclusion and maintenance of agreements with third countries?

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

Crime was not among the topics discussed at the sixth South Africa-EU Summit given the priority was economic and foreign affairs issues. However, it has been dealt with at various occasions within the EU-South Africa political dialogue, when required.

With regard to racial violence, the Honourable Member is referred to the answers *inter alia* provided to previous written questions E-3506/2010, E-3505/2010, E-5051/2011 and E-631/2012 ([1]).

The South African Constitution offers strong guarantees against human rights' abuses, and safeguards to minorities' rights. Close political dialogue with South Africa, including a dialogue on human rights, provides the EU with the opportunity, to convey messages to the South African authorities on issues of possible concern, including on crime and discrimination.

Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) is an integral part of the programme launched in South Africa since 1994 to overcome the economic legacy of apartheid and to broaden participation in the economy by black people.The EU supports the overall socioeconomic transformation agenda and is involved in its implementation through political/policy dialogues, development cooperation, trade and investments.

The Broadly Based BEE (B-BBEE) Amendment Bill adopted in June 2013 by the South African Parliament aims to improve the previous 2003 Act through improved compliance and incentives. The new Bill opened the way for the adoption in the next months of new implementation codes. In their interaction with the South African Government, the EU and its Member States shared a number of preoccupations especially in relation to the codes' onerous penalties for non-compliance, training and skills development requirements and enterprise and supplier development.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008922/13
aan de Raad (Voorzitter Europese Raad)
Philip Claeys (NI)
(22 juli 2013)

Betreft: PCE/PEC — EU-Zuid-Afrika top

De voorzitter van de Europese Raad nam samen met o.m. de voorzitter van de Europese Commissie deel aan de zesde EU-Zuid-Afrika top in Pretoria op 18 juli.

Werd met president Zuma en/of andere regeringsvertegenwoordigers het probleem van de criminaliteit in het algemeen in Zuid-Afrika, en van het geweld tegen Afrikaners in het bijzonder besproken? In de opmerkingen van de voorzitter van de Europese Raad na de top is daar niets over terug te vinden. Waarom niet?

O.a. via de „Black Empowerment Act" worden Zuid-Afrikanen van Europese origine openlijk gediscrimineerd in het onderwijs, in overheidsfuncties enzovoort. Werd deze geïnstitutionaliseerde en systematische discriminatie van Zuid-Afrikanen van Europese oorsprong besproken met de Zuid-Afrikaanse regering? Zo ja, wat waren de conclusies? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Is de discriminatie die onder meer met de „Black Empowerment Act" beoogd en georganiseerd wordt, in overeenstemming met de voorwaarden die de Europese Unie stelt voor het afsluiten en in stand houden van akkoorden met derde landen?

Antwoord
(7 oktober 2013)

Het geachte Parlementslid wordt verwezen naar het antwoord op zijn identieke vraag E-008921/2013 aan de Commissie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008922/13
to the Council (President of the European Council)
Philip Claeys (NI)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: PCE/PEC — EU-South Africa summit

The President of the European Council, together with — *inter alia* — the President of the Commission, attended the sixth EU-South Africa summit in Pretoria on 18 July.

Was the subject of crime in general, and that of violence against Afrikaners in particular, in South Africa discussed with President Zuma and/or other government representatives? The comments made by the President of the European Council after the summit make no mention of this. Why not?

By means, *inter alia*, of the Black Empowerment Act, South Africans of European origin are openly discriminated against in education, public employment, etc. Was this institutionalised and systematic discrimination against South Africans of European origin discussed with the South African Government? If so, what were the conclusions? If not, why not?

Does the discrimination which the Black Empowerment Act, among other instruments, aims to bring about and organise accord with the conditions imposed by the European Union for the conclusion and maintenance of agreements with third countries?

Reply
(7 October 2013)

The Honourable Member is referred to the answer given to his identical Question E-008921/2013 to the Commission.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008923/13
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(22 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Nowy premier Albanii

Poinformowano, że kolejnym premierem Albanii ma być Edi Rama, przywódca partii socjalistycznej. Koalicja zdobędzie prawdopodobnie 84 z 140 miejsc w parlamencie tego kraju. Położy to kres trwającym od ośmiu lat rządom centroprawicowej partii demokratycznej pod przywództwem Saliego Beriszy.

Jak zdaniem ESDZ to wydarzenie polityczne wpłynie na integrację Albanii z Europą?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Štefana Füllego w imieniu Komisji
(16 września 2013 r.)

W konkluzjach Rady z grudnia 2012 r. wyraźnie określa się warunki, które należy spełnić, by Albania uczyniła postęp w procesie integracji europejskiej. Komisja uważa, że zdecydowana większość w parlamencie powinna pozwolić nowo utworzonemu rządowi na sprostanie zasadniczym wyzwaniom w tym zakresie oraz na kontynuację drogi rozpoczętej przez dotychczasowy rząd.

Koniecznym warunkiem sukcesu w procesie integracji z UE są nadal dwa czynniki: konstruktywny dialog i porozumienie między nowym rządem a opozycją.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008923/13
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Albania's new Prime Minister

It has been reported that the next Prime Minister of Albania will be Edi Rama, leader of the Socialist Party. His coalition is likely to win 84 of the national parliament's 140 seats. This marks an end to the eight-year rule of the centre-right Democratic Party under Sali Berisha.

In the assessment of the EEAS, how will this political development affect the European integration of Albania?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(16 September 2013)

The Council conclusions of December 2012 clearly specify the conditions that need to be met for Albania to progress on its European integration process. The Commission considers that the solid majority obtained by the incoming government should allow it to tackle key challenges in this regard, continuing the European path on which the outgoing government had set out.

Constructive dialogue and consensus between the new government and the opposition remain essential for success in the EU integration process.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008924/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(22 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Prezydent Egiptu usunięty przez wojsko

Rok po wyborze Mohameda Morsiego na prezydenta Egiptu wojsko, wskutek powszechnych protestów, pozbawiło go pełnionej przez niego funkcji. Pierwszy demokratycznie wybrany prezydent Egiptu rozzłościł liberalną opozycję swoim proislamskim programem.

Jakie stanowisko wobec sytuacji w Egipcie zajmuje ESDZ? Czy ESDZ uważa, że Mohamed Morsi został usunięty wskutek zamachu stanu? Jakie kroki może podjąć UE, aby zapobiec dalszemu rozlewowi krwi w Egipcie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton
w imieniu Komisji
(10 września 2013 r.)

UE uważnie i z niepokojem obserwuje sytuację w Egipcie. W tym kontekście Wysoka Przedstawiciel / Wiceprzewodnicząca wydała od początku lipca br. różne oświadczenia, także w imieniu 28 państw członkowskich, wypowiadała się także za pośrednictwem swojego rzecznika, nie wspominając o konkluzjach Rady z dnia 22 lipca i 21 sierpnia br.

UE w dalszym ciągu wzywa wszystkie partie polityczne do zaangażowania się w rzeczywisty, obejmujący wszystkich dialog w celu przywrócenia procesu demokratycznego w odpowiedzi na uzasadnione żądania i aspiracje narodu egipskiego. Konfrontacji i polaryzacja nie stanowią rozwiązania.

UE nadal dokładnie śledzi rozwój sytuacji, również poprzez swoich przedstawicieli na miejscu, oraz potwierdza swoją gotowość do wsparcia narodu egipskiego w dążeniu do zbudowania Egiptu stabilnego, demokratycznego i dostatniego, w którym jest miejsce dla wszystkich.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008924/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Egypt's president removed by the military

Following popular protests one year after his election, Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi has been removed from office by the military. The country's first democratically elected president, he had angered the liberal opposition with his pro-Islamist agenda.

What is the position of the EEAS as regards the situation in Egypt? Does it consider Mr Morsi to have been removed by a military coup? What steps can the EU take to help prevent more bloodshed in Egypt?

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

The EU is following the developments in Egypt closely and with concern. In this respect, various statements have been issued by the HR/VP, also on behalf of the 28 Member States as well as by her spokesperson since the beginning of July, not to mention the Council Conclusions of 22 July and 21 August.

The EU continues to call on all political parties to engage in a real and inclusive dialogue in order to restore a democratic process responding to the legitimate requests and asprations of the Egyptian people. Confrontation and polarization are not a solution.

The EU continues to follow the situation closely, also on the ground, and reiterates its readiness to assist the people of Egypt in their quest for a stable, inclusive, democratic and prosperous Egypt.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008925/13
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(22 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Strajk greckich służb miejskich przeciw planom rządowym

Pracownicy greckich służb miejskich strajkowali przeciw rządowym planom zmniejszenia liczby urzędników państwowych. Jest to warunek postawiony przez międzynarodowych wierzycieli Grecji przed zaakceptowaniem przez nich wypłaty następnej transzy pakietu pomocowego dla tego kraju. Rząd Grecji planuje wysłać 12 500 urzędników na przymusowy urlop pod koniec 2013 r. Otrzymają oni wynagrodzenie w wysokości 75 % pensji i w ciągu ośmiu miesięcy zostaną zwolnieni, chyba że zostaną przeniesieni do innych służb.

Jakie jest stanowisko Komisji w sprawie tej reformy?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Olliego Rehna w imieniu Komisji
(2 września 2013 r.)

Pytanie Pana Posła odnosi się do tzw. systemu mobilności. Aby nadrobić nagromadzone opóźnienia tego systemu, władze planują zakończyć przenoszenie do niego przynajmniej 12 500 zwykłych pracowników do końca września i co najmniej kolejnych 12 500 do końca grudnia. Płace pracowników objętych systemem mobilności zostaną obniżone do 75 %, zaś pracownicy ci zostaną ocenieni, zgodnie z odgórnie zdefiniowanymi ramami oceny, które zostaną ustanowione do końca września, zanim zostaną przeniesieni na nowe stanowiska lub zwolnieni.

System mobilności to istotny element wysiłków, które mają na celu podniesienie skuteczności administracji publicznej i poprawę funkcjonowania całej gospodarki. Reformy te przyczyniają się do odnowy i poprawy jakości służby cywilnej.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008925/13
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Greek municipal workers strike over government plans

Greek municipal workers have been striking over government plans to reduce the number of civil servants. Greece's international creditors required this measure before their approval of the next bailout instalment for the country. The Greek Government is seeking to put 12 500 civil servants on administrative leave by the end of 2013. They will be paid 75% of their normal salary and will be made redundant within 8 months unless they are transferred to another service.

What is the Commission's position concerning this reform?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

The Honourable Member's question refers to the so-called mobility scheme. To recover the accumulated delays of this scheme, the authorities plan to complete shifting at least 12,500 ordinary employees to the scheme by end-September and at least another 12,500 by end-December. Employees placed in the mobility scheme will have their wages cut to 75% and will be assessed, within a centrally-defined evaluation framework to be established by end-September, before reallocation to new positions or exit.

The mobility scheme is an important part of the efforts to make public administration more effective and to improve the functioning of the whole economy. These reforms contribute to a renewal and an improved quality of the civil service.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008926/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(22 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – napad zorganizowanej grupy przestępczej na posterunek policji w Sinciang w Chinach

W regionie Sinciang w Chinach dochodzi do napięć między muzułmańską mniejszością Ujgurów a dominującą grupą etniczną Chińczyków Han. W ciągu kilku ostatnich lat pojawiło się szereg doniesień o incydentach z użyciem przemocy, do jakich doszło w kontekście tych napięć. Ostatnim takim incydentem był napad z użyciem noży na posterunek policji, w wyniku którego śmierć poniosło 9 policjantów i 17 cywilów. Napad ten zakończył się zastrzeleniem dziesięciu napastników, co zwiększyło liczbę ofiar do 36.

Jakich informacji może udzielić ESDZ na temat napięć między muzułmańską mniejszością Ujgurów a dominującą grupa etniczną Chińczyków Han? Czy Wysoka Przedstawiciel i ESDZ kiedykolwiek poruszyli w rozmowach z rządem chińskim kwestię znaczenia złagodzenia napięć oraz zmniejszenia liczby aktów przemocy w Sinciang?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(24 września 2013 r.)

Sytuacja w regionie autonomicznym Sinkiang budzi od 2009 r. szczególny niepokój UE, kiedy to w starciach na tle etnicznym, do jakich doszło między muzułmańskimi Ujgurami a Chińczykami Han w stolicy Urumczi, zginęło prawie 200 osób. Od jakiegoś czasu ESDZ monitoruje sytuację i dlatego dobrze znane są jej ostatnie zamieszki z udziałem policji.

UE wielokrotnie składała oświadczenia na posiedzeniach Rady Praw Człowieka i Zgromadzenia Ogólnego Narodów Zjednoczonych dotyczące traktowania przez władze chińskie mniejszości takich jak Ujgurzy. W oświadczeniach tych wyraziła zaniepokojenie arbitralnymi zatrzymaniami i wymuszonymi zaginięciami, łamaniem prawa do rzetelnego procesu sądowego, a także do wolności słowa i zgromadzeń oraz wolności religii lub przekonań. Tego typu kwestie były również poruszane podczas dwustronnych rozmów poświęconych prawom człowieka, m.in. podczas ostatniego dialogu poświęconego prawom człowieka, który prowadzono 25 czerwca 2013 r. UE wzywa też władze chińskie do podjęcia konstruktywnych działań w celu zajęcia się podstawowymi roszczeniami i doprowadzenia do długoterminowego rozwiązania.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008926/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Gang attacks police station in Xinjiang, China

In the region of Xinjiang in China, there have been tensions between the Muslim Uighur minority and the dominant ethnic group, the Han Chinese. Over the last few years, a number of violent incidents have been reported against a backdrop of tension. In the most recent incident, a police station was attacked by knife-wielding assailants who killed 9 policemen and 17 civilians. The attack ended with the ten attackers being shot dead, with, therefore, a total of 36 people being killed.

What information can the EEAS provide on the tensions between the Muslim Uighurs and the Han ethnic group in China? Have the High Representative and the EEAS addressed the importance of easing the tensions and reducing the number of violent incidents in Xinjiang in any talks with the Chinese Government?

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

The situation in Xinjiang has been of particular concern for the EU since 2009, when ethnic clashes between Muslim Uighur and Han Chinese in the regional capital of Urumqi killed nearly 200 people. Over time, the EEAS has been monitoring the situation and is therefore well aware of the most recent clashes involving the police.

The EU has repeatedly issued statements at the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations referring to the treatment of minorities such as the Uighurs, by the Chinese authorities, expressing concerns at arbitrary detention and enforced disappearances, violations of the right to fair trial, as well as of freedom of expression and assembly and freedom of religion or belief. Such concerns have also been raised during the bilateral Human Rights Dialogues, including during the latest Human Rights Dialogue on 25 June 2013, and the EU urges the Chinese authorities to take constructive steps to address underlying grievances and bring about a long-term solution.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008927/13
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(22 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Coraz bardziej wyszukane sposoby przeprowadzania cyberataków

Ze względu na postęp technologiczny i uzależnienie od technologii liczba zagrożeń związanych z cyberprzestrzenią gwałtownie rośnie, a ataki stają się coraz bardziej wyszukane. Do głównych celów ataków zaliczają się banki, firmy prawnicze czy przedsiębiorstwa.

Jakie kroki podjęła Komisja, by zapewnić ochronę przed wzrostem liczby zaawansowanych cyberataków? Czy Komisja może przedstawić dane dotyczące liczby pomyślnie przeprowadzonych cyberataków, jakie miały miejsce w ostatnich latach? Jak – w odniesieniu do liczby cyberataków, które miały miejsce w państwach członkowskich – UE wypada na tle krajów trzecich?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wiceprzewodniczącą Neelie Kroes w imieniu Komisji
(16 września 2013 r.)

Komisja Europejska zdaje sobie sprawę ze stale zmieniających się zagrożeń dla bezpieczeństwa cybernetycznego, w obliczu których stoi Europa i cały świat.

W odpowiedzi na te zagrożenia Komisja opracowała skoordynowaną politykę w ścisłej współpracy z państwami członkowskimi UE i innymi instytucjami i agencjami. Europejska strategia bezpieczeństwa cybernetycznego ([1]) określa konieczne działania i funkcje mające na celu podniesienie poziomu bezpieczeństwa w cyberprzestrzeni. Komisja przyjęła jednocześnie wniosek dotyczący dyrektywy ([2]) w sprawie bezpieczeństwa sieci i informacji, którego celem jest zapewnienie odpowiedniej ochrony sektora publicznego i prywatnego przed incydentami cybernetycznymi oraz umożliwienie im wspólnego reagowania na te incydenty, jeżeli mają one skutki transgraniczne, niezależnie od tego, czy są to ataki czy przypadkowe zdarzenia. Wniosek Komisji jest obecnie przedmiotem debaty w Radzie i Parlamencie Europejskim.

UE przyjęła także niedawno dyrektywę dotyczącą ataków na systemy informatyczne ([3]), która ma na celu wspieranie wysiłków na rzecz walki z cyberprzestępczością, między innymi poprzez rozpoznanie nowych rodzajów przestępstw, takich jak wykorzystywanie botnetów, a także poprzez podniesienie poziomu sankcji karnych w przypadku ataków na wielką skalę na systemy informatyczne. Na poziomie operacyjnym w bieżącym roku utworzono w ramach Europolu Europejskie Centrum ds. Walki z cyberprzestępczością w celu zapewnienia wsparcia dla krajowych dochodzeń oraz gromadzenia danych wywiadowczych na temat nowych zagrożeń w zakresie cyberprzestępczości.

Chociaż informacje otrzymywane od dostawców rozwiązań w zakresie bezpieczeństwa świadczą o skali problemu, trudno jest uzyskać wiarygodne dane na temat cyberataków. Przedsiębiorstwa często nie ujawniają liczby lub wpływu incydentów cybernetycznych, a cyberprzestępstwa często nie są zgłaszane organom ścigania. Wymóg sprawozdawczości określony w proponowanej nowej dyrektywie w sprawie bezpieczeństwa sieci i informacji zobowiązuje do przekazywania właściwym organom krajowym danych w tym zakresie.

([1]) JOIN (2013) 1 final.
([2]) COM(2013) 48.
([3]) Dyrektywa 2013/40/UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008927/13
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Ever more sophisticated nature of cyberattacks

Due to technological advances and reliance on technology, cyber-risks are growing exponentially and attacks are becoming more sophisticated. High-value targets, such as banks, law firms and corporate businesses are becoming key targets.

What steps has the Commission taken to ensure protection against this increase in more advanced cyberattacks? Could the Commission provide data on the number of successful cyberattacks that have occurred in recent years? How does the EU compare — in terms of the number of cyberattacks that have occurred in Member States — with third countries?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(16 September 2013)

The European Commission is aware of the ever-evolving cybersecurity threat facing Europe and the rest of the world.

In response to this threat, the Commission has designed a coordinated policy in close cooperation with EU Member States and other institutions and agencies. The EU Cyber Security Strategy ([1]) sets out actions required and roles to be played to enhance security in cyberspace. The Commission has simultaneously adopted a proposal for a directive ([2]) on network and information security (NIS), aimed at ensuring that the public and the private sector are adequately protected against cyber incidents and able to react to them jointly when they have cross-border implications, be the attacks or accidental events. The Commission's proposal is currently being discussed in the Council and the European Parliament.

The EU has also recently adopted a directive on attacks against information systems ([3]), which aims at supporting the fight against cyber-crime, inter alia by introducing new offences, such as the use of botnets, and by raising the level of criminal sanctions in case of large-scale attacks against information systems. At operational level, the European Cybercrime Centre (EC3) has been launched within Europol early this year to provide support to national investigations and gather intelligence on new cybercriminal threats.

While reports from security solution suppliers illustrate the magnitude of the problem, it is difficult to get reliable data on cyber-attacks. Companies often do not reveal the number or impact of cyber incidents and criminal incidents often do not get reported to law enforcement. A result of the reporting requirement in the proposed NIS Directive would be to give competent national authorities such data.

([1]) JOIN (2013) 1 final.
([2]) COM(2013) 48.
([3]) Directive 2013/40/EU.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008928/13
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(22 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Zachodni podgatunek nosorożca czarnego oficjalnie uznany za wymarły

Międzynarodowa Unia Ochrony Przyrody i Jej Zasobów (IUCN) podaje, że zachodni podgatunek nosorożca czarnego z Afryki został oficjalnie uznany za wymarły. Ostatniego przedstawiciela tego podgatunku zaobserwowano w 2006 r. Wymarcie wspomnianego podgatunku jest wynikiem nielegalnych polowań i braku podjęcia odpowiednich środków służących ochronie zwierząt. IUCN stwierdziła również, że liczba osobników należących do północnego podgatunku nosorożca białego spada i że w razie braku podjęcia odpowiednich środków jemu także grozi wymarcie. Istnieją doniesienia, że jednej czwartej wszystkich gatunków ssaków grozi wyginięcie.

Jakie środki służące ochronie zwierząt mogłaby podjąć Komisja, aby zapewnić ochronę zagrożonym gatunkom ssaków? Jakie informacje mogłaby dostarczyć Komisja na temat kłusownictwa w krajach rozwijających się będących odbiorcami pomocy finansowej UE? Jakie kroki mogłaby podjąć Komisja, aby zapobiec nielegalnym polowaniom, a zwłaszcza tym organizowanym w Afryce?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Komisarza Janeza Potočnika w imieniu Komisji
(3 września 2013 r.)

Unia Europejska przyjęła kompleksowy pakiet środków, których celem jest zagwarantowanie ochrony ssaków, m.in. dyrektywę Rady 92/43/EWG ([1]) z dnia 21 maja 1992 r. w sprawie ochrony siedlisk przyrodniczych oraz dzikiej fauny i flory oraz rozporządzenie Rady (WE) nr 338/97 ([2]) z dnia 9 grudnia 1996 r. w sprawie ochrony gatunków dzikiej fauny i flory w drodze regulacji handlu nimi, którym wdrożono Konwencję o międzynarodowym handlu dzikimi zwierzętami i roślinami gatunków zagrożonych wyginięciem (CITES) w UE.

UE podejmuje również aktywne działania przeciwko kłusownictwu na poziomie międzynarodowym.

UE odgrywała wiodącą rolę podczas 16. posiedzenia Konferencji Stron Konwencji CITES w marcu 2013 r., w trakcie którego przyjęto szereg zaleceń dotyczących konkretnych działań, jakie należy podjąć, aby ograniczyć nielegalny handel dziką fauną i florą, będący głównym czynnikiem napędzającym kłusownictwo, w tym w odniesieniu do nosorożców. UE jest również głównym źródłem finansowania międzynarodowego konsorcjum na rzecz zapobiegania przestępczości wymierzonej przeciwko dzikiej faunie i florze (International Consortium against Wildlife Crime), które zrzesza Interpol, Biuro NZ ds. Narkotyków i Przestępczości, Światową Organizację Celną, CITES i Bank Światowy. Mandat tego organu międzyagencyjnego obejmuje zwalczanie nielegalnego handlu dziką fauną i florą oraz powiązanego z nim kłusownictwa, również w Afryce.

W wielu krajach rozwijających się, które otrzymują pomoc finansową z UE, Komisja wspiera takie inicjatywy, jak MIKE (monitorowanie nielegalnego zabijania słoni). Jej celem jest badanie tendencji oraz czynników, które mają wpływ na te tendencje, w szczególności w Afryce, aby pomóc autorom polityki w wyborze odpowiednich środków zapobiegawczych. Niedawno, w wyniku rozmów z Sekretariatem Konwencji CITES, zatwierdzono program będący kontynuacją inicjatywy MIKE, równocześnie rozszerzając zakres działań na kolejne gatunki zwierząt oraz uwzględniając zwalczanie kłusownictwa.

([1]) Dz.U. L 206 z 22.7.1992.
([2]) Dz.U. L 61 z 3.3.1997.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008928/13
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Western black rhinoceros: officially extinct

According to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Africa's western black rhinoceros is now officially extinct. The last of the subspecies was seen in 2006. The extinction of this subspecies was the result of illegal hunting and a lack of conservation measures. The IUCN also stated that northern white rhinoceros numbers are falling and that this subspecies too could face extinction if the right measures are not taken. It has been reported that one quarter of all mammal species are at risk of extinction.

What conservation measures could the Commission implement to ensure that mammals at risk of extinction are protected? What information could the Commission provide on the poaching of animals in developing countries that are in receipt of financial assistance from the EU? What steps could the Commission take to prevent illegal hunting, especially in Africa?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

The European Union has adopted a comprehensive set of measures aiming to ensure the conservation of mammal species, including Council Directive 92/43/EEC ([1]) of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora and Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 ([2]) of 9 December 1996 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein which implements the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) in the EU.

The EU has also taken an active stance against animals poaching at international level.

The EU played a leading role in the adoption, at the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES in March 2013, of a series of recommendations calling for concrete actions against wildlife trafficking which is the major driver for poaching, including regarding rhinoceroses. The EU is also the major donor to the International Consortium against Wildlife Crime which brings together Interpol, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Customs Organisation, CITES and the World Bank. The mandate of this inter-agency body is to tackle wildlife trafficking and associated poaching, including in Africa.

In many developing countries that are in receipt of financial assistance from the EU, the Commission supports initiatives such as Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) which measures trends and identifies the factors that influence these trends in particular in Africa, thereby helping policy-makers to define appropriate responses. A follow-up programme to MIKE, including a broadened scope of activities to other flagship species and to the fight against poaching has been discussed with the CITES Secretariat and has just been approved.

([1]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([2]) OJ L 61, 3.3.1997.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008929/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(22 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Zabójstwo dwóch pakistańskich sióstr i ich matki z powodu rodzinnego filmu wideo

Dwie pakistańskie siostry i ich matka zostały zamordowane z powodu zamieszczonego cztery miesiące temu w Internecie filmu wideo, na którym siostry radośnie tańczą w strugach deszczu. Siostry były córkami emerytowanego policjanta, który wraz ze swoją rodziną mieszkał w Chilas w północnym Pakistanie. Wedle przypuszczeń zabójstwo sióstr i ich matki było karą za splamienie honoru rodziny. Tylko w ubiegłym roku z podobnych pobudek zamordowanych zostało ponad 900 kobiet.

Jakie kroki może podjąć ESDZ, aby chronić prawa kobiet w Pakistanie? Czy ESDZ może stwierdzić, w jak wielu podobnych przypadkach mordercą była osoba niepełnoletnia?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel i Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(24 września 2013 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel i Wiceprzewodnicząca odsyła szanownego Pana Posła do odpowiedzi udzielonych na poprzednie zapytania pisemne E-008108/2013 i E-008306/2013 ([1]).

Ze względu na zbyt małą liczbę zgłaszanych przestępstw honorowych na świecie (na to zjawisko zwracają uwagę autorzy rezolucji Rady Europy nr 1681(2009)) nie jest możliwe podanie dokładnej liczby przypadków, w których nieletni padli ofiarami tego rodzaju przestępstw lub sami je popełnili.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008929/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Two Pakistani girls killed along with their mother because of a family video

Two Pakistani sisters have been killed along with their mother after a family video showing the two girls dancing happily in the rain had circulated online for about four months. The two girls were the daughters of a retired police officer living with his family in the town of Chilas in northern Pakistan. It is believed that the two girls and their mother were killed as punishment for having tarnished the family's honour. Only last year, more than 900 women were murdered for similar reasons.

What steps can the EEAS take to protect the rights of women in Pakistan? Can the EEAS state how many similar cases there have been in which the murderer was under age?

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

The HR/VP refers the Honourable Member to the answers provided to previous written questions E-008108/2013 and E-008306/2013 ([1]).

Owing to the global under-reporting of honour crimes (referred to in Council Resolution 1681 (2009)) it is not possible to report accurately on the number of cases in which minors have been either the victim or the perpetrator of the crime.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008930/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej / Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(22 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – zburzenie piramidy El Paraíso w Peru

Zburzono 5000-letnią piramidę, która była częścią stanowiska archeologicznego El Paraíso w prowincji Lima (Peru). Piramida ta była jedną z najstarszych budowli w obu Amerykach, jej powstanie datuje się na 3000 r. p.n.e. Za winnych zniszczenia uznaje się kilku potajemnie działających sprawców.

Ważny element stosunków między UE i Peru stanowi współpraca. Mając na uwadze, że UE przeznaczyła 135 mln EUR w krajowym dokumencie strategicznym dotyczącym Peru na lata 2007-2013, czy to wsparcie finansowe zapewnia jakiekolwiek mechanizmy, które służą ochronie stanowisk archeologicznych?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton
w imieniu Komisji
(10 września 2013 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca zdaje sobie sprawę z sytuacji na stanowisku archeologicznym El Paraíso i podziela zaniepokojenie Szanownego Pana Posła.

W krajowym dokumencie strategicznym na lata 2007-2013 dotyczącym Peru, którego priorytety określono w ramach wspólnego działania UE i Peru, nie przewidziano żadnych mechanizmów służących ochronie stanowisk archeologicznych. Zasadą przewodnią Instrumentu Finansowania Współpracy na rzecz Rozwoju, który stanowi obowiązujące ramy prawne współpracy z Peru, jest zwalczanie ubóstwa. Nie świadczy się obecnie pomocy w obszarze dziedzictwa kulturowego ani nie planuje się świadczenia takiej pomocy w przyszłości.

Warto jednakże zauważyć, że w czerwcu 2010 r. powołano w Peru Ministerstwo Kultury, a w odpowiedzi na incydent w El Paraíso mianowana niedawno minister kultury Diana Álvarez Calderón zapowiedziała zajęcie się problemem i opracowanie skutecznych mechanizmów ochrony dziedzictwa narodowego Peru.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008930/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — El Paraíso pyramid destroyed in Peru

A 5 000-year-old pyramid at the El Paraíso site in Lima (Peru) has been destroyed. The pyramid was among the oldest constructions in the Americas, believed to date back as far as 3 000 BCE. Several clandestine operators are believed to be responsible for its destruction.

Cooperation is an important element in EU-Peru relations. Bearing in mind that the EU earmarked EUR 135 million in its Peru Country Strategy Paper 2007-2013, does this financial support provide for any mechanisms to help ensure the protection of archaeological sites?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the situation at the El Paraíso site and shares the Honourable Member's concerns.

The Country Strategy Paper for Peru for the period 2007-2013, the priorities of which have been defined jointly between the EU and Peru, does not provide for any mechanisms to help ensure the protection of archaeological sites. The main guiding principle under the applicable legal framework for cooperation with Peru, the Development Cooperation Instrument, is the fight against poverty. There is no ongoing or future assistance planned in the area of culture heritage.

It is however worth noting that a Ministry of Culture was set up in Peru in June 2010 and that, in response to the event at the El Paraíso site, the recently appointed Minister of Culture, Diana Álvarez Calderón, has promised to address the problem and design efficient mechanisms to protect the national heritage of Peru.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008931/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(22 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Przewodniczący Autonomii Palestyńskiej popiera ataki terrorystyczne

Przewodniczący Autonomii Palestyńskiej odznaczył Nayefa Hawatmeha najwyższym orderem „Gwiazdy Honoru". Nayef Hawatmeh jest przywódcą Demokratycznego Frontu Wyzwolenia Palestyny, który, jak wiadomo, sam przeprowadził szereg śmiertelnych ataków terrorystycznych lub brał w nich udział, np. w masakrze zakładników w mieście Ma'alot (22 uczniów i czworga dorosłych).

Palestyńskie władze zachęcają za pośrednictwem Organizacji Wyzwolenia Palestyny do przemocy wobec obywateli Izraela i popierają szereg działań wymierzonych przeciw Izraelowi. Jednoznacznym potwierdzeniem tego są wysokie miesięczne wynagrodzenia wypłacane terrorystom palestyńskim przebywającym w izraelskich więzieniach.

Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca Komisji/Wysoka Przedstawiciel poruszyła tę kwestię w rozmowie z przewodniczącym Autonomii Palestyńskiej?

Z uwagi na fakt, że Komisja udziela Palestynie największej pomocy finansowej, jakie kroki może podjąć UE, by doprowadzić do tego, że władze palestyńskie zaniechają polityki, która wspiera terroryzm i zachęca do przemocy?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(24 września 2013 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca odsyła szanownego Pana Posła do odpowiedzi udzielonej na poprzednie zapytanie pisemne 008346/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008931/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Palestinian Authority Chairman supports terror attacks

The Chairman of the Palestinian Authority has awarded Nayef Hawatmeh the 'highest order of the Star of Honour'. Hawatmeh is the leader of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, which is known to have carried out and participated in several deadly terror attacks, one of them being the massacre of 22 schoolchildren and four adults taken hostage in Ma'alot.

The Palestinian authorities, through the Palestine Liberation Organisation, have encouraged violence against Israeli citizens and have supported a number of anti-Israeli policies. This is clearly demonstrated by the high monthly salaries paid to Palestinian terrorists who are in Israeli prisons.

Has the Vice-President/High Representative/Vice-President addressed this issue with the Chairman of the Palestinian Authority?

Bearing in mind that the Commission is the biggest provider of financial assistance to Palestine, what steps can the EU take to make sure that the Palestinian authorities refrain from policies that promote terrorism and incite violence?

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

The HR/VP refers the Honourable Member to the reply given previous written question 008346/2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008932/13
an die Kommission
Franziska Katharina Brantner (Verts/ALE)
(22. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Einschränkung des Fahrrad-Direktvertriebs in Frankreich durch Dekret Nr. 95-937

Nach Artikel 7 des Dekrets Nr. 95-937 der französischen Regierung vom 24. August 1995 *(Décret no 95-937 du 24 août 1995 relatif à la prévention des risques résultant de l'usage des bicyclettes)* müssen in Frankreich Fahrräder dem Verbraucher vollständig montiert und komplett eingestellt geliefert werden. Diese Rechtsvorschrift macht es Händlern nahezu unmöglich, Fahrräder per Direktvertrieb zu vertreiben, wovon insbesondere Händler in anderen Mitgliedstaaten negativ betroffen sind. Verbraucher in Frankreich wiederum sehen sich einer kleineren Auswahl an Fahrrädern und Händlern sowie höheren Preisen gegenüber.

Das Recht der Union und das nationale Recht anderer Mitgliedstaaten sehen eine derartige Einschränkung des Direktvertriebs nicht vor, und es scheint nicht der Fall zu sein, dass dies dort zu Sicherheitsrisiken für die Verbraucher geführt hat.

Vor diesem Hintergrund stellt sich die Frage, ob der Artikel 7 des Dekrets Nr. 95-937 eine unrechtmäßige Einschränkung des freien Warenverkehrs innerhalb der Union darstellt oder andere Rechtsvorschriften der Union verletzt. Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass Artikel 7 des Dekrets Nr. 95-937 mit dem Recht der Union vereinbar ist oder nicht, und aus welchen Gründen? Welche primär- oder sekundärrechtlichen Normen sieht die Kommission gegebenenfalls als verletzt an?

2. Welche Schritte gedenkt die Kommission zu unternehmen, falls sie der Ansicht ist, dass die Bestimmung gegen das Recht der Union verstößt?

Antwort von Herrn Tajani im Namen der Kommission
(17. September 2013)

Der Kommission liegt eine Beschwerde gegen Frankreich vor. Sie ist sich daher der Hindernisse für den freien Warenverkehr bewusst, die sich aus den von der Frau Abgeordneten genannten nationalen Rechtsvorschriften ergeben und vor allem Einzelhändler in anderen Mitgliedstaaten betreffen.

1. Nach Auffassung der Kommission sollte das Dekret Nr. 95-937 geändert werden, um die bestehenden Handelshemmnisse im Sinne des Artikels 34 AEUV zu beheben.

2. Die Kommission hat diesbezüglich Kontakt mit den französischen Behörden aufgenommen und wartet auf deren Antwort.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008932/13
to the Commission
Franziska Katharina Brantner (Verts/ALE)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Restriction on the direct sale of bicycles in France under Decree No 95-937

In accordance with Article 7 of Decree No 95-937 adopted by the French Government on 24 August 1995, *(Décret no 95-937 du 24 août 1995 relatif à la prévention des risques résultant de l'usage des bicyclettes)* bicycles must be delivered to the customer fully assembled and adjusted. This provision means that it is almost impossible for retailers to sell bicycles directly, and retailers in other Member States are particularly badly affected. Meanwhile, consumers in France are offered a smaller choice of bicycles and retailers and are faced with higher prices.

Union legislation and national legislation in other Member States do not provide for this kind of restriction of direct selling, and this does not appear to have led to safety risks for consumers.

This raises the question as to whether Article 7 of Decree No 95-937 represents an undue restriction on the free movement of goods within the Union or an infringement of other Union legislation.

1. Does the Commission believe that Article 7 of Decree No 95-937 is compatible withUnion legislation? Why (not)? Which provisions of primary or secondary law does itbelieve have been infringed, if any?

2. What action would the Commission take should it believe that the provision represents an infringement of Union law?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(17 September 2013)

The Commission received a complaint against France and is thus aware of the obstacles to the free movement of goods resulting from the national rules quoted by the Honourable Member and which particularly affect retailers in other Member States.

1. The Commission believes that modifications should be introduced to Decree No 95-937 in order to remove the current obstacles to trade falling within the scope of Art. 34 TFEU.

2. The Commission has contacted the French authorities on this issue and is awaiting their reply.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008933/13
à la Commission
Henri Weber (S&D)
(22 juillet 2013)

Objet: Prolifération des cormorans

La prolifération des cormorans en Europe est préoccupante, étant donné les dégâts occasionnés notamment sur l'activité piscicole (professionnelle et amateur). La biodiversité est elle-même menacée puisque, à cause du grand nombre de ces volatiles, d'autres espèces, dont certaines sont également protégées, disparaissent progressivement (anguilles, truites, brochets, saumons…).

Au niveau de l'Union européenne, les cormorans sont protégés par la directive 2009/147/CE du 30 novembre 2009.

Grâce au financement d'un projet qui a débuté le 1er février 2011, une plate-forme d'échange et de diffusion des informations techniques utiles entre les autorités et les parties intéressées a pu être mise en place. Malheureusement, malgré la diffusion de ces bonnes pratiques et les pistes de solutions suggérées, force est de constater que le nombre de cormorans ne cesse d'augmenter, que ces derniers causent toujours autant de déprédations et que les mesures prises au sein de l'Union et dans les États membres s'avèrent insuffisantes.

1. En tenant compte des différentes situations au sein de l'Union, la Commission envisage-t-elle d'améliorer les dispositions déjà prises et de mettre sur pied des actions plus efficaces afin de contrôler/réduire la population de cormorans?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(3 septembre 2013)

La Commission met actuellement sur pied un programme d'actions scientifiquement fondées qui fait intervenir les principaux groupes intéressés et dont l'objectif est d'aider les États membres à éviter l'interaction entre cormorans et pêcheries. Elle a préparé un document d'orientation sur la manière d'utiliser les dérogations de l'article 9 de la directive sur les oiseaux pour les cormorans ([1]). Elle finance également un projet de trois années sur la «gestion durable des populations de cormorans» (CorMan) afin d'établir une plateforme de collecte d'informations scientifiques et d'échange d'expériences et de bonnes pratiques ([2]). Ce projet comprend des décomptes détaillés des effectifs de cormorans pendant les périodes de reproduction et d'hivernage. La Commission prévoit en outre de financer une étude d'une année sur la dynamique des populations de cormorans en Europe afin de combler les lacunes détectées en matière d'information.

Ces projets devraient être achevés en 2014. Ils serviront de base aux discussions que mèneront les États membres et les groupes intéressés afin de déterminer s'il est nécessaire d'engager d'autres actions à l'avenir.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/pdf/guidance_cormorants.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/cormorants/home_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008933/13
to the Commission
Henri Weber (S&D)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Proliferation of cormorants

The proliferation of cormorants in Europe is giving cause for concern, given the damage caused to (professional and amateur) fish farming in particular. Biodiversity itself is under threat because the large number of these birds leads to the gradual disappearance of other species, some of which are also protected (eels, trout, pike, salmon, etc.).

At EU level, cormorants are protected by Directive 2009/147/EC of 30 November 2009.

Through funding for a project that began on 1 February 2011, it has been possible to set up a platform for the exchange and dissemination of useful technical information by the authorities and stakeholders. Unfortunately, despite the dissemination of good practices and suggested solutions, the number of cormorants is still rising, they are still causing just as much damage and the measures taken by the EU and Member States are not proving to be sufficient.

Given the different situations that exist in the Union, does the Commission intend to improve the measures already taken and to develop more effective actions to control/reduce the cormorant population?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

The Commission is undertaking a programme of science-based actions, involving major stakeholder groups, aimed at supporting Member States in addressing the interaction between Cormorants and fisheries. It has prepared a Guidance Document on the use of Derogations under Article 9 of the Birds Directive for Cormorants ([1]). It is also financially supporting a three-year project on 'Sustainable Management of Cormorant Populations' (CorMan) aimed at establishing a Platform for the collection of scientific information, exchange of experiences and good practice ([2]). This project includes comprehensive counts of Cormorant numbers during the breeding and wintering periods. The Commission also plans to finance a one-year study on the Dynamics of Cormorant Populations in Europe, to fill the identified information gaps.

These projects are likely to be finalised in 2014 and will form the basis for discussions with Member States and stakeholders to decide on further actions that might become necessary in the future.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/pdf/guidance_cormorants.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/cormorants/home_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008934/13
à la Commission
Michèle Striffler (PPE)
(22 juillet 2013)

Objet: Animaux génétiquement modifiés en Europe

La création et l'utilisation d'animaux génétiquement modifiés soulèvent d'importantes questions relatives à l'éthique et au bien-être animal.

Pour l'heure, aucune demande d'autorisation pour des animaux génétiquement modifiés n'a encore été reçue dans l'Union européenne, mais les évolutions scientifiques laissent penser que des demandes pourraient être soumises à l'avenir pour un certain nombre d'espèces, comme c'est le cas aux États-Unis, où une demande de commercialisation du premier animal transgénique destiné à la consommation (un saumon de l'Atlantique) est actuellement à l'étude.

En catimini, l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (EFSA) a d'ores-et-déjà élaboré des lignes directrices complètes sur l'évaluation des risques associés aux animaux génétiquement modifiés, afin d'anticiper de futures demandes d'autorisation de mise sur le marché européen.

Cette méthodologie n'est pas acceptable. Il est essentiel que les problèmes inhérents à l'utilisation d'animaux génétiquement modifiés fassent l'objet d'un débat public et démocratique.

Afin de se prémunir contre les dangers liés à l'utilisation d'animaux génétiquement modifiés en Europe, quelles mesures la Commission compte-t-elle mettre en œuvre pour assurer un débat sur:

1. la création et l'utilisation de ces animaux, même à des fins scientifiques

et

2. la vente des produits issus d'animaux génétiquement modifiés ou de leur progéniture?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(18 septembre 2013)

En août 2011, l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (l'EFSA) a lancé une consultation publique autour d'un projet de lignes directrices sur l'évaluation des risques présentés par les denrées alimentaires et les aliments pour animaux provenant d'animaux génétiquement modifiés, d'une part, et sur la santé et le bien-être des animaux, d'autre part. Les résultats de cette consultation sont disponibles sur le site internet de l'EFSA ([1]).

En juin 2012, l'Autorité a procédé à une deuxième consultation, invitant le public à faire part de ses observations concernant le projet de lignes directrices sur l'évaluation des risques environnementaux liés aux animaux génétiquement modifiés. Les résultats de cette deuxième consultation sont, eux aussi, disponibles sur le site internet de l'EFSA ([2]).

([1]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/226e.pdf
([2]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/428e.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008934/13
to the Commission
Michèle Striffler (PPE)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Genetically modified animals in Europe

The creation and use of genetically modified animals raises important questions about ethics and animal welfare.

To date, no applications for authorisation for genetically modified animals have been received in the European Union, but scientific developments suggest that applications could be submitted in the future for certain species, as is the case in the USA where an application to market the first transgenic animal for human consumption (Atlantic salmon) is currently being assessed.

Away from the public eye, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has been drawing up comprehensive guidelines on assessing the risks associated with genetically modified animals in order to anticipate any future applications for authorisation to place these on the EU market.

This way of proceeding is not acceptable. It is essential that the problems inherent in the use of genetically modified animals be the subject of a public and democratic debate.

To guard against the dangers associated with the use of genetically modified animals in Europe, what measures does the Commission intend to take to ensure a debate is held on:

1. the creation and use of these animals, even for scientific purposes;

2. the sale of products derived from genetically modified animals or their offspring?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(18 September 2013)

In August 2011, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) opened a public consultation on a draft guidance document on the risk assessment of food and feed from genetically modified animals and on animal health and welfare aspects. The outcomes of this consultation are available on the EFSA website ([1])

In June 2012, EFSA conducted a second consultation exercise inviting the public to submit comments on the draft guidance on the environmental risk assessment of genetically modified animals. The outcomes of this public consultation are available on the EFSA website. ([2])

([1]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/226e.pdf
([2]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/428e.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008935/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(22 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Equo compenso: causa Amazon contro Austro-Mechana

In seguito al ricorso presentato da Amazon, compagnia statunitense di commercio elettronico, la Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea con la sentenza dell'11 luglio scorso sulla vertenza C-521/11 con Austro-Mechana, agenzia austriaca di gestione collettiva dei diritti d'autore, ha stabilito che gli Stati membri possono, in determinate circostanze, riscuotere un prelievo sui supporti di registrazione vergini come CD, DVD, schede di memoria e lettori MP3 a titolo di equo compenso.

In base a tale sentenza, Amazon dovrà pagare all'azienda austriaca circa 1,9 milioni di euro per la vendita di supporti vuoti in Austria nella prima metà del 2004 e rendere noti i dati contabili utili a quantificare il resto della somma dovuta per le vendite di prodotti vergini nel periodo fra il 2002 e il 2004, come richiesto da Austro-Mechana.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. non ritiene che il sistema dell'equo compenso si traduca in un ulteriore onere a carico del consumatore finale, con una conseguente contrazione delle vendite a svantaggio dell'industria del settore?

2. Considerando che attualmente viene indicato solamente il prezzo totale della vendita, non ritiene opportuno stabilire l'obbligo di indicare sullo scontrino il valore dell'equo compenso al fine di garantire il diritto del consumatore ad una corretta informazione?

3. Considerando che la direttiva 2001/29/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 22 maggio 2001, nonostante la volontà di creare un quadro giuridico armonizzato tra le diverse legislazioni in materia, prevede ancora numerose deroghe e lascia agli Stati membri considerevoli margini operativi per il suo recepimento, non riterrebbe opportuna una revisione del testo per garantire una maggiore omogeneità, alla luce anche degli sviluppi tecnologici intercorsi dal 2001 ad oggi?

4. Quali strumenti ritiene idonei per conciliare diritto d'autore e diritto del consumatore affinché a trarre vantaggio dall'equo compenso non siano unicamente le agenzie di gestione dei diritti d'autore?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(27 settembre 2013)

1. Nella causa C-521/11 Amazon contro Austro-Mechana, la Corte di giustizia dell'UE ha ribadito che spetta, in linea di principio, alla persona che realizza, a fini di uso privato, la riproduzione di un'opera protetta senza chiedere la previa autorizzazione del titolare finanziare il compenso che sarà corrisposto al legittimo titolare. La Commissione non dispone di dati che confermino che i prelievi riscossi su determinati prodotti utilizzati per effettuare copie private al fine di finanziare un compenso adeguato causi un calo delle vendite dei prodotti in questione.

2. Ai sensi della direttiva 2005/29/CE relativa alle pratiche commerciali sleali e della direttiva 2011/83/UE sui diritti dei consumatori, i professionisti sono tenuti a fornire informazioni chiare sul prezzo dei beni o servizi, che deve essere comprensivo di tutte le tasse e altre imposte. Tuttavia, le direttive in oggetto non impongono ai professionisti di indicare le varie componenti del prezzo.

3.-4. Come annunciato nella comunicazione del 18 dicembre 2012, attualmente la Commissione sta effettuando un riesame della normativa dell'UE in materia di diritti di autore, basandolo su studi di mercato e una valutazione di impatto nonché su un lavoro di redazione legislativa, in vista di una decisione nel 2014 in merito all'opportunità di presentare proposte legislative di riforma. I prelievi riscossi per le copie per uso privato saranno uno dei temi da discutere. In questa fase la Commissione non è in grado di prendere posizione in merito alla necessità di un intervento né sulla natura e portata di tale intervento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008935/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Fair compensation: Amazon versus Austro-Mechana case

Following the appeal brought by Amazon, a US electronic commerce company, the Court of Justice of the European Union, in its judgment of 11 July 2013 in Case C-521/11 involving Austro-Mechana, an Austrian copyright collecting society, ruled that the Member States may, in certain circumstances, collect a levy on blank recording media such as CDs, DVDs, memory cards and MP3 players, as fair compensation.

On the basis of this judgment, Amazon will have to pay approximately EUR 1.9 million to the Austrian firm for the sale of blank media in Austria in the first half of 2004 and will have to provide accounting data in order to quantify the remainder of the amount due on the sale of blank media products in the period from 2002 to 2004, as requested by Austro-Mechana.

1. Does the Commission believe that the system of fair compensation translates into a further burden on the final consumer, with a resulting contraction in sales, at the expense of the sector?

2. Since currently only the total price of the sale is given, does it not believe it should be made mandatory to indicate on the price label the amount of the fair compensation, in order to safeguard consumers' right to accurate information?

3. Since, despite the intention to create a harmonised legal framework among the different national laws on this issue, Directive 2001/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 May 2001 still lays down many derogations and leaves the Member States considerable room for discretion in terms of transposing the directive, would the Commission not consider it advisable to review the text in order to make it more homogeneous, especially in the light of technological developments since 2001?

4. What instruments does it consider appropriate in order to achieve a balance between copyright and consumer rights, so that it is not simply the copyright collection societies that benefit from fair compensation?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(27 September 2013)

1. In case C — 521/11 Amazon vs. Austro-Mechana, the Court of Justice of the EU reaffirmed that it is, in principle for the person who, for his private use, reproduces a protected work without seeking prior authorisation to finance the compensation paid to rightholders. The Commission is not in possession of the data which would confirm that levies imposed on certain products used for private copying with a view of financing the fair compensation cause a decline in sale of those products.

2. Under Directive 2005/29/EC on Unfair Commercial Practices and Directive 2011/83/EU on Consumer Rights, traders are required to provide clear information on the price of the goods or services inclusive of all taxes and other charges. However, these Directives do not require traders to break down the total price according to different cost components.

3-4. As announced in the communication of 18 December 2012, the Commission is currently carrying a process of review of the EU copyright framework, based on market studies and impact assessment and legal drafting work, with a view to a decision in 2014 whether to table legislative reform proposals. Private copying levies are among issues addressed in that process. At this stage of the ongoing work the Commission is neither able to take a position on the necessity of intervention nor on its nature and possible scope.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008936/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(22 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: L'aumento dell'IVA colpisce la filiera della stampa italiana

La Federazione Italiana Editori Giornali (Fieg) lancia un allarme: l'articolo 19 del decreto-legge n. 63/2013, attualmente in fase di conversione, stabilisce, a partire dal 1º gennaio 2014, l'aumento dell'IVA dal 4 % al 21 % sugli abbinamenti di contenuti digitali, musica, film e fiction a quotidiani e periodici.

Nel provvedimento, pensato per coprire le detrazioni fiscali per le ristrutturazioni edilizie e per l'acquisto di mobili, rientrano gadget, cd, dvd, allegati ai libri di testo e tutti i prodotti che arricchiscono il contenuto dei libri consentendone la piena fruizione come eserciziari, audio-letture e integrazioni audiovisive.

Si stima che la conseguente scomparsa o riduzione del mercato dei prodotti editoriali ceduti con supporti integrativi provochi un calo del 35 % delle vendite nelle edicole con conseguenze per l'intera catena produttiva e distributiva italiana della stampa e dell'editoria.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. è informata dei fatti?

2. Con riferimento alla decisione n. 1718/2006/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 15 novembre 2006, relativa all'attuazione di un programma di sostegno al settore audiovisivo europeo (MEDIA 2007), non ritiene che il provvedimento penalizzi il comparto dell'editoria e dell'industria musicale che rappresenta un'eccellenza del *Made in Italy*?

3. Considerando che l'aumento del carico fiscale, ricadendo sui consumatori finali, determinerà un impatto negativo in termini di riduzione delle vendite, con la conseguente chiusura di edicole e aziende di distribuzione, che andranno ad aggiungersi alle oltre 5.000 già costrette alla chiusura negli ultimi cinque anni, non ritiene che il decreto-legge in questione contrasti con quanto stabilito dal Consiglio nella raccomandazione del 29 maggio 2013 (COM(2013)362 def.) in materia di occupazione?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(24 settembre 2013)

Sulla base degli articoli da 96 a 99 della direttiva IVA ([1]), gli Stati membri sono tenuti ad applicare un'aliquota normale unica, che non può essere inferiore al 15 %. Essi possono inoltre applicare a loro discrezione al massimo due aliquote ridotte, pari almeno al 5 %, ai beni e servizi elencati nell'allegato III della direttiva IVA. Gli Stati membri che al 1º gennaio 1991 applicavano aliquote ridotte inferiori al minimo fissato nella direttiva IVA possono continuare ad applicarle.

Anche se gli Stati membri possono applicare un'aliquota ridotta ai libri su qualsiasi tipo di supporto fisico (compresi CD e CD-ROM purché riproducano essenzialmente lo stesso contenuto dei libri stampati), ai giornali e ai periodici conformemente alla categoria 6 dell'allegato III, non sono autorizzati a farlo nel caso dei servizi forniti per via elettronica, che sono esplicitamente esclusi dall'aliquota ridotta a norma dell'articolo 98, paragrafo 2. I CD di musica e i film su DVD non possono beneficiare di un'aliquota IVA ridotta in quanto non sono compresi nell'allegato III.

Poiché la direttiva IVA non prevede misure speciali concernenti le forniture raggruppate di beni/servizi venduti a un prezzo unico, spetta agli Stati membri decidere le modalità di applicazione delle norme IVA a tali forniture.

In linea con la raccomandazione specifica rivolta all'Italia nel 2013 ([2]) e con la raccomandazione del Consiglio del 9 luglio ([3]), la Commissione ritiene che la misura proposta dall'Italia sembri rispondere all'esigenza di «trasferire il carico fiscale da lavoro e capitale a consumi, (…) assicurando la neutralità di bilancio» e «rivedere [in particolare] l'ambito di applicazione delle aliquote ridotte dell'IVA».

([1]) Direttiva 2006/112/CE del Consiglio del 28 novembre 2006 — GU L 347 dell'11.12.2006.
([2]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/13/st10/st10640-re01.en13.pdf
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:217:0042:0046:IT:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008936/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Italian printing sector affected by VAT increase

The Italian Federation of Newspaper Publishers (FIEG) is sounding the alarm: Article 19 of Decree-Law No 63/2013, which is currently being converted into a more permanent type of legal act, provides that, as of 1 January 2014, VAT will increase from 4% to 21% on packages linking digital content, music, film and fiction to daily papers and periodicals.

The provision, which is intended to pay for tax relief on the renovation of buildings and the purchase of furniture, applies to merchandise, CDs and DVDs accompanying textbooks and all products that enrich the content of books by allowing them to be used in full, such as workbooks, audiobooks and audiovisual accessories.

It is estimated that the resulting disappearance or reduction of the market in printed matter supplied with additional media will result in a 35% drop in sales at news agencies and news stands, with consequences for the entire Italian printing and publishing production and distribution chain.

1. Is the Commission aware of the facts?

2. With reference to Decision No 1718/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006 concerning the implementation of a programme of support for the European audiovisual sector (MEDIA 2007), does it not consider that the provision penalises the publishing sector and the music industry, which are areas of excellence within Italy's economy?

3. Since the increase in the tax will be borne by the final consumer, it will have an adverse impact by reducing sales, which will result in the closure of further news agencies/news stands, in addition to the 5000 which have already been compelled to close in the past five years. Does not the Commission consider that the Decree-Law in question runs counter to the provisions of the Council recommendation of 29 May 2013 (COM(2013) 362 final) concerning employment?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(24 September 2013)

Based on Articles 96 to 99 of the VAT Directive ([1]), Member States are required to apply a single standard rate, which must be at least 15%. They may also have a maximum of two reduced rates set no lower than 5%, which they may apply, at their discretion, to goods and services listed in Annex III to the VAT Directive. Member States which, at 1 January 1991, were applying reduced rates lower than the minimum laid down in the VAT Directive may continue to apply those reduced rates.

Although Member States may apply a reduced rate to books on all physical means of support (including CDs, CD-ROMs provided they predominantly reproduce the same information content as printed books), newspapers and periodicals according to Category c in Annex III, they are not allowed to do so with electronically supplied services which are explicitly excluded from the reduced rate by Article 98(2). Music CDs and DVD films are not eligible for a reduced VAT rate as they are not listed in Annex III.

Since the VAT Directive does not provide for any special measures regarding bundled supplies of goods/services sold at a single price, it is up to the Member States to decide how the VAT rules will be enforced regarding these supplies.

In line with the country-specific recommendation addressed to Italy in 2013 ([2]) and the 9 July Council recommendation ([3]), the Commission considers that the measure envisaged by Italy appears to respond to the need to 'shift the tax burden from labour and capital to consumption, (…) in a budgetary neutral manner', and 'to review [notably] the scope of VAT reduced rates'.

([1]) Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006 — OJ L 347, 11.12.2006.
([2]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/13/st10/st10640-re01.en13.pdf
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:217:0042:0046:EN:PDF

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008937/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(22 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Nuova normativa sulle sementi: a rischio la produzione agricola su piccola scala

Il 6 maggio scorso è stata sottoposta al Parlamento la nuova proposta di regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio COM(2013)0262 relativo al materiale riproduttivo vegetale («Plant Reproductive Material Law»), che dal 2016 modificherà l'attuale legislazione comunitaria sulla commercializzazione di sementi e materiali di propagazione vegetale («Seed and plant propagating material» (SPPM)).

La proposta di regolamento intende istituire l'Agenzia europea per le varietà vegetali per analizzare e approvare i semi e le piante nel territorio europeo. Il testo concede la commercializzazione senza restrizioni delle sementi brevettate, penalizzando invece le varietà tradizionali. Le multinazionali straniere del settore, tra cui la Monsanto, si sono già attivate per cercare di registrare circa un centinaio di sementi che, se approvate dall'agenzia preposta, saranno ammesse nelle coltivazioni europee. Il rischio è che le sementi tradizionali vengano soppiantate dalle nuove e che il mercato delle sementi venga regolato dai certificati e dai brevetti delle multinazionali. Dal momento che l'Agenzia europea per le varietà vegetali si occupa solo dell'approvazione dei tipi di sementi utilizzati dagli agricoltori industriali, le varietà impiegate nei piccoli appezzamenti degli agricoltori su piccola scala e dei coltivatori biologici risulteranno non rispondenti ai criteri necessari per la loro registrazione.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. considerando che, se approvata, la proposta renderebbe illegale coltivare, riprodurre o commerciare i semi di ortaggi che non sono stati approvati e accettati dall'agenzia, non ritiene che in questo modo gli agricoltori tradizionali saranno penalizzati a favore delle multinazionali dell'agroalimentare?

2. Con riferimento al titolo IV della proposta, può assicurare che la richiesta, l'esame formale, le analisi tecniche e i controlli delle sementi non ricadano sui piccoli coltivatori?

3. Non ritiene che il nuovo regolamento pregiudichi la salvaguardia della biodiversità, così come affermato nel contesto della proposta: «Occorre inoltre rafforzare maggiormente l'obiettivo della conservazione dell'agrobiodiversità in situ», in contrasto con le ragioni invocate dalla Commissione stessa per riformare la legislazione vigente?

4. Ritiene opportuno considerare un'eventuale modifica del testo per riconoscere e proteggere il diritto dei contadini e degli orticoltori a scambiarsi liberamente le loro sementi, pratica che garantisce il rinnovo costante della biodiversità coltivata e permette l'adattamento locale delle piante ai territori e dei climi senza un ricorso massiccio a concimi e pesticidi chimici?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(23 settembre 2013)

1) Contrariamente alle critiche espresse in merito alla legislazione proposta, questa terrà maggiormente conto delle esigenze dei coltivatori tradizionali e assicurerà una riduzione dell'onere amministrativo, soprattutto per le microimprese.

2) Le microimprese saranno esentate da qualsiasi tassa di registrazione delle varietà e dalle tasse di certificazione delle sementi. Per la registrazione e i test le varietà tradizionali saranno oggetto di tasse più contenute e per il loro mantenimento nel registro non sarà richiesta una tassa annuale.

3) La proposta incoraggia l'agricoltura biologica, le varietà atte ad assicurare una coltivazione e un uso sostenibili nonché le varietà tradizionali. Le regole oggetto della proposta si spingeranno ben oltre rispetto alla legislazione vigente per quanto concerne la protezione della biodiversità. Gli elementi di flessibilità per l'accesso al mercato di determinate varietà nel quadro del regime proposto potenzieranno la conservazione dell'agrobiodiversità in situ.

4) Lo scambio senza lucro di materiale riproduttivo vegetale tra persone diverse dagli operatori professionali esula dal campo di applicazione della legislazione proposta. L'esenzione riguarderà inoltre gli agricoltori che non producono o non commercializzano a livello professionale materiale riproduttivo vegetale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008937/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: New legislation on seeds: small-scale agricultural production under threat

On 6 May 2013 a new proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council (COM(2013)0262, the Plant Reproductive Material Law) was put before Parliament. This regulation will amend current EU legislation on the marketing of seed and plant propagating material (SPPM) from 2016.

The proposal for a regulation recommends the establishment of a European Agency on Plant Varieties to analyse and approve seeds and plants in Europe. The regulation's text allows the marketing of patented seeds without restriction, but penalises traditional varieties. The foreign multinationals in the sector, including Monsanto, have already made moves to register around 100 seeds which, if approved by the agency responsible for this issue, will be permitted in European agriculture. The risk is that traditional seeds will be replaced by the new ones and that the seed market will be governed by the multinationals' certificates and patents. Since the European Agency on Plant Varieties only deals with the approval of types of seeds used by industrial-scale farmers, the varieties used in the small plots belonging to small-scale farmers and organic growers will not meet the registration criteria.

1. Since the proposal, if adopted, would make it illegal to cultivate, reproduce or market vegetable seeds that have not been approved and accepted by the agency, does the Commission not believe that this will penalise traditional farmers but benefit agri-food multinationals?

2. With reference to Title IV of the proposal, can it provide assurances that small-scale growers will not have to bear the burden of the application, formal examination, technical tests and checks on seeds?

3. Does the Commission not consider that the new regulation will be detrimental to the safeguarding of biodiversity, as stated in the proposal: '[t]he aim of in situ conservation of agro-biodiversity should be further strengthened', conflicting with the reasons invoked by the Commission itself for reviewing the current legislation?

4. Does it believe that the text ought to be amended to acknowledge and protect the right of farmers and vegetable growers to freely exchange their seed, a practice that ensures that crop biodiversity is constantly renewed and allows local adaptation of plants to regions and climates without the large-scale use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(23 September 2013)

1. Contrary to criticism with the proposed legislation, the needs of traditional farmers will be strengthened and a reduction of administrative burden, especially for Microenterprises, will be achieved

2. Micro-enterprises would be exempted from any fees for registration of varieties and fees payable for seed certification. Traditional varieties would be subject to lower fees for registration and testing, and no annual fees would be charged for their maintenance.

3. The proposal supports organic farming, varieties with value for sustainable cultivation and use, and traditional varieties. The proposed rules would go much further than the current legislation with regards to protection of biodiversity. The elements of flexibility for access to the market for certain varieties in the proposed regime will enhance the in-situ conservation of agro-biodiversity.

4. The exchange in kind of plant reproductive material between persons other than professional operators is outside the scope of the proposed legislation. That exemption would also concern farmers who do not produce or market plant reproductive material as a profession.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008938/13
aan de Commissie
Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(22 juli 2013)

Betreft: Microkredietinstellingen en middelen Europese Investeringsbank (EIB)

Micro- en kleinbedrijven zijn een belangrijke motor voor de economie van de Europese Unie. Vandaar dat er ook leningen van minder dan 25 000 euro via het PROGRESS-programma van het Europese Investeringsfonds worden verstrekt. Maar voor de bedrijven die kleine kredieten tussen de 25 000 en 50 000 euro willen lenen, blijft het lastig om de kredieten te verkrijgen.

1. Organisaties zoals kredietunies, Qredits en MicroStart maken gebruik van PROGRESS om kredieten aan micro- en kleinbedrijven te kunnen verstrekken. Is de Commissie bereid om toestemming te verlenen aan dit soort organisaties om de kredietlimiet vanuit PROGRESS op te hogen tot 50 000 euro?

2. Indien dit niet mogelijk zou zijn, blijft als belangrijkste kanaal voor kredietverlening de Europese Investeringsbank over. Is de Commissie het met deze conclusie eens of zijn er toch nog andere mogelijkheden om via EU-programma's aan kredieten tussen 25 000 en 50 000 euro te komen?

3. Het probleem voor bovengenoemde organisaties bij kredietverstrekking via de EIB is dat zij een bankvergunning nodig hebben om hierbij te bemiddelen. Gelet op het specifieke karakter van deze organisaties is dat voor hen moeilijk, zo niet onmogelijk. Ziet de Commissie mogelijkheden om bijvoorbeeld de „Europese gedragscode voor de verstrekking van microkrediet" in het kader van het JASMINE-raamwerk als certificaat te gebruiken in plaats van een traditionele bankvergunning? Zo nee, ziet de Commissie andere mogelijkheden voor dit type organisaties om toch te kunnen bemiddelen bij kredietverstrekking via de EIB?

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(11 september 2013)

1) De Progress-microfinancieringsfaciliteit richt zich op microleningen, die volgens Besluit nr. 283/2010/EU van de medewetgevers per definitie minder dan 25 000 EUR bedragen. Thans bedragen de meeste van deze microleningen (37 %) minder dan 5 000 EUR, gevolgd door microleningen tot 10 000 EUR (25 %). Ongeveer 12,5 % van de leningen bedraagt tussen 20 000 en 25 000 EUR ([1]).

2) Een ander instrument waarmee de Commissie iets aan de moeilijke toegang tot krediet doet, is de SMEG-garantiefaciliteit van het kaderprogramma voor concurrentievermogen en innovatie ([2]), die aan het mkb ter beschikking staat via tussenpersonen zoals banken en onderlinge waarborgmaatschappijen. In de periode 2014-2020 bouwt het nieuwe Cosme-programma ([3]) voort op de ervaring die met het kaderprogramma voor concurrentievermogen en innovatie is opgedaan. Het omvat een leningsgarantiefaciliteit die het garantie-instrument in het nieuwe Horizon 2020-programma ([4]) aanvult. Ook moedigt de Commissie de beheersautoriteiten van het EFRO en het ESF aan om starters te helpen. Zo zijn een aantal door deze structuurfondsen medegefinancierde financiële instrumenten voor het mkb gecreëerd in het kader van het Jeremie-initiatief.

3) Thans maken 14 banken en 11 niet-banken gebruik van de Progress-microfinancieringsfaciliteit. De lidstaten bepalen zelf of een bankvergunning nodig is om microkredieten te verstrekken. Bij het uitwerken van de financiële instrumenten wordt een dergelijke vergunning niet als noodzakelijke voorwaarde gesteld. De Europese gedragscode voor de verstrekking van microkrediet is een initiatief om beste praktijken te bevorderen, de standaarden op dit gebied te verhogen en de kwaliteit van de door de sector verleende diensten te verbeteren, in het bijzonder voor niet-bancaire microkredietverstrekkers. Het is mogelijk dat de uitvoering ervan door niet-banken een voorwaarde wordt voor financiering in het kader van het EaSI-programma ([5]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=10430&langId=en
([2]) Kaderprogramma voor concurrentievermogen en innovatie 2007-2013, dat namens de Commissie wordt beheerd door het Europees Investeringsfonds.
([3]) Programma voor het concurrentievermogen van ondernemingen en het mkb.
([4]) Horizon 2020 ondersteunt onderzoek en innovatie.
([5]) Programma voor werkgelegenheid en sociale innovatie http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en & catId=89&newsId=1093 .

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008938/13
to the Commission
Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Microcredit institutions and European Investment Bank (EIB) funding

Small and micro enterprises provide the EU economy with much of its impetus. That is why loans of less than EUR 25 000 are also extended through the European Investment Fund's PROGRESS programme. But in the case of businesses wishing to borrow small amounts between EUR 25 000 and EUR 50 000, it remains difficult to obtain credit.

1. Such organisations as credit unions, Qredits and MicroStart use PROGRESS to provide loans to small and micro enterprises. Will the Commission allow the credit limit for loans to such organisations from PROGRESS to be raised to EUR 50 000?

2. If this is not possible, the most important channel for credit remains the EIB. Does the Commission endorse this conclusion, or are there any other ways in which loans of between EUR 25 000 and EUR 50 000 can be obtained through EU programmes?

3. The problem for the above organisations in securing loans from the EIB is that they need a banking licence in order to act as intermediaries. In view of the specific character of these organisations, this is difficult — if not impossible — for them. Does the Commission see any way in which, for example, the European Code of Good Conduct for Microcredit Provision, within the framework of Jasmine, could be used as a certificate instead of a traditional banking licence? If not, does the Commission see any other ways in which such organisations could nonetheless act as intermediaries in obtaining loans via the EIB?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(11 September 2013)

1. Progress Microfinance focuses on microloans, which are by definition only up to EUR 25 000 according to Decision No 283/2010/EU adopted by the co-legislators. Currently, most of these microloans (37%) are for less than EUR 5 000, followed by microloans of up to EUR 10 000 (25%). Loans of between EUR 20 000 and 25 000 attract approximately 12.5% ([1]).

2. Other ways of addressing the difficult access to credit by the Commission, include the SMEG guarantee facility of the CIP ([2]) programme which is made available to SMEs through intermediaries, such as banks and mutual guarantee societies. In 2014-2020, the new COSME ([3]) programme will build on the experience gained from the CIP and will include a Loan Guarantee Facility to complement the guarantee instrument in the new Horizon 2020 programme ([4]). The Commission also encourages the ERDF and ESF managing authorities to support businesses starters. A number of financial instruments for SMEs co-financed from these structural funds, have been created e.g. under the JEREMIE initiative.

3. Currently, 14 banks and 11 non-banks benefit from Progress Microfinance. The necessity of a banking licence for the provision of microcredit depends on the national legislative framework, it is not a precondition set when designing the financial instruments. The European Code of Good Conduct for Microcredit Provision is an initiative to promote best practices, raise standards in this field and develop the quality of the services provided by the sector, especially for non-bank microfinance providers. Its implementation by non-bank providers may become a condition for funding under the EaSI programme ([5]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=10430&langId=en
([2]) Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme 2007-13, managed by the European Investment Fund on behalf of the Commission.
([3]) Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs.
([4]) Horizon 2020 will support research and innovation.
([5]) Programme for Employment and Social Innovation http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1093

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008939/13
an die Kommission
Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE)
(22. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Inhaftierung von Asylantragstellern in Ungarn

Die Zahl der Asylantragsteller in Ungarn stieg in der ersten Jahreshälfte 2013 massiv an: Bis Juni 2013 wurden bereits über 10 000 neue Asylantragsteller registriert ([1]). Zum Vergleich: 2012 wurden lediglich 2 155 Antragsteller registriert ([2]). Zum 1. Juli 2013 traten derweil in Anlehnung an die EU-Aufnahmerichtlinie in Ungarn Gesetzesänderungen in Kraft, die unter anderem die Inhaftierung von Asylantragstellern vorsehen. Das UNHCR und die ungarische NGO Helsinki Komitee äußerten Bedenken über die neue ungarische Gesetzgebung, da die Inhaftierungsgründe (wie in der Aufnahmerichtlinie auch) derart weit gefasst sind, dass zu befürchten ist, dass die Inhaftierung von Asylantragstellern in Ungarn (erneut) zum Regelfall wird ([3]). Besonders bedenklich ist, dass die neue Gesetzgebung keine individuellen Rechtsmittel gegen die Inhaftierung vorsieht. Eine richterliche Überprüfung der Haft erfolgt ausschließlich im Rahmen einer automatischen Überprüfung im 60-Tage Intervall ([4]). In den Jahren 2011 und 2012 wurde nur durch drei von insgesamt 5 000 Entscheidungen der zuständigen lokalen Gerichte die Inhaftierung beendet ([5]). Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Welche Projekte wurden in den vergangen fünf Jahren aus Mitteln des Europäischen Flüchtlingsfonds und des Europäischen Rückkehrfonds in Ungarn bezuschusst? Was waren die Ziele dieser Projekte; mit welchem Betrag wurden sie gefördert, und wer setzte sie um?

2. Hält die Kommission die (neuen) gesetzlichen Vorgaben zur Inhaftierung von Asylsuchenden in Ungarn (insbesondere mit Blick auf die Rechtsmittel, die den Inhaftierten zur Verfügung stehen) für vereinbar mit den Vorgaben der Europäischen Menschenrechtskonvention und der Europäischen Grundrechtecharta? Falls ja, warum? Falls nein, was gedenkt die Kommission zu tun?

3. Hat die Europäische Kommission Erkenntnisse darüber, wo sich die (neuen) Asylantragsteller gegenwärtig aufhalten? Laut einem Presseartikel in den ungarischen Medien waren im Juni 2013 nur knapp über 2 500 Personen in ungarischen Flüchtlingsunterkünften untergebracht.

4. Welche Strategie verfolgt die Europäische Kommission, um angesichts der gestiegenen Asylantragszahlen in Ungarn „systemische Mängel" im Asylverfahren und bei den Aufnahmebedingungen auszuschließen?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(31. Oktober 2013)

Der Kommission ist bekannt, dass die Zahl der Asylbewerber in Ungarn stark angestiegen ist und sich daraus erhebliche Probleme ergeben, einschließlich einer Verknappung der verfügbaren Unterbringungsmöglichkeiten. Die Kommission steht in dieser Sache in engem Kontakt mit den zuständigen Behörden. Ungarn hat vor kurzem Soforthilfen aus dem Europäischen Flüchtlingsfonds (EFF) beantragt; dieser Antrag wird zurzeit geprüft.

Die Kommission wurde davon in Kenntnis gesetzt, dass die Aufnahmekapazität der bestehenden Einrichtungen erhöht wurde, neue vorläufige Unterkünfte geschaffen (z. B. in Szeged-Nagyfa) und staatseigene Immobilien umgewidmet wurden (z. B. in Vámosszabadi), damit alle Asylbewerber untergebracht werden können.

Im Zeitraum 2008 bis 2013 wurden Ungarn 6,6 Mio. EUR aus dem EFF und 7, 1 Mio. EUR aus dem Europäischen Rückkehrfonds bereitgestellt. Finanziert wurden hauptsächlich Maßnahmen, die darauf ausgerichtet waren, ein effizientes und faires Asylverfahren sicherzustellen und die Aufnahmebedingungen zu verbessern, Programme zur Unterstützung der begleiteten freiwilligen Rückkehr zu entwickeln und die Verfahren zur Rückführung besser zu gestalten. Für die Ausführung beider Fonds ist das ungarische Innenministerium zuständig. Die Jahresprogramme sowie die Liste der Projekte und Begünstigten sind abrufbar unter: http://www.solidalapok.hu.

([1]) Vgl. Hungarian Helsinki Committee: Brief Information note on the main asylum related legal changes in Hungary as of 1 July, 2013, Seite 3.
([2]) Vgl. Pressemitteilung von Eurostat vom 22.3.2013.
([3]) Vgl. ECRE Weekly Bulletin 14 — June 2013: Hungary passes legislation allowing widespread detention of asylum seekers.
([4]) Vgl. Hungarian Helsinki Committee: Brief Information note on the main asylum related legal changes in Hungary as of 1 July, 2013, Seite 3.
([5]) http://www.kisalfold.hu/gyori_hirek/menekulttabor_-_ujabb_fejlesztes_maradna_el_vamosszabadin/2338124

Die Kommission achtet sorgfältig darauf, dass die Mitgliedstaaten das EU-Recht einhalten; mit den ungarischen Behörden ist bereits wegen verschiedener Aspekte des Asylsystems, einschließlich der Inhaftierung von Asylbewerbern, Kontakt aufgenommen worden. Derzeit prüft die Kommission die neuen Gesetzesänderungen in diesem Bereich. Als Hüterin der Verträge wird die Kommission nicht zögern, geeignete Schritte einzuleiten, falls sich herausstellen sollte, dass Ungarn gegen EU-Recht verstößt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008939/13
to the Commission
Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Detention of asylum-seekers in Hungary

In the first half of 2013 there was a massive rise in the number of asylum applicants in Hungary: more than 10 000 new asylum applications were registered up to June 2013 ([1]). By way of comparison, the number of asylum-seekers registered in 2012 was only 2 155. ([2]) Meanwhile, on 1 July 2013 amendments to the law entered into force in Hungary which, referring to the EU Reception Conditions Directive, provide *inter alia* for the detention of asylum-seekers. The UNHCR and the Hungarian Helsinki Committee expressed clear concerns about the new Hungarian legislation, since the grounds for detention (as in the Reception Directive) are couched in such broad terms that it is to be feared that the detention of asylum-seekers will (once again) become the rule rather than the exception in Hungary ([3]). It is particularly worrying that the new law does not provide any individual legal remedy against detention. The only judicial review of the detention takes the form of an automatic review after 60 days. ([4]) In 2011 and 2012, detention was ended in only three cases out of a total of 5 000 which were the subject of rulings by the relevant local courts ([5]). That being so, I have the following questions:

1. What projects have been subsidised in Hungary over the past five years from the European Refugee Fund and the European Return Fund? What were the objectives of these projects, what were the amounts granted to them, and who implemented them?

2. Does the Commission regard the (new) rules on the detention of asylum-seekers in Hungary (particularly with regard to the legal remedies available to detainees) as compatible with the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union? If so, why? If not, what does the Commission propose to do?

3. Does the Commission have any information on where the (new) asylum-seekers are currently being housed? According to an article in the Hungarian press, in June 2013 only just over 2 500 persons were housed in Hungarian refugee accommodation.

4. What strategy is the Commission pursuing, given the rise in the number of asylum applications in Hungary, to eliminate 'systemic failings' in the asylum procedure and reception arrangements?

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

The Commission is aware of the significant increase in numbers of asylum applicants in Hungary which has led to major challenges, including accommodation shortages. The Commission is in close contact with the authorities in this respect. Hungary has recently applied for emergency funding under the European Refuge Fund (ERF) and the request is currently being assessed.

The Commission was informed that in order to ensure accommodation of all asylum-seekers, the reception capacity of the existing centres was increased, provisional new reception facilities were opened (e.g.Szeged-Nagyfa) and state-owned estates were restructured (e.g. Vámosszabadi).

For the 2008-2013 period, EUR 6.6 million were allocated to Hungary under the ERF and EUR 7.1 million under the European Return Fund. Activities financed aimed mainly at ensuring an effective and fair asylum procedure and improved reception conditions, developing assisted voluntary returns programmes, and improving the process of forced returns. The implementation of both funds is managed by the Hungarian Ministry of Interior. The annual programmes, as well as the list of projects and beneficiaries is available at: http://www.solidalapok.hu

([1]) Cf. Hungarian Helsinki Committee: Brief Information Note on the Main Asylum-Related Legal Changes in Hungary as of 1 July, 2013, p. 3.
([2]) Cf. Press release from Eurostat, 22 March 2013.
([3]) Cf. ECRE Weekly Bulletin 14 — June 2013: Hungary passes legislation allowing widespread detention of asylum-seekers.
([4]) Cf. Hungarian Helsinki Committee: Brief Information Note on the Main Asylum-Related Legal Changes in Hungary as of 1 July, 2013, p. 3.
([5]) http://www.kisalfold.hu/gyori_hirek/menekulttabor_-_ujabb_fejlesztes_maradna_el_vamosszabadin/2338124

The Commission closely monitors Member States' compliance with EC law and has already been in contact with the Hungarian authorities on several aspects of their asylum system, including detention. The Commission is currently assessing the new legislative amendments in this area. As guardian of the Treaties, the Commission will not hesitate to take the appropriate steps if there is clear evidence that Hungary has violated EC law.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-008940/13
an die Kommission
Werner Langen (PPE)
(22. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Fördermittel der Europäischen Union für Rheinland-Pfalz im Zeitraum 2007-2013

In welcher Höhe und in welche Maßnahmen sind Mittel der Europäischen Union nach Rheinland-Pfalz geflossen, und zwar aus:

1. dem Europäischen Fonds für regionale Entwicklung (EFRE);

2. dem Garantiefonds für die Landwirtschaft (EGFL);

3. dem Europäischen Landwirtschaftsfonds für die Entwicklung des ländlichen Raums (ELER);

4. dem Europäischen Sozialfonds (ESF);

5. den Programmen für Lebenslanges Lernen der Europäischen Gemeinschaft;

6. sonstigen Programmen der Europäischen Gemeinschaft?

Welcher Anteil wurde dabei durch die Bundesrepublik Deutschland oder das Land Rheinland-Pfalz mitfinanziert?

Antwort von Herrn Lewandowski im Namen der Kommission
(4. Oktober 2013)

Die vom Herrn Abgeordneten gewünschten Informationen finden sich in den Anlagen 1 bis 5.

Was das EU-Programm für lebenslanges Lernen betrifft, so wurden von 2008 bis 2013 rund 993 Projekte, bei denen es sich um in Rheinland-Pfalz ansässige Empfänger handelte, mit 17 752 865,30 EUR über die deutschen nationalen Agenturen finanziert. Da noch nicht alle Projekte abgeschlossen sind, beläuft sich der bis zum 18. September 2013 gezahlte Betrag auf 16 496 061,71 EUR.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008940/13
to the Commission
Werner Langen (PPE)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: European Union grants for Rhineland-Palatinate between 2007 and 2013

How much funding did the European Union provide for Rhineland-Palatinate, for what measures, from:

1. the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF);

2. the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF);

3. the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD);

4. the European Social Fund (ESF);

5. the EU's lifelong learning programmes;

6. other EU programmes?

What proportion of this was co-financed by the Federal Republic of Germany or the *Land* of Rhineland-Palatinate?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(4 October 2013)

The Honourable Member can find the requested information in Annexes 1 to 5.

As regards the EU's lifelong learning programme, around 993 projects were funded through the German National Agencies, the beneficiaries of which are resident in the German region of Rheinland-Pfalz, between 2008 and 2013 for an amount of EUR 17 752 865,30. As the projects are not all finalised, the amount paid until 18 September 2013 is EUR 16 496 061,71.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008941/13
to the Commission
Linda McAvan (S&D)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Sustainable consumption and production

At the beginning of 2012, the Commission issued a public consultation on 'Delivering more Sustainable Consumption and Production'. Can the Commission outline the steps taken to bring forward the results of this consultation over the subsequent period?

On 9 July 2013 the Commission launched a public consultation on 'Sustainability of the Food System'. How does the Commission see the relationship between the wider sustainable consumption and production agenda and the specific policies on sustainability in the food system?

Is the Commission planning to issue a communication on sustainable consumption and production before the end of its term?

Does the Commission intend to promote sustainable consumption and production in the context of the European Year of Development 2015 and the future global sustainable development framework post-2015?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 September 2013)

The public consultation on 'Delivering more Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP)' was part of the review of the SCP/SIP Action Plan ([1]). Results indicated the need to strengthen SCP policy in close connection with the implementation of the Resource Efficiency Roadmap ([2]). The Commission will present a package on resource efficiency and the review of waste management targets in 2014.

In April 2013 the Commission issued the 'Building the Single Market for Green Products' communication ([3]), which introduces two methods for measurement and a set of principles for communicating the environmental performance of products and organisations to facilitate a higher uptake of green products in the Single Market. These are the natural follow-up of the SCP/SIP Action Plan; the Commission therefore does not intend to issue another communication on SCP.

As stated in the Resource Efficiency Roadmap, 'nutrition, housing and mobility are typically responsible for 70-80% of all environmental impacts'. Thus, the Commission intends to present a communication on sustainable food, to respond to the specificities of the food sector and face the challenges to promote its sustainability. The consultation launched on 9 July 2013 is a step in this process.

Additionally, the new Common Agricultural Policy brings about a policy change by reinforcing its 'green' instruments in both pillars.

The Commission has been promoting SCP at international level since the Rio+10 Conference in 2002. At the Rio+20 Conference in 2012, the 10 Years Framework of Programme on SCP ([4]) was launched, aiming at enhancing international cooperation to accelerate the shift towards SCP. The Commission will continue to promote SCP, including in the context of post 2015 agenda.

([1]) COM(2008) 397.
([2]) COM(2011) 571.
([3]) COM(2013) 196. http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/smgp/index.htm
([4]) http://www.unep.org/10yfp/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008942/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sajjad Karim (ECR)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Killing of four protestors by Indian security forces in Kashmir

Last week Indian government forces killed four Kashmiri villagers and injured dozens more by opening fire on crowds protesting against the alleged desecration of the Qur'an by the Indian Border Security Force (BSF).

The heavy-handed tactics of the BSF, who ignited the recent violence by beating students and tearing up several copies of the Qur'an at an Islamic school in Dharam on 17 July 2013, has again heightened tension in the area.

Against the backdrop of reported systematic human rights abuses by the Indian government forces against Kashmiris, and with the shocking discovery in Indian-administered Kashmir of 40 unmarked graves containing 2000 bodies in 2011, this recent episode gives rise to the following questions:

1. Has the Vice-President/High Representative publicly condemned this week's shooting?

2. If so, what assurances has the Vice-President/High Representative received that India will conduct a transparent and fair inquiry into the shootings?

3. With the EU-India Free Trade Agreement still currently being negotiated, what further political leverage or measures will the EU use to urge India to respect the human rights of the people of Kashmir?

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

The HR/VP has noted the incident in Jammu and Kashmir and is concerned by any act of violence against civilians. In line with international humanitarian law, non-violent means should always be used in such instances before resorting to the use of force. We are aware that the Indian authorities are looking into the incident. The HR/VP has taken note of Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's immediate condemnation saying that it was 'highly unacceptable to shoot at unarmed protesters.' The HR/VP further noted that Indian Home Minister, Shinde has promised an investigation and said that 'any use of excessive force or irresponsible action will be dealt with strictly'.

In view of recent positive steps to curb or bring to justice perpetrators in similar instances, such as the Commission for Inquiry set up by the Supreme Court to address extrajudicial killings in Manipur, under the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, the HR/VP hopes that investigations allowing the prosecution of perpetrators will also apply in this situation. The HR/VP is aware that investigations into the issue of unidentified graves have been undertaken by the State Human Rights Commission. The HR/VP has consistently urged placing human rights protection mechanisms at the centre of any attempt to ensure responsibility and accountability for abuses against civilians. The HR/VP also regularly raises the question of impunity of armed forces as a core issue in its periodic Human Rights Dialogue with the Government of India, as well as in interactions with other interlocutors and will do so in the framework of the forthcoming Human Rights Dialogue.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008943/13
an die Kommission
Rebecca Harms (Verts/ALE)
(22. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Zusatzfrage zu den Anfragen zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003665/2013 und E-003664/2013

Mit dem Königlichen Dekret 547/2012 hat Spanien das Königliche Dekret 1462/2001 bestätigt, durch das einem privaten Unternehmen mehrere Genehmigungen zur Exploration von Kohlenwasserstoffen erteilt wurden. Diese Genehmigungen erstreckten sich auch auf ein Erkundungsprogramm für Kohlenwasserstoffe ([1]), das auf einem Meeresgebiet von 6 161 km^2, also auf einer Fläche, die mehr als doppelt so groß ist wie Lanzarote und Fuerteventura zusammen, durchgeführt werden soll und mindestens zwei Tiefseebohrungen (3 500 m) umfassen wird.

Die Kommission vertrat zunächst die Ansicht, dass für ein solches Projekt keine Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung (UVP) gemäß der Richtlinie 2011/92/EU durchgeführt werden müsse ([2]), obwohl für das künftige Förderprojekt eine UVP erforderlich sei. Kürzlich hat die Kommission jedoch ausgeführt, dass solche Genehmigungen vorbehaltlich der Einhaltung der Rechtsvorschriften im Bereich der UVP erteilt würden ([3]).

Außerdem hat die Kommission darauf hingewiesen, dass das oben genannte Erkundungsprogramm nicht der Richtlinie 2001/42/EG unterliege, da es „keinen Rahmen für die künftige Genehmigung von Förderprojekten in einem bestimmten Sektor" ([4]) setze, und doch wird das genannte Programm bereits einer UVP unterzogen.

Kann die Kommission erklären, auf welcher Grundlage sie zu dem Schluss gekommen ist, dass das oben genannte Erkundungsprogramm keinen Rahmen für künftige Genehmigungen setzt, wenn im Zuge der Durchführung eines solchen Programms bereits für mehrere Tiefseebohrungen eine UVP eingeleitet wurde?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(6. September 2013)

In der Richtlinie 2001/42/EG über die Prüfung der Umweltauswirkungen bestimmter Pläne und Programme ([4]) wird der in Artikel 3 Absatz 2 verwendete Ausdruck „Rahmen für die künftige Genehmigung der (…) Projekte" nicht definiert. Gemäß der Leitlinie der Kommission zur Umsetzung dieser Richtlinie ([5]) sollten die Pläne und Programme Kriterien oder Voraussetzungen beinhalten, die die Grundlage bilden, auf der die Genehmigungsbehörde über einen Genehmigungsantrag entscheidet. Mit den von der Frau Abgeordneten genannten Erkundungsgenehmigungen wird kein Rahmen für die künftige Genehmigung von Förderprojekten gesetzt, sondern das Prospektionsgebiet abgegrenzt und die erforderlichen Investitionen über die Laufzeit des betreffenden Vorhabens ermittelt.

Wie bereits in der Antwort auf die schriftlichen Anfragen E-3664/2013 und E-3665/2013 erläutert, schließt die Tatsache, dass die Erkundungsgenehmigungen keine Pläne und Programme nach Maßgabe der Richtlinie 2001/42/EG ([6]) darstellen, auf keinen Fall die Anwendung der entsprechenden Bestimmungen der geänderten Richtlinie 2011/92/EU über die Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung bei bestimmten öffentlichen und privaten Projekten (UVP-Richtlinie) auf Projekte für Erkundungsbohrungen, sofern erforderlich, aus.

([1]) Artikel 2 des Königlichen Dekrets 1462/2001 vom 21. Dezember 2001 (BOE vom 23. Januar 2001), geändert durch das Königliche Dekret 547/2012 vom 16. März 2012 (BOE vom 21. März 2012).
([2]) Antwort von Janez Potočnik auf die Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000429/2013.
([3]) Gemeinsame Antwort von Herrn Potočnik auf die Anfragen zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003665/2013 und E-003664/2013.
([4]) ABl. L 197 vom 21.7.2001.
([5]) Abrufbar unter: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/pdf/030923_sea_guidance_de.pdf
([6]) ABl. L 26 vom 28.1.2012 (kodifizierte Fassung der Richtlinie 85/337/EWG).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008943/13
to the Commission
Rebecca Harms (Verts/ALE)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Follow up to Written Questions E-003665/2013 and E-003664/2013

Under Royal Decree 547/2012, Spain ratified Royal Decree 1462/2001, which granted a number of hydrocarbon exploratory permits to a private undertaking. Such permits also contained a hydrocarbon 'investigation programme' ([1]) to be carried out in a sea area of 6 161 km², which is more than twice the size of Lanzarote and Fuerteventura put together, and comprises not less than two future deep-water drillings (3 500 m).

The Commission initially considered that 'such [an exploration] project does not require an environmental impact assessment (EIA) under Directive 2011/92/EU' ([2]), although an EIA would be required for the future exploitation project. However, the Commission recently stated that 'such permits are subject to compliance with the requirements of EIA legislation' ([3]).

The Commission has also noted that the abovementioned investigation programme was not subject to Directive 2001/42/EC because 'they do not set up a framework for future development consent of exploitation projects operating in a given sector' ([4]), and yet the programme in question is already undergoing an EIA.

Can the Commission explain on what basis it has concluded that the abovementioned investigation programme is not a framework for future authorisations when, as part of the execution of such a programme, an EIA of a number of deep drillings has already been initiated?

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

Directive 2001/42/EC ([5]) on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment does not define the expression 'set the framework for future development consent' used in Article 3(2) thereof. According to the Commission's Guidance on the implementation of this directive ([6]), plans or programmes should contain criteria or conditions which guide the way the consenting authority decides an application for development consent. The exploratory permits referred to by the Honourable Member delineate the research area and identify the required investments over the prospects lifetime rather than laying down the framework for future authorisations.

In any event, the fact that these exploratory permits do not constitute a plan or programme within the meaning of Directive 2001/42/EC does not preclude the applicability of the relevant provisions of Directive 2011/92/UE ([7]) on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, as amended). (EIA Directive) to the projects for exploratory drillings, where pertinent, as explained in the reply to the previous questions E-3664/2013 and E-3665/2013.

([1]) Article 2 of Royal Decree 1462/2001 of 21 December 2001 (BOE of 23 January 2001) as amended by Royal Decree 547/2012 of 16 March 2012 (BOE of 21 March 2012).
([2]) Reply by Mr Potočnik to Written Question E-000429/2013.
([3]) Joint reply by Mr Potočnik to Written Questions E-003665/2013, E-003664/2013.
([4]) Joint reply by Mr Potočnik to Written Questions E-003665/2013, E-003664/2013.
([5]) OJ L 197, 21.7.2001.
([6]) Available under the address http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/pdf/030923_sea_guidance.pdf
([7]) OJ L 26, 28.01.2012 (codified version of Directive 85/337/EEC.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008944/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Jürgen Klute (GUE/NGL)
(22. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Menschenrechte in Kolumbien in Gefahr: Präsident Santos droht mit Schließung des UNHCHR-Büros

Der kolumbianische Präsident Juan Manuel Santos gab am 16. Juli 2013 bekannt, er werde darüber entscheiden, ob das Büro der Hohen Kommissarin der Vereinten Nationen für Menschenrechte (UNHCHR) geschlossen werden soll. Er vertritt die Ansicht, dass Kolumbien genügend Fortschritte auf dem Gebiet der Menschenrechte gemacht habe.

Die Hohe Kommissarin der Vereinten Nationen für Menschenrechte hat sich indes erst vor kurzem wiederholt über die Menschenrechtlage in Kolumbien besorgt gezeigt. So hat sie am 10. Juli 2013 Verstöße gegen die wirtschaftlichen, sozialen und kulturellen Rechte in der Region Catatumbo bemängelt und Mitte Juni das vom kolumbianischen Senat verabschiedete Militärjustizgesetz als wesentlichen Rückschritt im Hinblick auf die Menschenrechte bezeichnet.

Darüber hinaus ist Kolumbien nach wie vor ein sehr gefährliches Land für Gewerkschaftsführer, Gemeindesprecher, Journalisten, Landrechteaktivisten, Menschenrechtsverteidiger sowie führende Vertreter der indigenen und afro-kolumbianischen Gemeinschaften.

Daher ist die Präsenz internationaler Institutionen außerordentlich wichtig, da sie dazu beitragen können, Menschenrechtsverletzungen zu verhindern sowie Vorwürfe in Bezug auf derartige Übergriffe zu dokumentieren.

— Kann die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin darüber Auskunft geben, welche Maßnahmen sie als Reaktion auf die besorgniserregenden Aussagen von Präsident Santos ergriffen hat?

— Ist die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin gewillt, Mittelübertragungen an Kolumbien und die Handelszusammenarbeit mit dem Land auszusetzen, falls man sich dieser Anliegen nicht annimmt?

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

Die EU und ihre Mitgliedstaaten haben die Bedeutung der Verlängerung des Mandats des Amtes des Hohen Kommissars der Vereinten Nationen für Menschenrechte (OHCHR) in Kolumbien mehrfach mit den Behörden zur Sprache gebracht, so z. B. während der 16. Sitzung im Rahmen der allgemeinen regelmäßigen Überprüfung durch den Menschenrechtsrat im April sowie beim Menschenrechtsdialog zwischen der EU und Kolumbien im vergangenen Juni. Die kolumbianische Regierung hat ihre Absicht erklärt, das Mandat zu verlängern.

Im Anschluss an den Besuch der Hohen Kommissarin der Vereinten Nationen für Menschenrechte, Navi Pillay, in Kolumbien im Juli haben die Behörden bestätigt, dass das Mandat des OHCHR bis Oktober 2014 verlängert wird. Die Frage einer weiteren Verlängerung sollte dann von der neuen Regierung behandelt werden, die aus den Präsidentschafts- und Parlamentswahlen im Frühjahr 2014 hervorgehen wird.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008944/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Jürgen Klute (GUE/NGL)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Human rights in danger in Colombia: Santos threatens to remove OHCHR

On 16 July 2013 Colombian president Juan Manuel Santos announced that he will decide whether or not to retain the human rights office of the United Nations in Colombia. He maintains that Colombia has made sufficient progress in the field of human rights.

Oddly enough, this statement comes following a series of concerns expressed by the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Colombia. On 10 July 2013 the High Commissioner denounced economic, social and cultural rights violations in the region of Catatumbo and in mid-June judged the law on military justice approved by the Colombian senate to be a major setback for human rights.

Furthermore, Colombia remains a seriously dangerous country for trade union leaders, community leaders, journalists, land activists, human rights defenders, and indigenous and Afro-Colombian leaders.

In such a context, the presence of international bodies is extremely important given that they can provide leverage in the prevention of human rights abuses and in the monitoring of allegations of such abuses.

— Could the Vice-President/High Representative comment on the actions she has taken to address President Santos' alarming statements?

— Is the Vice-President/High Representative willing to withhold or withdraw funds and trade cooperation from Colombia unless these concerns are addressed?

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

The EU and its Member States have raised the importance of renewing the mandate of the UN Office for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Colombia on several occasions with the authorities, notably during the sixteenth session of the Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review in April as well as during the Human Rights Dialogue between the EU and Colombia last June. The Colombian government stated its intention to extend the mandate.

Following the visit of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay to Colombia in July, the authorities have confirmed that the mandate of OHCHR would be extended until October 2014. The question of further renewal should be addressed by the next government, following the presidential and legislative elections to be held in the spring 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008945/13
to the Commission
Pat the Cope Gallagher (ALDE)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Trade agreements and human rights

The 'Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council: Human Rights and Democracy at the Heart of EU External Action' (COM(2011)0886) outlines the central role that human rights must play in EU trade negotiations as well as the need for the EU's trade and human rights agenda to be 'coherent, transparent, predictable, feasible and effective'.

Moreover, a number of recent reports, including 'Sold to the Sea' from the Environmental Justice Foundation, have documented serious, widespread and persistent human rights abuses in Thailand's seafood industry, including human trafficking, violence and murder. The EU is a major importer of Thai seafood products.

— Can the Commission provide specific examples of how human rights considerations are being applied to the recently opened Free Trade Agreement talks with Thailand?

— Can the Commission provide specific examples of how persistent reports of severe human rights abuses in the seafood sector are being addressed in the Free Trade Agreement talks?

— Can the Commission give an update on the development of transparent assessment criteria regarding the human rights clauses in the EU's agreements with third countries?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(16 September 2013)

The Commission is deeply concerned by reports on human trafficking in the Thai fisheries sector and is following the issue closely. The issue of trafficking of human beings was raised by the President of the Commission in a meeting with the Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra in Brussels in March 2013, and the EU Delegation in Bangkok will host a seminar later in 2013 on how to address the issue. These concrete actions are in addition to the regular contacts the Commission has with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on labour rights and with civil society.

The Commission is also firmly committed to including ambitious provisions on trade and sustainable development in the EU's Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Thailand currently under negotiation. Promoting the effective implementation of core labour standards, including the elimination of child labour and forced labour, should form an important part of the Trade and Sustainable Development chapter. Such a chapter should also provide a framework for ongoing dialogue in this area, including with relevant stakeholders.

Action 33(b) of the EU Human Rights Action Plan provides that the EU will develop criteria for the application of the human rights clause in its external agreements. Work is underway on this issue, which should be completed in 2014. Preventing and combating human trafficking is also the specific subject of Directive 2011/36/EU ([1]) and of the integrated EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016.

([1]) Directive 2011/36/EU of Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA, OJ L 101, 15.4.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008946/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Subsidies to Nobel Foundation

Could the Commission please advise me of any funding that it may have provided in the past to the Nobel Foundation, or any of its subsidiaries?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(12 September 2013)

The Commission does not possess a record of a legal entity named 'Nobel Foundation' to which it has provided funding in the past.

As regards other entities which are part of the Nobel foundation's network, the 'Stiftelsen Nobels Fredsenter' has received an amount of EUR 6 776,21 and the 'Nobel Media AB' an amount of EUR 11 050 (see attached tables in Annexes I and II). According to information available to the Commission, the two entities are not considered as Nobel Foundation's subsidiaries.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-008947/13
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(22 ta' Lulju 2013)

Suġġett: Servizzi għall-indukrar tat-tfal u l-objettivi ta' Barċellona

L-objettivi ta' Barċellona, imfassla fl-2002, irriflettew impenn min-naħa tal-Istati Membri lejn l-għoti ta' servizzi għall-indukrar tat-tfal għal tal-anqas 33 % tat-tfal taħt l-età ta' tliet snin sal-2010.

Minħabba n-nuqqas ta' konformità, l-Istati Membri fl-2011 kellhom "jerġgħu jaffermaw" l-impenn tagħhom u din id-darba ffissaw d-data tal-objettiv għall-2020.

Fid-29 ta' Mejju 2013, 11-il Stat Membru rċevew rakkomandazzjonijiet speċifiċi għall-pajjiżi fl-ambitu tas-Semestru Ewropew dwar l-impjiegi fost in-nisa u dwar id-disponibilità u l-kwalità tas-servizzi għall-indukrar tat-tfal. Sal-lum huma biss 10 dawk l-Istati Membri li laħqu l-objettivi ta' Barċellona għall-faxxa tal-età speċifika.

It-titjib tad-disponibilità u tal-aċċessibilità tas-servizzi għall-indukrar tat-tfal jgħin biex titjieb l-ugwaljanza tal-ġeneru billi jitneħħew id-diżinċentivi għan-nisa milli jipparteċipaw fis-suq tax-xogħol. Barra minn hekk, ir-realizzazzjoni tal-objettivi ta' Barċellona, skont il-Kummissjoni, kienet fil-"qalba tal-istrateġiji ta' tkabbir ekonomiku tal-Ewropa", frażi li ilha mill-Istrateġija ta' Lisbona, miktuba ferm qabel ma bdiet il-kriżi ekonomika.

Fid-dawl ta' dak li ntqal hawn fuq:

— Għaliex il-Kummissjoni ma tiħux lilha nnifisha aktar bis-serjetà billi tkompli tinsisti fuq il-fatt li l-Istati Membri jtejbu d-disponibilità u l-aċċessibilità tas-servizzi għall-indukrar tat-tfal?

— Xi provvedimenti biħsiebha tieħu l-Kummissjoni biex taċċerta li l-Istati Membri jassumu impenn akbar biex jilħqu l-objettivi ta' Barċellona, barra mir-rakkomandazzjonijiet speċifiċi għall-pajjiżi stabbiliti fl-ambitu tas-Semestru Ewropew?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Reding f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(19 ta' Settembru 2013)

Il-Kummissjoni adottat rapport dwar il-progress lejn il-miri ta' Barċellona ([1]). Mill-2002 lil hawn sar xi progress. Minkejja l-impenn tal-Istati Membri permezz ta' żewġ patti Ewropej suċċessivi għall-ugwaljanza bejn in-nisa u l-irġiel, madankollu, il-forniment ta' faċilitajiet għall-indukrar tat-tfal għadha mhix konformi mal-miri ta' Barċellona. F'dan id-dawl, il-Kummissjoni stiednet lill-Istati Membri biex iżidu l-isforzi tagħhom u saħqet fuq il-ħtieġa li jerġa' jiftaħ id-dibattitu biex jintlaħqu l-miri.

Fuq proposta mill-Kummissjoni, il-Kunsill Ewropew irrakkomanda lil ħdax-il Stat Membru biex itejbu d-disponibbiltà ta' servizzi ta' indukrar tat-tfal, u b'hekk saħqet fuq l-importanza tal-ħtieġa li jkun hemm aktar faċilitajiet ta' indukrar tat-tfal u tal-kontribuzzjoni tagħhom għall-objettivi tal-Unjoni Ewropea. Il-Kummissjoni se tissorvelja mill-qrib l-implimentazzjoni mill-Istati Membri tar-rakkomandazzjonijiet.

Barra minn hekk, il-Kummissjoni tħeġġeġ lill-Istati Membri biex jużaw l-appoġġ finanzjarju pprovdut permezz tal-Fond Ewropew tal-Investiment u l-Fondi Strutturali. Il-Fond Ewropew għall-Iżvilupp Reġjonali jista' jappoġġja d-disponibbiltà fiżika ta' servizzi ta' indukrar tat-tfal. L-investimenti fl-infrastruttura tal-indukrar tat-tfal huma parti mill-programmi attwali u huma ppjanati wkoll fiċ-ċiklu ta' pprogrammar li jmiss.

Il-proposti tal-Kummissjoni għal Regolamenti ġodda dwar il-Fondi Ewropej Strutturali u ta' Investiment jippromwovu l-prinċipju tal-ugwaljanza bejn is-sessi ([2]). B'mod speċifiku, fir-rigward tal-Fond Soċjali Ewropew (FSE) ([3]), ir-Regolament propost jiddikjara b'mod ċar l-obbligu għall-Istati Membri biex b'mod effettiv jintegraw id-dimensjoni tal-ugwaljanza bejn is-sessi fil-politiki u l-programmi tagħhom permezz ta' approċċ doppju: permezz tal-integrazzjoni tal-ugwaljanza bejn is-sessi u permezz ta' azzjonijiet speċifiċi. Din tal-aħħar tista' tiġi pprogrammata taħt kwalunkwe investiment ta' prijorità tal-FSE.

([1]) COM(2013) 322.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=62&langId=en
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/BlobServlet?docId=231&langId=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008947/13
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Childcare services and achieving the Barcelona targets

The Barcelona targets, drawn up in 2002, reflected a commitment by Member States to provide childcare to at least 33% of children under three years of age by 2010.

Owing to a lack of compliance, Member States had to 'reaffirm' this commitment in 2011, this time setting the target for 2020.

On 29 May 2013, 11 Member States received country-specific recommendations under the European Semester on female employment and on childcare availability and quality. Only 10 Member States have reached the Barcelona targets for the specified age group so far.

Improving the availability and accessibility of childcare services helps to improve gender equality by removing disincentives for women to participate in the labour market. Moreover, the achievement of the Barcelona targets has, according to the Commission, been 'at the heart of Europe's economic growth strategies', a phrase dating from the Lisbon strategy, which was drafted long before the economic crisis began.

In light of the above:

— Why does the Commission not take itself more seriously by further insisting that Member States improve availability and access to childcare services?

— What measures does the Commission intend to take to see that Member States make a greater commitment to reach the Barcelona targets, other than the country-specific recommendations set out under the European Semester?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(19 September 2013)

The Commission adopted a report on progress towards the Barcelona targets ([1]). Some progress was made since 2002. Despite Member States' commitment through two successive European pacts for equality between women and men, however, the provision of childcare facilities is still not in line with the Barcelona targets. In this light, the Commission invited Member States to step up their efforts and stressed the need to reopen the debate to reach the targets.

Upon proposal by the Commission, the European Council recommended to eleven Member States to improve the availability of childcare services, thus reaffirming the need for more childcare facilities and their contribution to the objectives of the European Union. The Commission will closely monitor Member States' implementation of the recommendations.

In addition, the Commission encourages Member States to make use of the financial support provided through the European Structural and Investment Funds. The European Regional Development Fund can support the physical availability of childcare services. Childcare infrastructure investments are part of the current programs and also envisaged in the next programming cycle.

The Commission's proposals for new Regulations on European Structural and Investment Funds promote the principle of gender equality ([2]). Specifically, as regards the European Social Fund (ESF) ([3]), the proposed Regulation clearly states the obligation for Member States to effectively integrate the gender dimension into their policies and programmes through a dual approach: by gender mainstreaming and by specific actions. The latter may be programmed under any ESF investment priority.

([1]) COM(2013) 322.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=62&langId=en
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/BlobServlet?docId=231&langId=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008948/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Online travel companies

Is the Commission aware of any practices amongst online travel companies whereby individual users' data relating to searches for travel products, such as car rental and flights, are retained for the purpose of adapting prices according to the level of interest shown by particular consumers, using cookies and IP addresses?

If the Commission is aware of such practices, what is its view on them? Is there legislation in existence at present, or is the Commission considering proposing legislation, to cover such practices and protect consumers who check flights and car rental products several times seeking to get the best value?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(12 September 2013)

The Commission would like to refer to its joint answer to questions P-001257/13, E-001574/13, and E-000956/13, given on 18 April 2013, and to its answer to Question E-006023/13 given on 23 July 2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008949/13
an die Kommission
Burkhard Balz (PPE)
(22. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Mitgliedschaft der Europäischen Investitionsbank (EIB) im Europäischen Verband langfristiger Investoren (European Association of Long-Term Investors — ELTI)

In einer Pressemitteilung vom 5. Juli 2013 hat die Europäische Investitionsbank (EIB) die Einrichtung des Europäischen Verbands langfristiger Investoren (European Association of Long-Term Investors — ELTI) angekündigt. Der Verband, dem sowohl öffentlich-rechtliche Förderinstitute als auch börsennotierte Banken (Banco Português de Investimento (BPI) und National Bank of Greece) angehören, soll im Transparenz-Register der europäischen Organe angemeldet werden und die „gemeinsamen Interessen seiner Mitglieder gegenüber den EU-Institutionen vertreten".

Kann die Kommission in Bezug auf die Mitgliedschaft der EIB im ELTI folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Inwiefern ist die Mitgliedschaft der EIB, des Finanzierungsinstituts der Europäischen Union, in einem Verband zur Vertretung von Interessen gegenüber den EU-Organen mit ihrer Satzung und den EU-Verträgen vereinbar?

2. Kann die EIB gewährleisten, dass der besagte Verband keine den öffentlichen Interessen der EU entgegenstehende Partikularinteressen vertritt?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(5. September 2013)

Wie bereits im Statut ([1]) des Verbands erläutert, besteht das Hauptziel des ELTI ([2]) im Ausbau der institutionellen und operationellen Zusammenarbeit zwischen den wichtigsten langfristigen Investoren in allen EU-Mitgliedstaaten unter voller Angleichung an die EU-Ziele und -Politiken. Der ELTI wurde nach dem Europäischen Rat vom 27./28. Juni 2013 gegründet, um seine Angleichung an die EU-Politiken hervorzuheben.

Wie bereits bei seinem Vorgänger, dem Club der Spezialinstitute des langfristigen Kredits („Club of institutions specialised in Long-term credit"/ISLTC), wird die Teilnahme der EIB an diesem Verband als assoziiertes Mitglied die oben genannte Angleichung in einem noch höheren Maße gewährleisten.

Durch die Teilnahme der EIB am Verband dürften der Umfang und die Auswirkungen der gemeinsamen EU-EIB-Instrumente auf den Märkten noch ausgebaut werden, da sie gegebenenfalls durch eine Kofinanzierung der Vollmitglieder des Verbandes gehebelt werden. Dadurch könnten die Ressourcen des öffentlichen und des privaten Sektors der Mitgliedstaaten im Hinblick auf EU-Politiken stärker mobilisiert werden.

([1]) Die Parteien erklären, dass die Mitglieder des „Club of institutions of the EU specializing in the Long-Term Credit" (ISLTC) bereit sind, weiterhin mit den EU Mitgliedern des „Club of Long Term investors" (LTIC) zusammenzuarbeiten und gemeinsam die Förderung und den Ausbau der langfristigen Investitionen in voller Übereinstimmung mit den Zielen und Initiativen der EU zu stärken.

([2]) Europäischer Verband langfristiger Investoren („European Association of Long-Term Investors" — ELTI).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008949/13
to the Commission
Burkhard Balz (PPE)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: European Investment Bank (EIB) membership in the European Association of Long-Term Investors (ELTI)

In a press release dated 5 July 2013, the European Investment Bank (EIB) announced the creation of the European Association of Long-Term Investors (ELTI). The association, whose members include financial institutions under public law as well as listed banks (Banco Português de Investimento (BPI) and National Bank of Greece), is to appear in the transparency register of the European institutions and will represent 'the shared interests of its members vis-à-vis the EU institutions'.

1. To what extent is membership of the EU's own financing agency in an association representing interests vis-à-vis the EU institutions reconcilable with the EIB's Statute and EU treaties?

2. Can the EIB guarantee that the association will not be representing particular interests which go against any of the EU's public interests?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

As stated in the Statute ([1]) of the Association, the core objective of the ELTI ([2]) is to enhance institutional and operational cooperation among the main long-term financial institutions of all EU Member States, in full alignment with EU objectives and policies. The ELTI was established following the 27-28 June European Council meeting to signal its alignment with EU policies.

As it was the case in the predecessor Club of institutions specialised in Long-term credit (ISLTC), the participation of the EIB in the Association as associated member will ensure this alignment to an even greater degree.

The participation of the EIB to the Association shall also contribute to increase the scale and market impact of EU-EIB joint-instruments, as they may be leveraged through co-financing from the full Members of the Association, hence catalysing national public and private sector resources around EU policies.

([1]) 'The parties declare that the Members of the Club of institutions of the EU specializing in the Long-Term Credit (ISLTC) are willing to go further with the EU members of the Club of Long Term investors (LTIC) in their cooperation and to join efforts to promote and enhance long term investment in full convergence with the objectives and initiatives developed by the EU'.

([2]) European Association of Long-Term Investors.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008950/13
à la Commission
Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid (PPE)
(22 juillet 2013)

Objet: Impact du secteur des véhicules anciens sur l'économie de l'Union européenne

Dans le cadre des secteurs culturels et créatifs, les véhicules anciens contribuent largement à enrichir le patrimoine européen tant sur le plan économique que culturel. Cette valeur ajoutée se traduit par un chiffre d'affaires important: à titre d'exemple, en 2005, les échanges relatifs aux véhicules anciens ont généré 16,66 milliards d'euros, et 55 000 personnes étaient employées dans ce secteur. Malheureusement, on ne dispose pas de données chiffrées plus récentes.

Le secteur des véhicules anciens contribue aussi à relancer et à recréer des activités et des métiers qui risquent de disparaître. Étant à la recherche de personnes qualifiées dans les différentes techniques de réparation, restauration et maintenance, ce secteur peut représenter un domaine attractif pour les jeunes désireux de trouver un emploi.

Dans ce contexte:

— Est-ce que la Commission prévoit de faire une étude précise sur l'impact de ce secteur sur l'économie de l'Union européenne?

— Compte-t-elle proposer des actions structurées sur le long terme visant à protéger et investir dans ce secteur?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(2 septembre 2013)

En novembre 2012, la Commission a présenté le plan d'action CARS 2020 définissant un certain nombre d'actions concrètes (financement de la recherche, amélioration des conditions du marché, internationalisation et promotion de l'investissement dans les compétences) qui sont considérées comme essentielles pour la compétitivité à long terme et la croissance durable du secteur. À l'heure actuelle, la Commission se concentre sur leur mise en œuvre.

Par conséquent, elle ne prévoit pas, à ce stade, d'étude particulière sur l'incidence du secteur des véhicules anciens sur l'économie de l'UE. De même, la Commission n'a pas l'intention de proposer de mesures à long terme qui encourageraient davantage d'investissements dans ce sous-secteur de l'industrie automobile, étant donné que le secteur des véhicules anciens ne fait pas partie du plan d'action stratégique CARS 2020.

Toutefois, dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre de CARS 2020, les membres du groupe de travail ont la possibilité de soulever cette question lors d'une de leurs réunions s'ils la considèrent importante pour le développement compétitif et durable de l'industrie automobile européenne.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008950/13
to the Commission
Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid (PPE)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Impact of the vintage-vehicle sector on the EU economy

Vintage vehicles do much to enrich Europe's heritage, both economically and culturally. That added value is reflected in the sector's robust financial health: in 2005, for instance, trade in vintage vehicles generated a turnover of EUR 16.66 billion and the sector employed some 55 000 people. Unfortunately, no more recent figures are available.

The vintage-vehicle sector is also helping to revive activities and trades on the brink of disappearing for good. As it needs individuals skilled in repair, restoration and maintenance, the sector may prove to be an attractive one for young job seekers.

— Does the Commission intend to conduct a study focusing specifically on the sector's impact on the EU's economy?

— Does it intend to put forward structured long-term measures with the aim of protecting and encouraging investment in this sector?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

The Commission has presented in November 2012 the CARS 2020 Action Plan which lists a number of concrete actions (financing of research, improvement of market conditions, internationalisation and promoting investments in skills), which are considered to be the key ones in the long-term competitiveness and sustainable growth of the sector. At the present the Commission is putting all the focus on their implementation.

The Commission does therefore not foresee at this stage any particular study on the impact of the vintage vehicle sector on the EU economy. Similarly, the Commission does not intend to propose any long-term measures which would encourage further investment to this sub sector of the automotive industry as the vintage vehicle sector is not part of the strategic action plan CARS 2020.

However within the CARS 2020 implementation the members of the working group have the possibility to raise this issue in one of the working group meetings, if they considered it to be important for the competitive and sustainable development of the European car industry.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008952/13
à la Commission
Agnès Le Brun (PPE), Michel Dantin (PPE), Gaston Franco (PPE), Alain Cadec (PPE), Dominique Vlasto (PPE), Alain Lamassoure (PPE), Philippe Boulland (PPE), Françoise Grossetête (PPE), Michèle Striffler (PPE), Tokia Saïfi (PPE), Constance Le Grip (PPE), Dominique Riquet (PPE), Christine De Veyrac (PPE), Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid (PPE), Sophie Auconie (PPE), Franck Proust (PPE), Jean-Pierre Audy (PPE) et Brice Hortefeux (PPE)
(22 juillet 2013)

Objet: Importations d'œufs ukrainiens

À une précédente question sur l'importation d'œufs en provenance d'Ukraine (P-004042/2013), la Commission européenne a répondu qu'aucun œuf ou ovo-produit en provenance d'Ukraine n'avait été importé dans l'Union depuis l'entrée en vigueur du règlement d'exécution n° 88/2013. La Commission a également fait savoir que l'accord d'association UE-Ukraine prévoyait l'alignement intégral de la législation ukrainienne sur la législation de l'UE, y compris celle en matière de bien-être animal.

1. La Commission peut-elle prévoir dans combien de temps la législation ukrainienne atteindra les normes européennes en matière de bien-être animal et à quelle date les exploitations ukrainiennes respecteront réellement ces normes?

2. La Commission peut-elle confirmer que, dans l'intervalle, il est possible que des œufs et ovo-produits ukrainiens pénètrent le marché européen? Peut-elle en prévoir l'impact?

3. La Commission peut-elle confirmer que l'alignement concernera à la fois les œufs et les ovo-produits?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(13 septembre 2013)

1. L'accord d'association UE-Ukraine, qui prévoit l'institution d'une zone de libre-échange approfondi et complet, ne précise pas la durée de la période de transition pendant laquelle les autorités ukrainiennes doivent se rapprocher de la législation sanitaire et phytosanitaire (SPS) de l'UE. En revanche, l'accord établit que, dans les trois mois suivant son entrée en vigueur, l'Ukraine soumettra une stratégie globale concernant les mesures sanitaires et phytosanitaires, y compris en matière de bien-être animal. Cette stratégie indiquera les domaines prioritaires liés à ces mesures facilitant les échanges de produits spécifiques ou de groupes de produits spécifiques.

En ce qui concerne le respect effectif de la législation ukrainienne, une fois celle-ci alignée sur l'acquis de l'UE, des mécanismes spécifiques sont prévus par l'accord pour l'évaluation de la mise en œuvre et de l'application des mesures en question.

2. À compter d'aujourd'hui, suite à l'adoption du règlement (UE) n° 88/2013 ([1]), les œufs produits aux fins de la transformation et les ovo produits ukrainiens peuvent en effet être commercialisés dans l'UE. Toutefois, depuis l'entrée en vigueur de ce règlement (le 21 février 2013), il n'y a pas eu de réels échanges, et donc pas d'impact, des produits couverts par le règlement. Par contre, les œufs de table ne peuvent être importés tant que le programme ukrainien de contrôle des salmonelles n'est pas approuvé.

3. L'alignement sur la législation SPS en question concernera à la fois les œufs et les ovo produits. Jusqu'à ce que le processus de rapprochement soit terminé, l'Union européenne importera des œufs et ovo produits d'Ukraine dans les conditions applicables aux importations provenant d'autres pays tiers.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:032:0008:0010:FR:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008952/13
to the Commission
Agnès Le Brun (PPE), Michel Dantin (PPE), Gaston Franco (PPE), Alain Cadec (PPE), Dominique Vlasto (PPE), Alain Lamassoure (PPE), Philippe Boulland (PPE), Françoise Grossetête (PPE), Michèle Striffler (PPE), Tokia Saïfi (PPE), Constance Le Grip (PPE), Dominique Riquet (PPE), Christine De Veyrac (PPE), Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid (PPE), Sophie Auconie (PPE), Franck Proust (PPE), Jean-Pierre Audy (PPE) and Brice Hortefeux (PPE)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Imports of Ukrainian eggs

In its answer to a previous question regarding eggs imported from Ukraine (P-004042/2013), the Commission stated that no eggs or egg products from Ukraine had been imported into the EU since the entry into force of Implementing Regulation No 88/2013. The Commission also pointed out that the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement stipulates that Ukrainian legislation must be brought fully into line with EU legislation, including in the area of animal welfare.

1. How long does the Commission think that it will take before Ukrainian legislation is on a par with European legislation in the area of animal welfare and before Ukrainian farms actually comply with this legislation?

2. Is it true that, in the meantime, Ukrainian eggs and egg products can be marketed in the EU? What impact is this likely to have?

3. Is it true that the approximation of laws applies to both eggs and egg products?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

1. The EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, including its Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA), does not indicate the length of the interim period during which the Ukrainian authorities have to approximate the EU Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) legislation. What the DCFTA does establish is that not later than three months after entry into force of the Agreement, Ukraine will submit a comprehensive strategy as regards the SPS measures, including animal welfare, which will indicate priority areas that relate to those measures facilitating trade in one specific commodity or group of commodities.

As regards the effective compliance of the Ukrainian legislation, once this is approximated to the EU acquis, specific mechanisms are foreseen in the Agreement for the appraisal of the implementation and enforcement of the relevant measures.

2. As of today, following the adoption of Regulation No 88/2013 ([1]), Ukrainian eggs for processing and egg products can indeed be marketed in the EU. However, since its entry into force (21 February 2013), there has been no actual trade — and therefore no impact — for the products covered by the regulation. Conversely, table eggs cannot be imported as long as Ukraine control programme for Salmonella is not approved.

3. The approximation of relevant SPS legislation will concern both eggs and eggs products. Until the process of approximation has been completed the Union will import eggs and egg products from Ukraine under the same conditions as for other third countries.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:032:0008:0010:EN:PDF

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008953/13
aan de Commissie
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(22 juli 2013)

Betreft: Verbod op neonicotinoïden

Al enkele jaren is er — onder meer Europa en de VS — sprake van een abnormale sterfte onder bijen. Meerdere recente studies wijzen op het veelvuldig gebruik van een aantal bestrijdingsmiddelen als een van de oorzaken. Op basis van een herbeoordeling door de EFSA van de risico's voor bijen van een vijftal neonicotinoïden en de stof fipronil heeft de Commissie in april 2013 besloten tot een tijdelijk verbod op bepaalde toepassingen van drie neonicotinoïden: clothianidine, thiamethoxam en imidacloprid. Deze week volgde een vergelijkbare maatregel voor de stof fipronil.

Uit een vorige maand gepubliceerd onderzoek van het Centrum voor Landbouw en Milieu (CLM) in opdracht van Greenpeace blijkt echter dat in Nederland 85 % van het gebruik van de drie „verboden" neonicotinoïden buiten schot blijft. Een groot aantal toepassingen, zoals grondbehandeling bij pootaardappelen, zaadbehandeling bij suikerbieten, alle toelatingen voor het gebruik in kassen, worden niet aangepakt. Volgens een recente studie van de Universiteit van Sussex duurt het vaak meerdere jaren en soms zelfs tot wel 17 jaar voordat deze stoffen uit de bodem zijn verdwenen. Het gevolg is dat deze zeer persistente stoffen zich kunnen blijven ophopen in de bodem en het oppervlaktewater.

1. Kan de Commissie een overzicht geven van de gebruikte hoeveelheden van de drie neonicotinoïden en fipronil, en welk percentage hiervan wel en niet onder het moratorium vallen (voor de EU als geheel en per lidstaat)?

2. Waarom is het gebruik in kassen vrijgesteld van het verbod terwijl al jaren bekend is dat lozingen vanuit kassen een belangrijke oorzaak zijn van de grootschalige normoverschrijdingen van neonicotinoïden en andere stoffen in het oppervlaktewater?

3. Welke maatregelen gaat de Commissie nemen om ervoor te zorgen dat ook andere problematische toepassingen van neonicotinoïden en fipronil worden beëindigd? Behoort een totaalverbod tot de opties? Waarom wel/niet?

4. Hoe gaat de Commissie ervoor zorgen dat de schade die in het verleden is veroorzaakt door het gebruik van neonicotinoïden, wordt beperkt of hersteld?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(11 september 2013)

1-3 De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-008396/2013 ([1]).

2 De recente evaluatie van de drie neonicotinoïden in het kader van artikel 21 van Verordening (EG) nr. 1107/2009 ([2]) was beperkt tot een beoordeling van het risico voor bijen en heeft geleid tot de beperkingen die in Verordening (EU) nr. 485/2013 ([3]) zijn opgenomen. De risico's voor water en in het water levende organismen zijn in dit stadium niet beoordeeld.

4 De dossiers over neonicotinoïden zijn volgens het in de EU-regelgeving vastgelegde evaluatieproces grondig beoordeeld voordat zij als werkzame stof zijn goedgekeurd. Zoals hierboven vermeld, is rekening gehouden met verdere informatie over neonicotinoïden en dit heeft geleid tot beperkte voorwaarden voor goedkeuring. De lidstaten zijn verantwoordelijk voor de uitvoering van deze beperkte voorwaarden wanneer zij gewasbeschermingsmiddelen toelaten die de stoffen bevatten die zijn goedgekeurd om op de markt te worden gebracht.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) PB L 309 van 24.11.2009, blz. 1.
([3]) PB L 139 van 25.5.2013, blz. 12.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008953/13
to the Commission
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Ban on neonicotinoids

For some years, bees have been dying at an abnormal rate, *inter alia* in Europe and the USA. A number of recent studies have shown that one of the causes is the widespread use of a number of pesticides. On the basis of a reassessment by the EFSA of the risks presented to bees by five neonicotinoids and the substance fipronil, the Commission decided in April 2013 to impose a temporary ban on certain uses of three neonicotinoids: clothianidin, thiamethoxam and imidacloprid. This week, a similar measure was introduced for fipronil.

However, according to research by the Centrum voor Landbouw en Milieu (CLM) published last month, which was commissioned by Greenpeace, 85% of the use of the three 'banned' neonicotinoids remains unaffected in the Netherlands. Many applications, such as soil treatment for seed potatoes, seed treatment for sugar beet and all applications for use in greenhouses, are not covered. According to a recent study by the University of Sussex, it often takes several years — and sometimes as long as 17 years — for these substances to vanish from the soil. Consequently, these highly persistent substances can continue to accumulate in the soil and surface waters.

1. Can the Commission provide an overview of the quantities of the three neonicotinoids and fipronil which are being used, and indicate what percentage of them does or does not fall under the moratorium (for the EU as a whole and per Member State)?

2. Why is use in greenhouses exempt from the ban despite the fact that it has been known for years that discharges from greenhouses are a leading cause of the widespread breaches of limits on neonicotinoids and other substances in surface waters?

3. What measures will the Commission take to ensure that other problematic applications of neonicotinoids and fipronil are halted? Is a total ban among the options? Why/why not?

4. How will the Commission ensure that the damage which has been caused in the past by the use of neonicotinoids is limited or remedied?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 September 2013)

1-3 The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-008396/2013 ([1]).

2 The recent review process of the three neonicotinoids launched in the framework of Article 21 of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 ([2]) was limited to the risk assessment for bees and resulted in the restrictions provided for in Regulation (EU) No 485/2013 ([3]). The risk assessments for water and aquatic organisms were not reviewed at this stage.

4 The neonicotinoids dossiers were thoroughly assessed through the evaluation process set by the EU legislation before their approval as active substances. As mentioned above, further information on neonicotinoids was assessed and led to restricted conditions for approval. Member States are responsible for the implementation of such restricted conditions when authorising plant protection products containing the approved substances for placing on the market.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 1.
([3]) OJ L 139, 25.5.2013, p. 12.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008954/13
aan de Commissie
Mark Demesmaeker (Verts/ALE)
(22 juli 2013)

Betreft: Negatieve aspecten van de DSM-5-standaard

Onlangs publiceerde de American Psychiatric Association de vijfde editie van het „Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders" (DSM-5), dat de standaard is geworden voor de beschrijving van psychische aandoeningen.

De invloed ervan reikt ver: verzekeraars eisen een DSM-diagnose bij attesten van werkonbekwaamheid; overheden vragen gegevens over psychiatrische patiënten in DSM-categorieën aan te leveren; sommige medicatie wordt alleen terugbetaald met een DSM-diagnose; zonder een DSM-diagnose van ADHD of autisme hebben kinderen geen recht op extra begeleiding in het onderwijs enz.

DSM-5 staat nochtans aan heel wat kritiek bloot: normaal gedrag zoals rouw en driftbuien worden als psychische aandoeningen aangemerkt waardoor het een vehikel is geworden voor verkeerde diagnose, overdiagnose en het voorschrijven van onnodige geneesmiddelen.

Ik verneem dan ook graag van de Commissie of de gevolgen van de toepassing van DSM-5 van invloed zal zijn op de toepassing van EU-recht, en in voorkomend geval, of de Commissie zal optreden om op EU-niveau deze negatieve aspecten van de DSM-5-standaard tegen te gaan.

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(2 september 2013)

Het door de American Psychiatric Association gepubliceerde „Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5)" is in de EU niet van toepassing. De Europese Commissie en de EU-lidstaten maken gebruik van de Internationale classificatie van ziekten van de WHO als diagnostisch standaardinstrument voor epidemiologie, gezondheidsbeheer en klinische doeleinden. Bijgevolg is de DSM-5 niet van invloed op de toepassing van het EU-recht en is de Commissie niet voornemens maatregelen te nemen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008954/13
to the Commission
Mark Demesmaeker (Verts/ALE)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Negative aspects of the DSM-5 standard

The American Psychiatric Association recently published the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), which has become the standard reference work for describing psychiatric disorders.

Its influence is pervasive: insurers insist on a DSM diagnosis for certificates of unfitness for work; authorities request data on psychiatric patients using DSM classifications; the cost of some medications is reimbursed only with a DSM diagnosis; without a DSM diagnosis of ADHD or autism, children are not entitled to extra support at school, etc.

However, DSM-5 has come in for a good deal of criticism: normal behaviour such as mourning and attacks of rage are classified as psychiatric disorders, making it a vehicle for misdiagnosis, overdiagnosis and the prescription of unnecessary medicines.

Will the consequences of the use of DMS-5 affect the application of EC law? If appropriate, will the Commission take action in order to combat these negative aspects of the DSM-5 standard at EU level?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

The 'Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5)', published by the American Psychiatric Association, is not applicable within the EU. The European Commission and EU Member States make reference to the WHO 'International Classification of Diseases (ICD)' as the standard diagnostic tool for epidemiology, health management and clinical purposes. Therefore, the DSM-5 does not have any impact on the application of EC law and the Commission does not intend to take any action.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008955/13
aan de Commissie
Mark Demesmaeker (Verts/ALE)
(22 juli 2013)

Betreft: Invoering van ISA (Intelligent Speed Adaptation) in de EU

Intelligent Speed Adaptation (ISA), een zwarte doos met snelheidsbeperking verbonden aan de GPS, kan het risico op ongevallen veroorzaakt door overdreven snelheid doen afnemen, het verkeer vlotter laten verlopen en de milieu-impact van het autoverkeer verminderen.

Alhoewel sommige lidstaten dit systeem invoeren, wordt ISA pas echt efficiënt als het op EU-niveau wordt gelanceerd. Ik verneem daarom graag van de Commissie of zij EU-regelgeving overweegt om de autoconstructeurs te verplichten om ISA te installeren in hun auto's.

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(5 september 2013)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-2382/2012 van mevr. Inés Ayala Sender ([1]).

Bovendien wordt momenteel onderzoek over dit onderwerp verricht. Slotverslag en conclusies van dit onderzoek worden eind 2013 verwacht.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008955/13
to the Commission
Mark Demesmaeker (Verts/ALE)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Introduction of ISA (Intelligent Speed Adaptation) in the EU

Intelligent Speed Adaptation (ISA), a black box with a speed-limiting function linked to GPS, can reduce the risk of accidents caused by excessive speed, make traffic flow more smoothly and reduce the environmental impact of road traffic.

Although some Member States are introducing this system, ISA will only become genuinely efficient if it is launched at EU level. Is the Commission considering EU legislation to require car manufacturers to instal ISA in their cars?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-2382/2012 by Ms Inés Ayala Sender ([1]).

In addition, the Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that a study on this matter is on going and its final report and conclusions are expected by the end of 2013.

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

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008956/13
do Komisji
Artur Zasada (PPE)
(22 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Definicja „zorganizowanych podróży służbowych" w świetle (2013/0246(COD))

W ostatnich dniach Parlament zaczął przygotowywać się do pracy nad propozycją Komisji w sprawie zmiany dyrektywy 90/314/EWG dotyczącej zorganizowanych podróży, wakacji i wycieczek (2013/0246(COD)).

Jednocześnie otrzymałem prośbę o pomoc we właściwym zrozumieniu definicji „zorganizowanych podróży służbowych".

Uprzejmie proszę o odpowiedź, czy w zakresie wyżej wymienionej definicji mieszczą się jedynie wyjazdy służbowe (delegacje, wyjazdy na targi, itd.) pracowników poszczególnych firm jednoznacznie związane z ich obowiązkami zawodowymi, czy też definicja ta zawiera w sobie również wyjazdy przygotowywane przez firmy na własną rękę, takie jak wyjazdy motywacyjne czy też nagrodowe, będące konsekwencją programów motywacyjnych?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Viviane Reding w imieniu Komisji
(13 września 2013 r.)

We wniosku dotyczącym nowej dyrektywy w sprawie zorganizowanych podróży, wakacji i wycieczek, który został przyjęty w dniu 9 lipca 2013 r., Komisja faktycznie zaproponowała wyłączenie zarządzanych podróży służbowych z zakresu dyrektywy. Podróże zorganizowane lub aranżowane usługi turystyczne rezerwowane za pośrednictwem przedsiębiorstwa zarządzającego podróżami na podstawie umowy ramowej z pracodawcą podróżującego nie są objęte wspomnianą dyrektywą (zob. art. 2.2 lit. c) wniosku). Faktyczny cel podróży służbowej nie ma znaczenia dla stosowania dyrektywy; w związku z tym wyjazdy motywacyjne lub nagrodowe, które stanowią podróże zorganizowane lub aranżowane usługi turystyczne, są wyłączone z tego zakresu, jeśli są rezerwowane za pośrednictwem biura podróży współpracującego z danym przedsiębiorstwem, lecz mieszczą się w tym zakresie, jeśli zostały wykupione na podstawie jednorazowej umowy.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008956/13
to the Commission
Artur Zasada (PPE)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Meaning of the term 'managed business trips' in Commission proposal (2013/0246(COD))

Parliament recently started preparing to commence work on a Commission proposal for the amendment of Council Directive 90/314/EEC on package travel, package holidays and package tours (2013/0246(COD)).

In this connection, some uncertainty has been voiced as to what the term 'managed business trips' covers.

Does it refer solely to work-related business travel (to meetings, conferences, etc.) by company employees, or does it also cover team-building or reward trips that companies organise for their employees as part of in-house motivation programmes?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

The Commission's proposal for a new Package Travel Directive, which was adopted on 9 July 2013, proposes indeed to exclude managed business travel from the scope of the directive. Packages and assisted travel arrangements booked via a travel management company on the basis of a framework contract with the traveller's employer are not covered by the directive (see Article 2.2 c) of the proposal). The actual purpose of the business trip is not relevant for the directive's application; therefore team-building or reward trips which constitute packages or assisted travel arrangements are excluded from the scope if they are booked via the company's travel agency but covered if they are purchased on the basis of a one-off contract.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-008957/13
Komisi
Oldřich Vlasák (ECR)
(22. července 2013)

Předmět: Přiměřenost dodatečných povolení na tranzit vojenského materiálu

S odkazem na článek 258 Smlouvy o fungování Evropské unie bych chtěl Komisi upozornit na povinnost dodatečných povolení uvalenou tranzitními zeměmi při transportu vojenského materiálu za účelem exportu do třetích zemí a dotázat se, zda Komise tuto povinnost považuje za přiměřenou s ohledem na svobodu pohybu zboží či zda se chystá přiměřenost této povinnosti prověřit.

Jelikož Česká republika nemá přímý přístup k moři, je vývoz vojenského materiálu do třetích zemí možné vedle nákladného leteckého způsobu realizovat tranzitem do námořních přístavů přes sousední země. Na tento tranzit však dané tranzitní země uvalují nutnost dodatečného schválení podle jejich národní legislativy, čímž de facto ignorují exportní licence již vydané Českou republikou. V řadě případů je navíc proces udělení tranzitní licence uměle prodlužován – přičemž se lze domnívat, že tím byla poskytnuta výhoda firmám tranzitních zemí, které mohly nabízet náhradu za blokované exporty – či došlo přímo k nevydání licence. Tímto postupem vznikají českým firmám ekonomické škody.

S odkazem na volný pohyb zboží proto chci Komisi položit následující otázky:

— Považuje Komise povinnost dodatečných tranzitních licencí za slučitelnou se zásadou přiměřenosti při omezení volného pohybu zboží ze strany tranzitních států?

— Prověří Komise s odkazem na článek 258 Smlouvy o fungování Evropské unie, zda lze popsané tranzitní licence považovat za přiměřené, tedy zda neslouží jako prostředky svévolné diskriminace nebo zastřeného omezování obchodu, a neporušují tak článek 36 téže smlouvy?

Odpověď komisaře Tajaniho jménem Komise
(11. září 2013)

Komise je plně vázána povinností zajišťovat řádné fungování vnitřního trhu s produkty pro obranné účely a přispívat k co největšímu možnému snížení administrativní zátěže společností, které jsou činné v tomto důležitém průmyslovém odvětví. Důležitým milníkem na této cestě bylo přijetí směrnice 2009/43/ES, která upravuje přeshraniční transfery produktů pro obranné účely s konečnou destinací v některém členském státě. Tyto transfery uvnitř EU jsou podmíněny získáním předchozího povolení; členský stát, přes který je tranzit produktu realizován, však nemůže ukládat žádná dodatečná povolení.

Pokud však jde o vývoz do třetích zemí, je rozhodnutí o povolení nebo nepovolení transferu vojenského vybavení v pravomoci členských států. To zahrnuje vydávání povolení pro tranzit vojenského vybavení: hlavním důvodem těchto povolení je získat jistotu, že je transfer řádně povolen členským státem původu a případně také že splňuje požadavky na bezpečnost dopravy.

Komise se domnívá, že takovéto tranzitní licence samy o sobě nepředstavují porušení SFEU. V této souvislosti je též nutné podotknout, že Komise neví o žádné formální stížnosti ze strany hospodářských subjektů. Pokud ovšem taková situace nastane, Komise splní svoji úlohu strážkyně Smlouvy a přezkoumá, zda tato opatření mohou představovat omezení transferů a zda jsou jako taková přiměřená a nediskriminační, nebo zda představují zastřené omezování obchodu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008957/13
to the Commission
Oldřich Vlasák (ECR)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Proportionality of additional authorisations for the transit of military equipment

With reference to Article 258 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, I would like to draw the attention of the Commission to the requirement for additional authorisations imposed by transit countries for the transport of military equipment for export to third countries, and to ask whether the Commission considers this requirement to be proportional with regard to the free movement of goods and whether it intends to examine the proportionality of the requirement.

Since the Czech Republic does not have direct access to the sea, military equipment must be exported to third countries (unless shipped as air freight) by transiting through neighbouring countries to seaports. For such transits, however, the transit countries involved require additional approvals under their national legislation, thereby *de facto* disregarding the export licences already issued by the Czech Republic. Moreover, the process of granting a transit licence is artificially drawn out in many cases-in order, perhaps, to give an advantage to companies in the transit country that offer alternatives to the blocked exports-or a licence may not even be issued at all. These actions cause economic damage to Czech firms.

With regard to the free movement of goods, I would therefore like to ask the Commission the following questions:

— Does the Commission consider the requirement of additional transit licences imposed by transit countries to be compatible with the principle of proportionality if the free movement of goods is restricted?

— Will the Commission, with reference to Article 258 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, examine whether the transit licences described may be considered proportionate, or whether they are a means of wilful discrimination or a disguised restriction on trade and thus a violation of Article 36 of the Treaty?

Answer given by Mr Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(11 September 2013)

The Commission is fully commmitted to guarantee a well-functionning internal market in defence-related products and to contribute to reduce as far as possible the administrative burden for companies which are active in this important industrial sector. A major milestone has been achieved with the adoption of Directive 2009/43/EC which regulates cross-border transfers of defence-related products with a final destination in a Member State. These intra-EU transfers are subject to a prior authorisation, but no additional authorisations can be imposed by the Member State through which the product will transit.

With regard to exports to third countries however, the decision to transfer or deny a transfer of military equipment lies at the national discretion of Member States. This includes authorisations for transit of military equipment, the main purpose of which is to make sure that the transfer is duly authorised by the originating Member State and where appropriate meet the requirements for transport safety.

The Commission considers that such transit licenses do not constitute as such a breech of the TFEU. Also, the Commission is not aware of formal complaints raised by economic operators on this issue. However, if this will be the case, the Commission will fulfill its role of the Guardian of the Treaty and examine whether these measures may consitute restrictions on transfers and as such may be proportionate and not discriminatory or constitute disguised restriction on trade.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008958/13
à la Commission
Agnès Le Brun (PPE)
(22 juillet 2013)

Objet: L'huile de palme

Depuis de nombreuses années, plusieurs enquêtes ont attiré l'attention de l'opinion publique sur l'utilisation d'huile de palme dans la transformation de produits alimentaires ou cosmétiques. Cette pratique dans l'industrie agro-alimentaire est très problématique puisqu'elle provoque une déforestation importante en Asie du Sud-est et notamment sur l'île de Bornéo.

Cette déforestation a, elle-même, des conséquences sur notre environnement et notre climat et met en cause les équilibres fragiles en matière d'environnement et plus particulièrement de biodiversité. Ce faisant, elle va à l'encontre de la politique environnementale de l'Union européenne qui prévoit une protection des espèces et des habitats.

Ajoutons que l'un des objectifs de l'Union Européenne est d'offrir une information plus riche et plus claire aux citoyens. Pour ce faire, elle prévoit d'adopter de nouvelles règles sur la sécurité alimentaire. Or, la consommation d'huile de palme peut être mauvaise pour la santé des citoyens européens, provoquant notamment des risques cardiovasculaires accrus, ainsi qu'une augmentation du taux de cholestérol.

Je m'interroge alors sur l'évolution de l'étiquetage réservé aux biens de consommation:

1. La Commission pourrait-elle envisager un étiquetage spécifique pour les produits contenant de l'huile de palme?

2. Les réflexions en cours s'agissant de la mise en place d'un étiquetage environnemental des produits européens pourraient-elles répondre à ce problème?

Réponse donnée par le commissaire Borg au nom de la Commission
(26 septembre 2013)

1. Pour ce qui est des aliments, le nouveau règlement (UE) n° 1169/2011 concernant l'information des consommateurs sur les denrées alimentaires ([1]), qui s'appliquera à compter du 13 décembre 2014, prévoit que la désignation «huiles végétales» doit être immédiatement suivie de l'énumération des origines végétales spécifiques (par exemple, huile de palme) et, éventuellement, de la mention «en proportion variable».

2. Le sujet de l'approvisionnement durable en huile de palme est abordé dans le contexte de l'attribution du label écologique de l'UE à certains groupes de produits. Des critères écologiques sont actuellement établis pour les produits cosmétiques rincés; des prescriptions y sont proposées pour l'approvisionnement durable en huile de palme, en huile de palmiste et en produits dérivés ([2]). Le projet des critères relatifs au label écologique des produits en cosmétique rincés n'a pas encore été adopté, mais il sera mis aux voix lors de la prochaine réunion du comité de réglementation.

Il convient de noter que le label écologique de l'UE n'impose pas d'étiquetage spécifique quant à l'utilisation de l'huile de palme.

([1]) Règlement (UE) n° 1169/2011 concernant l'information des consommateurs sur les denrées alimentaires, modifiant les règlements (CE) n° 1924/2006 et (CE), n° 1925/2006 du Parlement européen et du Conseil et abrogeant la directive 87/250/CEE de la Commission, la directive 90/496/CEE du Conseil, la directive 1999/10/CE de la Commission, la directive 2000/13/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil, les directives 2002/67/CE et 2008/5/CE de la Commission et le règlement (CE) n° 608/2004 de la Commission (JO L 304 du 22.11.2011, p. 18).

([2]) http://susproc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/soaps_and_shampoos/docs/Rinse-off%20cosmetics%20-%20Comm%20Dec_%2020.05.2013_website.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008958/13
to the Commission
Agnès Le Brun (PPE)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Palm oil

For some years now, following several studies, public attention has been drawn to the use of palm oil in the food processing and cosmetics industries. This agri-food industry practice is highly problematic as it is the cause of significant deforestation in South-East Asia, particularly on the island of Borneo.

That deforestation in turn has repercussions for our environment and climate, imperilling fragile environmental balances and, more specifically, biodiversity. This means that it runs counter to the European Union's environmental policy, which sets out to protect species and habitats.

In addition, one of the EU's objectives is to provide greater and clearer information to the public. To do this, it is planning to adopt new rules on food security. Palm oil can be damaging to the health of the EU public since, among other things, it can heighten the risk of cardiovascular disease and lead to an increase in cholesterol levels.

With regard to developments in the labelling of consumer goods, can the Commission therefore state:

1. whether it might consider introducing special labelling for products containing palm oil;

2. whether this issue could be resolved through the on-going discussions on the introduction of eco-labelling for European products?

Answer given by Commissioner BORG on behalf of the Commission
(26 September 2013)

1. As far as foods are concerned, the new Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, ([1]) which will apply as of 13 December 2014, provides that the designation 'vegetable oils' must be followed immediately by a list of indications of the specific vegetable origin (e.g. palm oil) and may be followed by the phrase 'in varying proportions'.

2. Sustainable sourcing of palm oil is an area addressed in the context of the award of EU Ecolabel for certain product groups. Currently ecological criteria for rinse off cosmetics products are developed in which requirements are being proposed for the sustainable sourcing of palm oil, palm kernel oil and their derivatives. ([2]) The draft Ecolabel criteria for rinse-off cosmetics are not yet adopted but will be proposed for voting in the next regulatory committee.

Notably, the Ecolabel does not impose specific labelling regarding the use of palm oil.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.

([2]) http://susproc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/soaps_and_shampoos/docs/Rinse-off%20cosmetics%20-%20Comm%20Dec_%2020.05.2013_website.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008959/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(22 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Famiglia sequestrata e seviziata in Pakistan da alcuni musulmani

È notizia della metà del mese di luglio che il cittadino pakistano Rafique Masih, cristiano, e la sua famiglia sono stati vittime di atti intimidatori, pestaggi e sevizie da parte di alcuni connazionali musulmani, non ancora assicurati alla giustizia. Rafique è padre di sette figli, di cui anche 4 ragazze che, negli ultimi tempi, hanno subito una serie di atti persecutori da parte di coetanei islamici. Il pestaggio ai danni della famiglia ha visto l'irruzione in casa Masih di una banda armata di bastoni di legno e mattoni. Gli aggressori hanno inveito sia sul capofamiglia, provocandogli la frattura di un braccio e una ferita alla testa, sia su uno dei figli maschi. Le figlie sono state schiaffeggiate e insultate mentre tutta la famiglia è stata vittima di un sequestro durato qualche giorno, conclusosi lo scorso 13 luglio grazie all'intervento della Commissione per la giustizia e pace (NCJP).

Il Parlamento europeo nella risoluzione sulla situazione dei cristiani nel contesto della libertà religiosa (P7_TA(2011)0021) «esprime grave preoccupazione per l'abuso della religione da parte dei responsabili di atti terroristici in numerose regioni del mondo; denuncia la strumentalizzazione della religione in diversi conflitti politici» e «sollecita le autorità degli Stati che registrano un numero allarmante di attacchi contro comunità religiose ad assumersi le loro responsabilità garantendo a tutte le confessioni religiose lo svolgimento normale e pubblico delle loro pratiche».

In questo contesto, occorre ricordare anche l'articolo 18 della Dichiarazione universale dei diritti dell'uomo del 1948, l'articolo 18 del Patto internazionale sui diritti civili e politici del 1966, l'articolo 9 della Convenzione europea per la salvaguardia dei diritti dell'uomo e la dichiarazione delle Nazioni Unite sull'eliminazione di tutte le forme di intolleranza e di discriminazione fondate sulla religione o il credo del 1981.

È la Commissione a conoscenza di altri casi simili?

Quali miglioramenti ritiene vi siano stati, a seguito degli interventi normativi dell'UE, nelle condizioni di vita dei cristiani nei paesi a rischio?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(6 settembre 2013)

L'UE viene regolarmente informata sui presunti abusi commessi contro i cristiani e altre minoranze religiose in Pakistan. L'UE si è detta più volte preoccupata per il clima di intolleranza e di violenza in Pakistan e per gli attacchi contro i cristiani e altri gruppi minoritari. Siamo ben consapevoli della situazione di vulnerabilità di tutte le minoranze religiose in Pakistan e dei possibili abusi delle leggi sulla blasfemia.

Nelle conclusioni del marzo 2013 il Consiglio Affari esteri ha condannato fermamente tutti gli atti di violenza contro le minoranze religiose vulnerabili in Pakistan e ha sollecitato le autorità a consegnare alla giustizia i responsabili di tali abusi. Le conclusioni sottolineano altresì che l'UE intende avviare immediatamente un dialogo con il neoeletto governo pakistano su temi prioritari, compresi i diritti umani e la tutela delle minoranze.

L'UE non può intervenire direttamente, con regolamenti o in altro modo, negli affari interni di un paese partner, ma può esprimere la sua preoccupazione per i danni che può causare un clima di intimidazione e violenza allo sviluppo di un paese. L'UE è impegnata in un dialogo regolare con i paesi terzi, compreso il Pakistan, sui diritti umani e sui principi democratici, inclusi i diritti civili e politici delle minoranze religiose, e ha chiesto l'adozione di misure volte a proteggere i diritti di tutti i cittadini.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008959/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Family held and tortured in Pakistan by a group of Muslims

It was reported in mid-July that Rafique Masih, a Pakistani citizen and a Christian, together with his family, were subjected to acts of intimidation, beatings and torture by a group of Muslim fellow nationals, who have not yet been brought to justice. Rafique is the father of seven children, of whom four are girls who have recently suffered several acts of persecution perpetrated by Muslims of their own age. The Masih family were beaten after a band armed with wooden clubs and bricks burst into their house. The attackers attacked both the head of the household, breaking one of his arms and wounding him in the head, and one of his sons. The daughters were slapped and insulted, while the whole family was held hostage for several days, until 13 July 2013, when the National Commission for Justice and Peace (NCJP) intervened.

In its resolution on the situation of Christians in the context of freedom of religion (P7_TA(2011)0021), the European Parliament '[e]xpresses its grave concerns about the abuse of religion by the perpetrators of terrorist acts in several areas of the world; denounces the instrumentalisation of religion in various political conflicts' and '[u]rges the authorities of states with alarmingly high levels of attacks against religious denominations to take responsibility in ensuring normal and public religious practices for all religious denominations'.

In this context, we should also bear in mind Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966, Article 9 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief of 1981.

Is the Commission aware of other similar cases?

What improvements does it believe there have been, following the EU's regulatory interventions, in the living conditions of Christians in countries where they are under threat?

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

The EU is regularly made aware of alleged abuses committed against Christians and other religious minorities in Pakistan. The EU has repeatedly expressed its concern at the climate of intolerance and violence in Pakistan and the attacks on Christians as well as other minority groups. We are well aware of the vulnerable situation of all religious minorities in Pakistan, and the potential for abuse of the blasphemy laws.

The March 2013 Foreign Affairs Council conclusions strongly condemned all acts of violence against vulnerable religious minorities in Pakistan and urged the authorities to bring the perpetrators to justice. They also underline EU plans to engage promptly with the newly elected Pakistani government on priority issues including human rights and the protection of minorities.

The EU cannot intervene directly with regulations or otherwise, in the internal affairs of a partner country, but it can convey concern at the damage that a climate of intimidation and violence does to a country's development. The EU engages in regular dialogue with third countries, including Pakistan, on human rights and democratic principles, including the civil and political rights of minority religions and has called for the adoption of measures to protect the rights of all citizens.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008960/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(22 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Chiusura delle chiese domestiche e aumento degli episodi di persecuzione ai danni delle minoranze — Il caso indonesiano

Secondo il rapporto annuale divulgato dalla Indonesian Christian Defense League, le violenze degli estremisti islamici contro le comunità cristiane di Aceh sarebbero in aumento. Come prospettato dal governatore Zaini Abdullah fin dal suo discorso di insediamento, la provincia sarebbe infatti oggetto di un'islamizzazione intensiva, che ha portato alla chiusura di 17 chiese domestiche, sia cattoliche che protestanti.

L'Indonesia è la nazione musulmana più popolosa al mondo e le violenze hanno raggiunto, oltre alle comunità cristiane, anche i musulmani Ahmadi.

Inoltre, nella provincia di Aceh vige la legge islamica, la Sharia, e il governatore Abdullah in passato è stato esiliato in Svezia per il suo ruolo attivo all'interno di movimenti eversivi violenti, quali il Gam, che si prefiggeva la liberazione di Aceh dalla comunità cristiana minoritaria.

Infine, la crisi sociale e politica è stata ammessa anche dal ministro dell'Interno Gamawan Fauzi, per il quale «la tolleranza deve essere garantita e la maggioranza non può opprimere la minoranza violandone i diritti civili».

Alla luce di quanto indicato, può la Commissione far sapere se condivide, sulla base dei dati in suo possesso, la ricostruzione del ministro Fauzi?

Intende adottare una serie di azioni, a livello diplomatico, per dimostrare la sua vicinanza alle minoranze indonesiane vittime di soprusi?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(6 settembre 2013)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è a conoscenza degli episodi di violenza e intolleranza a danno delle minoranze religiose in alcune parti dell'Indonesia, tra cui la regione di Aceh, e condivide le preoccupazioni dell'onorevole deputato.

Queste preoccupazioni sono state sollevate in più occasioni con le autorità di Aceh, compreso il governatore, e con il governo dell'Indonesia attraverso il nostro dialogo regolare sui diritti umani.

Nel caso particolare di Aceh, dopo decenni di conflitti la situazione è cambiata grazie al processo di pace e alle iniziative di ricostruzione messe in atto a seguito dello tsunami del 2004. L'UE ha svolto un ruolo di primo piano in tale contesto e continua a incoraggiare i progressi per quanto riguarda, tra l'altro, il rispetto dei diritti delle minoranze e dello Stato di diritto.

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente assicura all'onorevole deputato che continuerà a seguire da vicino la situazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008960/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Closure of house churches and increased persecution of minorities — the case of Indonesia

According to the annual report published by the Indonesian Christian Defence League, violence by Islamic extremists against Christian communities in Aceh is on the increase. As the Governor of Aceh, Zaini Abdullah, first stated in his inaugural speech, the province is in fact undergoing an intensive process of Islamisation, which has led to the closure of 17 house churches, both Catholic and Protestant.

Indonesia has the world's largest Muslim population, and the violence has been directed at Ahmadi Muslims as well as Christians.

Moreover, Sharia law is in force in the province of Aceh, and Governor Abdullah was once expelled to Sweden because of his active role in violent subversive movements, such as GAM, which sought to liberate Aceh from the minority Christian community.

Lastly, the political and social crisis has also been acknowledged by the Minister for Home Affairs, Gamawan Fauzi, who stated that tolerance must be guaranteed and that the majority cannot crush the minority by violating their civil rights.

In view of the above, can the Commission say whether, on the basis of the information available to it, it agrees with Minister Fauzi's statement?

Will it make a series of diplomatic moves to show its support for those minorities in Indonesia who are the victims of injustice?

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

The HR/VP is aware of reports of violence and intolerance against religious minorities in parts of Indonesia, including Aceh, and share the Honourable Member's concern.

These concerns have been raised several times with the authorities in Aceh, including the Governor, and with the Indonesian government through our regular Human Rights Dialogue.

In the particular case of Aceh, after decades of conflict the situation there has been transformed by the peace process and reconstruction effort which followed the tsunami of 2004. The EU played a full part in these efforts and continues to encourage progress, including respect for the rights of minorities and the rule of law.

The HR/VP can assure the Honourable Member that it will continue to follow the situation closely.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008961/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(22 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Mancata pubblicazione dei dati sul livello di criminalità in Venezuela

Da otto anni il Venezuela non pubblica i dati sui crimini registrati entro i suoi confini nazionali, secondo quanto ammesso anche dal ministro dell'Interno del governo Maduro al quotidiano di Caracas El Nacional. La diffusione delle stime riguardanti il tasso di delinquenza è lasciata all'agenzia della Polizia Nazionale (CICP) che, tuttavia, spesso non presenta cifre in linea con quelle rilevate dalle Nazioni Unite o dallo stesso Osservatorio venezuelano sulla violenza.

Occorre considerare che nel paese si registrano un alto tasso di corruzione e carenze del sistema giudiziario nazionale, oltre che diffuse ingerenze della criminalità organizzata, in particolar modo dei narcotrafficanti, nel mondo politico.

Inoltre, il partito di opposizione Prima la giustizia, guidato dall'avvocato Henrique Capriles, ha evidenziato la scarsa trasparenza della macchina politica la quale oppone però ad ogni richiesta di trasparenza un generale «interesse pubblico» affinché i dati richiesti non vengano diffusi.

Il governo Maduro ha recentemente varato anche un piano di sicurezza denominato «Plan Patria Segura», che prevede una discesa in campo delle forze armate in quanto «beneamate dalla popolazione».

Occorre infine sottolineare che tale intervento non è bastato ad arginare le attività illegali della criminalità organizzata venezuelana che, anzi, opera anche sul territorio europeo gestendo il mercato delle sostanze stupefacenti e la tratta delle schiave dal Sudamerica.

Considerando quanto sopra, è la Commissione in grado di fornire dati verosimili sull'effettivo tasso di delinquenza in Venezuela?

Ritiene di poter avviare un progetto di cooperazione internazionale con il paese, al fine di ridurre l'incidenza delle attività criminali sulla vita della popolazione venezuelana e limitare la criminalità organizzata, con gli effetti che questa produce anche a livello di Unione?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(1º ottobre 2013)

L'AR/VP conferma che si tratta di un problema estremamente serio. L'UE non raccoglie direttamente i dati, ma ha accesso sia ai dati ufficiali pubblicati dal governo che a quelli pubblicati dalle Nazioni Unite.

La Commissione sta finanziando in Venezuela un progetto (contributo UE: 3,3 milioni di euro) a sostegno del piano nazionale antidroga 2008-2013, attraverso il quale l'UE prevede, in particolare, il sostegno all'agenzia nazionale antidroga (acronimo spagnolo «ONA») nella lotta al traffico di droga.

Poiché il Venezuela è classificato come paese a reddito medio-alto, nel quadro del prossimo quadro finanziario pluriennale la Commissione ha proposto di emanciparlo dall'assistenza bilaterale allo sviluppo e di non concedere più aiuti bilaterali a questo paese. Il Venezuela potrebbe tuttavia continuare a soddisfare le condizioni per ricevere aiuti regionali o tematici e potrebbe quindi partecipare anche in futuro a progetti regionali dell'UE a sostegno della riforma del settore giudiziario e della sicurezza, nonché della lotta contro droga e criminalità organizzata.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008961/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Non-publication of data on the level of crime in Venezuela

For eight years, Venezuela has failed to publish data on the crimes recorded within its borders. This is according to an admission made by, among others, the Maduro government's minister of the interior to the Caracas newspaper *El Nacional*. The national police agency (CICPC) is responsible for publishing estimated crime rates, but the figures it presents often do not match those recorded by the United Nations or by the Venezuelan Violence Observatory itself.

It should be borne in mind that the country has a high level of corruption and a flawed national justice system. Interference by criminal organisations — particularly drug traffickers — in politics is also common.

Moreover, the opposition party, Justice First, led by the lawyer Henrique Capriles, has emphasised the political machine's lack of transparency. All calls for transparency are rejected for vague 'public interest' reasons, thereby ensuring that the requested data are not published.

The Maduro government has also recently launched a security plan, the *Plan Patria Segura*, under which the armed forces are being deployed on the street, because 'the people love them'.

Lastly, it should be pointed out that this measure has not been enough to curb the illegal activities of Venezuela's criminal organisations; indeed, they also operate in Europe, overseeing the illicit drug market and trafficking in people from South America.

In view of the above, can the Commission provide reliable data on the true level of crime in Venezuela?

Does it consider it possible to launch a project aimed at international cooperation with the country, in order to reduce the impact of criminal activities on the lives of the Venezuelan people and to curb organised crime and the effects it has at EU level too?

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

The HR/VP agrees that this is a crucial problem. The EU does not collect the data itself but instead has access to official data issued by the Government and that published by the United Nations.

The Commission is currently financing in Venezuela a project (EU contribution: EUR 3.3 million) supporting its National Anti-Drug Plan 2008-2013, through which the EU notably provides support to the National Antidrug Office (ONA according to its Spanish acronym) in the fight against drug trafficking.

As Venezuela is categorised as an Upper Middle-Income Country, the Commission has proposed that under the next Multiannual Financial Framework, it will graduate from bilateral development assistance and thus no longer receive bilateral aid. However, Venezuela would continue being eligible for regional or thematic programmes, and could thus participate also in the future in relevant EU regional projects supporting justice and security sector reform as well as the fight against drugs and organised crime.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008962/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(22 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Lettera del capo della falange jihadista TTP a Malala Yousafzai, in Pakistan

È notizia recente la lettera indirizzata da Adnan Rasheed, capo della falange jihadista pakistana TTP, a Malala Yousafzai, la ragazza pakistana colpita da una serie di colpi di arma da fuoco da un talebano alla fine dello scorso anno, ma scampata alla morte grazie a un intervento d'urgenza. Malala, che ha 16 anni, è stata presa di mira dall'estremista per aver descritto gli attentati suicidi che avvengono nella valle dello Swat e in particolare nella sua città, Mingora, e che comportano la distruzione di molte scuole e altri edifici pubblici.

Sottolineando come, nella missiva, Rasheed giustifichi gli attentati dei talebani affermando che Malala non è stata colpita per la sua passione per la scuola e lo studio, ma per la «campagna diffamatoria» cui avrebbe sottoposto i talebani;

osservando inoltre che, con riferimento all'educazione femminile, il Pakistan occupa una posizione di poco superiore rispetto all'Africa sub-sahariana, in quanto uno studio diffuso dall'UNESCO lo scorso anno precisa che circa il 62 % delle ragazze pakistane non ha alcuna possibilità di accedere all'istruzione elementare;

riprendendo infine le parole del Segretario generale dell'ONU Ban Ki-Moon, secondo il quale «Gli estremisti hanno mostrato che ciò che li spaventa di più è una ragazza con un libro. […] In nessuna parte del mondo dovrebbe essere un atto di coraggio per un adulto insegnare o per una ragazza andare a scuola»;

si chiede alla Commissione:

— se sia a conoscenza delle attuali condizioni di vita di Malala Yousafza;

— se intenda intraprendere, anche in futuro, programmi a tutela del diritto allo studio delle donne nei paesi in cui l'accesso all'educazione è loro negato.

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(18 settembre 2013)

L'anno scorso, dopo l'attentato, Malala Yousafzai è stata trasferita in aereo per proseguire le cure nel Regno Unito, dove soggiorna attualmente con la famiglia.

La parità di trattamento nell'istruzione e nell'accesso ad essa è un obiettivo importante delle riforme e dei programmi in materia che l'UE sostiene in diversi paesi nel mondo.

Anche se non è possibile ottenere la parità di genere in Pakistan a breve termine, l'UE fa sì che i programmi di sostegno migliorino la situazione e promuove riforme che vanno in quella direzione. Attualmente l'istruzione è un settore fondamentale del sostegno dell'UE in Pakistan ed è previsto che resti in cima alle priorità nel prossimo periodo di programmazione 2014-2020. L'UE sostiene programmi di riforma dell'istruzione nelle province del Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa e del Sindh. Uno specifico contributo alla parità di genere in questi progetti è il versamento di indennità periodiche per l'istruzione femminile, in modo che le ragazze continuino ad andare a scuola anche dopo il ciclo elementare. Uno dei risultati previsti esplicitamente indicato nei nuovi programmi è il migliore accesso all'istruzione, in particolare femminile.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008962/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Letter from the leader of the jihadist group TTP to Malala Yousafzai, in Pakistan

According to recent news reports, Adnan Rasheed, leader of the Pakistani jihadist group TTP, has sent a letter to Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani girl who was shot several times by a Taliban gunman at the end of last year, but who survived thanks to emergency medical treatment. Sixteen-year-old Malala was targeted by the extremist for describing the suicide attacks that are carried out in the Swat valley and in particular in her hometown of Mingora, destroying a number of schools and other public buildings.

In the letter, Adnan Rasheed justifies the Taliban attacks by claiming that Malala was shot not because of her love of school and studying, but because of the 'smear campaign' that she ran against the Taliban.

Moreover, Pakistan ranks only slightly above sub-Saharan Africa with regard to female education, since a Unesco study published last year reveals that around 62% of Pakistani girls have no access to primary education.

Lastly, according to United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, 'The terrorists showed what frightens them most: a girl with a book. […] Nowhere in the world should it be an act of bravery for a young girl to go to school.'

— Is the Commission aware of Malala Yousafzai's current living conditions?

— Will it establish programmes, now and in the future, to safeguard the right of women to study in countries in which they are denied access to education?

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

Following the attack last year, Malala Yousafzai was flown to the UK for follow-up treatment. She is now based in the United Kingdom with her family.

Equal treatment both in education and in access to education is an important goal of education reforms and programmes that are supported by the EU in many countries throughout the world.

Even though full gender-equality is not achievable in the short term in Pakistan, the EU is making sure that the support programmes improve the situation and support reforms that will continue to do so. Education currently is one of the focal areas of EU support to Pakistan and is expected to remain a focal area for the next programming period in 2014-2020. The EU is currently supporting education reform programmes in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and in Sindh. One specific gender focused input in these projects is 'Stipends for Girls' which is provided to encourage retention of girls in schools after primary education. One of the expected outcomes explicitly mentioned in new programmes is improved access to education, especially for girls.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008963/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(22 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Esercitazioni militari in Estremo Oriente. Il caso della Federazione russa

È notizia recente il trasferimento di Vladimir Putin a Sachalin, nell'Estremo Oriente della Federazione russa, al fine di assistere alle manovre militari delle forze armate. I dati diffusi da fonti non ufficiali parlano della presenza di circa 160 000 soldati, 1 000 carri armati, 130 aerei e 70 navi. Lo scopo sarebbe quello di provare la capacità dell'apparato militare russo di dislocarsi in breve tempo entro un raggio di almeno tremila chilometri, difendendo l'intero paese da possibili invasioni straniere. Le esercitazioni dureranno fino al prossimo 20 luglio.

Considerando che solo qualche giorno fa la Russia e Pechino hanno attuato insieme nei pressi di Vladivostok, a poca distanza dalle coste giapponesi, una serie di manovre navali congiunte;

sottolineando inoltre come, negli stessi giorni, anche Stati Uniti e Giappone abbiano dato inizio a esercitazioni di autodifesa presso Hokkaido, in una zona che consente a sua volta di monitorare quanto avviene in territorio cinese;

osservando infine che la collaborazione militare russo-cinese viene vista con crescente preoccupazione dalla comunità internazionale, essendovi la possibilità concreta che si venga a creare un blocco armato verso altri paesi, in una zona già tradizionalmente segnata da difficoltà nei rapporti diplomatici e da contese territoriali;

si chiede al Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante Catherine Ashton quale posizione l'Unione Europea intenda assumere per far fronte ai recenti avvenimenti in Estremo Oriente, nell'ambito della sicurezza comune e della politica estera.

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(1º ottobre 2013)

L'AR/VP ribadisce la propria preoccupazione per le persistenti tensioni nell'Asia nordorientale.

L'UE segue da vicino gli sviluppi nella regione e trasmette messaggi di moderazione e di misura nel contesto dei suoi dialoghi bilaterali con i paesi della regione. L'AR/VP ha chiaramente espresso l'auspicio che tutte le parti, attraverso il dialogo, cerchino soluzioni pacifiche e di cooperazione per risolvere le loro controversie. Esse dovrebbero evitare qualsiasi azione capace di provocare un aumento delle tensioni.

Anche se le esercitazioni congiunte citate dall'onorevole parlamentare sono in corso già da tempo, una maggiore trasparenza e garanzie di intenti pacifici delle parti durante tali esercitazioni potrebbero contribuire a rafforzare la fiducia reciproca.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008963/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Military exercises in the Far East: the case of the Russian Federation

It has recently been reported that Vladimir Putin has gone to Sakhalin, in the far east of the Russian Federation, to be present at the armed forces' military manoeuvres. According to unofficial sources, there are approximately 160 000 soldiers, 1 000 tanks, 130 aircraft and 70 ships present. It is believed that the aim is to prove that the Russian military machine can be mobilised within a short period of time within a radius of at least 3 000 kilometres, defending the entire country from possible foreign invasion. The exercises will last until 20 July.

Only a few days ago Russia and Beijing carried out a series of joint naval manoeuvres together close to Vladivostok, not far from the Japanese coast.

At the same time, the United States and Japan also began defence exercises near Hokkaido, in an area from where activity in Chinese territory can be monitored.

Finally, Russian-Chinese military collaboration is being viewed with increasing concern by the international community, since there is a real possibility that an armed blockade might be created targeting other countries in an area that is already characterised by strained diplomatic relations and territorial disputes.

In view of the above, can Vice-President/High Representative Ashton say what position the European Union intends to adopt in relation to the recent events in the Far East, in the sphere of the common foreign and security policy?

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

The HR/VP remains concerned by persisting tensions in North-East Asia.

The EU follows closely the developments in the region and passes messages of moderation and restraint in the context of its bilateral dialogues with the countries in the region. The HR/VP has clearly expressed her view that all parties should, through dialogue, seek peaceful and cooperative solutions to their differences. They should avoid any action that could risk escalating tensions.

While underlining that the various joint exercises mentioned by the honourable MEP are not new, greater transparency and assurances of peaceful intent by the parties concerned when they undertake joint exercises could help build up mutual confidence.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008964/13
aan de Commissie
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(22 juli 2013)

Betreft: Nederlandse knelpunten voor soorten onder habitat- en vogelrichtlijn

Is de Commissie op de hoogte van het door Alterra — het kennisinstituut voor de groene leefomgeving, van de Universiteit Wageningen — uitgevoerde onderzoek ([1]) betreffende knelpunten voor soorten die vallen onder de habitat- en de vogelrichtlijn in Nederland?

Dit onderzoek wijst uit dat in veel natuurgebieden, inclusief de Natura 2000-gebieden, de ruimtelijke en milieucondities niet geschikt zijn om de Nederlandse biodiversiteit te behouden en om aan EU-eisen te voldoen, i.e. om de habitats en de soorten in een goede staat van instandhouding te krijgen.

Is de Commissie het eens met de conclusie van het onderzoek dat er meer maatregelen nodig zijn om de deels door de habitat- en de vogelrichtlijn opgelegde doelen te bereiken? Zo nee, waarom niet? Zo ja, welke maatregelen zou zij Nederland adviseren?

Is de Commissie bereid om in een constructieve dialoog met de Nederlandse regering beleidsmaatregelen te opperen die resulteren in verbetering van de natuur en biodiversiteit in Nederland? Zo ja, binnen welk tijdsbestek? Zo nee, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(5 september 2013)

In het onderzoek waarnaar het geachte Parlementslid verwijst, worden de eerdere bevindingen die Nederland officieel heeft ingediend in haar verslaglegging in het kader van artikel 17 van de habitatrichtlijn en het begin 2013 bij de Commissie ingediende prioritaire actiekader grotendeels bevestigd. Zij tonen aan dat er verdere inspanningen ter beperking van atmosferische stikstofdepositie en uitdroging en versnippering van gebieden nodig zijn om binnen een redelijke termijn een goede staat van instandhouding voor de doelsoorten van het Nederlandse „Natura 2000"-netwerk te bewerkstelligen.

De Commissie is al met de lidstaten over deze kwesties in dialoog, met name via de nieuwe studiebijeenkomsten over biogeografisch beheer, waar op het niveau van de biogeografische regio's (in plaats van op het niveau van de afzonderlijke lidstaten) de belangrijkste belastingen en bedreigingen en de benodigde instandhoudings- en herstelmaatregelen in kaart worden gebracht en de prioriteiten in verband hiermee worden vastgesteld. In december 2012 is door de Nederlandse autoriteiten de eerste studiebijeenkomst voor de Atlantische biogeografische regio georganiseerd. De belangrijkste conclusies van de studiebijeenkomst zijn online beschikbaar ([2]).

([1]) „Considerable environmental bottlenecks for species listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives in the Netherlands", G.W.W. Wamelink, http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0006320713001523.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/seminars_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008964/13
to the Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(22 July 2013)

Subject: Bottlenecks for species listed in the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives in the Netherlands

Is the Commission aware of the survey ([1]) by Alterra — Wageningen University's institute for research into the green living environment — concerning bottlenecks for species listed in the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives in the Netherlands?

The survey shows that in many nature conservation areas, including Natura 2000 areas, the spatial and environmental conditions are not well suited to preserving biodiversity in the Netherlands and complying with EU requirements, i.e. securing a favourable conservation status for species.

Does the Commission agree with the survey's conclusion that more measures are needed in order to attain the objectives set by the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives? If not, why not? If so, what measures would it recommend to the Netherlands?

Will the Commission engage in a constructive dialogue with the Netherlands Government to propose policy measures which would improve the status of nature and biodiversity in the Netherlands? If so, within what timeframe? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

This study referred to by the Honorable Member largely confirms earlier findings officially submitted by the Netherlands, in its reporting under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive, as well as in its Prioritized Action Framework, submitted to the Commission in early 2013. They show that further efforts are still required to reduce atmospheric nitrogen deposition, site desiccation and site fragmentation if a favorable conservation status is to be achieved in a reasonable time for the species targeted by the Dutch Natura 2000 network.

The Commission is already engaging in a dialogue with Member States on these issues, in particular through the new bio-geographic management seminars, where the main pressures and threats, as well as the necessary conservation and restoration measures are identified and prioritized at the level of the bio-geographic regions, rather than for each Member State in isolation. A first seminar for the Atlantic bio-geographic region was hosted by the Dutch authorities in December 2012. The main findings of this seminar are available online. ([2])

([1]) 'Considerable environmental bottlenecks for species listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives in the Netherlands', G.W.W. Wamelink, http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0006320713001523

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/seminars_en.htm

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-008965/13
za Komisijo
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(23. julij 2013)

Zadeva: Strategija EU za zdravje in varnost pri delu za obdobje 2013–2020

Varovanje zdravja in varnost pri delu sta temeljni pravici delavcev. Vlaganje v preventivo pozitivno prispeva tako k sistemom socialne varnosti kot k industrijskim politikam.

Zaradi tega nujno potrebujemo močno evropsko strategijo za zdravje in varnost pri delu za obdobje 2013–2020. Vse višje stopnje tveganja za zdravje in varnost so povezane z intenzivnostjo in negotovostjo dela. Vendar je za zmanjšanje ekonomskih stroškov in socialnih posledic delovnih nezgod in poklicnih bolezni bistveno izboljšati preventivo in obvladovanje tveganja ter pri tem delavce prek predstavnikov za varnost spodbuditi k udeležbi.

— Kdaj namerava Komisija sprejeti novo strategijo EU za zdravje in varnost pri delu?

— Katere bodo prednostne naloge nove strategije?

Odgovor gospoda Andorja v imenu Komisije
(11. september 2013)

Komisija poslanko vabi, naj si pogleda njen odgovor na pisno vprašanje E-006795/2013.

Javno posvetovanje o novem političnem okviru se je zaključilo 26. avgusta. Komisija zdaj preučuje odgovore.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008965/13
to the Commission
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: EU strategy on health and safety at work 2013-2020

The protection of health and safety at work is a fundamental right of workers. Investments made in prevention make a positive contribution both to social security systems and to industrial policies.

A strong European health and safety strategy for the period 2013-2020 is therefore urgently needed. Increasing rates of health and safety risks at work are linked to work intensity and insecurity. However, tackling prevention and risk management in a better way, while promoting worker involvement through safety representatives, are key to reducing the economic costs and social consequences of accidents at work and occupational illnesses.

— When does the Commission plan to adopt a new EU strategy on health and safety at work?

— What will be the main priorities of the new strategy?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(11 September 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-006795/2013.

The public consultation on a new policy framework was closed on 26 August. The Commission is currently analysing the replies.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008966/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Cielo Único Europeo I

El Servicio Meteorológico de Cataluña (SMC) ha iniciado recientemente el proceso de certificación como proveedor de servicios meteorológicos de apoyo a la navegación aérea mediante la presentación de una solicitud ante la Autoridad de Supervisión Meteorológica (Ansmet) de la Secretaría de Estado de Medio Ambiente, tal y como establece la Orden MAM/1792/2006 de 5 de junio. Cuando se finalice este proceso de certificación (que se puede alargar hasta siete meses), el SMC deberá solicitar al Ministerio de Agricultura, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente la designación como proveedor en determinadas partes del espacio aéreo. Como el SMC pide la certificación por los servicios de observación y de predicción en los aeródromos, la designación será efectiva en el espacio aéreo correspondiente a las proximidades del aeropuerto.

Actualmente, la Agencia Estatal de Meteorología (AEMet) es la autoridad meteorológica del Estado ante la Organización de Aviación Civil Internacional (OACI) según indica la Ley 21/2003 de 7 de julio de Seguridad Aérea. Asimismo es el único proveedor de servicios meteorológicos a la aviación civil, por ser el único ente certificado y designado en 2006, después de la creación del Cielo Único Europeo en 2004 y de la publicación de la Orden MAM/1792/2006 de 5 de junio por la que se regula el procedimiento de certificación de proveedores de servicios meteorológicos de apoyo a la aviación. Esta situación es consistente con la legislación actual y por tanto si se recibiera la petición de algún otro proveedor certificado y existiera la intención de disponer de más de un proveedor en el Estado, se debería revisar la legislación y la designación de AEMet como proveedor exclusivo en todo el espacio aéreo español.

¿Cree la Comisión que es adecuado que un Estado miembro deposite en el mismo organismo las funciones de autoridad meteorológica y proveedor de servicios meteorológicos de apoyo a la navegación aérea?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de septiembre de 2013)

Ya en el primer paquete relativo al Cielo Único Europeo (SES), aprobado en 2004, la Comisión trató de aumentar la independencia de las autoridades de supervisión respecto a los proveedores de servicio que supervisan. En ese momento, el acuerdo solo preveía una separación parcial de los dos, de manera que la autoridad debía estar separada desde el punto de vista funcional —pero no organizativo— de las entidades que pretendía supervisar. Por tanto, la situación que describe Su Señoría actualmente sigue siendo legal, si se ejerce una separación funcional adecuada.

No obstante, la supervisión efectuada por la Comisión y la Agencia Europea de Seguridad Aérea muestra que la separación funcional no ha sido suficiente para garantizar la imparcialidad e independencia de una autoridad. Por consiguiente, la Comisión considera que el establecimiento de la autoridad y del proveedor de servicios en una sola organización no favorece una supervisión adecuada, dado que sigue habiendo aún numerosas deficiencias por lo que respecta a la independencia, recursos y capacidades de muchas autoridades. En la propuesta de tercer paquete

(SES2+), transmitida al Parlamento en junio de 2013, la Comisión propone mejorar la situación acordando una separación completa entre las autoridades de supervisión y las que son objeto de supervisión. Esa separación incluirá no solo una separación organizativa y presupuestaria, sino también las condiciones sobre la transferencia de personal entre ambas, a fin de garantizar una imparcialidad absoluta.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008966/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Single European Sky I

The Catalan Meteorological Service (SMC) has recently initiated the certification procedure to become a supplier of meteorological services to the air navigation sector by means of a request submitted to the Meteorological Supervisory Authority (ANSMET) of the State Secretariat for the Environment, in line with Order MAM/1792/2006 of 5 June. On completion of the certification process (which can take up to seven months), the SMC will ask the Ministry for Agriculture, Food and the Environment to be designated a provider covering certain parts of Spanish airspace. As the SMC certification request relates to observation and forecasting services at airfields, the designation will apply to the airspace in the vicinity of the airport.

Under Law 21/2003 of 7 July concerning aviation safety, the current state meteorological authority registered with the International Civil Aviation Organisstion (ICAO) is the State Meteorological Agency (AEMet). It is also the sole provider of meteorological services to the civil aviation sector, as it is the only certified body appointed in 2006 following the creation, in 2004, of the Single European Sky and the publication of Order MAM/1792/2006 of 5 June which amended the certification procedure for providers of meteorological services to the aviation sector. This situation is consistent with current legislation and, therefore, if another certified provider were to submit a request and if there was a will to have more than one provider in Spain, the legislation would have to be revised and AEMet's status as the exclusive provider in Spanish airspace would have to be amended.

Does the Commission believe that it is appropriate for a Member State to have one body which functions as both the meteorological authority and a provider of meteorological services to the air navigation sector?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(16 September 2013)

Already in the first Single European Sky (SES) package, which was approved in 2004, the Commission sought to improve the independence of supervisory authorities from the services providers that they oversee. The agreement at the time stipulated only a partial separation of the two, so that the authority was required to be functionally — but not organisationally — separated from the entities it was intended to oversee. Hence the situation as described by the Honourable Member is currently still legal, if proper functional separation is exercised.

However the oversight performed by the Commission and the European Aviation Safety Agency has shown that functional separation has not been sufficient to ensure the impartiality and independence of an authority. Therefore the Commission is of the opinion that locating the authority and service provider in one organisation is not conducive to good oversight as there are still many deficiencies in the independence, resources and capabilities of many authorities. In the proposal for a third package (SES2+), which was transmitted to the Parliament in June 2013, the Commission is proposing to improve the situation by stipulating a full separation of the supervisory authorities from those being supervised. Such separation will include not only organisational and budgetary separation, but also conditions on the transfer of personnel between the two, to ensure total impartiality.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008967/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Cielo Único Europeo II

El Servicio Meteorológico de Cataluña (SMC) ha iniciado recientemente el proceso de certificación como proveedor de servicios meteorológicos de apoyo a la navegación aérea mediante la presentación de una solicitud ante la Autoridad de Supervisión Meteorológica (Ansmet) de la Secretaría de Estado de Medio Ambiente, tal y como establece la Orden MAM/1792/2006 de 5 de junio. Cuando se finalice este proceso de certificación (que se puede alargar hasta siete meses), el SMC deberá solicitar al Ministerio de Agricultura, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente la designación como proveedor en determinadas partes del espacio aéreo. Como el SMC pide la certificación por los servicios de observación y de predicción en los aeródromos, la designación será efectiva en el espacio aéreo correspondiente a las proximidades del aeropuerto. Actualmente, la Agencia Estatal de Meteorología (AEMet) es la autoridad meteorológica del Estado ante la Organización de Aviación Civil Internacional (OACI) según indica la Ley 21/2003 de 7 de julio de Seguridad Aérea. Asimismo es el único proveedor de servicios meteorológicos a la aviación civil, por ser el único ente certificado y designado en 2006, después de la creación del Cielo Único Europeo en 2004 y de la publicación de la Orden MAM/1792/2006 de 5 de junio por la que se regula el procedimiento de certificación de proveedores de servicios meteorológicos de apoyo a la aviación.

Esta situación es consistente con la legislación actual y por tanto si se recibiera la petición de algún otro proveedor certificado y existiera la intención de disponer de más de un proveedor en el Estado, se debería revisar la legislación y la designación de AEMet como proveedor exclusivo en todo el espacio aéreo español. Dado que el artículo 9, «Designación de proveedores de servicios meteorológicos», del Reglamento (CE) 550/2004 del Parlamento Europeo relativo a la prestación de servicios de navegación aérea en el «cielo único europeo» indica que los Estados miembros podrán designar a un proveedor para suministrar la totalidad o parte de los datos meteorológicos en régimen de exclusividad en todo o en parte del espacio aéreo teniendo presente los criterios de seguridad,

¿cree la Comisión que es adecuado que los Estados miembros mantengan un proveedor exclusivo si en el Estado hay otras empresas certificadas pendientes de designación de espacio aéreo o en proceso de certificación?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de septiembre de 2013)

En el primer paquete del cielo único europeo (SES), adoptado en 2004, la Comisión ya preveía la creación de un mercado de servicios de navegación aérea en el espacio aéreo de la UE. Aunque este objetivo no podía lograrse de inmediato, los servicios meteorológicos se consideraron un ámbito potencial en el que cabía la existencia de múltiples proveedores de servicios. Por este motivo, la actual normativa (SES2) prevé que, si bien en el caso de los servicios esenciales de tránsito aéreo sigue siendo obligatoria la designación en régimen de exclusividad, los servicios meteorológicos pueden ser prestados en el marco de las normas ordinarias en materia de contratos públicos. No obstante, son muy pocos los Estados miembros que han hecho uso de esta posibilidad.

En su propuesta de tercer paquete legislativo (SES2+) [referencia], transmitida al Parlamento en junio de 2013, la Comisión ha llevado esta política un poco más lejos, a fin de maximizar el potencial tanto de los servicios de navegación aérea como de otros servicios auxiliares. Con arreglo a la nueva propuesta, varios servicios de apoyo, incluidos los servicios meteorológicos, van a escindirse del proveedor de los servicios esenciales de tránsito aéreo y prestarse con arreglo a las normas ordinarias en materia de contratos públicos; ello facilitará el acceso al mercado a nuevos operadores capaces de competir de forma eficiente por las concesiones.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008967/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Single European Sky II

The Catalan Meteorological Service (SMC) has recently initiated the certification procedure to become a supplier of meteorological services to the air navigation sector by means of a request submitted to the Meteorological Supervisory Authority (ANSMET) of the State Secretariat for the Environment, in line with Order MAM/1792/2006 of 5 June. On completion of the certification process (which can take up to seven months), the SMC will ask the Ministry for Agriculture, Food and the Environment to be designated a provider covering certain parts of Spanish airspace. As the SMC certification request relates to observation and forecasting services at airfields, the designation will apply to the airspace in the vicinity of the airport. Under Law 21/2003 of 7 July concerning aviation safety, the current state meteorological authority registered with the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) is the State Meteorological Agency (AEMet). It is also the sole provider of meteorological services to the civil aviation sector, as it is the only certified body appointed in 2006 following the creation, in 2004, of the Single European Sky and the publication of Order MAM/1792/2006 of 5 June which amended the certification procedure for providers of meteorological services to the aviation sector.

This situation is consistent with current legislation and, therefore, if another certified provider were to submit a request and if there was a will to have more than one provider in Spain, the legislation would have to be revised and AEMet's status as the exclusive provider in Spanish airspace would have to be amended. Article 9 ('Designation of providers of meteorological services') of Regulation (EC) No 550/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the provision of air navigation services in the single European sky states that Member States may designate a provider to supply all or part of meteorological data on an exclusive basis in all or part of their airspace, taking into account safety considerations.

In light of the above, does the Commission believe that it is appropriate for a Member State to retain an exclusive provider if there are other companies in that Member State that have been, or are being, certified and are awaiting designation for the airspace?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(16 September 2013)

In the first Single European Sky (SES) package, adopted in 2004, the Commission had already envisaged the creation of a market for air navigation services in the EU airspace. While this could not be achieved immediately, meteorological services were identified as a potential area where multiple service providers could exist. Hence the current legislation (SES2) foresees that whilst for the core air traffic services exclusive designation remains mandatory, meteorological services could also be provided under normal public procurement rules. Very few Member States have however made use of this possibility.

In its proposal for a third legislative package (SES2+) [reference], which was transmitted to the Parliament in June 2013, the Commission took this policy a step further with the aim of maximising the potential of both air navigation services and other ancillary services. Under the new proposal, various support services — including meteorological services — would be unbundled from the core air traffic service provider and provided under normal public procurement rules, thereby facilitating market access for new entrants able to compete efficiently for concessions.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008968/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Cielo Único Europeo III

El Servicio Meteorológico de Cataluña (SMC) ha iniciado recientemente el proceso de certificación como proveedor de servicios meteorológicos de apoyo a la navegación aérea mediante la presentación de una solicitud ante la Autoridad de Supervisión Meteorológica (Ansmet) de la Secretaría de Estado de Medio Ambiente, tal y como establece la Orden MAM/1792/2006 de 5 de junio. Cuando se finalice este proceso de certificación, el SMC deberá solicitar al Ministerio de Agricultura, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente la designación como proveedor en determinadas partes del espacio aéreo. Como el SMC pide la certificación por los servicios de observación y de predicción en los aeródromos, la designación será efectiva en el espacio aéreo correspondiente a las proximidades del aeropuerto. Actualmente, la Agencia Estatal de Meteorología (AEMet) es la autoridad meteorológica del Estado ante la Organización de Aviación Civil Internacional (OACI) según indica la Ley 21/2003 de 7 de julio de Seguridad Aérea. Asimismo es el único proveedor de servicios meteorológicos a la aviación civil, por ser el único ente certificado y designado en 2006, después de la creación del Cielo Único Europeo en 2004 y de la publicación de la Orden MAM/1792/2006 de 5 de junio por la que se regula el procedimiento de certificación de proveedores de servicios meteorológicos de apoyo a la aviación. Esta situación es consistente con la legislación actual y por tanto si se recibiera la petición de algún otro proveedor certificado y existiera la intención de disponer de más de un proveedor en el Estado, se debería revisar la legislación y la designación de AEMet como proveedor exclusivo en todo el espacio aéreo español.

El Reglamento (CE) 550/2004 del Parlamento Europeo define muy claramente las responsabilidades del Estado sobre la certificación, nombrando las funciones de la autoridad nacional de supervisión y los requisitos que debe cumplir el proveedor; pero en lo relativo a la designación de proveedores de servicios meteorológicos, que tienen un tratamiento diferenciado en el artículo 9, solo indica que los Estados designarán e informarán. Esto da lugar a que si el Estado no reglamenta al respecto la empresa u organismo que quiera optar a la designación desconozca el proceso que debe seguir.

¿Cree conveniente la Comisión recomendar/instar a los Estados miembros la reglamentación del proceso de designación?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de septiembre de 2013)

La cuestión planteada por Su Señoría en relación con los servicios meteorológicos está en vías de solución mediante una serie de medios un tanto diferentes establecidos en la última propuesta sobre el Cielo Único Europeo, que se transmitió al Parlamento Europeo en junio de 2013 (SES2+). De conformidad con la nueva propuesta, diversos servicios de apoyo, incluidos los servicios meteorológicos, se desvincularán del proveedor principal de servicios de tránsito aéreo y se seleccionarán de conformidad con las normas de contratación pública, permitiendo así que

operadores nuevos y más eficientes compitan en igualdad de condiciones por los contratos. Así pues, ya no habrá necesidad de un procedimiento específico para la designación de tales servicios de apoyo, y el proceso de contratación será transparente para todos los participantes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008968/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Single European Sky III

The Catalan Meteorological Service (SMC) has recently initiated the certification procedure to become a supplier of meteorological services to the air navigation sector by means of a request submitted to the Meteorological Supervisory Authority (ANSMET) of the State Secretariat for the Environment, in line with Order MAM/1792/2006 of 5 June. On completion of the certification process, the SMC will ask the Ministry for Agriculture, Food and the Environment to be designated a provider covering certain parts of Spanish airspace. As the SMC certification request relates to observation and forecasting services at airfields, the designation will apply to the airspace in the vicinity of the airport. Under Law 21/2003 of 7 July concerning aviation safety, the current state meteorological authority registered with the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) is the State Meteorological Agency (AEMet). It is also the sole provider of meteorological services to the civil aviation sector, as it is the only certified body appointed in 2006 following the creation, in 2004, of the Single European Sky and the publication of Order MAM/1792/2006 of 5 June which amended the certification procedure for providers of meteorological services to the aviation sector. This situation is consistent with current legislation and, therefore, if another certified provider were to submit a request and if there was a will to have more than one provider in Spain, the legislation would have to be revised and AEMet's status as the exclusive provider in Spanish airspace would have to be amended.

Regulation (EC) No 550/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council clearly defines the Member State's responsibilities on certification, setting out the tasks of the national supervisory authority and the requirements to be met by the supplier, but when it comes to the designation of providers of meteorological services, which are dealt with separately in Article 9, it simply states that Member States are to designate these and inform the Commission and other Member States. This means that if the Member State does not regulate how providers are to be designated, the company or body seeking designation does not know what procedure to follow.

Does the Commission consider it appropriate to recommend or insist that Member States regulate the designation procedure?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(16 September 2013)

The immediate question raised by the Honourable Member, concerning meteorological services, is being resolved through somewhat different means in the latest proposal, on the Single European Sky, which was transmitted to the Parliament in June 2013 (SES2+). Under the new proposal, various support services — including meteorological services — would be unbundled from the core air traffic service provider and selected under normal public procurement rules, thereby allowing new and more efficient entrants to the market to compete successfully for contracts. There would thus be no longer a need for a specific procedure for designation of these support services and the procurement process would be transparent for all participants.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008969/13
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE) und Markus Pieper (PPE)
(23. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Ergebnisse der ROMA-Programme

Im Rahmen der EU-Rahmenstrategie zur Integration der Roma bis 2020 sind die Mitgliedstaaten dazu aufgefordert, nationale Roma-Strategien vorzulegen und diese mit Unterstützung der verschiedenen Fonds der EU umzusetzen.

1. Welche Mittel stehen in der laufenden MFR-Finanzperiode in welchen Fonds für Roma bereit?

2. Kann die Kommission diese Mittel in Verpflichtungen und Zahlungen auf die jeweiligen Länder aufschlüsseln?

3. Wie viele Mittel wurden bislang pro Land und Fonds gebunden?

4. Wie viele Mittel wurden bislang pro Land und Fonds ausgezahlt?

5. Wie hat sich die Lebenssituation der Roma in den jeweiligen Ländern über die MFR-Finanzperiode verändert?

6. Welche Roma-Strategien haben die Mitgliedstaaten bislang ausgearbeitet?

7. Zu welchen Evaluierungsergebnissen kam die Kommission bislang in den jeweiligen Ländern?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(27. September 2013)

In dem EU-Rahmen für nationale Strategien zur Integration der Roma haben sich alle Mitgliedstaaten darauf geeinigt, der Kommission ihre nationalen Integrationsstrategien vorzulegen. Die Kommission überprüft alljährlich die erzielten Fortschritte bei der Umsetzung dieser Strategien und erstattet dem Europäischen Parlament und dem Rat darüber Bericht. Der neueste Bericht mit dem Titel „Weitere Schritte zur Umsetzung der nationalen Strategien zur Integration der Roma“ ([1]) wurde am 26. Juni 2013 angenommen. Darin wird festgestellt, dass zwar gewisse Fortschritte in den Mitgliedstaaten zu verzeichnen sind, aber Verbesserungen vor Ort nur langsam vorankommen. Zusammen mit dem Bericht hat die Kommission einen Vorschlag für eine Empfehlung des Rates für wirksame Maßnahmen zur Integration von Roma angenommen ([2]). Sowohl in dem Bericht als auch in dem Vorschlag für eine Empfehlung des Rates werden die Mitgliedstaaten nachdrücklich aufgefordert, die im Rahmen der Strukturfonds verfügbaren Mittel optimal auszuschöpfen, um die Eingliederung der Roma zu fördern.

Zur Mittelvergabe ist zu bemerken, dass EU-Mittel nicht nach Kriterien der ethnischen Zugehörigkeit zugewiesen werden. Allerdings werden die EU-Strukturfonds ([3]) herangezogen, um nationale Anstrengungen zu unterstützen; neben den nationalen Haushalten stellen sie einen wichtigen Finanzhebel dar, um sicherzustellen, dass die Umsetzung der nationalen Strategien zur Integration der Roma zur einer echten sozioökonomischen Inklusion der Roma-Gemeinschaften führt. Ungefähre Angaben lassen sich anhand der Berichterstattung der Mitgliedstaaten zu dem Schwerpunktthema (71) „Förderung von Konzepten für die Eingliederung oder Wiedereingliederung von benachteiligten Personen; Bekämpfung von Diskriminierung beim Zugang zum Arbeitsmarkt und beim Vorankommen auf dem Arbeitsmarkt und Förderung der Akzeptanz von Unterschiedlichkeit am Arbeitsplatz“ ermitteln, das die meisten, wenn auch nicht alle Programme zur Integration der Roma erfasst. Nach den im Januar 2013 vorliegenden Daten beliefen sich die Ausgaben in diesem Teilbereich bislang auf 7,4 Mrd. EUR.

([1]) KOM(2013)454 endg.
([2]) KOM(2013)460 endg.
([3]) Europäischer Sozialfonds (ESF), Europäischen Fonds für regionale Entwicklung (EFRE) und Europäischer Landwirtschaftsfonds für die Entwicklung des ländlichen Raums (ELER).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008969/13
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE) and Markus Pieper (PPE)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Results of the Roma Programmes

Under the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020, Member States are required to present national Roma strategies and to implement these with support from the various EU funds.

1. What level of funding is available for Roma in which funds during the current MFF financing period?

2. Could the Commission provide a breakdown of commitments and payments per Member State?

3. How much funding has been committed for each country from each fund?

4. How much funding has been paid out to each country from each fund?

5. How have the living conditions of Roma in the individual countries changed over the current MFF financing period?

6. What Roma strategies have been drawn up so far by Member States?

7. What is the Commission's assessment of the progress made thus far by the individual countries?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(27 September 2013)

Within the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies, all Member States have agreed to submit their national integration strategies to the Commission. The Commission reviews annually the progress made in the implementation of these strategies and reports to the European Parliament and the Council. The most recent report 'Steps forward in implementing National Roma Integration Strategies' ([1]) was adopted on 26 June 2013. Overall, the report found that while some progress has been made by Member States, improvement on the ground remains too slow. Jointly with this report, the Commission adopted its proposal for a Council Recommendation in order to enhance the effectiveness of measures to achieve Roma integration ([2]). Both the report and the proposal for a Council Recommendation urge the Member States to fully make use of the resources available through the Structural Funds to facilitate the inclusion of Roma.

As regards funding, allocation of EU funds is not made on the basis of ethnicity. However, EU Structural Funds ([3]) have been mobilised to boost national efforts and are an important financial lever in ensuring the translation of national Roma integration into real socioeconomic inclusion of Roma communities, alongside national budgets. An approximate figure can be based on reporting by Member States on the ESF priority theme (71) 'Pathways to integration and re-entry into employment for disadvantaged people; combating discrimination in accessing and progressing in the labour market and promoting acceptance of diversity at the workplace', which includes most of the Roma inclusion programmes but not exclusively those. According to January 2013 data, spending in this category has been so far EUR 7.4 billion.

([1]) COM(2013) 454 final.
([2]) COM(2013) 460 final.
([3]) European Social Fund (ESF), European regional Development Fund (ERDF) and European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008970/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(23 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Emergenza sanitaria e politica in Libano causata dalla fuga dei cittadini siriani dalla guerra

Le Nazioni Unite hanno recentemente descritto la guerra in Siria come «la peggiore emergenza umanitaria dalla guerra del Ruanda». A due anni di distanza dallo scoppio delle ostilità, infatti, il conflitto ha causato oltre 100.000 morti e migliaia di profughi che cercano rifugio nei campi di accoglienza gestiti da varie organizzazioni internazionali in Libano, Turchia e Giordania.

Secondo l'Alto Commissario per i rifugiati presso le Nazioni Unite Antonio Gutierrez, il numero dei profughi siriani presenti in Libano avrebbe ormai raggiunto una quota pari al 25 % della stessa popolazione libanese e, solo nell'ultima settimana, altri 17.000 siriani avrebbero cercato rifugio nel paese.

Il governo locale non diffonde stime ufficiali riguardo al numero degli sfollati presenti sul territorio e la Caritas libanese denuncia il propagarsi di continue epidemie nei campi improvvisati sul confine, mentre i rimedi predisposti dal Ministero della sanità sarebbero finora risultati inefficaci.

In Libano l'emergenza sanitaria si accompagna ad una crescente instabilità politica poiché la partecipazione alla guerra siriana da parte del partito libanese di Hezbollah ha causato un aumento di scontri religiosi alle frontiere nazionali soprattutto tra sunniti e sciiti.

Infine attualmente, anche sul confine turco, ricominciano a registrarsi le ostilità perché i miliziani curdi hanno ripreso la lotta per l'egemonia sui territori nord-orientali e hanno ucciso almeno 9 soldati jihadisti della brigata al-Nusra presso la zona strategica di Ras al-Am.

Può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per la politica estera e di sicurezza comune riferire quali provvedimenti intende adottare l'UE a tutela dei profughi siriani, in particolar modo al fine di evitare l'acuirsi dell'instabilità politica nei paesi vicini e le ripercussioni che ciò produrrebbe a livello internazionale?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(2 ottobre 2013)

Nel quadro della crisi siriana, l'UE è il principale donatore di aiuti destinati a far fronte all'emergenza nel paese, in particolare a sostenere i rifugiati che abbandonano la Siria e si recano verso i paesi confinanti. Uno dei principali beneficiari di detti aiuti è il Libano, date le gravi conseguenze della crisi siriana nel paese. Il sostegno dell'UE ai rifugiati in Libano è destinato essenzialmente a far fronte ai bisogni più urgenti in termini di assistenza sanitaria, alloggio, servizi igienici, protezione, ecc. Attualmente l'importo complessivo dell'assistenza prestata dall'UE alla Siria e ai paesi limitrofi che ospitano rifugiati siriani, compresi i contributi degli Stati membri, è pari a 1,8 miliardi di euro. L'UE intende confermare il suo impegno a fornire aiuti, compresi quelli destinati ad alleviare la situazione dei rifugiati.

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente e altri interlocutori UE sono in contatto con i rappresentanti dei paesi confinanti con la Siria, incluso il Libano. In questo contesto l'UE trasmette messaggi chiari circa la necessità di garantire ai rifugiati una tutela che sia in linea con gli standard internazionali, nonché circa la necessità di tenere aperte le frontiere per i rifugiati.

L'UE sta mettendo in atto un approccio globale per affrontare la crisi siriana, i cui elementi sono stati definiti chiaramente nella comunicazione congiunta dell'Alta Rappresentante e della Commissione del 24 giugno 2013. Uno dei principali obiettivi dell'approccio globale dell'Unione europea consiste nel sostenere la stabilità nella regione e prevenire altre ripercussioni della crisi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008970/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Health and political emergency in Lebanon caused by Syrians fleeing the war

The UN has recently described the war in Syria as the worst humanitarian emergency since the Rwandan genocide. In the two years since the start of hostilities, the death toll has risen to over 100 000, and thousands of refugees are seeking shelter in the reception camps run by various international organisations in Lebanon, Turkey, and Jordan.

According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, António Guterres, the number of Syrian refugees in Lebanon now stands at 25% of the Lebanese population; within the last week alone, another 17 000 Syrians have sought refuge there.

The Lebanese Government is not issuing official estimates of the number of displaced persons in the country. Caritas Lebanon claims that epidemics are continuing to spread in the makeshift camps on the border, the Ministry of Health having apparently failed in its attempts to date to contain them.

In addition to the health emergency, political instability in Lebanon is mounting. The decision by the Lebanese Hezbollah party to intervene in the Syrian war has led to increased sectarian clashes between Sunnis and Shias in the border region.

Lastly, renewed fighting is breaking out on the Turkish border too, as the Kurdish militias have resumed the struggle for control of the north-eastern territories; they have killed at least nine jihadist soldiers of the al-Nusra Front near the strategically important town of Ras al-Ayn.

What steps will the EU take to protect Syrian refugees and in particular avert more serious political instability in neighbouring countries and the repercussions that would result at international level?

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

The EU is the biggest donor in providing assitance to address the Syrian crisis in general, and to support the refugees coming from Syria to the neighbouring countries in particular. Lebanon, due to the serious repercussions of the crisis in the country, is a major beneficiary. The EU support to the refugees in Lebanon is primarily addressed to assist their most pressing needs in terms of health, shelter, sanitation, protection, etc. The current overall sum of EU assistance — to Syria and its neighboring countries hosting Syrian refugees — including contributions from Member States, stands at almost EUR 1.8 billion. The EU will uphold its commitment to continue providing aid, inclding to alleviate the situation of refugees.

The HR/VP and other EU interlocutors maintain contacts with representatives of the countries neighbouring Syria, including Lebanon. In these contacts, the EU has been delivering clear messages at to the need to provide protection to coming refugees in line with international standards, as well as the need to keep borders open for refugees.

The EU is implementing a comprehensive approach to address the Syrian crisis, whose elements were clearly set out in the Joint Communication of the High Representative and the Commission of 24 June 2013. Supporting stability in the region and preventing further spillovers of the crisis is one of the key aims of the EU comprehensive approach.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008971/13
to the Commission
Geoffrey Van Orden (ECR)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Suspension of EU payments to Member States

In response to a previous question relating to the Court of Auditors and the refusal to sign off on the EU Budget, the Commission stated that 'where deficiencies persisted, the Commission has resorted to interruption and suspension of payments to the concerned Member States'.

Could the Commission give the most recent examples of where such payments have been suspended, as well as the circumstances and the amounts concerned?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(23 September 2013)

Examples from 2013 where Structural Funds, Cohesion Fund and CAP payments have been interrupted or suspended, together with the amounts concerned, are presented in Annex to this reply. Concerning the year 2012, the relevant information can be found in the Annual Activity Reports of the Directorates-General ([1]), summarised in the 2012 Synthesis report ([2]).

The most common reasons for these suspensions and interruptions are linked to significant deficiencies identified by audit bodies in the related Member States' management and control systems which did not allow the Commission to proced with the associated payments. These weaknesses are often related to the organisation of the management and control bodies, clear audit trails missing and in some cases to irregularities in public procurement procedures.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/synthesis/aar/
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/pdf/synthesis_report_2012_en.pdf , (point 6.4).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008972/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU election observation mission to Bangladesh parliamentary elections

Scheduled five-yearly parliamentary elections in Bangladesh are due to take place shortly, in December 2013 or at the latest in January 2014. It is essential for regional stability that these elections be conducted in a free, fair and transparent fashion. The opposition political parties led by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) are threatening to boycott the elections unless a caretaker non-party-based government is in power during the election period to prevent the use of administrative resources or any advantage accruing to the incumbent Awami League Government led by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Bangladesh is an important South Asian secular democracy which deserves the political and economic support of the EU. It has recently gone through a period of unrest after the end of the war crime trials and following two major tragic incidents in the clothing industry.

Can the Vice-President/High Representative confirm whether the EU plans to send a long-term election observation mission (EOM) to Bangladesh to monitor the period before the election? Will it facilitate a short-term European Parliament EOM mission through the EU delegation in Dakha?

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

The HR/VP is pleased to confirm that an Election Observation Mission (EOM) in Bangladesh is part of the 2013 priority list for the EU Election Observation Missions. For this purpose, an electoral exploratory Mission led by the EEAS is planned to be sent to Bangladesh as early as September 2013 to help determine the scope of such an Election Observation Mission. The final decision on the EOM will be adopted by the HR/VP. Preliminary discussions with the European Parliament services in charge of election observation seemed to indicate a willingness from the EP to associate an EP Delegation to the EOM. As usual the EEAS would facilitate the participation of any EP Delegation, should it be decided at a later stage by the EP, to the EOM.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008973/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Further violation of human rights against Ahwazi Arab minorities in Iran

Iran's continued violation of human rights against its minorities is a matter for major international concern, as evidenced on this occasion by the arrest of four Iranian Ahwazi cultural activists from Ahwaz, southern Iran, who are currently facing the death penalty, which was imposed in December 2012. These individuals — Ghazi Abbasi, Jassim Mughadem Panah, Abdulameer Majdami and Abdulreda Ameer Khanafra — were allegedly first arrested based on an unpublished Iranian intelligence report according to which the activists are described as 'waging war against God' and spreading corruption.

There is additional serious concern that the Ahwazi activists are facing physical and psychological torture whilst in the prison.

— Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of these cases?

— Will she raise them with the Iranian Government at the next appropriate occasion?

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

The HR/VP is well aware of the drasticsituation of these Ahwazi activists. She follows very closely the situation of Human Rights and fundamental freedoms in Iran, including local communities' rights, such as those of the Ahwazi community. The most recent statement concerning this issue was issued by the HR/VP on 29 January 2013 on the death sentences and potentially imminent executions of five Ahwazi Arab men.

The EU will continue to pay great attention to the situation of Arab communities as well as other ethnic or religious groups in Iran. It will discuss these matters with Iranian counterparts whenever possible and will remind the Iranian authorities of their international obligations under the Covenant of Civil and Political Rights, to which Iran has subscribed.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008974/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 de julio de 2013)

Asunto: Directiva 2006/112/CE sobre el IVA

El impuesto sobre el valor añadido (IVA) es un impuesto general sobre el consumo que se aplica a las actividades comerciales que implican la producción y la distribución de bienes y la prestación de servicios. Las disposiciones relativas al establecimiento del sistema común del IVA de la Unión Europea (UE) así como los distintos tipos de IVA y sus exenciones están codificados en la Directiva IVA (Directiva 2006/112/CE con sus modificaciones y correcciones sucesivas).

Dicha Directiva no contempla la exención o la aplicación del IVA reducido en caso de desastre natural o declaración de zona catastrófica.

Cuando los Gobiernos centrales pagan el IVA luego recuperan este dinero al recaudar este impuesto. No es el caso de los gobiernos locales o regionales (en Estados no federales) ya que solamente el Gobierno central recauda este impuesto.

Cuando un gobierno local o regional tiene que hacer frente a la reconstrucción de carreteras, puentes o edificios dañados o destruidos por causas mayores como podrían ser fuertes lluvias, terremotos, incendios… y la zona ha sido declarada zona catastrófica ¿no cree la Comisión que todas esas obras de reconstrucción deberían estar exentas de pagar el IVA o, como mucho, que debería aplicarse el IVA reducido para que la mayor cantidad de dinero posible se destinara a arreglar la zona afectada?

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

Con arreglo a las normas establecidas en el Tratado, cualquier modificación de la Directiva del IVA vigente, por ejemplo la ampliación de la lista de excepciones de interés público o las categorías a las que puede aplicarse el tipo reducido, exigiría la adopción unánime del correspondiente acto jurídico por el Consejo, sobre la base de la propuesta correspondiente de la Comisión.

Debe considerarse que las exenciones fiscales y los tipos reducidos son excepciones a la norma general, según la cual cada actividad realizada a título oneroso y considerada una actividad económica en el sentido del artículo 9 de la Directiva del IVA está sujeta al tipo normal del IVA. La ampliación de las exenciones fiscales y los tipos reducidos provocaría, por tanto, una mayor complejidad e iría en detrimento de la armonización. Así pues, hay que examinar detenidamente si la modificación de esas normas sería un medio apropiado para atenuar los problemas planteados por Su Señoría. A este respecto, los fondos de solidaridad nacionales o que ya existen en la EU parecen ser instrumentos más adecuados y flexibles. Además, los Estados miembros son libres de introducir mecanismos de compensación específicos, ajenos al sistema del IVA, para mitigar el coste del IVA (no deducible) soportado en las adquisiciones por las autoridades locales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008974/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Directive 2006/112/EC on VAT

Value added tax (VAT) is a general tax on consumption applied to commercial activities involving the production and distribution of goods and the provision of services. The provisions relating to the establishment of the EU common VAT system and to the different rates of VAT and exemptions are laid down in the VAT Directive (Directive 2006/112/EC and its amended versions and corrigendums).

The directive does not provide for an exemption or the application of the reduced rate of VAT in the event of a natural disaster or declaration of a disaster area.

Central governments recover the VAT they have paid when they themselves levy the tax. This is not the case with local or regional governments (in non-federal States), as only central governments collect VAT.

Local and regional governments sometimes need to invest money in rebuilding roads, bridges and buildings which have been damaged or destroyed by heavy rain, earthquakes, fires etc. Does the Commission not agree that, if an area has been declared a disaster zone, the cost of the rebuilding work should be exempt from VAT or, at least, the reduced rate of VAT should be applied so that as much money as possible can be invested in rebuilding the area in question?

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

According to the rules laid down in the Treaty, any amendment of the current VAT Directive, e.g. any extension to the list of exemptions in the public interest or the categories to which the reduced rate may be applied, would require the unanimous adoption of a respective legal act by the Council, based on a corresponding proposal from the Commission.

It must be considered that tax exemptions and reduced rates are exceptions from the general rule according to which every activity which is carried out for a consideration and qualifies as an economic activity within the meaning of Article 9 of the VAT Directive is taxed at the standard VAT rate. An extension of tax exemptions and reduced rates would therefore entail more complexity and less harmonisation. Thus, it must be carefully examined whether an amendment of these rules would be an appropriate means to mitigate the problems raised by the Honourable Member. National or existing EU solidarity funds would appear to be the more appropriate and flexible tools in this respect. Furthermore, Member States are free to introduce targeted compensation mechanisms, outside the VAT system, to alleviate the cost of (non-deductible) VAT on acquisitions borne by local authorities.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008975/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(23. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Soziale Netzwerke — Datenverwertung auch von Nichtteilnehmern

Anscheinend sammeln soziale Netzwerke nicht nur Daten von Nutzern, sondern auch von Personen, welche diese Dienste nicht nutzen (wollen). Beispielsweise verfügt die Facebook-App über eine Funktion, mit der das Adressbuch des Mobilgeräts mit der Freundesliste bei Facebook verbunden wird. Durch die Synchronisation können die Kontaktdaten (Name, Telefonnummer, E-Mailadresse) von Personen, die nicht bei Facebook registriert sind, auf die Internetplattform gelangen.

Bei der Markierung von Bildern mittels Foto-Tags werden ebenfalls neben den Mitgliedern auch jene Personen namentlich angezeigt, welche sich gegen die Nutzung sozialer Netzwerke entschieden haben. In Kombination mit Gesichtserkennungsalgorithmen sind Fotos von Personen, die einmal markiert wurden, sodann immer identifizierbar.

1. Wie steht die Kommission zu dieser Problematik, dass (Kontakt-)Daten von Nichtmitgliedern in soziale Netzwerke gelangen und dort auch (etwa für Werbezwecke) genutzt werden können?

2. Ist dies mit europäischen Datenschutzvorgaben vereinbar?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(18. September 2013)

Wie der Herr Abgeordnete zu Recht bemerkt, werden in gewissem Umfang persönliche Daten von Personen, die nicht bei sozialen Netzen registriert sind, von diesen Netzen gesammelt, beispielsweise wenn registrierte Nutzer ihr Adressbuch in das soziale Netz hochladen.

Facebook, das seinen europäischen Sitz in Irland hat, muss die irischen Vorschriften zur Umsetzung der Richtlinie 95/46/EG beachten. Dabei ist u. a. sicherzustellen, dass personenbezogene Daten nach Treu und Glauben und auf rechtmäßige Weise verarbeitet werden, für festgelegte eindeutige und rechtmäßige Zwecke erhoben werden und nicht darüber hinausgehen dürfen. Alle betroffenen Personen müssen über die ihnen zustehenden Rechte verfügen (Auskunftsrecht, Widerspruchsrecht bei Direktwerbung, Recht auf Löschung der Daten usw.). Für die Überwachung der Anwendung der auf Grundlage der Richtlinie 95/46/EG erlassenen Vorschriften sind die Datenschutzbehörden der Mitgliedstaaten zuständig.

Der Vorschlag der Kommission für eine Datenschutz-Grundverordnung, ([1]) der zurzeit von den Mitgesetzgebern geprüft wird, baut auf den Prinzipien der Richtlinie 95/46/EG auf und weitet die Befugnisse der nationalen Datenschutzbehörden aus; so sollen sie die Möglichkeit erhalten, Verwaltungsstrafen zu verhängen, wenn beispielsweise personenbezogene Daten ohne oder ohne ausreichende Rechtsgrundlage verarbeitet werden. Außerdem wird der Grundsatz des Datenschutzes durch Technik und durch datenschutzfreundliche Voreinstellungen berücksichtigt, und die Rechte des Einzelnen werden insbesondere durch die Einführung des Rechts auf Vergessenwerden und des Rechts auf Datenübertragbarkeit gestärkt.

([1]) KOM(2012)11.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008975/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Social networks — processing of the data of non-participants

Apparently, social networks gather data not only on users but also on people do not use these services and do not want to. For example, the Facebook app has a function by means of which the address book of a mobile device is linked to the Facebook friend list. By means of synchronisation, contact data (name, telephone number, e-mail address) of people who are not registered with Facebook can be recorded by the Internet platform.

Similarly, when pictures are labelled by means of photo tags, it is not only members who are named but also people who have decided not to use social networks. In conjunction with facial recognition algorithms, photographs of people which have been labelled once can then be identified for ever.

1. What view does the Commission take of this problem, that data (contact data) of non-members find their way into social networks, where they can be used (e.g. for advertising purposes)?

2. Is this compatible with European data protection law?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(18 September 2013)

As the Honourable Member points out, some personal data of individuals not registered in social networks are collected by those networks, for instance when registered users upload their address book to the social network.

Facebook, established in Ireland, must comply with the national measures implementing Directive 95/46/EC. It must *inter alia* ensure that personal data is processed fairly and lawfully, collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes, not excessive in relation to the purpose for which they have been collected. All concerned individuals must be provided with their rights (right of information, right to object in case of direct marketing, right of deletion etc.). Monitoring the application of the provisions adopted pursuant to Directive 95/46/EC falls under the competence of Member States' data protection supervisory authorities.

The Commission's proposal for a General Data Protection Regulation ([1]) under examination of the co-legislators builds on the principles of Directive 95/46/EC, and reinforces the power of the national data protection authorities, e.g. by giving them the possibility to impose administrative sanctions, *inter alia* when personal data are processed without any or with no sufficient legal basis. It also introduces the principle of data protection by design and by default and reinforces individual's rights, especially by introducing the right to be forgotten and the right to personal data portability.

([1]) COM(2012)11.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008976/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(23. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Kennzeichnung genmanipulierter Pflanzen

Demnächst dürfen wohl genmanipulierte Pflanzensorten in europäischen Ladenregalen landen. Nachdem sich die EU-Staaten nicht einigen konnten, steht zu erwarten, dass die EU-Kommission in Kürze grünes Licht hinsichtlich der Zulassung für den menschlichen und tierischen Konsum gibt.

— Ist im Falle einer EU-weiten Zulassung eine Anpassung der Kennzeichnungspflichten geplant, so dass sich der Verbraucher klar für oder gegen genmanipulierte Pflanzen bzw. darauf basierende Folgeprodukte entscheiden kann?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(18. September 2013)

Die Kennzeichnung von GVO ist in der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1829/2003 über genetisch veränderte Lebensmittel und Futtermittel sowie in der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1830/2003 über die Rückverfolgbarkeit und Kennzeichnung von genetisch veränderten Organismen und über die Rückverfolgbarkeit von aus genetisch veränderten Organismen hergestellten Lebensmitteln und Futtermitteln ([1]) geregelt. Letztere Verordnung sieht vor, dass Lebensmittel und Futtermittel, die einen GVO enthalten, daraus bestehen oder daraus hergestellt sind, mindestens mit dem Wortlaut „genetisch verändert“ gekennzeichnet sein müssen. In Ausnahmefällen wird ein Produkt von dieser Kennzeichnungsanforderung ausgenommen, wenn es GVO enthält, daraus besteht oder daraus hergestellt ist, deren Anteil bei höchstens 0,9 % liegt und sofern dieser zufällig oder technisch nicht zu vermeiden ist.

Die Kommission beabsichtigt derzeit nicht, diese Vorschriften zu ändern.

([1]) ABl. L 268 vom 18.10.2003.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008976/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Labelling of GM plants

It is likely that genetically modified plant varieties will soon appear in the shops in Europe. As European States have been unable to reach agreement, it can be expected that the Commission will shortly give the green light authorising them for human and animal consumption.

— In the event of EU-wide authorisation, are there any plans for altering labelling requirements so that consumers have an unambiguous choice as to whether or not to buy GM plants or products from them?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(18 September 2013)

The labelling of GMOs is regulated by Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 on genetically modified food and feed and Regulation (EC) No 1830/2003 ([1]) concerning the traceability and labelling of genetically modified organisms and the traceability of food and feed produced from genetically modified organisms. This regulation provides that food and feed containing, consisting of or produced from a GMO must be labelled with at least the words 'genetically modified'. Exceptionally, a product is exempted from this labelling requirement where it consists of, contains, or is produced from GMOs in a proportion not higher than 0.9%, and provided that this presence is adventitious or technically unavoidable.

The Commission is currently not intending to alter these rules.

([1]) OJ L 268, 18.10.2003.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008977/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(23 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Complesso Tremol 2 nel polo sciistico di Piancavallo di Aviano (PN) e possibili violazioni delle direttive Habitat 92/43/CEE, VAS 2001/42/CE e VIA 2011/92/UE

Nell'area del polo sciistico del comprensorio di Piancavallo, frazione di Aviano (PN), è stato realizzato il progetto denominato «Tremol 2». Trattasi nello specifico dell'avvenuta costruzione di un impianto di risalita (segnatamente di una seggiovia quadriposto) pari a metri 1.757 di lunghezza sviluppata, di un bar/ristoro per sciatori sottostante alla stazione di arrivo dell'impianto e, infine, di un tratto di pista (300 metri) per realizzare il collegamento alla rete già esistente. Nel territorio circostante esistono valenze ecologiche e naturali tutelate quali SIC e ZPS, ai sensi rispettivamente delle direttive Habitat 92/43/CEE e Uccelli 2009/147/CE ([1]).

Secondo il Movimento ambientalista internazionale Mountain Wilderness, autore anche di una denuncia alla Commissione in proposito, il procedimento che ha condotto all'approvazione del succitato progetto sarebbe stato caratterizzato da plurime violazioni delle direttive Habitat, VAS e VIA. Citando in estrema sintesi le infrazioni più importanti, secondo Mountain Wilderness lo screening VINCA effettuato ai sensi della direttiva Habitat (conclusosi con l'assenza di significative conseguenze negative per l'area) avrebbe avuto a oggetto solo la variante al PRPC (Piano regolatore particolareggiato comunale) resasi necessaria e non il progetto stesso. Non sarebbe stata presa in considerazione, inoltre, l'incidenza sul SIC/ZPS veneto Foresta del Cansiglio, erroneamente indicato alla distanza di 4,5 km dalla opere, laddove è di appena 700 metri nel punto più vicino. Quanto alla direttiva 2001/42/CE, il piano strategico elaborato dalla società che ha proposto il progetto non sarebbe stato sottoposto a VAS. Quanto alla direttiva VIA, sarebbe stata esclusa l'effettuazione del relativo screening solo perché la seggiovia non supera la soglia di capienza richiesta per l'assoggettabilità alla procedura ai sensi della normativa italiana ([2]). Viene rilevata, infine, la mancata applicazione dei principi di precauzione e prevenzione (art. 174, par. 2 TUE).

Sempre secondo Mountain Wilderness non sarebbe stata opportuna la scelta di investire in infrastrutture sciistiche in una località sita in quota inferiore ai 1.800 metri, dato che, a causa del progressivo innalzamento dello zero termico in atto nell'arco alpino, queste rischieranno in futuro di rivelarsi inutili.

Sulla base di quanto esposto, quali iniziative intende intraprendere la Commissione per approfondire la questione e verificare eventuali violazioni della normativa UE di settore in questa vicenda?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(13 settembre 2013)

La Commissione ha ricevuto nel 2010 la denuncia cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato e l'ha archiviata nel 2012, in seguito a una valutazione da cui non risulta sussistere violazione alcuna della normativa ambientale dell'UE.

Ciò non preclude che la Commissione possa condurre ulteriori indagini qualora le pervengano prove concrete di un'eventuale violazione del diritto dell'UE.

([1]) SIC IT3310006 — IT3230077 Foresta del Cansiglio, IT3310004 Forra del Torrente Cellina, IT3310009 Magredi del Cellina; ZPS IT3311001 Magredi di Pordenone e IT3230077 Foresta del Cansiglio.

([2]) Nonostante all'art. 4, par. 3 della direttiva VIA preveda che, anche qualora lo Stato membro abbia fissato dei parametri di soglia, si debba comunque tenere conto ai fini della decisione circa l'assoggettabilità alla procedura di valutazione di quanto previsto all'allegato III, che detta una serie di parametri relativi a caratteristiche, localizzazione e impatto potenziale dei progetti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008977/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Tremol 2 complex in the Piancavallo di Aviano ski resort and possible infringements of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, SEA 2001/42/EC and EIA 2011/92/EU

In the ski resort of Piancavallo, in Aviano (PN), a project called Tremol 2 has been implemented. More specifically, the project involves a 1 757 metre-long ski lift (in particular a 4-seater chair-lift), which has already been built, in addition to a snack bar for skiers just below the arrival station, and lastly, a section of ski piste (300 metres) to complete the connection to the existing network. In the surrounding area are some ecologically valuable protected areas, such as SCIs and SPAs, respectively under the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC and the Birds Directive 2009/147/EC ([1]).

According to the international environmental movement Mountain Wilderness, which has also submitted a complaint to the Commission about this matter, the process that led to the approval of the project in question involved multiple breaches of the Habitats Directive, the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). In a nutshell, the most significant offences, according to Mountain Wilderness, were the fact that the environmental implications assessment (known as VINCA) carried out under the Habitats Directive (which declared that there would be no significant adverse impact on the area), related only to the alternative to the PRPC (detailed municipal land use plan) which had subsequently become necessary, and not to the project itself. Moreover, the impact on the SCI/SPA the Cansiglio Forest was not taken into account, as it was mistakenly referred to as being 4.5 km from the works, when it is just 700 metres away at its closest point.

As regards Directive 2001/42/EC, the strategic plan drawn up by the company that put forward the project did not, apparently, undergo a Strategic Environmental Assessment. As for the EIA Directive, the environmental impact assessment was apparently not carried out simply because the chair-lift did not exceed the capacity required for the procedure to be mandatory under Italian law ([2]). Last but not least, there has been an apparent failure to apply the principles of precaution and prevention (Article 174(2) TEU).

Mountain Wilderness alleges that it was inappropriate to invest in ski infrastructure in an area that is lower than 1800 metres, given that, due to the gradual increase in temperatures in the Alpine region, the infrastructure in question is likely to become useless in future.

In the light of the above, what measures will the Commission take to look at this matter in detail and ascertain whether there have been any infringements of the relevant EU legislation?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

The Commission received the complaint mentioned by the Honourable Member in 2010 and closed it in 2012 after an assessment had shown that there was no evidence of a breach of EU environmental law.

The above would not preclude the Commission services from investigating the matter further should they receive concrete evidence of a possible breach of EC law.

([1]) SCI IT3310006 — IT3230077 Cansiglio Forest, IT3310004 Forra del Torrente Cellina, IT3310009 Magredi del Cellina; SPA IT3311001 Magredi di Pordenone and IT3230077 Cansiglio Forest.

([2]) Even though Article 4(3) of the EIA Directive provides that, even if the Member State has set its own thresholds or criteria, the relevant criteria set out in Annex III — which includes a range of criteria relating to the characteristics, location and potential impact of projects — still need to be taken into account for the purpose of deciding whether or not the project should be made subject to the assessment procedure.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008978/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(23 juli 2013)

Betreft: Boycot producten uit Judea en Samaria

Minstens twee grote supermarktketens verkopen geen producten meer die afkomstig zijn uit Judea en Samaria. Het gaat om Aldi en Hoogvliet, internationaal opererend, en Jumbo.

In mei 2012 is in de EU bovendien het besluit genomen dat op producten uit genoemde gebieden niet meer het etiket „Made in Israel" mag staan.

1. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat het boycotten resp. het stellen van etiketteringseisen betreffende producten uit Judea en Samaria een discriminerend besluit is, aangezien een dergelijk besluit níet genomen is betreffende producten uit gebieden die territoriaal omstreden zijn zoals Tibet, Noord-Cyprus, Kashmir, Kosovo, de westelijke Sahara etc.? Zo neen, waarom niet?

2. Is de Commissie ervan op de hoogte dat Abbas meermaals heeft gezegd dat er geen Jood in het toekomstige Palestina mag wonen, terwijl er in Israël miljoenen Arabieren wonen? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat Joden overal ter wereld moeten kunnen wonen — dus ook in Judea en Samaria? Zo ja, hoe rijmt de Commissie dit met het ontmoedigen van het kopen van hun producten?

3. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat het stellen van etiketteringseisen betreffende producten uit Judea en Samaria indruist tegen het WTO-verdrag dat stelt dat etikettering geen onnodige obstakels voor internationale handel mag vormen? Zo neen, waarom niet?

4. Is de Commissie ertoe bereid het EU-besluit inzake etikettering betreffende producten uit Judea en Samaria in te trekken? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(23 oktober 2013)

Het standpunt van de EU inzake de nederzettingen houdt in dat zij in strijd zijn met het internationale recht en een belemmering voor de vrede vormen.

Inzake de vraag van het geachte Parlementslid betreffende de boycot is het nauwelijks duidelijk naar welk „besluit om deze producten te boycotten" hij verwijst. De Commissie heeft nooit een besluit vastgesteld inzake het verbieden of het boycotten van producten die van oorsprong zijn buitende Israëlische grenzen van vóór 1967, maar die in de EU als Israëlische producten op de markt worden gebracht. De Commissie heeft ook nog geen standpunt ingenomen [een „besluit" is een formele handeling, maar het is weinig waarschijnlijk dat de Commissie een officieel besluit vaststelt] inzake de etikettering van dergelijke producten.

Wat betreft de etikettering heeft de consument recht op een geïnformeerde keuze en daarom mag de etikettering niet misleidend zijn. In de conclusies van de Raad Buitenlandse Zaken van mei 2012 werd herhaald dat de EU zich blijft beijveren voor de volledige en doeltreffende uitvoering van de bestaande EU-wetgeving en de bilaterale overeenkomsten die op uit de nederzettingen afkomstige producten van toepassing zijn. Om ervoor te zorgen dat producten die afkomstig zijn uit gebieden buiten de Israëlische grenzen van vóór 1967, binnen de EU op de juiste wijze worden geëtiketteerd, is begonnen met het in kaart brengen van de bestaande EU-wetgeving. De handhaving van deze regelgeving is in de eerste plaats de verantwoordelijkheid van de lidstaten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008978/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Boycott of products from Judea and Samaria

At least two large supermarket chains are no longer selling any products originating in Judea and Samaria. The chains in question are Aldi and Hoogvliet, which operate internationally, and Jumbo.

In May 2012, moreover, it was decided in the EU that products from these areas should no longer bear the label 'Made in Israel'.

1. Does the Commission agree that the decision to boycott these products from Judea and Samaria or to impose labelling requirements on them is discriminatory, as no such decision was taken with regard to products from areas whose territory is disputed such as Tibet, Northern Cyprus, Kashmir, Kosovo, Western Sahara, etc.? If not, why not?

2. Is the Commission aware that Abbas has said several times that no Jew may live in the future Palestine, whereas millions of Arabs live in Israel? Does the Commission agree that Jews should be allowed to live anywhere in the world, including in Judea and Samaria? If so, how does the Commission reconcile this with measures to discourage the purchase of their products?

3. Does the Commission agree that imposing labelling requirements on products from Judea and Samaria is contrary to the WTO Agreement, which stipulates that labelling must not present any unnecessary obstacles to international trade? If not, why not?

4. Will the Commission withdraw the EU decision on labelling of products from Judea and Samaria? If not, why not?

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

The EU position on settlements is that they are illegal under international law and constitute an obstacle to peace.

Concerning the boycott question of the Honourable Member, it is not completely clear whose 'decision to boycott these products' he is referring to. The Commission has never adopted a decision to ban or to boycott products originating beyond Israel's pre-1967 borders but marketed in the EU as Israeli products. Nor has the Commission yet adopted a position ['decision' is a formal act, but it is unlikely that the Commission will adopt a formal decision] on the labelling of such products.

Concerning labelling, the consumer has the right to an informed choice, and hence labelling must not be misleading. The May 2012 Foreign Affairs Council conclusions reaffirmed the commitment of the EU and its Members States to fully and effectively implement existing EU legislation and bilateral agreements applicable to settlement products. A mapping of existing EU legislation has been initiated with the objective of ensuring the correct labelling within the EU of products originating beyond Israel's pre-1967 borders. The enforcement of this regulatory regime is primarily the responsibility of Member States.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008979/13
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(23 juli 2013)

Betreft: VP/HR — Geen financiering meer voor Israëlische bedrijven in „Palestijns gebied"

Israëlische bedrijven die zich in zogenaamd „Palestijns gebied" bevinden, zullen vanaf 2014 niet meer kunnen rekenen op financiering van de Europese Unie. EU-lidstaten mogen dan op geen enkele wijze financiële steun meer verlenen aan bedrijven die de „grenzen van 1967 niet respecteren", zo luidt het Brussels dictaat ([1]).

De Israëlische premier Netanyahu reageert afwijzend: „We aanvaarden geen dictaten van buitenaf. Deze knopen kunnen alleen doorgehakt worden in het kader van rechtstreekse onderhandelingen tussen de partijen."

1. Waarom kiest de Vicevoorzitter/Hoge Vertegenwoordiger, met dit besluit, overduidelijk partij voor de Palestijnen en laat zij Israël — bondgenoot én enige democratische staat in het Midden-Oosten — volledig in de kou staan?

2. Deelt de Vicevoorzitter/Hoge Vertegenwoordiger de mening dat haar overduidelijk pro-Palestijnse houding inzake het Israëlisch-Palestijnse conflict de positie van Israël zwaar ondermijnt en dat dit bijzonder kwalijk is? Zo neen, waarom niet?

3. Is de Vicevoorzitter/Hoge Vertegenwoordiger ertoe bereid het besluit in te trekken en zich luid en duidelijk pro-democratie, en dus pro-Israël, uit te spreken? Zo neen, waarom niet?

4. Hoe reageert de Vicevoorzitter/Hoge Vertegenwoordiger op de afwijzende reactie van de Israëlische premier Netanyahu? Hoe ervaart zij het dat hij „geen dictaten van buitenaf", aldus ook niet van Brussel, accepteert? Deelt de Vicevoorzitter/Hoge Vertegenwoordiger de mening dat zijn reactie volledig terecht is? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(26 september 2013)

De „Richtsnoeren betreffende de mogelijkheid van Israëlische entiteiten en hun activiteiten in de door Israël sinds juni 1967 bezette gebieden om in aanmerking te komen voor subsidies, prijzen en financieringsinstrumenten die na 2014 met EU-middelen worden gefinancierd" die door de Commissie op 28 juni 2013 werden goedgekeurd, betreffen uitsluitend de EU-begroting en niet de lidstaten.

Deze richtsnoeren impliceren geen verandering van het EU-beleid. Zij bevestigen het traditionele standpunt dat bilaterale overeenkomsten met Israël niet gelden voor de gebieden die sinds juni 1967 door Israël worden bestuurd, en dat nog onlangs in de conclusies van de Raad Buitenlandse Zaken van december 2012 werd herhaald. De richtsnoeren zijn ook het resultaat van een expliciete verbintenis van de Commissie ten aanzien van het Parlement om een oplossing te zoeken voor een beperkt aantal gevallen waarin de EU ten onrechte activiteiten heeft gesubsidieerd in Israëlische nederzettingen aan de andere kant van de groene lijn.

De richtsnoeren doen onder geen beding afbreuk aan de resultaten van de vredesonderhandelingen tussen Israëliërs en Palestijnen. Het standpunt van de EU is vanouds dat wijzigingen van de grenzen worden erkend indien deze door beide partijen worden overeengekomen. De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter is een groot bepleiter van de onderhandelingen tussen Israël en de Palestijnen en steunt ten volle de grote inspanningen van de Amerikaanse minister van Buitenlandse Zaken Kerry die hebben geleid tot hervatting van deze onderhandelingen.

De richtsnoeren zullen slechts in hun geheel worden toegepast op 1 januari 2014. Ondertussen verwacht de EU, zoals door de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter op 19 juli 2013 is verklaard, met Israël samen te werken en van gedachten te wisselen over een breed spectrum van bilaterale kwesties, en heeft zij Israël uitgenodigd discussies te voeren over de territoriale reikwijdte van de overeenkomsten met de EU die momenteel in voorbereiding zijn.

([1]) http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2808/Israelisch-Palestijns-conflict/article/detail/3476813/2013/07/16/EU-schrapt-financiering-Israelische-bedrijven-in-bezet-gebied-Netanyahu-misnoegd.dhtml.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008979/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Termination of financing of Israeli businesses in 'Palestinian territory'

As from 2014, Israeli businesses in so-called 'Palestinian territory' will no longer be able to count on financing from the European Union. EU Member States will then no longer be permitted to provide any form of financial support to businesses which fail to 'respect the 1967 borders', according to the diktat from Brussels ([1]).

Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel has rejected this: 'We shall not accept any external dictates on our borders. That is an issue that will be decided only in direct negotiations between the sides.'

1. Why in taking this decision, is the Vice-President/High Representative unambiguously siding with the Palestinians and leaving Israel completely out in the cold, despite the fact that it is both an ally and the only democratic State in the Middle East?

2. Does the Vice-President/High Representative agree that her unambiguously pro-Palestinian stance on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict seriously undermines Israel's position and that this is extremely undesirable? If not, why not?

3. Will the Vice-President/High Representative withdraw the decision and, loudly and clearly, adopt a position in favour of democracy, which means a pro-Israeli one? If not, why not?

4. What is the response of the Vice-President/High Representative to Prime Minister Netanyahu's rejection of the EU decision? What view does she take of the fact that he refuses to accept any 'external dictates', including therefore those from Brussels? Does the Vice-President/High Representative agree that his response is absolutely right? If not, why not?

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

The 'Guidelines on the eligibility of Israeli entities and their activities in the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 for grants, prizes and financial instruments funded by the EU from 2014 onwards' adopted by the Commission on 28 June 2013 apply only to the EU budget and not to Member States.

These guidelines do not represent a shift in EU policy. They reiterate the long-held position that bilateral agreements with Israel do not cover the territory that came under Israel's administration in June 1967, reiterated most recently in the December 2012 Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) conclusions. The guidelines are also the result of an explicit pledge taken by the Commission vis-à-vis Parliament to find a solution for a limited number of cases in which the EU inadvertently funded activities in Israeli settlements beyond the Green Line.

In no way will this prejudge the outcome of peace negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians. It has been the EU's long-held position that it will recognise changes made to the borders once agreed by both parties. The HR/VP is deeply committed to Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and fully supports Secretary Kerry's intense efforts which have led to the resumption of negotiations

The entirety of the guidelines will only be implemented before 1 January 2014. In the meantime, as the HR/VP stated on 19 July 2013, the EU looks forward to working and consulting with Israel on a broad range of bilateral issues, and has invited Israel to hold discussions on the territorial scope of agreements with the EU that are currently under preparation.

([1]) http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2808/Israelisch-Palestijns-conflict/article/detail/3476813/2013/07/16/EU-schrapt-financiering-Israelische-bedrijven-in-bezet-gebied-Netanyahu-misnoegd.dhtml

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008980/13
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(23 juli 2013)

Betreft: Schijnzelfstandigheid bij Ryanair

Het merendeel van de ongeveer 3 500 Ryanair-piloten zijn niet rechtstreeks in dienst bij de luchtvaartmaatschappij, maar zijn er als zelfstandige aan de slag — aangeworven via het agentschap Brookfield Aviation.

Volgens getuigenissen van diverse Ryanair-piloten in Die Zeit (18 juli 2013) gaat het hier om schijnzelfstandigheid, constructies opgezet om onder een stelsel van lagere sociale bijdragen te kunnen ressorteren.

De betrokken piloten hebben zich intussen verenigd in de Ryanair Pilot Group met als doel iets te doen aan sociale mistoestanden bij de lagekostenmaatschappij.

Kan de Commissie onderzoeken of Ryanair zich inderdaad bezondigt aan sociaal laakbare praktijken die bovendien in strijd zijn met de EU-regelgeving, en desgevallend optreden?

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(5 september 2013)

Overeenkomstig artikel 153 VWEU wordt het arbeidsrecht van de Unie gevormd door richtlijnen die door de lidstaten moeten worden omgezet en ten uitvoer gelegd. De nationale autoriteiten, met inbegrip van de nationale rechterlijke instanties, zijn verantwoordelijk voor de vaststelling en handhaving van de criteria om te bepalen of iemand een werknemer in loondienst is.

Aangezien richtlijnen volgens het EU-recht bovendien geen rechtstreekse werking hebben ten opzichte van een particuliere werkgever, moet in een dergelijk geval een beroep worden gedaan op de nationale voorschriften die die richtlijnen omzetten en tenuitvoerleggen. Eventueel misbruik kan derhalve doeltreffender worden voorkomen — en sancties doeltreffender opgelegd — op nationaal niveau.

De Europese Commissie heeft dientengevolge geen rechtstreekse bevoegdheid om een onderzoek in te stellen naar de arbeidsrechtelijke praktijken van afzonderlijke ondernemingen in de particuliere sector. Dit is de bevoegdheid van de bevoegde autoriteiten van de lidstaten.

De Commissie heeft echter in verscheidene publicaties de aandacht gevestigd op het algemene probleem van schijnzelfstandigheid ([1]) en werkt momenteel aan een initiatief om de samenwerking tussen de arbeidsinspecties van de lidstaten te verbeteren met het oog op het voorkomen en tegengaan van diverse vormen van zwartwerk en verkeerd gedeclareerd werk.

([1]) Zie bijvoorbeeld Modernising labour law to meet the challenges of the 21st century (COM(2006)708); de studie van externe deskundigen Comparative study on the legal aspects of the posting of workers van maart 2011, http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=6677&langId=en.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008980/13
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Bogus self-employment at Ryanair

The majority of the approximately 3 500 Ryanair pilots are not directly employed by the airline but self-employed, being recruited through the Brookfield Aviation agency.

According to testimony by various Ryanair pilots in Die Zeit (18 July 2013), this is a case of bogus self-employment: an artificial arrangement designed to reduce compulsory social insurance contributions.

The pilots concerned have now organised themselves, forming the Ryanair Pilot Group, with the aim of doing something about the poor terms of employment offered by the low-cost airline.

Can the Commission investigate whether Ryanair is indeed engaging in reprehensible employment practices which moreover breach European law, and, if appropriate, take action?

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

In accordance with Article 153 TFEU, EU labour law rules take the form of directives which have to be transposed and implemented by Member States. It is the national authorities, including the national courts, who are responsible for laying down and enforcing the criteria for determining the status of an employed person.

Moreover, since directives do not have direct effect under EC law against a private sector employer, it is the national measures transposing and implementing those directives which may be invoked in such a case. Any abuses, therefore, can be more effectively prevented, and sanctions can be more effectively imposed, at the national level.

The European Commission thus has no direct power to investigate the employment law practices of an individual company in the private sector. This is the competence of the relevant authorities of the Member States.

The Commission has, however, drawn attention to the general problem of bogus self-employment in several publications ([1]) and is currently working on an initiative to enhance cooperation between labour inspectorates of Member States, in order to prevent and deter various forms of undeclared or wrongly declared work.

([1]) See for example Modernising labour law to meet the challenges of the 21st century (COM(2006)708) ; external expert study Comparative study on the legal aspects of the posting of workers, March 2011, http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=6677&langId=en

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008981/13
aan de Commissie
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(23 juli 2013)

Betreft: Ziekte tijdens verlofperiode

Iemand die ziek wordt en op verlof gaat, kan vandaag al volgens de Belgische wetgeving deze ziektedagen aftrekken van zijn verlof (b.v. je wordt ziek, maar hebt reis geboekt, je kan vertrekken, maar met doktersbriefje Belgische dokter kan je de ziektedagen aftrekken van je verlofdagen).

Iets anders is, iemand is al op reis, wordt daar ziek, gaat daar naar de dokter en krijgt een ziektebriefje. Dit blijft als verlof staan.

Evenwel zaak C-277/08 bij het Europees Hof stelt dat dit eigenlijk wel als ziekteverlof zou moeten worden beschouwd.

Vandaag geldt in België en in verschillende andere lidstaten het principe van de eerste schorsingsoorzaak. Als de werknemer al ziek was voor het begin van zijn vakantie: de geattesteerde ziektedagen mogen niet als vakantie worden aangerekend. Wordt hij ziek tijdens zijn vakantie, dan blijven die dagen als vakantie beschouwd.

Daarom volgende vragen aan de Commissie:

1. Zal de Commissie maatregelen nemen om de lidstaten acties te doen ondernemen zodat zij hun wetgeving aanpassen aan de uitspraak van het Europees Hof (zaak C-277/08)?

2. Welke maatregelen zal de Commissie hieromtrent nemen?

3. Welke timing voorziet de Commissie?

4. Indien de Commissie geen maatregelen zou nemen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(5 september 2013)

Het geachte Parlementslid merkt terecht op dat het Hof van Justitie van de Europese Unie in zaak C-277/08, *Francisco Vicente Pereda*, heeft vastgesteld dat een werknemer die met ziekteverlof is tijdens een van tevoren vastgelegde jaarlijkse vakantieperiode het recht heeft, op zijn verzoek en teneinde daadwerkelijk van zijn recht op jaarlijkse vakantie gebruik te kunnen maken, om deze vakantie te nemen in een andere periode dan die welke samenvalt met de periode van ziekteverlof. Het is de taak van de lidstaten om ervoor te zorgen dat de nationale wetgeving en praktijk in overeenstemming is met het EU-recht, met inbegrip van Richtlijn 2003/88/EG ([1]), zoals uitgelegd door het Europees Hof van Justitie. Mochten de lidstaten hierbij in gebreke blijven, dan behoudt de Commissie zich het recht voor om in haar rol als hoedster van de Verdragen alle verdere maatregelen te nemen die nodig zijn om ervoor te zorgen dat de richtlijn word nageleefd.

([1]) Richtlijn 2003/88/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad, PB L 299 van 18.11.2003.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008981/13
to the Commission
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Sickness during a leave period

Currently, under Belgian law, a person who falls ill during a leave period can already deduct the days of sickness from his leave (e.g. you fall ill, but have booked a holiday: you are allowed to depart but can deduct the days of illness from your leave, provided that you obtain a certificate from a Belgian doctor).

The situation is different if a person is already away on holiday, then falls ill, goes to the doctor and obtains a certificate. The days of sickness still count as leave.

However, according to the judgment in Case C-277/08 before the Court of Justice, they ought really to be regarded as sick leave.

In Belgium and various other Member States, the principle applied at present is that of the 'original ground for absence from work'. If the employee was already sick before his holiday began, days on which he was officially registered as sick cannot be counted as annual leave. If he falls ill during his leave, the days of sickness are still regarded as annual leave.

1. Will the Commission take measures to require Member States to align their legislation with the judgment of the Court of Justice in Case C-277/08?

2. What measures will the Commission take in this connection?

3. What timeframe does the Commission have in mind?

4. If the Commission does not intend to take any measures, why not?

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

The Honourable Member correctly points out that in Case C-277/08, *Francisco Vicente Pereda* v *Madrid Movilidad SA,* the Court of Justice of the European Union has held that a worker who is on sick leave during a period of previously scheduled annual leave has the right, on his request and in order that he may actually use his annual leave, to take that leave during a period which does not coincide with the period of sick leave. It is for the Member States to ensure that national law and practice is in compliance with EC law, such as Directive 2003/88/EC ([1]), as interpreted by the CJEU. Should Member States fail to do so, the Commission reserves the right, in its role as Guardian of the Treaties, to take all further measures which may be necessary to ensure compliance with the directive.

([1]) Directive 2003/88/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council , OJ L 299, 18.11.2003.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-008982/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Daň z finančných transakcií

Reagujúc na pretrvávajúcu krízu v Európe jedenásť členských štátov Únie zvažuje zaviesť daň z finančných transakcií. Tento krok by mal eliminovať finančné špekulácie a zároveň primäť banky k participácii na zmierňovaní následkov finančnej krízy.

Je však v súčasnosti v právomociach Komisie legislatívne ošetriť resp. ustrážiť, aby finančné inštitúcie nemali snahu vyhýbať sa svojim záväzkom a nesústredili finančné aktivity mimo územia EÚ?

Odpoveď pána Šemetu v mene Komisie
(3. októbra 2013)

Hlavnými cieľmi návrhu Komisie sú:

— zabrániť fragmentácii vnútorného trhu s finančnými službami so zreteľom na rastúci počet nekoordinovaných daňových opatrení zavádzaných na vnútroštátnej úrovni;

— zaistiť, aby finančné inštitúcie spravodlivým podielom prispeli k pokrytiu nákladov spojených s nedávnou krízou, a zabezpečiť rovnaké podmienky v porovnaní s inými sektormi, pokiaľ ide o zdanenie;

— vytvoriť primerané prekážky odrádzajúce od transakcií, ktorými sa nezvyšuje efektívnosť finančných trhov, a doplniť tak regulačné opatrenia zamerané na zamedzenie budúcim krízam.

Komisia sa domnieva, že hlavné ustanovenia jej návrhu, najmä ustanovenia článku 4, pomôžu minimalizovať riziko premiestnenia finančných služieb mimo EÚ, ktorého jediným účelom je vyhnutie sa daňovým povinnostiam, a to tým, že zásada miesta pobytu sa v krajnom prípade doplní o prvky zásady emisie. V dôsledku doplnenia zásady miesta pobytu o zásadu emisie sa premiestnenie činnosti a usadenie sa mimo oblasti pôsobnosti dane z finančných transakcií stane skutočne menej výhodné, keďže obchodovanie s finančnými nástrojmi, ktoré podliehajú zdaneniu podľa zásady emisie a ktoré boli vydané v oblasti pôsobnosti dane z finančných transakcií, bude tak či tak zdanené. Podľa článku 12 návrhu bude prijatie opatrení na predchádzanie daňovým podvodom a daňovým únikom úlohou členských štátov, ktoré sa zúčastňujú na posilnenej spolupráci v oblasti dane z finančných transakcií. Zúčastnené členské štáty by mali mať povinnosť prijať vhodné opatrenia týkajúce sa registrácie, účtovníctva a vykazovania a iných povinností tak, aby sa daň z finančných transakcií vymeriavala správne a včas a aby sa daňovým orgánom skutočne platila.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008982/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: The financial transaction tax

In response to the continuing crisis in Europe, 11 European Union Member States are considering the introduction of a tax on financial transactions. This move should eliminate financial speculation and force banks to contribute to mitigating the consequences of the financial crisis.

Nevertheless, is it within the Commission's existing powers to use legislation to police financial institutions and to ensure that they do not attempt to avoid their obligations or concentrate their financial activities outside the EU?

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

The main objectives of the Commission proposal are:

— to avoid fragmentation in the internal market for financial services, bearing in mind the increasing number of uncoordinated national tax measures being put in place;

— to ensure that financial institutions make a fair contribution to covering the costs of the recent crisis and to ensure a level playing field with other sectors from a taxation point of view;

— to create appropriate disincentives for transactions that do not enhance the efficiency of financial markets thereby complementing regulatory measures aimed at avoiding future crises.

The Commission considers that key provisions of its proposal, notably the provisions of Article 4, will help to minimise the risk of relocation of financial services outside the EU for the sole purpose of tax avoidance, by supplementing the residence principle by elements of the issuance principle as a last resort. Indeed, by complementing the residence principle with the issuance principle, it will be less advantageous to relocate activities and establishments outside he FTT jurisdiction, since trading in the financial instruments subject to taxation under the latter principle and issued in the FTT jurisdiction will be taxed anyway. According to Article 12 of the draft proposal, it would be up to the Member States participating in the enhanced cooperation on a financial transaction tax to adopt measures to prevent tax fraud and evasion. The participating Member States should be obliged to take appropriate measures for registration, accounting, reporting and other obbligations for the FTT be levied accurately and timely and effectively paid to tax authorities.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-008983/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Reforma poľnohospodárskej politiky

V súčasnosti putuje 40 % ročného rozpočtu Európskej únie do poľnohospodárstva, ktoré je jednou z ústredných politík Únie. V ostatných dňoch Parlament, Rada a Komisia spoločne dospeli k novej dohode odrážajúcej smerovanie poľnohospodárstva po roku 2014.

Nové pravidlá sa javia byť prospešnými pre poľnohospodárov i európskych spotrebiteľov. Existujú možnosti, ako by mohla Komisia prispieť k čo najpromptnejšiemu vstupu nových legislatívnych opatrení v rámci danej problematiky do platnosti?

Odpoveď pána Cioloşa v mene Komisie
(10. septembra 2013)

Komisia je presvedčená, že reforma SPP bude prínosom pre európskych farmárov aj spotrebiteľov. Preto Komisia aktívne spolupracuje s Európskym parlamentom a Radou, ktorí sú teraz v súlade s riadnym legislatívnym postupom zodpovední za prijatie a uverejnenie, s cieľom zabezpečiť, aby základné akty týkajúce sa reformy nadobudli účinnosť pred koncom tohto roka alebo najneskôr na začiatku roku 2014. Okrem toho Komisia začala pripravovať potrebné delegované a vykonávacie akty, aby mohli byť prijaté okamžite po nadobudnutí účinnosti základných aktov. Napriek tomu, obdobie, ktoré má Európsky parlament a Rada na vyjadrenie pripomienok k delegovaným aktom prijatým Komisiou (2 + 2 mesiace) a prestávka pred voľbami do Európskeho parlamentu v roku 2014 by mohli tento proces ovplyvniť.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008983/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Reform of the common agricultural policy

At present, 40% of the annual budget of the European Union goes to agriculture, which is one of the core policies of the EU. Parliament, the Council and the Commission jointly reached a new agreement recently reflecting the direction that agriculture will take after 2014.

It appears that the new rules will be beneficial for farmers as well as for European consumers. Are there options by which the Commission could contribute to the entry into force, as rapidly as possible, of new legislative measures relating to this issue?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2013)

The Commission is convinced that the reform of the CAP will be beneficial for both European farmers and European consumers. The Commission is, therefore, actively working together with the Parliament and the Council — who, by the ordinary legislative procedure, now are in charge of the adoption and publication — with a view to ensuring that the basic acts for the reform enter into force before the end of the year or early 2014, at the latest. Moreover, the Commission has started preparing the necessary delegated and implementing acts so that they can be adopted as soon as possible after the entry into force of the basic acts. Nevertheless, the period for the EP and the Council for expressing objections on Delegated Acts adopted by the Commission (2 + 2 months) and the recess period due to the 2014 elections of the EP could have an influence on this.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-008984/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Európske voľby 2014

Voľby do Európskeho parlamentu v roku 2014 budú prvými voľbami od nadobudnutia platnosti Lisabonskej zmluvy. Navyše budú o to dôležitejšie, že Európska únia aktuálne vynakladá úsilie na prijímanie zásadných opatrení zameraných na vytvorenie skutočnej hospodárskej a menovej únie stojacej na dodržiavaní demokratických zásad. Prihliadnuc na posilnenú úlohu a právomoci Parlamentu sa javí ako nevyhnutné zlepšiť a súčasne dostať viac do popredia samotný proces voľby jeho členov.

Považujem za dôležité načúvať problémom európskych občanov a dať im na vedomie, aký rozsiahly vplyv majú politiky EÚ na ich každodenný život. Akým spôsobom, v kontexte nadchádzajúcich volieb do Európskeho parlamentu, môže Komisia k týmto snahám prispieť v zmysle priblíženia sa k občanom – voličom?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(9. septembra 2013)

V nadväznosti na záväzok Komisie vybudovať spoločný európsky verejný priestor v záujme dosiahnutia dlhodobého cieľa, ktorým je politická únia ([1]), Komisia nedávno navrhla opatrenia, ktorých cieľom je uľahčiť účasť občanov na voľbách do Európskeho parlamentu a posilniť európsky rozmer týchto volieb. Medzi tieto iniciatívy patrí predovšetkým oznámenie ([2]) a odporúčanie ([3]) prijaté s cieľom ďalej posilniť demokratický charakter a efektívnosť európskych volieb. Cieľom odporúčaní je ďalšie posilnenie demokratickej legitimity rozhodovacieho procesu na úrovni EÚ a ďalšie priblíženie európskeho systému občanom Únie.

Vzhľadom na to, že európske voľby v roku 2014 sú medziinštitucionálnou komunikačnou prioritou, Komisia je pripravená podporiť komunikačnú kampaň Európskeho parlamentu v tejto súvislosti. Komunikačná kampaň pri príležitosti Európskeho roku občanov v roku 2013 a dialógy s občanmi, na ktorých sa zúčastnili členovia Komisie spolu s poslancami Európskeho parlamentu a predstaviteľmi vnútroštátneho politického života – to sú konkrétne kroky, ktoré už podnikla Komisia s cieľom podporiť mobilizáciu voličskej základne pred budúcoročnými európskymi voľbami.

Komisia ďalej v správe o občianstve EÚ za rok 2013 s názvom „Občania EÚ: vaše práva, vaša budúcnosť“ ([4])oznámila, že povedomie občanov EÚ o právach, ktoré im z tohto občianstva vyplývajú, a najmä o ich politických právach, podporí vydaním publikácie venovanej tejto problematike. Cieľom je, aby vnútroštátne orgány sprístupnili túto publikáciu všetkým mladým občanom EÚ, ktorí dosiahli vek umožňujúci im voliť, resp. ako študijnú pomôcku v rámci školských osnov pre výučbu náuky o spoločnosti.

([1]) Správa predsedu Európskej komisie José Manuela Barrosa o stave Únie za rok 2012.
([2]) COM(2013) 126.
([3]) Ú. v. EÚ L 17, 21.3.2013, s. 29.
([4]) COM(2013) 269.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008984/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: 2014 European elections

The 2014 elections to the European Parliament will be the first since the Treaty of Lisbon entered into force. Moreover, they will be all the more important as the EU is currently making efforts to adopt important measures aimed at the creation of genuine economic and monetary union based on respect for democratic principles. In view of the reinforced role and powers of Parliament, it would appear to be essential to enhance and to give more prominence to the process for electing its members.

I think it is important to listen to the concerns of European citizens and to make them aware of the extensive impact of EU policies on their day-to-day lives. How, in the context of the upcoming elections to Parliament, can the Commission contribute to these efforts in terms of getting closer to citizens as voters?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(9 September 2013)

As a follow-up to the commitment made by the Commission to develop a common European public space with a political union on the horizon ([1]), the Commission recently proposed measures to facilitate citizens' participation in the European Parliament elections and to strengthen the European dimension of these elections. Initiatives notably include a communication ([2]) and a recommendation ([3]) for further enhancing the democratic and efficient conduct of the European elections. The recommendations aim at reinforcing the democratic legitimacy of the EU decision-making process and thus bringing the system closer to Union citizens.

Since the European elections of 2014 are an interinstitutional communication priority, the Commission is committed to supporting the European Parliament's communication campaign for the European elections. Indeed, the communication campaign for the 2013 European Year of Citizens, and the Citizens' Dialogues carried out by Commissioners together with Members of the European Parliament and local politicians are tangible steps that the Commission has already taken to support the mobilisation of the electorate ahead of the 2014 elections.

Moreover, the Commission announced in its 2013 EU Citizenship Report 'EU citizens: your rights, your future' ([4]) that it will further promote EU citizens' awareness of their EU citizenship rights, and in particular their political rights, by producing a handbook presenting those rights. The handbook is intended to be distributed by national authorities to every young EU citizen reaching voting age or as material to be included in school curricula, in particular on citizenship education.

([1]) 'State of the Union 2012' address of Commission President José Manuel Barroso.
([2]) COM(2013)126.
([3]) OJ L79, 21.3.2013, p. 29.
([4]) COM(2013)269.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-008985/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Ochrana pracovníkov pracujúcich v zahraničí

Takmer milión ľudí odchádza každoročne za prácou mimo svoju krajinu. Neraz sú pritom obchádzané pracovnoprávne predpisy a normy, pracujúcim nie je zabezpečená dostatočná ochrana.

Akými konkrétnymi krokmi môže Komisia prispieť k tomu, aby práva pracovníkov boli plne rešpektované? Je zároveň v možnostiach Komisie zabezpečiť, aby firmy mali snahu legálnym spôsobom využívať potenciál jednotného trhu?

Odpoveď pána Andora v mene Komisie
(13. septembra 2013)

Vážená pani poslankyňa si možno neuvedomuje, aký veľký počet občanov EÚ sa sťahuje do iného členského štátu za prácou. Podľa prieskumov dosahuje počet vyslaných pracovníkov v EÚ približne 1,2 milióna ročne ([1]), pričom zhruba 6,5 miliónov občanov EÚ ([2]) v širšom poňatí žije a pracuje v inom členskom štáte, ako je ich krajina pôvodu.

Monitorovanie a posilňovanie pracovných podmienok a podmienok zamestnávania, ako aj reálne odmeňovanie pracovníkov vrátane vyslaných pracovníkov, patrí do právomoci členského štátu. Pokiaľ ide o vyslaných pracovníkov, v marci 2012 Komisia prijala návrh ([3]) smernice o presadzovaní, aby tak zlepšila spôsob, akým členské štáty v praxi vykonávajú, uplatňujú a presadzujú smernicu 96/71/ES ([4]). Navrhovaná smernica, o ktorej v súčasnosti rokuje Rada a Parlament, by zlepšila nástroje, ktoré majú členské štáty k dispozícii na monitorovanie a posilňovanie podmienok zamestnávania.

Okrem toho v záujme zefektívnenia právnych predpisov EÚ o voľnom pohybe pracovníkov a boja proti diskriminácii na základe štátnej príslušnosti a proti neoprávneným prekážkam vo voľnom pohybe pracovníkov prijala Komisia 26. apríla 2013 návrh smernice, ktorého cieľom je jednoduchšie uplatňovanie práv migrujúcich pracovníkov EÚ ([5]), čo znamená aj výraznejšie posilnenie ich súčasných práv. Návrh, o ktorom v súčasnosti takisto rokuje Rada a Parlament, by si vyžadoval, aby členské štáty poskytli migrujúcim pracovníkom informácie o ich právach a viac pomoci pri ich presadzovaní.

Pokiaľ ide o všeobecnejšiu otázku využívania jednotného trhu, Komisia spolupracuje s členskými štátmi, aby jednotné kontaktné miesta poskytovali užitočné informácie o formalitách a postupoch poskytovateľom služieb, ktorí majú v úmysle podnikať v konkrétnom členskom štáte.

([1]) Vysielanie pracovníkov v Európskej únii a krajinách EZVO: Správa o prenosných dokumentoch A1 vydaných v rokoch 2010 a 2011, Európska komisia, 2012, na: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=9675&langId=en

([2]) Pracovná a sociálna situácia v EÚ , Quarterly Review, jún 2013, na: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=10312&langId=en; „Geografická mobilita pracovníkov v čase krízy“, externá štúdia Európskej agentúry pre sledovanie zamestnanosti, na: http://www.eu-employment-observatory.net/resources/reports/ESDE-SynthesisPaper-June2013-Final.pdf

([3]) COM(2012) 131 final z 21. marca 2012.

([4]) Smernica Európskeho parlamentu a Rady96/71/EC zo 16. decembra 1996 o vysielaní pracovníkov v rámci poskytovania služieb, Ú. v. ES L 18, 21.1.1997.

([5]) COM(2013) 236 final z 26. apríla 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008985/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Protection of workers working abroad

Nearly a million people leave to work outside their country each year. Labour laws and standards are often circumvented, and workers are inadequately protected.

What concrete steps can the Commission take to help ensure that workers' rights are fully respected? Also, is it possible for the Commission to ensure that firms strive to exploit the potential of the Single Market by lawful means?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

The Honourable Member may be underestimating the number of EU citizens moving to another Member State to work. Surveys put the number of posted workers in the EU at around 1.2 million per year ([1]), while some 6.5 million EU citizens ([2]) are, more broadly, living and working in a Member State other than their country of origin.

The monitoring and enforcement of working and employment conditions and the actual remuneration of workers, including posted workers, are a Member State competence. As regards posted workers, in March 2012 the Commission adopted a proposal ([3]) for an enforcement directive to improve the way Directive 96/71/EC ([4]) is implemented, applied and enforced in practice by the Member States. The proposed directive, which is currently before the Council and Parliament, would improve the instruments available to the Member States for monitoring and enforcing employment conditions.

Furthermore, in order to make EC law on free movement of workers more effective and to fight against discrimination on the basis of nationality and unjustified obstacles to free movement of workers, on 26 April 2013 the Commission adopted a proposal for a directive to facilitate the exercise of rights of EU migrant workers ([5]) which involves better enforcement of existing rights. The proposal, which is also currently before the Council and Parliament, would require the Member States to provide migrant workers with information on their rights and more assistance to assert them.

On the more general question of exploiting the Single Market, the Commission is working with Member States to ensure that the Points of Single Contact provides useful information on formalities and procedures for service providers intending to conduct business in a particular Member State.

([1]) Posting of workers in the European Union and EFTA countries: Report on A1 portable documents issued in 2010 and 2011, European Commission, 2012, at: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=9675&langId=en.

([2]) EU Employment and Social Situation, Quarterly Review, June 2013, at: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=10312&langId=en; 'Geographical labour mobility in the context of the crisis', external study for European Employment Observatory, at: http://www.eu-employment-observatory.net/resources/reports/ESDE-SynthesisPaper-June2013-Final.pdf

([3]) COM(2012) 131 final of 21 March 2012.

([4]) Directive 96/71/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 1996 concerning the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services, OJ L 18, 21.1.1997 .

([5]) COM(2013) 236 final of 26 April 2013.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-008986/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Zdravotné pomôcky a nová regulácia

Nekvalitné prsné implantáty sa pričinili o diskusiu o novej podobe schvaľovania zdravotných pomôcok. S cieľom predísť podobným nepríjemnostiam v budúcnosti Európska komisia predostrela zámer aktualizovať súčasnú legislatívu týkajúcu sa zdravotných pomôcok.

V čom budú spočívať konkrétne kroky Komisie? Je opodstatnené uvažovať o možnosti striktnejšieho sledovania jednotlivých druhov pomôcok resp. uplatnenia mechanizmov kontroly voči samotným výrobcom?

Odpoveď pána Mimicu v mene Komisie
(12. septembra 2013)

V nadväznosti na prípad prsníkových implantátov od firmy PIP Komisia predložila plán na okamžité opatrenie a návrhy nariadenia o zdravotníckych pomôckach ([1]) a nariadenia o diagnostických zdravotníckych pomôckach *in vitro* (IVD) ([2]). Plán na okamžité opatrenie, zameraný na lepšie uplatňovanie súčasných právnych predpisov, je vo fáze realizácie. V legislatívnych návrhoch, ktoré Komisia prijala 26. septembra 2012, sa zavádzajú prísnejšie pravidlá uvádzania zdravotníckych pomôcok na trh.

Pokiaľ ide o monitorovanie jednotlivých typov pomôcok a uplatňovanie kontrolných mechanizmov na výrobcov, legislatívne návrhy obsahujú niekoľko opatrení:

Vo fáze schvaľovania sa v nich sprísňujú požiadavky na určovanie a monitorovanie notifikovaných orgánov zodpovedných za posudzovanie zhody pomôcok, ktoré sa majú vyrábať. Takisto sa v nich sprísňujú požiadavky na klinické údaje a zavádza kontrolný mechanizmus, ktorý umožňuje zapojenie regulačného orgánu do procesu schvaľovania vysokorizikových pomôcok.

Vo fáze po uvedení na trh sa návrhmi posilňuje dohľad zo strany notifikovaných orgánov, ako aj príslušných orgánov. Konkrétne sa v návrhoch vyžaduje od notifikovaných orgánov, aby vykonávali každoročné audity a pravidelné neohlásené inšpekcie vo výrobných prevádzkach, ktorých súčasťou sú kontroly vzoriek pomôcok, ako aj kontrola výrobných vzoriek z trhu. Okrem toho sa posilňujú ustanovenia o vigilancii, aby bolo možné rýchlejšie zistiť závažné udalosti, ako aj ustanovenia, ktorými sa zlepšuje mechanizmus koordinácie medzi príslušnými vnútroštátnymi orgánmi v rámci dohľadu po uvedení na trh.

Obidva návrhy sú práve predmetom legislatívneho postupu a predpokladá sa, že by mohli byť prijaté v rámci súčasného mandátu EP.

([1]) Návrh nariadenia Európskeho parlamentu a Rady o zdravotníckych pomôckach a ktorým sa mení a dopĺňa smernica 2001/83/ES, nariadenie (ES) č. 178/2002 a nariadenie (ES) č. 1223/2009, COM(2012) 542 final, Brusel, 26.9.2012.

([2]) Návrh nariadenia Európskeho parlamentu a Rady o diagnostických zdravotníckych pomôckach in vitro, COM(2012) 541 final, Brusel, 26.9.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008986/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Medical devices and new regulation

Low-quality breast implants have led to debate on a new form of approval for medical devices. In order to prevent similar difficulties in the future, the European Commission has put forward a plan to update the current legislation relating to medical devices.

What specific steps will the Commission take? Is it reasonable to consider the possibility of monitoring individual types of devices more strictly or of applying control mechanisms to the manufacturers themselves?

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(12 September 2013)

Following the PIP breast implants case the Commission put forward a Plan for Immediate Action and proposals for a regulation on medical devices ([1]) and for a regulation on *in vitro* diagnostic medical devices ('IVDs') ([2]). The Plan for Immediate Action, aimed at improved application of the existing legislation, is in its implementation phase. The legislative proposals, adopted by the Commission on 26 September 2012, introduce stricter rules for the placing on the market of the medical devices.

With regard to the monitoring of the individual types of devices and applying control mechanisms to the manufacturers, the legislative proposals contain several measures:

At the authorisation stage, they strengthen the requirements for designation and monitoring of notified bodies responsible for carrying out conformity assessment of devices to be manufactured. They also reinforce the requirements for clinical data and introduce a scrutiny mechanism which allows for the involvement of a regulatory authority in the approval process of high-risk devices.

At the post-market stage, the proposals strengthen surveillance both by notified bodies and by competent authorities. In particular, they require notified bodies to carry out annual audits and periodic unannounced inspections on the manufacturing site, which include checks of device samples, as well as to check production samples from the market. In addition, there are strengthened provisions on vigilance to allow better detection of serious incidents and provisions which improve the mechanisms for coordination between national competent authorities in the post-market surveillance.

Both proposals are presently in the legislative procedure with a view to their adoption under the current EP's mandate.

([1]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on medical devices, and amending Directive 2001/83/EC, Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 and Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009, COM(2012) 542 final, Brussels, 26.9.2012.

([2]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on *in vitro* diagnostic medical devices, COM(2012) 541 final, Brussels, 26.9.2012.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-008987/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Pravidlá pre technickú kontrolu motorových vozidiel

V snahe posilniť bezpečnosť cestnej premávky a súčasne sa pričiniť o ochranu životného prostredia bol v uplynulých dňoch v pléne Európskeho parlamentu predložený návrh zlepšujúci uplatňovanie kontroly technického stavu najmä v prípadoch, keď technický stav vozidla bezprostredne ohrozuje bezpečnosť cestnej premávky. Súčasne je tiež zámerom, aby bola vzájomne uznávaná platnosť osvedčenia o technickej kontrole, ak je vozidlo znovu zaregistrované v inom členskom štáte, alebo v prípade, že došlo k zmene vlastníctva vozidla a nová registrácia je nutná.

Je zrejmé, že za všetkým týmto úsilím v prvom rade stojí snaha chrániť, resp. zvyšovať bezpečnosť cestnej premávky. Je ale možné prihliadnuť zároveň na skutočnosť, aby spoločne s realizovanými krokmi neprichádzala i zvýšená administratívna záťaž?

Odpoveď pána Kallasa v mene Komisie
(13. septembra 2013)

Komisia si dovoľuje upriamiť pozornosť váženej pani poslankyne na posúdenie vplyvu ([1]) priložené k návrhu nariadenia Európskeho parlamentu a Rady o pravidelných kontrolách technického stavu motorových vozidiel a ich prípojných vozidiel ([2]), ktoré obsahuje analýzu nákladov a prínosov pre občanov, prevádzkovateľov vozidiel, MSP a správne orgány. V dôsledku navrhovaného sprísnenia technickej kontroly motorových vozidiel vyplynul z analýzy pozitívny pomer nákladov a prínosov (1:1.73).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/events-archive/2012_07_13_press_release_en.htm
([2]) COM(2012) 380 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008987/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Rules for the technical inspection of motor vehicles

In order to enhance road safety and to contribute to environmental protection, a proposal has been submitted to Parliament's plenary session in the last few days that aims at improving the way in which inspections of the technical condition of vehicles are carried out, in particular where their technical condition poses an imminent threat to road safety. A further objective is mutual recognition of the validity of technical inspection certificates where a vehicle is re-registered in another Member State, or where there has been a change of ownership of a vehicle and a new registration is required.

It is clear that, first and foremost, the desire to maintain or improve road safety is behind all these efforts. Is it possible, however, to ensure that these steps, when implemented, do not also bring about an increased administrative burden?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

The Commission draws the attention of the Honourable Member to the impact assessment ([1]) accompanying the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and the Council on periodic roadworthiness tests for motorvehicles and their trailers ([2]) which analyses the costs and benefits for citizens, vehicle operators, SMEs and administrations. The analysis demonstrates a positive cost-benefit ratio of 1:1.73 as a result of the proposed enhancement of the technical inspection of motor vehicles.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/events-archive/2012_07_13_press_release_en.htm
([2]) COM(2012) 380 final.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-008988/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Ochrana obetí násilia

Európska komisia v uplynulom období predložila návrh na vznik európskeho ochranného príkazu. Ministrami spravodlivosti jednotlivých členských štátov bol tento návrh akceptovaný. Je nevyhnutne dôležité, aby bola obetiam násilia poskytovaná potrebná ochrana a mohli sa domôcť rešpektovania a napĺňania svojich práv. Nové nariadenie nadobúda platnosť a pôsobnosť v rámci celej Európskej únie. To znamená, že súdny príkaz vydaný v domácej krajine je platným vo všetkých členských štátoch, kdekoľvek by sa ten-ktorý občan zdržiaval.

Akým spôsobom chce Komisia zabezpečiť, aby jednotlivé členské krajiny v záujme ochrany svojich občanov uplatňovali predmetný ochranný príkaz zodpovedne a v plnom rozsahu?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(30. augusta 2013)

V predošlej odpovedi ([1]) na podobnú otázku váženej pani poslankyne bola uvedená povaha právneho rámca EÚ, pokiaľ ide o ochranné príkazy: predmetná smernica ([2]) ako aj predmetné nariadenie ([3]) sa týkajú vzájomného uznávania. Žiadny z týchto predpisov nezasahuje do vnútroštátnych systémov, ktoré sa vzťahujú na nariaďovanie ochranných opatrení. Členským štátom sa nimi neukladá povinnosť zmeniť svoje vnútroštátne systémy, aby sa tým umožnilo nariaďovanie ochranných opatrení v občianskych (alebo trestných) veciach, ani zaviesť nové opatrenia na účely uplatňovania týchto nástrojov ([4]). Predmetné nariadenie má navyše samovykonávací charakter; ide o akt s priamym právnym účinkom, ktorý môžu chránené osoby vymáhať pred vnútroštátnymi súdmi.

Predošlá odpoveď okrem toho zaväzuje členské štáty v súlade so smernicou o obetiach ([5]) zabezpečiť dostupné opatrenia na ochranu obetí ([6]) a ich rodinných príslušníkov. Hoci smernica o obetiach explicitne neharmonizuje vnútroštátne ochranné príkazy, je zrejmé, že členské štáty by sa mali v rámci vnútroštátnej legislatívy zaoberať potrebou ochrany.

([1]) E-8126/13.
([2]) Smernica 2011/99/EÚ z 13. decembra 2011 o európskom ochrannom príkaze.
([3]) Nariadenie (EÚ) č. 606/2013 o vzájomnom uznávaní ochranných opatrení v občianskych veciach.
([4]) Pozri odôvodnenie 12 nariadenia (EÚ) č. 606/2013 a odôvodnenie 8 a článok 5 smernice 2011/99/EÚ.
([5]) Smernica Európskeho parlamentu a Rady 2012/29/EÚ z 25. októbra 2012, ktorou sa stanovujú minimálne normy v oblasti práv, podpory a ochrany obetí trestných činov.
([6]) Článok 18 „Bez toho, aby bolo dotknuté právo na obhajobu, členské štáty zabezpečia, aby boli dostupné opatrenia na ochranu obetí a ich rodinných príslušníkov pred sekundárnou a opakovanou viktimizáciou, zastrašovaním a pomstou vrátane ochrany pred rizikom emocionálnej alebo psychickej ujmy spôsobenej obetiam a na ochranu ich dôstojnosti počas výsluchu a svedeckej výpovede“.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008988/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Protecting victims of violence

The Commission has recently put forward a proposal for the creation of a European protection order. The justice ministers of the Member States have accepted the proposal. It is essential that victims of violence are afforded the necessary protection and are able to obtain respect and exercise their rights. The new regulation will enter into force throughout the European Union. This means that an injunction obtained in the home country will be valid in any Member State in which the citizen is located.

How does the Commission intend to ensure that individual Member States enforce injunctions responsibly and fully in order to protect their citizens?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(30 August 2013)

The previous reply ([1]) to a similar question of the Honourable Member indicated the nature of the EU legal framework on protection orders: both the directive ([2]) and the regulation ([3]) deal with the mutual recognition. Neither interferes with the national systems for ordering protection measures. They do not oblige the Member States to modify their national systems so as to enable such measures to be ordered in civil (or criminal) matters, or to introduce new measures for the application of these instruments ([4]). Moreover, the regulation is a self-executing, directly applicable act, enforceable by the protected persons before the national courts.

In addition, the previous reply as indicated in the Victims Directive ([5]) obliges Member States to provide for available measures to protect victims ([6]) and their family members. Albeit the Victims Directive does not harmonise national protection orders explicitly, it is understood that Member States should address the protection needs of individuals under national legislation.

([1]) E-8126/13.
([2]) Directive 2011/99/EU of 13 December 2011 on the European protection order.
([3]) Regulation (EU) 606/2013 on mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters.
([4]) See Recital 12 of the Regulation (EU) 606/2013 and Recital 8 and Article 5 of Directive 2011/99/EU.
([5]) Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime.
([6]) Article 18 'Without prejudice to the rights of the defence, Member States shall ensure that measures are available to protect victims and their family members from secondary and repeat victimisation, from intimidation and from retaliation, including against the risk of emotional or psychological harm, and to protect the dignity of victims during questioning and when testifying'.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-008989/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Práva utečencov a rasizmus

Medzi hlavné úlohy Európskej únie patrí ochrana základných ľudských práv a slobôd jej občanov. Napriek tomu dochádza k hrubému zaobchádzaniu s utečencami z Afriky a z Ázie a otvorenému rasizmu voči rómskemu etniku. Napriek predchádzajúcim sľubom Európskej komisie zo strany Francúzska bolo v prvom štvrťroku 2012 vysťahovaných 9 000 občanov rómskeho etnika, pričom dochádzalo k nerešpektovaniu medzinárodných záruk zo strany miestnych úradov. Francúzska polícia odignorovala nové pravidlá v oblasti etnického profilovania a kontroly osobných dokladov. Problém nerešpektovania základných ľudských práv sa objavil aj v Nemecku, ktoré odmietlo udeliť utečenecký status 195 osobám z Tuniska a 105 z Iraku. V Taliansku pokračuje umiestňovanie Rómov do etnicky segregovaných táborov. Podobné problémy sa vyskytujú aj v mnohých ďalších členských krajinách.

Aký je názor Komisie na nerešpektovanie nových pravidiel v oblasti etnického profilovania a kontroly osobných dokladov zo strany niektorých členských štátov?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(4. októbra 2013)

Európska komisia opakovane odsúdila všetky formy a prejavy netolerancie vrátane diskriminačného profilovania, keďže sa nezlučujú s hlavnými hodnotami, na ktorých je EÚ založená. Pozorne túto situáciu sleduje a vyjadruje znepokojenie nad akýmikoľvek prejavmi rasizmu alebo xenofóbie v EÚ.

Podľa rámcového rozhodnutia 2008/913/SVV sú členské štáty povinné postihovať úmyselné verejné podnecovanie k násiliu alebo nenávisti na základe rasy, farby pleti, náboženského vyznania, pôvodu či národného alebo etnického pôvodu. Správu o vykonávacích opatrenia členských štátov Komisia uverejní v decembri 2013. Potrebné je však poznamenať, že vyšetrovanie akýchkoľvek prípadov šírenia nenávisti a trestných činov z nenávisti, ako aj stíhanie páchateľov takýchto deliktov náleží vnútroštátnym orgánom.

Pokiaľ ide o štátnych príslušníkov tretích krajín, ktorí sú žiadateľmi o azyl v niektorom členskom štáte EÚ, tak žiadosti týchto osôb sa musia posúdiť v plnom súlade s platnými ustanoveniami práva Únie. To stanovuje jasné normy, ktoré sa majú uplatňovať v súvislosti s poskytovaním podmienok prijímania, postupy, ktoré sa majú dodržiavať a kritériá, ktoré sa majú zohľadniť pri posudzovaní potrieb v oblasti ochrany.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008989/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: The rights of refugees and racism

Among the main roles of the European Union is to protect the fundamental human rights and freedoms of its citizens. Yet refugees from Africa and Asia are treated harshly, and there is overt racism towards the Roma ethnic group. Despite an earlier promise made by France to the Commission, 9 000 Roma citizens were removed during the first quarter of 2012 and the local authorities disregarded international guarantees. French police ignored the new rules relating to ethnic profiling and the checking of identity documents. The problem of non-respect for basic human rights also surfaced in Germany, which refused to grant refugee status to 195 people from Tunisia and 105 from Iraq. In Italy, Roma continue to be placed in ethnically segregated camps. Similar problems are arising in many other Member States.

What is the Commission's opinion on the failure of some Member States to comply with the new rules on ethnic profiling and the checking of identity documents?

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

The European Commission has repeatedly condemned all forms and manifestations of intolerance, including discriminatory profiling, as they are incompatible with the principal values the EU is founded on. It is closely following the situation and is concerned about any racist or xenophobic incidents emerging in the EU.

According to Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA, Member States are obliged to penalise the intentional public incitement to violence or hatred on the basis of race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin. The Commission will publish a report on Member States' implementing measures in December 2013. It should, however, be noted that it is for national authorities to investigate any instances of hate speech or hate crime and to prosecute the perpetrators of such offences.

As regards third-country nationals who apply for asylum in an EU Member State, such persons must have their applications considered in full compliance with the applicable provisions of Union law, which set out clear standards to be adhered to in terms of the reception conditions to be offered, the procedures to be followed, and the criteria to be taken into account in assessing protection needs.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-008990/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Ekologická náplň R1234yf v osobných automobiloch

Problematika globálneho otepľovania a podpora ekológie patria medzi hlavné priority Európskej únie v súčasnosti. O spomalenie procesu globálneho otepľovania sa Európska komisia snaží aj zakázaním používania chladiaceho média s označením R134a. Od 1. januára 2013 toto médium nesmie nikto používať. Problémom však je, že niektoré automobilky nerešpektujú predmetné nariadenie a naďalej používajú zakázané chladiace médium. Problémom nového chladiaceho média R1234yf je jeho mierna horľavosť, ktorú nepopierajú ani samotní výrobcovia. Pri čelnom náraze v prípade kontaktu kvapaliny s horúcim povrchom motora môže dôjsť k vznieteniu celého automobilu. Do úvahy prichádzajú aj iné spôsoby chladenia, napríklad využívanie CO_2. Vývoj nového systému klimatizácie je časovo a finančne náročný.

Plánuje Komisia presne zadefinovať, akú chladiacu zmes môžu výrobcovia vo svojich automobiloch používať?

Plánuje Komisia sankcie za nedodržiavanie predmetného nariadenia?

Odpoveď pána Tajaniho v mene Komisie
(9. septembra 2013)

V smernici Európskeho parlamentu a Rady 2006/40/ES o emisiách z klimatizačných systémov v motorových vozidlách sa ustanovuje, že s účinnosťou od 1. januára 2011 klimatizačné systémy nových typovo schválených motorových vozidiel musia byť naplnené chladiacim médiom s nízkym potenciálom globálneho otepľovania, avšak nezávisle od technológie a nepredpisuje konkrétne chladiace médium, ktoré sa musí použiť na splnenie tejto povinnosti. Komisia v súčasnosti neplánuje preskúmanie smernice 2006/40/ES, aby určila, ktoré chladiace médiá výrobcovia môžu používať vo vozidlách.

Komisia pravdepodobne nepodnikne opatrenia proti konkrétnym hospodárskym subjektom. V prípadoch nesúladu s predpismi EÚ je potrebné, aby príslušný členský štát, zodpovedný za typové schválenie vozidla, uplatnil vhodné nápravné opatrenia priamo na výrobcu. Je možné, že Komisia začne konania vo veci porušenia právnych predpisov voči členským štátom, ktoré neuplatňujú právne predpisy EÚ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008990/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Ecological filling R1234yf in passenger cars

The issue of global warming and the promotion of ecological awareness are among the main priorities of the European Union at present. The European Commission is striving to slow down the process of global warming by, among other things, prohibiting the use of the refrigerant R134a. Since 1 January 2013, no one has been allowed to use this substance. The problem is, however, that some car manufacturers are failing to comply with the regulation and continue to use the banned refrigerant. The problem with the new refrigerant R1234yf is its moderate flammability, which is not disputed by the manufacturers themselves. In the event of a head-on collision, the whole car may ignite if the liquid comes into contact with the hot surface of the engine. Other cooling methods, such as the use of CO_2, may be considered. The development of a new air-conditioning system is time-consuming and costly.

Does the Commission intend to define exactly what refrigerants manufacturers may use in their vehicles?

Does the Commission plan to impose penalties for non-compliance with the regulation?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(9 September 2013)

Directive 2006/40/EC on mobile air-conditioning (MAC) stipulates that, as of 1 January 2011, MAC of newly approved types of vehicles have to be filled with a refrigerant with a low GWP, but is technology neutral and does not prescribe a specific refrigerant to be used to fulfil this obligation. The Commission is currently not planning to review Directive 2006/40/EC in order to define exactly what refrigerants manufacturers may use in their vehicles.

The Commission may not take action against specific economic operators. In cases of non-compliance with EU legislation, the Member State responsible for the vehicle type-approval needs to apply appropriate corrective measures directly with the manufacturer. The Commission may launch infringement proceedings against Member States not applying EU legislation.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-008991/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Ochrana týraných žien

Európska únia sa usiluje v maximálnej možnej miere zabezpečiť komplexnejšiu ochranu týraným ženám na svojom území. Aby bola naša pomoc účinná, týraným ženám by mal byť umožnený prístup k špecializovaným službám a vyškoleným úradníkom kdekoľvek v Európskej únii. Cieľom nedávno prijatého nariadenia o vzájomnom uznávaní ochranných opatrení je umožniť obetiam cestovať a žiť v členských štátoch Európskej únie bez strachu, že budú sledované a opäť napadnuté rovnakým páchateľom. Nariadenie je súčasťou väčšieho balíka na ochranu obetí vrátane smernice o právach obete, ktorá bola prijatá v novembri minulého roka. Hlavným problémom predmetného nariadenia však ale zostáva terminológia.

Aký je názor Komisie na vyjadrenia určitých odborníkov, že v prípade násilia páchaného na ženách ide o pokračujúci trestný čin, a v tomto zmysle by teda mal byť definovaný?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(24. septembra 2013)

Násilie páchané voči ženám, a to najmä vo vzťahoch, je zložitým problémom a môže zahŕňať širokú škálu trestných činov vrátane pokračujúcich trestných činov.

Práve kvôli týmto často pretrvávajúcim hrozbám môžu všetky obete, a najmä obete rodového násilia ([1]), využívať súčasný právny rámec EÚ v oblasti ochranných príkazov ([2]).

Obeť môže vo svojom novom mieste pobytu alebo v mieste svojho nového bydliska v EÚ buď požiadať, aby sa ochranné opatrenie uznalo podľa zrýchleného postupu na obmedzený čas (12 mesiacov) na základe nariadenia (EÚ) č. 606/2013 ([3]), alebo požiadať o jeho neobmedzené uznanie podľa nariadenia Brusel I ([4]). Obeť sa môže tiež rozhodnúť pre uplatnenie nového ochranného opatrenia, ktoré je k dispozícii podľa vnútroštátneho práva členského štátu jej nového miesta pobytu.

Pokiaľ ide o pripomienky váženej pani poslankyne týkajúce sa terminológie v nariadení (EÚ) č. 606/2013, toto nariadenie sa vzťahuje aj na situácie, ktoré presahujú rámec násilia páchaného voči ženám. Preto sa nezdá, že by bolo potrebné osobitne vymedziť akty, proti ktorým by obeť mala byť chránená.

([1]) Pozri odôvodnenie 6 nariadenia. V podobnom odôvodnení 9 uvedenej smernice sa však požaduje ochrana „zohľadňujúc pritom osobitosti každého druhu trestného činu“.

([2]) Smernica 2011/99/EÚ z 13. decembra 2011 o európskom ochrannom príkaze a nariadenie (EÚ) č. 606/2013 o vzájomnom uznávaní ochranných opatrení v občianskych veciach.

([3]) Pozri článok 4 ods. 4 a odôvodnenia 15 až 17 nariadenia (EÚ) č. 606/2013.

([4]) Nariadenie Rady (ES) č. 44/2001 o právomoci a o uznávaní a výkone rozsudkov v občianskych a obchodných veciach.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008991/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Protecting abused women

The European Union is making every possible effort to ensure the comprehensive protection of abused women in its territory. In order for our assistance to be effective, abused women should be given access to specialist services and trained officials anywhere in the European Union. The aim of the recently adopted Regulation on mutual recognition of protection measures is to enable victims to travel and live in EU Member States without fear of being stalked and attacked again by the same offender. The regulation is part of a larger package for the protection of victims that includes a directive on the rights of victims, which was adopted in November last year. The main problem in the regulation in question, however, remains the terminology.

What is the Commission's view on the statements of certain experts that violence against women is a continuing offence, and that it should thus be defined as one?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(24 September 2013)

Violence against women, in particular in relationships is complex and may include a wide variety of offences, including continuing offences.

It is because of these often persisting threats that all victims, and in particular victims of gender-based violence ([1]) can benefit from current EU legal framework on protection orders ([2]).

The victim, in her new place of stay or residence in the EU, can either apply to have the protection measure recognised following a fast track procedure for a limited period of time (12 months) on basis of the regulation (EU) 606/2013 ([3]) or invoke its unlimited recognition under Regulation Brussels I ([4]). The victim can also choose to apply for a new protection measure available under the national law of the Member State of her new residence.

With regard to the comment of the Honourable Member concerning the terminology in Regulation (EU) 606/2013, not only does the regulation cover situations which go beyond violence against women, moreover it does not appear to be necessary to specifically define the acts against which the victim may be protected.

([1]) See Recital 6 of the regulation. Similar Recital 9 of the directive calls, however, for 'taking into account the specificities of each type of crime concerned'.

([2]) Directive 2011/99/EU of 13 December 2011 on the European protection order and Regulation (EU) 606/2013 on mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters.

([3]) See Article 4(4) and recitals 15-17 of the regulation(EU) 606/2013.

([4]) Council Regulation (EC) No 44/2001 on jurisdiction and the recognition and enforcement of judgments in civil and commercial matters.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-008992/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Reforma schengenského priestoru

Vytvorenie schengenského priestoru a s tým spojený voľný pohyb osôb v rámci Európskej únie prináša benefity do každodenného života občanov Európskej únie. Európsky parlament schválil na svojom júnovom zasadnutí reformu schengenského priestoru pridaním nariadenia o schengenskom hodnotiacom mechanizme a novelizáciou nariadenia o Kódexe schengenských hraníc. Novelizácia prináša presnejšie zadefinovanie pojmov a okolností, ktoré vedú k znovuzavedeniu kontrol na hraniciach. Komisia predmetnou novelizáciou sleduje, aby sa neopakovala situácia z roku 2011, keď Francúzsko žiadalo o znovuzavedenie kontrol z dôvodu masívnej ekonomickej migrácie z inej členskej krajiny Európskej únie.

Nepovažuje Komisia masívnu migráciu štátnych príslušníkov tretej krajiny za ohrozenie vnútornej bezpečnosti a verejného poriadku?

Odpoveď pani Malmströmovej v mene Komisie
(25. septembra 2013)

V súlade s návrhom nariadenia, ktorým sa mení Kódex schengenských hraníc, o ktorom sa zmieňuje vážená pani poslankyňa ([1]), môže členský štát v prípade závažného ohrozenia verejného poriadku alebo vnútornej bezpečnosti výnimočne obnoviť na obmedzený čas kontrolu vnútorných hraníc. Ak členský štát prijme takéto rozhodnutie, musí posúdiť mieru pravdepodobnosti toho, že predmetné opatrenie primerane odstráni hrozbu pre verejný poriadok alebo vnútornú bezpečnosť a tiež posúdiť proporcionalitu opatrenia vo vzťahu k tejto hrozbe.

Ako vyplýva z tohto návrhu nariadenia, migrácia a prekročenie vonkajších hraníc veľkým počtom štátnych príslušníkov tretích krajín by sa ako také nemali považovať za závažné ohrozenie verejného poriadku alebo vnútornej bezpečnosti. Pokiaľ by však veľký počet štátnych príslušníkov tretej krajiny prekročil vonkajšiu hranicu, môže sa dočasné obnovenie kontroly vnútorných hraníc považovať za odôvodnené, ale iba ak okolnosti predstavujú vážne ohrozenie verejného poriadku alebo vnútornej bezpečnosti a ak toto opatrenie predstavuje adekvátnu nápravu. Či ide o takýto prípad alebo nie, je potrebné posúdiť v každom prípade zvlášť, pričom sa zohľadnia uvedené kritériá.

([1]) Legislatívne uznesenie Európskeho parlamentu z 12. júna 2013 o návrhu nariadenia Európskeho parlamentu a Rady, ktorým sa mení nariadenie (ES) č. 562/2006 s cieľom stanoviť spoločné pravidlá pri dočasnom obnovení kontroly vnútorných hraníc za mimoriadnych okolností (KOM(2011)0560 – C7-0248/2011 – 2011/0242(COD)).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008992/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Reform of the Schengen area

The creation of the Schengen area and the associated free movement of people within the European Union bring benefits to the everyday lives of EU citizens. At its June session, Parliament approved a reform of the Schengen area through the addition of a regulation on the Schengen evaluation mechanism and the amendment of the regulation on the Schengen Borders Code. The amendment provides a more precise definition of terms and the circumstances under which border controls might be reintroduced. The Commission is monitoring the amendment in question so as to avoid a repeat of the situation in 2011, when France called for the reintroduction of controls due to massive economic migration from another EU Member State.

Does the Commission not consider the mass migration of third-country nationals to be a threat to internal security and public order?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(25 September 2013)

In accordance with the draft regulation amending the Schengen Borders Code referred to by the Honourable Member ([1]), a Member State may, where there is a serious threat to public policy or internal security, exceptionally reintroduce border control at internal borders for a limited period of time. When a Member State takes such a decision, it shall assess the extent to which such a measure is likely to adequately remedy the threat to public policy or internal security, and it shall assess the proportionality of the measure in relation to that threat.

Following the same draft regulation, migration and the crossing of external borders by a large number of third-country nationals should not, per se, be considered to be a serious threat to public policy or to internal security. Indeed, if a large number of third-country nationals cross the external border, the temporary reintroduction of internal border controls might be justified, but only if the circumstances constitute a serious threat to public policy or to internal security and if this measure would constitute an adequat remedy. Whether this is the case or not needs to be assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the abovementioned criteria.

([1]) European Parliament legislative resolution of 12 June 2013 on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 562/2006 in order to provide for common rules on the temporary reintroduction of border control at internal borders in exceptional circumstances (COM(2011)0560 — C7-0248/2011 — 2011/0242(COD)).

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-008993/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Spoločná poľnohospodárska politika na obdobie rokov 2014 – 2020

V súčasnosti prebiehajú v Luxemburgu rokovania o konečnej podobe rozsiahlej reformy spoločnej poľnohospodárskej politiky. Reforma sa snaží riešiť aktuálne problémy pri rozdeľovaní dotácií a zároveň nahradiť súčasné prepojenie platieb a historickej úrovne produkcie v mnohých častiach Európy. Najväčší zamestnávatelia v rámci poľnohospodárstva zrejme prídu o 30 % súčasných dotácií. Je zrejmé, že značná pozornosť bude zameraná na ekologické opatrenia, ktoré však môžu mať negatívny dopad na produkciu potravín v regióne. Viacerí odborníci však upozorňujú na to, že reforma sa nevyrovnala s otázkou diskriminácie v podporách, pretože počíta s ďalšou diskrimináciu poľnohospodárov z oblasti strednej a východnej Európy na úkor ich západoeurópskej konkurencie. Vyrovnávanie rozdielov medzi regiónmi a vytváranie zdravého podnikateľského prostredia by ale v modernej Európe už malo byť samozrejmosťou.

Akým spôsobom chce Komisia zdôvodniť nevyrovnanie platieb pre staré a nové členské krajiny Európskej únie v oblasti poľnohospodárstva v programovom období 2014 – 2020?

Neplánuje Komisia ponechať vymedzenie citlivých sektorov v národnej kompetencii?

Odpoveď pána Cioloşa v mene Komisie
(10. septembra 2013)

Vo svojej odpovedi na písomnú otázku P-008917/11 ([1]) Komisia uznala, že je čoraz zložitejšie odôvodniť existenciu výrazných rozdielov medzi priamymi platbami na hektár v rámci členských štátov. Z rozdielov medzi jednotlivými štátmi v oblasti hospodárstva však vyplýva, že spoločná „paušálna sadzba“ nie je vhodným riešením a spravodlivé rozdelenie nemusí znamenať rovnakú výšku podpory pre všetkých.

Výsledkom medzinštitucionálnej politickej agendy z júna 2013 – pod podmienkou, že dôjde k potvrdeniu nového viacročného finančného rámca – je teda progresívne prispôsobenie úrovne priamej podpory na hektár medzi členskými štátmi („vonkajšia konvergencia“).

Ide o odklon od (predchádzajúcich) odkazov týkajúcich sa podpory. V prípade tých členských štátov, v ktorých je úroveň priamych platieb na hektár pod 90 % priemeru EÚ to znamená progresívne zvýšenie, vrátane národného priemerného minima 196 EUR na hektár pre všetky členské štáty do roku 2019, financované proporcionálne členskými štátmi, v ktorých je úroveň nad priemerom EÚ.

To by malo zabezpečiť spravodlivejšiu, efektívnejšiu a transparentnejšiu SPP.

Čo sa týka rozsahu zodpovednosti jednotlivých štátov, v novej SPP sa uznáva rôznorodosť podmienok v EÚ a umožňuje sa členským štátom zaoberať sa svojimi špecifickými potrebami s väčšou pružnosťou pri vykonávaní v rámci dobre definovaných regulačných a rozpočtových limitov s cieľom zabezpečiť rovnaké podmienky a snažiť sa o dosiahnutie spoločných cieľov.

To sa týka niekoľkých aspektov vrátane výberu sektorov/regiónov so špecifickými ťažkosťami v prípade viazanej podpory (zo zoznamu oprávnených sektorov a v rámci určitých limitov).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008993/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: The common agricultural policy for 2014-2020

Negotiations are currently underway in Luxembourg concerning the final form of an extensive reform of the common agricultural policy. The reform seeks to address the current problems in the allocation of subsidies and to replace the existing linking of payments and historical production levels in many parts of Europe. The largest employers in agriculture are likely to lose 30% of their current subsidies. It is clear that much attention will be focused on environmental measures, but those measures may have a negative impact on regional food production. Several experts, however, point out that the reform does not address the issue of discrimination in aid, since it is expected that farmers in central and eastern Europe will continue to be discriminated against, to the benefit of their western European competitors. Yet evening out the disparities between regions and creating a healthy business environment should be taken for granted in modern Europe.

How does the Commission intend to justify the inequality in payments for old and new EU Member States in agriculture in the 2014-2020 programming period?

Is the Commission intending the definition of sensitive sectors to remain a national responsibility?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2013)

In its answer to Written Question P-008917/11 ([1]), the Commission acknowledged that significant differences in direct payments per ha between Member States are increasingly difficult to justify. Yet inter-state differences in economic situation make a common 'flat rate' inappropriate and an equitable distribution does not necessarily mean equal support for all.

Thus, what emerged from the interinstitutional political agreement of June 2013 — subject to confirmation of the new Multiannual Financial Framework — is a progressive adjustment of the direct support per ha level between Member States ('external convergence').

This constitutes a shift away from (historical) references of support. For those with a level of direct payments per ha below 90% of the EU average, it implies a progressive increase — including a national average of minimum EUR 196 per ha for all Member States by 2019 — financed proportionally by Member States above the EU average.

This should ensure a more equitable, more effective and more transparent CAP.

On the extent of national responsibilities the new CAP acknowledges the diversity of conditions across the EU and allows Member States to address their specific needs through greater flexibility in implementation within well-defined regulatory and budgetary limits in order to ensure a level-playing field and the strive for common objectives.

This applies to several aspects including the choice of sectors / regions with specific difficulties for coupled support (among a list of eligible sectors and within certain limits).

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

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-008994/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Budúcnosť fondu pre najodkázanejších

Fond európskej pomoci pre najodkázanejšie osoby by mal v nasledujúcich rokoch nahradiť súčasný program EÚ na distribúciu potravín, ktorý bol pôvodne navrhnutý s cieľom efektívne využiť potravinové prebytky v rámci spoločnej poľnohospodárskej politiky na nákup základnej materiálnej pomoci pre najchudobnejších. Komisia má vnútroštátne programy následne schváliť, pričom vnútroštátne orgány si vyberajú na distribúciu partnerské organizácie. Podľa viacerých štatistík tento fond môže pomôcť 2 miliónom ľudí ročne, čo však predstavuje len minimálne percento ľudí, ktorí sa nachádzajú v materiálnej núdzi. Objavili sa aj názory, ktoré poukazujú na neefektívne prerozdeľovanie finančných prostriedkov.

Je vhodné, aby partnerské organizácie na distribúciu potravín a tovaru vyberali vnútroštátne orgány? Ako bude Komisia posudzovať vhodnosť týchto organizácií?

Uvažuje Komisia o navýšení fondu pre najodkázanejších v programovom období 2014 – 2020?

Bude Komisia presadzovať povinnú účasť členských štátov na programe?

Odpoveď pána Andora v mene Komisie
(5. septembra 2013)

Pokiaľ ide o prvú otázku, Komisia odporúča váženej pani poslankyni konzultovať odpoveď na písomnú otázku E-003636/2013 ([1]). Ako sa uvádza v danej odpovedi, Fond európskej pomoci pre najodkázanejšie osoby bude fungovať so zdieľaným hospodárením. Riadenie všetkých vnútroštátnych operačných programov vrátane zodpovednosti za výber partnerských organizácií teda patrí do kompetencie jednotlivých členských štátov.

Členské štáty však budú musieť opísať kritériá výberu týchto organizácií v operačnom programe (OP), ktorý bude musieť schváliť Komisia. V hodnotení návrhu OP Komisiou sa zohľadní rešpektovanie zásady riadneho finančného hospodárenia v súlade s článkom 5 návrhu nariadenia.

Komisiu teší dohoda, ku ktorej došlo medzi Parlamentom a Radou, pokiaľ ide o dotovanie Fondu európskej pomoci pre najodkázanejšie osoby (Fonds européen d'aide aux plus démunis, FEAD) povinným rozpočtom v sume 2,5 miliardy EUR, spolu s jednou miliardou EUR, ktorú budú môcť členské štáty uvoľniť na dobrovoľnom základe.

Tiež poznamenáva, že v tejto dohode sa stanovuje povinná mobilizácia v prospech FEAD, ktorá sa týka všetkých členských štátov.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008994/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Future of the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived

In the next few years, the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived should replace the current European Food Distribution Programme, which was originally proposed in order to make effective use of food surpluses under the common agricultural policy for the purchase of basic material assistance for the poorest. The Commission should then approve national programmes, with the national authorities selecting partner organisations for distribution. According to a number of statistics, the fund could help 2 million people a year, but this is only a minimal percentage of those who are in material need. Opinions have also been aired that point to the inefficient redistribution of funds.

Is it appropriate that the partner organisations for the distribution of food and goods are selected by national authorities? How will the Commission assess the suitability of these organisations?

Is the Commission considering increasing the fund for the most deprived in the 2014-2020 programming period?

Will the Commission enforce the mandatory participation of Member States in the programme?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(5 septembre 2013)

En ce qui concerne la première question, la Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à se référer à la réponse apportée à la question écrite E-003636/2013 ([1]). Comme indiqué dans cette réponse, le Fond européen d'aide aux plus démunis sera mis en œuvre en gestion partagé. La gestion de chaque programme opérationnel national, y compris la responsabilité de sélection des organisations partenaires, relevant donc de la responsabilité de chaque État membre.

Toutefois, les États membres devront décrire les critères de sélection de ces organisations dans le programme opérationnel (PO) que la Commission devra approuver. L'évaluation de la proposition du PO par la Commission va prendre en compte le respect du principe de bonne gestion financière en accord avec l'article 5 de la proposition du règlement.

La Commission se réjouit de l'accord intervenu entre le Parlement et le Conseil de doter le Fonds européen d'aide aux plus démunis (FEAD) d'un budget obligatoire de 2,5 milliards d'euros, renforcé d'un milliard d'euros que les États membres pourront mobiliser sur base volontaire.

Elle note aussi que cet accord prévoit effectivement une mobilisation du FEAD obligatoire pour tous les États membres.

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

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-008995/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Pomoc členským štátom pri odstraňovaní následkov povodní

Ničivé povodne zasiahli krajiny strednej Európy. Členské štáty zápasia s následkami povodní, ktoré sužujú ich obyvateľov v už aj tak náročnom období hospodárskej krízy. V dôsledku konsolidačných opatrení a škrtov vo všetkých oblastiach, ktoré vlády členských štátov neustále presadzujú, nezostáva v rozpočtoch dostatok finančných prostriedkov na boj s následkami povodní. Škody spôsobené povodňami by mali byť nahradzované z Fondu solidarity, ten však momentálne nie je schopný pokryť výdavky spojené s odstraňovaním následkov, ktoré povodne spôsobili. Členské štáty rokujú o doplnkovom rozpočte na rok 2013, ale ani tieto dodatočné výdavky nebudú stačiť. Pomoc od Európskej únie by teda mohla doraziť najskôr na budúci rok.

Aké kroky plánuje uskutočniť Komisia na zabezpečenie okamžitej pomoci obyvateľom postihnutých regiónov?

Uvažuje Komisia o poskytnutí výnimky z pravidiel čerpania z Fondu solidarity pre členské štáty postihnuté povodňami?

Odpoveď pána Hahna v mene Komisie
(5. septembra 2013)

Fond solidarity EÚ je financovaný z rozpočtových prostriedkov, ktoré nad rámec bežného rozpočtu EÚ navyšuje Parlament a Rada. Maximálna ročná výška vyčlenených prostriedkov v rámci tohto fondu na rok 2013 je 1 miliarda EUR, z čoho väčšia časť je stále k dispozícii.

Komisiu už začiatkom tohto roka požiadalo o pomoc z Fondu solidarity v súvislosti so záplavami Nemecko, Rakúsko, Česká republika a Maďarsko. Komisia sa týmito žiadosťami plánuje zaoberať ako jedným balíkom a v prípade splnenia podmienok navrhne uvoľnenie prostriedkov z fondu ešte v rámci prostriedkov pridelených na tento rok na jeseň. Pomoc by bolo možné vyplatiť ihneď po jej schválení Parlamentom a Radou.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008995/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Assistance to Member States in overcoming the consequences of the floods

Devastating floods have hit the countries of Central Europe. Member States are struggling with the consequences of the floods, which have afflicted their populations in an already difficult period of economic crisis. As a result of the consolidation measures and cuts constantly being made in all areas by national governments, budgets no longer contain sufficient funds in to counter the effects of the floods. Compensation for flood damage should be provided from the Solidarity Fund, but the Fund is not currently able to cover the expenses associated with overcoming the consequences of the floods. Negotiations are taking place between the Member States on a supplementary budget for 2013, but not even this extra expenditure will be enough. Assistance from the European Union would therefore arrive next year at the earliest.

What steps does the Commission plan to take to provide immediate assistance to those living in the affected regions?

Is the Commission considering granting a derogation from the rules on drawing from the Solidarity Fund for the Member States affected by the floods?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

The EU Solidarity Fund is financed from appropriations to be raised by Parliament and the Council over and above the normal EU budget. The maximum annual allocation of the Fund in 2013 is EUR 1 billion of which the major part is still available.

The Commission has already received applications for Solidarity Fund aid relating to the floods earlier this year from Germany, Austria, Czech Republic and Hungary. The Commission intends dealing with these applications as a package and will — if the conditions are met — propose the mobilisation of the Fund still under this year's allocation in the autumn. Aid could be paid out as soon Parliament and Council have approved it.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-008996/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Zhoršujúca sa situácia občanov rómskeho etnika v Európe

V roku 2011 bol prijatý rámec pre vnútroštátne stratégie integrácie Rómov. Išlo o významný krok vpred, ktorý mal zlepšiť kvalitu života a zároveň pomôcť Rómom k lepšiemu začleneniu do spoločnosti a v neposlednom rade priniesť zvýšenie životnej úrovne pre 10 – 12 miliónov rómskych občanov žijúcich v Európskej únii. Realita je však iná, a v roku 2013 sa 1 z 5 občanov rómskej národnosti stal obeťou napadnutia, vyhrážania alebo iného rasovo motivovaného trestného činu. Stratégia, ktorá bola prijatá, v praxi zlyháva, čo má negatívne následky pre rómsku komunitu. Treba odstrániť byrokratické prekážky v členských štátoch, pretože peniaze, ktoré sú určené na pomoc a rozvoj rómskej komunity, sa väčšinou strácajú skôr, než by mohli skutočne pomôcť tým, ktorí to potrebujú. Je potrebné, aby Komisia tlačila na členské štáty a kontrolovala využívanie finančných prostriedkov, ako aj zabezpečila participáciu Rómov v procese vytvárania politík a stratégii, ktoré im zabezpečia uplatnenie v spoločnosti a plnohodnotný život.

Aké stratégie zamerané na zlepšenie zlej situácie Rómov pripravuje Komisia do budúcna, keďže doposiaľ prijaté stratégie sa ukazujú ako neúčinné?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(9. septembra 2013)

Komisia rieši otázku integrácie Rómov viacerými spôsobmi. Monitoruje pokrok, ktorý členské štáty dosiahli v kontexte rámca EÚ pre vnútroštátne stratégie integrácie Rómov, ako aj v rámci procesu Európa 2020. Okrem toho stanovila sociálne začlenenie rómskych komunít za jednu z priorít súčasného a budúceho programovacieho obdobia štrukturálnych fondov EÚ.

Dňa 26. júna 2013 Komisia prijala svoju druhú správu o posúdení ([1]), v ktorej sa hodnotí, ako sú zabezpečené potrebné predpoklady na úspešnú a udržateľnú implementáciu stratégií. V správe sa konštatuje, že hoci členské štáty dosiahli určitý pokrok, na konkrétnych miestach napreduje zlepšovanie príliš pomaly. Komisia preto zabezpečí výmenu skúseností s vnútroštátnymi kontaktnými miestami pre integráciu Rómov a ďalšími vnútroštátnymi orgánmi zapojenými do integrácie Rómov. Na budúci rok Komisia zhodnotí dosiahnutý pokrok.

Spolu s uvedenou správou Komisia prijala návrh na odporúčanie Rady s cieľom zvýšiť účinnosť opatrení na dosiahnutie integrácie Rómov ([2]). Návrh je v súčasnosti predmetom rokovania pracovnej skupiny pre sociálne otázky v Rade.

Komisia takisto navrhla celý rad zlepšení na obdobie financovania 2014 – 2020 vrátane minimálnej výšky prídelu finančných prostriedkov na oblasť sociálneho začlenania a chudoby (20 % Európskeho sociálneho fondu) a územného zacielenia finančných prostriedkov na skupiny, ktorým hrozí najväčšie riziko vylúčenia.

V rámci procesu Európa 2020 päť členských štátov dostalo odporúčania pre jednotlivé krajiny týkajúce sa Rómov: Bulharsko, Česká republika, Maďarsko, Rumunsko a Slovensko.

([1]) „Kroky vpred pri implementácii vnútroštátnych stratégií integrácie Rómov“, COM(2013) 454 final.
([2]) COM(2013) 460 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008996/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: The worsening situation of Roma citizens in Europe

In 2011, a framework for national Roma integration strategies was adopted. This was a significant step forward that should have improved the quality of life of Roma, helped them to integrate better into society and, not least, brought about a higher standard of living for the 10-12 million Roma citizens living in the European Union. The reality is different, however, and in 2013, one in five Roma citizens became victims of assault, threats or other racially motivated crime. The strategy that was adopted is failing in practice, with negative consequences for the Roma community. The bureaucratic obstacles in the Member States must be removed, because money intended to help and develop the Roma community is, for the most part, lost before it can actually help those who need it. The Commission needs to press the Member States and monitor the use of funds, as well as ensure the participation of Roma in the process of developing policies and strategies to ensure that they play a role in society and lead fulfilling lives.

Since the strategies adopted so far are proving ineffective, what strategies aimed at improving the difficult situation of the Roma is the Commission preparing for the future?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(9 September 2013)

The Commission is tackling Roma integration in various aspects. It monitors progress made by the Member States within the context of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies and also within the Europe 2020 process. It has also made social inclusion of Roma communities one of the priorities for the current and next programming periods of EU Structural Funds.

On 26 June 2013, the Commission adopted its second assessment report ([1]) which assesses how the necessary preconditions have been secured for a successful and sustainable implementation of the strategies. The report found that while some progress has been made by Member States, improvement on the ground remains too slow. Therefore, the Commission will pursue exchanges with the National Contact Points for Roma integration and other national authorities involved in Roma inclusion. The Commission will assess next year progress made.

Jointly with this report, the Commission adopted its proposal for a Council Recommendation in order to enhance the effectiveness of measures to achieve Roma integration ([2]). The proposal is currently discussed within the Social Questions Working Party of the Council.

The Commission has also proposed a series of improvements for the 2014-2020 funding period including a minimum allocation for social inclusion and poverty (20% of the European Social Fund) and geographical targeting of the funds for groups at highest risk of exclusion.

Within the context of the Europe 2020 process, five Member States received country specific recommendations on Roma: Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia.

([1]) 'Steps forward in implementing National Roma Integration Strategies', COM(2013) 454 final.
([2]) COM(2013) 460 final.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-008997/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Podpora a oživenie starých priemyselných regiónov

Europarlament schválil uznesenie o spôsoboch, ktorými by sa mal zvrátiť úpadok priemyslu v niekdajších prosperujúcich regiónoch. Štáty s rozvinutou industriálnou bázou znášajú dôsledky krízy lepšie ako ostatné. Po finančnej stránke by mohlo byť nápomocné napríklad sprístupnenie Kohézneho fondu a štrukturálnych fondov alebo finančné inžinierstvo Európskej investičnej banky, ako aj vnútroštátne, regionálne a komunálne politiky hospodárskeho rozvoja. Veľa bývalých priemyselných oblastí tiež disponuje veľkými možnosťami na zvýšenie energetickej účinnosti prostredníctvom využitia moderných technológií a stavebných noriem, ktoré by prospeli regionálnemu hospodárstvu a životnému prostrediu. Existuje tu však obava, že finančné prostriedky sa dostanú len k veľkým podnikom a strední a malí podnikatelia ostanú bokom.

Aké prostriedky chce Komisia použiť, aby sa dostalo spravodlivej finančnej pomoci aj malým a stredným podnikom?

Odpoveď pána Hahna v mene Komisie
(18. septembra 2013)

V rámci politiky súdržnosti sa podporujú najmä regióny s osobitnými problémami a v prípade potreby aj upadajúce priemyselné regióny. Táto podpora umožňuje členským štátom a regiónom, aby samy prispeli k oživeniu svojho priemyslu. Podpora MSP zohráva významnú úlohu v politike súdržnosti. V období 2007 – 2013 sa v rámci politiky súdržnosti investuje okolo 55 mld. EUR do MSP. V období 2014 – 2020 sa táto priorita ešte zvýši. Okrem niekoľkých výnimiek týkajúcich sa najmä výskumu a inovácie, energetickej účinnosti a energie z obnoviteľných zdrojov budú iba produktívne investície zo strany MSP oprávnené na podporu EFRR. Na konkurencieschopnosť MSP sa budú ďalej vzťahovať ustanovenia EFRR o tematickej koncentrácii. Aj podpora MSP z ESF bude pokračovať v budúcom programovom období.

Komisia takisto rieši ťažkú situáciu MSP pri získavaní financií pomocou rôznych finančných nástrojov, najmä nástroja vlastného imania a nástroja pre úverové záruky v rámci programu CIP ([1]). Na obdobie 2014 – 2020 sa navrhuje, že nový program COSME zlepší prístup MSP k finančným prostriedkom prostredníctvom nástroja vlastného imania a nástroja pre úverové záruky. Tieto nástroje budú dopĺňať finančné nástroje v rámci nového programu Horizont 2020 na podporu výskumu a inovácie.

V rámci politiky súdržnosti sa v súčasnosti poskytuje podpora finančným nástrojom pre MSP vo výške zhruba 10 mld. EUR (pôžičky, záruky a produkty vlastného a rizikového kapitálu), ktoré spravuje EIF, ako aj vnútroštátni verejní a súkromní finanční sprostredkovatelia alebo správcovia fondov. Táto podpora bude aj naďalej k dispozícii v období 2014 – 2020.

([1]) Rámcový program pre konkurencieschopnosť a inovácie 2007 – 2013: jeho finančné nástroje sú dostupné pre MSP cez finančných sprostredkovateľov, ako sú banky, vzájomné garantované spoločnosti a fondy rizikového kapitálu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008997/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Support for old industrial regions and their revitalisation

Parliament has adopted a resolution on the means by which the decline of industry in formerly prosperous regions should be reversed. Countries with a developed industrial base are better able to bear the effects of the crisis than other countries. Financially, it might be helpful if, for example, the Cohesion Fund and structural funds, and the financial engineering of the European Investment Bank, were made available, as well as national, regional and municipal economic development policies. Many former industrial areas also have great potential for improving energy efficiency through the use of modern technology and construction standards, which would benefit regional economies and the environment. However, there is some concern that the funds will only be given to large enterprises, leaving small and medium-sized enterprises behind.

How does the Commission intend to ensure that small and medium-sized enterprises will receive fair financial assistance?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(18 September 2013)

Cohesion policy support focuses on regions with particular problems including, where relevant, declining industrial regions. It enables the Member States and regions to contribute to their revitalisation. SME support plays a major role in cohesion policy. During 2007-2013, cohesion policy is investing around EUR 55 billion in SMEs. In 2014-2020, this priority will be reinforced: With few exceptions, most notably on research and innovation, energy efficiency and renewable energy, only productive investments carried out by SMEs will be eligible for ERDF support. In addition, SME competitiveness will be covered by the ERDF thematic concentration provisions. Also ESF support for SMEs will continue in the future programming period.

The Commission is also addressing the difficult access to finance situation for SMEs through a variety of financial instruments, most notably the equity and loan guarantee facilities of the CIP programme ([1]). For 2014-2020, it is proposed that the new COSME programme will improve access to finance for SMEs via an equity and loan guarantee facility. This will complement financial instruments in the new Horizon 2020 programme, to support research and innovation.

Cohesion policy also currently provides support to financial instruments for SMEs of around EUR 10 billion (loans, guarantees, and equity/venture capital products) managed by the EIF as well as by national public and private financial intermediaries or fund managers. Such support will continue to be available in 2014-2020.

([1]) Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme 2007-2013: Its financial instruments are made are made available to SMEs through financial intermediaries such as banks, mutual guarantee societies and venture capital funds.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-008999/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Právo na dôstojné bývanie

Právo na dôstojné bývanie je základným právom každej ľudskej bytosti. Následkom hospodárskej a sociálnej krízy, ktorá momentálne otriasa Európskou úniou, je skutočnosť, že mnohí európski obyvatelia nemajú z finančných dôvodov prístup k dôstojnému bývaniu. V roku 2010 malo problémy s bývaním 5,7 % európskych obyvateľov. V preľudnených alebo nevhodných bytoch žilo 17,86 % obyvateľov a 10,10 % domácností uviedlo, že náklady na bývanie prekračujú 40 % ich príjmu.

Aké konkrétne opatrenia zamerané na presadzovanie a ochranu práva na dôstojné bývanie obyvateľov Európskej únie plánuje prijať Komisia v najbližšom čase?

Odpoveď pána Andora v mene Komisie
(13. septembra 2013)

V Európskej únii sú za sprístupnenie dôstojného bývania svojmu obyvateľstvu zodpovedné v prvom rade členské štáty. Úloha Komisie je obmedzená na poskytovanie podpory a usmerňovanie. Vo februári 2013 Komisia predložila balík o sociálnych investíciách (Social Investment Package, SIP) ([1]), ktorý zahŕňal pracovný dokument útvarov Komisie o bezdomovstve. Ľuďom, ktorí sú z finančných dôvodov násilne vysťahovaní zo svojich domovov, skutočne hrozí bezdomovstvo. V uvedenom pracovnom dokumente útvarov Komisie sa identifikujú osvedčené postupy, ako sa členské štáty môžu vyhnúť bezdomovstvu, a zároveň sa na ne nalieha, aby preskúmali svoj právny a regulačný rámec týkajúci sa deložovania.

Komisia uverejnila v roku 2011 pracovný dokument útvarov Komisie o vnútroštátnych opatreniach proti uzavretiu trhu ([2]). Agentúra Eurofond vypracovala v roku 2012 štúdiu na tému „Služby dlhového poradenstva pre domácnosti v Európskej únii ([3])". V správe Komisie z roku 2012 sa skúmali opatrenia v členských štátoch na ochranu spotrebiteľov s finančnými ťažkosťami pred osobným bankrotom, hypotéky *datio in solutum* a praktiky zneužívania pri vyberaní dlhu ([4]). Komisia v súčasnosti dokončuje štúdiu o nadmernej zadlženosti ([5]).

V júli 2013 Komisia uverejnila výzvu na predkladanie ponúk týkajúcu sa štúdie zameranej na podporu ochrany práva na bývanie – zabránenie bezdomovstvu v súvislosti s deložovaním ([6]), ktorej cieľom je zhromaždiť údaje o deložovaní, vytvoriť súvislosť medzi deložovaním a bezdomovstvom a zistiť, ako sa dá zlepšiť účinnosť opatrení na ochranu pred deložovaním v členských štátoch.

([1]) Pozri najmä pracovný dokument útvarov Komisie SWD(2013) 41 v konečnom znení s názvom Riešenie problému bezdomovstva v Európskej únii. Viac informácií o balíku o sociálnych investíciách získate na: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=fr&catId=1044&newsId=1807&furtherNews=yes

([2]) Pozri na: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SEC:2011:0357:FIN:EN:PDF

([3]) Pozri na: http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2011/89/en/1/EF1189EN.pdf

([4]) Pozri na: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finservices-retail/docs/fsug/papers/debt_solutions_report_en.pdf

([5]) „Nadmerná zadlženosť európskych domácností: zmapovanie aktuálnej situácie, povaha a príčiny, dôsledky a iniciatívy na zmiernenie jej vplyvu". Očakávaná v druhej polovici roku 2013.

([6]) Pozri na: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=624&langId=en&callId=387&furtherCalls=yes

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008999/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: The right to decent housing

The right to decent housing is a fundamental right belonging to every human being. As a result of the economic and social crisis that is currently shaking the European Union, it is a fact that many European citizens do not have access to decent housing for financial reasons. In 2010, 5.7% of the European population had housing problems. 17.86% of the population lived in overcrowded or unsuitable housing, and 10.10% of households reported that housing costs exceeded 40% of their income.

What concrete measures does the Commission intend to adopt in the near future aimed at promoting and protecting the right of the EU population to decent housing?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

In the EU Member States are primarily competent for giving their population access to decent housing. The role of the Commission is limited to providing support and guidance. In February 2013, the Commission presented its Social Investment Package (SIP) ([1]) which included a Commission Staff Working Document (CSWD) on homelessness. People who are evicted from their homes for financial reasons can indeed be vulnerable to homelessness The CSWD identifies good practices for Member States to better prevent homelessness and urges them to revise their legal and regulatory framework on evictions.

The Commission published in 2011 a Staff Working Paper on national measures to avoid foreclosure ([2]). Eurofound conducted a study in 2012 on 'Household debt advisory services in the European Union ([3])'. A 2012 Commission report studied measures in Member States to protect consumers in financial difficulty against personal bankruptcy, datio in solutum of mortgages and abusive debt collection practices ([4]). The Commission is currently finalising a study on over-indebtedness ([5]).

In July 2013 the Commission published a call for tender for a study focusing on promoting protection of the right to housing- homelessness prevention in the context of evictions ([6]), which aims at gathering data on evictions, establishing the link between evictions and homelessness and identifying how the efficiency of eviction safeguard measures may be improved in the Member States.

([1]) See in particular the Commission Staff Working Document SWD (2013) 42 final on Confronting Homelessness in the European Union. For more information on the Social Investment Package, please visit http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=fr&catId=1044&newsId=1807&furtherNews=yes

([2]) See at http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SEC:2011:0357:FIN:EN:PDF

([3]) See at http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2011/89/en/1/EF1189EN.pdf

([4]) See http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finservices-retail/docs/fsug/papers/debt_solutions_report_en.pdf

([5]) 'The over-indebtedness of European households: update mapping of the situation, nature and causes, effects and initiatives for alleviating its impact'. Expected for the second half of 2013.

([6]) See at http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=624&langId=en&callId=387&furtherCalls=yes

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-009000/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Zamestnanosť žien v EÚ

Nízka zamestnanosť je v súčasnej Európskej únii pálčivým problémom. Ženy navyše v tejto súvislosti ešte stále čelia mnohým prekážkam, či už ide o priamu a nepriamu diskrimináciu, či napríklad problémy so zosúladením pracovného a rodinného života. Ženy však majú v spoločnosti svoju nezastupiteľnú úlohu, a preto by mali mať možnosť byť aktívne na pracovnom trhu a rovnako plniť aj svoju úlohu matiek.

Aké konkrétne opatrenia zamerané na zlepšenie miery účasti žien na pracovnom trhu plánuje Komisia prijať v najbližšej dobe?

Odpoveď pána Andora v mene Komisie
(13. septembra 2013)

Komisia si uvedomuje, že problém rodového rozdielu, pokiaľ ide o mieru zamestnanosti žien a mužov, je ešte stále aktuálny. Zatiaľ čo priemerná miera zamestnanosti mužov v 28 členských štátoch EÚ (vo veku 20 – 64 rokov) bola v roku 2012 na úrovni 74,5 %, miera zamestnanosti žien dosahovala iba 62,3 %. Cieľom stratégie Európa 2020 je dosiahnuť 75 % mieru zamestnanosti žien a mužov vo vekovej skupine 20 – 64 rokov do roku 2020. Komisia s Vami súhlasí v tom, že poskytnutie príležitostí na zosúladenie pracovného a rodinného života ([1]) je jedným zo základných predpokladov pomoci ženám pri ich začleňovaní sa do pracovného trhu. Pracovný a rodinný život by bolo možné zosúladiť poskytovaním dostupných a finančne primeraných služieb starostlivosti, ktoré by spĺňali potreby rodičov vrátane tých, ktorí pracujú na plný úväzok, a to poskytovaním flexibilnejších pracovných príležitostí a odstránením finančných prekážok vyplývajúcich zo systémov daňových úľav pre druhé zárobkovo činné osoby v domácnosti. Rovnováha pracovného a rodinného života je prioritou v stratégii rovnosti žien a mužov v období rokov 2010 – 2015 ([2]). Komisia v rámci európskych semestrov vydala odporúčania pre niekoľko členských štátov, najmä pokiaľ ide o finančné stimuly pre druhé zárobkovo činné osoby v domácnosti, aby sa vrátili do práce a zotrvali v nej, starostlivosť o deti, starších ľudí a celodenné školské služby ([3]), a monitorovala úspešnosť členských štátov pri zvyšovaní miery zamestnanosti žien. Komisia nedávno uverejnila správu o pokroku pri dosahovaní barcelonských cieľov ([4]). V balíku opatrení v oblasti zamestnanosti a v balíku o sociálnych investíciách sa takisto rieši rodový rozdiel v zamestnanosti a sociálnych politikách, pričom sa odporúča venovať väčšiu pozornosť starostlivosti o deti. S cieľom podporiť a monitorovať úsilie členských štátov preklenúť rozdiel v odmeňovaní žien a mužov a odstrániť prekážky, ktorým musia ženy čeliť pri začleňovaní sa do pracovného trhu, Komisia každoročne uverejní správu o pokroku na ceste k rovnosti mužov a žien.

([1]) O jednoznačnom vplyve materstva na zamestnanosť svedčia štatistické údaje: zatiaľ čo priemerná miera zamestnanosti bezdetných žien (vo veku 25 – 54 rokov) v EÚ-28 bola na úrovni 75,1 % (v porovnaní so 78,7 % u mužov), u žien s dvomi deťmi to bolo iba 69,6 % (v porovnaní s 89,6 % u mužov).
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=6568&langId=en
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/130531_barcelona_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009000/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Women's employment in the EU

The low employment rate is a burning issue in the European Union at present. Women, moreover, still face many obstacles in this respect, whether due to direct or indirect discrimination or due, for example, to problems in harmonising their working and family lives. However, women play an irreplaceable role in society, and should therefore have the opportunity to be active in the labour market and also to play their role as mothers.

What concrete measures does the Commission plan to adopt in the near future to improve the participation rate of women in the labour market?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

The Commission is aware of the persisting gender gap in employment. While the employment rate of men on the EU28 average (age 20-64) was 74,5% in 2012, that of females was a sheer 62,3%. The Europe 2020 strategy aims at the 75% employment rate for women and men aged group 20-64 by 2020. The Commission agrees that one of the key pre-conditions to help women onto the labour market is to provide the opportunities to reconcile work and family life ([1]). Work-life reconciliation could be done via providing available and affordable care services meeting the needs for parents, including for those working full-time; through providing more flexible working opportunities, and dismantling the financial disincentives stemming from the tax-benefit systems for second earners. Work-life balance features as priority in the strategy for gender equality 2010-2015 ([2]). Within the framework of the European Semesters, the Commission has issued recommendations to several Member States, in particular on financial incentives for second earners to return and stay in work, childcare, elderly care and full-day school services ([3]), and monitored Member States' performance in improving the female employment. The Commission recently published a report on progress towards the Barcelona targets ([4]). Furthermore, the Employment Package and the Social Investment Package address the gender dimension in the employment and social policies recommending greater focus on childcare. To support and monitor the Member States' efforts to close the gender pay gap and address barriers to women's participation in the labour market the Commission will publish an Annual Report on Progress between Women and Men.

([1]) The effects of motherhood on employment are clearly visible in the statistical figures: While the employment rate of women without children (age 25-54) was 75,1% on the EU28 average (compared with 78,7% for men) , that of women with 2 children was only 69,6% (compared with 89,6% for men).
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=6568&langId=en
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/130531_barcelona_en.pdf

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-009001/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Program registrovaných cestujúcich

Návrh programu registrovaných cestujúcich je súčasťou balíka pre tzv. inteligentné hranice. Tento balík obsahuje aj návrh na zmenu Kódexu schengenských hraníc, ako aj systému vstupu a výstupu. Program bol navrhnutý v súvislosti s nárastom tokov cestujúcich a s tým spojenými problémami, ktoré môžu vzniknúť na vonkajších hraniciach EÚ. Cieľom je uľahčenie prechodu vonkajších hraníc Únie cestujúcimi z tretích krajín, ktorí do EÚ cestujú často a pred príchodom na hranicu už boli preverení. Takýmto spôsobom by sa medzi cestujúcimi rozlišovalo.

Nedala by sa podľa názoru Komisie potreba účinnejších kontrol vonkajších hraníc Únie primerane zabezpečiť aj prostredníctvom alternatívnych riešení, napr. sústrediť sa skôr na občanov EÚ a na tých, ktorí majú právo na voľný pohyb?

Odpoveď pani Malmströmovej v mene Komisie
(11. septembra 2013)

V právnych predpisoch EÚ sa vyžaduje vykonávanie systematických kontrol na schengenských vonkajších hraniciach (pri vstupe aj pri výstupe). Dôkladné kontroly sa spravidla vykonávajú v prípade štátnych príslušníkov tretích krajín a minimálne kontroly v prípade občanov EÚ a v prípade osôb, ktoré majú právo na voľný pohyb. Podľa súčasných predpisov sa však v prípade štátnych príslušníkov tretích krajín uplatňujú rovnaké kontroly bez ohľadu na rozdiely v miere rizika medzi jednotlivými cestujúcimi alebo na to, ako často cestujú.

Hraničné kontroly občanov EÚ sa dajú na základe súčasných právnych predpisov zautomatizovať, ak sú títo občania držiteľmi elektronický pasov. Niektoré členské štáty už investovali do automatizovaného systému kontroly hraníc na veľkých letiskách, aby urýchlili prekračovanie hraníc. Tieto investície získali podporu z Fondu pre vonkajšie hranice a naďalej budú prioritou v rámci budúceho Fondu pre vnútornú bezpečnosť. V prípade štátnych príslušníkov tretích krajín sa však tento systém nedá použiť bez zmeny právneho rámca a založenia špecifického programu na uľahčenie prekračovania hraníc príslušníkom tretích krajín (približne 26 % cestujúcich prekračujúcich vonkajšie hranice EÚ).

Prostredníctvom programu rýchleho vybavovania registrovaných cestujúcich by sa skrátil čas a znížili by sa náklady na prekračovanie hraníc cestujúcim, ktorí často cestujú a zvýšila by sa kapacita priepustnosti hraničných priechodov.

Súčasný systém dávania pečiatok do cestovných pasov by bol nahradený systémom vstup a výstup s elektronickou registráciou povolených krátkodobých pobytov štátnych príslušníkov tretích krajín. Tento systém by monitoroval povolený pobyt a prispel by takisto k optimalizácii postupov hraničných kontrol.

Komisia sa preto domnieva, že vhodným riešením potreby účinnejších hraničných kontrol na vonkajších hraniciach je balík „inteligentných hraníc“.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009001/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Registered Traveller Programme

The proposed Registered Traveller Programme is part of the 'smart borders' package. The package also includes a proposal to amend the Schengen Borders Code and to modify the entry and exit system. The programme was proposed in connection with increased passenger flows and the associated problems that may arise at the external borders of the EU. The aim is to facilitate the crossing of the EU's external borders for third-country travellers who travel frequently to the EU and who have already been cleared prior to their arrival at the border. This would distinguish between different travellers.

In the Commission's opinion, would it not be possible to respond to the need for more effective controls at the EU's external borders by other appropriate means, such as by focusing more on EU citizens and on those who have the right of freedom of movement?

Answer given by Ms Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(11 September 2013)

EC law requires that systematic checks are carried out at the Schengen external borders (both on entry and exit). Thorough checks are normally carried out on third-country nationals and minimum checks on EU citizens and persons enjoying the right of free movement. However, under the current rules the same checks apply for third-country nationals regardless of any differences in risk between travellers or their frequency of travel.

Border checks of EU citizens can be automated based on the current legislation, if they hold an e-passport. Several Member States have already invested in automated border control gates at major airports to speed up their border crossings. These investments have been supported through the External Borders Fund and this will continue to be a priority under the future Internal Security Fund. For third-country nationals this cannot be done without changing the legal framework and establishing a specific programme to facilitate third-country nationals' border crossing (around 26% of travellers crossing the EU external borders).

The Registered Traveller Programme would decrease the time and costs of border crossings for frequent travellers and increase the throughput capacity of border crossing points.

The Entry Exit System would replace the current system of stamping passports with an electronic registry of third-country nationals admitted for short stays. The system would monitor authorised stays and would also contribute to optimising border check procedures.

The Commission therefore considers that the Smart Borders Package responds effectively to the need for more effective border controls at the external borders.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-009002/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Rómska problematika v Moldave nad Bodvou

V marci tohto roku sa paralelne v Bruseli a na Slovensku uskutočnila rómska konferencia s názvom Od pilotných projektov k výsledkom – Lekcie z dôkazov o socioekonomickej inklúzii rómskych komunít, na ktorej sa zúčastnili predstavitelia Európskej komisie, Rozvojového programu OSN – UNDP, Svetovej banky a rómski aktivisti. Účastníci konferencie následne vydali písomné vyhlásenie, v ktorom vyjadrujú „vážne znepokojenie ohľadne medializovaných správ o policajnom násilí na obyvateľoch rómskej osady Budulovská v Moldave nad Bodvou". Ide o údajné fyzické násilie a poškodenie majetku obyvateľov osady, a to zo strany špeciálnych jednotiek štátnej polície SR. Došlo pritom k zraneniu viac ako 30 osôb vrátane malého dieťaťa, 15 osôb bolo zadržaných a odvedených na policajnú stanicu v Moldave nad Bodvou, kde došlo k ďalším fyzickým útokom zo strany polície. Útok bol zjavne neadekvátny a policajná brutalita pravdepodobne pramenila z rasizmu voči rómskej komunite.

Bude sa Komisia týmto prípadom zaoberať?

Ak áno, bude určitým spôsobom apelovať na vládu Slovenskej republiky, aby došlo k objektívnemu a spravodlivému prešetreniu všetkých relevantných okolností zásahu?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(9. septembra 2013)

Situácia Rómov je predmetom záujmu a dôvodom znepokojenia EÚ. Hoci je vecou zodpovednosti členských štátov zabezpečiť, aby Rómovia neboli diskriminovaní, ale aby sa s nimi zaobchádzalo ako s ktorýmikoľvek inými občanmi, Komisia pozorne a s veľkým znepokojením sledovala situáciu v Moldave nad Bodvou v Slovenskej republike. Sme informovaní o zásahu polície v rómskej osade, pri ktorom boli zranení mnohí Rómovia vrátane detí.

Podľa našich informácií príslušné slovenské orgány vykonávajú vyšetrovanie s cieľom preskúmať zákonnosť a primeranosť tohto policajného zásahu. Požiadali sme slovenské orgány, aby Komisii poskytli výsledky tohto vyšetrovania.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009002/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: The Roma issue in Moldava nad Bodvou

In March this year, a Roma conference was held in tandem in Brussels and Slovakia entitled 'From pilots to outcomes: Evidence-based lessons on the socioeconomic inclusion of Roma communities', which was attended by representatives of the European Commission, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and Roma activists. The conference attendees subsequently issued a written statement expressing 'serious concern about media reports of police violence against the inhabitants of the Roma settlement of Budulovská in Moldava nad Bodvou'. This related to alleged physical violence and damage to the property of residents by special units of the Slovak state police. More than 30 people, including a small child, were injured, and 15 people were arrested and taken to the police station in Moldava nad Bodvou, where they were subjected to further physical attacks by the police. The attacks were clearly disproportionate, and it is likely that the police brutality stemmed from racism towards the Roma community.

Will the Commission be looking into this case?

If so, will it call on the Government of the Slovak Republic to ensure that all the relevant circumstances of the intervention are investigated objectively and fairly?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(9 September 2013)

The situation of Roma is a matter of EU interest and concern. Although it is the Member State's responsibility to ensure that Roma are not discriminated against but treated as any other citizens, the Commission has been following the situation in Moldava nad Bodvou, the Slovak Republic, closely and with great concern. We are aware of the police intervention in a Roma settlement in which many of Roma, including children were hurt.

According to our information, the Slovak competent authorities are undertaking an investigation to examine the legality and adequacy of this police action. The Slovak authorities were asked to provide the Commission with the results of this investigation.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-009003/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Zamestnanosť Rómov

Mnohé dostupné dáta a štatistické údaje neustále dokazujú, že nezamestnanosť Rómov je žalostne vysoká. Rómske etnikum trpí marginalizáciou na trhu práce. Jednou z príčin je aj nízka kvalifikačná a vzdelanostná úroveň a samozrejme skrytá diskriminácia zo strany zamestnávateľov. Marginalizácia na trhu práce patrí medzi primárne zdroje chudoby a v konečnom dôsledku vylučuje jedinca zo životného štandardu a šancí, ktoré sú v spoločnosti obvyklé. Zvýšenie zamestnanosti, odstránenie diskriminácie a inklúzia rómskeho etnika však patrí medzi hlavné priority Európskej únie.

Aké konkrétne opatrenia zamerané na zvýšenie zamestnanosti Rómov plánuje Komisia prijať v najbližšej dobe?

Plánuje sama Komisia zamestnať vo svojich štruktúrach vyšší počet Rómov?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(18. septembra 2013)

V kontexte rámca EÚ pre vnútroštátne stratégie integrácie Rómov si EÚ stanovila cieľ znížiť rozdiely v nezamestnanosti Rómov a zvyšku populácie.

Dňa 26. júna 2013 Komisia prijala svoju druhú hodnotiacu správu ([1]) o implementácii stratégií. Len niektoré členské štáty sa zamerali na opatrenia navrhované v uvedenom rámci EÚ, akými sú napríklad zabezpečenie prístupu k mikroúverom, zamestnávanie kvalifikovaných štátnych zamestnancov vo verejnom sektore, poskytovanie personalizovaných služieb a mediácia.

Komisia tiež prijala návrh odporúčania Rady s cieľom zvýšiť účinnosť opatrení zameraných na dosiahnutie integrácie Rómov ([2]) prostredníctvom cielených činností v oblasti zamestnanosti, ktoré by mohli byť obzvlášť užitočné pre mladých Rómov, ako napríklad podporovanie prvých pracovných skúseností, odbornej prípravy na pracovisku, celoživotného vzdelávania a rozvoja zručností.

Komisia takisto navrhla iniciatívy s priamym dosahom na zamestnanosť mladých (vrátane rómskej mládeže), ako napríklad odporúčanie týkajúce sa zriadenia záruky pre mladých ľudí (Youth Guarantee), ktoré Rada prijala.

Komisia v súčasnosti realizuje osobitný program stáží, ktorého cieľom je umožniť členom rómskej komunity absolvovať stáž v Európskej komisii.

([1]) „Kroky vpred pri implementácii vnútroštátnych stratégií integrácie Rómov“, COM(2013) 454 final.
([2]) COM(2013) 460 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009003/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Roma employment

Many of the available data and statistics consistently show that unemployment among Roma is woefully high. Roma suffer marginalisation in the labour market. One of the causes is their low level of qualifications and education; another, of course, is hidden discrimination by employers. Marginalisation in the labour market is one of the primary sources of poverty and, ultimately, it excludes the individual from living standards and opportunities that are normal in society. Increasing employment, eliminating discrimination and promoting the inclusion of Roma, however, are among the main priorities of the European Union.

What concrete measures to improve the employment of Roma does the Commission plan to adopt in the near future?

Does the Commission itself intend to employ more Roma within its structures?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(18 September 2013)

Within the context of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies, the EU goal is to reduce the employment gap between Roma and the rest of the population.

On 26 June 2013, the Commission adopted its second assessment report ([1]) on the implementation of the strategies. Measures suggested in the EU Framework, such as providing access to micro-credit, employing qualified civil servants and providing personalised services and mediation were addressed by only some Member States.

The Commission also adopted a proposal for a Council Recommendation in order to enhance the effectiveness of measures to achieve Roma integration ([2]) through targeted actions in the employment field such as supporting first work experience, on the job training, life-long learning and skills development that could be particularly useful for young Roma people.

The Commission has also proposed initiatives with immediate impact on youth employment (including Roma youth), such as the recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee adopted by the Council.

The Commission currently implements a specific traineeship programme aimed at providing members of the Roma community with the possibility of carrying out a traineeship within the European Commission.

([1]) 'Steps forward in implementing National Roma Integration Strategies', COM(2013) 454 final.
([2]) COM(2013) 460 final.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-009004/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Kontroly prepravy odpadu

V posledných dňoch predstavila Európska komisia návrh nových pravidiel, ktoré sú zamerané na elimináciu nezákonného vývozu odpadu. Nové pravidlá, ktoré novelizujú nariadenie (ES) č. 103/2006 o preprave odpadu stanovujú prísnejšie kontroly prepravy odpadu, a to v rámci EÚ, ako aj do tretích krajín. Približne 25 % odpadu smerujúceho z členských štátov Únie do tretích krajín končí na skládkach, ktoré ohrozujú ľudské zdravie, ako aj životné prostredie, a odpad sa prepravuje v rozpore s medzinárodnými predpismi. Komisia chce zabezpečiť, aby boli úrovne kontroly vo všetkých členských štátoch podobné.

Prinesú účinnejšie kontroly členským štátom aj priame ekonomické výhody a ak áno, aké konkrétne?

Odpoveď pána Potočnika v mene Komisie
(3. septembra 2013)

Očakáva sa, že aktuálny návrh Komisie na zmenu nariadenia (ES) č. 1013/2006 o preprave odpadu ([1]) prinesie členským štátom priame ekonomické výhody vrátane:

— zvýšenia aktivity zariadení EÚ na spracovanie odpadov (a následného zníženia nadmernej kapacity), keďže by sa menej odpadu nezákonne prepravovalo do tretích krajín;

— tvorby nových pracovných miest na podporu vykonávania nových inšpekčných požiadaviek, ako aj v dôsledku rozširovania činnosti zariadení na spracovanie odpadov;

— zníženia nákladov spojených s návratom nezákonne prepraveného odpadu;

— cenných druhotných surovín, ktoré sa budú dať použiť v rámci EÚ, ako napr. kovový šrot;

— zníženia nákladov na odstraňovanie následkov a náhradu v prípadoch, keď nezákonná preprava odpadu spôsobila zdravotné a environmentálne problémy.

([1]) Ú. v. EÚ L 190, 12.7.2006, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009004/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Control of shipments of waste

The European Commission has recently put forward a proposal for new rules aimed at eliminating unlawful exports of waste. The new rules, which amend Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 on shipments of waste, lay down more stringent checks on waste shipments, both within the EU and to third countries. Approximately 25% of waste going from EU Member States to third countries ends up in landfills, which threaten human health and the environment, and the waste is transported in contravention of international law. The Commission wants to ensure that control levels are similar in all Member States are .

Will more effective checks bring direct economic benefits to the Member States, and if so, what specific benefits will they bring?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

The recent Commission proposal to amend Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 on shipments of waste ([1]) is expected to bring direct economic benefits to Member States, including:

— more activity in EU treatment facilities (with a consequent decline in overcapacity) as less waste would be channelled illegally to third countries;

— the creation of new jobs to help implement the new inspections requirements, and through expansion of operations for waste treatment facilities;

— a decrease in repatriation costs for illegal shipments;

— valuable secondary raw materials remaining for use in the EU e.g. scrap metals;

— a decrease in clean up and compensation costs paid in cases where illegal shipments of waste have caused health and environmental problems.

([1]) OJ L 190, 12.7.2006, p. 1.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-009005/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Projekt „Euroinkubátor“

V posledných dňoch mi bol predstavený zaujímavý projekt zameraný na podporu zamestnanosti mladých ľudí s názvom „Euroinkubátor“. Ide o projekt aplikovateľný v celej Európskej únii. Spojením štátnych inštitúcii, verejnej správy a podnikateľských subjektov pri vytvorení inkubátorových pozícii v prospech škôl, miest, obcí, malých a stredných firiem sa môže iba na Slovensku vytvoriť cez 10 000 štartovacích miest pre absolventov škôl a mládež.

Po naštartovaní budú pozície samofinancovateľné, a preto môžu byť aplikovateľné aj v iných štátoch Európy. Cieľom je vytvoriť sieť pracovných pozícií ako prostredie inkubátoru v profesionálnom a režimovo stabilnom prostredí na získavanie praktických skúseností a pracovných návykov a zároveň vytvorenie priestoru a času na nájdenie si pracovného miesta podľa vlastnej predstavy alebo na prípravu na samostatné podnikanie.

Aký je názor Komisie na projekt „Euroinkubátor“?

Plánuje podporiť takýto nový spôsob čerpania európskych peňazí zameraných na podporu zamestnanosti mladých?

Odpoveď pána Andora v mene Komisie
(13. septembra 2013)

Komisia sa domnieva, že podnikanie mladých ľudí má kľúčový význam z hľadiska vytvárania pracovných miest a boja proti nezamestnanosti, ako sa zdôrazňuje v Akčnom pláne pre podnikanie 2020 a v balíku opatrení pre zamestnanosť mladých.

Pokiaľ ide o možnosti financovania, v odporúčaní Rady o záruke pre mladých ľudí ([1]) sa krajiny vyzývajú k podpore vzdelávania a služieb zamestnanosti, aby spropagovali a usmernili podnikanie a samostatnú zárobkovú činnosť u mladých ľudí, a to aj prostredníctvom kurzov. V období rokov 2014 – 2020 budú podnikanie a samostatná zárobková činnosť aktívne podporované z európskych štrukturálnych a investičných fondov (ESI) ako osobitná investičná priorita. Vzdelávacie programy v oblasti podnikania možno financovať v rámci ESF, aby sa zabezpečil súlad zručností s potrebami trhu práce. ERDF je takisto možné využiť na podporu podnikania, konkrétne prostredníctvom uľahčenia ekonomického využitia nových nápadov a podpory vytvárania nových firiem, sociálnej inovácie a podpory sociálnych podnikov. Iniciatíva na podporu zamestnanosti mladých ľudí (YEI) bude podporovať priame intervencie v prospech mladých ľudí, ktorí sú nezamestnaní a nie sú zapojení do procesu vzdelávania ani odbornej prípravy, napr. aj prostredníctvom pracovnej praxe, učňovskej prípravy, ako aj opatreniami v oblasti samostatnej zárobkovej činnosti.

Komisia si dovoľuje vyzvať členské štáty a zainteresované strany, aby využívali finančné prostriedky EÚ na oprávnené projekty v oblasti podnikania mladých ľudí. Ďalej pripomína, že za výber jednotlivých projektov, ktoré majú byť podporované z operačných programov spolufinancovaných z ERDF, ESF a YEI, zodpovedajú príslušné orgány v príslušných členských štátoch.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32013H0426(01):SK:NOT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009005/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: The 'Euroincubator' project

I was recently introduced to an interesting project aimed at promoting the employment of young people, entitled 'Euroincubator'. The project applies to the whole of the European Union. By bringing together state institutions, public administration authorities and businesses in the creation of incubator positions to benefit schools, towns, villages and small and medium-sized firms, over 10 000 starter jobs for school leavers and young people can be created in Slovakia alone.

After they have been started up, the positions will be self-financing, and may therefore be applied to other European countries as well. The aim is to create a network of jobs as an incubator in a professional and stable environment for people to gain practical experience and work habits while, at the same time, creating space and time to find the job they are looking for or to prepare for self-employment.

What is the Commission's view on the 'Euroincubator' project?

Does it plan to support this new way of spending European money to support youth employment?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

The Commission considers youth entrepreneurship to be of key importance in job creation and fighting unemployment, as highlighted by the Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan and the Youth Employment Package.

As for funding opportunities, the Youth Guarantee Council Recommendation ([1]) calls on countries to encourage education and employment services to promote and provide guidance on entrepreneurship and self-employment for young people, including through courses. In 2014-2020, the ESI funds will actively support entrepreneurship and self-employment as a dedicated investment priority. Entrepreneurship education programmes can be funded under the ESF to ensure skills align to labour market needs. ERDF can also be used for the promotion of entrepreneurship, more precisely by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new firms, social innovation and support for social enterprises. The Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) will support direct interventions for young people not in employment, education or training, including through job practice and apprenticeships, as well as self-employment measures.

The Commission warmly encourages the Member States and interested parties to draw upon EU funding for eligible projects in the area of youth entrepreneurship. It recalls that selection of individual projects to be supported from operational programmes co-financed by the ERDF, ESF and YEI is the responsibility of the relevant authorities in the Member State concerned.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32013H0426(01):EN:NOT

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-009006/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Nemecká politika v oblasti obnoviteľných zdrojov energie

Nemecká vláda sa usiluje o vybudovanie svojej energetiky na obnoviteľných zdrojoch energie. S tým súvisí plánovaná odstávka jadrových elektrární a snaha o minimalizáciu využívania fosílnych palív. Tieto plány sú však finančne čoraz náročnejšie, čo pociťujú najmä malé podniky a živnostníci, ako aj bežní občania. Nemecké médiá navyše nedávno informovali, že spolková vláda uplatňuje v oblasti podpory využívania obnoviteľných zdrojov voči firmám rozdielnu poplatkovú politiku, čo by mohlo byť v rozpore s pravidlami Európskej únie v oblasti hospodárskej súťaže. Európska komisia má v tejto veci začať oficiálne vyšetrovanie.

Aké budú ďalšie kroky Komisie v prípade, keď vyšetrovanie potvrdí, že Nemecko porušuje pravidlá hospodárskej súťaže?

Odpoveď pána Almuniu v mene Komisie
(18. septembra 2013)

Nemecký systém podpory obnoviteľnej energie prostredníctvom príplatkov, ktoré spravidla platia všetci spotrebitelia, prináša so sebou rozdielnu poplatkovú politiku voči niektorým firmám v súvislosti s podporou využívania obnoviteľných zdrojov. V zákone o obnoviteľných energiách (*Erneuerbare-Energien-Gesetz* – EEG) sa stanovuje, že energeticky náročné podniky, ktoré spĺňajú určité kritériá, platia v porovnaní s ostatnými spotrebiteľmi znížený príplatok.

Komisia v súčasnosti skúma, či uvedený znížený EEG príplatok za energiu pre energeticky náročné podniky predstavuje štátnu pomoc, ale zatiaľ nerozhodla, či je oficiálne vyšetrovanie opodstatnené. Začatie oficiálneho vyšetrovania navyše nemá vplyv na záver, ku ktorému by Komisia vo svojom konečnom rozhodnutí dospela, pričom by náležite zohľadnila možné pripomienky zo strany Nemecka a zúčastnených strán ohľadne toho, či uvedený EEG príplatok predstavuje štátnu pomoc v rozpore s pravidlami štátnej pomoci EÚ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009006/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: German policy in the field of renewable energy

The German Government is aiming to base its energy sector on renewable energy sources. In connection with this, it plans to shut down nuclear power plants and to attempt to minimise the use of fossil fuels. These plans, however, are becoming increasingly costly, and this is felt in particular by small businesses and entrepreneurs, as well as by ordinary citizens. Moreover, the German media recently reported that the Federal Government applies a different charging policy to firms as regards the promotion of the use of renewable resources, which could be contrary to EU competition rules. The European Commission is to launch an official investigation into the matter.

What will be the Commission's next steps if the investigation confirms that Germany is acting in breach of the competition rules?

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

The German system to support renewable energy through a surcharge paid in principle by all consumers entails a different charging policy to certain firms as regards promoting the use of renewable resources. Indeed, the Renewable Energy Act provides that energy-intensive undertakings meeting certain criteria pay a reduced surcharge compared to other consumers.

The Commission is currently examining whether this reduced EEG-surcharge for energy-intensive undertakings constitutes state aid, but has not yet decided whether an official investigation is warranted. Furthermore, the launching of an official investigation is without prejudice to the conclusion which the Commission may ultimately reach in a final decision, with due regard to possible observations by Germany and interested parties, as to whether the reduced EEG-surcharge constitutes state aid in violation of EU State aid rules.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-009007/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Daň z finančných transakcií a posilnená spolupráca

Februárový návrh dane z finančných transakcií predložený Európskou komisiou musí byť schválený všetkými jedenástimi participujúcimi štátmi, ktoré ju chcú zaviesť na základe tzv. posilnenej spolupráce, keďže nie všetky členské štáty Únie s ňou súhlasia. Krajiny majú o jej konkrétnej podobe odlišné predstavy. Výhrady má napríklad Taliansko. Hrozí pritom, že aj únia jedenástich členských štátov, ktoré chcú návrh prijať, sa rozpadne, pretože existujú obavy, že súčasná podoba návrhu bude kontraproduktívna, bude odrádzať investorov a týmto spôsobom teda bude ohrozovať financovanie ekonomiky.

Aká je odpoveď Komisie na obavy niektorých členských štátov, že transakčná daň bude kontraproduktívna a ohrozí financovanie ekonomiky?

Nebolo by podľa názoru Komisie vhodnejšie návrh zlepšiť tak, aby sa mohol prijať v Európskej únii ako celku?

Odpoveď pána Šemetu v mene Komisie
(18. septembra 2013)

Komisia si dovoľuje odkázať na posúdenie vplyvu vypracované k návrhu dane z finančných transakcií [SWD(2013) 28 final] ([1]). Komisia je presvedčená, že výsledkom rokovaní participujúcich členských štátov bude spoločná cesta vpred.

V roku 2012 sa Rada zaoberala uvedeným návrhom Komisie i jeho niekoľkými variantmi. Nakoniec si 11 členských štátov vyžiadalo práve postup „posilnenej spolupráce“, ktorý Rada schválila, keďže potreba zaviesť spoločný systém dane z finančných transakcií na úrovni Únie bola predmetom pretrvávajúcich a zásadných názorových rozdielov medzi členskými štátmi a potvrdilo sa, že zásada harmonizovaného zdanenia finančných transakcií by v dohľadnej budúcnosti v Rade nezískala jednomyseľnú podporu.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/swd_2013_28_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009007/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: The financial transaction tax and enhanced cooperation

The financial transaction tax that was proposed in February and presented by the European Commission must be approved by all 11 participating countries, which, because not all EU Member States agree to it, want to introduce it on the basis of 'enhanced cooperation'. The countries have different ideas about the specific form it should take. Italy, for example, has reservations. There is a risk, however, that the union of the 11 Member States that want to adopt the proposal will fall apart, because there are concerns that the current draft will be counterproductive in that it will discourage investors, thus jeopardising the financing of the economy.

What is the Commission's response to the concerns of some Member States that the transaction tax will be counterproductive and will threaten the financing of the economy?

In the Commission's opinion, would it not be more appropriate to improve the proposal so that it could be adopted across the European Union as a whole?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(18 September 2013)

The Commission would like to refer to the impact assessment of the FTT proposal (SWD(2013) 28 final) ([1]). It is confident that the participating Member States will conclude a common way forward during the negotiation process.

In 2012, the Council had discussed both the Commission proposal and several variants thereof. Eventually, the very procedure of 'enhanced cooperation' had been requested by 11 Member States and authorised by the Council as there had been persisting and essential differences in opinion amongst Member States as regards the need to establish a common system of FTT at the Union level and it was confirmed that the principle of harmonised taxation on financial transactions would not receive unanimous support within the Council in the foreseeable future.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/swd_2013_28_en.pdf

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-009009/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Sledovacie programy amerických agentúr vs. ochrana súkromia občanov členských štátov EÚ

V správach v medzinárodnej tlači začiatkom júna 2013 sa objavili informácie, že americké úrady pristupujú k spracovaniu údajov o občanoch Únie využívajúcich služby amerických poskytovateľov internetových služieb. Práve používatelia služieb spoločností Google, Apple či Facebook sa môžu cítiť dotknutí, keď hovoríme o ochrane osobných údajov.

Prihliadajúc na naliehavosť problému, je dôležité, aby sa podnikli kroky na zabezpečenie ochrany osobných údajov a súkromia zamestnancov európskych inštitúcií aj európskych občanov. Ako chce Komisia postupovať pri riešení tejto situácie v snahe zabezpečiť čo najprísnejšie normy garantujúce ochranu osobných údajov?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(13. septembra 2013)

Komisia si dovoľuje odkázať váženú pani poslankyňu na svoju odpoveď na písomnú otázku E-007934/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009009/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Surveillance programmes by American agencies vs. protecting the privacy of EU citizens

Reports in the international press in early June 2013 brought to light the information that US authorities are to start processing data on EU citizens who use American ISP services. Users of Google, Apple and Facebook services may be concerned about personal data protection.

Considering the urgency of the issue, it is important to take steps to ensure the protection of personal data and the privacy of the staff of European institutions and European citizens. How does the Commission intend to proceed in addressing this situation in order to ensure the highest standards guaranteeing the protection of personal data?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-007934/13.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-009010/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Sexuálne zdravie v Európe

Sexuálne zdravie a pohlavne prenosné infekcie zostávajú významným problémom verejného zdravia v Európe. Neliečené pohlavne prenosné ochorenia môžu mať závažné dlhodobé či krátkodobé dôsledky. Najohrozenejšími sú mladí ľudia vo veku 16 – 25 rokov. Neraz sa stáva, že negatívne vnímanie sexuálnej výchovy a s tým spojená obava, že by mohla stimulovať sexuálnu aktivitu u mladých ľudí, spôsobujú, že sú im odopierané informácie, resp. služby, ktoré by im mohli byť prospešné.

Aj preto sa javí ako potrebné zvýšiť povedomie v rámci danej problematiky a poskytnúť relevantné informácie prostredníctvom vzdelávania. Ako chce na túto výzvu vhodným spôsobom odpovedať Komisia?

Odpoveď pána Borga v mene Komisie
(12. septembra 2013)

O zdravotných aspektoch lepších znalostí o prevencii sexuálne prenosných infekcií sa diskutuje s členskými štátmi a zainteresovanými stranami vo viacerých európskych orgánoch, ako je Výbor siete EÚ na dohľad nad prenosnými ochoreniami a ich kontrolu, skupina expertov na HIV/AIDS, Fórum občianskej spoločnosti a Európske centrum pre prevenciu a kontrolu chorôb.

Okrem toho sa v oznámení Komisie s názvom Boj proti HIV/AIDS v Európskej únii a susedných krajinách, 2009 – 2013 ([1]), konštatuje, že „začlenenie vzdelania v oblasti sexuálneho a reprodukčného zdravia do školských osnov by bolo prínosné z hľadiska prevencie HIV/AIDS a sexuálne prenosných infekcií a malo by mať širokú politickú podporu“. V oznámení Komisie sa okrem toho zdôrazňuje, že „mladí ľudia by mali mať možnosť zapojiť sa“ a „mali by sa vypracovať informácie šité na mieru“.

V súlade s článkom 165 zmluvy majú zodpovednosť za obsah výučby a organizáciu vzdelávacích systémov a systémov odbornej prípravy vrátane učebných plánov výlučne členské štáty. V odporúčaní o kľúčových kompetenciách pre celoživotné vzdelávanie ([2]) sa však v bode „Spoločenské a občianske kompetencie“ zdôrazňuje dôležitosť toho, aby občania porozumeli „spôsobu, akým si jednotlivci môžu zabezpečiť optimálne fyzické a psychické zdravie“ … a mali „vedomosti o tom, ako k tomu môže prispieť zdravý životný štýl“.

Európsky portál pre mládež, ktorý bol nedávno znovu sprístupnený, obsahuje aj oddiel „Zdravie a blahobyt“ s informáciami a odkazmi na príslušné webové lokality na túto tému. Mladým ľuďom, ktorí žiadajú o podrobnejšie informácie alebo poradenstvo prostredníctvom služby „Pýtate sa“, je poskytnutý odkaz na príslušné expertné organizácie.

([1]) KOM(2009) 569, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0569:FIN:SK:PDF
([2]) Ú. v. EÚ L 394, 30.12.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009010/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Sexual health in Europe

Sexual health and sexually transmitted infections remain a major public health problem in Europe. Untreated sexually transmitted diseases can have serious long-term or short-term consequences. Young people aged 16-25 years are the most vulnerable. Negative perceptions of sex education and the associated fear that it could encourage sexual activity in the young often means that they are denied information or services from which they could benefit.

It therefore seems that we need to raise awareness about the issue and to provide relevant information through education. How does the Commission intend to respond to this challenge in an appropriate manner?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 September 2013)

The Health related aspects of improved knowledge on prevention of sexually transmitted infections are discussed with Member States and stakeholders in a number of European bodies, like the EU Network Committee for Surveillance and Control of Communicable Diseases, the HIV/AIDS Think Tank, the Civil Society Forum and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control.

In addition, the Commission Communication on combating HIV/AIDS in the European Union and neighbouring countries 2009-2013 ([1]) states that the 'inclusion of sexual and reproductive health education in school curricula would be beneficial for HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections prevention and should receive broad political support'. The Commission Communication underlines also that 'young people should also be empowered and involved' and that 'tailored information should be developed'.

In accordance with Article 165 of the Treaty, the responsibility for the content and organisation of education and training systems, including school curricula, rests entirely with Member States. However, the recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning ([2]) stresses, under 'social and civic competences', the importance of citizens possessing 'an understanding of how individuals can ensure optimum physical and mental health … and knowledge of how a healthy lifestyle can contribute to this'.

The recently re-launched European Youth Portal further includes a section on 'Health and Well-being', with information and links to relevant websites on this topic. Young people who request more detailed information or advice through the 'Ask a Question' service are signposted to the relevant expert organisations.

([1]) COM/569/2009, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0569:FIN:EN:PDF
([2]) Official Journal L 394 of 30.12.2006.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-009011/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23. júla 2013)

Vec: Systém e-Call a bezpečnosť cestnej premávky

V ostatnom čase sa na mňa obrátili občania s obavami reflektujúc na povinné zavedenie systému e-Call od októbra 2015. Vytýkaná je predovšetkým neefektívna forma pasívnej či aktívnej bezpečnosti, ako aj vysoká cena samotného zariadenia a nákladov súvisiacich s jeho prevádzkou.

Systém e-Call nenapomáha predchádzať samotným zraneniam pri dopravných nehodách. Môže sa pričiniť o presnejšiu lokalizáciu a zalarmovanie pomoci. Nepovažuje však Komisia za opodstatnenejšie sústrediť dostupné finančné prostriedky skôr na iniciatívy zamerané na predchádzanie dopravným nehodám?

Odpoveď pani Kroesovej v mene Komisie
(6. septembra 2013)

Komisia už odviedla a naďalej odvádza veľký kus práce v snahe zvýšiť bezpečnosť na európskych cestách prostredníctvom rôznych programov, ktoré zaviedla, ako napr. Politické usmernenia pre bezpečnosť cestnej premávky na roky 2011 – 2020, Európska charta bezpečnosti cestnej premávky podporujúca spoluprácu zainteresovaných strán pri znižovaní počtu nehôd a úmrtí na cestách, ako aj v rámci 7. rámcového programu pre výskum podporujúcim mnohé projekty, ktoré sa týkajú aktívnej i pasívnej bezpečnosti cestnej premávky.

Prevencia nehôd je hlavným cieľom výskumu a inovácií v doprave. Moderné systémy pomoci pre vodiča ako systém výstrahy pred vybočením z jazdného pruhu alebo núdzové brzdenie významne prispeli k zníženiu počtu smrteľných nehôd, pričom prebiehajúci výskum v oblasti automatického vedenia vozidiel pomôže ešte viac zlepšiť prevenciu nehodovosti. Cieľ tzv. „nulovej vízie“ stanovený Európskou úniou v oblasti bezpečnosti cestnej premávky sa týka tak prevencie dopravných nehôd, ako aj minimalizácie ich následkov. Ako už preukázalo posúdenie vplyvu ([1]), služba e-Call má veľký potenciál zabrániť úmrtiam spôsobeným neskorým poskytnutím pomoci.

Technológia e-Call využíva verejné mobilné komunikačné siete a existujúce infraštruktúry tiesňovej linky 112. Tento model je považovaný za najefektívnejší spôsob zvládnutia núdzových situácií, ktorý si nevyžaduje investície do novej komunikačnej infraštruktúry. Náklady na vybavenie vozidiel budú relatívne nízke a očakáva sa, že sa výrazne znížia vo chvíli, keď sa v celej EÚ spustí povinná služba eCall na báze tiesňovej linky 112, pričom vzniknuté úspory z rozsahu sa dosiahnu zabudovaním zariadení potrebných na zabezpečenie fungovania tejto služby do všetkých nových modelov vozidiel predávaných na trhu EÚ od októbra 2015.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/ia_carried_out/docs/ia_2011/sec_2011_1019_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009011/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: The eCall system and road safety

Citizens have been approaching me recently with concerns about the mandatory introduction of the eCall system in October 2015. They complain in particular about the ineffective form of passive and active safety, as well as the high price of the equipment itself and the cost of operating it.

The eCall system does not help to prevent road accident injuries themselves. It can locate accidents fairly precisely and summon help. Nevertheless, does the Commission not think it makes more sense to concentrate the available funds on initiatives aimed at preventing accidents instead?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(6 September 2013)

The Commission has made and continues to make huge efforts to improve safety on European roads through its different programmes such as the Policy Orientations on Road Safety 2011-2020, the European Road Safety Charter which supports cooperation of stakeholders to reduce the number of accidents and fatalities, and the 7th Framework Programme for Research supporting many projects addressing both active and passive road safety.

Accident prevention is the main focus of research and innovation in transport. Advanced driver assistance systems such as lane departure warning or emergency braking are important contributions to decrease the number of fatal accidents, and ongoing research on automated driving will help to make further achievements in accident prevention. The European Union's 'Vision Zero' on road safety aims both at preventing traffic accidents and at minimising the impact of accidents. As demonstrated in the impact assessment ([1]) e-Call has a significant potential to avoid fatalities that are caused by delayed rescue.

The eCall technology makes use of public mobile communication networks and existing 112 emergency call infrastructures. This model is regarded as the most efficient structure to cope with emergency situations which does not necessitate investments into new communication infrastructure. The costs for the in-vehicle equipment will be relatively low and is expected to go down significantly when the 112-based mandatory eCall service is rolled out across the EU and the resulting economies of scale are achieved with respect to the in-vehicle devices needed for the service to function for all new models of vehicles sold in the EU market as of October 2015.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/ia_carried_out/docs/ia_2011/sec_2011_1019_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009012/13
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(23 July 2013)

Subject: Upper rate of VAT for goods or services not in the environmental, public health and food safety domain

Would the Commission permit a Member State to establish an upper rate of VAT above the standard rate for certain categories of goods or services that are not in the interest of public health, the protection of habitats, the protection of the environment or the protection of public safety?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(12 September 2013)

According to Articles 96 to 99 of the VAT Directive ([1]), Member States are required to apply a single standard rate, which must be at least 15%. They may also have a maximum of two reduced rates set no lower than 5%, which they may apply, at their discretion, to goods and services listed in Annex III (list of supplies of goods and services which may be subject to reduced rates) to the VAT Directive.

Therefore, applying a second VAT rate in addition to the standard rate to certain categories of goods or services would not be in line with the EU VAT rules.

([1]) Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006 — OJ L 347, 11.12.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009013/13
to the Commission
Gay Mitchell (PPE)
(24 July 2013)

Subject: Follow up to written question on alleged forced sterilisations in India

In response to the answer provided by Commissioner Piebalgs to Written Question E-005190/2013 entitled 'Alleged forced sterilisations in India', could the Commission answer the following follow-up questions:

The Commission refers to 'appropriate and effective voluntary methods' of sterilisation. Does this mean that the Commission believes, a priori, that sterilisation is an appropriate form of family planning?

The Commission states that there is evidence of sterilisation taking place without proper counselling or informed consent. What exactly is the Indian Government doing to tackle this problem? Is there a legal framework that allows for prosecutions for such abuse? If so, how many prosecutions have there been? What is the EU delegation in India doing to highlight this problem and put pressure on the Indian Government?

Which non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working on health issues in India receive EU funding? What amounts were granted to them in 2012? Are any of these NGOs involved in sterilisations? What system of control has the Commission put in place to ensure that any such sterilisations are not carried out in collaboration with EU-funded NGOs?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(27 August 2013)

All EU cooperation regarding sexual and reproductive health is compliant with the internationally and EU-agreed principles and practices as stated in the Programme of Action agreed to at the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994. It stipulates the principle of informed free choice for family planning.

In 2005 the Supreme Court ordered that guidelines should be produced by Government of India at state and central level. By 2007, this decision had been enforced. The guidelines include standards about the performance of sterilization procedures, requirements of informed consent, punitive action for violations, and compensation for victims ([1]).

The Commission would further refer the Honourable Member to its answers to previous written questions E-005190/2013, E-004800/2013 and E-005235/2012 ([2]).

The main financial support of the Commission to the health sector has been through support to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Non-Governmental Organisations support on health issues represents less than 10% of the support to India's health sector. All of the Commission's implementing partners have to abide by national laws and international best practice as explained above. The Honourable Member will find the list of supported projects in annex, which is sent directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat.

([1]) More details under: http://www.escr-net.org/node/365195.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-009015/13
za Komisijo
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(24. julij 2013)

Zadeva: Podatki o podjetnicah

Podjetništvo velja za gonilo gospodarske rasti in konkurenčnosti. Podjetnice so za Evropsko unijo še toliko pomembnejše, tako zaradi enakosti med spoloma kot zaradi gospodarske rasti. Čeprav se ženske na trgu delovne sile vse bolj uveljavljajo, prepad med spoloma v podjetništvu ostaja velik.

Zato je treba nujno okrepiti podporne strukture za podjetnice, kot so zagotavljanje informacij in usposabljanje, poslovne mreže in storitve v podporo poslovanju, ter jim olajšati dostop do finančnega kapitala.

Kako Komisija spodbuja žensko podjetništvo? Ali ponuja posebne programe za povečanje števila podjetnic?

Ali ima Komisija na voljo natančne podatke o številu samozaposlenih žensk v EU?

Odgovor komisarja Antonia Tajanija v imenu Komisije
(9. september 2013)

Komisija poslanko vabi, naj si pogleda odgovor na pisno vprašanje E-004603/2012 o podatkih o ženskah v podjetništvu.

Poleg tega je v načrtu študija, katere namen bo deloma tudi pridobitev podrobnejših podatkov s tega področja in ki naj bi se začela pred koncem leta 2013.

Glede posebnih programov za povečanje števila podjetnic in podporo podjetnicam Komisija poslanko vabi, naj si pogleda odgovor na pisno vprašanje E-006676/2012.

Glede vprašanja spodbujanja ženskega podjetništva na splošno Akcijski načrt za podjetništvo 2020, ki je bil sprejet januarja 2013 ([1]), posebej vključuje ženske kot posebno skupino sedanjih in prihodnjih podjetnikov, ki jim je treba nameniti pomoč in podporo tako na evropski kot na nacionalni in regionalni ravni.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/entrepreneurship-2020/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009015/13
to the Commission
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(24 July 2013)

Subject: Data on female entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is seen as a catalyst for economic growth and competitiveness. Female entrepreneurship is of further importance to the European Union for both gender equality and economic growth. Yet, while women are catching up on labour markets, the gender gap in entrepreneurship remains wide.

The reinforcement of support structures for female entrepreneurs, such as the provision of information and training, business networks, business support services, and the facilitation of access to financial capital for women is therefore crucial.

How is the Commission promoting female entrepreneurship? Does the Commission have specific programmes aimed at increasing the number of female entrepreneurs?

Does the Commission have exact data on the number of women in the EU who are self-employed?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(9 September 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the reply given to Written Question E-004603/2012 on data on women in entrepreneurship.

In addition, a study aimed in part at obtaining further such data is planned to begin before the end of 2013.

With respect to specific programmes to increase and support women entrepreneurs, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the reply given to Written Question E-006676/2012.

Regarding promotion of female entrepreneurship in general, the Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan, adopted in January 2013 ([1]) specifically includes women as one of the specific groups of present or future entrepreneurs to whom outreach and support should be directed at both European as well as national and regional levels.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/entrepreneurship-2020/index_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009016/13
an die Kommission
Martin Häusling (Verts/ALE)
(24. Juli 2013)

Betrifft: Krise auf dem Milchmarkt — GD Landwirtschaft

Die Krise auf dem Milchmarkt in den Jahren 2008 und 2009 war für den gesamten Sektor mit weitreichenden Konsequenzen verbunden. Als Reaktion darauf wurden auf EU-Ebene sowie national finanzielle Mittel eingesetzt.

Welche Kosten hat die Milchkrise innerhalb der EU verursacht?

1. Welche finanziellen Mittel wurden für folgende Maßnahmen aufgebracht: Interventionszahlungen, Exportsubventionen, private Lagerhaltung, spezielle EU- Krisenbeihilfen?

2. Wo wurden weitere Finanzmittel in welcher Höhe eingesetzt?

3. Welche finanziellen Mittel wurden in welcher Höhe in nationalen Krisenprogrammen eingesetzt?

4. Wie hoch war der Verfall bei den Milcherzeugerpreisen?

5. Welche Investitionsrückgänge waren bei den milchwirtschaftlichen Betrieben zu verzeichnen?

6. Wie hoch ist die verloren gegangene Wertschöpfung in der Lebensmittelkette bei den jeweiligen Marktakteuren anzusetzen?

7. Wie viele Milchviehbetriebe haben die Erzeugung krisenbedingt eingestellt?

8. Wie hat sich die Verschuldung der Milchviehbetriebe in den Mitgliedstaaten im Zeitraum von 2007 bis 2012 entwickelt?

Antwort von Herrn Cioloş im Namen der Kommission
(11. September 2013)

1. EU-Ausgaben für Molkereiprodukte von 2009 bis 2013 in Mio. EUR: 373 für Ausfuhrerstattungen, 36 für private Lagerhaltung und 294 für besondere Marktstützungsmaßnahmen. Öffentliche Interventionen führten zu Nettoeinnahmen von 50 Mio. EUR.

2. Im Rahmen des GAP-Gesundheitschecks/des Europäischen Konjunkturprogramms flossen von 2009 bis 2011 173 Mio. EUR in die Umstrukturierung des Milchsektors als eine neue Herausforderung.

Die gesamten Investitionsausgaben aus dem ELER im Zusammenhang mit dem Milchsektor von 2007 bis 2011 belaufen sich auf 1,1 Mrd. EUR.

Gemäß Artikel 68 der Verordnung über Direktzahlungen wurden von 2010 bis 2013 1 335 Mio. EUR als spezifische Unterstützung im Milchsektor bewilligt, hauptsächlich als gekoppelte Beihilfen, aber ebenso um die Qualität der Milchprodukte zu verbessern.

Dies sind jedoch keine Kosten aufgrund der Krise, sondern Investitionen zur Verbesserung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit des EU-Milchsektors, um zukünftig widerstandsfähiger zu sein.

4. Der durchschnittliche monatliche Ab-Hof-Milchpreis in der EU stieg im Jahr 2007 von 28,80 auf 38,99 EUR je 100 kg, im Jahr 2008 sank er auf 30,92 EUR, 2009 sank er im Mai auf 24,39 EUR und erholte sich aufgrund von Maßnahmen der Kommission zur Schaffung von Sicherheitsnetzen auf einen „historischen Normalstand“ von 28,31 EUR. Im Juni 2013 lag der Preis bei 35,42 EUR (siehe Anhang).

7. Es ist nicht möglich zu beziffern, wie viele landwirtschaftliche Betriebe ihre Produktion aufgrund der Krise eingestellt haben. Abgesehen von den Auswirkungen der Umstrukturierung in den EU-2 scheint der rückläufige Trend bei der Anzahl der Milcherzeuger in der EU-25 nicht erheblich beeinflusst worden zu sein (siehe Anhang).

8. Gemäß dem Informationsnetz landwirtschaftlicher Buchführungen verbesserte sich zwischen 2007 und 2011 das durchschnittliche Verhältnis zwischen Verbindlichkeiten und Vermögenswerten in Molkereibetrieben in der EU im Vergleich zu allen landwirtschaftlichen Betrieben um 0,6 %. In acht Mitgliedstaaten verbesserte sich das Verhältnis in Molkereibetrieben in diesem Zeitraum (siehe Anhang).

Die Kommission bedauert, dass sie nicht ausreichende Informationen zur Verfügung hat, um Fragen 3, 5 und 6 zu beantworten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009016/13
to the Commission
Martin Häusling (Verts/ALE)
(24 July 2013)

Subject: Crisis on the milk market — DG Agriculture

The crisis on the milk market in 2008 and 2009 had far-reaching consequences for the whole industry. In response, funding was allocated both at EU and at national level.

What costs were incurred within the EU on account of the milk crisis?

1. What funding was allocated to the following measures: intervention payments, export subsidies, private storage and special EU crisis aid?

2. Where was further funding allocated, and how much?

3. What funding was allocated in national crisis programmes, and how much?

4. How much did farmgate prices of milk fall?

5. What declines in investment occurred among dairy processors?

6. How much added value is estimated to have been lost in the food production chain on the part of the various market operators?

7. How many dairy farms halted production on account of the crisis?

8. How did the indebtedness of dairy farms develop in the Member States between 2007 and 2012?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(11 September 2013)

1. EU expenditure for dairy from 2009 to 2013 in million EUR: 373 for export refund, 36 for private storage and 294 for the specific market support measure. Public intervention resulted in a net income of EUR 50 million.

2. Within the context of the Health-Check of the CAP/European Economic Recovery Plan, from 2009 to 2011 EUR 173 million was spent targeting dairy restructuring as a new challenge.

EAFRD funds global investment expenditure linked to dairy from 2007 to 2011 amount to EUR 1.1 billion

Under Article 68 of the regulation for direct payments, from 2010 to 2013 EUR 1 332 million was granted as specific support for the dairy sector, mostly as coupled aids but also to improve the quality of dairy products.

However, these are not cost made on the account of the crisis but investments to improve competitiveness of the EU dairy sector to make it more resilient for the future.

4. The monthly EU average farmgate milk price in EUR per 100 kg in 2007 increased from 28.80 to 38.99, in 2008 decreased to 30.92, in 2009 decreased to 24.39 in May and recovered as an effect of the Commission's safety net measures to a 'normal historical' level of 28.31. In June 2013 the price was EUR 35,42. (see annex)

7. It is not possible to link a number of farms halting production to the crises. Apart from the restructuring effect in the EU 2, the decreasing trend in the number of milk producers in the EU 25 does not seem to be significantly influenced. (see annex)

8. According to Farm Accountancy Data Network, between 2007 and 2011 the EU average liabilities-to-assets ratio in milk farms increased by 0.6% more than in all farms. In 8 Member States the ratio for milk farms improved during this period. (see annex)

The Commission regrets that it does not have sufficient data to answer questions 3, 5 and 6.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009017/13
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(24 juillet 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — l'Union européenne doit prendre position pour protéger Sahar Gul et toutes les femmes et filles afghanes

L'histoire de la jeune Afghane Sahar Gul est terrible: vendue à 12 ans pour un mariage forcé et torturée par sa belle-famille, elle a vécu l'enfer, se faisant régulièrement battre, torturer et affamer, enfermée dans une cave pour avoir refusé de se prostituer. Poursuivis pour tentative d'homicide, ses bourreaux ont été acquittés pour manque de preuves. Condamnés pour coups et lacérations, ils ont cependant été relâchés après à peine un an sur les dix années de prison qu'ils auraient dû purger, après une décision en appel dont la victime n'avait même pas été informée.

Nous aurions tort de croire que cette histoire bouleversante n'est qu'un cas isolé. Le Parlement afghan examine actuellement une réforme du code pénal qui pourrait empêcher à l'avenir la majorité des femmes afghanes victimes de violence de faire valoir leurs droits les plus fondamentaux en justice. Et l'avenir du texte sur l'élimination de la violence envers les femmes, leur rempart légal contre cette violence, n'est pas assuré.

Mes craintes, et celles de tous les défenseurs des droits des femmes, devant un risque de recul de la protection des femmes en Afghanistan, sont réelles et pressantes.

L'engagement de l'UE en faveur des femmes en Afghanistan est constant. Le Conseil «Affaires étrangères» l'a bien souligné dans ses conclusions du 24 juin, dans lesquelles il rappelle l'importance de garantir les droits des femmes dans le pays, soulignant qu'une réforme judiciaire est nécessaire pour permettre une meilleure application de leurs droits et leur meilleur accès à la justice. Pourtant, malgré ce rappel, la haute représentante — qui pourtant préside cette formation du Conseil — a choisi de ne pas s'exprimer lorsque la nouvelle choquante de la libération des bourreaux de Sahar Gul est apparue, moins d'un mois après la tenue de ce Conseil. Cela aurait été l'occasion de prouver son engagement au soutien des femmes afghanes, et je déplore qu'elle n'ait pas saisi cette opportunité.

L'UE doit marquer son engagement fort au soutien des femmes et filles afghanes: j'appelle donc la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante à prendre officiellement position en soutien de la jeune Sahar Gul. J'aimerais également savoir si la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante est en mesure de nous faire part des objectifs et ambitions concrets de l'UE pour la protection des femmes afghanes.

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

Consciente de l'histoire bouleversante de M^me^ Sahar Gul, la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante reste profondément préoccupée par les difficultés que rencontrent les femmes et les jeunes filles afghanes pour revendiquer et défendre leurs droits. Maintenir les avancées réalisées dans le domaine des droits de la femme ces dix dernières années et favoriser la pleine mise en œuvre de la législation en vigueur sont des priorités pour l'Union européenne. La loi sur l'élimination de la violence à l'égard des femmes (loi EVAW), qui est actuellement débattue au sein du Parlement afghan, fait partie de ces priorités.

L'Union continue d'insister auprès du gouvernement pour qu'il trouve une solution aux usages traditionnels généralisés qui sont discriminatoires à l'encontre des femmes et des jeunes filles, et fait pression auprès des législateurs afin que tous les actes législatifs soient conformes aux normes internationales relatives aux Droits de l'homme.

Le renforcement de l'État de droit et des opérations civiles de maintien de l'ordre, et notamment le soutien en faveur d'une réforme judiciaire de grande ampleur, reste un secteur de concentration de l'aide au développement de l'Union européenne. L'Union soutient un large éventail de projets et d'activités de sensibilisation en faveur des droits des femmes afghanes. Ces projets portent, entre autres, sur la fourniture d'une aide juridique, de services de conseil et de médiation pour les femmes et les jeunes filles victimes de violence familiale, sur la promotion des droits de la femme par l'intermédiaire de structures locales de la société civile et sur le renforcement des capacités et la sensibilisation à l'intention du personnel judiciaire et des acteurs de leur communauté. D'autres projets visent à permettre aux organisations de la société civile et aux communautés locales actives au niveau provincial de suivre la loi EVAW et la résolution 1325 du Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies, ainsi qu'à financer des activités médiatiques relatives à ce thème dans une quinzaine de provinces. La mission EUPOL Afghanistan a, quant à elle, apporté une aide aux unités d'intervention familiale du ministère de l'intérieur et au bureau du procureur général, et a assuré des formations spécialisées à l'intention des policiers et des procureurs, spécifiquement axées sur la loi sur l'élimination de la violence à l'égard des femmes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009017/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(24 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — The European Union has to take a stand to protect Sahar Gul and all Afghan women and children

The story of the Afghan girl Sahar Gul is a terrible one: sold at the age of 12 for a forced marriage and tortured by her in-laws, she went through hell and was regularly beaten, tortured and starved, locked in a cellar for her refusal to become a prostitute. When prosecuted for attempted murder, her killers were acquitted due to a lack of evidence. Convicted of assault and wounding, they were nevertheless released after only one year out of the ten they were supposed to serve in prison, following a decision by an appeal court, of which the victim had not even been informed.

It would be wrong to believe that this shocking story is an isolated case. The Afghan Parliament is currently considering a reform of the penal code that could prevent, in future, the majority of Afghan women who are victims of violence from asserting their basic legal rights before the courts. And the future of the text on the elimination of violence against women, their legal defence against this violence, is by no means guaranteed.

My fears, and those of all those who defend women's rights, in relation to this risk of regression in the protection of women in Afghanistan, are genuine and pressing.

The EU has constantly committed itself to defending women in Afghanistan. The Foreign Affairs Council pointed this out firmly in its conclusions of 24 June, in which it reaffirmed the importance of ensuring women's rights in the country, stressing that judicial reform was necessary to better implement their rights and to improve their access to justice. Yet despite this reminder, the High Representative — who chairs this Council — chose not to speak out when the shocking news of the release of Sahar Gul's murderers emerged, less than a month after this Council meeting. That would have been an opportunity to demonstrate her commitment to supporting Afghan women, and I regret that she did not seize this opportunity.

The EU has to show its strong commitment to supporting Afghan women and girls. I therefore call on the HR/VP officially to take a stand in support of the young Sahar Gul. I would also like to know if the HR/VP can provide us with any information on the EU's specific goals and ambitions in relation to the protection of Afghan women.

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

The HR/VP is aware of the shocking case of Sahar Gul and remains deeply concerned about the challenges Afghan girls and women continue to face in claiming and defending their human rights. Safeguarding the advances made over the last decade in women's rights and promoting the full implementation of existing statutory provisions are priorities for the EU. This includes the Eliminating Violence Against Women Law (EVAW), which is under discussion in the Afghan parliament.

The EU continues to urge the government to tackle widespread traditional customs that discriminate against women and girls and advocates with lawmakers that all legislative acts comply with international Human Rights Standards.

Strengthening the rule of law and civilian policing, including support for a wider judicial reform, remains a focal sector for EU development assistance. The EU supports a wide range of projects and awareness raising activities to support the rights of Afghan women. Examples include the provision of legal support, counselling and mediation for women and girls affected by family violence; the promotion of women's rights through local civil society structures; capacity building and awareness raising activities for justice personnel and community stakeholders; enabling civil society organisations and local communities at provincial level to follow up on the EVAW Law and UNSCR 1325; and the funding of media activities in the field in 15 provinces. The EUPOL AFGHANISTAN mission has supported the Ministry of the Interior's Family Response Units and the Attorney General's Office and has been providing specialized training for police and prosecutors on EVAW.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009018/13
alla Commissione
Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(24 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Riconversione ex zuccherificio di Finale Emilia

La centrale a biomassa di Finale Emilia rientra tra i progetti di riconversione degli ex zuccherifici chiusi dopo la riforma comunitaria del settore bieticolo saccarifero varata nel 2006 (Ocm zucchero). Sembra che il piano per la riconversione determinato dal Comitato interministeriale, istituito con la legge 81/2006, prevedesse nello specifico di Finale Emilia l'uso di fondi europei nell'ambito del piano di sviluppo rurale e in particolare del FEAOG (Fondo europeo agricolo di orientamento e di garanzia) di circa cinquanta milioni di euro.

L'accordo di riconversione prevedeva la realizzazione di una centrale elettrica di 12.5 Mw (elettrici) alimentata con biomasse provenienti prevalentemente dalla filiera agricola del sorgo da fibra. Tale accordo prevedeva espressamente che l'avvio dei lavori potesse avvenire solamente a seguito dello specifico «accordo di filiera» con le organizzazioni di produttori, condizione inderogabile per la sostenibilità del progetto e per la creazione di una filiera agroenergetica.

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

1. Ritiene compatibile con il finanziamento europeo la finalità della riconversione?

2. Ritiene che si possa configurare un uso improprio dei finanziamenti europei in quanto non è stata realizzata alcuna filiera agroenergetica locale?

3. Considera che si sia raggiunto un ottimale utilizzo della materia agricola?

4. È del parere che, allo stato attuale, l'impianto rispetti i criteri di sostenibilità e libera concorrenza?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(11 settembre 2013)

L'onorevole deputato chiede delucidazioni sulla conversione dell'ex zuccherificio di Finale Emilia in una centrale a biomassa a seguito della riforma dell'organizzazione comune del mercato dello zucchero varate dall'UE nel 2006.

Questo progetto risulta essere finanziato in conformità del regolamento del Consiglio (CE) n. 320/2006, del 20 febbraio 2006, relativo a un regime temporaneo per la ristrutturazione dell'industria dello zucchero nella Comunità e che modifica il regolamento (CE) n. 1290/2005 relativo al finanziamento della politica agricola comune. Il fondo di ristrutturazione ivi previsto faceva parte del Fondo europeo agricolo d'orientamento e garanzia, sezione Garanzia e, a decorrere dal 1º gennaio 2007, fa parte del Fondo europeo agricolo di garanzia (FEAGA) ([1]).

Ai fini di questo fondo di ristrutturazione, gli Stati membri erano pienamente responsabili della sua attuazione nei rispettivi territori.

Il programma di sviluppo rurale 2007-2013 della Regione Emilia-Romagna esclude specificamente tali interventi dal finanziamento.

([1]) Articolo 1, paragrafo 1, del regolamento (CE) n. 320/2006 della Commissione (GU L 58 del 28.2.2006).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009018/13
to the Commission
Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(24 July 2013)

Subject: Redevelopment of former sugar factory in Finale Emilia

A biomass power plant in Finale Emilia has been included among the redevelopment projects for the former sugar factories closed down after the EU reform of the sugar beet sector in 2006 (sugar CMO). The redevelopment plan drawn up by the Interministerial Committee, established by Law 81/2006, apparently provided for — in the specific case of Finale Emilia — the use of some EUR 50 million in EU funds under the rural development plan and in particular under the EAGGF (European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund).

The redevelopment agreement provided for the establishment of a 12.5 MW (electrical) power plant supplied with biomass mainly from the fibre sorghum agricultural sector. This agreement expressly provided that the relevant work could begin only after the specific 'sectoral agreement' had been drawn up with producer organisations — a prerequisite for the sustainability of the project and for the creation of an agro-energy supply chain.

In the light of the above, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Does it believe that the purpose of this redevelopment is compatible with EU funding?

2. Does it not think that EU funds may have been used improperly, given that no local agro-energy supply chain has been created?

3. Does it believe that an optimal use of agricultural material has been achieved?

4. Does it believe that, at present, the power plant fulfils the criteria of sustainability and free competition?

Answer given by Mr Ciolos on behalf of the Commission
(11 September 2013)

The Honourable MEP enquires about the conversion of a former sugar refinery in Finale Emilia into a biomass plant following the 2006 reform of the EU sugar Common Market.

This project appears to have been supported with resources in accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No 320/2006 of 20 February 2006 establishing a temporary scheme for the restructuring of the sugar industry in the Community and amending Regulation (EC) No 1290/2005 on the financing of the common agricultural policy. The restructuring fund was part of the Guarantee Section of the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund. As from 1 January 2007 it is part of the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) ([1]).

Within the framework of this restructuring fund, Member States had full responsibility for its implementation within their territory.

The 2007-2013 Rural Development Program of the region Emilia Romagna specifically excludes such interventions from funding.

([1]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 320/2006, art. 1, Paragraph 1 (OJ L 58, 28.2.206).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009019/13
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(24 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: Pirateria marittima nel Mediterraneo

Considerando che il trasporto marittimo è uno dei cardini della crescita economica e del continente e che l'80 % del commercio mondiale avviene via mare;.

considerando che la pirateria costituisce una minaccia alla sicurezza e alla stabilità e che pertanto la lotta alla pirateria rappresenta una priorità dell'azione comunitaria;.

considerando che la pirateria d'alto mare resta un problema irrisolto, sebbene il numero degli attacchi riusciti sia sensibilmente diminuito lo scorso anno, soprattutto grazie alle attività dell'operazione ATALANTA e al ricorso a Nuclei militari di protezione (anche privati); che la pirateria continua a diffondersi rapidamente nell'Oceano indiano occidentale, soprattutto al largo delle coste della Somalia e del Corno d'Africa, ma anche in altre zone, tra cui il sud-est asiatico e l'Africa occidentale, e che rappresenta pertanto un pericolo sempre maggiore per la vita umana e l'incolumità della gente di mare e di altre persone, nonché una minaccia per lo sviluppo e la stabilità regionali, l'ambiente marino, il commercio mondiale e ogni forma di trasporto marittimo e di navigazione, tra cui i pescherecci;.

considerando che ogni anno 10 000 navi europee attraversano zone marittime pericolose e che, pertanto, la pirateria non solo incide sulle vite umane e sull'incolumità delle persone ma rappresenta anche un problema economico, in quanto mette a rischio le rotte marittime commerciali internazionali e comporta pesanti ricadute negative sul commercio internazionale;.

considerando che la crescita esponenziale del fenomeno determina un aumento dei costi degli operatori marittimi oltre che uno spostamento del traffico delle navi, che preferiscono circumnavigare l'Africa evitando il Mediterraneo,.

non ritiene la Commissione che sia necessario istituire una missione simile ad ATALANTA che sorvegli il transito delle navi e ristabilisca la totale sicurezza sulle rotte verso il Mediterraneo?

Non reputa la Commissione che sia importante istituire un Osservatorio sulla pirateria marittima per il Mediterraneo?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(30 settembre 2013)

L'efficace risposta della comunità internazionale, compresa l'operazione navale dell'UE ATALANTA e l'attuazione delle misure di autoprotezione da parte delle unità mercantili o da pesca come in particolare raccomandato dalla Commissione ([1]) hanno portato a una riduzione drastica del numero di attacchi tentati e riusciti da parte dei pirati nel Golfo di Aden e nell'Oceano Indiano occidentale. Nel 2013 ci sono stati meno di 20 attacchi ed eventi sospetti al largo delle coste della Somalia. Dal maggio 2012 nessuna nave di grandi dimensioni è stata assalita dai pirati.

Non esiste nessuna indicazione che le rotte marittime principali siano sostanzialmente cambiate. Secondo l'autorità sul traffico del canale di Suez circa 18 000 navi transitano annualmente nel canale di Suez.

L'Ufficio marittimo internazionale ritiene che il mar Mediterraneo non sia una zona soggetta ad atti di pirateria e ad attacchi armati.

([1]) Raccomandazione della Commissione dell'11 marzo 2010, relativa alle misure di autoprotezione e di prevenzione degli atti di pirateria e degli attacchi armati contro le navi (Testo rilevante ai fini del SEE) GU L 67 del 17.3.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009019/13
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(24 July 2013)

Subject: Maritime piracy in the Mediterranean

Maritime transport is key to economic growth and of crucial importance to Europe as a whole. Eighty per cent of the goods traded worldwide are transported by sea.

Piracy is a threat to security and stability and is therefore a priority area for EU action.

Even though the number of successful attacks fell substantially in 2012, owing in large part to Operation Atalanta and the use of military and private Vessel Protection Detachments, piracy on the high seas remains a problem and is continuing to spread rapidly in the Western Indian Ocean, particularly off the coasts of Somalia and the Horn of Africa, as well as in other areas, including South-East Asia and West Africa. It is therefore a very real threat to the lives and safety of seafarers and passengers, as well as to regional development and stability, the marine environment, world trade and all forms of shipping, including fishing vessels.

Given that some 10 000 European vessels sail through dangerous maritime waters every year, piracy clearly has economic consequences in addition to its impact on human life and safety, because it makes international maritime trading routes less safe and is therefore seriously affecting international trade.

The huge rise in the number of attacks has pushed up costs for maritime operators and influenced their choice of shipping routes, with vessels now preferring to go around Africa instead of through the Mediterranean.

Does the Commission not agree that an operation similar to Atalanta is needed in order to protect vessels and to make the Mediterranean route safe once again?

Does it not think that it would be a good idea to establish a maritime piracy monitoring centre for the Mediterranean?

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

The effective response of the international community, including through the EU naval Operation Atalanta, and the implementation of self protection measures by merchant and fishing vessels as notably recommended by the Commission ([1]), have led to a dramatic reduction of the number of attempted and successful pirate attacks in the Gulf of Aden and the western Indian Ocean. In 2013, there have been less than 20 attacks and suspicious events off the Somali coasts. No large ship has been pirated since May 2012.

There is no indication that the main maritime routes have changed substantially. The Suez Canal Authority Traffic reports about 18 000 ships transiting yearly through the Suez canal.

According to the International Maritime Bureau, the Mediterranean Sea is not a Piracy & Armed Robbery Prone Area.

([1]) Commission Recommendation of 11 March 2010 on measures for self-protection and the prevention of piracy and armed robbery against ships Text with EEA relevance, OJ L 67, 17.3.2010.