(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009819/13
an die Kommission
Jo Leinen (S&D)
(3. September 2013)

Betrifft: Förderung einer Verschwellungsanlage aufgrund der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1638/2006

Armenien möchte zur Förderung des Umwelt- und Naturschutzes ein „Pilotprojekt" in Form einer patentrechtlich geschützten „Verschwellungsanlage" für Müll und organische Abfälle mit gleichzeitiger Trennung von verwertbaren Rohstoffen errichten. Die Anlage soll außerdem für rund 30 000 Haushalte Strom erzeugen.

Laut der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1638/2006 zur Festlegung allgemeiner Bestimmungen zur Schaffung eines Europäischen Nachbarschafts- und Partnerschaftsinstruments stehen für solche Projekte bis 2013 11 181 000 000 EUR zur Verfügung.

1. Sind diese Mittel inzwischen ausgeschöpft oder stehen noch Gelder zur Verfügung?

2. Wird die Förderung solcher Projekte in der nächsten Periode 2014-2020 weitergeführt?

Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(29. Oktober 2013)

Die Kommission setzt den Herrn Abgeordneten in Kenntnis, dass alle im Rahmen des Europäischen Nachbarschafts- und Partnerschaftsinstruments (ENPI) für Armenien vorgesehenen Mittel für den Zeitraum 2007-2013 bereits programmiert wurden. Das Projekt Verschwellungsanlage zählt derzeit nicht zu den von der armenischen Regierung und der Europäischen Union festgelegten Prioritäten.

Die Prioritäten für die Bereiche, die im Planungszeitraum 2014-2020 finanziell unterstützt werden sollen, werden derzeit mit der armenischen Regierung und anderen Akteuren erörtert.

Im Bereich Abfallbewirtschaftung und erneuerbare Energien unterstützt die Kommission mehrere regionale Programme zur Verbesserung der nationalen politischen und rechtlichen Rahmenbedingungen und zum Aufbau nationaler Kapazitäten für Abfallbewirtschaftung und erneuerbare Energien, die mit dem Besitzstand der EU im Einklang stehen und deren Erfahrungen berücksichtigen. So wurden ENPI-Mittel für ein regionales Programm zur Abfallbewirtschaftung bereitgestellt, mit dem in einer Pilotregion jedes Landes der Östlichen Partnerschaft die Entwicklung einer auf europäischen Normen basierenden Strategie für die Abfallbewirtschaftung unterstützt wurde.

Der von dem Herrn Abgeordneten genannte Projektvorschlag benötigt möglicherweise eine Investitionsfinanzierung, die von den regionalen Programmen nicht geleistet werden kann. Er könnte jedoch von einer der europäischen Finanzinstitutionen (EIB ([1]), EBWE ([2]), AFD ([3]), KfW ([4]) usw.) unterstützt werden. Sollte die armenische Regierung einen solchen Antrag stellen, könnte für die Kosten für technische Hilfe und vorbereitende Studien für Pilotprojekte im Bereich Abfallbewirtschaftung und Energieerzeugung aus erneuerbaren Quellen eine Unterstützung aus der Nachbarschaftsinvestitionsfazilität des ENPI in Betracht gezogen werden.

([1]) Europäische Investitionsbank.
([2]) Europäische Bank für Wiederaufbau und Entwicklung.
([3]) Agence française de développement.
([4]) Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009819/13
to the Commission
Jo Leinen (S&D)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Funding for a resource recovery facility under Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006

In an effort to protect the environment and conserve nature, Armenia intends to set up a pilot project involving a patented resource recovery facility for rubbish and organic waste which will also separate off recyclable raw materials. The facility will also generate enough electricity to supply approximately 30 000 households.

In accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006 laying down general provisions establishing a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, EUR 11 181 000 000 is available for such projects over the programming period ending in 2013.

1. Has this funding now been exhausted?

2. Will funding for such projects be continued in the 2014-2020 programming period?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(29 October 2013)

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that all the funds for Armenia under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) have been programmed for the period 2007-2013. Priorities are set by the Armenian Government and the European Union, and this project has not been included in the present priorities.

As concerns the next programming period 2014-2020, priorities for the areas to be financially supported are currently being discussed with the Armenian Government and other stakeholders.

Concerning waste management and renewables, the Commission supports a number of regional programmes aiming to improve national policy and regulatory frameworks and to develop national capacities on waste management and on renewable energy in line with the EU experience and *acquis*. In this context, ENPI funds have been made available for a regional programme on waste governance that has supported the development of a strategy for waste governance based on European standards in a pilot region of each Eastern Partnership country.

The project proposal referred to by the Honourable Member may require investment funding that the regional programmes cannot cover but could be supported by one of the European financial institutions (EIB ([1]), EBRD ([2]), AFD ([3]), KfW ([4]), etc.). If such a request were made by the Armenian Government, support from the ENPI Neighbourhood Investment Facility for the cost of some technical assistance and preparatory studies for pilot projects in the field of waste management and renewable energy generation could be considered.

([1]) European Investment Bank.
([2]) European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.
([3]) Agence Française de développement.
([4]) Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009820/13
an die Kommission
Jörg Leichtfried (S&D)
(2. September 0132)

Betrifft: Direktes Abbuchen der Kaution für Mietautos

Das weltweit tätige US-amerikanische Mietwagenunternehmen Hertz (The Hertz Corporation) führt in seinen Allgemeinen Geschäftsbedingungen (AGBs) die Inanspruchnahme der Kaution für gemietete PKWs als Blockieren, also Reservieren der entsprechenden Summe auf dem Kreditkartenkonto an und praktiziert dieses auch entsprechend.

In gewissen rechtlichen Firmenkonstellationen, in den AGBs genauer als „Hertz-Lizenznehmer" bezeichnet, in denen unabhängige Unternehmen unter der Marke Hertz agieren, kann jedoch von oben genannter Praxis abgewichen werden, da die AGBs ausdrücklich nicht für jene Firmenkonstellationen gültig sind. Dieses Abweichen äußert sich durch direktes Abbuchen statt Blockieren der jeweiligen Kaution und nachträgliches Rücküberweisen, wird nach jetzigem Kenntnisstand in Teilen der Europäischen Union, beispielsweise Teneriffa, praktiziert und wird durch keine online einsehbaren AGBs gedeckt.

Diese Sachlage berührt den Verbraucherschutz auf mehrfache Weise. Zum einen führt die oftmals online durchgeführte Buchung und das Nichtvorhandensein der AGBs in digitaler Form zu einer schwerwiegenden Informationsasymetrie zu Lasten der Verbraucher. Zum anderen ist die Praxis des Abbuchens und Rücküberweisens anstatt Blockierens im Kern bereits konsumentenschädigend, da nicht nur versteckte Zinskosten anfallen, sondern durch das hervorgerufene Gläubigerverhältnis und eine nicht auszuschließende Insolvenz ein Verlustrisiko in Bezug auf die Kaution besteht.

1. Besitzt die Kommission Kenntnisse über das obengenannte Missverhältnis?

2. Wenn die Kommission keinerlei Kenntnis über die obengenannte Praxis hat: Plant die Kommission Nachforschungen in dieser Sache anzustellen?

3. Plant die Kommission Maßnahmen, um hier eine sachgerechte, verbraucherfreundliche Ausgestaltung des Mietverhältnisses herbeizuführen, einerseits durch eine rechtliche Kopplung der Online-Buchungen an einen unmittelbaren Zugriff auf die AGBs, andererseits durch das rechtliche Reduzieren der Zurückhaltung der Kaution auf das oben erwähnte Blockieren?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(33. November 0132)

Die Kommission hatte bislang keine Kenntnis von den vom Herrn Abgeordneten angeführten Praktiken in Bezug auf das direkte Abbuchen von Mietkautionen.

Nach EU-Recht müssen Gewerbetreibende im Sinne der Fernabsatzrichtlinie ([1]), die ab dem 13. Juni 2014 durch die Richtlinie über die Rechte der Verbraucher ([2]) aufgehoben wird, Verbraucher vor dem Online-Vertragsabschluss auch über die Zahlungsmodalitäten informieren. Nach Vertragsschluss muss der Gewerbetreibende dem Verbraucher eine Bestätigung dieser Informationen auf einem dauerhaften Datenträger (z. B. per E-Mail) übermitteln. Gemäß der Richtlinie über den elektronischen Geschäftsverkehr ([3]) müssen die Vertragsbedingungen so zur Verfügung gestellt werden, dass der Empfänger sie speichern und reproduzieren kann.

Die Richtlinie über unlautere Geschäftspraktiken ([4]) kann ebenfalls greifen, wenn Verbraucher in der EU nachweislich durch Irreführung zu geschäftlichen Entscheidungen veranlasst werden, die sie ansonsten nicht getroffen hätten. Hierunter fällt auch, wenn der Gewerbetreibende es unterlässt, wesentliche Informationen über den Preis und die Zahlungsmodalitäten bereitzustellen, so dass die Verbraucher keine Entscheidung in Kenntnis der Sachlage treffen können.

([1]) Richtlinie 97/7/EG über den Verbraucherschutz bei Vertragsabschlüssen im Fernabsatz, ABl. L 144 vom 4.6.1997, S. 19.
([2]) Richtlinie 2011/83/EU über die Rechte der Verbraucher, ABl. L 304 vom 22.11.2011, S. 64.
([3]) Richtlinie 2000/31/EG über bestimmte rechtliche Aspekte der Dienste der Informationsgesellschaft, insbesondere des elektronischen Geschäftsverkehrs, im Binnenmarkt („Richtlinie über den elektronischen Geschäftsverkehr"), ABl. L 178 vom 17.7.2000, S. 1.
([4]) Richtlinie 2005/29/EG über unlautere Geschäftspraktiken, ABl. L 149 vom 11.6.2005, S. 22.

In erster Linie obliegt es den nationalen Behörden und Gerichten, möglichen Verstößen von in ihrem Hoheitsgebiet tätigen einzelnen Unternehmen gegen EU-Rechtsvorschriften nachzugehen. Angesichts der bisherigen Erfahrungen muss jedoch insbesondere in Fällen, in denen das gleiche Problem wiederholt in verschiedenen Mitgliedstaaten auftritt, die Durchsetzung besser koordiniert werden. Deswegen hat die Kommission im Hinblick auf die Überarbeitung der Verordnung über die Zusammenarbeit im Verbraucherschutz (5) eine öffentliche Konsultation eingeleitet, um Möglichkeiten für verstärkte Mechanismen zu sondieren, mit denen im Binnenmarkt weithin verbreitete Verstöße gegen die EU-Verbraucherschutzvorschriften angegangen werden können. Die Kommission wäre dem Herrn Abgeordneten für die Mitteilung weiterer Sachverhalte, die auf Verstöße gegen Unionsrecht hindeuten, dankbar.

(5) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 2006/2004 über die Zusammenarbeit zwischen den für die Durchsetzung der Verbraucherschutzgesetze zuständigen nationalen Behörden, ABl. L 364 vom 9.12.2004, S. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009820/13
to the Commission
Jörg Leichtfried (S&D)
(2 September 0132)

Subject: Direct debiting the deposit on hire cars

In its General Terms and Conditions (GTC), the global US-based car rental company Hertz (The Hertz Corporation) invokes the right to block the deposit on hire cars, i.e. to reserve the equivalent sum on the customer's credit card account; and this is in fact how it operates.

However, some legal corporate structures, designated in the GTC more precisely as 'Hertz Licensees', in which independent companies operate under the Hertz name, sometimes depart from the above practice, as the GTC specifically state that they do not apply to these corporate structures. They directly debit — instead of blocking — the deposit and subsequently refund it; this is, to my knowledge, practised in parts of the European Union, for example, Tenerife, and is not covered by any GTC available online.

This situation raises a number of consumer protection issues. Firstly, the fact that bookings are often made online in the absence of GTC in digital form means that important information is being withheld from consumers. Secondly, the practice of debiting and refunding, instead of blocking, is in itself prejudicial to consumers, since the consumer not only incurs hidden interest costs, but risks losing the deposit owing to the creditor relationship thereby created and the fact that insolvency cannot be ruled out.

1. Is the Commission aware of the abovementioned anomaly?

2. If not: does it intend to investigate this matter?

3. Does it plan to take measures to create fit-for-purpose, user-friendly rental agreements, firstly by introducing a statutory requirement that consumers making online bookings must have direct access to the GTC and, secondly, by legally limiting the scope of the lessor in withholding the deposit to the practice of blocking mentioned above?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(33 November 0132)

The Commission was so far not aware of the practices reported by the Honourable Member concerning the direct debit of deposits.

Under EC law, the Distance Selling Directive [1], to be replaced by the Consumer Rights Directive [2] as from 13 June 2014, requires traders to inform consumers prior to the online conclusion of the contract also about the arrangements for payment. After the conclusion of the contract, the trader has to provide the consumer with a confirmation of this information on a durable medium (such as e-mail). The E-commerce Directive [3] provides that terms and conditions must be made available in a way allowing the recipient to store and reproduce them.

The Unfair Commercial Practices Directive [4] can also come into play if evidence shows that EU consumers were misled into entering transactions they would not have entered otherwise, including if the trader omitted to provide material information on the price and arrangements for payment, thus preventing consumers to take an informed decision.

(1) Directive 97/7/EC on the protection of consumers in respect of distance contracts, OJ L 144, 4.6.1997, p. 19.
(2) Directive 2011/83/EU on consumer rights, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 64.
(3) Directive 2000/31/EC on certain legal aspects of information society services, in particular electronic commerce, in the internal market (Directive on electronic commerce), OJ L L178, 17.7.2000, p. 1.
(4) Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair commercial practices, OJ L 149, 11.6.2005, p. 22.

National authorities and courts are primarily competent to investigate any potential breach of EU legislation by individual companies operating on their territory. However, experience has shown a need for improving coordinated enforcement, in particular where a recurring problem arises in different Member States. In order to address this issue, the Commission launched a public consultation on the review of the Consumer Protection Cooperation (CPC) Regulation [5] to explore options for strengthened mechanisms to tackle infringements of EU consumer rules occurring widely in the Single Market. The Commission would welcome receiving from the Honourable Member any further factual element pointing to an EU relevant breach of Union legislation.

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[5] Regulation 2006/2004/EC on cooperation between national authorities responsible for the enforcement of consumer protection laws, OJ L 364, 9.12.2004, p.1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009821/13
to the Commission
Gay Mitchell (PPE)
(2 September 0132)

Subject: EU and private sector engagement in development cooperation

As mentioned in the Agenda for Change, the Commission would like to enhance its engagement with the private sector in development cooperation. It is important to analyse properly the diversity of the private sector, identify which private sector activities the Commission will interact with and establish how the Commission will support additionality to enhance development before implementing policy objectives. It is important to be aware that not all private sector activities will automatically reduce poverty in developing countries.

What, therefore, is the Commission's plan for setting out a clear policy on EU engagement with the private sector in development cooperation?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(00 October 0132)

The private sector has a crucial role to play in achieving inclusive and sustainable growth. Without businesses creating jobs, innovating and providing poor people with affordable access to basic services like water and sanitation, sustainable energy, telecommunication, or financial services, we would not have witnessed this remarkable decline in global poverty over the last three decades. Obviously, it is not only what the private sector does which is important but also how it does it — hence the need to ensure that companies take responsibility for their workers, communities and the environment. The Commission believes the EU has a role in encouraging productive investment and business practices in developing countries that are responsible in social, environmental and fiscal terms. Working more closely with the private sector, both from the EU and in partner countries, towards achieving common development goals can moreover be a way to enhance the effectiveness of the EU's support to private sector development.

The Commission is working on defining a clear policy that formulates in more operational terms a strategy for implementing the directions given in the 'Agenda for Change' ([1]) on working with the private sector in development cooperation. This policy will include principles and conditions to guide the EU's engagement with the private sector. It will adopt a differentiated approach to private sector support and partnerships that takes account of the diversity of private sector actors and their respective strengths and support needs, with the ultimate aim to support local private sector development and the creation of decent jobs that offer a real escape from poverty.

([1]) COM(2011) 637 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009822/13
to the Commission
George Lyon (ALDE)
(2 September 0132)

Subject: Update: Implementation of Council Directive 1999/74/EC of 19 July 1999 laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens

Council Directive 1999/74/EC of 19 July 1999 laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens, bans the use of battery cages as of 1 January 2012.

Firstly, can the Commission provide an update on the Member States which have confirmed that they are fully compliant with the new rules?

Secondly, can the Commission provide a detailed update on what infringement proceedings have been initiated against those Member States which are not fully compliant?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(38 October 0132)

Only two Member States remain non-compliant with the ban on un-enriched cages for laying hens ([1]); Italy and Greece. On 25 April 2013 both were referred to the European Court of Justice for failure to comply with Union law. These cases are thus with the Court and the Commission must await its ruling.

([1]) Council Directive 1999/74/EC laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens; OJ L 203, 3.8.1999, p. 53.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009824/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(3 septembre 2013)

Objet: Interdire l'IP tracking

Les plaintes émanant de consommateurs à travers l'Europe ne cessent d'augmenter. Certains voyagistes truquent leurs tarifs et arnaquent les consommateurs en ligne.

Créer la pénurie pour pousser à l'achat impulsif. La recette est connue et fait partie de l'arsenal de tout bon commercial. Cette pratique, même si elle est tolérée car de notoriété publique, devrait déjà être sanctionnée.

Moins connue du grand public en revanche et totalement scandaleuse: la pratique de l'IP tracking. Cette technique marketing permet à des sites, en particulier à des sites de tourisme, de surtaxer les clients qui réservent des billets ou des séjours en ligne: cela représente annuellement des millions de victimes à travers l'Europe.

1. Que compte faire la Commission pour combattre l'IP tracking?

2. La Commission compte-t-elle sanctionner le fait de créer la pénurie pour pousser à l'achat impulsif?

3. La Commission compte-t-elle légiférer via une directive ou un règlement? En guise d'exemple, dans certaines législations, il existe l'interdiction de tout automatisme dans la prise de décision. L'idée est d'interdire les procédés qui altèrent, ou sont susceptibles d'altérer de manière substantielle, le comportement du consommateur normalement informé et raisonnablement attentif et avisé à l'égard d'un bien ou d'un service.

4. Est-ce que l'idée d'une brigade européenne consacrée à ce genre de traques séduit la Commission?

Réponse donnée par M^me Reding au nom de la Commission
(5 novembre 2013)

En ce qui concerne l'utilisation des technologies de ciblage, comme le suivi des consommateurs au moyen des adresses IP, en vue d'ajuster les offres commerciales, la Commission renvoie l'Honorable Parlementaire à la réponse conjointe donnée aux questions E-000956/13, P-001257/13 et E-001574/13.

La Commission procède actuellement à la révision de ses orientations pour l'application de la directive 2005/29/CE [SEC(2009)1666], en tenant compte des nouvelles pratiques, telles que le marketing en ligne basé sur le suivi des consommateurs.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009824/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Banning IP tracking

Complaints from consumers across Europe continue to mount. Some travel firms are fixing their rates and ripping off online customers.

Creating a shortage to encourage impulse buying: it's a familiar tactic and part of the arsenal of any good salesperson. But this practice, even though tolerated because it is so widespread, should be penalised.

Less familiar to the public, however, and something which is absolutely scandalous, is the practice of IP tracking. This is a marketing technique where websites, especially tourism websites, overcharge customers who book tickets or holidays online, and it claims millions of victims Europe-wide every year.

1. What action does the Commission intend to take to tackle IP tracking.

2. Does the Commission intend to introduce penalties for the practice of creating a shortage to encourage impulse buying?

3. Does the Commission intend to adopt a directive or a regulation in this area? Some legal systems ban any automatic linkage in decision-making, with the idea being to ban procedures which alter, or are likely to alter, in a substantial way the behaviour of a reasonably well-informed and reasonably observant and circumspect consumer in respect of a product or service.

4. Would the Commission consider setting up an EU unit to deal with this type of tracking?

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

Regarding the use of targeting technologies, such as tracking consumers through IP addresses, to adjust commercial offers, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to its joint answer given to questions E-000956/13, P-001257/13 and E-001574/13.

The Commission is currently reviewing its Guidance on the application of the directive 2005/29/EC (SEC(2009)1666), taking into account such newer practices, as online marketing based on tracking of consumers.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009825/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(2 septembre 0132)

Objet: Aubagio

Sanofi et sa filiale Genzyme ont indiqué que la Commission avait délivré une autorisation de mise sur le marché à Aubagio (tériflunomide) 14 mg, en une prise orale par jour, dans le traitement des adultes atteints de sclérose en plaques récurrente-rémittente.

1. Sur quoi la Commission s'est-elle basée pour délivrer cette autorisation?

2. La Commission possède-t-elle des statistiques fiables sur le nombre de citoyens européens souffrant de la sclérose en plaques et sur les tendances affichées par la maladie au cours des dernières années?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(38 octobre 0132)

La décision d'exécution de la Commission ([1]) autorisant la mise sur le marché du médicament Aubagio (ayant pour substance active le tériflunomide) a été adoptée le 26 août 2013. Ce médicament sert au traitement de patients adultes atteints de sclérose en plaques récurrente-rémittente. L'autorisation de mise sur le marché a été délivrée en vertu du règlement (CE) n° 726/2004 du Parlement européen et du Conseil, c'est-à-dire via la procédure centralisée et, en tant que telle, est valide dans tous les États membres de l'Union européenne (UE).

La décision de la Commission a été adoptée conformément à l'avis scientifique du comité des médicaments à usage humain de l'Agence européenne des médicaments ([2]). Ce comité a conclu que les avantages liés à l'utilisation de ce médicament étaient supérieurs à ses risques. Les études ont montré qu'Aubagio réduit les rechutes et retarde la progression de l'invalidité chez les patients atteints de sclérose en plaques récurrente-rémittente. Bien que ses effets soient modestes, ils ont été considérés comme cliniquement pertinents et similaires à ceux d'autres traitements de la sclérose en plaques.

La Commission ne dispose pas à présent de statistiques sur le nombre de citoyens européens atteints de sclérose en plaques. Cependant, certains projets sur la sclérose en plaques réalisés dans le cadre des programmes de santé de l'UE «Registre européen de la sclérose en plaques» ([3]) et «Multiple Sclerosis — Information Dividend» ([4]) ainsi que la subvention de fonctionnement à la Plateforme européenne de la sclérose en plaques ([5]) remédieront à l'absence de données sur les répercussions de cette maladie en Europe. De plus, la Commission dispose par l'intermédiaire d'Eurostat de données sur les taux de mortalité et le nombre de décès par âge/sexe dus à la sclérose en plaques.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/documents/community-register/html/h838.htm
([2]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/medicines/human/medicines/002514/human_med_001645.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac058001d124
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20101213
([4]) http://www.ms-id.org/
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20123302

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009825/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(2 September 0132)

Subject: Aubagio

Sanofi and its subsidiary Genzyme have stated that the Commission has issued authorisation to market Aubagio (teriflunomide), in the form of a 14 mg tablet to be taken once a day by mouth, in order to treat adults suffering from relapsing forms of multiple sclerosis.

1. On what grounds did the Commission issue the marketing authorisation?

2. Does it have accurate statistics showing how many European citizens are suffering frommultiple sclerosis and illustrating recent trends concerning the disease?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(38 October 0132)

The Commission Implementing Decision ([1]) on granting marketing authorisation for the medicinal product Aubagio (the active substance teriflunomide) was adopted on 26 August 2013. Aubagio is used for the treatment of adult patients with relapsing remitting multiple sclerosis (MS). The marketing authorisation was granted under Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council, i.e. via the centralised procedure and as such is valid in all EU Member States.

The Commission decision was adopted in accordance with the scientific opinion of the Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) of the European Medicines Agency ([2]). The CHMP concluded that benefits related to the use of the medicine are greater than its risks. In studies, Aubagio was shown to reduce relapses and delay the progression of disability in patients with relapsing-remitting MS. Although the effects were modest, they were considered to be clinically relevant and similar to other MS treatments.

The Commission does not at present have statistics available on how many European citizens are suffering from MS. However, projects under EU Health Programmes focusing on multiple sclerosis: European Register for MS ([3]), MS — the information Dividend ([4]) and the operating grant to the European MS Platform ([5]) will address the lack of data on the burden of MS in Europe. In addition, data on death rates and numbers of death by gender/age due to MS is available to the Commission from Eurostat.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/documents/community-register/html/h838.htm
([2]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/medicines/human/medicines/002514/human_med_001645.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac058001d124
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20101213
([4]) http://www.ms-id.org/
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20123302

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009826/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(3 septembre 2013)

Objet: Maintien de l'itinérance

La commissaire européenne chargée des nouvelles technologies, Neelie Kroes, ne se cache pas de son ambition d'abolir l'itinérance intraeuropéenne en 2014. Un paquet législatif, dont l'objectif final sera la création d'un marché unique des télécommunications, doit être présenté le 10 septembre. Neelie Kroes avait préparé une proposition consistant à faire baisser les tarifs de l'itinérance, de 90 % dans certains cas, mais ce texte ne sera finalement pas présenté, a appris Reuters.

La commissaire visait un prix maximum de 3 centimes d'euro la minute pour les appels intraeuropéens (- 70 % par rapport aux nouveaux tarifs de juillet, déjà en nette baisse), et de 1,5 centime par Mo de données.

1. D'après nos informations, la dernière version du texte ne parle plus du tout des baisses de tarifs. Qu'en est-il?

2. Le lobbying des opérateurs historiques tels qu'Orange, Telecom Italia, Telefonica et Deutsche Telekom aurait-il eu raison de ces bonnes intentions?

3. La commissaire ne s'est-elle pas trop avancée en parlant dans tous les médias de 2014?

Réponse donnée par M[me] Kroes au nom de la Commission
(16 octobre 2013)

La proposition relative à un continent connecté, adoptée par la Commission le 11 septembre 2013, s'inspire du règlement sur l'itinérance et entend mettre un terme aux tarifs élevés de ce service en rendant le marché plus concurrentiel. La Commission a la ferme intention d'atteindre l'objectif fixé dans la stratégie numérique pour l'Europe, à savoir faire en sorte que la différence entre les tarifs en itinérance et les tarifs nationaux soit proche de zéro.

La Commission estime qu'il est important d'inciter les opérateurs à trouver des accords qui leur permettent de réduire les coûts de gros liés à l'itinérance et, partant, d'aligner les tarifs des services d'itinérance sur les tarifs nationaux (roam like at home) à partir de 2014, c'est-à-dire bien avant la date prévue par l'actuel règlement. Grâce au texte proposé, les utilisateurs européens pourraient bénéficier des mêmes tarifs que ceux pratiqués dans leur pays d'origine lorsqu'ils utilisent le réseau d'un opérateur d'un autre pays de l'Union. La Commission espère que les citoyens pourront effectivement disposer de telles offres à partir de 2014 et que celles-ci seront progressivement étendues à tous les services de détail d'ici à 2016. Il est également important de noter que la Commission invite les opérateurs à abandonner définitivement la surtaxe des appels reçus au sein de l'UE (à partir de juillet 2014). Il appartient maintenant au Parlement européen, en collaboration avec le Conseil, de veiller à ce que les citoyens européens bénéficient de conditions avantageuses plus nombreuses en 2014, comme le propose la Commission.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009826/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Maintaining roaming

The Commissioner responsible for new technologies, Neelie Kroes, has made no secret of her desire to abolish intra-European roaming in 2014. A legislative package which aims ultimately to establish a single market for telecommunications is due to be published on 10 September. Ms Kroes had drafted a proposal that would have seen roaming charges come down by 90% in some cases, but, according to Reuters, that text will not now be brought forward.

The Commissioner was planning a maximum price of 3 cents per minute for intra-European calls (70% less than the new rates introduced in July, which were already a substantial reduction), and 1.5 cents per Mb of data.

1. Our information is that the latest version of the text makes no mention of reductions in tariffs. Where do things now stand?

2. Was it lobbying by incumbent operators, such as Orange, Telecom Italia, Telefonica and Deutsche Telekom, that caused Ms Kroes to have a change of heart?

3. Is the Commissioner not getting ahead of herself by talking in all the media about 2014?

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

The Connected Continent proposal that the Commission adopted on 11 September 2013 builds on the Roaming Regulation and proposes a solution to end high roaming charges by reinforcing competitive market conditions. The Commission is strongly committed to achieving the target set by the Digital Agenda for Europe, namely for the difference between roaming and national tariffs to approach zero.

The Commission considers that it is important to incentivise operators to find agreements which allow them to reduce wholesale roaming costs and thus enable them to provide roaming services at the level of domestic prices (roam-like-at-home) starting in 2014, and much quicker than the current Regulation foresees. As a result of the proposal European users would be able, when roaming in any other EU country, to benefit from the same rates as in their home country. The Commission expects that citizens will indeed have such offers available as of 2014 and that this availability will be gradually extended so that by 2016 it applies to all retail packages. It is also important to note that the Commission proposes to put an end altogether (as of July 2014) to charges for receiving calls while travelling within the EU. It is now up to the European Parliament, working with the Council, to make sure that European citizens get more benefits in 2014, as proposed by the Commission.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009827/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(3 septembre 2013)

Objet: La Commission tue la neutralité du net

Dans son article 20, le projet de règlement prétend protéger la neutralité du net en interdisant les restrictions d'accès imposées par les opérateurs (blocage ou bridage). Mais dans le même temps, il autorise d'autres formes de discrimination inacceptables. Il permettrait en effet aux opérateurs de passer des accords commerciaux avec certains gros fournisseurs de contenus comme *Google*, *Apple* et consorts. En échange d'importantes sommes d'argent versées aux opérateurs, ce club de privilégiés bénéficierait d'un trafic prioritaire sur les réseaux et donc, par définition, tout le reste du trafic se trouverait d'emblée non prioritaire. Cela fait des années que le lobby des opérateurs souhaite pouvoir mettre en œuvre ces modèles économiques. Des fuites récentes indiquent que dans ce projet, Neelie Kroes reprend leurs propositions.

1. La Commission partage-t-telle notre avis quant au fait que donner un tel pouvoir aux opérateurs est résolument contraire au principe de neutralité, qui garantit à la fois la liberté de communication des utilisateurs et, par ricochet, la concurrence et l'innovation dans l'économie numérique?

2. Ne pense-t-elle pas que les plus petits acteurs, les innovateurs, les nouveaux entrants, eux, n'auront pas les moyens de bénéficier d'un trafic prioritaire?

3. N'est-il pas évident que les opérateurs seront en outre découragés d'investir dans davantage de bande passante, puisque la congestion d'internet rendrait plus attractifs les accès rendus prioritaires? Ils seraient alors en mesure de dégager plus de marges de bénéfices pour moins d'investissement. En définitive, c'est l'ensemble de la société qui serait perdante.

Réponse donnée par M^{me} Kroes au nom de la Commission
(15 octobre 2013)

La Commission est fermement résolue à défendre l'internet ouvert et à promouvoir la qualité des services d'accès à l'internet. La proposition «continent connecté» adoptée le 11 septembre 2013 ([1]) interdit les fournisseurs d'accès à l'internet de bloquer, de ralentir, de dégrader ou de traiter de manière discriminatoire le trafic ([2]); elle établit donc une réelle neutralité de l'internet. Parallèlement, afin de répondre à la demande des utilisateurs finaux en matière de meilleure qualité de services, la proposition permet la fourniture de services spécialisés de qualité supérieure, dont de nombreux exemples sont déjà sur le marché aujourd'hui, comme IPTV, l'utilisation de nuages à haute intensité de données par les entreprises, certaines applications de santé en ligne ou de vidéoconférence. Toutefois, la proposition de règlement indique clairement que les services spécialisés ne doivent pas entraîner la dégradation de la qualité des services d'accès à l'internet. De plus, ces services ne peuvent pas être «commercialisés ou largement utilisés comme produit de substitution à un service d'accès à l'internet» ([3]). À titre de sauvegarde, les autorités réglementaires nationales contrôlent non seulement la qualité des services d'accès à l'internet mais ils doivent également garantir le maintien de la disponibilité de services d'accès à l'internet non discriminatoires et ils auront le pouvoir d'imposer des exigences minimales de qualité de service. Dès lors, la proposition permet à tous les acteurs d'atteindre les utilisateurs finaux avec leurs contenus, applications et services, en fonction de leurs besoins.

La proposition renforce également la transparence et les droits des utilisateurs finaux. Par exemple, les utilisateurs finaux recevront des informations sur la vitesse réelle de la connexion et auront à leur disposition des voies de recours en cas d'écart significatif et non provisoire.

([1]) Proposition de règlement du Parlement européen et du Conseil établissant des mesures relatives au marché unique européen des communications électroniques et visant à faire de l'Europe un continent connecté, et modifiant les directives 2002/20/CE, 2002/21/CE et 2002/22/CE ainsi que les règlements (CE) n° 1211/2009 et (UE) n° 531/2012, COM(2013) 0627 final.

([2]) Ces mesures sont justifiées uniquement à titre exceptionnel et dans un nombre limité de cas de gestion raisonnable de trafic.

([3]) Article 2, point 15, de la proposition.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009827/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(2 September 0132)

Subject: Commission sounds the death knell for net neutrality

Article 20 of the proposal for a regulation currently under preparation ostensibly seeks to protect the neutrality of the Internet by banning operator-imposed access restrictions which block or throttle rival services. At the same time however, the proposal would allow other unacceptable forms of discrimination to be practised, in that it would enable operators to conclude commercial agreements with large content providers such as Google and Apple. In exchange for large payments, operators would give content from this elite club of providers priority on their networks; all other traffic would therefore be 'non-priority'. Operators have been lobbying for this type of arrangement for many years now. Recent leaks would tend to indicate that Neelie Kroes's proposals are set to give them what they want.

1. Would the Commission agree that giving powers of this kind to Internet providers is totally contrary to the principle of net neutrality, which guarantees freedom of expression for users and, at the same time, fosters competition and innovation in the digital economy?

2. Would it not agree that this arrangement would make it impossible for small players, innovators and new entrants to gain 'priority traffic' status?

3. Would it not agree, furthermore, that operators would have no incentive to invest in more bandwidth, because congestion on the net would make these priority arrangements still more sought after? Operators would thus be able to make larger profits while investing less. And society as a whole would suffer.

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(35 October 0132)

The Commission is fully committed to defending the open Internet and to promoting the quality of Internet access services. The Connected Continent proposal adopted on 11 September 2013 ([1]) prohibits providers of Internet access service to block, throttle, degrade or discriminate traffic ([2]), and thus delivers effective net neutrality. At the same time, to meet end-users' demand for better service quality, the proposal allows the provision of enhanced quality for specialized services, many of which are already in the market today, like IPTV, data-intensive cloud use by business, certain e-Health applications or videoconferencing. However, the proposed regulation makes it clear that specialized services must not lead to quality of the Internet access services. Also, such quality of feedback services must not be 'marketed or widely used as a substitute for Internet access services' ([3]). As a safeguard, National Regulatory Authorities shall not only monitor the quality of Internet access services but they must also ensure the continued availability of non-discriminatory Internet access and will have the power to impose minimum quality of service requirements. Thus the proposal enables all players to reach end-users with their content, applications and services, depending on their needs.

The proposal also strengthens transparency and reinforces end-users' rights. For example, end-users would be provided with information on actual speed of the connection and in case of significant and non-temporary discrepancies remedies would be made available.

([1]) Proposal for a regulation of the European parliament and of the Council laying down measures concerning the European single market for electronic communications and to achieve a Connected Continent, and amending Directives 2002/20/EC, 2002/21/EC and 2002/22/EC and Regulations (EC) No 1211/2009 and (EU) No 531/2012; COM(2013) 0627 final.

([2]) Such measures are justified only exceptionally and in a limited number of cases of reasonable traffic management.

([3]) Article 2 point 15 of the proposal.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009829/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(3 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Aumento del 9 % del finanziamento ai partiti europei

I c.d. «partiti europei» entità politiche notoriamente fantomatiche esistenti solo come atto notorio, sede più o meno fittizia, attività esterne di pura facciata hanno ricevuto da Bruxelles un aumento del 9 % del già cospicuo finanziamento.

Non ritiene la Commissione che tale esorbitante regalia ai pressoché inesistenti «partiti europei» sia in stridente e vergognoso contrasto con la strategia di spending review, dalla stessa raccomandata ai paesi membri?

Intende la Commissione avvalersi della specifica competenza dell'Olaf per sottoporre ad adeguati e approfonditi controllo e verifica di congruità delle spese pregresse di tali partiti imputate al finanziamento europeo, viste le ricorrenti notizie relative a «gonfiamenti» delle spese e/o risarcimenti richiesti per servizi in realtà inesistenti?

Risposta di José Manuel Barroso a nome della Commissione
(7 ottobre 2013)

Responsabile dell'applicazione del regolamento (CE) n. 2004/2003 relativo allo statuto e al finanziamento dei partiti politici a livello europeo è il Parlamento europeo. In tale veste quest'ultimo gestisce la pertinente linea di bilancio della sezione I (Parlamento europeo) del bilancio generale dell'Unione europea. Per maggiori informazioni sull'eventuale aumento degli importi assegnati ai partiti politici a livello europeo la Commissione invita l'on. parlamentare a rivolgersi al Parlamento.

Tuttavia, la Commissione desidera precisare che non condivide l'opinione dell'on. parlamentare secondo cui i partiti politici europei sarebbero «pressoché inesistenti»; al contrario, ritiene che tali partiti contribuiscano in misura estremamente rilevante al dibattito a livello europeo, al processo decisionale democratico nell'UE e a far sì che i cittadini si avvicinino alla politica e alle istituzioni europee.

La Commissione ricorda inoltre che il controllo sui finanziamenti europei assegnati ai partiti politici a livello europeo a norma del regolamento (CE) n. 2004/2003 è esercitato dall'ordinatore responsabile del Parlamento europeo conformemente al regolamento finanziario e alle relative modalità di esecuzione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009829/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(2 September 0132)

Subject: 9% more funding for European political parties

European political parties, as they are called — notoriously shadowy political entities existing only in the form of statutory declarations, whose headquarters are, to a greater or lesser degree, fictions, and whose external activities are merely a façade — have received a 9% cash injection from Brussels, adding to their already substantial funding.

Does not the Commission believe that to bestow such inordinate largesse upon the near non-existent 'European parties' is blatantly and disgracefully at odds with the spending review strategy which it is advocating for Member States?

Will it make use of OLAF's specific powers in order to carry out the necessary thorough check and determine the appropriateness of the parties' earlier expenditure financed from European sources, bearing in mind the repeated reports of 'over-inflation' in their spending and/or the payments requested for services never actually rendered?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(7 October 0132)

The European Parliament is responsible for the implementation of Regulation (EC) 2004/2003 governing political parties at European level and the rules regarding their funding. As such, it manages the corresponding budget line listed in Section I (European Parliament) of the general budget of the European Union. For more details on any possible increase of the amounts granted to political parties at European level, the Commission invites the Honourable Member to contact the Parliament.

The Commission, however, does not share the opinion of the Honourable Member on a 'near non-existence' of European political parties and considers on the contrary that these parties make a very important contribution to the European debate, to democratic decision-making in the EU and to bring citizens closer to European politics and institutions.

The Commission would also like to recall that the control of EU funding granted to political parties at European level under Regulation (EC) 2004/2003 is exercised in accordance with the Financial Regulation and its implementing provisions by the responsible Authorising officer of the European Parliament.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009830/13
aan de Commissie
Patricia van der Kammen (NI) en Lucas Hartong (NI)
(3 september 2013)

Betreft: EU-snelheidsbegrenzers

In „The Guardian" ([1]) en op de website van de Commissie ([2]) is te lezen dat de Europese Commissie aan plannen werkt om in alle auto's snelheidsbegrenzers verplicht te maken.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „UK fights EU bid to introduce speed limit devices"[(1)]?

2. Klopt het dat de Commissie aan plannen werkt om de installatie van snelheidsbegrenzers in voertuigen verplicht te stellen?

3. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de verplichte installatie van snelheidsbegrenzers wederom een voorbeeld is van de absurde en doorgeslagen regeldrang en beheersdrift van de Commissie? Zo nee, waarom niet?

4. Is de Commissie inmiddels tot het inzicht gekomen dat haar bemoeizucht Orwelliaanse trekken vertoont? Zo nee, wat is daarvoor nodig?

5. Deelt de Commissie de mening van de PVV dat de Nederlandse burgers deze vreselijke betutteling door de Commissie niet nodig hebben en ook niet zitten te wachten op deze verregaande invasieve bemoeienis met zaken waar de landen zelf over kunnen en zouden moeten beslissen? Zo nee, waarom niet?

6. Is de Commissie bereid om haar idiote plannen per direct naar de prullenbak te verwijzen? Zo nee, waarom niet?

7. Hoeveel belastinggeld heeft de Commissie inmiddels verstrekt en besteed aan onderzoek voor dit project?

8. Is de Commissie bereid verdere verstrekking van geld aan dit soort bemoeizucht direct te staken? Zo nee, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(14 oktober 2013)

De Commissie werkt niet aan plannen om in alle auto's snelheidsbegrenzers verplicht te maken en is niet op de hoogte van het rapport „UK fights EU bid to introduce speed limit devices".

De Commissie heeft in 2013 een ex-postevaluatiestudie opgestart inzake de toepassing van Richtlijn 92/6/EEG ([3]) betreffende snelheidsbegrenzers van bedrijfsvoertuigen. De algemene doelstelling van deze studie bestaat in het verstrekken van een onafhankelijke, externe evaluatie van de verkeersveiligheid en van de milieu- en economische effecten van de geldende wetgeving. In overeenstemming met de uitdrukkelijke oproep aan de Commissie van het Europees Parlement ([4]) *„een voorstel uit te werken om voertuigen uit te rusten met „systemen voor intelligente snelheidsaanpassing", met inbegrip van een tijdschema, details inzake de goedkeuringsprocedure en een beschrijving van de vereiste wegeninfrastructuur"* wordt in deze studie ook de mogelijke toepassing van intelligente snelheidshulpsystemen in lichte bedrijfsvoertuigen onderzocht.

([1]) http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/01/uk-fights-eu-speed-limit-devices.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/specialist/knowledge/esave/esafety_measures_known_safety_effects/intelligent_speed_adaptation_isa.htm
([3]) PB L 57 van 2.3.1992, blz. 27-28. zoals gewijzigd door Richtlijn 2002/85/EG (PB L 327, 4.12.2002).
([4]) Verslag over de verkeersveiligheid in Europa 2011-2020 (2010/2235(INI))
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A7-2011-0264+0+DOC+XML+V0//NL

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009830/13
to the Commission
Patricia van der Kammen (NI) and Lucas Hartong (NI)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: EU speed limiters

According to *'The Guardian'* ([1]) and the Commission's website ([2]), the Commission is working on plans to make it compulsory to instal speed limiters in all cars.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the report 'UK fights EU bid to introduce speed limit devices'[1]?

2. Is it true that the Commission is working on plans to make it compulsory to instal speed limiters in vehicles?

3. Does the Commission agree that the compulsory installation of speed limiters is yet another instance of the Commission's absurd and excessive mania for regulation and control? If not, why not?

4. Has the Commission now realised that its meddling is taking on Orwellian features? If not, what still needs to happen in order for this realisation to dawn?

5. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that people in the Netherlands do not need to be nannied in this awful way and have no desire to accept this far-reaching invasive interference in matters on which countries themselves can and should take decisions? If not, why not?

6. Will the Commission immediately consign its idiotic plans to the wastepaper basket? If not, why not?

7. How much tax revenue has the Commission so far spent on research for this project?

8. Will the Commission immediately halt any further funding of such meddling? If not, why not?

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

The Commission is not working on plans concerning compulsory installation of speed limitation devices in all cars and is not aware of the report 'UK fights EU bid to introduce speed limit devices'.

The Commission has launched in 2013 an ex-post evaluation study on the application of Directive 92/6/EEC ([3]) on speed limitation devices of commercial vehicles. The general purpose of the study is to provide an independent, external evaluation of the road safety, environmental and economic effects of the legislation in force. In line with the explicit call on the Commission of the European Parliament ([4]) to 'draw up a proposal to fit vehicles with "intelligent speed assistance systems" which incorporate a timetable, details of an approval procedure and a description of the requisite road infrastructure', the study also assesses possible application of intelligent speed assistance systems to light commercial vehicles.

([1]) http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/01/uk-fights-eu-speed-limit-devices
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/specialist/knowledge/esave/esafety_measures_known_safety_effects/intelligent_speed_adaptation_isa.htm
([3]) OJ L 57, 2.3.1992, p. 27 as amended by Directive 2002/85/EC (OJ L 327, 4.12.2002).
([4]) Report on European road safety 2011-2020 (2010/2235(INI)) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&reference=A7-2011-0264&language=EN

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-009832/13
a la Comisión
Salvador Garriga Polledo (PPE)
(3 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Tax Lease holandés — Apertura de expediente

En relación con el régimen de Tax Lease holandés, en diciembre de 2012 se denunció ante la Comisión Europea la amortización anticipada y acelerada disponible para los ejercicios 2009, 2010 y 2011 por su carácter selectivo, al excluir de su ámbito de aplicación determinados bienes. Asimismo, fue denunciada la combinación de esta medida con otros incentivos fiscales en el marco de las estructuras de arrendamiento financiero para la adquisición de buques, que permiten evitar la reversión de la amortización y la tributación de la plusvalía puesta de manifiesto con la venta del buque, obteniendo un ahorro fiscal definitivo.

Ya en su comparecencia el pasado 28 de mayo ante la Comisión de Asuntos Económicos y Monetarios del Parlamento Europeo, el Comisario de Competencia, Joaquín Almunia, manifestó que la CE estaba investigando el asunto de referencia. Sin embargo, a fecha de hoy, no se ha producido la apertura de un expediente de investigación al país denunciado por los hechos anteriormente referidos.

¿A qué se debe el retraso en la apertura del expediente? ¿Necesita la Comisión información adicional para hacerlo? ¿Daña ese retraso la igualdad de trato con otros países que ya han sido objeto de investigación y decisión por parte de la Comisión?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de octubre de 2013)

La evaluación de las medidas objeto de la denuncia está en marcha. La Comisión ha analizado las respuestas de las autoridades neerlandesas hasta la fecha y a mediados de septiembre les remitió una solicitud de información adicional.

La Comisión debe establecer en primer lugar si las diferentes medidas de que se trata entran en el ámbito de aplicación de las normas sobre ayudas estatales y a continuación evaluar la compatibilidad de cada una de las medidas individualmente. Solo las evaluará en su conjunto si se puede demostrar que existen claros vínculos entre ellas, establecidos por la legislación o por la práctica administrativa.

Cuando se haya completado la información, si existen serias dudas, la Comisión incoará el procedimiento de investigación formal a tenor del artículo 4, apartado 4, del Reglamento (CE) n° 659/99 del Consejo por el que se establecen disposiciones de aplicación del artículo 93 del Tratado CE ([1]). Si en última instancia la Comisión constatara la existencia de ayuda incompatible, ordenaría su recuperación con intereses calculados desde la fecha en que se concedió la ayuda.

La duración de la investigación depende de la complejidad de las medidas a examen. Las medidas fiscales y las operaciones de arrendamiento fiscal pueden mostrar un nivel de complejidad que justifique objetivamente una investigación más larga. Ello no supone discriminación alguna. A la vista de las circunstancias objetivas de este asunto, la Comisión considera que no lo está tratando de forma diferente a casos similares de otros Estados miembros.

([1]) DO L 83 de 27.3.1999, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009832/13
to the Commission
Salvador Garriga Polledo (PPE)
(2 September 0132)

Subject: Dutch tax lease system — opening of investigation

In December 2012 a complaint was submitted to the Commission in respect of the Dutch tax lease system, in particular the accelerated depreciation provisions in place in the financial years 2009-2011. According to the complaint, the provisions were selective because they excluded certain goods. The complaint also criticised the fact that these provisions were combined with other tax incentives provided for under the financial leasing arrangements for the acquisition of vessels. These made it possible for investors to avoid paying back tax saved under the depreciation arrangements and to avoid the capital gains tax due on the sale of a vessel, equating to a permanent tax saving.

At the meeting of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs of 28 May 2013, Competition Commissioner Joaquín Almunia said that the Commission was investigating the matter. However, no investigation has yet been launched in respect of the Netherlands' tax lease system.

What is the reason for this delay? Does the Commission need more information before it can open an investigation? Does it think that the delay runs counter to the principle of equal treatment given that the Commission has previously investigated and ruled on cases concerning other countries?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(7 October 0132)

The assessment of the measures targeted by the complaint is ongoing. The Commission has analysed the answers provided by the Dutch authorities so far and sent them an additionnal request for information mid-September.

The Commission must first establish whether the different measures concerned fall within the scope of state aid rules and then assess the compatibility of each of the measures individually. It will only assess them together if clear links between them — established by law or by administrative practice — can be demonstrated.

When the information is complete, if serious doubts exist, the Commission will open the formal investigation procedure in accordance with Article 4(4) of Council Regulation (EC) No 659/99 laying down detailed rules for the application of Article 93 of the EC Treaty [1]. If the Commission were to ultimately identify incompatible aid, it would order its recovery with interest calculated as from the date the aid was awarded.

The duration of an investigation depends on the complexity of the measures under scrutiny. Tax measures and tax lease operations may exhibit a level of complexity which objectively justifies a lengthier investigation. This does not imply discrimination. In the light of the objective circumstances of this case, the Commission considers that it is not treating it any differently from similar cases in other Member States.

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[1] OJEC L 83 of 27.3.1999, p.1.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-009833/13
an die Kommission
Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL)
(3. September 2013)

Betrifft: Altersgrenze für Lehrkräfte in Projekten, die vom ESF gefördert werden

Im Bundesland Sachsen (Deutschland) erging die Entscheidung, dass eine Lehrkraft, die in einem vom ESF geförderten Projekt als Lehrkraft tätig ist, nicht älter als 65 Jahre alt sein darf.

Welches ist die Rechtsgrundlage für diese Entscheidung?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(10. Oktober 2013)

In der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1083/2006 ([1]) mit allgemeinen Bestimmungen unter anderem über den ESF heißt es, dass die Regeln für die Förderfähigkeit der Ausgaben bis auf die in den Verordnungen der einzelnen Fonds vorgesehenen Ausnahmen auf nationaler Ebene festgelegt werden. Auch wenn die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1081/2006 ([2]) über den ESF keine Altersgrenzen vorsieht, kann die Europäische Kommission demnach nicht ausschließen, dass nach nationalen oder subnationalen Bestimmungen implizite oder explizite Altersgrenzen bestehen.

([1]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1083/2006 des Rates vom 11. Juli 2006 mit allgemeinen Bestimmungen über den Europäischen Fonds für regionale Entwicklung, den Europäischen Sozialfonds und den Kohäsionsfonds und zur Aufhebung der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1260/1999 (ABl. L 210 vom 31.7.2006).

([2]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1081/2006 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 5. Juli 2006 über den Europäischen Fonds für regionale Entwicklung und zur Aufhebung der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1784/1999 (ABl. L 210 vom 31.7.2006).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009833/13
to the Commission
Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Age limit for teachers in ESF-funded projects

In Saxony, Germany, a decision has been taken to the effect that no teacher aged over 65 may participate in ESF-funded projects.

What is the legal basis for this decision?

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

Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 ([1]) laying down general provisions *inter alia* on the ESF states that the rules on the eligibility of expenditure are to be laid down at national level, subject to the exceptions provided for in the specific Regulations for each Fund. While Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006 ([2]) on the ESF lays down no age limitations, the European Commission cannot therefore exclude that implicit or explicit age limitations are in place according to national or sub-national regulations.

([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.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the European Social Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1784/1999, OJ L 210, 31.7.2006.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-009834/13
do Komisji
Wojciech Michał Olejniczak (S&D)
(3 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Etykietowanie produktów żywnościowych niezawierających organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie

Rozporządzenie (WE) nr 1829/2003 w sprawie genetycznie zmodyfikowanej żywności i paszy wprowadza obowiązek umieszczania odpowiednich etykiet na wszystkich środkach spożywczych zawierających organizmy zmodyfikowane genetycznie lub wyprodukowane z organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie. Czy istnieją jednak jakieś przepisy UE, które mogłyby pozwolić na bardziej elastyczne podejście do etykietowania produktów rolnych i środków spożywczych jeśli chodzi o zawartość organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie? Odnosi się to do niewystępowania organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie w składnikach tych produktów ani na żadnym etapie procesu produkcji, o czym informują etykiety, takie jak „brak organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie", „bez organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie", „wolne od organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie" itp.

Konkretniej, czy istnieją przepisy UE, które pozwalałyby na nieujawnianie konsumentom informacji dotyczących pasz dla zwierząt użytych w procesie produkcji żywności, które mogą zawierać organizmy zmodyfikowane genetycznie (z wyłączeniem technicznie niemożliwej do uniknięcia zawartości organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie nieprzekraczającej 0,9 % ciężaru paszy)? Podsumowując, czy zgodnie z przepisami UE na produktach rolnych i środkach spożywczych można arbitralnie umieścić etykietę, taką jak „wolne od organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie" lub „wyprodukowane z paszy zwierzęcej wolnej od organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie"?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(26 września 2013 r.)

Współprawodawcy zdecydowali, że rozporządzenie (WE) nr 1829/2003 [1] ma zastosowanie jedynie do żywności i paszy zawierającej, składającej się lub wyprodukowanej z GMO, ale nie do żywności i paszy „z zawartością" GMO. Motyw 16 rozporządzenia określa, że czynnikiem decydującym jest to, czy materiał uzyskany z genetycznie zmodyfikowanego materiału źródłowego występuje w żywności lub paszy. W związku z tym produkty uzyskane ze zwierząt żywionych GMO, takie jak jaja, mięso lub mleko, nie podlegają ani wymaganiom zezwolenia, ani wymaganiom etykietowania określonym w tym rozporządzeniu.

W wyniku petycji z 2007 r., w której wezwano do etykietowania takich produktów, Komisja zwróciła się do EFSA z prośbą o wyjaśnienie, czy transgeny lub ich produkty mogą zostać włączone do tkanek zwierzęcych lub produktów. EFSA stwierdził, że do chwili obecnej wiele badań doświadczalnych z udziałem zwierząt gospodarskich wykazało, że w tkankach, płynach lub produktach jadalnych pochodzących od zwierząt takich kurczaki, bydło, świnie czy przepiórki nie wykryto fragmentów rekombinacyjnego DNA czy protein pochodzących z genetycznie zmodyfikowanych roślin spożytych przez te zwierzęta. Na tej podstawie Komisja stwierdziła, że właściwe jest utrzymanie obecnie obowiązującego podejścia legislacyjnego.

Jednak przepisy UE nie zakazują stosowania etykiet „wolne od GM" sygnalizujących, że środki spożywcze nie zawierają upraw zmodyfikowanych genetycznie lub zostały wyprodukowane bez użycia GMO, pod warunkiem że są one zgodne z ogólnymi przepisami dotyczącymi etykietowania żywności [2]. Takie etykiety są przygotowywane w kilku państwach członkowskich, a Komisja zainicjowała badanie w celu lepszego zrozumienia zakresu i specyfikacji tych etykiety w UE. Wyniki tego badania zostaną udostępnione na stronie internetowej Komisji w nadchodzących miesiącach.

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(1) Dz.U. L 268 z 18.10.2003.
(2) Dyrektywa 2000/13/WE w sprawie zbliżenia ustawodawstw państw członkowskich w zakresie etykietowania, prezentacji i reklamy środków spożywczych. Dz.U. L 109 z 6.5.2000, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009834/13
to the Commission
Wojciech Michał Olejniczak (S&D)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Labelling of GMO-free food products

Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 on genetically modified food and feed introduces an obligation for all foodstuffs containing genetically modified organisms (GMOs) or produced from GMOs to bear an appropriate label. That said, is there any EU legislation which could allow for a more relaxed approach to the labelling of agricultural products and foodstuffs with regard to GMO content? This relates both to the lack of GMO material in the contents of these products as well as their absence at any stage of the production process, which is expressed by means of labels such as 'non-GMO', 'without GMO', 'GMO-free' etc.

More specifically, is there any EU legislation which could allow for the non-disclosure of information to consumers relating to animal feed used in the process of food production which may contain GMOs (excluding technically unavoidable GMO contents of less than 0.9% of the feed mass)? To summarise, as provided for in EU legislation, is it allowed to arbitrarily assign labels such as 'GMO-free' or 'produced from animals fed with GMO-free feed' to agricultural products and foodstuffs?

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

The co-legislators decided that regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 ([1]) only applies to food and feed containing, consisting of or produced from a GMO, but not to food and feed produced 'with' a GMO. Recital 16 of the regulation provides that the determining factor is whether or not material derived from the GM source material is present in the food or in the feed. Consequently, products obtained from animals fed with GMOs, such as eggs, meat or milk, are subject neither to the authorisation requirements nor to the labelling requirements referred to in the regulation.

Following a petition in 2007 asking for the labelling of such products, the Commission asked EFSA to clarify if transgenes or their products may be incorporated into animal tissues or products. EFSA concluded that, to date, a large number of experimental studies with livestock have shown that recombinant DNA fragments or proteins derived from GM plants ingested by farm animals like broilers, cattle, pigs or quails have not been detected in their tissues, fluids or edible products. On this basis, the Commission concluded that it was appropriate to maintain the current legislative approach.

However the EU legislation does not forbid the use of 'GM-free' labels signalling that foodstuffs do not contain GM crops, or were produced not using GMOs, provided that they respect the general rules on food labelling ([2]). Such labels are being developed in several Member States and the Commission has launched a study to gain a better understanding of the scopes and specifications of these labels in the EU. The findings of this study will be made available on the related Commission's website in the coming months.

([1]) OJ L 268, 18.10.2003.
([2]) Directive 2000/13/EC 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.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009835/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Independencia del nuevo organismo regulador en el Estado español

En fecha reciente, ha trascendido que los integrantes del Consejo del nuevo organismo regulador de España serán elegidos mediante un sistema de cuotas.

Estas cuotas serían repartidas entre los distintos partidos políticos según su peso ponderado en el Parlamento español.

Por otro lado, la Comisión ha remarcado insistentemente la importancia que el organismo regulador sea independiente. En su respuesta a la pregunta E-003358/2013, dice: «la Comisión otorga gran importancia a los requisitos que impone el nuevo marco regulador de la UE en relación con la independencia de las autoridades reguladoras nacionales. Parece ser que el proyecto de ley refuerza la participación y el control del Parlamento en el nombramiento de los miembros del Consejo. En particular, dicho proyecto establece que tales miembros serán designados previa consulta del Parlamento, que tendrá un derecho de veto respecto a los candidatos propuestos.».

A la luz de lo anterior:

¿Considera la Comisión que elegir el Consejo de gobierno de un organismo regulador mediante cuotas asignadas a los partidos políticos es compatible con su independencia?

¿Cree que la nominación de militantes y ex-altos cargos de los partidos políticos lamina la independencia del órgano?

Respuesta de la Sra. Kroes en nombre de la Comisión
(10 de octubre de 2013)

Como se indicaba en nuestra respuesta a la pregunta parlamentaria E-003358/2013, la Comisión concede una gran importancia a la independencia de las autoridades nacionales de reglamentación. El marco regulador de la UE en materia de comunicaciones electrónicas contiene una serie de requisitos a este respecto. En particular, la Directiva 2002/21/CE, en su versión modificada por la Directiva 2009/140/CE ([1]), dispone, entre otras cosas, que los Estados miembros garantizarán que estas autoridades sean jurídicamente distintas y funcionalmente independientes de todas las entidades suministradoras de redes, equipos o servicios de comunicaciones electrónicas, y que actuarán con independencia y no solicitarán o aceptarán instrucciones de ningún otro organismo en el ejercicio de determinadas tareas asignadas en virtud de la legislación nacional por la que se aplica el Derecho de la UE.

No obstante, el procedimiento para el nombramiento de los miembros del consejo de las autoridades nacionales de reglamentación es competencia nacional. La legislación de la Comisión Nacional de los Mercados y la Competencia (CNMC) ha reforzado la participación parlamentaria en el proceso de nombramiento de los miembros del consejo de la nueva autoridad otorgando al Parlamento un poder de veto sobre la propuesta del Gobierno. A efectos de la aplicación de este procedimiento nacional, la propuesta del Gobierno de los nuevos miembros del Consejo de administración de la CNMC fue adoptada el 30 de agosto ([2]), y la audiencia parlamentaria de los candidatos propuestos tuvo lugar el 5 de septiembre de 2013.

La Comisión continuará vigilando estrechamente la aplicación de la reforma de la CNMC con el fin de garantizar su compatibilidad con los requisitos pertinentes establecidos en virtud del Derecho de la UE.

([1]) DO L 337 de 18.12.2009, p. 37.
([2]) http://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/ConsejodeMinistros/Referencias/_2013/refc20130830.htm#ComisionMercados

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009835/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 September 0132)

Subject: Independence of the new regulatory body in Spain

It recently transpired that the members of the Board of the new Spanish regulating body are to be elected by means of a quota system.

These quotas will be attributed to the various political parties according to their weight in the Spanish parliament.

The Commission, on the other hand, has repeatedly stressed that the regulating body must be independent. In its response to Written Question E-003358/2013, it said that 'the Commission attaches great importance to the requirements under the EU regulatory framework regarding the independence of national regulatory authorities. The draft law seems to reinforce the involvement and control of the Parliament in the appointment process of the members of the Board. In particular, the draft law foresees that the members of the Board will be appointed following consultation of the Parliament which will have the right to veto the proposed candidates.'

In the light of the above:

Does the Commission consider the election of the governing board of a regulatory body by means of quotas assigned to political parties to be compatible with that body's independence?

Does it consider that the nomination of activists and former leaders of political parties will limit the independence of the regulatory body?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(31 October 0132)

As indicated in our reply to PQ E-003358/2013, the Commission attaches great importance to the independence of national regulatory authorities. The EU regulatory framework for electronic communications contains a number of requirements in this regard. In particular, Directive 2002/21/EC, as amended by Directive 2009/140/EC ([1]), provides, amongst others, that Member States shall guarantee that these authorities are legally distinct from and functionally independent of all organisations providing electronic communications networks, equipment or services, and that they shall act independently and not seek or take instructions from any other body in the exercise of certain tasks under national law implementing EC law.

However, the procedure for the appointment of the members of the board of the national regulatory authorities is a national competence. The CNMC law has reinforced the parliamentary involvement in the appointment process of the members of the board of the new authority by giving the Parliament a veto power over the Government proposal. In application of this national procedure, the Government proposal of the new Members of the Board of the CNMC was adopted on 30 August ([2]) and the parliamentary hearing of the proposed candidates took place on 5 September 2013.

The Commission will continue to monitor closely the implementation of the CNMC reform in order to guarantee its compatibility with the relevant requirements under EC law.

([1]) OJ L 337, 18.12.2009, p.37.
([2]) http://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/ConsejodeMinistros/Referencias/_2013/refc20130830.htm#ComisionMercados

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009836/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Venta de participaciones industriales a organismo estatal por parte de una entidad financiera rescatada

BFA-Bankia ha vendido el total de sus participaciones industriales a la SEPI (Sociedad Española de Participaciones Industriales), una entidad de carácter público.

Esta venta, que significa el 20,14 % de las acciones de la empresa, ha resultado por valor de 337 millones de euros, que reducen el montante de la deuda de BFA-Bankia pero aumentan el déficit del Estado español ([1]).

La Comisión se ha pronunciado en repetidas ocasiones sobre la importancia de que BFA-Bankia proceda a vender sus participaciones industriales con la mayor celeridad posible. Pero no sobre si estas ventas se pueden realizar a entidades públicas.

A la luz de lo anterior:

¿Considera la Comisión que esta venta es compatible con las normas sobre ayudas de estado vigentes en los Tratados de la UE?

¿Investigará la Comisión si ha existido un trato preferencial en esta operación producida entre dos entidades de titularidad pública?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(9 de octubre de 2013)

En virtud de la decisión de reestructuración aprobada por la Comisión en noviembre de 2012, las autoridades españolas se comprometieron a que BFA-Bankia vendiera sus participaciones industriales. La venta deberá realizarse en condiciones de mercado. La decisión no especifica si los compradores tienen que ser públicos o privados. Hasta el momento, la Comisión no tiene indicios de que la venta no se realizara en condiciones de mercado.

Aunque la Comisión sigue el proceso de reestructuración de BFA-Bankia como parte de los procedimientos de control normales, incluida la venta de participaciones industriales, por el momento, no hay una investigación ad hoc prevista por lo que se refiere a su venta.

([1]) http://blogs.elconfidencial.com/mercados/el-inversor-inteligente/2013-08-08/indra-y-el-despilfarro-del-gobierno_16351/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009836/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 September 0132)

Subject: Sale of industrial shares to a state body by a bailed-out bank

BFA-Bankia has sold all its industrial shares to SEPI, the Spanish Industrial Holding Company, which is a public body.

The EUR 337 million sale of 20.14% of the company's shares reduces BFA-Bankia's debt but increases Spain's national deficit.

The Commission has repeatedly stressed that BFA-Bankia needs to sell its industrial shares as quickly as possible, but has not stated whether or not they can be sold to public bodies.

In the light of the above:

Does the Commission consider this sale compatible with the existing rules on state aid established in the EU Treaties?

Will the Commission investigate whether this transaction between two public bodies constitutes preferential treatment?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(9 October 0132)

Under the terms of the restructuring decision as approved by the Commission in November 2012, the Spanish authorities have committed to BFA-Bankia selling its industrial shares. Any such sale has to take place on commercial terms. The decision does not specify whether the buyers have to be public or private. So far, the Commission has no indication that the sale did not take place under commercial terms.

While the Commission is following the restructuring process of BFA-Bankia as part of its normal monitoring procedures, including the sale of industrial shares, so far there is no ad hoc investigation expected as regards their sale.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009837/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Financiación de Sareb a entidades compradoras

Ha salido a la luz que Sareb (banco malo creado a raíz de las condiciones acordadas en el MoU del préstamo europeo para el sector financiero español) ha prestado dinero a un fondo de capital que ha participado en la llamada Operación Bull ([1]). La sociedad ha financiado el 40 % de su importe, es decir, 40 de los 100 millones en que se ha valorado.

Esta medida, sumada a que Sareb tenga el 49 % de las acciones del vehículo financiero que actúa como comprador, ha hecho que Sareb tenga un 70 % del riesgo de la operación.

Este hecho se contradice con la voluntad expresada en su página web de que «entre las funciones de Sareb no se contempla dar financiación para adquirir los activos de la sociedad» ([2]).

A la luz de lo anterior,

¿Cree la Comisión que esta práctica está de acuerdo con el objetivo de Sareb de reducir las pérdidas para los contribuyentes?

¿Está de acuerdo la Comisión en que Sareb dé crédito a posibles compradores a pesar de que ello aumenta notablemente sus riesgos?

¿Cree la Comisión que esta acción contradice los principios enunciados en la propia página web de Sareb?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(18 de octubre de 2013)

La creación de Sareb ha constituido un elemento importante del programa de ayuda al sector financiero español para facilitar, a su debido tiempo y de manera ordenada, la desinversión de los «activos heredados» relacionados con los sectores de desarrollo inmobiliario y de la construcción.

Es importante recordar que, con objeto de optimizar el nivel de recuperación y de preservación del valor, con vistas a minimizar también el coste para el contribuyente, se concedió a Sareb un período de hasta 15 años. Además, Sareb es una empresa de propiedad mayoritariamente privada, aunque con una importante participación pública minoritaria que asciende al 45 % del capital de la empresa. Por último, su equipo de gestión lo componen personas con un alto grado de profesionalidad, incluidos expertos en el mercado inmobiliario español.

Como empresa privada gestionada por profesionales, Sareb toma decisiones de manera independiente con el fin de cumplir mejor sus objetivos. Al mismo tiempo, la Comisión, de consuno con las autoridades españolas, está siguiendo de cerca la evolución de la situación relativa a Sareb para garantizar que ésta actúa en consonancia con el espíritu del Protocolo de Acuerdo.

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(1) http://www.elconfidencial.com/vivienda/2013-08-29/sareb-presta-dinero-a-los-fondos-para-que-se-le-compren-sus-propios-inmuebles_22221/?utm_source=buffer&utm_campaign=Buffer&utm_content=bufferc77da&utm_medium=twitter
(2) http://www.sareb.es/cms/estatico/srb/sareb/web/es/portal/sobre_sareb/faqs/index.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009837/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 September 0132)

Subject: Funding of purchasing bodies by Sareb

It has come to light that Sareb (the bad bank created under the terms of the memorandum of understanding for the European loan to the Spanish financial sector) lent money to an equity fund which took part in Operation Bull ([1]). The company funded 40% of the amount, in other words, EUR 40 million out of the EUR 100 million at which it was valued.

This measure, added to the fact that Sareb owns a 49% stake in the financial vehicle acting as purchaser, means that Sareb is liable for 70% of the operation's risk.

This contradicts the affirmation on the bad bank's website that 'Sareb's functions do not include providing funding for the purpose of acquiring the firm's assets' ([2]).

In light of the above:

Does the Commission consider this practice to be in line with Sareb's aim of reducing losses for taxpayers?

Does the Commission agree with Sareb providing credit to possible purchasers despite this decidedly increasing its own risk?

Does the Commission feel that this behaviour contradicts the principles outlined on Sareb's own website?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(38 October 0132)

The creation of Sareb has been an important element of the financial sector assistance programme for Spain to facilitate timely and orderly disinvestment of legacy assets linked to the construction and the real estate development sectors.

It is important to recall that in order to optimize the level of recovery and value preservation with a view to also minimise the cost to the taxpayer, Sareb was given a timeframe of up to 15 years. In addition, Sareb is a majority-private owned company, although with an important public minority stake amounting to 45% of its capital. Finally, its management team compromises of highly professional individuals, including experts in the Spanish real estate market.

As a private company, managed by professional staff, Sareb takes decisions independently in order to best fulfil its goals. At the same time, the Commission together with the Spanish authorities are monitoring closely the developments related to Sareb to ensure that it performs in line with the spirit of the MoU.

([1]) http://www.elconfidencial.com/vivienda/2013-08-29/sareb-presta-dinero-a-los-fondos-para-que-se-le-compren-sus-propios-inmuebles_22221/?utm_source=buffer&utm_campaign=Buffer&utm_content=bufferc77da&utm_medium=twitter

([2]) http://www.sareb.es/cms/estatico/srb/sareb/web/es/portal/sobre_sareb/faqs/index.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009838/13
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(3 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Accidente de tren en las inmediaciones de Santiago de Compostela y medidas de seguridad ferroviaria en la EU

El pasado 24 de julio, en la curva «A Grandeira» (Angrois), próxima a Santiago de Compostela, se produjo el descarrilamiento de un TALGO Serie 720 operado por Renfe que viajaba con 218 pasajeros de diferentes nacionalidades a bordo y circulaba con exceso de velocidad. El accidente causó 79 fallecidos y más de un centenar de heridos. Es el accidente ferroviario más grave de España desde 1944 y de Europa desde el año 2000.

Las autoridades españolas mantienen abiertas investigaciones sobre el accidente. El sistema de seguridad en el lugar del siniestro es el Anuncio de Señales y Frenado Automático (ASFA), después de una transición a realizar por el tren desde el Sistema Europeo de Gestión del Tráfico Ferroviario (ERTMS) / Sistema de Control Ferroviario Europeo (ETCS), que rige en otros tramos del recorrido con origen en Madrid. En la UE se estudian diversas opciones para el frenado de trenes en marcha (EATS, STPS, ECUC, etc.).

En los últimos catorce años han ocurrido ya once accidentes de tren muy graves en diversos Estados miembros de la UE (Polonia, Bélgica, Italia, Alemania, Hungría, Reino Unido, Austria y España). Días después del accidente de Santiago, en Suiza colisionaban frontalmente dos trenes de pasajeros en Granges-Marnand con el balance de 1 muerto y 26 heridos (5 de ellos graves).

¿Considera la Comisión necesario proceder a revisar y a incrementar la armonización de los actuales sistemas de seguridad en la EU al objeto de incrementar la seguridad del tráfico ferroviario y evitar accidentes como el ocurrido en las inmediaciones de Santiago?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de octubre de 2013)

La armonización de los sistemas de seguridad a nivel de la UE sigue siendo una prioridad para la Comisión, perseguida a través de iniciativas como el Sistema Europeo de Gestión del Tráfico Ferroviario (ERTMS/ETCS) mencionado por Su Señoría. Los Estados miembros se han comprometido con el ERTMS desde 1996 y la determinación de la Comisión a la hora de impulsar su despliegue es firme ([1]).

La tecnología también debe complementarse con la gestión de la seguridad y el control por parte de las empresas ferroviarias y el administrador de la infraestructura, así como con la supervisión por parte de las autoridades nacionales de seguridad (ANS).

La Directiva 2004/49/CE de seguridad ferroviaria ([2]) ya ha puesto en práctica un marco, por el que se atribuye la responsabilidad principal de las operaciones ferroviarias a las empresas ferroviarias y a los administradores de la infraestructura. Desde la entrada en vigor de dicha Directiva, estos operadores tienen la obligación de instaurar un sistema de gestión de la seguridad y disponer de un certificado de seguridad o una autorización de seguridad (respectivamente) antes de comenzar las operaciones. Las autoridades nacionales de seguridad emiten los certificados de seguridad y la autorización de seguridad y supervisan a los operadores.

Las propuestas del cuarto paquete ferroviario contribuyen a mejorar el ámbito de la seguridad. Más concretamente, la Agencia Ferroviaria Europea (AFE) expedirá los certificados de seguridad a las empresas ferroviarias, a fin de garantizar una evaluación más transparente y armonizada de su capacidad en la gestión de la seguridad. La supervisión seguirá siendo una tarea de las autoridades nacionales de seguridad, si bien la Agencia Ferroviaria Europea garantizará una mejor coordinación de esta actividad.

En caso de que las investigaciones en curso de los accidentes mencionados por Su Señoría revelen la necesidad de actuar a nivel de la UE, la Comisión adoptará medidas en el ámbito de sus competencias o presentará propuestas legislativas adecuadas con carácter de urgencia.

([1]) Para más información, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a las preguntas escritas E-009478/2013 y E-009495/2013, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=ES

([2]) Directiva 2004/49/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 29 de abril de 2004, sobre la seguridad de los ferrocarriles comunitarios y por la que se modifican la Directiva 95/18/CE del Consejo sobre concesión de licencias a las empresas ferroviarias y la Directiva 2001/14/CE relativa a la adjudicación de la capacidad de infraestructura ferroviaria, aplicación de cánones por su utilización y certificación de la seguridad (DO L 164 de 30.4.2004).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009838/13
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Train crash near Santiago de Compostela and rail safety measures in the EU

On 24 July 2013, a TALGO 720 series train, operated by Renfe, derailed at the A Grandeira curve in the immediate vicinity of Santiago de Compostela with 218 passengers on board and while travelling in excess of the speed limit. The accident caused the deaths of 79 people, with over a hundred injured. It was Spain's most serious rail accident since 1944 and the worst in Europe since 2000.

The Spanish authorities are still investigating the accident. At the point where it took place, the ASFA (Signal Alert and Automatic Braking) safety system is in operation, following the train's transition from the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS)/European Train Control System (ETCS), which operates on other stretches of the journey from Madrid. A number of different systems for braking trains in motion (EATS, STPS, ECUC, etc) are currently being studied in the EU.

During the last 14 years there have already been 11 serious train accidents in several EU Member States (Poland, Belgium, Italy, Germany, Hungary, United Kingdom, Austria and Spain) A few days after the accident at Santiago de Compostela, two passenger trains collided head-on at Granges-Marnand in Switzerland, leaving one person dead and 26 injured (five of them seriously so).

Does the Commission see a need to review and increase the harmonisation of the safety systems currently used in the EU, to make rail travel safer and prevent accidents like the one which took place just outside Santiago?

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

Harmonisation of safety systems at EU level continues to be a priority for the Commission, pursued through intiatives such as the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS/ETCS) mentioned by the Honourable Member. Member States have committed to ERTMS since 1996, and the Commission determination to push its deployment is firm ([1]).

Technology must also be accompanied by safety management and monitoring by the railway undertakings and infrastructure manager as well as by supervision by the National Safety Authorities (NSA).

Directive 2004/49/EC on railway safety ([2]) has already put in place a framework, attributing main responsibility for railway operations to the railway undertakings and infrastructure managers. Since the entry into force of this directive, these operators have the obligation to establish a safety management system and be granted a safety certificate or a safety authorisation (respectively) before starting operations. NSAs deliver safety certificates and safety authorisation, and supervise the operators.

The proposals of the 4th railway package further contribute to improve the safety framework. More specifically, the European Railway Agency (ERA) will deliver the safety certificates to the railway undertakings, ensuring a more transparent and harmonised assessment of their capability in managing safety. Supervision will remain a task of the NSAs, while ERA will ensure a better coordination of this activity.

Should the ongoing investigations into the accidents referred to by the Honourable Member reveal a need for further action at EU level, the Commission will adopt measures within the limit of its competences or present appropriate legislative proposals as a matter of urgency.

([1]) For more details, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written questions E-009478/2013 and E-009495/2013, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN

([2]) Directive 2004/49/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on safety on the Community's railways and amending Council Directive 95/18/EC on the licensing of railway undertakings and Directive 2001/14/EC on the allocation of railway infrastructure capacity and the levying of charges for the use of railway infrastructure and safety certification (OJ L 164, 30.4.2004).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009839/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(3 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Despilfarro de fondos europeos en Cantabria

El pasado 13 de mayo, László Ándor, Comisario de Empleo y Asuntos Sociales, participó en un debate celebrado por la Fundación Fuhem donde afirmó que España ha despilfarrado los fondos europeos de cohesión al haber desarrollado políticas poco inteligentes.

El Comisario llegó a sostener que este despilfarro se encuentra en la base de los problemas de competitividad que lleva arrastrando la economía española. Los fondos de cohesión en España 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 compañías de la construcción, que en última instancia han sido las grandes perceptoras de los fondos europeos.

Durante años, estos fondos se han estado empleando para beneficiar a las citadas empresas, y en la actualidad ha aparecido información sobre los supuestos pagos que dichas compañías 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, y es por ello que resulta necesario recabar la mayor información posible sobre la evaluación que la Comisión ha realizado de dichos proyectos.

A la vista de las críticas lanzadas por el Comisario sobre la ejecución de dichos fondos, consideramos necesario conocer 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. Cantabria es una de las regiones europeas con mayor desempleo y por eso urge conocer cómo evalúa el Comisario los proyectos realizados en la región.

¿Qué proyectos financiados con los fondos de cohesión constituyen para la Comisión proyectos que no han servido para el impulso económico de Cantabria, sino que suponen un despilfarro de los fondos europeos?

¿Qué alternativas considera que habrían podido ser financiadas en Cantabria para generar un incremento de la actividad económica y un descenso del desempleo?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de octubre de 2013)

La Comisión se permite remitir a Su Señoría a sus respuestas a las preguntas escritas siguientes: E-5454/13, E-5885/13, E-6360/13, E-6691/2013, E-7043/2013, E-7662/2013, E-8153/2013 y E-8904/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009839/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Squandering of public funds in Cantabria

On 13 May 2013 the European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, László Ándor, took part in a debate organised by the Fuhem Foundation during which he said that Spain had wasted European cohesion funding on ill thought-out policies.

Mr Ándor said that this was one reason for the competitiveness problems besetting the Spanish economy. Spain has wasted cohesion funding on useless or redundant infrastructure projects which have done nothing to improve the country's competitiveness. The projects have benefited only major construction companies, which have ultimately been the main recipients of European funding.

For years the companies in question have prospered as a result, and now information has emerged suggesting that they made payments to the leaders of the political party responsible for the projects. This could explain the thinking behind the Spanish authorities' choice of projects to be funded with EU money, and it is essential, therefore, to gather as much information as possible about the way in which the Commission evaluated these projects.

In light of the Commissioner's criticisms of the way this funding has been used, we feel it is important to know which projects have been shown by the Commission's assessments to have been 'ill thought-out' and what alternative projects the Commission feels could have been carried out in their place. Given that Cantabria is one of the regions with the highest rates of unemployment in Europe, it is vital to understand how the Commissioner views the projects implemented in the region.

In the Commission's eyes, which of the projects financed from cohesion funds did nothing to boost the Cantabrian economy and merely wasted European money?

What alternative projects does the Commission think could have been funded in Cantabria in order to boost economic activity and bring down unemployment?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-5454/13, E-5885/13, E-6360/13, E-6691/2013, E-7043/2013, E-7662/2013, E-8153/2013 and E-8904/13.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009840/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(3 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εκκρεμή συνταξιοδοτικά δικαιώματα

Σύμφωνα με πρόσφατα δημοσιεύματα του ελληνικού τύπου, π.χ. ([1]), ο αριθμός των εκκρεμών αιτήσεων για συντάξεις και εφάπαξ προσεγγίζει τις 360 000. Αναλυτικά, στο δημοσίευμα αναφέρεται ότι στο ΙΚΑ εκκρεμούν τουλάχιστον 155 000 αιτήματα για κύρια και επικουρική σύνταξη. Στα υπόλοιπα Ταμεία εκκρεμούν περίπου 150 000 αιτήσεις για κύριες και επικουρικές συντάξεις, ενώ πάνω από 50 000 άτομα περιμένουν το εφάπαξ.

Συγκεκριμένα, στο ΙΚΑ εκκρεμούν 85 000 αιτήσεις για κύρια σύνταξη και 70 000 αιτήσεις για επικουρική σύνταξη, στον ΟΓΑ εκκρεμούν οι αιτήσεις για σύνταξη 60 000 αγροτών, στο Δημόσιο εκκρεμούν 30 000 αιτήσεις, στον ΟΑΕΕ 15 000 αιτήσεις, ενώ στο Ενιαίο Ταμείο Ανεξάρτητα Απασχολούμενων (ΕΤΑΑ) πάνω από 7 000 αιτήσεις.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή, με την ιδιότητά της ως μέρους της τρόικα:

Είναι ενήμερη για τον αριθμό των εκκρεμών συνταξιοδοτικών δικαιωμάτων;

Ποιά είναι η εκτίμηση του δημοσιονομικού βάρους άμεσα όπως και μακροπρόθεσμα, όταν οι εκκρεμείς αιτήσεις εγκριθούν;

Έχει γίνει πρόβλεψη στα ασφαλιστικά ταμεία, ώστε τα εκκρεμή συνταξιοδοτικά δικαιώματα να περιλαμβάνονται στο έλλειμμα των ετών στα οποία αντιστοιχούν;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(25 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη για τον μεγάλο αριθμό εκκρεμών αιτήσεων για συντάξεις και εφάπαξ. Το αίτημα σχετικά με τον αριθμό των αιτήσεων θα πρέπει να διαβιβαστεί στο ελληνικό Υπουργείο Εργασίας, το οποίο έχει την εποπτεία των διαφόρων ταμείων κοινωνικής ασφάλισης. Η τεχνική βοήθεια που παρέχεται στην Ελλάδα στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής αποσκοπεί στον εκσυγχρονισμό του διοικητικού συστήματος και στον τομέα των συντάξεων. Η αποτελεσματική υλοποίηση αυτού του προγράμματος αναμένεται να μειώσει σημαντικά τον χρόνο διεκπεραίωσης των αιτήσεων.

Ο αριθμός των εκκρεμών αιτήσεων ενδέχεται να υπερβαίνει τον αριθμό των συνταξιούχων, καθώς το ίδιο πρόσωπο μπορεί να υποβάλει αίτηση για κύρια σύνταξη, σύνταξη ΙΚΑ και επικουρική σύνταξη. Ένας επιπλέον λόγος για τον εκ πρώτης όψεως υψηλό αριθμό των εκκρεμών αιτήσεων είναι το γεγονός ότι το όριο συνταξιοδότησης αυξήθηκε κατά 2 έτη από την 1η Ιανουαρίου 2013. Σε αυτό οφείλονται οι εκκρεμείς αιτήσεις όσων υπέβαλαν αίτηση χωρίς, με βάση τα νέα δεδομένα, να βρίσκονται ακόμη σε ηλικία συνταξιοδότησης.

Οι ελληνικές αρχές είναι αρμόδιες να παρέχουν έγκυρες φορολογικές και στατιστικές πληροφορίες λαμβάνοντας υπόψη όλα τα διαθέσιμα στοιχεία. Η Επιτροπή εξακολουθεί να παρακολουθεί την εφαρμογή του προγράμματος προσαρμογής, συμπεριλαμβανομένων όλων των παραγόντων που επηρεάζουν τις δημόσιες δαπάνες για τις συντάξεις.

([1]) http://news247.gr/eidiseis/oikonomia/stoivagmenes_360_000_aithseis_gia_suntaksh_kai_efapaks.2359545.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009840/13
to the Commission
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(2 September 0132)

Subject: Outstanding pension rights

According to recent Greek press reports ([1]), there are almost 360 000 applications for pensions and lump sum payments currently pending. More specifically, it is reported that at least 155 000 applications for basic and supplementary pensions are pending with IKA (the Greek Social Security Institute). The other funds have approximately 150 000 applications for basic and supplementary pensions pending, while more than 50 000 people are awaiting lump sum payments.

In particular, IKA has 85 000 applications for basic pensions and 70 000 applications for supplementary pensions pending, 60 000 farmers have pension applications pending with the OGA (Agricultural Insurance Organisation), the state pension fund has 30 000 applications pending, while the OAEE (Self-Employed Workers' Insurance Organisation) and the Unified Self-employed workers Fund (ETAA) have 15 000 applications and over 7 000 applications respectively, pending.

Bearing in mind the above, will the Commission state, in its capacity as member of the Troika:

Is it aware of the number of outstanding pension applications?

How much does it estimate the financial burden will be, both immediately and in the long term, when the pending applications are approved?

Has any provision been made by the pension funds to include the outstanding pension rights in the deficit for the years to which they relate?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(05 October 0132)

The Commission is aware of a large number of pending applications for pensions and lump-sum payments. The request on the number of applications should be addressed to the Greek Ministry of Labour which has the supervision of the many Social Security Funds. The technical assistance provided to Greece under the Economic Adjustment Programme aims at modernising the administrative system also in the field of pensions. When effectively applied it should shorten the processing times significantly.

The number of pending applications is likely to be higher than the number of relevant retirees as applications for basic pensions, IKA pensions and supplementary pensions can be submitted by the same applicant. One additional reason for the seemingly high number of pending applications is the fact that retirement ages were increased by 2 years as of 1 January 2013. This naturally results in pending applications for those who applied without having yet reached their new retirement age.

The Greek authorities are in charge of providing accurate fiscal and statistical information taking into account all available data. The Commission continues to monitor the implementation of the adjustment programme, including all factors affecting public pension expenditure.

([1]) http://news247.gr/eidiseis/oikonomia/stoivagmenes_360_000_aithseis_gia_suntaksh_kai_efapaks.2359545.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009841/13
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(2 September 0132)

Subject: Fourth directive on company accounts

Article 47 of the Fourth Council Directive 78/660/EEC on the annual accounts of certain types of companies provides that the annual accounts, duly approved, and the annual report, together with the opinion submitted by the person responsible for auditing the accounts, shall be published as laid down by the laws of each Member State in accordance with Article 3 of Directive 68/151/EEC. The directive goes on to make it possible for all or part of the report to be made available on request (subject to an administration fee).

1. Is the Commission satisfied that all Member States fully observe their obligations with regard to the filing and disclosure of accounts?

2. Is the Commission satisfied that Member States have adequate penalties in place to ensure that companies do file their accounts?

3a. Specifically regarding the filing of accounts in France, is the Commission aware that companies are sometimes fined for failing to file accounts and that no further action appears to be taken?

3b. Is the Commission therefore satisfied that France has robust mechanisms in place to ensure that all company accounts are filed?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(00 October 0132)

The Fourth Council Directive 78/660/EEC has been repealed and replaced in July 2013 by the new Accounting Directive 2013/34/EU. The Commission will closely monitor the transposition of this directive, which is due by July 2015. The Commission has offered assistance to the Member States during this process.

The Commission has been satisfied so far that France has transposed into its national law requirements for the relevant companies to publish annual accounts, as provided for in the Fourth Directive, as well as sanction mechanisms for the cases of non-publication. The Commission is not aware that there would be any systemic issues regarding publication in France.

The Commission informs the Honourable Member that the correct transposition of provisions relating to publication and related sanctions will be reviewed again for all the Member States as part of the transposition process for the new Directive. This will include whether these sanctions are effective, proportionate and dissuasive as foreseen by the directive.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009842/13
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: Airport development fees

Most airports across the European Union charge airlines landing and handling fees for the services they offer and these costs are passed onto consumers through ticket prices. However, some airports charge travellers directly instead of the airlines, and these fees are described as 'airline passenger fees' or 'airport development fees'. Notwithstanding the fact that airports which operate under this business model make clear to airlines that travellers should be informed of such fees before travelling, these charges can still come as a surprise to some passengers.

Has the Commission considered mandating that tickets include all non-optional fees, charges and taxes so that there are no unexpected additional charges? If not, has the Commission considered mandating some kind of 'tick box' authorisation drawing travellers' attention to such non-optional fees when booking their airline ticket?

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

Air Services Regulation ([1]) in its Article 2.18 defines that air fares mean the prices to be paid for the carriage of passengers on air services and any conditions under which those prices apply. Articles 22-23 of the same Regulation declare the pricing freedom of air carriers and impose on air carriers the obligation to include the applicable conditions and all applicable taxes, charges, surcharges and fees which are unavoidable and foreseeable at the time of publication.

The Commission considers that these obligations are met by the air carrier and the airport if the following condition is fulfilled:

The airport collects the 'development fee' or equivalent, not the airline. Thus, air carriers cannot include it in their final price. In order however to meet the requirements of the aforementioned provisions on displaying price elements, airlines shall draw the attention of the passengers — at the beginning of the booking process — that there are fees collected at the airport before departure. In paralel, the airport too shall inform passengers about the existence of such fees in a clear and transparent manner.

The Commission considers that when the Air Services Regulation is correctly applied by all parties involved, it is ensured that passengers receive transparent information as regards the final cost of their travel by air. Passengers, that find that the regulation is not correctly applied, are advised to contact the relevant national enforcement authorities that have the power to investigate the case.

([1]) OJ L 293, 31.10.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009843/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(3 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Hmong people in Laos

Thao Moua and Pa Fue Khang, men of the ethnic Hmong people in Laos, were arrested in June 2003 after emerging from the jungle of Xieng Khouang Province, where they had been working as guides for journalists Thierry Falise and Vincent Reynaud — two EU citizens who had been researching the ill-treatment of Hmong people.

On 30 June 2003 they were all brought to trial, which lasted less than three hours. The charges against them included collaboration in the commission of an offence, possession of firearms and explosives, possession of drugs and destruction of evidence. The Laotians had no legal representation and the trial's outcome appeared from reports to be predetermined. Thao Moua and Pa Fue Khang were sentenced to 12 and 15 years respectively. The EU nationals were also sentenced, but their embassies negotiated their release shortly afterwards and the two were deported. Thao Moua and Pa Fue Khang were transferred to Samkhe prison in Vientiane, the Laotian capital.

Their trial appears to be a result of their involvement in researching a news story about the plight of the Hmong hiding in the jungle.

Is the High Representative aware of the case involving Thao Moua and Pa Fue Khang?

What representations, if any, have been made specifically on behalf of these two men?

What steps are being taken to highlight the rights of the Hmong minority vis-à-vis the Laotian Government?

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

The cases of Mr Thao Moua and Mr Pa Fue Khang are very well known by the EU and our concerns have been communicated to the Lao authorities, most recently in the context of the human rights dialogue in February 2013. Our information is that they can expect to be released no later than June 2014 and June 2017, respectively.

The situation of the Hmong and other minorities is followed closely, including by field visits. These matters are discussed regularly, and notably at the annual human rights dialogue between the Lao PDR and the EU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009844/13
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(2 September 0132)

Subject: Social charges and EU regulations

Second-home owners in France are liable for capital gains tax on this additional property (as is the case in other Member States). In addition to this tax there are a number of further social charges, including the contribution sociale généralisée (CSG) and the contribution au remboursement de la dette sociale (CRDS), which are payable on the sale of a second home.

Regulation (EEC) No 1408/71 (as amended and updated) creates the single state principle for social security, meaning citizens should not be penalised for exercising their treaty rights of free movement and thus should not have to pay a double social security contribution in multiple Member States.

For citizens primarily resident outside of France, they pay social security in their country of primary residence. Nonetheless, citizens in these circumstances still appear to be liable for the CSG and CRDS, and for those resident in the UK, citizens appear to be paying social security in a country from which they will not be able to draw any benefit.

Is the Commission aware of this situation? If so, has it made any representations to the French authorities?

Does the Commission class the CSG and CRDS as social contributions or national taxes?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(03 October 0132)

The Commission's services have received complaints concerning the application of Article 11(1) of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 (the Social Security Coordination Regulation) in cases where France levies the Contribution Sociale Géneralisée (CSG) and the Contribution au Remboursement de la Dette Sociale (CRDS) on income from real estate located in France, the owners of which do not reside in that Member State and do not qualify under the French social security system.

The Commission's services contacted the French authorities for further information on this practice. After considering their reply in detail, they are of the opinion that the social allowances concerned are specifically and directly allocated to financing the social security system in France and therefore have a sufficient link with the relevant social security legislation as referred to in Article 3(1) of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004.

The Commission's services have formally registered an infringement against France. However, in the meantime the French Conseil d'Etat has referred a request to the Court of Justice for a preliminary ruling on the application of the Social Security Coordination Regulation as regards the levying of the CSG and CRDS, the outcome of which will determine further action by the Commission.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009845/13
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(2 September 0132)

Subject: Commission funding for Guinea and the problem of female genital mutilation (FGM)

The Commission recently announced that it would provide EUR 6 million in funding to Guinea to support governance and democracy.

1. Given that Guinea has an astonishing rate of female genital mutilation (FGM) with 98.6% of women being affected, how much of this funding is earmarked with a view to eradicating this barbaric crime against girls as young as four years of age?

2. What action is the Commission taking in Guinea to combat FGM in the country?

3. Given that the Commission is providing funding to the Ministry of Health and Public Hygiene, what is it doing to tackle the medicalisation of FGM in Guinea and to ensure that EU taxpayers' money is not used to fund clinics or healthcare professionals who are involved in genital mutilation?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(4 November 0132)

1. The support project for civil society in Guinea places priority on capacity building and funding the activities of organisations defending the rights of the most vulnerable, including victims of female genital mutilation (FGM).

Until now the EU has not had a specific project on abolishing FGM in Guinea.

2. The subject has been regularly addressed on a political level in the dialogue on Human Rights between the EU and the Guinean authorities, and their Ministry of Social Affairs is currently drawing up a plan to combat FGM. FGM — which is prohibited by law — will also be dealt with by the EU through the Justice Reform Support Project using EUR 20 million from the 10th EDF ([1]). This project includes a civil society support component to promote rights among the citizens and to provide legal and judicial assistance. Furthermore, promoting the rights of women, children and the family will be included in the training activities for the judiciary and the modernisation of the regulatory framework.

A reduction in the rate of FGM will be included in the performance indicators of the health support project aimed at improving health services in the N'Zérékoré region. The reproductive health component will be implemented by Unicef which has valuable experience in combating FGM and has achieved significant results ([2]).

3. The Commission will ensure that the legal prohibition of FGM is respected in the Ministry's health facilities and awareness-raising campaigns will be carried out among beneficiaries. The subject will be included in the sectoral dialogue between donors and the Ministry.

([1]) The implementation of the Justice Reform Support Project depends on the Council lifting the appropriate measures based on Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement. This is conditional on the organisation of free and transparent legislative elections, currently planned for 28 September 2013.

([2]) http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/fgm_insight_eng.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009846/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D)
(3 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Επίπεδο πληρωμών από τις 31 Ιουλίου 2013

Μετά από την έγκριση του σχεδίου διορθωτικού προϋπολογισμού αριθ. 6/2012, η Επιτροπή, κατόπιν αιτήματος της αρμόδιας για τον προϋπολογισμό αρχής, υπέβαλε το σχέδιο διορθωτικού προϋπολογισμού αριθ. 2/2013, ύψους 11,2 δισ. ευρώ, που θα επιτρέπει την κάλυψη όλων των νόμιμων υποχρεώσεων πληρωμών, οι οποίες εκκρεμούσαν στα τέλη του 2012, καθώς και εκείνων που προκύπτουν πριν από το τέλος του 2013, εντός του προϋπολογισμού του τρέχοντος έτους.

Κατά τη συνεδρίαση του Συμβουλίου Ecofin της 14ης Μαΐου 2013, επιτεύχθηκε πολιτική συμφωνία για την παροχή της επιπρόσθετης χρηματοδότησης για τον προϋπολογισμό του 2013 σε δύο δόσεις, με την πρώτη να ανέρχεται σε 7,3 δισ. ευρώ, ενώ οι υπουργοί δεσμεύτηκαν να επανέλθουν στο θέμα αργότερα εντός του έτους. Ωστόσο, δεν υπήρξε επίσημη δέσμευση για το υπολειπόμενο ποσό των 3,9 δισεκατομμυρίων του σχεδίου διορθωτικού προϋπολογισμού 2/2013.

Μετά από την πολιτική συμφωνία της 27ης Ιουνίου 2013 που επιτεύχθηκε από τα θεσμικά όργανα σχετικά με το ΠΔΠ 2014-2020, το Συμβούλιο Ecofin ενέκρινε στις 9 Ιουλίου 2013 τη συμπληρωματική χρηματοδότηση ύψους 7,3 δισεκατομμυρίων για τον προϋπολογισμό του 2013 και δεσμεύτηκε να λάβει κάθε απαραίτητο πρόσθετο μέτρο για να διασφαλιστεί η πλήρης τήρηση των υποχρεώσεων της Ένωσης για το 2013. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, βάσει πρότασης που πρόκειται να υποβάλει η Επιτροπή στις αρχές του φθινοπώρου, με βάση τις πιο πρόσφατες επικαιροποιημένες εκτιμήσεις όσον αφορά τις πιστώσεις πληρωμών, το Συμβούλιο δεσμεύεται να αποφασίσει χωρίς καθυστέρηση σχετικά με πρόσθετο σχέδιο διορθωτικού προϋπολογισμού, προκειμένου να αποφευχθούν οποιεσδήποτε ελλείψεις στις αιτιολογημένες πιστώσεις πληρωμών.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη όλα όσα εκτέθηκαν ανωτέρω και δεδομένου ότι το επίπεδο πληρωμών για τον προϋπολογισμό του 2013 είναι κατά 5 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ χαμηλότερο από τις εκτιμήσεις της Επιτροπής για τις ανάγκες πληρωμών στο σχέδιο προϋπολογισμού της για το 2013, θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να παράσχει λεπτομερείς πληροφορίες σχετικά με το επίπεδο των πληρωμών που έλαβε μέχρι τις 31 Ιουλίου 2013; Ειδικότερα, θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να γνωστοποιήσει τις πληρωμές που έχουν καταβληθεί τον Ιανουάριο, τον Φεβρουάριο, τον Μάρτιο, τον Απρίλιο, τον Μάιο, τον Ιούνιο και τον Ιούλιο του 2013, ταξινομημένες ανά κράτος μέλος και ανά τομέα/πρόγραμμα πολιτικής;

Θα μπορούσε επίσης η Επιτροπή να παράσχει μία σύγκριση μεταξύ των εκτιμήσεων πληρωμών των κρατών μελών και των πραγματικών πληρωμών που έχουν καταβληθεί μέχρι τώρα στο πλαίσιο του προϋπολογισμού του 2013, ταξινομημένων ανά κράτος μέλος και ανά τομέα/πρόγραμμα πολιτικής;

Απάντηση του κ. Lewandowski εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Η αναλυτική κατανομή των έγκυρων αιτήσεων πληρωμών ([1]) που υποβλήθηκαν τον Ιούλιο για τα χρηματοδοτούμενα από το ΕΚΤ, το ΕΤΠΑ και το ΤΣ επιχειρησιακά προγράμματα της περιόδου 2007-2013 παρατίθεται στο παράρτημα I της παρούσας απάντησης, ενώ τα στοιχεία σχετικά με το ΕΤΑ και το ΕΓΤΑΑ παρατίθενται στο παράρτημα II. Τα αριθμητικά στοιχεία του πίνακα προκύπτουν από τη σύγκριση των αιτήσεων πληρωμών που υποβλήθηκαν έως το τέλος Ιουλίου 2013 με εκείνες που υποβλήθηκαν έως το τέλος Ιουνίου 2013. Η Επιτροπή μπορεί να αποφασίσει την αλλαγή χαρακτηρισμού μιας αίτησης πληρωμής από «Αποδεκτή» σε «Πλήρως απορριφθείσα» ή «Επιστραφείσα προς διόρθωση» και, συνεπώς, τα αριθμητικά στοιχεία των παραρτημάτων της παρούσας απάντησης ενδέχεται να αποτελέσουν αντικείμενο περαιτέρω προσαρμογών. Τα αρνητικά υπόλοιπα του ΕΚΤ για την Ουγγαρία, για παράδειγμα, είναι αποτέλεσμα τέτοιας αλλαγής χαρακτηρισμού.

Ανάλογα στοιχεία για τους μήνες Ιανουάριο, Φεβρουάριο, Μάρτιο, Απρίλιο, Μάιο και Ιούνιο δόθηκαν από την Επιτροπή στις ερωτήσεις E-001090/2013, E-003237/2013, E-003928/2013, E-004903/2013, E-006405/2013 και E-008097/2013 ([2]), αντίστοιχα.

Οι προβλέψεις πληρωμών των κρατών μελών δεν μπορούν να συγκριθούν άμεσα με τις πραγματικές πληρωμές που πραγματοποιήθηκαν μέχρι τώρα κατά το τρέχον έτος, λόγω του ότι οι εν λόγω πληρωμές περιλαμβάνουν το σημαντικό ποσό που αφορά τις αιτήσεις πληρωμών που ελήφθησαν πριν από το τέλος του προηγούμενου έτους και έπρεπε να καταλογιστούν στις διαθέσιμες πιστώσεις στον προϋπολογισμό του 2013.

([1]) Με εξαίρεση τα ποσά που έχουν απορριφθεί πλήρως.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009846/13
to the Commission
Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D)
(2 September 0132)

Subject: Level of payments as of 31 July 2013

After the approval of Draft Amending Budget No 6/2012, the Commission, at the request of the Budgetary Authority, came forward with Draft Amending Budget No 2/2013, amounting to EUR 11.2 billion, which will allow all legal payment obligations left pending at the end of 2012, as well as those arising before the end of 2013, to be covered in this year's budget.

At the Ecofin meeting of 14 May 2013, a political agreement was reached to provide the extra funding for the 2013 budget in two tranches, with the first one amounting to EUR 7.3 billion while the ministers committed to come back on the issue later in the year. However, there has been no formal commitment on the remaining EUR 3.9 billion of Draft Amending Budget 2/2013.

After the political agreement of 27 June 2013 reached by the institutions on the 2014-2020 MFF, the Ecofin Council, on 9 July 2013, approved the EUR 7.3 billion top-up for the 2013 Budget and committed to take all necessary additional steps to ensure that the Union's obligations for 2013 are fully honoured. In this respect, on the basis of a proposal to be made by the Commission in early autumn, based on the latest updated estimates regarding payment appropriations, the Council commits to decide, without delay, on a further draft amending budget to avoid any shortfall in justified payment appropriations.

Taking all the above into consideration and given the fact that the level of payments for the 2013 budget is EUR 5 billion lower than the Commission's estimates for payment needs in its 2013 draft budget, could the Commission provide detailed information on the level of payments received by 31 July 2013? Specifically, could the Commission inform on the payments received in the months of January, February, March, April, May, June and July 2013, broken down by Member State and policy area/programme?

Could the Commission also provide a comparison between the Member States' payment forecasts and the actual payments that have taken place thus far in the year, in the framework of the 2013 budget, broken down by Member State and by policy area/programme?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(7 October 0132)

A detailed breakdown of the valid payment claims ([1]) received in July for the 2007-2013 ESF, ERDF and CF-funded operational programmes is provided in Annex I to this reply while for EFF and EAFRD the data is included in Annex II. The figures in the table result from comparing valid payment claims submitted until the end of July 2013 with those submitted until the end of June 2013. The Commission may decide to change the status of a payment claim from 'Accepted' to 'Fully rejected' or 'Returned for corrections' and therefore the figures presented in the annexes to this reply could still undergo further adjustments. A negative ESF balance for Hungary, for instance, is the result of such changes in status.

Similar data for the months of January, February, March, April, May and June were provided by the Commission to Questions E-001090/2013, E-003237/2013, E-003928/2013, E-004903/2013, E-006405/2013 and E-008097/2013 ([2]), respectively.

Member States' payment forecasts cannot directly be compared to the actual payments that have taken place thus far in the year because the latter includes the significant amount of payment claims received before the end of last year and had to be charged on the appropriations available in the 2013 budget.

([1]) Excluding fully rejected amounts.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009847/13
alla Commissione
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(2 settembre 0132)

Oggetto: Dichiarazioni del pentito Schiavone — rifiuti in Campania

— Considerata la gravità della questione riguardante lo smaltimento dei rifiuti tossici ed illegali in Campania;

— posto che le dichiarazioni del pentito della camorra Carmine Schiavone hanno evidenziato gravi connivenze e responsabilità imputabili anche ad aziende del Nord Europa in merito al traffico di rifiuti tossici;

— considerato che, alla luce di quanto affermato, risulta imprescindibile trattare la questione a livello europeo perché la Campania è territorio europeo e non è più accettabile che venga trattata come se fosse al di fuori dell'UE, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. intende la Commissione procedere al finanziamento della bonifica di un territorio europeo, come quello campano, viste anche le responsabilità delle aziende del Nord Europa e i mancati controlli dei loro governi? In caso affermativo, quali finanziamenti sono disponibili?

2. Non crede che la questione suddetta abbia un carattere d'urgenza, soprattutto per le conseguenze sulla salute dei cittadini campani ed europei?

3. Come intende agire la Commissione, eventualmente con un'inchiesta ad hoc, per definire le responsabilità italiane ed anche europee per quanto sopra evidenziato?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(21 ottobre 0132)

Il programma operativo regionale (POR) 2007-2013 per la Campania prevede alcuni progetti per la bonifica di siti contaminati nella regione. Il cofinanziamento della Commissione dipende dalla misura in cui le autorità italiane dichiarano spese per progetti previsti dal POR.

Per quanto riguarda la questione più generale del traffico illecito di rifiuti in Europa, nel luglio 2013 la Commissione ha adottato una proposta per rafforzare i controlli sulle spedizioni di rifiuti, attraverso una modifica del regolamento (CE) n. 1013/2006 ([1]). La Commissione controlla l'attuazione di detto regolamento e ogni tre anni pubblica una relazione.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1013/2006 relativo alle spedizioni di rifiuti, GU L 190 del 12.7.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009847/13
to the Commission
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(2 September 0132)

Subject: Statements by the mafia informer Schiavone — waste in Campania

The disposal of toxic and illegal waste in Campania has become a very serious issue.

Statements made by the Camorra informer Carmine Schiavone have revealed that even companies in northern Europe are responsible for, and have been accomplices in, the trafficking of toxic waste.

Given that it is vital that this issue be dealt with at EU level, because Campania is part of the EU and it is no longer acceptable for it to be treated as if it were outside the EU, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Will the Commission finance the clean-up of Campania — an EU territory — given also the responsibilities of companies from northern Europe and the lack of monitoring on the part of their governments? If so, what funding is available?

2. Does it not believe that this issue is a matter of urgency, especially with regard to its impact on the health of the people of Campania and of the EU?

3. What action will the Commission take, possibly by conducting an ad hoc investigation, to determine the Italian — and European — responsibilities for these issues?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(21 October 0132)

The 2007-13 Regional Operational Programme for Campania (ROP) includes some types of projects aimed at cleaning up contaminated sites in the region. Co-financing by the Commission depends on whether the Italian authorities declare expenditures for projects covered by the ROP.

As for the more general issue of the illegal traffic of waste in Europe, in July 2013, the Commission adopted a proposal to strengthen inspections on waste shipments through an amendment to Regulation 1013/2006 ([1]). The Commission monitors the implementation of this regulation and publishes a report every three years.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 on shipments of waste (OJ L 190, 12.7.2006).

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-009849/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(3 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Turismul viticol

În ultimii ani, turiștii preferă, din ce în ce mai mult, călătoriile educative în locul celor pasive. Un domeniu care începe să capteze tot mai mult este turismul viticol.

O vizită organizată într-o manieră detaliată într-o podgorie oferă vizitatorilor posibilitatea învățării diferitelor aspecte tehnice din procesul de fabricare a vinului, precum și a cultivării viței de vie.

Pe de altă parte, turiștii au posibilitatea să se familiarizeze cu o mare diversitate de peisaje, fără a renunța la condiții de cazare confortabile și, nu în ultimul rând, de a cunoaște mâncărurile și obiceiurile tradiționale din zonele vizitate.

În plus, consumatorii au avantajul că pot degusta vinul pentru a putea decide ce produs cumpără, mai ales în cazul în care este vorba de loturi speciale care nu se găsesc pe piață.

Cum poate sprijini Comisia eforturile autorităților locale și parteneriatele public-privat pentru derularea de proiecte, inclusiv transfrontaliere și inter-regionale, care să ducă la dezvoltarea acestui domeniu, cu efecte benefice asupra creșterii locurilor de muncă în mediul rural?

Răspuns dat de dl Tajani în numele Comisiei
(29 octombrie 2013)

Comisia sprijină autoritățile locale și parteneriatele public-privat în efortul lor de a diversifica oferta de produse turistice. Turismul cu o componentă educațională pe tema vinului și a podgoriilor a fost sprijinit prin intermediul mai multor fonduri europene (Fondul european agricol pentru dezvoltare rurală — FEADR, fonduri structurale). De exemplu, Fondul european de dezvoltare regională pentru perioada 2007-2013 a finanțat proiectul „Grand équipement de loisir culturel autour du vin", din regiunea Aquitaine, cu peste 15 milioane de euro. Puteți consulta mai multe astfel de exemple accesând baza de date a proiectelor de dezvoltare regională, gestionată de Comisia Europeană (http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/projects/stories/index_ro.cfm) precum și baza de date a Rețelei europene de dezvoltare rurală (http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/policy-in-action/rdp_view/en/view_projects_en.cfm)

Începând din 2011, Comisia a lansat cereri anuale de propuneri pentru a sprijini dezvoltarea a diferite tipuri de „itinerarii europene" (turism cultural și industrial, drumeții, ciclism etc.). Drumul vinului a fost una dintre temele eligibile. Proiectul „Secret Wine Tour", de exemplu, vizează crearea unui circuit care include șapte țări și în care degustările de vin și istoricul viticulturii sunt integrate în cadrul unei oferte turistice tradiționale.

În plus, Comisia cooperează cu Consiliul Europei pentru a dezvolta o serie de itinerarii culturale europene. Unul dintre acestea, „Iter Vitis", este conceput ca o nouă experiență turistică legată de producția de vin.

Sprijinirea investițiilor în turism rămâne un potențial domeniu de activitate pentru viitoarele programe din cadrul fondurilor structurale și de investiții, cu condiția ca acestea să fie legate de prioritățile tematice și de obiectivele fondurilor respective ([1]). Dezvoltarea acestui tip de programe va beneficia atât de sprijinul FEADR, cât și de cel al viitoarei politici de coeziune ([2]) și al modalităților inovative de finanțare ([3]).

([1]) Este deosebit de important ca aceste investiții să fie încorporate în strategii localizate și integrate de dezvoltare și să aibă o justificare economică temeinică din punctul de vedere al sustenabilității pe termen lung și al impactului asupra creșterii economice și a ocupării forței de muncă.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/BlobServlet?docId=232&langId=en
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/enveco/biodiversity/pdf/BD_Finance_summary-300312.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009849/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(2 September 0132)

Subject: Wine tourism

Over recent years tourists have displayed a growing preference for educational travel as opposed to more passive forms of tourism. In this connection, wine tourism is becoming an increasingly popular choice, with visits around vineyards providing detailed information about the various technical aspects of wine making and vine cultivation.

Participants also have the opportunity to travel through a wide variety of landscapes without sacrificing any creature comforts and, not least, become acquainted with local culinary specialities and traditions.

In addition, potential purchasers are able to sample wines, including special batches not available on the market, before making a selection.

What measures can the Commission take to support efforts by local authorities and public-private partnerships to promote such initiatives, including cross-border and interregional projects, thereby helping the sector develop its potential and improving employment prospects in rural areas?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(09 October 0132)

The Commission supports local authorities and public-private partnerships in diversifying tourism products. Educational travel around wine and vineyards has been supported through several European Funds (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development EAFRD, Structural funds). For instance, the European Regional Development Fund 2007-2013 contributed over EUR 15 million to the 'Grand équipement de loisir culturel autour du vin' project of the region of Aquitaine. More examples are provided by the Regional development projects database of the Commission (http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/projects/stories/index_en.cfm) as well as by the European Network for Rural Development's database (http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/policy-in-action/rdp_view/en/view_projects_en.cfm).

Since 2011, the Commission has launched annual Calls for Proposals to support the development of different types of European Routes: cultural and industrial tourism, hiking and cycling. Wine tourism was amongst the eligible themes. The 'Secret Wine Tour', for instance, is about developing a route through seven countries where wine tasting and viticulture history are integrated within a more traditional tourism offer.

Moreover, the Commission cooperates with the Council of Europe to develop certified European Cultural Routes. One of them, 'Iter Vitis', is conceived as a new tourism experience linked to the production of wine.

Support for tourism investments continues to be a potential activity area of the future programmes under the European Structural and Investment Funds, if they are connected to the thematic priorities and objectives of the funds ([1]). The future cohesion policy ([2]) as well as innovative financing ([3]) will contribute in this sense alongside the EAFRD.

([1]) It is of particular importance that these investments are embedded in integrated, place-based development strategies and that they have a sound economic rationale in terms of their growth and jobs impact and long-term sustainability.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/BlobServlet?docId=232&langId=en
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/enveco/biodiversity/pdf/BD_Finance_summary-300312.pdf

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-009850/13
za Komisijo
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(3. september 2013)

Zadeva: Konvencija OZN o pravicah starejših

Name so se obrnili predstavniki Zveze društev upokojencev Slovenije (ZDUS) – nevladna, neprofitna in samopomočna organizacija, ki v Sloveniji skrbi za pravice upokojencev. Opozorili so me, da se zavzemajo za sprejetje konvencije OZN o pravicah starejših, ki so jo sprožile mednarodne nevladne organizacije leta 2010, saj so priporočila s konference Združenih narodov v Madridu iz leta 2002, ki urejajo pravice starejših, zastarela.

Po enajstih letih se je položaj starejših zaradi demografskih sprememb bistveno spremenil in v skladu s tem bi se mogli tudi dokumenti, ki urejajo to področje, ustrezno prilagoditi in spremeniti, zato se zavzemajo za podporo sprejetju omenjene konvencije.

Predstavniki ZDUS se tako pridružujejo pozivu drugih organizacij starejših v Evropi in na drugih celinah, da Organizacija združenih narodov sprejme konvencijo o pravicah starejših, kot je že sprejela konvencijo o pravicah žensk, invalidov, migrantov in podobne. Konvencija Organizacije združenih narodov za pravice starejših bi vladam posameznih držav omogočila pravni okvir in podporo pri sprejemanju zakonov za zaščito in promocijo pravic starejših oseb.

Glede na to, da večina držav članic EU ni naklonjena podpisu te konvencije, me zanima, ali se podobna strategija o kakovostnem aktivnem staranju pripravlja na ravni EU?

Kako bo Komisija v prihodnje poskrbela za najšibkejši del prebivalstva, ki največ uporablja javne socialne in zdravstvene storitve, če se pri varčevalnih ukrepih vedno začne v javnem sektorju?

Odgovor komisarja Andorja v imenu Komisije
(28. oktober 2013)

Aktivno staranje je del strategije Evropa 2020, za uspeh katere je treba med drugim omogočiti starejšim, da bodo v celoti prispevali k družbi in trgu dela. Komisija spodbuja boljše pogoje za starejše na različnih programskih področjih, kot so pokojnine, zdravstveno varstvo in dolgotrajna oskrba, zaposlovanje, IKT, boj proti diskriminaciji, izobraževanje odraslih in promet. Dober primer takšne pomoči je evropsko partnerstvo za inovacije za dejavno in zdravo staranje, ki spodbuja razvoj in razširjanje inovativnih rešitev za dejavno in zdravo staranje po vsej EU.

Čeprav je zagotavljanje socialnih in zdravstvenih storitev odgovornost držav članic, EU zagotavlja podporo prek Evropskega socialnega sklada in programskih usmeritev. Komisija s pomočjo svežnja o socialnih naložbah, sprejetega februarja 2013, in izkušenj, pridobljenih v evropskem letu aktivnega staranja in medgeneracijske solidarnosti 2012, državam članicam zagotavlja smernice za prilagoditev njihovih socialnih modelov na izzive starajoče se družbe v času omejenih javnih proračunov za ohranjanje dostopnih, ustreznih in trajnostnih socialnih, zdravstvenih in skrbstvenih storitev ([1]).

Evropska komisija se bori proti diskriminaciji starejših z vsemi sredstvi, ki so ji na razpolago. Cilj pravnega okvira EU ([2]) in Direktive 2000/78/ES je varovanje pravic starejših.

Ukrepi EU vključujejo tudi finančno pomoč državam članicam EU in civilni družbi prek programa PROGRESS, v okviru katerega se spodbuja izmenjava dobrih praks ter izvajajo kampanje za ozaveščanje, raziskave in študije na tem področju ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=sl
([2]) Vključno s členoma 21 in 25 Listine Evropske unije o temeljnih pravicah.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/age/index_sl.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009850/13
to the Commission
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(2 September 0132)

Subject: UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons

I have been contacted by representatives of the Association of Pensioners' Societies of Slovenia (ZDUS), a non-governmental, non-profit, self-help organisation which advocates for pensioners' rights in Slovenia. They told me that they support the adoption of a UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons, which international NGOs began calling for in 2010, as the recommendations concerning the rights of older people which came out of the 2002 UN conference in Madrid have become outdated.

They say that after 11 years older people's situation has changed substantially as a result of demographic changes, and that the documents governing this area should therefore be adapted accordingly. Consequently they support the adoption of the aforementioned convention.

The representatives of the ZDUS are thus joining the call of other older people's organisations in Europe and on other continents for the United Nations to adopt a Convention on the Rights of Older Persons, along the lines of the conventions it has already adopted on the rights of women, people with disabilities, migrants, etc. A UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons would give individual governments a legal framework and support for adopting laws to protect and promote the rights of older people.

Given that a majority of Member States are not in favour of signing this convention, I am interested to know whether a similar strategy on quality active ageing is being drawn up at EU level.

How, in future, will the Commission look after the weakest section of the population, who are the biggest users of public social and health services, if cost-cutting measures always begin with the public sector?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(08 October 0132)

Active ageing is part of the Europe 2020 strategy, the success of which also depends on enabling older people to contribute fully to society and the labour market. The Commission is promoting better conditions for older people in policy areas such as pensions, health and long-term care, employment, ICT, antidiscrimination, adult education and transport. A good example of such support is the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing which is promoting the deployment and scaling up of innovative solutions for active and healthy ageing across the EU.

Although the provision of social and health services is a responsibility of Member States, the EU provides support through the European Social Fund and policy guidance. With the Social Investment Package of February 2013 and building upon the lessons learnt from the 2012 European Year on active ageing and solidarity between generations, the Commission provides guidance to Member States on how to adapt their social models to the challenges of an ageing society in times of limited public budgets, to maintain accessible, adequate and sustainable social, health and care services ([1]).

The European Commission is fighting discrimination against older people with all means at its disposal. The EU legal framework ([2]) and Directive 2000/78/EC aim at protecting the rights of older people.

EU actions furthermore include financial support to EU Member States and civil society through the PROGRESS programme, facilitating the exchange of good practices, carrying out awareness raising campaigns, surveys and studies in this area ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en
([2]) Including Articles 21 and 25 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/age/index_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009851/13
an die Kommission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(3. September 2013)

Betrifft: Einhaltung der Aarhus-Konvention in den Mitgliedstaaten

Die Europäische Union ist Vertragspartei der Aarhus-Konvention über den Zugang zu Informationen sowie die Öffentlichkeitsbeteiligung im Bereich des Umweltschutzes. Mit der Richtlinie 2003/35/EG wird die Konvention in EU-Recht umgesetzt und die Mitgliedstaaten zur Übertragung in nationales Recht verpflichtet. Im Rahmen der Planungen für neue Mammut-Parkplätze für LKW an den Rastanlagen Münsterland Ost und West entlang der Bundesautobahn A1 werden die Verpflichtungen der Aarhus-Konvention nach vorliegenden Informationen durch die Bundesrepublik Deutschland missachtet. Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Welche Verpflichtungen in Bezug auf Transparenz und Bürgerbeteiligung ergeben sich nach Auffassung der Kommission für die deutschen Behörden aus der oben genannten Richtlinie bei der Planung neuer Rastplätze?

2. Wie stellt die Kommission sicher, dass die zuständigen Bundesbehörden diesen Verpflichtungen nachkommen?

3. Wie wird die Kommission sicherstellen, dass Bürgerinnen und Bürger sowie Umwelt- und Naturschutzverbände den ihnen zustehenden Zugang zu allen relevanten Informationen erhalten?

4. Hält die Kommission es für rechtmäßig, wenn vertragliche Vereinbarungen die Regelungen der ersten und zweiten Säule der Aarhus-Konvention einer Öffentlichkeitsbeteiligung außer Kraft setzen? Wenn ja, warum? Wenn nein, warum nicht?

5. Welche Maßnahmen wird die Kommission zur Durchsetzung des geltenden EU-Rechts im vorliegenden Fall ergreifen?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(31. Oktober 2013)

1. Mit der Richtlinie 2003/35/EG wurden die Vorschriften der Aarhus-Konvention in Bezug auf die Öffentlichkeitsbeteiligung an Entscheidungsverfahren, den Zugang zu Informationen und den Zugang zu Gerichten in die Richtlinie 2011/92 über die Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung bei bestimmten öffentlichen und privaten Projekte [1] (UVP-Richtlinie) aufgenommen.

Nach der UVP-Richtlinie muss vor Genehmigung von in Anhang I der UVP-Richtlinie genannten Projekten sowie von Projekten gemäß Anhang II der Richtlinie, bei denen aufgrund eines UVP-Screenings mit erheblichen Auswirkungen auf die Umwelt zu rechnen ist, eine Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung durchgeführt werden. Die UVP-Richtlinie enthält Bestimmungen für eine obligatorische Beteiligung der Öffentlichkeit und den Zugang zu Informationen.

2. Es obliegt hauptsächlich den nationalen Behörden sicherzustellen, dass die Anforderungen der UVP-Richtlinie erfüllt werden. Nach Artikel 11 der UVP-Richtlinie müssen die Mitgliedstaaten außerdem den Zugang zu einem Überprüfungsverfahren vor einem Gericht sicherstellen, damit die materiellrechtliche und die verfahrensrechtliche Rechtmäßigkeit von Entscheidungen, Handlungen oder Unterlassungen, für die die Bestimmungen dieser Richtlinie über die Öffentlichkeitsbeteiligung gelten, angefochten werden können. Die Umsetzung des EU-Rechts fällt in erster Linie in die Zuständigkeit des Mitgliedstaats.

3. In den Artikeln 5 und 6 der UVP-Richtlinie ist die Information der Öffentlichkeit und die Möglichkeit, zu dem Projekt Stellung zu nehmen, geregelt.

4. Vertragliche Vereinbarungen können keinen Vorrang vor den Anforderungen der UVP-Richtlinie haben.

5. Der Kommission liegen keine Informationen vor, anhand deren sie beurteilen könnte, ob die Anforderungen der UVP-Richtlinie in diesem Fall eingehalten wurden oder nicht.

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[1] ABl. L 26 vom 28.1.2012, S. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009851/13
to the Commission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(2 September 0132)

Subject: Compliance with the Århus Convention in Member States

The EU is a party to the Århus Convention on access to information and public participation for environmental protection purposes. Directive 2003/35/EC transposes the Convention into EC law and imposes an obligation on Member States to implement it in their national law. Regarding the gigantic projected new lorry parks at the Münsterland Ost and West service areas on the A1 motorway, it appears, according to the information available, that Germany is failing to meet its Århus Convention obligations. That being the case:

1. According to the Commission's understanding, what transparency and public participation obligations are the German authorities required to fulfil under the abovementioned directive when planning new service areas?

2. How will the Commission ensure that the federal authorities concerned comply with those obligations?

3. How will it ensure that citizens and environmental and conservation organisations can enjoy their proper right of access to all relevant information?

4. Does the Commission think it lawful for first- and second-pillar public participation arrangements under the Århus Convention to be overridden by contractual agreement? If so, why? If not, why not?

5. What will the Commission do to enforce EC law in this particular case?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(23 October 0132)

1. Directive 2003/35/EC introduces the requirements of the Aarhus Convention as regards public participation, information and access to justice into Directive 2011/92 [1] on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (EIA Directive).

Under the EIA Directive, an environmental impact assessment (EIA) must be carried out prior to the authorisation for projects falling under Annex I of the directive and for projects falling under Annex II of the EIA Directive which, further to an EIA screening, are presumed to have significant effects on the environment. The EIA Directive established obligations for a mandatory public participation and disclosure of information.

2. It is primarily for the national authorities to ensure that the requirements of the EIA Directive are fulfilled. Furthermore, pursuant to Article 11 of the EIA Directive the Member States have to provide access to a review procedure before a court to challenge the substantive or procedural legality of decisions acts or omissions subject to the public participation provisions of this directive. The implementation of EU legislation is in the first place a Member State competence.

3. Articles 5 and 6 of the EIA Directive ensure the information of the public and the possibility to comment on the project.

4. The requirements of the EIA Directive cannot be overridden by contractual agreements.

5. The Commission does not have information about the specific project to assess whether or not the requirements of the EIA Directive were respected in this case.

[1] OJ L 26/1, 28.1.2012.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-009852/13
Komisijai
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(2013 m. rugsėjo 3 d.)

Tema: Klausos negalią turinčių asmenų diskriminacija informacijos prieinamumo srityje

Nors Europos Sąjungoje (ES) Jungtinių Tautų neįgaliųjų teisių konvencija įsigaliojo nuo 2011 m. sausio 21 d., tačiau kai kuriose ES valstybėse narėse kurtieji vis dar yra nevisaverčiai šalies socialinio, politinio, ekonominio ir kultūrinio gyvenimo dalyviai. Prieigą prie informacijos kurtiesiems pirmiausia galėtų užtikrinti televizija – vizuali, operatyvi, pagal negalią labiausiai tinkanti, skirtingus informacijos poreikius tenkinanti žiniasklaidos priemonė. Kurčiųjų draugijos ir organizacijos ne kartą pabrėžė, kaip svarbu šalinti informacijos prieinamumo klausos negalią turintiems asmenims kliūtis, užtikrinant transliuojamų televizijos laidų titravimą arba vertimą į gestų kalbą. Be to, labai svarbu užtikrinti kokybišką vertimą į gestų kalbą ir aiškiai parašytus titrus. Kai kuriose valstybėse narėse gestų vertėjo veidas televizijos ekrane rodomas tokiame mažame kvadrate, kad kurtieji veido mimikos, tokios svarbios gestų kalbai, tiesiog negali įžiūrėti. Tad kasdienines žinias kurtieji gali suprasti tik iš dalies.

Deja, kai kuriose šalyse, taip pat Lietuvoje kurtiesiems ir neprigirdintiems vaikams bei jaunuoliams nė viena televizijos laida, net skirta bendraamžiams, nėra prieinama, kadangi jos nėra titruojamos ar verčiamos į gestų kalbą.

Ar Komisija nemano, jog skubiai reikėtų imtis priemonių, kad būtų pašalintos informacijos prieinamumo klausos negalią turintiems asmenims kliūtys, kovojama su kurčiųjų diskriminacija ir užtikrintos jų lygios galimybės informacijos prieinamumo srityje?

Europos Parlamentas dar 2011 m. spalio 25 dieną priimtame savo pranešime dėl žmonių su negalia judumo ir įtraukties ir 2010-2020 m. Europos strategijos dėl negalios (2010/2272(INI)) paragino Komisiją kartu su valstybėmis narėmis imtis veiksmų, kad gestų kalba būtų pripažinta oficialia valstybių narių kalba.

N. Kroes atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. spalio 14 d.)

Komisija pripažįsta, kad būtina panaikinti kliūtis, su kuriomis klausos sutrikimų turintys žmonės ir kurtieji susiduria norėdami gauti informacijos.

Todėl į Audiovizualinės žiniasklaidos paslaugų direktyvą (Audiovizualinės žiniasklaidos paslaugų direktyva 2010/13/ES) įrašytas 7 straipsnis. Jame valstybėms narėms nustatytas įpareigojimas skatinti jų jurisdikcijai priklausančius žiniasklaidos paslaugų teikėjus užtikrinti, kad jų paslaugos palaipsniui taptų prieinamos asmenims, turintiems regėjimo ar klausos sutrikimų. Dėl to straipsnio taikymo gerokai padaugėjo regėjimo ar klausos sutrikimų turintiems asmenims prieinamų transliavimo paslaugų. Kai kurios valstybės narės (visų pirma Jungtinė Karalystė, Prancūzija ir Nyderlandai), palyginti su kitomis ES valstybėmis, šioje srityje pasiekė išties puikių rezultatų: jų pagrindiniais kanalais transliuojamas turinys subtitruojamas beveik 100 %. Kitose valstybėse narėse šie skaičiai nėra tokie dideli, tačiau, kaip matyti iš Komisijos tarnybų atliekamos stebėsenos, susijusios su 2011 m. Audiovizualinės žiniasklaidos paslaugų direktyvos taikymo ataskaita ([1]), taip pat iš tyrimo, kurį atliko Europos klausos sutrikimų turinčių asmenų federacija ([2]), Audiovizualinės žiniasklaidos paslaugų direktyvos 7 straipsnis – veiksminga priemonė, galinti paskatinti tas valstybes nares šioje srityje imtis aktyvesnių veiksmų.

Komisijos tarnybos minėtos nuostatos veiksmingumą turėtų aptarti antrojoje direktyvos taikymo ataskaitoje, kuri turi būti parengta 2014 m. Iki to laiko valstybės narės turi būti pranešusios ne tik apie šios nuostatos perkėlimą į nacionalinę teisę, bet ir apie praktinį šios nuostatos įgyvendinimą nacionaliniu lygmeniu.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/docs/reg/tvwf/contact_comm/35_table_2.pdf
([2]) State of Subtitling access in the EU, 2011 m., EFHOH ataskaita.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009852/13
to the Commission
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(2 September 0132)

Subject: Discrimination against the hard-of-hearing as regards access to information

Even though the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities entered into force in the European Union on 21 January 2011, in some Member States deaf people are still not able fully to participate in the economic, social, political and cultural life of their country. Television could be a particularly useful tool for enabling deaf people to access information, as it is a quick and effective visual medium, which is particularly suited to their disability and could meet their various needs in terms of information. Associations and organisations for deaf people have repeatedly stressed how important it is to remove the obstacles faced by deaf people in access to information, by providing subtitling or sign language interpretation on television programmes. Moreover, it is very important to ensure that sign language interpretation is of good quality and that subtitles are clearly legible. In some Member States, the face of the sign language interpreter appears in a window that is so small that it is simply impossible for deaf people to distinguish facial expressions, which are so important in sign language. Deaf people can therefore only partially understand the daily news.

Unfortunately, in some countries, such as Lithuania, children and young people who are hard-of-hearing or deaf have no access to TV programmes for children and young people of their own age, due to a lack of subtitling or interpretation into sign language.

Does the Commission not think that swift action should be taken to eliminate the obstacles encountered by the hard-of-hearing as regards access to information, to combat discrimination against deaf people and to provide them with equal opportunities in access to information?

In its report on mobility and inclusion of people with disabilities and the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (2010/2272 (INI)), adopted on 25 October 2011, Parliament once again called on the Member States and the Commission to take steps to ensure that sign language was recognised as an official language in the Member States.

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(34 October 0132)

The Commission recognises the need to eliminate the obstacles encountered by hard-of-hearing and deaf people as regards their access to information.

With this aim Article 7 was inserted in the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMS Directive 2010/13/EU). It obliges Member States to encourage media service providers under their jurisdiction to ensure that their services are gradually made accessible to people with a visual or a hearing impairment. It has contributed substantially to the increase in the number of accessible broadcasting services. Some Member States, in particular the UK, France and the Netherlands are exemplary in the EU, nearing 100% subtitling provision on their main channels. In other Member States, the numbers are not so high but as confirmed by the monitoring exercise run by the Commission services for the 2011 Application Report on AVMS Directive ([1]), as well as the survey done by the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People ([2]), Article 7 of the AVMSD is proving to be an incentive for these Member States to do more in this area.

The Commission services should be able to address the effectiveness of the said provision in the 2nd Application Report due in 2014. By that time Member States will have been able to report not just on transposition but also on practical implementation of this provision at national level.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/docs/reg/tvwf/contact_comm/35_table_2.pdf
([2]) State of Subtitling access in the EU, 2011 Report by EFHOH.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009853/13
a la Comisión
Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D) y Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(4 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Lanzamiento de bloques de hormigón en aguas de la bahía de Algeciras

Los pescadores del Campo de Gibraltar (Cádiz) cifran en más de 1,5 millones de euros las pérdidas acumuladas por las dificultades para seguir faenando en aguas próximas al Peñón, que afectan a 70 embarcaciones y 300 familias de la zona.

La situación se ha visto agravada el pasado 24 de julio a consecuencia del lanzamiento unilateral por parte de las autoridades de Gibraltar de 70 bloques de hormigón C40 de dos toneladas de peso cada uno en la bahía de Algeciras. Independientemente de las consideraciones relativas a la falta de reconocimiento de otra jurisdicción sobre estas aguas españolas, estos bloques están destruyendo caladeros tradicionales, afectan a las actividades pesqueras que se venían practicando y alteran sustancialmente las condiciones de un entorno sometido a protección ambiental.

A pesar del aluvión de quejas y denuncias y de la próxima vista de expertos de la UE, las autoridades del Peñón parecen dispuestas a proseguir en su política de hechos consumados y prevén la implantación, en una segunda fase, de al menos dos nuevos bloques de hormigón de 12 toneladas cada uno en el área del conflicto. Estas actuaciones imposibilitan que los pescadores de la zona prosigan con el desarrollo de su actividad, con grave detrimento de la situación económica y del empleo.

¿Puede aclarar la Comisión si las actuaciones realizadas por las autoridades de Gibraltar se ajustan a la normativa europea? ¿Va a adoptar alguna iniciativa urgente para evitar nuevas medidas unilaterales de lanzamiento de bloques? ¿Tiene prevista alguna medida para restablecer la situación y posibilitar la compensación de las consecuencias socioeconómicas padecidas por los pescadores de la zona y sus familias a consecuencia de estas medidas?

Respuesta de la Sra. Damanaki en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de octubre de 2013)

La Comisión recuerda a Sus Señorías que esta pregunta es la misma que la anterior pregunta escrita P-009625/2013 y, por tanto, les remite a la respuesta pertinente ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009853/13
to the Commission
Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D) and Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Submersion of concrete blocks in the Bay of Algeciras

As a result of problems encountered in the waters off Gibraltar, fishing fleets from the Campo de Gibraltar (Cádiz) have incurred total losses exceeding EUR 1.5 million, affecting 70 vessels and 300 local families.

On 24 July, matters came to a head following a unilateral decision by the Gibraltarian authorities to drop 70 two-tonne C40 cement blocks into the Bay of Algeciras. Quite apart from the question of sovereignty regarding these Spanish waters, this action is causing the destruction of traditional fishing grounds and the livelihood of fishing fleets, as well as having a major impact on what is an environmental conservation area.

Notwithstanding the flood of protests and complaints and the forthcoming hearing of EU experts, the Gibraltarian authorities are clearly determined to proceed regardless with their chosen course of action, the next step being the planned submersion of at least two 12-tonne blocks in the disputed zone, effectively barring local fleets from access to these fishing grounds and seriously impacting on the economic situation and employment in the area.

Can the Commission say whether the actions of the Gibraltarian authorities are in compliance with EC law? Will it take urgent measures to prevent any further unilateral initiatives such as the submersion of additional cement blocks? Is it envisaging any measures to remedy the situation and compensate local fishermen and their families for the social and economic hardships suffered by them as a consequence of the above actions?

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

The Commission would point out that this question is the same as previous Written Question P-009625/2013 and would therefore refer the Honourable Members to the corresponding answer ([1]).

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009854/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(4 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αποζημίωση από την ΕΕ για τη νοσηλεία λαθρομεταναστών στην Ελλάδα

Ο Έλληνας Υπουργός Υγείας ανέφερε σε πρωινή τηλεοπτική εκπομπή του σταθμού «ΣΚΑΪ» (στις 30.8.2013) ότι σχεδιάζεται η επιβολή «εισιτηρίου» 25 ευρώ για κάθε ασθενή που επιθυμεί να κάνει εισαγωγή και να νοσηλευθεί σε ελληνικά δημόσια νοσοκομεία, εκτός από κάποιες οικονομικά αδύναμες κατηγορίες πολιτών «και τους λαθρομετανάστες, οι οποίοι δεν θα πληρώνουν γιατί για αυτούς δεν υπάρχουν στοιχεία». Προσέθεσε δε ότι έχει ήδη συνεννοηθεί «με τις ευρωπαϊκές αρχές» ώστε να καλύπτουν αυτές το εξαιρετικά υψηλό κόστος περίθαλψης των λαθρομεταναστών στην Ελλάδα, οι οποίοι ξεπερνούν τα 2,5 εκ.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Ποια συμφωνία μεταξύ «ευρωπαϊκών αρχών» και Ελλάδας εννοεί ο Έλληνας Υπουργός Υγείας και ποιο το χρηματικό ποσό που έχει δεσμευθεί από την ΕΕ για την Ελλάδα αναφορικά με την κάλυψη εξόδων περίθαλψης των λαθρομεταναστών στα ελληνικά δημόσια νοσοκομεία;

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

Η Επιτροπή στηρίζει ενέργειες μέσω του προγράμματος υγείας της ΕΕ για τη βελτίωση της πρόσβασης σε υπηρεσίες υγειονομικής περίθαλψης, την προώθηση της υγείας και την πρόληψη ώστε να καλύπτονται οι ανάγκες των μεταναστών στα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ. Σε αυτές περιλαμβάνονται, για παράδειγμα, οι πρωτοβουλίες για την πρόληψη και τον έλεγχο των μεταδοτικών νόσων και την πρόληψη μέσω εμβολιασμού.

Επιπλέον, οι δυνατότητες χρηματοδότησης ενεργειών με σκοπό την παροχή υγειονομικής περίθαλψης στο πλαίσιο των τεσσάρων ταμείων του γενικού προγράμματος «Αλληλεγγύη και διαχείριση των μεταναστευτικών ροών» την περίοδο 2007-2013 επισημαίνονται στην απάντηση της Επιτροπής στην κοινοβουλευτική ερώτηση E-10318/2010 ([1]).

Η Επιτροπή δεν γνωρίζει περί «συμφωνίας» στην οποία αναφέρεται ο κ. βουλευτής και δεν έχει δεσμευθεί ειδικό ποσό που προορίζεται για την εφαρμογή αυτών των ενεργειών, δεδομένου ότι τα κράτη μέλη είναι κατά κύριο λόγο υπεύθυνα τόσο για την εφαρμογή όσο και για την επιλογή των ενεργειών. Στο πλαίσιο του ετησίου προγράμματος 2012 του Ταμείου Επιστροφής, η Ελλάδα υλοποιεί μια αποκλειστικού στόχου ενέργεια με την παροχή ιατρικής βοήθειας σε κέντρα κράτησης που φιλοξενούν υπηκόους τρίτων χωρών. Η ενέργεια συγχρηματοδοτείται στο πλαίσιο του Ταμείου με ποσό 1 125 εκατ. ευρώ. Μια παρόμοια ενέργεια προτάθηκε από την Ελλάδα στο πλαίσιο του ετησίου προγράμματος 2013 του Ταμείου Επιστροφής η οποία εξακολουθεί να αποτελεί αντικείμενο συζήτησης με την Επιτροπή.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009854/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: EU compensation to cover the cost of medical care for illegal immigrants in Greece

The Greek Minister of Health stated in a *Sky* breakfast TV show on 30 August 2013 that plans were underway to issue a 'ticket' of EUR 25 for each patient wishing to be admitted and treated in Greek public hospitals; an exception would be made for some economically disadvantaged categories of citizen 'and illegal immigrants who do not pay because there is no data relating to them.' The minister went on to say that an agreement had already been reached 'with the EU authorities' so that they meet the extremely high cost of treating illegal immigrants in Greece, who number more than 2.5 million.

In view of the above, will the Commission state:

What agreement between the 'EU authorities' and Greece is the Greek Minister of Health referring to and what amount of funding has been committed by the EU to enable Greece to cover the healthcare costs of illegal immigrants in Greek public hospitals?

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

The Commission supports actions through the EU Health Programme to improve access to healthcare services, health promotion and prevention to meet the needs of migrants in the EU Member States. These include for instance initiatives on prevention and control of communicable diseases and prevention through vaccination.

In addition, the funding possibilities for actions aimed at providing healthcare under the four funds of the General Programme 'Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows' 2007-2013 are indicated in the Commission's reply to parliamentary Question E-10318/2010 ([1]).

The Commission is not aware of an 'agreement' as referred to by the Honourable Member and no specific amount is earmarked for the implementation of such actions, since Member States are primarily responsible both for the implementation and the selection of actions. Under the Return Fund 2012 annual programme, Greece implements a dedicated action providing medical aid in detention centres hosting third-country nationals. The action is co-financed under the Fund with EUR 1,125 million. A similar action was proposed by Greece under the 2013 Return Fund annual programme which is still discussed with the Commission.

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009855/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(4 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Επιδότηση εξαγωγών προϊόντων υδατοκαλλιέργειας από την Τουρκία

Παρά τις συνεχείς ερωτήσεις των συναδέλφων Α. Ποδηματά και Κ. Αρσένη (αρ. ερώτησης E-001540/2010) και του υποφαινομένου (αριθμός E-005425/2013) προς την Επιτροπή, ο Επίτροπος κ. DE GUCHT αρνείται να ερευνήσει την καταγγελλόμενη νόθευση του ανταγωνισμού εκ μέρους της Τουρκίας στον κλάδο της υδατοκαλλιέργειας με τις παράνομες εξαγωγικές επιδοτήσεις τις οποίες χορηγεί. Ο Επίτροπος απάντησε στην παραπάνω ερώτησή μου δηλώνοντας ότι δεν έχει καταγγελία από τον κλάδο παραγωγής, όταν είναι γνωστό ότι η Επιτροπή μπορεί να κινήσει διαδικασία ελέγχου ανά πάσα στιγμή, κάτι που έχει ήδη κάνει για άλλα ζητήματα στην περίπτωση της Ελλάδας, της Πορτογαλίας, της Ισπανίας κ.λπ.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Γιατί υπάρχει αυτή η ανεξήγητη προσέγγιση αναφορικά με το παραπάνω ζήτημα και η συνακόλουθη άρνηση διερεύνησης του θέματος των παράνομων εξαγωγικών επιδοτήσεων για τουρκικά προϊόντα υδατοκαλλιέργειας, τα οποία εκτοπίζουν — μέσω πρακτικών που δεν συνάδουν με τον ελεύθερο ανταγωνισμό — τα αντίστοιχα κοινοτικά;

Απάντηση του κ. De Gucht εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή λαμβάνει πολύ σοβαρά υπόψη το πρόβλημα του αθέμιτου ανταγωνισμού και είναι πάντα ανοικτή στη συζήτηση του θέματος με τους κλάδους παραγωγής της Ένωσης. Πράγματι, ορισμένες συνεδριάσεις έγιναν ήδη μεταξύ του κλάδου της υδατοκαλλιέργειας και της Επιτροπής.

Είναι υψίστης σημασίας η Επιτροπή να σέβεται την ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία και τους διεθνείς κανόνες σ' αυτόν τον τομέα. Τα μέτρα εμπορικής άμυνας δεν πρέπει να εφαρμόζονται αβασάνιστα. Συνήθως η Επιτροπή κινεί την έρευνα κατά των επιδοτήσεων κατόπιν καταγγελίας από τον κλάδο παραγωγής της Ένωσης, η οποία περιέχει επαρκή αποδεικτικά στοιχεία σχετικά με την ύπαρξη επιδοτήσεων που προκαλούν σοβαρή ζημία. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει λάβει καταγγελία η οποία να περιείχε επαρκή αποδεικτικά στοιχεία που να δικαιολογούν την έναρξη έρευνας.

Επιπλέον, ο Παγκόσμιος Οργανισμός Εμπορίου δεν επιτρέπει στην Ένωση να κινήσει έρευνα εμπορικής άμυνας εκτός αν υπάρχουν επαρκή στοιχεία που να αποδεικνύουν την ύπαρξη επιδοτήσεων που προκαλούν σοβαρή ζημία. Στην παρούσα κατάσταση, η Επιτροπή δεν είναι σε θέση να κινήσει διαδικασία για τα τουρκικά προϊόντα υδατοκαλλιέργειας. Η προσέγγιση αυτή δεν θίγει την απόφαση που θα ληφθεί σε περίπτωση που τεθούν επί τάπητος πιο τεκμηριωμένοι ισχυρισμοί.

Υπό αυτές τις συνθήκες, είναι σαφές ότι δεν μπορεί να κινηθεί έρευνα κατά των επιδοτήσεων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009855/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t4*Export subsidies for Turkish aquaculture products

Despite repeated questions to the Commission by MEPs Anni Podimata and Kriton Arsenis (Question E-001540/2010) and myself (E-005425/2013), Commissioner De Gucht refuses to investigate allegations that Turkey is distorting competition in the aquaculture sector by paying illegal export subsidies. He replied to my above question stating that he had not received any complaints from the production sector in question, even though it is common knowledge that the Commission may initiate a control procedure at any time, something that it has already been done in respect of other issues in the case of Greece, Portugal, Spain etc.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Why is it adopting this inexplicable approach to the above question and consequently refusing to investigate the issue of illegal export subsidies for Turkish aquaculture products which are driving out the corresponding Community products through practices that are incompatible with free competition?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(02 O:tober 013u)

The Commission takes the issue of unfair competition very seriously and is always open to discussing the issue with Union industries. In fact, a number of meetings have already taken place between the aquaculture industry and the Commission.

It is of paramount importance that the Commission respects European law and international rules in this area. Trade defence measures should not be used lightly. The Commission normally initiates an anti-subsidy investigation on the basis of a complaint made by the Union industry containing sufficient evidence of the existence of subsidies causing material injury. The Commission has not received at this stage a complaint containing sufficient evidence to warrant the initiation of an investigation.

Furthermore, the World Trade Organisation does not allow for the Union to initiate a trade defence investigation unless there is sufficient evidence available of the existence of subsidies that are causing material injury. In the current situation, the Commission is not in a position to initiate a proceeding on Turkish aquaculture products. This approach is without prejudice to the position which would be taken in case more substantiated allegations are put on the table.

In these circumstances, it is clear that no anti-subsidy investigation can be initiated.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009856/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Insicurezza alimentare in Egitto

L'11 luglio 2013 varie fonti di informazione hanno riportato che l'Egitto disponeva di scorte di grano importato per meno di due mesi. Stando al ministro uscente degli approvvigionamenti Bassem Ouda, il paese, che solitamente importa circa 10 milioni di tonnellate di grano all'anno, dispone attualmente di solo 500 000 tonnellate di grano importato. I disordini politici in Egitto hanno esaurito le riserve di valuta estera e il governo ha difficoltà a mantenere i necessari livelli di importazione di prodotti alimentari e di carburante.

Benché abbia bisogno immediato di enormi quantità di grano importato, l'Egitto ha interrotto le importazioni nel mese di febbraio. Stando all'agenzia Reuters, un addetto del Dipartimento dell'agricoltura statunitense (USDA) in Egitto, in una relazione, afferma che ai livelli attuali di consumo le scorte di grano nazionali dureranno solo fino a ottobre.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. Qual è la posizione dell'UE per quanto riguarda il problema dell'insicurezza alimentare in Egitto e quali passi è il Vice Presidente/Alto Rappresentante disposto a intraprendere per contribuire ad alleviarlo? L'UE è pronta a collaborare con gli altri donatori?

2. Qual è la valutazione dei funzionari dell'Unione europea al Cairo riguardo ai problemi sociali che potrebbero scatenarsi se non saranno effettuati sforzi per aumentare le scorte di grano in Egitto?

Risposta di Stefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(28 ottobre 2013)

L'Egitto è un importatore netto di prodotti alimentari, in particolare di grano, il cui fabbisogno viene soddisfatto per circa il 45-50 % dalle importazioni. Tale situazione rende il paese vulnerabile alle fluttuazioni dei prezzi mondiali e, come si è visto recentemente, all'esaurimento delle sue riserve in valuta estera ([1]).

Alla fine di agosto 2013 le riserve internazionali nette egiziane ammontavano a 18,9 milioni di dollari, in grado di coprire 3,7 mesi di importazioni. Rispetto al minimo storico di 12 milioni di USD registrato all'inizio dell'anno, si tratta di un valore in aumento. Il 29 settembre il ministro egiziano per l'Approvvigionamento e il commercio interno ha affermato che le riserve alimentari sono al sicuro e che «le scorte di grano sono sufficienti a soddisfare il fabbisogno del paese fino alla fine di febbraio». Secondo la FAO, le riserve strategiche di grano in Egitto dureranno fino alla fine del 2013 ([2]).

L'UE sostiene l'agricoltura egiziana attraverso l'ENPI, nell'ambito del quale sono stati finanziati nel 2009 un progetto di 10 milioni di EUR per migliorare la produttività dei terreni e generare reddito e occupazione nelle zone rurali, e nel 2011 una sovvenzione di 22 milioni di EUR destinata a creare posti di lavoro, sviluppare sistemi di sostegno al credito e offrire assistenza tecnica agli agricoltori. Nel 2013 l'UE ha impegnato 27 milioni di EUR per un ampio programma di sviluppo rurale nell'ambito dell'iniziativa ENPARD (programma europeo di vicinato per l'agricoltura e lo sviluppo rurale), che persegue tra i sui principali obiettivi quello di contribuire alla sicurezza alimentare, garantendo un approvvigionamento più sostenibile e a prezzi contenuti dei prodotti alimentari nei paesi della PEV.

Il 21 agosto 2013 il Consiglio «Affari esteri» ha affrontato la questione dell'assistenza all'Egitto esprimendo preoccupazione per la situazione economica e gli effetti negativi sulle fasce più vulnerabili della popolazione. Il Consiglio ha ribadito la propria volontà di proseguire l'assistenza dell'UE a sostegno dell'economia e della società civile del paese.

([1]) «Egyptian Food Observatory, Food and Monitoring and Evaluation System», bollettino trimestrale, aprile-giugno 2013 in allegato.
([2]) http://statistics.amis-outlook.org/data/index.html e http://www.fao.org/giews/countrybrief/country.jsp?code=EGY.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009856/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Food insecurity in Egypt

On 11 July 2013 various news sources reported that Egypt had less than two months' supply of imported wheat remaining in its stocks. According to the outgoing Minister of Supplies, Bassem Ouda, the country has only 500 000 tonnes of imported wheat left — it usually imports about 10 million tonnes of wheat per year. Political turmoil in Egypt has drained foreign currency reserves, making it difficult for the government to maintain the necessary levels of food and fuel imports.

Although Egypt has immediate need of huge amounts of foreign wheat, it halted grain purchases in February. According to Reuters, a report by a US Department of Agriculture (USDA) attaché in Egypt states that, at current levels of consumption, domestic wheat stocks will only last until October.

1. What is the position of the EU as regards the problem of food insecurity in Egypt, and what steps is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to take to help alleviate it? Is the EU prepared to coordinate with other donors?

2. What is the assessment of EU officials in Cairo of the social problems that could be unleashed if substantial efforts are not made to increase wheat stocks in Egypt?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(28 October 2013)

Egypt is a net food importer, particularly of wheat. Around 45 to 50% of the country's wheat needs are imported, which makes the country vulnerable to fluctuations in its global price, and more recently to the depletion of its foreign currency reserves ([1]).

At the end of August 2013, Egypt's net international reserves stood at USD 18,900 million, equivalent to 3.7 months worth of imports. This represents an increase from the record low of USD 12,000 million earlier this year. On 29 September, the Egyptian Minister of Supply and Internal Trade asserted that the reserves of food commodities were safe, and that 'the wheat reserve meets the needs of the country until late February'. According to the FAO, the strategic wheat inventory in Egypt would suffice until the end of 2013 ([2]).

Through ENPI, the EU has been supporting the agriculture sector, with a EUR 10 million project in 2009 to improve land productivity, income and employment generation in rural areas, and a EUR 22 million grant in 2011 to create job opportunities, develop credit schemes and offer technical assistance to farmers. In 2013, the EU is committing EUR 27 million to support a comprehensive rural development programme under the European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD) Initiative — one of the main objectives of ENPARD is to contribute to food security by ensuring more sustainable provision of affordable food in the ENP countries.

On 21 August 2013, the Foreign Affairs Council discussed the issue of assistance to Egypt and expressed its concern at the economic situation and the negative impact on the most vulnerable groups in Egyptian society. The Council reiterated its commitment to continuing EU assistance in the socioeconomic sector and to civil society.

([1]) 'Egyptian Food Observatory, Food and Monitoring and Evaluation System', Quarterly Bulletin, April-June 2013, which the Honourable Member will find in annex.
([2]) http://statistics.amis-outlook.org/data/index.html and http://www.fao.org/giews/countrybrief/country.jsp?code=EGY

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009857/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Ragazza yemenita costretta a un matrimonio forzato

Alla metà del luglio 2013, varie fonti giornalistiche hanno dato conto di un video relativo ad una bambina yemenita di 11 anni, Nada al-Ahdal, che minacciava di uccidersi se fosse stata costretta a contrarre matrimonio. Nel video la bambina chiedeva «Cosa ne è dell'innocenza dell'infanzia?». Nada è stata salvata dallo zio contro la volontà dei genitori, che erano favorevoli a darla in sposa ad un cittadino yemenita residente in Arabia Saudita.

In Yemen non esiste una legge che vieti il matrimonio dei minori ed oltre il 50 % delle ragazze diventano spose nel momento in cui raggiungono l'età di 18 anni; i rapporti sessuali sono vietati fintantoché un minore non abbia raggiunto la pubertà. La popolazione dello Yemen aumenta di circa 700 000 unità all'anno, uno dei più alti tassi di crescita al mondo, e quasi la metà della popolazione ha meno di 15 anni. Le ragazze giovani sono quindi regolarmente date in matrimonio sotto la direzione dei loro consanguinei al fine di ridurre l'onere finanziario di una grande famiglia.

Secondo il quotidiano britannico «The Times», si è cercato di far adottare una legge che limiti l'età minima per il matrimonio a 17 anni; tuttavia, i membri conservatori del Parlamento yemenita l'hanno bloccata. Un certo numero di yemeniti giustifica lo status quo, osservando che il Profeta Maometto sposò Aisha quando aveva nove anni e sostenendo che è culturalmente accettabile che le ragazze si sposino in giovane età.

1. Quali misure intende adottare l'UE per contribuire a limitare il fenomeno del matrimonio dei minori in paesi come lo Yemen?

2. È la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante disposta a discutere il caso di Nada al-Ahdal con le autorità yemenite, e, in particolare, con il presidente Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi?

3. Quali sforzi sta facendo l'Unione europea nello Yemen per sostenere i diritti delle donne, in particolare per quanto riguarda i tassi di alfabetizzazione e l'educazione sessuale?

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

Il 14 settembre 2013 l'AR/VP ha rilasciato una dichiarazione in cui si esprimeva con la massima fermezza in merito alla notizia del decesso di una bambina di otto anni dovuto alle lesioni riportate durante la prima notte di nozze. Oltre a commentare questo dramma personale, la dichiarazione ha permesso all'AR/VP di sollevare la questione dei matrimoni di minori nello Yemen e di ricordare a questo paese i suoi obblighi in quanto firmatario della convenzione ONU sulla tutela dei diritti dei minori.

La dichiarazione dell'AR/VP e gli intensi contatti della delegazione di Sana'a con tutte le parti interessate hanno contribuito a rilanciare il dibattito sul ripristino di un'età minima per il matrimonio. A quanto pare, il gruppo di lavoro della conferenza del dialogo nazionale sui diritti e sulle libertà nello Yemen sarebbe largamente orientato a fissare l'età minima per il matrimonio a 18 anni. L'UE si augura che l'istituzione di un'età minima per il matrimonio sia uno dei risultati del dialogo nazionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009857/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Yemeni girl forced into marriage

In mid-July 2013, various news sources reported on a video that had emerged of an 11-year-old Yemeni girl, Nada al-Ahdal, who threatened to kill herself if she were forced to marry. In the video she asks 'What about the innocence of childhood?' Nada was rescued by her uncle against the wishes of her parents who were keen to marry her to a Yemeni expatriate living in Saudi Arabia.

In Yemen there is no law preventing the marriage of minors and over 50% of girls become brides by the time they reach the age of 18; sexual intercourse is prohibited until a child has reached puberty. Yemen's population is growing by approximately 700 000 per year, which is one of the highest growth rates in the world, and nearly half of the population is under the age of 15. Young girls are therefore regularly married off under the direction of their families in order to reduce the financial burden of a large family.

According to the UK newspaper *The Times*, attempts have been made to pass a law limiting the minimum age of marriage to 17; however, conservative members of the Yemeni Parliament have blocked the legislation. A number of Yemenis justify the status quo by noting that the Prophet Muhammad married Aisha when she was nine years old, arguing that it is culturally acceptable for girls to marry at a young age.

1. What steps is the EU taking to help curtail the phenomenon of child marriage in states such as Yemen?

2. Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to discuss the case of Nada al-Ahdal with the Yemeni authorities, and in particular, with President Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi?

3. What efforts is the EU making in Yemen to support women's rights, especially in the areas of literacy rates and sex education?

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

On 14 September 2013, the HR/VP issued a very firm statement in reaction to the reports of the death of an eight year old girl from injuries sustained on her wedding night. In addition to comments on this cruel individual case, the statement was the occasion to address the general issue of child marriage in Yemen and to remind of the obligations that Yemen has as a signatory to the UN Convention on the protection of the rights of the child.

The HR/VP's statement and the intensive engagement of the EU Delegation in Saana with all stakeholders have contributed to reviving the debate on reinstating a minimum age at marriage. There seems to be general agreement within the Yemen National Dialogue Conference's Working Group for Rights and Freedom to set the minimum age at marriage at 18. The EU is hopeful that the setting of a minimum age at marriage will be one of the outcomes of the National Dialogue.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009858/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Situazione nello Zimbabwe

Prima delle elezioni generali svoltesi il 31 luglio 2013 nello Zimbabwe, il quotidiano zimbabwano *Herald* ha affermato che, se le elezioni fossero giudicate libere ed eque, l'Unione europea sarebbe stata disponibile a revocare le sanzioni. Questa valutazione è stata attribuita a commenti rilasciati dal capo della delegazione dell'UE in Sud Africa, Roeland van de Geer.

L'Unione europea ha imposto sanzioni allo Zimbabwe nel 2002, ma nel marzo 2013 le sanzioni nei confronti di alcuni membri della cerchia più ristretta di collaboratori del Presidente Robert Mugabe sono state revocate in seguito a un referendum costituzionale, che è stato considerato dall'UE «pacifico, credibile e coronato da successo». Cionondimeno, il quotidiano Christian Science Monitor ha rilevato che non vi è stata praticamente alcuna riforma politica dal 2008 e che il partito ZANU-PF al governo ha espresso l'intenzione di modificare la costituzione.

Dopo le elezioni sono state lanciate varie accuse, sia dall'interno del paese che da parte della comunità internazionale, riguardo a brogli, intimidazioni e corruzione. Ciò ha nuovamente sollevato la questione delle sanzioni dell'UE contro lo Zimbabwe.

1. Qual è la posizione del Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante riguardo alle critiche nei confronti del processo elettorale nello Zimbabwe? Qual è la linea dell'UE per quanto concerne la revoca delle attuali sanzioni?

2. Quali passi sta intraprendendo l'UE attualmente, al fine di migliorare la buona governance e il rispetto della democrazia in Zimbabwe? Quali programmi sono stati istituiti per affrontare le questioni sopra indicate?

Risposta dell'Alto Rappresentante/Vice Presidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(22 ottobre 2013)

Come espresso il mese scorso in diverse dichiarazioni ufficiali, l'UE continua a nutrire preoccupazione per le carenze individuate nel processo elettorale e per la mancanza di trasparenza, come evidenziato dalle valutazioni iniziali della Comunità per lo sviluppo dell'Africa australe, dell'Unione africana e dai rapporti delle missioni di osservazione interna. In attesa di conoscere i rapporti completi, sottolineiamo quanto sia importante continuare a rafforzare le riforme per garantire che le future elezioni siano pienamente trasparenti e credibili, oltre che pacifiche. Attualmente la UE sta rivedendo le sue relazioni con lo Zimbabwe. Il nostro obiettivo è quello di sostenere il popolo dello Zimbabwe nella costruzione di un paese più prospero e democratico. L'UE è pronta a rafforzare il proprio programma di sostegno, già di per sé significativo, per promuovere le riforme politiche, i diritti umani e lo stato di diritto nello Zimbabwe.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009858/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Situation in Zimbabwe

Prior to Zimbabwe's general elections on 31 July 2013, Zimbabwe's *Herald* newspaper reported that if the elections were deemed to have been free and fair, the European Union would be prepared to lift sanctions. This view has been attributed to comments made by the head of the EU delegation to South Africa, Roeland van de Geer.

The EU imposed sanctions on Zimbabwe in 2002 but in March 2013, sanctions against some members of President Robert Mugabe's inner circle were lifted after a constitutional referendum, which was considered by the EU to be 'peaceful, successful and credible'. Despite this, however, the Christian Science Monitor has noted that there have been virtually no political reforms since 2008 and that the ruling ZANU-PF party has made public its intention to change the constitution.

Since the elections, there have been various accusations of vote-rigging, intimidation and corruption, both from within Zimbabwe and the international community. This has once again raised the issue of EU sanctions against Zimbabwe.

1. What is the position of the Vice-President/High Representative regarding the criticism over the election process in Zimbabwe? What the EU's position regarding the removal of existing sanctions?

2. What efforts are currently being undertaken by the EU in order to improve good governance and respect for democracy in Zimbabwe? What programmes have been established to address these issues?

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

As expressed in several official statements the past month, the EU remains concerned about the identified weaknesses in the electoral process and the lack of transparency, as highlighted in the initial assessments of the Southern African Development Community, the African Union and domestic observation mission reports. We look forward to the full reports and underline the importance of continuing to strengthen reforms to ensure that future elections are fully transparent and credible, as well as peaceful. The EU is currently reviewing its relations with Zimbabwe. Our goal is to support the Zimbabwean people in achieving a more prosperous and democratic Zimbabwe. The EU stands ready to strengthen its already significant support programme to promote political reforms, Human Rights and the rule of law in Zimbabwe.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009859/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Studente marocchino imprigionato per aver insultato il Re

Il 16 luglio 2013, l'organizzazione Human Rights Watch (HRW) ha riferito la notizia che uno studente di 24 anni, Abdessamad Haydour, è tenuto in detenzione in Marocco dopo essere stato condannato per aver offeso la dignità del re. Tutto ciò, nonostante il fatto che il Marocco, oltre 2 anni fa, abbia adottato una Costituzione che sancisce la libertà di espressione.

Il 13 febbraio 2012, un tribunale della città di Tazaon ha giudicato il signor Haydour colpevole di aver violato l'articolo 179 del codice penale del paese e l'articolo 41 del codice della stampa, che vietano discorsi ritenuti lesivi della dignità del Re. Il signor Haydour ha già scontato la metà di una condanna a tre anni per aver denunciato il Re Mohammed VI in un video pubblicato online. HRW rileva che il giovane sconta una pena più lunga di qualsiasi altro cittadino marocchino detenuto negli ultimi anni per questo particolare reato.

Nel 2011, agli albori della primavera araba, il Marocco ha elaborato una nuova costituzione, successivamente adottata a seguito di un referendum. Essa garantisce la «libertà di pensiero, di opinione e di espressione in tutte le sue forme». La costituzione del 2011 si discosta inoltre dalle costituzioni precedenti non definendo più la «persona del re» come «sacra», sebbene dichiari il re «inviolabile» e «degno di rispetto». Tuttavia, i tribunali marocchini continuano a imprigionare persone per reati non violenti di parola contro il re, le istituzioni statali e i privati.

1. È la Vice Presidente/Alto Rappresentante pronta a chiedere, alla luce della nuova costituzione del Marocco, che le autorità marocchine adottino misure urgenti per affrontare il caso di Abdessamad Haydour?

2. Quali misure sono in fase di adozione da parte dell'UE per monitorare i progressi del Marocco quanto al rispetto della sua nuova costituzione?

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

L'UE sta sollevando singoli casi, come quello menzionato dagli onorevoli parlamentari, nel quadro del dialogo politico con le autorità marocchine e, in particolare, nell'ambito del sottocomitato per i diritti umani, la democrazia e la governance.

I servizi dell'UE, sia a Bruxelles che in Marocco, stanno seguendo da vicino l'avanzamento delle riforme, comprese quelle relative all'attuazione della nuova costituzione, in quanto rappresentano elementi fondamentali del partenariato UE-Marocco. A questo proposito si svolgono regolari riunioni tra l'UE e il Marocco a vari livelli, comprese quelle tra alti funzionari, e in particolare in sede di sottocomitato per i diritti umani, la democrazia e la governance dove le questioni inerenti i diritti umani vengono regolarmente discusse.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009859/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Moroccan student imprisoned for insulting the king

On 16 July 2013 Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported that a 24-year-old student, Abdessamad Haydour, remains in prison in Morocco after having been convicted of offending the dignity of the king. This is despite the fact that Morocco adopted a constitution that enshrines freedom of expression over 2 years ago.

On 13 February 2012 a court in the city of Tazaon found Mr Haydour guilty of violating Article 179 of the country's Penal Code and Article 41 of its Press Code, which prohibit speech deemed to offend the dignity of the king. Mr Haydour is now halfway through a three-year sentence for denouncing King Mohammed VI in a video posted online. HRW notes that he has been imprisoned for longer than any other Moroccan in recent years for this particular offence.

In 2011, in the wake of the Arab Spring, Morocco drafted a new constitution, which was subsequently adopted following a referendum. It guarantees 'freedom of thought, opinion, and expression in all its forms'. The 2011 constitution also departs from previous constitutions by no longer defining the 'person of the king' as 'sacred', although it does declare the king to be 'inviolable' and 'owed respect.' Nevertheless, Moroccan courts continue to imprison people for non-violent offences of speech against the king, state institutions, and private individuals.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to ask, in the light of Morocco's new constitution, that the Moroccan authorities take urgent steps to address the case of Abdessamad Haydour?

2. What steps is the EU taking to monitor Morocco's progress in abiding by its new constitution?

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

The EU is raising individual cases, such as the one mentioned by the Honorable Members, in the framework of the political dialogue with the Moroccon authorities and, more in particular, in the context of the sub-committee on human rights, democracy and governance.

The EU services both in Brussels and in Morocco are following closely the progress of reforms, including those related to implementation of the new constitution, as they represent fundamental elements of the EU-Morocco partnership. In this respect, regular EU-Morocco meetings take place on various levels, including the senior officials meetings, and in particular the sub-committee on human rights, democracy and governance, where human rights issues are regurarly discussed.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009860/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Al-Nusra controlla attività strategiche in Siria

In Siria orientale il gruppo al-Nusra, affiliato ad al-Qaeda, è riuscito a prendere il controllo di varie attività strategiche, fra cui fabbriche e raffinerie di petrolio e di gas. Il gruppo ha utilizzato queste risorse nella città di Shadadi, catturata a febbraio, e fornisce pane, energia elettrica e acqua ai suoi abitanti. Il gruppo ha anche imposto la sharia.

Il quotidiano *The Guardian* ha recentemente riportato che un emiro del gas ha preso il comando di una raffineria di gas nella regione. Egli ha affermato che il segreto del successo di al-Nusra è stata la sua capacità organizzativa. Tutti i beni sono stati inviati a un comitato centrale chiamato il «Tesoro musulmano». Il gruppo al-Nusra si è separato dall'esercito siriano libero a causa della questione della corruzione e sostiene di voler allontanarsi dal sistema di governo attuale del paese. Il giornale afferma che il successo del gruppo nella «mobilitazione delle sue risorse» ha permesso di conquistare i cuori e le menti della città.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. Quali misure intende adottare l'UE per monitorare le esportazioni di petrolio provenienti dalla Siria nordorientale e/o dalle zone sotto il controllo del Fronte al-Nusra?

2. Quali misure intende il Vice Presidente/Alto Rappresentante adottare per esaminare il problema della corruzione legata all'esercito siriano libero, che ha sostenuto l'ascesa di gruppi come al-Nusra?

3. Qual è la valutazione dei funzionari dell'Unione europea in Medio Oriente per quanto riguarda il ruolo di al-Nusra in Siria? Reputano che il gruppo rappresenti una minaccia per gli interessi occidentali?

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

L'UE accoglie con favore la dichiarazione rilasciata il 20 aprile 2013 dalla coalizione nazionale delle forze siriane della rivoluzione e dell'opposizione (SOC), con cui è in stretto contatto, la quale respinge l'estremismo e stabilisce i principi di una Siria democratica, pluralistica, inclusiva e rispettosa dei diritti umani, compresi i diritti delle minoranze religiose ed etniche, e dello stato di diritto.

L'UE esprime grave preoccupazione per l'aumento delle violenze di carattere etnico o religioso e per il coinvolgimento di attori non statali estremisti e stranieri nel conflitto siriano, fattore che alimenta ulteriormente il conflitto e costituisce una minaccia per la stabilità regionale. L'UE deplora inoltre i gravi abusi, compresi i crimini di guerra, compiuti dai gruppi armati antigovernativi documentati nella relazione della commissione d'inchiesta, per quanto tali abusi non raggiungano l'intensità e la portata di quelli commessi dalle forze del regime e dalle milizie affiliate.

Per quanto riguarda le esportazioni di petrolio dalla Siria, nelle misure restrittive dell'UE è stata introdotta una deroga all'embargo petrolifero al fine di aiutare la popolazione civile siriana, consentendo agli Stati membri di autorizzare l'acquisto, l'importazione o il trasporto di petrolio greggio o di prodotti petroliferi dalla Siria. Prima di rilasciare qualsiasi autorizzazione, gli Stati membri devono accertare il rispetto di una serie di condizioni rigorose e consultare la coalizione nazionale delle forze siriane della rivoluzione e dell'opposizione. Inoltre, il fronte Al-Nusra è un'entità che figura nell'elenco allegato al regolamento (CE) n. 881/2002 del Consiglio che impone specifiche misure restrittive nei confronti di determinate persone ed entità associate alla rete di Al-Qaeda. Pertanto, nessun fondo o risorsa economica può essere messa a disposizione di tale gruppo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009860/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — al-Nusra's control of Syria's strategic assets

In eastern Syria, the al-Qaeda-affiliated group al-Nusra has managed to take control of various strategic assets, including factories and oil and gas refineries. The group has used these resources in the eastern town of Shadadi, which was captured in February, and supplies bread, free electricity and water to its residents. The group has also imposed Sharia law.

The Guardian newspaper recently reported that an appointed gas emir has taken command of a gas refinery in the region. He said that the secret to al-Nusra's success has been its organisational skills. All captured assets have been sent to a central committee called the 'Muslim Treasury'. Al-Nusra broke away from the Free Syrian Army over the issue of corruption, and the group contends that it wants to break with the current governing system in the country. The newspaper says that the group's success in 'marshalling its resources' has allowed it to win hearts and minds in the town.

1. What steps is the EU taking in order to monitor gas and oil exports coming from north-eastern Syria and/or the areas under the control of the al-Nusra Front?

2. What steps is the Vice-President/High Representative taking to investigate the problem of corruption associated with the Free Syrian Army, which has bolstered the rise of groups such as al-Nusra?

3. What is the assessment of EU officials in the Levant regarding the role of al-Nusra in Syria?

4. Do they believe the group poses a threat to western interests?

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

The EU remains in close contact with the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces (SOC) and welcomes its the declaration of 20 April 2013 setting out the principles of a democratic, pluralistic and inclusive Syria respectful, *inter alia*, of the rights of religious and ethnic minorities, the rule of law, and rejecting extremism.

The EU is deeply concerned with the rise of religiously or ethnically motivated violence. Likewise, the EU is seriously concerned with the involvement of extremist and foreign non-state actors in the fighting in Syria, which is further fuelling the conflict and posing a threat to regional stability.The EU deplores serious abuses, including war crimes that are being committed by anti- Government armed groups documented in the report of the Commission of Inquiry, although such abuses do not reach the intensity and scale of those committed by the regime forces and affiliated militias.

As regards oil exports from Syria, a derogation to the oil embargo has been introduced in the EU's restrictive measures with a view to helping the Syrian civilian population, allowing Member States to authorise purchases, imports or transports of crude oil or petroleum products from Syria. Before any authorisation can be given, Member States must ensure that a number of strict conditions are met and must consult the Syrian National Coalition for Opposition and Revolutionary Forces. Furthermore, Al-Nusra Front is a listed entity under Council Regulation (EC) 881/2002 imposing restrictive measures against persons and entities associated with the Al Qaida network, and in any case no funds or economic resources may be made available to it.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009861/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(2 settembre 013O)

*g : : etto*4VP/HR — Alleanza tra gruppi jihadisti sahariani

Alla fine di agosto 2013 varie agenzie di stampa hanno riportato la notizia secondo cui due gruppi islamisti militanti, che in precedenza erano legati ad al-Qaeda nel Maghreb islamico, avrebbero costituito un'alleanza. I combattenti guidati dal militante Mokhtar Belmokhtar, responsabile di aver dato inizio all'attacco terroristico a In Amenas (Algeria) nel gennaio 2013, e i membri del Movimento per l'unità e la jihad in Africa occidentale (MUJAO) si sono uniti e hanno minacciato di attaccare gli interessi stranieri. Il MUJAO, un gruppo islamista capeggiato dal maliano Oumar Ould Hamaha, ha condotto attacchi sia in Mali che nel sud dell'Algeria. Entrambi i gruppi hanno rivendicato la responsabilità degli attacchi nel Niger settentrionale contro una base militare ad Agadez e una miniera di uranio gestita dai francesi, in cui sono rimaste uccise almeno 20 persone.

Il nuovo gruppo jihadista militante che si è così costituito è stato denominato al-Mourabitoun. Secondo Reuters, Belmokhtar avrebbe affermato che lo scopo del gruppo è di creare uno Stato islamico e che i recenti avvenimenti in Egitto hanno dimostrato che le forze «sioniste e crociate» intendono distruggere l'Islam. Belmokhtar ha indicato che il gruppo si concentrerà sull'attacco agli interessi francesi e ha avvertito la Francia e i suoi alleati nella regione che i mujahidin si sono incontrati e hanno deciso di sconfiggere i loro eserciti e di distruggere i loro piani e progetti.

1. Quali misure intende adottare l'UE per monitorare la nuova minaccia rappresentata dall'alleanza tra le forze di Mokhtar Belmokhtar e il MUJAO?

2. È l'Unione europea pronta a mettere a punto strategie per sostenere i paesi della regione del Sahel, che sono vulnerabili agli attacchi dei militanti e, in particolare, ai tentativi di accedere all'uranio del Niger che potrebbe essere utilizzato per la fabbricazione di una bomba sporca?

3. In riferimento al 10° FES per Mauritania, Niger e Mali, può l'UE spiegare in che modo sono ripartiti i finanziamenti unionali per migliorare la sicurezza e contrastare il radicalismo e l'estremismo violento?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(00 ottobre 013O)

Il rischio di attacchi terroristici nella regione sahelo-sahariana rimane molto elevato. I recenti attentati in Niger, seguiti dalla nascita di un nuovo gruppo terroristico denominato al-Mourabitoun, sono segno della costante minaccia terroristica alla stabilità della regione. In generale, se non si combattono il sottosviluppo e il terrorismo in tutta la regione, sarà vano qualunque tentativo di assicurare la stabilità del Mali.

In questo contesto, l'Unione europea è determinata a intensificare il suo impegno a sostegno delle autorità nazionali, della difesa e dei servizi di sicurezza i) in Mali, dove è in corso una missione militare UE con ruolo di formazione e consulenza (EUTM Mali); ii) in Niger, dove l'EUCAP SAHEL sostiene le forze di sicurezza nazionale, favorisce il consolidamento dello Stato di diritto e il coordinamento e promuove un progetto di controterrorismo nel quadro dello strumento di stabilità e iii) in Libia, dove è stata istituita la missione civile EUBAM per sostenere la sicurezza delle frontiere. La maggiore interoperabilità delle missioni di politica di sicurezza e di difesa comune nella regione costituisce una grande sfida. Inoltre, l'Unione europea ha sostenuto la missione internazionale di sostegno al Mali sotto guida africana (AFISMA) per riportare la sicurezza nel paese e porta avanti programmi di cooperazione che riguardano anche il settore della sicurezza e la riforma della governance.

Riconoscendo che non può esserci sicurezza duratura senza sviluppo, la relazione 2012/2013 sull'attuazione della strategia UE per il Sahel ([1]) spiega dettagliatamente come i fondi dell'Unione sostengano lo sviluppo socioeconomico dei paesi del Sahel e aiutino a migliorare la sicurezza e a combattere la radicalizzazione. A tal fine, l'Unione sta mobilitando tutti gli strumenti politici di cui dispone.

([1]) Documento di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione SWD(2013)317.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009861/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Saharan Jihadist groups form an alliance

In late August 2013 it was reported by various news agencies that two militant Islamist groups previously attached to al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb have formed an alliance. Fighters led by the militant Mokhtar Belmokhtar, responsible for initiating the In Amenas terrorist attack in Algeria in January 2013, and members of the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJWA) have merged, and have threatened to attack foreign interests. MUJWA, an Islamist group led by the Malian-born Islamist Oumar Ould Hamaha, has carried out attacks in both Mali and southern Algeria. Both groups have claimed responsibility for attacks in northern Niger against a military base in Agadez and a French-operated uranium mine, killing at least 20 persons.

The new militant jihadi group that has formed is called al-Mourabitoun. According to *Reuters*, Belmokhtar has said that the group aimed to create an Islamic state and that recent events in Egypt had shown how the 'Zionist and Crusader' forces wanted to destroy Islam. Belmokhtar has stated that the group would concentrate on attacking French interests. 'We say to France and its allies in the region … the Mujahideen have met and agreed to defeat your armies and destroy your plans and projects', he said.

1. What steps is the EU taking to monitor the new threat that has emerged through the alliance formed between Mokhtar Belmokhtar's forces and MUJWA?

2. Is the EU prepared to outline strategies to support countries in the Sahel region, which are vulnerable to militant attacks, and, in particular, efforts to gain access in Niger to uranium which could potentially be used in the production of a dirty bomb?

3. In reference to the 10th EDF for Mauritania, Niger and Mali, how is EU funding being allocated to improve security and combat radicalisation and violent extremism?

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

The risk of terrorist attacks in the Sahel-Sahara region remains very high. Recent attacks in Niger followed by the creation of a new terrorist group — Al-Mourabitoun — illustrate the continued terrorist threat to regional stability. More generally, efforts to bring stability in Mali will be jeopardised if underdevelopment and terrorism are not addressed in the broader Sahel-Sahara region.

In this context, the EU is determined to continue to enhance the level of its engagement in support of national authorities and relevant defence and security services: (i) in Mali where a EU military training and advisory mission (EUTM Mali) is ongoing; (ii) in Niger where EUCAP SAHEL supports the internal security forces and helps strengthen the rule of law and coordination, alongside a counter-terrorism project under the Instrument for Stability and (iii) in Libya where the civilian mission EUBAM was established to support border security. Increased interoperability of Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions in the region constitutes an important challenge. In addition, the EU has supported the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) to restore security throughout the country, and implements cooperation programmes, also covering the security sector and governance reforms.

Recognising that there cannot be long-term security without development, the 2012/2013 implementation report of the EU Sahel Strategy ([1]) provides details on how EU funding is supporting the socioeconomic development of Sahel countries and helping to improve security and combat radicalisation. To this end, the EU is mobilising all the instruments at its disposal.

([1]) SWD(2013) 317.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009862/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(2 sette8 gre 013O)

: *44ettov* VP/HR — Aumento dei finanziamenti sauditi al governo egiziano

Ad agosto 2013 il ministro degli esteri dell'Arabia Saudita, Principe Saud al-Faisal, ha annunciato che il suo paese è pronto a soddisfare le esigenze finanziarie dell'Egitto nel caso in cui i paesi occidentali sospendano i pagamenti degli aiuti a causa della repressione militare egiziana contro i sostenitori dei Fratelli Musulmani. Il Principe Saud al-Faisal ha affermato che, criticando il comportamento dei militari, i paesi occidentali incoraggiano tacitamente la violenza dei Fratelli Musulmani. Il governo di Riyadh ha sostenuto che gli egiziani stanno combattendo il terrorismo e la sedizione. Il Principe Saud al-Faisal, ha dichiarato che «coloro che hanno annunciato la fine del loro aiuto all'Egitto o hanno minacciato di farlo, devono capire che la nazione araba e islamica, con le risorse di cui dispone, non esiterà a dare il suo aiuto all'Egitto».

I leader occidentali, come il Presidente americano Barack Obama, hanno affermato che le esercitazioni militari annuali con l'Egitto saranno annullate in segno di protesta e gli Stati Uniti hanno ritirato la prevista consegna al paese di quattro jet F-16 da combattimento. Tre membri molto importanti del Consiglio di cooperazione del golfo (GCC), Arabia Saudita, Emirati Arabi Uniti e Kuwait, hanno recentemente annunciato il proprio impegno a dare 12 miliardi di dollari in aiuti all'Egitto.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. Qual è la posizione del Vice-Presidente/Alto Rappresentante di fronte all'insistenza dell'Arabia Saudita a offrire ulteriore sostegno finanziario al governo egiziano?

2. Se il VP/HR è disposto a incontrare i rappresentanti del GCC per discutere la posizione dell'UE nei confronti della crisi in Egitto?

3. Se l'UE intende seguire l'esempio del governo degli Stati Uniti e continuare a offrire finanziamenti alle ONG egiziane e ad altre organizzazioni umanitarie dedite alla promozione della democrazia e del buon governo?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(3mnobe8 gre 013O)

L'UE è consapevole delle difficoltà economiche e finanziarie dell'Egitto e, a tale riguardo, tiene a sottolineare che il paese deve impegnarsi ad attuare riforme socioeconomiche al fine di affrontare la crisi economica a lungo termine.

Il Consiglio straordinario Affari esteri del 21 agosto ha deciso di riesaminare la questione dell'assistenza dell'UE a favore dell'Egitto nel quadro della politica europea di vicinato (PEV) e sulla base dell'impegno dell'Egitto ad aderire ai principi in essa sanciti. Per alleviare le difficoltà dei gruppi più vulnerabili della popolazione, il Consiglio ha deciso di portare avanti l'assistenza al settore socioeconomico e alla società civile. Il sostegno dell'UE all'Egitto è costantemente in corso di revisione, in linea con la nuova politica europea di vicinato.

L'UE gestisce attualmente un portafoglio di circa 50 azioni volte a sostenere la società civile, per un importo superiore a 17,3 milioni di euro finanziati tramite lo strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani (EIDHR), la cooperazione culturale dell'ENPI, il programma tematico sulla migrazione, lo strumento di cooperazione allo sviluppo (DCI) e il nuovo strumento per la società civile istituito nel 2011 in risposta alla primavera araba.

Durante gli eventi in Egitto, l'AR/VP ha intrattenuto un dialogo intenso con i suoi omologhi dei paesi del Consiglio di cooperazione del Golfo (CCG). Oltre a discussioni formali nel corso della riunione ministeriale UE-CCG del 30 giugno 2013 a Manama (Bahrein), si sono tenute consultazioni costanti con i partner del Golfo a tutti i livelli, come dimostrato dallo stretto coordinamento tra gli sforzi di sensibilizzazione compiuti del rappresentante speciale dell'Unione europea León e gli inviati del Qatar e degli Emirati.

L'Unione europea accoglie con favore l'assistenza finanziaria annunciata dai paesi del CCG per sostenere le autorità egiziane, ritiene tuttavia che le riforme strutturali siano l'unico modo sostenibile per ripristinare la fiducia e la crescita economica dell'Egitto a medio termine.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009862/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Increased Saudi funding to the Egyptian Government

In August 2013 Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister, Prince Saud al-Faisal, announced that his country was prepared to meet Egypt's financial needs, should Western countries discontinue aid payments following the Egyptian military crackdown against supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood. Prince Saud has said that Western countries are tacitly encouraging Muslim Brotherhood violence by criticising the military's conduct. The Saudi Government in Riyadh has said that the Egyptians are tackling terrorism and sedition. Prince Saud has announced that 'to those who have declared they are stopping aid to Egypt or are waving such a threat, the Arab and Muslim nations are wealthier with their people and resources and will not shy away from offering a helping hand to Egypt'.

Western leaders, such as US President Barack Obama, have said that annual military exercises with Egypt will be cancelled in protest, with the US having withdrawn the planned delivery of four F-16 fighter jets to the country. Three key Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) members — Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait — recently announced a pledge to give USD 12 billion in aid to Egypt.

1. What is the Vice-President/High Representative's position regarding Saudi Arabia's insistence that it will offer additional financial support to the Egyptian Government?

2. Is the VP/HR prepared to meet with representatives from the GCC in order to discuss the EU's position regarding the crisis in Egypt?

3. Does the EU intend to follow the example of the US Government by continuing to offer funding to Egyptian NGOs and other humanitarian organisations that are devoted to promoting democracy and good governance?

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

The EU is aware of the financial and economic needs of Egypt. In this regard, it is important to underline that Egypt needs to engage on socioeconomic reforms in order to tackle the economic crisis in the long term.

The extraordinary Foreign Affairs Council on August 21 decided to review the issue of EU assistance to Egypt under the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and on the basis of Egypt's commitment to the principles that underpin it. In order to alleviate the impact on the most vulnerable groups, the Council decided that the assistance to the socioeconomic sector and to civil society would continue. The EU support to Egypt is constantly under revision in line with the reviewed ENP.

The EC is currently managing a portfolio of 50 actions in support of civil society worth more than EURO 17.3 million funded by the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), ENPI Cultural Cooperation, the Migration thematic programme, the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) and the new Civil Society Facility, created in 2011 as a response to the Arab Spring.

The HR/VP has been engaging her counterparts in GCC countries throughout the events in Egypt. Beyond formal discussions during the 30 June 2013 EU-GCC Ministerial meeting in Manama, Bahrain, consultations with Gulf partners have been continuous at all levels, as demonstrated by the close coordination between the outreach efforts of EUSR Leon and qatari and emirati envoys.

The EU welcomes financial assistance announced by GCC countries to support Egyptian authorities. However the EU believes that structural reforms are the only sustainable way to restore economic confidence and growth in Egypt over the medium term.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009861/31
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Zimbabwe: presunti progetti per esportare uranio in Iran

Di recente, il quotidiano britannico *The Times* ha riportato la notizia della firma di un memorandum d'intesa tra lo Zimbabwe e l'Iran per l'esportazione di uranio.

Il governo statunitense ha annunciato che gli eventuali tentativi dello Zimbabwe di rifornire di uranio l'Iran costituirebbero una violazione del diritto internazione e darebbero luogo a severe sanzioni. Il Dipartimento di Stato americano ha altresì affermato che lo Zimbabwe è tenuto a onorare l'impegno assunto nei confronti delle risoluzioni del Consiglio di sicurezza dell'ONU, in particolare la risoluzione 1737, che proibisce la vendita o il trasferimento di uranio all'Iran ad eccezione della varietà a basso arricchimento. Il paese è inoltre legato agli impegni assunti nell'ambito del Trattato di non proliferazione delle armi nucleari.

Secondo quanto affermato dagli Stati Uniti, le sanzioni che potrebbero essere comminate allo Zimbabwe includerebbero un divieto sulle operazioni di cambio e bancarie statunitensi e la possibilità che i funzionari e gli imprenditori zimbabwani siano inseriti in un «elenco di cittadini espressamente identificati».

Lo Zimbabwe ha negato l'esistenza del memorandum d'intesa, anche se Gift Chimanikire, vice ministro zimbabwano per le risorse minerarie, ha affermato di aver visto un memorandum d'intesa per esportare uranio in Iran. Anche il Presidente dello Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe, nega di essere a conoscenza di informazioni riguardanti le esportazioni di uranio, sebbene abbia manifestato il proprio sostegno nei confronti dell'Iran. Nel 2010 l'allora Presidente iraniano Mahmud Ahmadinejad si era recato in visita nel paese africano ed era stato rassicurato da Mugabe del sostegno continuo dello Zimbabwe alla corretta linea d'azione iraniana sulla questione nucleare.

1. Quali misure è disposto a intraprendere il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per indagare sulle segnalazioni di un memorandum d'intesa tra l'Iran e lo Zimbabwe relativo alla vendita di uranio a sostegno del programma nucleare iraniano?

2. È pronto a discutere la questione con il governo statunitense al fine di coordinare una risposta?

3. Quali sanzioni aggiuntive nei confronti dello Zimbabwe è disposta a proporre l'Unione europea qualora emerga che il paese africano si sta impegnando attivamente nell'esportazione di uranio?

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

Dalle nostre fonti non risulta attualmente che lo Zimbabwe stia esportando attivamente uranio verso l'Iran. La notizia di un presunto memorandum di intesa tra lo Zimbabwe e l'Iran per la vendita di uranio non è a questo stadio confermata. Diversi attori stanno monitorando la situazione e sarebbe congetturale in questo stadio discutere quali misure concrete potrebbero essere prese nel caso in cui la notizia trovasse conferma.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009861/31
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Zimbabwe — alleged plans to export uranium to Iran

The UK newspaper *The Times* recently reported that Zimbabwe has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Iran to export uranium.

The US Government has announced that any attempt by Zimbabwe to sell uranium to Iran would be a violation of international law and could lead to severe penalties. The US State Department said that Zimbabwe was obliged to honour its commitment to the resolutions of the UN Security Council, and in particular to Resolution 1737, which prohibits the sale or transfer of uranium to Iran except for the low-enriched variety. Harare is also bound by its commitments to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The US Government has said that penalties which could be imposed on Zimbabwe may include a ban on US foreign exchange and banking transactions and that Zimbabwean officials and business people may be placed on a ‘specially designated nationals list’.

Zimbabwe has denied the existence of the MoU, but the country’s Deputy Mining Minister, Gift Chimanikire, has said: ‘I have seen [a memorandum of understanding] to export uranium to the Iranians’. The Zimbabwean President, Robert Mugabe, also denies having seen any information regarding uranium exports; however, he has demonstrated his support for Iran. In 2010, Iran’s then President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, visited Zimbabwe and Mr Mugabe announced that his guest should be assured of ‘Zimbabwe’s continuous support of Iran’s just course on the nuclear issue’.

1. What steps is the Vice-President / High Representative prepared to take to investigate reports of a MoU between Iran and Zimbabwe regarding the sale of uranium to support Iran’s nuclear programme?

2. Is she prepared to discuss this issue with the US Government in order to coordinate a response?

3. What additional penalties is the EU prepared to propose against Zimbabwe if it is found to be actively working to export uranium?

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

It is our understanding that there is currently no active exploration of uranium being undertaken in Zimbabwe. Allegations that a memorandum of understanding between Zimbabwe and Iran would include provisions relating to sale of uranium are not confirmed at this stage. While the situation is being monitored by several stakeholders, it would be speculative to discuss which concrete measures would be undertaken were such information to be confirmed.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009864/13
al Consiglio
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Presunti progetti di al-Qaida di attaccare le reti ferroviarie europee

Il 19 agosto 2013 il quotidiano tedesco Bild ha riferito che al-Qaida starebbe progettando attacchi contro le reti ferroviarie europee ad alta velocità. Gli attacchi potrebbero essere realizzati mediante esplosivi installati sui treni e nelle gallerie, oppure al-Qaida potrebbe sabotare le linee ferroviarie o i relativi cavi elettrici. Stando al quotidiano, le informazioni proverrebbero dall'Agenzia per la sicurezza nazionale statunitense. L'Agenzia ha riferito che sono state effettuate diverse conferenze telefoniche tra vari esponenti di al-Qaida e che al centro delle loro conversazioni vi era il tema degli attentati sulla rete ferroviaria europea.

Le autorità tedesche hanno reagito inviando agenti di polizia in borghese nelle stazioni e aumentando la sorveglianza. In precedenza gli esperti di intelligence avevano intercettato messaggi tra il leader di al-Qaida, Ayman al-Zawahiri, e il suo vice, capo delle cellule yemenite, Naser al-Wahishi, che discutevano della possibilità di effettuare attacchi contro le ambasciate occidentali in Medio Oriente. Questo ha portato alla chiusura di diverse ambasciate statunitensi e di altri paesi occidentali nelle regioni arabe e musulmane.

1. Alla luce delle allarmanti rivelazioni secondo cui al-Qaida starebbe progettando attacchi alle reti ferroviarie europee, quali azioni sta intraprendendo il Consiglio per condividere le informazioni di intelligence al fine di individuare i potenziali obiettivi chiave di al-Qaida?

2. Quali misure sta adottando il Consiglio per assicurare che le informazioni di intelligence relative ad al-Qaida siano diffuse tra gli Stati membri?

3. È il Consiglio intenzionato a formulare raccomandazioni, e se sì quali, al fine di aumentare la sicurezza dei passeggeri sulle reti ferroviarie?

Risposta
(5 novembre 2013)

Ai sensi dell'articolo 4, paragrafo 2 del TUE, la sicurezza nazionale resta di esclusiva competenza degli Stati membri. Ne consegue che qualsiasi decisione di condividere o scambiare informazioni di intelligence spetti a ogni singolo Stato membro.

La questione della cooperazione tra Stati membri e dello scambio di migliori prassi al fine di sviluppare una politica in materia di sicurezza dei trasporti terrestri, comprese le reti ferroviarie europee, è attualmente affrontata in seno al gruppo di esperti per la sicurezza dei trasporti terrestri, istituito dalla Commissione nel maggio 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009864/13
to the Council
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Alleged Al-Qaeda plots against Europe's rail networks

On 19 August 2013, the German newspaper *Bild* reported that al-Qaeda may attempt to launch attacks on European high speed rail networks. This could include explosives planted on trains and in tunnels, or al-Qaeda may carry out acts of sabotage against rail tracks or electrical cabling. According to the newspaper, the information came from the US National Security Agency. The NSA reported that there have been several conference calls between various al-Qaeda members who have made attacks on Europe's rail network a 'central topic' of their conversations.

The German authorities have responded by deploying plain-clothes police officers to stations and increasing surveillance. Prior to this latest news, intelligence experts intercepted messages between al-Qaeda's chief, Ayman al-Zawahiri, and his deputy in Yemen, Nasser al-Wahishi, who discussed targeting western embassies in the Middle East. This led to the closure of a number of US and other western embassies across the Arab and Muslim world.

1. In the light of alarming reports that al-Qaeda may attempt to launch attacks against European rail networks, what steps is the Council taking to pool intelligence in order to identify al-Qaeda's potential key targets?

2. What steps is the Council taking to help ensure that intelligence on al-Qaeda is being distributed among Member States?

3. What recommendations, if any, is the Council prepared to make in order to increase passenger security on rail networks?

Reply
(5 November 2013)

Under Article 4.2 TEU, national security remains the sole responsibility of Member States. It follows that any decision to pool or share intelligence is a matter for each individual Member State.

Cooperation between Member States and the exchange of best practices with a view to developing policy on the security of land transport, including European rail networks, is being addressed in the Land Transport Security Expert Group set up by the Commission in May 2012.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009865/13
al Consiglio
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Presunti commando omicida sostenuti dall'Iran e operanti negli Emirati arabi uniti

Il 21 luglio 2013, il *Sunday Times* ha riportato la notizia relativa alla scomparsa di un cittadino britannico di origini iraniane, Abbas Yazdanpanah Yazdi, dal suo ufficio a Dubai. Il sig. Yazdi è il direttore generale della società Echelon con sede a Dubai e si ritiene che sia stato sequestrato da agenti dei servizi segreti iraniani. Aveva deposto dinanzi a un tribunale arbitrale all'Aia in una controversia tra la National Iranian Oil Company e Crescent Petroleum, che ha sede negli Emirati arabi uniti. Si presume che in precedenza, negli anni '90, egli sia stato detenuto e torturato dai servizi segreti iraniani e sia poi fuggito nel Regno Unito.

Il sig. Yazdi avrebbe dovuto concludere la sua deposizione il giorno successivo al suo rapimento. La polizia di Dubai ritiene che sia ancora vivo, ma non conosce di preciso il luogo in cui è tenuto prigioniero. La moglie e gli amici sostengono che agenti iraniani lo inseguivano da mesi e credono che sia ora detenuto in Iran.

1. Quali indagini è disposto il Consiglio ad avviare presso le autorità iraniane in merito al luogo in cui si trova Abbas Yazdanpanah Yazdi?

2. In che modo valuta il Consiglio le attività degli agenti iraniani che operano al di fuori dell'Iran, i quali rappresentano una reale minaccia per i membri della comunità iraniana in esilio?

3. Quali misure sta adottando il Consiglio per proteggere gli esuli iraniani che sono potenzialmente a rischio di essere sequestrati da agenti iraniani?

Risposta
(21 ottobre 2013)

Il Consiglio non ha discusso la questione sollevata nell'interrogazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009865/13
to the Council
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Alleged Iranian-backed hit squads operating in the UAE

On 21 July 2013 the *Sunday Times* reported the disappearance of an Iranian-born British citizen, Abbas Yazdanpanah Yazdi, from his office in Dubai. Mr Yazdi is the CEO of the Dubai-based firm Echelon, and it is believed that he was abducted by Iranian intelligence agents. He had been giving evidence to an arbitration tribunal in The Hague, involving a dispute between the National Iranian Oil Company and Crescent Petroleum, which is based in the UAE. It is alleged that he had been detained and tortured by Iranian intelligence agents in the 1990s and had later fled to the United Kingdom.

Mr Yazdi had been due to finish his testimony the day after he was kidnapped. Police in Dubai believe that he is still alive but are uncertain as to where he is being kept. According to his wife and friends, Iranian agents had been pursuing him for months and they now believe that he is being held in Iran.

1. What enquiries is the Council prepared to make with the Iranian authorities as to the whereabouts of Abbas Yazdanpanah Yazdi?

2. What assessment does the Council make regarding the activities of Iranian agents operating outside of Iran, who pose a real threat to members of the country's exiled community?

3. What steps is the Council taking to protect Iranian exiles who are potentially at risk of being abducted by Iranian intelligence agents?

Reply
(21 October 2013)

The Council has not discussed the issue.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-009866/13
til Kommissionen
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE), Gaston Franco (PPE), Jo Leinen (S&D) og Margrete Auken (Verts/ALE)
(4. september 2013)

Om: Skovrydning og tab af biodiversitet

Ifølge en uafhængig rapport udarbejdet for Kommissionen er EU førende i den industrialiserede verden, hvad angår tiltagende skovrydning i verden ([1]). Det europæiske forbrug af varer har ført til tab af mindst ni millioner hektar skov mellem 1990 og 2008. Skovene i Latinamerika, Sydøstasien og Afrika er hårdest ramt. De store industrialiserede økonomier, herunder Kina, er ansvarlige for omtrent en tredjedel af den samlede skovrydning, der er sket på globalt plan i samme periode. Europas stadigt voksende efterspørgsel efter kød, mejeriprodukter, biomasse og biobrændstoffer til energi og andre produkter, der kræver store landområder, har lagt yderligere pres på skovenes økosystemer verden over.

I 2008 lovede EU's miljøministre at arbejde hen imod målet med at sætte en stopper for det globale skovtab inden 2030 og i hvert fald at halvere den tropiske skovrydning inden 2020, sammenlignet med niveauet i 2008 ([2]). Efter en formel overenskomst vil EU's 7. miljøhandlingsprogram opfordre EU til at overveje omfattende planer til imødegåelse af skovrydningen og forringelsen af skovene på globalt plan.

Hvad er Kommissionens planer for at udbrede resultaterne af rapporten om EU-forbrugets indflydelse på skovrydningen i de kommende måneder?

Vil Kommissionen overveje at udvikle en ambitiøs EU-handlingsplan vedrørende skovrydning og skovforringelse, og hvis ja, hvornår forventer den, at en sådan plan vil være færdigudviklet? Har Kommissionen opstillet en tidsplan, mål, aktiviteter og ressourcer til dette, og hvis ja, kan den oplyse Parlamentet om detaljerne?

Er Kommissionen enig i, at der, for at en hvilken som helst plan skal kunne lykkes, skal gennemføres politikker, der udelukker varer og produkter, der er knyttet til skovrydning og skovforringelse, fra EU-markedet, idet man også hjælper udviklingslande med at imødegå skovrydning og skovforringelse i deres egne områder?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Janez Potočnik
(30. oktober 2013)

Den pågældende rapport blev bestilt som opfølgning på meddelelsen fra 2008 om »en indsats for at imødegå udfordringerne ved skovrydning og skovødelæggelse med henblik på at bekæmpe klimaændringer og tab af biodiversitet« ([3]).

Resultaterne af denne rapport er blevet offentliggjort og er tilgængelige på Kommissionens websted. Kommissionen har fremlagt de vigtigste resultater på en række ekspertmøder.

Som en del af den politiske aftale, der blev indgået i juni 2013 vedrørende den 7. miljøhandlingsplan, er Europa-Parlamentet og medlemsstaterne blevet enige om at vurdere de miljømæssige virkninger af Unionens forbrug af fødevarer og andre varer i en global sammenhæng og om nødvendigt udarbejde politikforslag til håndtering af resultaterne af disse vurderinger og at overveje udviklingen af en EU-handlingsplan vedrørende skovrydning og skovforringelse.

I næste måned vil Kommissionen gøre status over de eksisterende politikker og foranstaltninger, identificere mangler, fortsætte med at indsamle idéer og lære fra EU-initiativer og andre initiativer, der direkte eller indirekte tager fat på de underliggende årsager til skovrydning og skovforringelse.

Kommissionen er enig i, at en kombination af foranstaltninger på udbuds- og efterspørgselssiden sandsynligvis vil være den mest effektive måde at takle problemet på, ligesom under FLEGT-handlingsplanen. Ved eventuelle initiativer på dette område skal der også tages hensyn til udviklingen i UNFCCC-klimaændringsforhandlingerne vedrørende REDD+.

([1]) »The impact of EU consumption on deforestation« http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/impact_deforestation.htm
([2]) Commission Communication and Council Conclusions (2008), http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/pdf/com_2008_645.pdf; http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/104508.pdf
([3]) KOM(2008) 645.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009866/13
an die Kommission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE), Gaston Franco (PPE), Jo Leinen (S&D) und Margrete Auken (Verts/ALE)
(4. September 2013)

Betrifft: Entwaldung und Rückgang der biologischen Vielfalt

Einem von der Kommission in Auftrag gegebenen unabhängigen Bericht zufolge belegt die EU als Mitverursacher der weltweiten Entwaldung bei den Industrieländern die Führungsposition ([1]). Der Güterkonsum Europas ging zwischen 1990 und 2008 zulasten einer Fläche von 9 Millionen Hektar Wald. Am schlimmsten sind davon Wälder in Lateinamerika, Südostasien und Afrika betroffen. Große industrialisierte Volkswirtschaften wie China zeichnen im Vergleichszeitraum für etwa ein Drittel der weltweiten Entwaldung verantwortlich. Durch die immer weiter steigende Nachfrage Europas nach Fleisch, Milchprodukten, Biomasse und Biokraftstoffen für die Energieerzeugung sowie anderen Erzeugnissen, für deren Herstellung oder Gewinnung große Nutzflächen ausgebeutet werden, geraten die Waldökosysteme der Welt zunehmend unter Druck.

2008 haben die EU-Umweltminister zugesichert, sich dafür einzusetzen, den fortschreitenden Verlust an Waldflächen bis 2030 zum Stillstand zu bringen und dafür zu sorgen, dass die Abholzung tropischer Wälder bis 2020 im Vergleich zum Stand von 2008 auf die Hälfte reduziert wird ([2]). Es wurde förmlich vereinbart, die EU im Rahmen des 7. Umweltaktionsprogramms aufzufordern, sich mit umfassenden Plänen zu befassen, die im weltweiten Maßstab der Lösung des Problems der Entwaldung und der Schädigung von Wäldern dienen.

Wie beabsichtigt die Kommission, die Ergebnisse des Berichts über die Folgen des EU-Konsums unter dem Gesichtspunkt der Entwaldung in den nächsten Monaten verfügbar zu machen?

Plant die Kommission, einen ehrgeizigen EU-Maßnahmenplan in Bezug auf Entwaldung und Waldschädigung auszuarbeiten? Wenn ja, wann wird die Arbeit an diesem Maßnahmenplan abgeschlossen sein? Wurden dafür bereits Fristen, Ziele und Maßnahmen festgelegt sowie Ressourcen vorgesehen? Könnte die Kommission das Parlament ggf. über die Einzelheiten unterrichten?

Teilt die Kommission die Ansicht, dass ein erfolgversprechender Plan die Umsetzung von Maßnahmen vorsehen muss, die zum einen darauf hinauslaufen, dass die Güter und Erzeugnisse, die im Zusammenhang mit dem Problem der Entwaldung und der Schädigung von Wäldern stehen, in der EU vom Markt genommen werden und zum anderen die Entwicklungsländer dabei unterstützen, diesem Problem in ihrem Hoheitsgebiet zu begegnen?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(30. Oktober 2013)

Der genannte Bericht wurde als Folgemaßnahme der 2008 angenommenen Mitteilung „Bekämpfung der Entwaldung und der Waldschädigung zur Eindämmung des Klimawandels und des Verlustes der biologischen Vielfalt“ ([3]) in Auftrag gegeben.

Die Ergebnisse dieses Berichts wurden veröffentlicht und sind auf der Website der Kommission abrufbar. Die Kommission hat die wichtigsten Ergebnisse in mehreren Sachverständigensitzungen vorgestellt.

Im Rahmen der politischen Einigung, die im Juni 2013 zum siebten Umweltaktionsplan erzielt wurde, haben das Europäische Parlament und die Mitgliedstaaten vereinbart, die weltweiten Umweltauswirkungen des Verbrauchs an Lebensmitteln und Non-Food-Erzeugnissen in der EU zu bewerten, gegebenenfalls politische Maßnahmen auszuarbeiten, die aufgrund der Ergebnisse dieser Bewertungen getroffen werden müssen, und die Ausarbeitung eines EU-Maßnahmenplans in Bezug auf Entwaldung und Waldschädigung zu prüfen.

In den kommenden Monaten will die Kommission eine Bestandsaufnahme der vorhandenen Strategien und Maßnahmen vornehmen, etwaige Lücken ermitteln sowie weiterhin Ideen sammeln und Erfahrungen aus Initiativen der EU und anderer Stellen auswerten, die mittelbar oder unmittelbar die Ursachen der Entwaldung und Waldschädigung zum Gegenstand haben.

([1]) Quelle: „The impact of EU consumption on deforestation“ im Internet unter: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/impact_deforestation.htm

([2]) Mitteilung der Kommission (KOM(2008)0645/3) und Schlussfolgerungen des Rates (Brüssel, 4. Dezember 2008), im Internet unter: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/envir/104508.pdf

([3]) KOM(2008)645.

Die Kommission teilt die Auffassung, dass diesem Problem mit einer Kombination aus Maßnahmen der Nachfrage- und der Angebotsseite, wie sie etwa im FLEGT-Aktionsplan vorgesehen sind, am ehesten beizukommen ist. Bei etwaigen Initiativen in diesem Bereich müssten auch die Entwicklungen bei den Verhandlungen zur VN-Klimarahmenkonvention in Bezug auf das REDD+-Programm berücksichtigt werden.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009866/13
à la Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE), Gaston Franco (PPE), Jo Leinen (S&D) et Margrete Auken (Verts/ALE)
(2 septembre 013O)

*j b:et4*Déforestation et perte de biodiversité

D'après un rapport indépendant préparé pour la Commission, l'Union européenne est, parmi les régions industrialisées, celle qui est à l'origine de la plus grande partie de la déforestation mondiale ([1]). Entre 1990 et 2008, la consommation de biens en Europe a conduit à une perte de couverture forestière d'au moins 9 millions d'hectares, affectant principalement les forêts d'Amérique latine, d'Asie du Sud-Est et d'Afrique. Dans la même période, les grandes économies développées, dont la Chine, ont causé environ un tiers de la déforestation ayant eu lieu à l'échelle mondiale. En Europe, la demande en constante augmentation de viande, de produits laitiers, de biomasse et de biocarburants sources d'énergie, ainsi que d'autres produits dont la production requiert l'épuisement de vastes terrains, exerce une pression croissante sur les écosystèmes forestiers du monde entier.

En 2008, les ministres de l'environnement de l'Union se sont engagés à œuvrer pour stopper la diminution de la couverture forestière à l'échelle mondiale avant 2030 et pour réduire au moins de moitié la déforestation tropicale avant 2020, par rapport aux niveaux de 2008 ([2]). Après accord officiel, le septième programme d'action pour l'environnement invitera l'Union à réfléchir à l'élaboration de plans détaillés de lutte contre la déforestation et la dégradation des forêts à l'échelle mondiale.

Que prévoit la Commission pour mettre à disposition dans les prochains mois les conclusions du rapport relatif à l'impact de la consommation de l'Union européenne sur la déforestation?

La Commission envisage-t-elle d'élaborer un plan d'action ambitieux relatif à la déforestation et à la dégradation des forêts? Dans l'affirmative, dans quel délai le processus d'élaboration pourrait-il être achevé? La Commission a-t-elle prévu un calendrier, des objectifs, des activités ou des ressources à cette fin? Dans l'affirmative, peut-elle fournir ces informations au Parlement?

La Commission convient-elle que, pour atteindre les résultats souhaités, un plan d'action doit prévoir la mise en œuvre de politiques excluant du marché commun toutes les matières premières et tous les produits à l'origine de la déforestation et de la dégradation des forêts, tout en incitant en parallèle les pays en développement à lutter contre la déforestation et la dégradation des forêts sur leur propre territoire?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(O1 octobre 013O)

Le rapport concerné a été commandité dans le cadre du suivi de la communication de 2008 intitulée «Combattre la déforestation et la dégradation des forêts pour lutter contre le changement climatique et la diminution de la biodiversité ([3])».

Les conclusions de ce rapport ont été publiées et sont disponibles sur le site web de la Commission. La Commission en a présenté les principales lors de plusieurs réunions d'experts.

Dans le cadre de l'accord politique conclu en juin 2013 sur le septième plan d'action pour l'environnement, le Parlement européen et les États membres sont convenus d'étudier l'incidence sur l'environnement, dans un contexte mondial, de la consommation dans l'Union de denrées alimentaires et de produits non alimentaires et, le cas échéant, d'élaborer des propositions stratégiques en vue de tenir compte des conclusions de ces évaluations, et d'envisager l'établissement d'un plan d'action de l'Union européenne sur la déforestation et la dégradation des forêts.

Le mois prochain, la Commission entend faire le point sur les politiques et mesures existantes, identifier les lacunes, continuer à recueillir des idées et à tirer des enseignements des initiatives de l'UE, notamment, qui s'attaquent directement ou indirectement aux causes sous-jacentes de la déforestation et de la dégradation des forêts.

([1]) Voir The impact of EU consumption on deforestation à l'adresse: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/impact_deforestation.htm
([2]) Voir la communication de la Commission (COM(2008)0645/3) et les conclusions du Conseil (Bruxelles, 4 décembre 2008), à l'adresse: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/envir/104508.pdf
([3]) COM(2008) 645 final.

La Commission reconnaît qu'une combinaison de mesures concernant tant la demande que l'offre est susceptible d'être la plus efficace pour traiter cette question, comme dans le cadre du plan d'action FLEGT. Les éventuelles initiatives dans ce domaine devront également tenir compte de l'évolution des négociations sur le changement climatique dans le cadre de la CCNUCC en ce qui concerne REDD+.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009866/13
aan de Commissie
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE), Gaston Franco (PPE), Jo Leinen (S&D) en Margrete Auken (Verts/ALE)
(4 september 2013)

Betreft: Ontbossing en biodiversiteitsverlies

Volgens een onafhankelijk rapport, opgesteld in opdracht van de Europese Commissie, is de EU koploper van de geïndustrialiseerde wereld in het aanjagen van de wereldwijde ontbossing ([1]). De Europese consumptie van goederen heeft geleid tot ten minste negen miljoen hectare bosvernietiging tussen 1990 en 2008. Bossen in Latijns-Amerika, Zuidoost-Azië en Afrika worden het zwaarst getroffen. Belangrijke geïndustrialiseerde economieën, waaronder China, waren verantwoordelijk voor circa een derde van alle ontbossing wereldwijd in dezelfde periode. Door de almaar toenemende vraag in Europa naar vlees, zuivelproducten, biomassa en -brandstoffen voor energie en andere producten waarvoor grote stukken grond nodig zijn, komen bosecosystemen over de hele wereld steeds meer onder druk te staan.

In 2008 hebben de EU-ministers van milieu hun steun betuigd aan het nastreven van het doel dat er in 2030 op wereldschaal geen bosareaal meer verloren mag gaan en dat vóór 2020 de ontbossing in de tropen ten minste met 50 % moet verminderen ten opzichte van de niveaus van 2008 ([2]). Naar aanleiding van een formele overeenkomst zal de EU in het zevende EU-milieuactieprogramma worden verzocht omvattende plannen ter bestrijding van ontbossing en bosdegradatie op wereldschaal te overwegen.

Wat heeft de Commissie voor de komende maanden gepland om de resultaten van het rapport betreffende de impact van de EU-consumptie op ontbossing bekend te maken?

Overweegt de Commissie een ambitieus EU-actieplan inzake ontbossing en bosdegradatie te ontwikkelen? Heeft de Commissie hiertoe een tijdschema, doelstellingen, activiteiten en hulpmiddelen vastgesteld en zo ja, kan de Commissie het Parlement hierover nader informeren?

Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat de uitvoering van beleid om grondstoffen en producten die verband houden met ontbossing en bosdegradatie van de EU-markt te bannen, in combinatie met ondersteuning van ontwikkelingslanden bij het tegengaan van ontbossing en bosdegradatie op hun eigen grondgebied, onontbeerlijk is voor elk succesvol plan?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(30 oktober 2013)

De opdracht voor het desbetreffende rapport werd gegeven bij wijze van follow-up van de mededeling uit 2008 „De uitdagingen van ontbossing en aantasting van bossen aangaan om de klimaatverandering en het verlies aan biodiversiteit aan te pakken ([3])".

De bevindingen van dit rapport werden gepubliceerd en zijn beschikbaar op de website van de Commissie. De Commissie heeft de belangrijkste bevindingen op verschillende vergaderingen met deskundigen gepresenteerd.

Als onderdeel van de politieke overeenkomst die in juni 2013 over het zevende milieuactieplan werd bereikt, hebben het Europees Parlement en de lidstaten besloten de wereldwijde gevolgen voor het milieu van de consumptie in de Unie van voedings- en niet-voedingsgrondstoffen te evalueren en eventueel beleidsvoorstellen te doen om de vastgestelde problemen te verhelpen, alsook de opstelling van een EU-actieplan inzake ontbossing en aantasting van bossen te overwegen.

De Commissie is van plan volgende maand de inventaris op te maken van de bestaande beleidsinitiatieven en -maatregelen, lacunes op te sporen, ideeën te blijven verzamelen en te leren van EU- en andere initiatieven die de onderliggende oorzaken van ontbossing en aantasting van bossen direct of indirect aanpakken.

([1]) „The impact of EU consumption on deforestation" http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/impact_deforestation.htm
([2]) Mededeling van de Commissie en conclusies van de Raad (2008), http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/pdf/com_2008_645.pdf; http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/envir/104508.pdf
([3]) COM(2008) 645.

De Commissie is het ermee eens dat een combinatie van maatregelen aan de vraag- en de aanbodzijde (zoals bij het Flegt-actieplan) waarschijnlijk het doeltreffendst is om het probleem aan te pakken. Bij eventuele initiatieven op dit gebied zal eveneens rekening moeten worden houden met ontwikkelingen in de onderhandelingen over de klimaatverandering in het kader van de UNFCCC wat REDD+ betreft.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009866/13
to the Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE), Gaston Franco (PPE), Jo Leinen (S&D) and Margrete Auken (Verts/ALE)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t4*Deforestation and loss of biodiversity

According to an independent report prepared for the Commission, the EU leads the industrialised world in driving global deforestation ([1]). European consumption of goods led to a loss of forest land of at least 9 million hectares between 1990 and 2008. Forests in Latin America, South-East Asia and Africa are suffering the greatest impact. Major industrialised economies, including China, were responsible for about one third of all deforestation that occurred globally in the same period. Europe's ever-increasing demand for meat, dairy products, biomass and biofuels for energy, as well as other products that require the exhaustion of large areas of land, has put growing pressure on forest ecosystems around the world.

In 2008, EU environment ministers pledged to pursue the goal of halting global forest loss by 2030 and at least halving tropical deforestation by 2020, compared with 2008 levels ([2]). Upon formal agreement, the 7th Environment Action Programme will call on the EU to consider comprehensive plans to tackle deforestation and forest degradation on a global scale.

What are the Commission's plans to make available the findings of the report on the EU's consumption impact on deforestation in the coming months?

Will the Commission consider the development of an ambitious EU action plan on deforestation and forest degradation? If so, by when does it expect this development to be completed? Has it established a timeframe, objectives, activities and resources to this end? If so, can it inform Parliament of the details?

Does the Commission agree that any successful plan needs to provide for the implementation of policies that eliminate commodities and products linked to deforestation and forest degradation from the EU market, while at the same time supporting developing countries to tackle deforestation and forest degradation in their own territories?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(u1 O:tober 013u)

The report in question was commissioned as a follow-up of the 2008 Communication on 'addressing the challenges of deforestation and forest degradation to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss ([3])'.

The findings of this report have been published and are available on the Commission's website. The Commission has presented the main findings at several expert meetings.

As part of the political agreement reached in June 2013 on the seventh Environment Action Plan, the European Parliament and Member States have agreed to assess the environmental impact, in a global context, of Union consumption of food and non-food commodities and, if appropriate, develop policy proposals to address the findings of such assessments, and consider the development of an EU action plan on deforestation and forest degradation.

In the coming month, the Commission plans to take stock of existing policies and measures, identify gaps, continue to gather ideas and learn from EU and other initiatives that directly or indirectly address the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation.

The Commission agrees that a combination of demand and supply side measures is likely to be the most effective in addressing the issue, as under the FLEGT Action Plan. Possible initiatives in this field will also need to take into account developments in the UNFCCC climate change negotiations related to REDD+.

([1]) See 'The impact of EU consumption on deforestation' available at http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/impact_deforestation.htm
([2]) Commission Communication (COM(2008)0645/3) and Council conclusions (Brussels, 4 December 2008), available at http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/envir/104508.pdf
([3]) COM(2008) 645.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-009867/13
komissiolle
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(4. syyskuuta 2013)

Aihe: Hizbollahin sotilaallisen siiven merkitseminen mustalle listalle

Hizbollahin sotilaallinen siipi lisättiin heinäkuussa 2013 Euroopan unionin viralliseen terroristiluetteloon. EU:n määrittely on kuitenkin riittämätön koko organisaation merkitsemiseksi mustalle listalle, mikä mahdollistaa sen muiden toimintojen jatkumisen esimerkiksi Euroopassa ”poliittisen siiven” alaisena, jota ei virallisesti ole edes olemassa.

Hizbollahin sisäiset lähteet ovat jopa itse antaneet ymmärtää, että Hizbollah on yksittäinen organisaatio, jossa ei ole toisistaan erillisiä ”siipiä”.

Miksi komissio on päättänyt lisätä vain Hizbollahin oletetun sotilaallisen ”siiven” terroristijärjestöjen luetteloon?

Milloin komissio lisää koko organisaation EU:n terroristiluetteloon?

Korkean edustajan, varapuheenjohtaja Catherine Ashtonin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(25. lokakuuta 2013)

Neuvosto hyväksyi 25. heinäkuuta 2013 päätöksen 2013/395/YUTP ([1]), jolla Hizbollahin sotilaallinen siipi sisällytettiin niiden henkilöiden, ryhmien ja yhteisöjen joukkoon, joita yhteisen kannan 2001/931/YUTP ([2]) 2, 3 ja 4 artikla koskevat. Neuvoston päätös lisätä Hizbollahin sotilaallinen siipi luetteloon oli yksimielinen, ja neuvosto otti sitä tehdessään huomioon tiedon tai aineiston päätöksestä, jonka toimivaltainen viranomainen oli tämän yhteisön suhteen tehnyt.

On huomattava, että päätöksen 2013/395/YUTP liite ja sitä vastaava neuvoston täytäntöönpanoasetus (EU) N:o 714/2013 ([3]) sisältävät tiettyjä selvennyksiä liittyen Hizbollahin sotilaallisen siiven salanimiin ja tarkentaen, että Hizbollahin sotilaallinen siipi kattaa myös kaikki sille raportoivat yksiköt. Yhteisen kannan 2001/931/YUTP nojalla toteutetut toimet ovat osa terrorismin ja ennen kaikkea terrorismin rahoittamisen vastaisia EU:n strategioita.

Koko Hizbollah-järjestön mahdollinen lisääminen luetteloon vaatisi neuvostolta uuden päätöksen.

([1]) 2013/395/YUTP: Neuvoston päätös 2013/395/YUTP, annettu 25 päivänä heinäkuuta 2013, niitä henkilöitä, ryhmiä ja yhteisöjä, joihin sovelletaan erityistoimenpiteiden toteuttamisesta terrorismin torjumiseksi hyväksytyn yhteisen kannan 2001/931/YUTP 2, 3 ja 4 artiklaa, koskevan luettelon ajan tasalle saattamisesta ja muuttamisesta sekä päätöksen 2012/765/YUTP kumoamisesta (EUVL L 201, 26.7.2013).

([2]) Neuvoston yhteinen kanta 27 päivältä joulukuuta 2001 erityistoimenpiteiden toteuttamisesta terrorismin torjumiseksi, EYVL L 344, 28.12.2001.

([3]) Neuvoston täytäntöönpanoasetus (EU) N:o 714/2013, annettu 25 päivänä heinäkuuta 2013, tiettyihin henkilöihin ja yhteisöihin kohdistuvista erityisistä rajoittavista toimenpiteistä terrorismin torjumiseksi annetun asetuksen (EY) N:o 2580/2001 2 artiklan 3 kohdan täytäntöönpanosta sekä täytäntöönpanoasetuksen (EU) N:o 1169/2012 kumoamisesta (EUVL L 201, 26.7.2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009867/13
to the Commission
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Blacklisting the military wing of Hezbollah

In July 2013, the military wing of Hezbollah was included in the official terrorist list of the European Union. However, the EU's designation falls short of blacklisting the entire organisation, allowing its other operations in Europe, for example, to go on under the cover of the 'political wing', which officially does not even exist.

Sources within Hezbollah itself have even suggested that Hezbollah is a single organisation with no 'wings' that are separate from one another.

Why has the Commission decided to include only Hezbollah's presumed military 'wing' in the list of terrorist organisations?

When will the Commission include the entire organisation in the EU's terrorist list?

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

On 25 July 2013 the Council adopted Council Decision 2013/395/CFSP ([1]) including the Hizballah Military Wing in the list of persons, groups and entities to which Articles 2, 3 and 4 of Common Position 2001/931/CFSP ([2]) apply. The decision to add the Hezbollah military wing in the list has been taken by the Council by unanimity, and taking into account the information or material in the file in relation to a decision by a competent authority in respect of this entity.

It is noted that the annex to Decision 2013/395/CFSP and the corresponding Council Implementing Regulation (EU) No 714/2013 ([3]) include certain clarifications as to a.k.a.'s (aliases) of the Hizballah Military Wing and clarifying that it includes all units reporting to it. The measures taken in the framework of Common Position 2001/931/CFSP are part of the EU's strategies to combat terrorism and in particular the fight against the financing of terrorism.

Regarding a possible inclusion of the entire Hizballah organisation on the list, this would require a new decision by the Council.

([1]) 2013/395/CFSP: Council Decision 2013/395/CFSP of 25 July 2013 updating and amending the list of persons, groups and entities subject to Articles 2, 3 and 4 of Common Position 2001/931/CFSP on the application of specific measures to combat terrorism, and repealing Decision 2012/765/CFSP, OJ L 201, 26.7.2013.

([2]) Council Common Position of 27 December 2001 on the application of specific measures to combat terrorism, OJ L 344, 28.12.2001.

([3]) Council Implementing Regulation (EU) No 714/2013 of 25 July 2013 implementing Article 2(3) of Regulation (EC) No 2580/2001 on specific restrictive measures directed against certain persons and entities with a view to combating terrorism, and repealing Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1169/2012, OJ L 201, 26.7.2013.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009868/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(4 september 2013)

Betreft: Vervolg op schriftelijke vraag E-006902/2013 over de richtlijn herstel en afwikkeling: hoe een golf faillissementen kan worden veroorzaakt

Aangezien de Commissie in haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-006902/2013 slechts de grote lijnen schetst van haar wetgevingsvoorstel over het herstel en de afwikkeling van banken, zou ik haar willen vragen een uitgebreid en gemotiveerd antwoord op de volgende vragen te geven:

1. Is de Commissie van mening dat het verdwijnen van niet-financiële ondernemingen van de markt minder ernstig is dan het verdwijnen van financiële ondernemingen?

2. Is zij van mening dat financiële instellingen een grotere bijdrage leveren aan de echte economie dan niet-financiële ondernemingen? Zo niet, waarom wordt het dan nuttiger geacht om kredietinstellingen en beleggingsondernemingen te behoeden voor een wanbetaling dan andere ondernemingen?

3. Is zij van mening dat de voorgestelde bail-in-regeling verenigbaar is met het EU-beleid en de EU-maatregelen voor ondernemingen?

Antwoord van de heer Barnier namens de Commissie
(22 oktober 2013)

De Commissie is van mening dat er in beginsel geen verschil mag zijn tussen het faillissement van niet-financiële en financiële ondernemingen. In geval van een faillissement moeten in beginsel beide volgens een normale insolventieprocedure worden geliquideerd. Het liquideren van een kredietinstelling volgens de normale insolventieprocedure zou echter bijvoorbeeld het ongewenste gevolg kunnen hebben dat een aanzienlijk deel van de bevolking en bedrijven gedurende bepaalde tijd geen toegang tot hun lopende rekeningen en spaarrekeningen, betalingsdiensten of kredietlijnen zouden hebben.

Dit betekent niet dat een kredietinstelling een hogere toegevoegde waarde voor de economie heeft dan een niet-financiële onderneming. Wegens haar intermediërende rol bij sparen, kredietverlening, betalen en ontvangen van geld kan het faillissement van een kredietinstelling een andere aanpak vereisen dan het faillissement van een niet-financiële onderneming. Het voorstel van de Commissie van 2012 voor een richtlijn inzake bankherstel en bankafwikkeling (BRRD) heeft onder meer tot doel de continuïteit van kritieke functies van kredietinstellingen voor de reële economie te verzekeren en de aandeelhouders en crediteuren te dwingen de verliezen van kredietinstellingen te dragen zoals bij een normale insolventieprocedure het geval zou zijn geweest.

Het ondernemingenbeleid van de Europese Unie beoogt het vergemakkelijken van het opstarten en ontwikkelen van ondernemingen, met name kleine en middelgrote ondernemingen (kmo's), in heel de Unie. De Raad heeft het bail-ininstrument in het kader van de BRRD aangevuld met een preferentie voor deposito's van kmo's, zodat deze in dat scenario minder waarschijnlijk verliezen zullen moeten absorberen. De Commissie is voorstander van die preferentie om bij een bankencrisis ondernemingen nader te beschermen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009868/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t4*Follow-up to Written Question E-006902/2013 on the Recovery and Resolution Directive: how to cause a flood of bankruptcies

Since the answer given by the Commission to Written Question E-006902/2013 only sets out the lines of its legislative proposal on the recovery and resolution of banks, I would like to ask it to provide detailed and circumstantiated answers to the following questions:

1. Does the Commission think that the exit of non-financial businesses from the market is less serious than the exit of financial ones?

2. Does it think that financial institutions contribute to the real economy more than non-financial businesses? If not, why should it be considered more worthwhile to protect credit institutions and investment firms than other businesses from default?

3. Does it think that the proposed regime of bail-ins is compatible with EU enterprise policies and actions?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(00 O:tober 013u)

The Commission is of opinion that in principle there should not be a difference between the failure of non-financial and financial companies. In case of a failure both should in principle be wound down under normal insolvency proceedings. However, winding down a credit institution under normal insolvency proceedings could, for example, have the undesired effect that a significant part of the population and businesses would not have access for a certain time to their current and savings accounts, payment services or credit lines.

This does not imply that a credit institution has a higher added value to the economy than a non-financial company. However, because of its intermediating role regarding saving, lending, paying and receiving money, the failure of a credit institution can require a different approach than the failure of a non-financial company. The 2012 Commission proposal for a Bank Recovery and Resolution Directive (BRRD) has as one of its objectives the protection of the continuity of critical functions of credit institutions for the real economy, while forcing their shareholders and creditors to bear the losses as they would have had to bear in case of normal insolvency proceedings.

The enterprise policies of the European Union are intended to facilitate the initiative and development of undertakings throughout the Union, particularly that of small and medium-sized undertakings (SME). The Council has complemented the bail-in tool in the BRRD with a preference for deposits of SMEs, so that the latter are less likely to have to absorb losses in that scenario. The Commission favours such preference as a means to further protect businesses in bank crisis.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009869/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(4 septembre 2013)

Objet: Dialogue Union européenne-États-Unis sur les risques chimiques, biologiques, radiologiques et nucléaires (CBRN)

En tant que rapporteur pour avis de la commission de l'industrie, de la recherche et de l'énergie du Parlement européen sur le renforcement de la sécurité CBRN dans l'Union européenne, j'avais encouragé, dans le cadre d'axes de collaboration stratégique bien définis, les coopérations avec les pays de l'OTAN (États-Unis et Canada) et certains États tiers pionniers via des échanges de bonnes pratiques, des dialogues structurés entre experts et le développement de capacités communes.

Je me félicite donc du lancement, le 12 juin dernier, du dialogue sur l'atténuation des risques CBRN entre l'Union européenne et les États-Unis, qui, selon la Commission, «constitue un effort renouvelé pour coordonner les activités d'assistance européennes et américaines pour atténuer les risques chimiques, biologiques, radiologiques et nucléaires de toutes sortes et les menaces de prolifération internationale».

1. Quelles activités l'Union européenne et les États-Unis vont-elles coordonner concrètement en matière de risques CBRN?

2. Une coopération industrielle et technologique l'Union européenne/États-Unis est-elle également envisagée dans ce domaine? Ce point sera-t-il discuté dans le cadre des négociations sur un nouveau partenariat avec les États-Unis (partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement, «PTCI»)?

3. L'Union européenne compte-t-elle ouvrir de nouveaux dialogues bilatéraux sur les risques CBRN avec d'autres pays?

Réponse donnée par M[me] Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante, au nom de la Commission
(26 novembre 2013)

1. La coordination entre l'Union européenne et les États-Unis en matière d'assistance aux pays tiers dans les domaines chimique, biologique, radiologique et nucléaire (CBRN) porte notamment sur le contrôle des exportations, la sécurité biologique/biosécurité, la reconversion des scientifiques, la contrebande et le trafic illicite de matières nucléaires. Elle vise en particulier à soutenir dans ces domaines les pays partenaires du monde entier. La coordination intervient également dans le cadre du programme de partenariat mondial du G8. L'UE et les États-Unis ont récemment engagé un dialogue stratégique afin d'étudier les efforts communs qui pourraient être réalisés pour atténuer les risques et les menaces de prolifération. L'un des outils utilisés est l'initiative du centre d'excellence CBRN, situé à Amman, où l'UE et les États-Unis mettent en commun leurs informations sur la situation au Moyen-Orient en matière de CBRN et où ils ont entamé une coopération avec la Jordanie, le Liban et l'Irak dans le domaine de la chimie. Contrôler les matières premières, les technologies et les installations et en assurer la sécurité constituent également des priorités communes.

2. Pour le moment, aucune coopération industrielle et technique n'est envisagée. L'intention est, à l'heure actuelle, d'échanger des vues afin de déployer des efforts communs, d'éviter les doubles emplois et de faire avancer les activités du programme.

L'aspect réglementaire est essentiel, tant sous l'angle des avantages économiques que, plus largement, sous celui de la pertinence des politiques menées dans le cadre du partenariat transatlantique sur le commerce et l'investissement. Il s'agit également de la partie la plus complexe des négociations puisque son ambition dépasse les résultats obtenus jusqu'à présent par l'UE ou par les États-Unis dans les négociations commerciales.

3. L'UE traite la question des risques CBRN avec d'autres partenaires stratégiques, comme le Japon, à travers des dialogues politiques, avec, par exemple, les pays d'Asie centrale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009869/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: EU-US dialogue on chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) risks

As rapporteur for Parliament's Committee on Industry, Research and Energy on improving CBRN security in the European Union, I encouraged cooperation, in specific strategic areas, with NATO countries (US and Canada) and a select group of third countries through the sharing of best practices, the organisation of expert-level dialogues and the development of common capabilities.

I therefore welcomed the launch, on 12 June 2013, of the EU-US CBRN risk mitigation dialogue, which, in the Commission's words, 'represents a renewed effort to coordinate CBRN assistance activities to mitigate CBRN risks of all kinds and international proliferation threats'.

1. What joint initiatives will the EU and US engage in with the specific aim of addressing CBRN risks?

2. Is industrial and technological cooperation between the EU and US also being considered in this area? Will this matter be discussed in the talks on a new EU-US partnership (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership — TTIP)?

3. Does the EU intend to open bilateral dialogues on CBRN risks with other countries?

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

1. EU-US coordination on chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) assistance to third countries includes export control, biosafety/biosecurity, redirection of scientists, nuclear smuggling and illicit trafficking. It focuses on supporting partner countries worldwide in these areas. Coordination also takes place in the framework of the G8 Global Partnership programme. The EU and US have recently engaged in a strategic dialogue to explore possible joint efforts to mitigate proliferation risks and threats. One of the tools employed is the CBRN Center of Excellence (CoE) initiative, located in Amman, where the EU and US share information on the CBRN situation in the Middle East and have begun cooperation in Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq in the chemical field. Safeguarding and securing materials, technologies and facilities is also a common priority.

2. For the moment industrial and technical cooperation is not considered. The intent now is to exchange views to develop joint efforts and to avoid duplication and scale-up in programme activities.

The regulatory aspect is critical, both in terms of economic benefits and broader policy relevance of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership. It is also the most complex part of negotiations since ambition goes beyond what the EU or the US have achieved so far in trade negotiations.

3. The EU is addressing CBRN risks with other strategic partners, such as Japan through political dialogues, for example with the countries of Central Asia.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009870/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 settembre 013O)

*g : : etto4*Decreto «svuota carceri»: legittimità e misure alternative

Attualmente, in Italia sono reclusi nei 206 istituti di pena detentiva oltre 66 000 detenuti a fronte di una capienza massima di circa 45 000.

Per far fronte alla condanna definitiva della Corte europea dei diritti dell'uomo inflitta al nostro Stato per le condizioni del suo sistema carcerario, l'attuale governo ha approvato il decreto legge «svuota carceri» quale misura per risolvere il sovraffollamento degli istituti penitenziari.

Considerando che:

— dei detenuti attualmente presenti nelle carceri italiane oltre 23 000 sono stranieri, dei quali il 19 % proviene dal Marocco, il 12,6 % dalla Tunisia, il 15 % dalla Romania, l'11,9 % dall'Albania;

— il costo del loro mantenimento ammonta a circa 1 miliardo e mezzo l'anno con un esborso medio per detenuto di 200 euro al giorno;

— i detenuti comunitari condannati in uno Stato Membro diverso dal proprio possono scontare la pena nel loro paese di origine solo se essi stessi esprimono il consenso, come previsto dalla decisione quadro 2008/909/GAI del Consiglio, del 27 novembre 2008, relativa all'applicazione del principio del reciproco riconoscimento alle sentenze penali che irrogano pene detentive o misure privative della libertà personale, ai fini della loro esecuzione nell'Unione europea.

La Commissione:

intende modificare la normativa vigente ex decisione quadro 2008/909/GAI al fine di permettere il trasferimento di un detenuto in istituti penitenziari nello Stato membro di origine in maniera automatica e senza il consenso del condannato?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(02 ottobre 013O)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputato alla risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-006200/2013 dell'onorevole Geoffrey Van Orden.

La decisione quadro 2008/909/GAI ([1]) istituisce un sistema per il riconoscimento delle sentenze e l'esecuzione delle pene detentive nello Stato membro di cui i condannati sono cittadini o in cui risiedono abitualmente (o in uno Stato membro con il quale hanno stretti legami), al fine di favorirne il reinserimento sociale.

Il consenso della persona condannata al trasferimento nel paese di origine non è richiesto se l'interessato: i) è cittadino dello Stato di esecuzione e vive in tale Stato, ii) sarà espulso verso lo Stato di esecuzione una volta dispensato dall'esecuzione della pena o iii) è fuggito nello Stato di esecuzione ([2]).

La Commissione adotterà in tempi brevi una relazione sull'applicazione della presente decisione quadro negli Stati membri.

([1]) Decisione quadro 2008/909/GAI, del 27 novembre 2008, relativa all'applicazione del principio del reciproco riconoscimento alle sentenze penali che irrogano pene detentive o misure privative della libertà personale, ai fini della loro esecuzione nell'Unione europea (GU L 327 del 5.12.2008, pag. 27).

([2]) Cfr. art. 6 della decisione quadro.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009870/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 September 013u)

Sj bæ:t4'Empty prisons' decree — legitimacy and alternative measures

In Italy there are currently over 66 000 inmates in 206 prisons, which are supposed to have a maximum capacity of about 45 000.

To comply with the final judgment of the European Court of Human Rights inflicted on Italy for the conditions of its prison system, the current government has adopted a decree-law to relieve the pressure on prisons (the 'empty prisons' decree-law) as a way of solving the problem of prison overcrowding.

Given that:

— of all the inmates currently held in Italian prisons, over 23 000 are foreigners, 19% of whom from Morocco, 12.6% from Tunisia, 15% from Romania and 11.9% from Albania;

— the cost of their upkeep amounts to some EUR 1.5 billion per year at an average cost per prisoner per day of EUR 200;

— EU prisoners convicted in a Member State other than their own may serve their sentences in their country of origin only if they themselves agree, as stipulated in 'Framework Decision 2008/909/JHA of 27 November 2008 on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to judgments in criminal matters imposing custodial sentences or measures involving deprivation of liberty for the purpose of their enforcement in the European Union';

Does the Commission intend to amend existing legislation under Framework Decision 2008/909/JHA in order to permit the transfer of prisoners to prisons in their Member State of origin automatically, without the consent of the offender?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(02 O:tober 013u)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the answer to the Written Question E-006200/2013 by Mr Van Orden.

Framework Decision 2008/909/JHA ([1]) establishes a system for recognising and enforcing custodial sentences in the Member State of nationality or habitual residence of the sentenced person (or to another Member State with which he has close ties) with a view to facilitating the social rehabilitation of this person.

No consent of the sentenced person to the transfer to his home country is required when the sentenced person: (i) is a national of the executing State who lives in the executing State; (ii) will be deported to the executing State once he is released and (iii) has fled to the executing State ([2]).

The Commission will adopt a Report on the application of this framework Decision in the Member States shortly.

([1]) Framework Decision 2008/909/JHA of 27 November 2008 on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to judgments in criminal matters imposing custodial sentences or measures involving deprivation of liberty for the purpose of their enforcement in the European Union, OJ 5.12.2008, L 327/27.
([2]) See Article 6 of the framework Decision.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009873/13
alla Commissione
Marco Scurria (PPE)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Adeguamento della direttiva sulle acque destinate al consumo umano

L'acqua destinata al consumo umano nel territorio dell'A.T.O. (Ambito territoriale ottimale) 1 Lazio Nord/Viterbo, risulta ad alta concentrazione di arsenico. La questione è diventata un argomento di grande rilevanza ambientale in seguito all'introduzione della direttiva europea 98/83/CE in base alla quale il precedente valore di parametro per l'arsenico, pari a 50 μg/l, è stato modificato nel valore di 10 μgl.

Nell'ottobre 2010, ricevuto dalla CE il diniego di concessione di ulteriori proroghe al Decreto legislativo 31/2001 che avrebbero consentito di continuare ad erogare acqua destinata al consumo umano con concentrazione di arsenico e fluoro superiori ai parametri normativi, lo Stato italiano ha istituito il Commissario Delegato per il superamento dell'emergenza arsenico e fluoro. Per il poco tempo a disposizione, la soluzione individuata dal Commissario ricadeva sulla realizzazione di singoli impianti di trattamento dislocati sull'intero territorio dell'A.T.O. 1 Lazio Nord/Viterbo.

Tale soluzione non può però essere definitiva per il servizio idrico integrato, considerato l'enorme costo economico gestionale e la precarietà del sistema, occorre invece prevedere opere strutturali e strategiche che consentano il prelevamento d'acqua presso fonti prive di arsenico e fluoro nei territori limitrofi ai confini dell'A.T.O.1 e la relativa adduzione presso i serbatoi di accumulo con varie condotte di interconnessione. Da uno studio di fattibilità redatto dal Dipartimento di Idraulica dell'Università «La Sapienza» di Roma, l'investimento previsto è di oltre 200 000 000 EUR.

Ciò premesso, non ritiene la Commissione che l'emanazione di una direttiva con costi di adeguamento così elevati debba essere affiancata da un intervento europeo dedicato?

Come si può evitare che i Comuni cerchino la copertura di tutti i costi della realizzazione delle infrastrutture idrauliche necessarie a superare il problema con i proventi della fatturazione (bollette degli utenti) gravando i cittadini degli oneri economici della realizzazione delle dette opere strutturali?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(5 novembre 2013)

L'obiettivo della direttiva sull'acqua potabile ([1]) (di seguito, la direttiva) è proteggere la salute umana dagli effetti negativi derivanti dalla contaminazione delle acque destinate al consumo umano e, al fine di conseguire tale obiettivo, la direttiva fissa requisiti minimi.

Gli obblighi stabiliti dalla direttiva in relazione all'arsenico sono entrati in vigore nel 2003. Da allora, l'Italia si è avvalsa delle possibilità di deroga ai sensi dell'articolo 9 della direttiva. Nel 2010 la Commissione ha concesso la terza deroga ([2]) e, a norma della direttiva, non è possibile concedere altre deroghe. I periodi di deroga sono stati concepiti anche per poter realizzare gli investimenti necessari a fronteggiare questi problemi (come è avvenuto in molti altri Stati membri e in altre zone di approvvigionamento idrico in Italia) imponendo così minori oneri finanziari ai cittadini coinvolti.

In relazione alla bolletta dell'acqua a carico dei consumatori, l'articolo 9, paragrafo 1, della direttiva quadro sulle acque (direttiva quadro 2000/60/CE) ([3]) impone il recupero dei costi dei servizi idrici, tenendo conto delle ripercussioni sociali, ambientali ed economiche del recupero, nonché delle condizioni geografiche e climatiche della regione o delle regioni interessate.

Gli investimenti finalizzati a soddisfare i requisiti previsti dalla direttiva possono essere finanziati, in linea di principio, tramite i programmi di finanziamento dell'UE (ad esempio, il Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale — FESR). Tuttavia, poiché il Lazio è una regione sviluppata, con un PIL regionale superiore al 90 % della media dell'UE, non è ammissibile il finanziamento di infrastrutture ambientali (in questo caso per l'acqua potabile) tramite il FESR.

([1]) GU L 330 del 5.12.1998.
([2]) https://circabc.europa.eu/faces/jsp/extension/wai/navigation/container.jsp
([3]) GU L 327 del 22.12.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009873/13
to the Commission
Marco Scurria (PPE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Adjustment of directive on water for human consumption

The water intended for human consumption in ATO 1 (local water board) of Northern Lazio/Viterbo has a high concentration of arsenic. The issue has become a matter of great environmental significance following the introduction of the European Directive 98/83/EC, under which the previous parameter value for arsenic — of 50 µg/l — was changed to 10 µgl.

In October 2010, after the EU had refused to grant further extensions to Legislative Decree 31/2001 that would have permitted a continued supply of water for human consumption with concentrations of arsenic and fluoride higher than the regulatory parameters, the Italian Government appointed a Deputy Commissioner in order to resolve the arsenic and fluoride emergency. Due to a lack of time, the Commissioner found a solution whereby individual treatment plants throughout the ATO 1 Northern Lazio/Viterbo would be built.

This solution, however, cannot be a definitive one for the integrated water service, given the huge cost of managing the system, not to mention its precariousness. Structural and strategic work needs to be done, to enable water to be taken from sources that are free of arsenic and fluoride in areas surrounding the ATO 1's borders and to be transported to storage tanks through interconnecting pipelines. According to a feasibility study carried out by the Department of Hydraulics, La Sapienza University of Rome, the necessary investment is estimated to cost more than EUR 200 million.

Does the Commission not therefore think that the adoption of a directive with such high compliance costs should be backed up by dedicated EU action?

How can we prevent municipalities from trying to cover the entire cost of the construction of the water infrastructure necessary to solve the problem with the proceeds of consumers' bills, thereby placing on citizens the financial burden of carrying out these structural works?

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

The objective of the Drinking Water Directive ([1]) (Directive) is to protect human health from the adverse effects of any contamination of the water intended for human consumption. In order to achieve this objective, the directive sets out minimum requirements.

The obligations set by the directive in relation to arsenic entered into effect in 2003. Since then, Italy has made use of the possibility for derogations under Article 9 of the directive. A third derogation was granted by the Commission in 2010 ([2]). According to the directive, no further derogations are possible. Derogation periods are designed in part to allow investments to take place to address these problems (as was the case in many other Member States and other water supply zones in Italy) thus imposing a more limited financial burden on the concerned citizens.

In relation to consumer's water bills, Art 9.1 of Water Framework Directive (WFD, 2000/60/EC) ([3]) requires the recovery of costs of water services, having regard to the social, environmental and economic effects of the recovery as well as the geographic and climatic conditions of the region or regions affected.

Investments related to meeting the requirements of the directive can in principle be financed from the EU funding programmes (e.g. European Regional Development Fund — ERDF). However, as Lazio is a developed region (its regional GDP is more than 90% of the EU average), funding for environmental infrastructure (in this case for drinking water) from the ERDF is not eligible.

([1]) OJ L 330, 5.12.1998.
([2]) https://circabc.europa.eu/w/browse/d4c661f0-dea6-40d6-b98e-91448c6a44f9
([3]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-009874/13
a Bizottság számára
Szegedi Csanád (NI)
(2013. szeptember 4.)

Tárgy: Roma integráció

Az elmúlt években egyre fontosabbá vált az Európai Unió számára az Unió tagállamaiban élő, jelentős számú, illetve növekvő populációjú roma kisebbség integrációjának elősegítése. A számos hatékonyan kidolgozott program (köztük a magyar elnökség által fémjelzett cselekvési tervek) ellenére a roma kisebbség mind a mai napig továbbra is igen nehéz helyzetben van más populációkkal szemben Európában. Az európai átlaggal ellentétben a roma népesség termékenységi rátája igen magas értéket képvisel, ami arányuk növekedését jelenti az európai populációban. Véleményem szerint jelentősen hozzájárulhat a probléma megoldásához a roma populáció kiemelt oktatási és munkaerő-piaci támogatása.

A kérdésem a következő: a Bizottságnak a közeljövőre vonatkoztatva milyen további cselekvési terve van a roma népesség integrációjával kapcsolatban?

Viviane Reding válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. október 17.)

A Bizottság az idén javaslatot fogadott el a romák integrációját célzó hatékony tagállami intézkedésekről szóló tanácsi ajánlásra ([1]), amelynek célja, hogy megerősítse „A nemzeti romaintegrációs stratégiák uniós keretrendszere 2020-ig” című közleménnyel megkezdett folyamatot, valamint elősegítse a nemzeti romaintegrációs stratégiák végrehajtását. A javaslat jelenleg megvitatás alatt áll a Tanácsban.

A Bizottság a jövőben is figyelemmel kíséri a nemzeti stratégiák végrehajtásának eredményeit, valamint az Európai Parlamentnek és a Tanácsnak, illetve az Európa 2020 stratégia keretében benyújtott beszámolókat.

A 2014 tavaszán elfogadandó következő értékelő jelentés négy kulcsfontosságú területen elemzi majd az elért eredményeket: az oktatás, a foglalkoztatás, az egészségügy és a lakhatás területén.

A Bizottság emellett kétoldalú és többoldalú megbeszéléseket folytat majd a romaintegrációs nemzeti roma kapcsolattartó pontokkal, a romákra vonatkozó szakpolitikai intézkedések végrehajtásában részt vevő egyéb nemzeti hatóságokkal, valamint a roma civil társadalmi szervezetekkel, a nemzetközi szervezetekkel és a romaintegráció folyamatában részt vevő egyéb érdekeltekkel.

Mozgósításra kerültek továbbá az európai strukturális és beruházási alapok forrásai, amelyek célja a 2014 és 2020 közötti új pénzügyi időszak nemzeti erőfeszítéseinek megerősítése. A Bizottság az ESZA-források legalább 20%-át a társadalmi befogadásra fordítja, ami magában foglalja a roma integrációt is. Az Európai Szociális Alap beruházásainak egyik kiemelt célkitűzése kifejezetten a társadalom peremére szorult közösségek – így a romák – beilleszkedése.

([1]) COM(2013) 460.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009874/13
to the Commission
Csanád Szegedi (NI)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Integration of Roma

In recent years, it has become increasingly important to the European Union to promote integration of the Roma minorities in the EU Member States, which are of a significant size or even growing. Despite the numerous effectively planned programmes (including the action plans associated with the Hungarian Presidency), the Roma minority still remains in a very difficult position in relation to other populations in Europe. Unlike the European average, the Roma population's fertility rate is high, so that Roma constitute a growing proportion of the European population. I believe that special support for education and employment of the Roma population could contribute significantly towards a solution to the problem.

My question is this: what further action plan does the Commission have for the near future to promote integration of the Roma population?

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

This year, the Commission adopted a proposal for a Council recommendation on effective Roma integration measures in the Member States ([1]), in order to reinforce the process started with the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 and to strengthen the implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategies. The proposal is currently discussed in the Council.

The Commission will continue to monitor the progress in the implementation of the national strategies and reporting to the European Parliament and the Council, as well as under the Europe 2020 strategy.

The next assessment report, to be adopted in spring 2014, will focus on progress made in the 4 key areas — education, employment, health and housing.

The Commission will also pursue bilateral and multilateral exchanges with the National Roma Contact Points for Roma integration, other national authorities involved in the implementation of Roma related policy measures as well as with Roma civil society organisations, international organisations and other stakeholders involved in the process of Roma inclusion.

In addition, the European Structural and Investment Funds have been mobilised to boost national efforts for the new financial period 2014-2020. The Commission proposes to use at least 20% of ESF resources for social inclusion which also includes Roma integration. A European Social Fund investment priority envisages, specifically, the integration of marginalised communities such as the Roma.

([1]) COM(2013) 460.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-009875/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(4 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Direito humano à água e ao saneamento

Tendo em conta a persistência de inúmeras situações de exclusão no acesso à água e ao saneamento em vários países da UE e tendo em conta que em vários países, e em especial naqueles que são alvo de programas de intervenção da UE e do FMI, se regista mesmo uma evolução negativa neste domínio, com o aumento das situações de exclusão, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre que medidas — legislativas ou outras — prevê adotar com vista a assegurar o efetivo direito humano à água e ao saneamento na UE a todos os cidadãos, sem exclusões, conforme preconizado na resolução aprovada na Assembleia-Geral das Nações Unidas sobre este assunto, acabando assim com esta grave violação dos Direitos Humanos na União Europeia.

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

A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta dada à pergunta escrita E-003620/2013. Na sua resposta à pergunta escrita E-003505/2013 a Comissão respondeu a questões semelhantes em relação a uma iniciativa de cidadania europeia sobre estas matérias.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009875/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t4*Human right to water and sanitation

Many people are still without access to water and sanitation in a number of EU states, and in some countries the situation is getting worse rather than better. This is particularly true of countries subject to EU and IMF intervention programmes, where such cases of exclusion have been increasing. What legislative or other measures will the Commission take to ensure that all citizens can exercise the human right to water and sanitation in the EU, without anyone being excluded, as recommended in the resolution on this subject adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, thus putting a stop to this serious violation of human rights in the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(u 1 O:tober 013u)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-003620/2013. The Commission has responded to similar questions in relation to a European Citizen's initiative on the issues in its answer to Written Question E-003505/2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-009876/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Aumento do consumo de drogas em Portugal

Notícias recentes na imprensa portuguesa dão conta de dados que demonstram o aumento do consumo de drogas nos últimos 3 anos, em Portugal. Fonte do Serviço de Intervenção nos Comportamentos Aditivos e nas Dependências (SICAD) informou que triplicaram as readmissões de consumidores de heroína nos serviços (1 008 em 2010, 1 843 em 2011, 2 881 em 2012). Responsáveis e técnicos do SICAD consideram que muitos dos casos de readmissões de consumidores de drogas têm causas sociais, como o aumento do desemprego ou a diminuição dos apoios sociais. É também referido que, tanto em Portugal, como nos países europeus com situações económicas semelhantes, está a diminuir o consumo de substâncias mais associadas ao ambiente recreativo e a aumentar o consumo de heroína e de bebidas alcoólicas, que são normalmente mais procuradas para o alívio do sofrimento. Por outro lado, um pouco por todo o país, estão a ser efetuados cortes nos serviços de proximidade (serviços de consultas descentralizadas, transportes para doentes, etc.), o que piora consideravelmente a situação destes doentes.

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Tem conhecimento destes dados? Como os comenta?

2. Considera que as medidas aprovadas entre a «troika», de que a Comissão faz parte, e o governo português estão a contribuir para o combate à toxicodependência na UE?

3. Tem dados sobre o aumento do consumo de drogas — nomeadamente de heroína — nos Estados-Membros nos últimos 3 anos? Em que países é que o consumo aumentou mais?

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

A Comissão está ciente de que a recessão económica provocou cortes nas medidas de redução à procura de droga em vários Estados-Membros da UE. De acordo com o Observatório Europeu da Droga e da Toxicodependência (OEDT), alguns países da UE comunicaram cortes nos programas e serviços relacionados com a luta contra a droga ([1]). Contudo, estes cortes orçamentais e o seu impacto parecem diferir consideravelmente entre os Estados-Membros da UE.

De acordo com o OEDT, a situação em matéria de drogas tem-se mantido relativamente estável nos últimos anos na UE ([2]). Embora o consumo de droga continue a ser elevado de acordo com os padrões históricos e novas substâncias psicoativas apareçam e se propaguem rapidamente na UE, registaram-se alterações positivas relativamente a substâncias controladas como a heroína, cocaína e cannabis.

Em resultado de um aumento global da disponibilização de tratamento para os consumidores de heroína registado no conjunto da UE, tem havido uma tendência descendente na utilização deste estupefaciente nos últimos anos. O número de consumidores de heroína que inicia o tratamento pela primeira vez estabilizou, tendo até decrescido ([3]) e o número de mortes relacionadas com os opiáceos diminuiu.

([1]) Relatório Europeu sobre drogas de 2013. Tendências e evoluções, OEDT. http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/attachements.cfm/att_213154_PT_TDAT13001ENN1.pdf
([2]) Relatório Europeu sobre drogas de 2013. Tendências e evoluções. Os dados disponíveis mais recentes referem-se a 2011 ou a anos anteriores.
([3]) Entre 2005 e 2011, apenas a Espanha, a França, os Países Baixos e a Irlanda comunicaram um aumento pouco significativo da média anual de aumento do consumo de heroína (0-10 %). http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/topics/pods/trends-in-heroin-use

O consumo de cannabis entre a população escolar diminuiu em quatro países da UE ([4]) e aumentou significativamente em nove ([5]), no período de 2007-2011. O consumo entre jovens adultos diminuiu ou permaneceu estável, com exceção da Polónia e da Finlândia. O consumo de cocaína diminuiu ou estabilizou nos países de prevalência mais elevada ([6]), mas a França e a Polónia comunicaram um ligeiro aumento no consumo em 2010 ([7]). O consumo de anfetaminas e de ecstasy entre os jovens adultos manteve-se estável ou diminuiu em 2010, em toda a UE, exceto na Polónia ([8]).

([4]) Dinamarca, Malta, República Eslovaca e Reino Unido.
([5]) Chipre, Finlândia, França, Grécia, Hungria, Letónia, Polónia, Portugal e Roménia.
([6]) Espanha, Reino Unido, Dinamarca e Irlanda.
([7]) Em todos os países, com exceção dos que apresentam elevada prevalência, os níveis do consumo de cocaína permaneceram relativamente baixos — cerca de 2 % ou menos.
([8]) Aumento em 2010 para 3,9 % quanto às anfetaminas e para 3 % quanto a ecstasy.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009876/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Increased drug use in Portugal

The Portuguese press has recently reported figures showing that drug use has increased in Portugal over the past three years. Information provided by the Serviço de Intervenção nos Comportamentos Aditivos e nas Dependências (Addictive Behaviour and Dependency Intervention Service — SICAD) shows that the number of heroin users readmitted to treatment services has tripled (1008 in 2010, 1843 in 2011 and 2881 in 2012). The SICAD service's directors and experts believe that many of these cases are the result of social factors such as increased unemployment and the reduction in social support. It is also pointed out that, both in Portugal and in other European countries facing similar economic conditions, there has been a decline in the consumption of substances that are more often linked to recreational use, and a rise in the consumption of heroin and alcohol, which are more commonly used by people seeking relief from problems. At the same time, virtually the whole country has seen cutbacks to local services (decentralised consultation services, transport services for patients, etc), and this has considerably worsened the situation for the people affected.

1. Is the Commission aware of these figures? What comments would it make?

2. Does it believe that the measures agreed between the troika, which includes the Commission, and the Portuguese Government are helping to combat drug dependency in the EU?

3. Does it have any figures on the increase in drug use — particularly heroin — in the Member States over the past three years? Which countries saw the largest increase in drug use?

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

The Commission is aware that the economic downturn has led to cuts in expenses for drug-demand reduction measures in several EU Member States. According to the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), a number of EU countries have reported cuts in drug-related programmes and services ([1]). However, the extent of these budget cuts and their impact appear to differ considerably between EU Member States.

According to the EMCDDA, the drugs situation has remained relatively stable in recent years in the EU ([2]). Although drug use remains high by historic standards and new psychoactive substances emerge and spread rapidly in the EU, positive changes have been recorded regarding controlled drugs such as heroin, cocaine and cannabis.

As a result of an overall increase in treatment availability for heroin users across the EU, there has been a downward trend in the use of this drug in recent years. The number of heroin users entering treatment for the first time has stabilised and has even fallen ([3]) and the number of opioid-related deaths has decreased.

Cannabis use among school children decreased in four ([4]) and rose significantly in nine EU countries ([5]) in 2007-2011. Use among young adults has decreased or remained stable, with the exception of Poland and Finland. Cocaine use has declined or stabilised in the highest prevalence countries ([6]), but France and Poland reported a slight increase in use in 2010 ([7]). Amphetamines and ecstasy use among young adults was stable or decreased in 2010 across the EU, except in Poland ([8]).

([1]) The European Drug Report 2013. Trends and Developments, EMCDDA. http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/attachements.cfm/att_213154_EN_TDAT13001ENN1.pdf
([2]) The European Drug Report 2013. Trends and Developments. The most recent available data relate to 2011 or earlier.
([3]) Between 2005 and 2011 only Spain, France, the Netherlands and Ireland reported limited increase an average annual percentage increase in heroin use (0-10 %). http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/topics/pods/trends-in-heroin-use
([4]) Denmark, Malta, Slovak Rep. and United Kingdom.
([5]) Cyprus, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Portugal and Romania.
([6]) Spain, UK, Denmark and Ireland.
([7]) In all countries but those with high prevalence, levels of cocaine use have remained relatively low — around 2 % or less.
([8]) Increase in 2010 to 3.9% for amphetamine and to 3% in ecstasy.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-009877/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Vaga de incêndios em Portugal

Este verão está a ser dramático para as populações de diversos concelhos e distritos de Portugal, as corporações de bombeiros e os elementos da proteção civil, por causa do número de incêndios que têm assolado o país. Segundo informações recentes, nos primeiros 25 dias de agosto ocorreram 5 115 incêndios, mais 2 315 do que em todo o ano de 2012. A média de fogos por dia ronda as 600 ocorrências, o que implica a mobilização diária de milhares de operacionais. Só neste mês de agosto, já arderam mais de 40 mil hectares de floresta, ou seja, ardeu mais floresta em agosto de 2013 do que em todo o ano de 2007 ou de 2008. Mas este ano tem também sido particularmente dramático ao nível de perda de vidas humanas — até hoje e durante o mês de agosto, já faleceram 5 bombeiros —, para além de dezenas de feridos entre bombeiros e população quando combatiam o fogo. As populações destes lugares perderam produções agrícolas e florestais, gado, rações para animais, máquinas agrícolas e foram muitos os que assistiram à destruição das suas casas.

É hoje certo que a mais importante medida preventiva dos fogos florestais — o reordenamento florestal — mostra-se insuficiente ou, em muitos casos, não existe. As corporações de bombeiros, por outro lado, carecem de recursos para o combate aos incêndios, o que passa muitas vezes por um equipamento completo de proteção individual.

Com base no exposto, perguntamos o seguinte à Comissão:

1. Tem dados sobre o impacto dos cortes na despesa pública portuguesa, negociados entre o Governo Português e a «troika» no âmbito do chamado memorando de entendimento, com especial incidência nos meios preventivos e de combate aos incêndios? Tem consciência de que estes cortes estão a ter consequências inaceitáveis, nomeadamente a perda de vidas humanas?

2. A partir de 2009, quais os níveis de financiamento da UE alocados para despesas relacionadas com a prevenção e o combate a incêndios em Portugal (limpeza e ordenamento da floresta, apoio a organizações de bombeiros, …)?

3. Que os apoios da UE podem ser mobilizados para o apoio às populações afetadas?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(30 de outubro de 2013)

1. No quadro do programa de assistência financeira a Portugal, a Comissão não solicitou cortes na despesa pública no que se refere aos recursos de prevenção e de luta contra os incêndios. A Comissão não dispõe de informações sobre a forma como as despesas em matéria de prevenção e luta contra os incêndios foram afetadas pelo Governo português, para que as suas finanças públicas retomem uma trajetória sustentável.

2. O Fundo de Coesão atribui uma elevada prioridade ao financiamento de prevenção de riscos naturais em Portugal no período corrente. Um total de 158 milhões de euros do Fundo de Coesão foi atribuído às despesas relacionadas com a prevenção de riscos naturais (proteção civil) em Portugal desde 2008. Deste montante, 111 milhões de euros foram afetados especificamente ao financiamento da prevenção e luta contra os incêndios, que inclui infraestruturas, equipamentos e sistemas de prevenção, nomeadamente quartéis, veículos, equipamento de combate ao fogo, equipamento de telecomunicações e mesmo um aeródromo da proteção civil em Castelo Branco.

No respeitante ao Feader ([1]), o apoio da UE está disponível para medidas destinadas a restabelecer o potencial agrícola e florestal e de prevenção. O programa de desenvolvimento rural do Continente atribuiu 78 milhões de euros a essas medidas.

3. O financiamento ao abrigo dos programas atualmente em vigor pode continuar a ser utilizado para prevenir os riscos e minimizar os efeitos das catástrofes naturais até ao final de 2015. A Comissão está atualmente a negociar com as autoridades portuguesas o quadro de apoio dos fundos estruturais e de investimento europeus para 2014-2020, período em que a Comissão continuará a apoiar ações estruturais de prevenção de riscos naturais e de catástrofes, incluindo incêndios florestais.

([1]) Fundo Europeu Agrícola de Desenvolvimento Rural.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009877/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bœ:t4*Spate of fires in Portugal

This has been a dramatic summer for people living in a number of municipalities and districts in Portugal, as well as firefighters and civil protection workers, owing to the large number of fires that have hit the country. According to recent reports, there were 5 115 fires in the first 25 days of August, which is 2 315 more than in the whole of 2012. There have been an average of around 600 fires every day, and thousands of people have been involved in combating them on a daily basis. Fires have affected more than 40 000 hectares of forest this August alone, which means that more woodland has burnt in August 2013 than in the whole of 2007 or 2008. This year has also claimed a heavy toll in terms of human life — five firefighters have already died since the beginning of August — and dozens of firefighters and members of the public have been injured while tackling fires. People living in these areas have lost crops, woodland, livestock, animal feed and farm machinery, and many have seen their homes destroyed.

It is now clear that the main preventive measure against forest fires — better forest management — has proved insufficient and in many cases non-existent. Fire brigades lack the necessary resources to combat fires, which often means that no proper individual protection equipment is available.

1. Does the Commission have any information regarding the impact of the cuts in Portuguese public spending that were negotiated between the Portuguese Government and the troika in the context of the so-called memorandum of understanding, in particular as regards resources to prevent and combat fires? Is it aware that these cutbacks are having unacceptable consequences, especially in terms of human lives lost?

2. How much European funding has been allocated to expenditure linked to preventing and combating fires in Portugal since 2009 (forest management and clearing of undergrowth, support for firefighting organisations, etc.)?

3. What EU support can be mobilised to assist those affected?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(u1 O:tober 013u)

1. In the framework of the financial assistance programme for Portugal, the Commission has not requested cuts in public spending as regards resources to prevent and combat fires. The Commission does not have information on how the spending on preventing and combating fires has been affected by the Portuguese Government in order to bring its public finances back on a sustainable path.

2. The Cohesion Fund has given high priority to the financing of natural risk prevention in Portugal in the current period. A total of EUR 158 million from the Cohesion Fund has been allocated to expenditure linked to natural risks prevention (civil protection) in Portugal since 2008. Of this, EUR 111 million has been allocated specifically to the financing of preventing and combatting fires, which includes infrastructure, equipment and prevention systems, namely fire-fighter headquarters, fire combat vehicles, fire-fighter equipment, telecommunication equipment and even one aerodrome for civil protection in Castelo Branco.

Concerning the EAFRD ([1]), EU support is available for restoring agricultural and forestry potential and prevention actions. The rural development programme of Mainland Portugal has allocated EUR 78 million to these measures.

3. Funding under current programmes can continue to be used to prevent risks and minimise the effects of natural disasters until the end of 2015. The Commission is currently negotiating with the Portuguese authorities the support framework from the European Structural and Investment Funds for the 2014-2020 period in which the Commission continues to support structural actions to prevent natural risks and disasters, including forest fires.

([1]) European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-009878/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Despedimentos no setor bancário em Portugal, alegadamente, por imposição da Comissão Europeia

Notícias na imprensa portuguesa dão conta de que a Comissão Europeia terá imposto a instituições bancárias portuguesas recapitalizadas com financiamentos públicos a obrigatoriedade de redução de pessoal. Ou seja, a Comissão Europeia, a pretexto das ajudas públicas concedidas à banca privada, estará agora alegadamente a impor despedimentos de trabalhadores nos bancos visados.

É sabido que, noutros casos semelhantes, a Comissão Europeia considerou que os apoios públicos, por configurarem uma distorção das «regras da livre concorrência», deveriam dar lugar à redução da atividade dos bancos em questão, o que podia incluir a supressão de balcões. Todavia, daqui não decorre obrigatoriamente a redução de pessoal.

Solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Confirma a imposição da redução de pessoal de instituições bancárias portuguesas?

2. Em caso afirmativo, quais as instituições em causa e quais as imposições, em concreto, feitas pela Comissão a cada uma delas?

3. Com que direito corta a Comissão impor reduções de pessoal/despedimentos em bancos portugueses? Como justifica estas decisões?

Resposta dada por Joaquín Almunia em nome da Comissão
(5 de novembro de 2013)

Em primeiro lugar, as medidas estruturais, incluindo os cortes de pessoal, as reduções na rede de balcões ou as alienações de ativos, fazem normalmente parte dos planos de reestruturação e dos compromissos assumidos por beneficiários de ajudas financeiras públicas ao setor bancário. Medidas deste tipo são, de um modo geral, necessárias para repor a viabilidade destas instituições e assegurar que a instituição em causa retoma o seu percurso até à viabilidade. A reposição da viabilidade é essencial para que a medida de auxílio estatal seja compatível com o mercado interno.

Em segundo lugar, o conteúdo dos planos de reestruturação e algumas das medidas que deles constam são confidenciais, na medida em que incluem informação sensíveis sobre o mercado. Quando essa informação é desbloqueada pelas autoridades nacionais relevantes, é publicada uma versão não confidencial de cada decisão de reestruturação aprovada pela Comissão Europeia no sítio Web (http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/register).

Por último, as medidas de reestruturação propostas pelos Estados-Membros no que respeita às entidades beneficiárias dos auxílios estatais encontram a sua base jurídica direta no Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia (artigos 107.° a 109.°) e nas disposições daí derivadas. De entre estas disposições, as mais significativas para efeitos da avaliação da compatibilidade do auxílio estatal a instituições bancárias são as várias comunicações que a Comissão aprovou desde o início da crise, em 2008, com base no artigo 107.°, n.° 3, alínea b), do TFUE. A mais recente delas é a Comunicação sobre a aplicação, a partir de 1 de agosto de 2013, das regras em matéria de auxílios estatais às medidas de apoio aos bancos no contexto da crise financeira ([1]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:216:0001:0015:EN:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009878/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Dismissals in the Portuguese banking sector, allegedly imposed by the Commission

The Portuguese press has reported that the Commission has imposed staffing cuts on Portuguese banks that have been recapitalised using public funding. According to these reports, the Commission is obliging the banks concerned to dismiss staff on the pretext of the public support provided for private banks.

The Commission is known to have taken the view in similar cases that, since public support represents a distortion of the 'rules of free competition', such support should entail a reduction in activity on the part of the banks in question, which might include branch closures. Nevertheless, this need not necessarily involve job losses.

1. Can the Commission confirm that staffing cuts have been imposed on Portuguese banks?

2. If so, which banks are concerned and what specific measures has the Commission imposed in each individual case?

3. On what legal basis can the Commission impose staffing cuts/dismissals on Portuguese banks? How does it justify these decisions?

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

Firstly, structural measures, including staff cuts, reductions in the branch network or asset disposals, normally form part of the restructuring plans and commitments put forward by recipients of public financial support in the banking sector. Such measures are typically needed to restore the viability of those institutions and to ensure that the institution concerned recovers its path to viability. Such a restoration of viability is critical for the state aid measure to be found compatible with the internal market.

Secondly, the content of the restructuring plans and some of the specific measures contained in them are confidential to the extent that they contain market-sensitive information. Once such information has been cleared with the relevant national authorities, a non-confidential version of each Restructuring Decision approved by the European Commission is published on the website: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/register

Finally, the legal basis for the restructuring measures proposed by Member States in respect of the entities in receipt of state aid is to be found in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union directly (Articles 107-109) and in the rules derived therefrom. The most significant of those rules for the purposes of evaluating the compatibility of state aid to banks are the various Communications which have been approved by the European Commission since the beginning of the crisis in 2008 on the basis of the article 107(3)(b) TFEU. The most recent of them is the communication from the Commission on the application, from 1 August 2013, of state aid rules to support measures in favour of banks in the context of the financial crisis ([1]).

(1) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:216:0001:0015:EN:PDF

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-009879/13
komissiolle
Sari Essayah (PPE)
(4. syyskuuta 2013)

Aihe: Defibrillaattorien sisällyttäminen lentokoneiden pakolliseen ensihoitokalustoon

Automaattinen ulkoinen defibrillaattori on pieni laite, jolla annetaan äkillisen sydänpysähdyksen saaneen potilaan sydämelle sähköimpulssi, jotta sydän saataisiin toimimaan jälleen normaalissa rytmissä. Äkilliseen sydänpysähdykseen kuolee Euroopassa vuosittain yli 300 000 henkeä. Äkillisen sydänpysähdyksen saaneista henkiin jää vain keskimäärin 5 prosenttia ja näistä yli puolet kärsivät pysyvistä seurauksista elvytysviiveen vuoksi. Eri tutkimusten mukaan mahdollisuus selvitä äkillisestä sydänpysähdyksestä moninkertaistuu, mikäli automaattinen ulkoinen defibrillaattori on välittömästi käytettävissä. Lentokoneissa tapahtuneissa kuolemaan johtaneissa sairauskohtauksissa kuolinsyynä on yleisimmin sydänpysähdys.

Lentoliikenne on yhä yleistyvä matkustusmuoto EU:ssa ja luonnollinen osa monen eurooppalaisen arkea. Tarkkojen turvallisuusstandardien ansiosta lentäminen on myös turvallinen matkustusmuoto. On tärkeää, että matkustajia suojellaan myös matkustajan äkillisen sairauskohtauksen tapahtuessa. Ensiapupakkaus kuuluu kaikkien lentokoneiden varustukseen, mutta laajempi hätälääkintäpakkaus on pakollinen ainoastaan, mikäli lentokoneen suurin käytettävä matkustajapaikkaluku on yli 30 ja jos suunnitellun lentoreitin jokin kohta sijaitsee kauempana sellaiselta lentopaikalta, jolla pätevää lääkinnällistä apua voidaan olettaa olevan saatavilla, kuin etäisyydellä, joka vastaa 60 minuutin lentoaikaa normaalilla matkalentonopeudella. Lisäksi, toisin kuin esimerkiksi Yhdysvalloissa, automaattinen ulkoinen defibrillaattori ei kuulu lentokoneiden pakolliseen ensihoitokalustoon.

1. Aikooko komissio ryhtyä toimiin, jotta kaikissa matkustajalentokoneissa olisi hätälääkintäpakkaus?

2. Onko komissio valmis toteuttamaan toimia, jotta jokaisessa matkustajalentokoneessa olisi automaattinen ulkoinen defibrillaattori?

Siim Kallasin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(16. lokakuuta 2013)

Kaikilla EU:n lentoyhtiöillä on lakisääteinen velvollisuus ([1]) huolehtia matkustamohenkilökunnan ensiapukoulutuksesta ja pitää lentokoneissa mukana ensiapupakkauksia. Lentokoneissa on todellakin hätälääkintäpakkaukset vain, jos tietyt edellytykset täyttyvät, ja toiminnanharjoittajan olisi määriteltävä automaattisen ulkoisen defibrillaattorin (AED) tarve lentokoneissa riskinarvioinnin perusteella, jossa otetaan huomioon erityistarpeet (kuten matka kohteeseen, lennon kestoaika, matkustajien lukumäärä ja ikärakenne). Esimerkiksi Atlantin ylittävillä tai muilla pitkillä reiteillä lentokoneissa on mukana automaattinen ulkoinen defibrillaattori.

Komissio ei ole tähän mennessä saanut mitään sellaista ratkaisevaa näyttöä, jonka vuoksi olisi perusteltua tehdä automaattinen ulkoinen defibrillaattori pakolliseksi kaikessa lentotoiminnassa ja kaikissa olosuhteissa. Hätälääkintäpakkauksen sisältöä koskevia vaatimuksia tarkastellaan säännöllisesti, ja niitä päivitetään tarvittaessa.

([1]) Komission asetus (EY) N:o 965/2012 (EUVL L 296, 25.10.2012).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009879/13
to the Commission
Sari Essayah (PPE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Inclusion of defibrillators in the compulsory first aid equipment carried on aircraft

The automatic external defibrillator is a small device which administers an electric shock to the heart of a patient who has suffered a cardiac arrest, in order to restore a normal pulse. Cardiac arrests kill more than 300 000 people a year in Europe. On average, only 5% of people who have suffered a cardiac arrest survive, and more than half of those who do survive suffer lasting effects because of delays in reanimating them. According to various studies, the likelihood of surviving cardiac arrest is many times greater if an automatic external defibrillator is immediately available. The most common cause of death through illness on board aircraft is cardiac arrest.

Air travel is an increasingly common mode of travel in the EU, and a natural part of the everyday lives of many people in Europe. Because of stringent safety standards, flying is also a safe mode of transport. It is important that passengers should also be protected in the event of their suddenly falling ill. First aid equipment is carried on all aircraft, but a wider range of emergency medical equipment is mandatory only if the maximum passenger capacity of the aircraft exceeds 30 and if any point on the planned flight path is situated further from an airport where expert medical assistance may be assumed to be available than the distance equivalent to 60 minutes' flying time at the normal flying speed of an airliner. Moreover, unlike for example in the USA, automatic external defibrillators are not part of the compulsory first aid equipment carried on board aircraft.

1. Will the Commission take measures to induce all airliners to carry emergency medical equipment?

2. Will the Commission take measures to induce all airliners to carry an automatic external defibrillator?

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

All EU airlines are legally required ([1]) to train their cabin crew in first aid and to carry first aid kits on their aircraft. Indeed, emergency medical kits are only carried on board if certain conditions are present and the carriage of an automated external defibrillator (AED) should be determined by the operator on the basis of a risk assessment, taking into account the particular needs of the operation (such as scope, flight duration, number and demographics of passengers). For example, on Transatlantic or other long haul routes AEDs are carried on board.

The Commission has not received any conclusive evidence so far, to consider that it would be justified to make it compulsory for all types of aircraft operation, and in all circumstances, to carry AED. The requirements with regard to the content of the emergency medical kit will be regularly reviewed, and updated if necessary.

([1]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 965/2012 (OJ L 296, 25.10.2012).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009880/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE) y Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(4 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Competencia en la liga de fútbol profesional en España

Los clubes que disputan la liga profesional de fútbol en España se dividen, en función de la fórmula que eligen sus propietarios para gestionarlos, en dos grandes categorías. La mayor parte de ellos son sociedades anónimas deportivas. Cuatro, entre los que figuran Fútbol Club Barcelona, Real Madrid, Athletic de Bilbao y Club Atlético Osasuna, son jurídicamente clubes deportivos en los que los socios mantienen la propiedad.

En las últimas semanas, diversas informaciones periodísticas se han referido a la existencia de una incipiente investigación de la Comisión Europea en torno a los posibles problemas de competencia entre entidades a que pudiese dar lugar esa diferencia en la estructura de propiedad. Según los datos disponibles, la Comisión estudia ahora un informe del Defensor del Pueblo Europeo que se abrió ante el retraso en resolver una denuncia sobre este asunto interpuesta ante la propia Comisión Europea en el año 2009.

A la vista de estas informaciones:

1. ¿En qué estado se encuentra esta investigación?

2. ¿En qué plazo podría resolverse?

3. ¿Indican los datos existentes que puede producirse algún problema de competencia derivado de estas circunstancias?

4. ¿Existen otras investigaciones en materia de competencia que afecten a la liga de fútbol profesional en España?

5. ¿Afectan estas investigaciones al reparto de los derechos de emisión televisiva que gestiona la liga de fútbol profesional en España?

6. ¿Y a las condiciones en que algunos equipos acceden a la financiación de sus fichajes?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(9 de octubre de 2013)

La Comisión está investigando el distinto trato a los clubes de fútbol profesional en España, en función de su forma jurídica. La Comisión no puede indicar cuando concluirá esta investigación. Puesto que la investigación está en curso, la Comisión todavía no está en condiciones de hacer comentarios sobre su posible resultado.

Como ya se ha mencionado en las respuestas a las preguntas escritas E-6424/2013, E-2747/2013 y E-3405/2013, la Comisión también está investigando la posible ayuda al Real Madrid, mediante una transferencia inmobiliaria, y a tres de los clubes de fútbol de la Comunidad Valenciana.

Estas investigaciones no se refieren al reparto de derechos de emisión televisiva que gestiona la liga de fútbol profesional. Ni tampoco abordan, al menos no directamente, la cuestión de cómo organizan los clubes de fútbol el traspaso de jugadores.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009880/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE) and Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Competition in the Spanish Professional Football League

The clubs competing in the Spanish Professional Football League fall into two broad categories according to the form of legal ownership they have opted for. While most are public limited sports companies, four are technically sports clubs that are owned by their members: FC Barcelona, Real Madrid, Athletic Bilbao and CA Osasuna.

Press reports in recent weeks have referred to the fact that the Commission has opened an investigation into the competition issues that may arise from this difference in legal ownership. According to the information available, the Commission is currently examining a report by the European Ombudsman drawn up in response to the delay in resolving a complaint on this matter which was lodged with the Commission in 2009.

1. What stage has been reached in the Commission's investigation?

2. When does it expect the matter to be resolved?

3. Do its current findings suggest that the situation could give rise to competition issues?

4. Is the Spanish Professional Football League affected by any other ongoing investigations involving competition?

5. If so, do those investigations affect the distribution of television rights that are managed by the league?

6. Do they affect the way in which some clubs raise money for signing new players?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(9 October 2013)

The Commission is investigating the different treatment of professional football clubs in Spain, based on their legal form. It is not able to indicate when this investigation will be closed. As the investigation is still ongoing, the Commission is not yet in a position to comment on its possible outcome.

As already mentioned in the answers to written questions E-6424/2013, E-2747/2013 and E-3405/2013, the Commission is also investigating possible aid to Real Madrid, by way of a real property transfer, and to three football clubs in Comunidad Valenciana.

These investigations do not concern the distribution of television rights managed by the Spanish Professional Football League. They do not, at least not directly, address the question of how clubs arrange for football players transfers.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009881/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(4 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Problemas con la organización de la capitalidad cultural 2016

La ciudad de Donostia-San Sebastián, nominada «Capital Europea de la Cultura 2016», recibió el pasado 17 de junio la visita del presidente del jurado internacional que realizó la nominación. A raíz de la misma, la Comisión de Control y Asesoramiento de Capitales Europeas de la Cultura está elaborando un informe sobre el modo en que la ciudad se prepara para acoger este evento. De acuerdo con algunas informaciones aparecidas en los medios, los evaluadores han expresado su inquietud por los efectos que las restricciones y recortes en los presupuestos públicos pueden tener en la preparación del proyecto. Además, se muestran críticos por la falta de liderazgo de la alcaldía de la ciudad, denuncian retrasos en el desarrollo del proyecto y deficiencias en la estructura técnica que está poniendo en marcha esta iniciativa, etc. Al parecer, estas advertencias se han comunicado por escrito a la alcaldía de Donostia-San Sebastián.

1. ¿Ha remitido la Comisión de Control y Asesoramiento de Capitales Europeas de la Cultura un informe crítico al ayuntamiento de San Sebastián sobre las tareas desarrolladas para preparar este evento?

2. De ser así, ¿puede considerarse un documento interno de trabajo dirigido exclusivamente a la alcaldía de la ciudad? ¿Cuáles son las principales deficiencias observadas hasta la fecha en la puesta en marcha de este proyecto?

3. ¿Qué medidas urgentes deberían ponerse en marcha para garantizar el éxito en la organización y desarrollo de este evento?

4. ¿Existen las «injerencias políticas» a que se refieren los medios de comunicación en sus informaciones? De ser así, ¿de qué tipo y cómo se han hecho patentes?

5. ¿Puede ser que la polémica surgida tras la nominación de la ciudad tenga alguna relación con la actitud reticente —que al parecer denuncia el informe— con la que el Ministerio español de Cultura está participando en este evento?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de octubre de 2013)

De conformidad con la Decisión n° 1622/2006/CE, la Comisión convocará dos reuniones formales de seguimiento entre un «Comité de seguimiento y asesoría» y las ciudades designadas como Capitales Europeas de la Cultura. La primera reunión se celebrará dos años antes de la manifestación; la segunda ocho meses antes de esta. Tras cada reunión, el Comité elaborará un informe sobre el estado de los preparativos de la manifestación en el que expondrá su evaluación y recomendaciones. Dichos informes se publicarán en el sitio web de la Comisión. Por lo que respecta a Donostia-San Sebastián, las reuniones de seguimiento tendrán lugar en el otoño del 2013 y la primavera del 2015.

Por otra parte, la Comisión ha adoptado nuevas medidas para ayudar a las ciudades a preparar su año como Capital Europea de la Cultura, como por ejemplo las visitas sobre el terreno que realizará Comité. Estas visitas suplementarias pretenden orientar un poco más a las ciudades de manera puramente informal, razón por la cual no se publicarán las actas de las mismas. En junio se llevó a cabo una visita de este tipo a Donostia-San Sebastián.

La Comisión no hace comentarios sobre especulaciones aparecidas en la prensa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009881/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Organisational problems concerning the Capital of Culture in 2016

In connection with a visit to Donostia-San Sebastián on 17 June by the Chair of the international selection panel which recommended it for the title of European Capital of Culture in 2016, media reports indicate that the monitoring and assessment committee, which is currently drawing up an assessment of preparations by the city, has written to the municipal authority expressing concern at the impact of austerity measures and public spending cuts, criticising the authority itself for lack of initiative and pointing to delays and technical problems.

1. Has the committee in fact submitted an assessment report to the San Sebastián municipal authority expressing concern regarding preparations for the event?

2. If so, can this be regarded as a purely internal document for the eyes of the mayor and municipal councillors alone? What have been the main problems observed to date?

3. What urgent measures must be taken to ensure the successful preparation and organisation of the event?

4. Are media reports of 'political interference' accurate? If so what form has this taken?

5. Could the controversy surrounding the choice of Donostia-San Sebastián be in any way related to what press reports describe as lukewarm support for the project on the part of the Spanish Ministry for Culture?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(15 October 2013)

According to Decision n° 1622/2006/EC, the Commission convenes two formal monitoring meetings between a 'monitoring and advisory panel' and the cities designated as European Capitals of Culture. The first meeting takes place two years, the second eight months before the title-year. After each meeting, the panel issues a report on the state of preparations for the event containing the panel's assessment and recommendations. These reports are published on the Commission's website. As regards Donostia-San Sebastián, the two monitoring meetings will take place in autumn 2013 and spring 2015.

In addition, the Commission has introduced further steps to help cities prepare their title-year, such as on-the-spot visits by the panel. These additional visits aim to provide cities with more guidance in a purely informal way and the proceedings of such meetings are therefore not made public. A visit of this nature was made to Donostia-San Sebastián in June.

The Commission does not comment on speculative comments made in the press.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009882/13
an die Kommission
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE) und Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(4. September 2013)

Betrifft: Mitreisende bei Delegationsreisen der Kommissionsmitglieder

Bezug nehmend auf Ihre schriftliche Antwort vom 25.6.2013 auf die Frage, wie viele Dritte (andere als Kommissionsbedienstete) bei den Delegationsreisen der Kommissionsmitglieder vertreten sind und ob die Kommission die Kosten dafür trägt (E-005341/2013), haben Sie geantwortet, dass generell keine Kosten für Dritte übernommen werden, außer in begründeten Ausnahmefällen.

1. Was sind diese Ausnahmefälle? Wann sind sie eingetreten? Welcher Kommissar führte sie durch?

2. Welche Ausnahmefälle gab es bei den jeweiligen Delegationsreisen in den Jahren von 2009 bis 2012? Warum?

3. Wer war bei diesen Reisen neben dem Kommissar vertreten? Was war der Zweck der Reise?

4. Welche Kosten sind bei den einzelnen Reisen entstanden?

5. Wie viele Delegationsreisen von Kommissaren fanden 2012 statt?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(17. Oktober 2013)

Die Kommission verweist die Frauen Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-005341/2013.

Es werden grundsätzlich keine Kosten für Dritte, die ein Kommissionsmitglied auf einer Dienstreise begleiten, übernommen. Nur bei Reisen, die offiziellen oder diplomatischen Zwecken dienen, werden in ordnungsgemäß begründeten Ausnahmefällen Kosten für Dritte übernommen. Als Beispiel für einen solchen Ausnahmefall lässt sich die Einladung der Gewinner eines Wettbewerbs anführen, den die EU-Organe in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Jugendforum veranstaltet hatten. Die Gewinner des Wettbewerbs „Frieden, Europa, Zukunft" waren eingeladen, gemeinsam mit einer Delegation der EU-Organe der Verleihung des Friedensnobelpreises beizuwohnen. Ihre Reise- und Übernachtungskosten wurden von der Kommission, dem Parlament und dem Rat gemeinsam übernommen.

Die IT-Systeme, die derzeit in Gebrauch sind, erlauben es nicht, Daten zu extrahieren, anhand deren sich die Zusammensetzung von Delegationen von Bediensteten der Organe oder Dritten, die ein Kommissionsmitglied auf einer Dienstreise begleiten, erkennen lässt.

Im Jahr 2012 haben die Mitglieder der Kommission 1 431 Dienstreisen unternommen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009882/13
to the Commission
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE) and Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Third parties accompanying Members of the Commission on mission

With reference to the Commission's reply of 25 June 2013 to the question as to how many third parties (other than Commission staff) travel on mission with Members of the Commission and whether the Commission pays their expenses (E-005341/2013), the Commission replied that as a general rule, the Commission does not cover the cost of third parties and that only under exceptional and duly justified circumstances are such expenses reimbursed.

1. What are these exceptional circumstances? When have they arisen? Which Commissioner was involved?

2. What exceptional circumstances arose during such missions between 2009 and 2012? Why?

3. Who travelled on these missions apart from the Commissioner? What was the purpose of travel?

4. What expenses were incurred on the individual journeys?

5. How many missions did Commissioners undertake in 2012?

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

We refer the Honourable Member to the reply given to the previous question (E-005341/2013).

As a general rule, the Commission does not cover the cost of third parties accompanying a Commissioner. Only under exceptional and duly justified circumstances are such expenses reimbursed for official or diplomatic purpose. An example of such an exception was the invitation of the winners of a competition organised by the EU institutions in partnership with the European Youth Forum. The winners of the 'Peace, Europe, Future' competition, were invited to attend the Nobel Peace prize ceremony with the delegation of the EU institutions. Their travel and accommodation costs were covered jointly by the Commission, the Parliament and the Council.

The current IT systems in operation do not permit the extraction of data allowing for the identification of the composition of delegations of staff members or third parties travelling on a mission with a Commissioner.

The number of missions undertaken by Commissioners in 2012 was 1 431.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-009883/13
a Bizottság számára
Szegedi Csanád (NI)
(2013. szeptember 4.)

Tárgy: A fertőző betegségek elterjedése az EU-ban

Az Unióban 1999-től működő Fertőző Betegségek Megfigyelési és Ellenőrzési Hálózatának jelentése szerint az EU-ban a fertőző betegségek előfordulási gyakorisága folyamatos emelkedést mutat. Az elmúlt időszakban olyan fertőzések incidenciája is növekedést jelez, amelyek nem voltak jellemzőek a tagállamokra, mint a tuberkulózis, az AIDS, vagy egyéb ritkább trópusi megbetegedések. Az Unióban évtizedek óta megfigyelhető fokozódó migráció jelentősen elősegítette a jelenség előfordulását. Véleményem szerint egy átfogó és a tagállamokkal közösen kidolgozott programot szükséges megvalósítani a fertőzések megállításának érdekében.

Milyen intézkedési és népegészségügyi programot tervez a Bizottság a fertőző betegségek visszaszorítása érdekében? A stockholmi székhelyű, 2004 óta működő Európai Betegségmegelőzési és Járványvédelmi Központnak milyen megfigyelései és cselekvési tervei vannak az ügy tekintetében?

Tonio Borg válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. október 21.)

A fertőző betegségek előfordulásait 1998 óta uniós szinten is szorosan nyomon követjük, amióta a 2119/98/EK európai parlamenti és tanácsi rendelet létrehozta a fertőző betegségek európai uniós járványügyi felügyeleti és ellenőrzési hálózatát.

A tagállamok jelenleg 49 fertőző betegséget, illetve fertőző betegségekhez kapcsolódó közegészségügyi problémát – antimikrobiális rezisztenciát, egészségügyi ellátással összefüggő fertőzést – kötelesek jelenteni az EU korai figyelmeztető és gyorsreagáló rendszerén keresztül; és ugyanígy értesítést kell küldeniük arról is, hogy milyen intézkedéseket fogadtak el a veszélyek enyhítése érdekében. Uniós szintű esetmeghatározások is kidolgozásra kerültek az egyes fertőző betegségek egyértelmű leírására és megkülönböztetésére, hogy az egész EU-ban egységes koncepció érvényesüljön e téren ([1]).

A szóban forgó fertőző betegségek felügyeletét a tagállamokban folytatott adatgyűjtések alapján az Európai Betegségmegelőzési és Járványvédelmi Központ (ECDC) koordinálja. A járványügyi felügyelettel kapcsolatos legfrissebb uniós adatok nem támasztják alá, hogy nőtt volna a fertőző betegségek előfordulásának gyakorisága Európában.

A bejelentett tuberkulózisos esetek összesített aránya az 1995-ben 100 000 főre eső 23 esethez képest 2011-re 14 eset/100 000 főre csökkent. Az AIDS-fertőzések értesítési aránya stabil maradt, 2004 óta 6 eset jut 100 000 főre. A fertőző betegségek Unióban való előfordulásairól részletesebben tájékozódhat az ECDC által megjelentetett éves felügyeleti jelentésből ([2]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31998D2119:HU:HTML
([2]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/20121130-Annual-HIV-Surveillance-Report.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009883/13
to the Commission
Csanád Szegedi (NI)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t4*Spread of infectious diseases in the EU

According to a report by the Communicable Disease Surveillance and Control Network, which has been operating in the EU since 1999, the prevalence of infectious diseases has been constantly increasing in the EU. In the recent period, there has also been a rise in the incidence of infection with diseases which used not typically to occur in the Member States, such as TB, AIDS or other, rarer, tropical diseases. The growth of migration within the EU which has been going on for decades bears much of the responsibility for this rise. In my view, there is a need for a comprehensive programme devised jointly by the Member States to combat infections.

What institutional and public health programmes is the Commission planning to combat infectious diseases? What surveillance and action plans does the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, based in Stockholm, which has been operating since 2004, have in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(03 O:tober 013u)

Infectious diseases are thoroughly monitored at EU level since 1998, when Decision 2119/98/EC of the European Parliament and the Council established a European Union network for the epidemiological surveillance and control of communicable diseases.

Currently 49 communicable diseases and public health issues related to communicable diseases, i.e. antimicrobial resistance and healthcare associated infections, need to be notified by Member States through an early warning and response system at EU level; measures taken to mitigate these threats have to be reported as well. Case definitions at EU level are available to clearly describe and distinguish each communicable disease and ensure a consistent approach throughout the EU ([1]).

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) coordinates, through data collection from the Member States, the surveillance of those communicable diseases. The latest EU figures on surveillance do not support a general rise in communicable diseases in Europe.

As regards tuberculosis, the overall notification rate has decreased from 23 per 100 000 people in 1995 to 14 per 100 000 in 2011. The notification rate for HIV infections has been stable at around 6 per 100 000 people since 2004. More detailed information on communicable diseases in the Union is available in the yearly surveillance report published by ECDC ([2]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31998D2119:EN:HTML
([2]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/20121130-Annual-HIV-Surveillance-Report.pdf

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-009884/13
a Bizottság számára
Szegedi Csanád (NI)
(2013. szeptember 4.)

Tárgy: Kerékpárutak bővítése az Unióban

Az európai uniós fejlesztéseknek köszönhetően a tagállamokban már évek óta prioritást élvez a kerékpárutak hálózatának kiépítése és bővítése a zöld beruházásoknak köszönhetően. Ezeknek számos előnye ismert, mint a testmozgás miatti egészséges életmódra való ösztönzés (betegségmegelőzés), az autózással szembeni biciklizés következtében a gépjárművek általi károsanyag-kibocsátás csökkenése (környezetvédelem), a tömegsport általi közösségi programok megteremtése (szocializáció) stb. Az a jelenség figyelhető meg, hogy a kiépített kerékpárutak ösztönzően hatnak a lakosságra és egyre nagyobb számú polgár váltja fel az autóját kerékpárra időszakosan vagy akár a napi használatban. A hálózat áttekintése nyomán azonban komoly hiányosságokat figyelhetünk meg az utak kiépítésével kapcsolatban.

A tagállamokon átnyúló, nemzetközi, Európát átszelő kerékpárútnak, amely az Atlanti Óceántól a Fekete-tengerig tartana Magyarország érintésével (EuroVelo), mintegy 1/3-a került idáig megvalósításra.

Véleményem szerint támogatni kell a lokális (tagállami) és a nemzetközi kerékpárutak további fejlesztését.

A Bizottságnak milyen további fejlesztési tervei vannak a tagállami és a nemzetközi kerékpárutak kiépítésével kapcsolatban?

Siim Kallas válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. október 22.)

A 2007–2013-as időszakra az uniós strukturális alapokból és a Kohéziós Alapból több mint 600 millió eurót irányoztak elő a kerékpárút-hálózat kiépítésébe történő beruházásokra az uniós régiókban.

A 2014–2020-as időszakra az Európai Hálózatfinanszírozási Eszköz keretében 26,2 milliárd eurót különítettek el a transzeurópai közlekedési hálózat projektjeinek finanszírozására, amely adott esetben az e pénzeszközök felhasználásával épült hidak vagy alagutak mellett húzódó kerékpárutakat is magában foglalja.

A turizmus területén az Unió hatáskörében számos ([1]), a kerékpáros túraútvonalak kiépítésére irányuló figyelemfelhívó és hálózati-építési projekt valósul meg a „fenntartható turizmus" előkészítő intézkedés társfinanszírozásával ([2]). A Bizottság ezenkívül az EuroVelo útvonalhálózat ([3]) központi koordinálásával és a „zöldutak" ([4]) népszerűsítésével ([5]) kapcsolatos projekteket is támogatott.

A Bizottság szorgalmazza a lakosság mobilitásának fokozását és az áruszállítás jobb és fenntarthatóbb módon történő szervezését elősegítő fenntartható városi mobilitási tervek elfogadását. Az ilyen terveket úgy kell kidolgozni, hogy a kerékpárutakat már a tervezési szakaszban figyelembe vegyék.

Ezen túlmenően a Civitas kezdeményezés ([6]) keretében a részt vevő 59 városban 2002 óta 200 millió eurót fordítottak több mint 120 olyan, a kerékpározással összefüggő innovatív intézkedés megvalósítására és értékelésére, amelyek célja a városi kerékpározás új megközelítésbe helyezése.

Az európai mobilitási hétnek ([7]) szintén fontos szerepe van, hiszen ennek köszönhető számos különböző, a részt vevő városok által a tömegközlekedés és a városi infrastruktúra fejlesztésére javasolt állandó intézkedés.

([1]) A Lisszaboni Szerződés hatáskört biztosít az Unió számára, hogy a tagállamok által a turizmus területén hozott intézkedéseket támogassa, koordinálja és kiegészítse. Ugyanakkor a turisztikai infrastruktúra a regionális/tagállami hatóságok hatáskörébe tartozik.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/iron-curtain-trail/year-2/index_en.htm
([3]) www.eurovelo.com vagy www.eurovelo.org
([4]) http://www.aevv-egwa.org/site/hp_en.asp
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/sustainable-tourism/index_en.htm
([6]) http://www.civitas-initiative.org/
([7]) http://www.mobilityweek.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009884/13
to the Commission
Csanád Szegedi (NI)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t4*Building more cycle paths in the EU

Thanks to developments in the European Union, priority has for years been assigned in the Member States to developing and expanding the cycle path network, using green investment. Cycle paths confer many benefits, such as encouraging a healthy life style by means of physical movement (disease prevention), reducing emissions of harmful substances from motor vehicles thanks to cycling (environmental protection), creation of Community programmes through grassroots sport (socialisation), etc. It is observable that the building of cycle paths encourages changes of behaviour, as more and more people take to cycling instead of driving for part of the time or even on a daily basis. However, if one examines the cycle path network, it becomes clear that there are serious gaps in it.

So far, approximately one third of the international, trans-European cycle path passing through Member States, including Hungary, and linking the Atlantic Ocean to the Black Sea (EuroVelo) has so far been built.

I believe that the further development of local (Member State) and international cycle paths should be supported.

What further development plans does the Commission have with the aim of expanding the Member States' and international cycle path networks?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(00 O:tober 013u)

For the period 2007-2013, the EU's Structural and Cohesion Funds made available an estimated budget of over EUR 600 million for the implementation of investment in cycle infrastructure in regions across the EU.

An allocation of EUR 26.2 billion of the EU budget (Connecting Europe Facility) will be made available for the period 2014 -2020 for the financing of projects on the Trans-European Transport Network. This includes cycle lanes where appropriate alongside bridges or tunnels which are built using this funding.

Within the competence of the EU in the field of tourism ([1]), several awareness-raising and networking-building projects for the development of long-distance cycling routes have been co-financed by the Preparatory Action 'Sustainable Tourism' ([2]). Moreover, the Commission supported with grants the projects related to the EuroVelo ([3]) Network central coordination and to greenways' ([4]) promotion ([5]).

The Commission actively encourages the adoption of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) to help organise the mobility of people and the delivery of goods in a better and more sustainable way. These will ensure that cycle infrastructure is included at the planning stage.

Furthermore, the Civitas Initiative ([6]) has committed EUR 200 million since 2002 to help 59 participating cities to implement and evaluate over 120 innovative cycling-related measures, in order to develop new approaches to cycling in cities.

European Mobility Week ([7]) also takes credit for a kaleidoscope of permanent measures put forward by participating cities to improve public transport and urban infrastructure in general.

([1]) The Lisbon Treaty grants the Union the competence to carry out actions to support coordinate or supplement the actions of the Member States in the tourism field. However, the competence for tourism infrastructure lies within regional/national authorities.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/iron-curtain-trail/year-2/index_en.htm
([3]) www.eurovelo.com or www.eurovelo.org
([4]) http://www.aevv-egwa.org/site/hp_en.asp
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/sustainable-tourism/index_en.htm
([6]) http://www.civitas-initiative.org/
([7]) http://www.mobilityweek.eu/

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-009885/13
a Bizottság számára
Szegedi Csanád (NI)
(2013. szeptember 4.)

Tárgy: A krónikus légzőszervi betegségek megelőzése és kezelése

A krónikus légzőszervi betegségek, amelyeket összefoglalóan „Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease”-nek (COPD) nevezünk, a súlyos civilizációs betegségeink közé tartoznak. Ilyen a krónikus *bronchitis*, amelyet elsősorban a dohányzás okoz, az allergia és az *asthma bronchiale*, melyek különböző allergén anyagok miatt alakulnak ki. Ezek mellett egyéb tüdőbetegségek (tuberkulózis, emfizéma stb.) is ehhez a csoporthoz tartozhatnak. A légzőszervi betegségek évtizedeken keresztül tartó légzési problémával járnak, és végső soron tüdőelégtelenséghez vezethetnek. Epidemiológiáját tekintve az előfordulásuk mind az USA-ban, mind az Európai Unióban enyhe emelkedést mutat. Európában ezen megbetegedések a populáció mintegy 5%-át érintik valamilyen formában, azonban ez Kelet-Európában akár 10% is lehet.

A betegség előfordulásában elsősorban a környezeti hatások játsszák a döntő szerepet, ami összefügg az iparosodással, a környezetszennyezéssel, az életmóddal, a fertőző betegségekkel és az erdőirtással. A növekvő, rendkívül nagy betegszám jelentős terhet jelent az egyes tagállamok egészségügyi rendszerére (Európában mintegy 3%-a az egészségügyi kiadásoknak). Érdemes tanulmány tárgyává tenni, hogy a betegség következtében mekkora populáció esik ki a munka világából, és ez mekkora hatást gyakorol a gazdaságra.

A morbiditás csökkentésében nagy szerepe van a megelőzésnek (dohányzás elleni kampányok), az egészséges életmódnak, a környezetszennyezés felszámolásának, illetve az allergén anyagok eliminálásának.

Véleményem szerint komprehenzív népegészségügyi programok és a tagállamok egészségügyi ágazatainak bevonása által kellene közösen fellépni a jelenség ellen.

Milyen programja van a Bizottságnak a krónikus légzőszervi betegségek megelőzésével és kezelésével kapcsolatban?

Tonio Borg válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. október 21.)

A dohányzás a krónikus obstruktív légzőszervi betegség első számú kiváltó oka. Minél többet dohányzunk, illetve vagyunk kitéve a passzív dohányzás ártalmainak, annál nagyobb eséllyel alakulhat ki szervezetünkben a COPD-nek is nevezett krónikus obstruktív légzőszervi betegség.

A COPD visszaszorítását szolgálja maga a dohánytermékekre vonatkozó jelenlegi uniós szabályozás, illetve az annak felülvizsgálatára irányuló európai bizottsági javaslat, továbbá a tagállami dohányzásellenes törvények elfogadását sürgető intézkedések és „A volt dohányosok megállíthatatlanok” elnevezésű kampány is.

A Bizottság a Közegészségügyi Program ([1]), valamint a hetedik kutatási és technológiafejlesztési keretprogram révén számos, a krónikus légzőszervi betegségekkel kapcsolatos projektet támogatott. A Közegészségügyi Program keretében 2005-től 2009-ig a Bizottság támogatásában részesült „A krónikus obstruktív légzőszervi betegség és az asztma nyomon követésének mutatói” elnevezésű kutatási projekt is.

Összességében 113 kutatási projekt több mint 215 millió euró támogatásban részesült; a támogatott kutatási területek között szerepelt a légúti fertőzések, a ritka betegségek, a COPD, az asztma, az allergiák, valamint a tüdőrák diagnosztizálása, megelőzése és kezelése is. Az érintett projektek közül külön kiemelhető az EvA ([2]), a PREDICTA ([3]), a MedALL ([4]) és a CURELUNG ([5]). Ezen túlmenően az innovatív gyógyszerek kutatására irányuló kezdeményezés ([6]) további három releváns projektet finanszírozott köz-magán társulás formájában, 30,5 millió euró értékben ([7]).

([1]) Lásd: http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html
([2]) Emfizéma markerek kontra RADS markerek a krónikus obstruktív légúti betegségben szenvedőknél: http://www.eva-copd.eu/
([3]) A posztinfekciós immunkezelés és annak összefüggései az allergiás légúti megbetegedések perzisztens és krónikus jellegével: http://www.predicta.eu
([4]) Az allergia kialakulásának mechanizmusai: http://medall-fp7.eu/
([5]) (Epi)genetikus terápiás génaláírások meghatározása a tüdőrák prognózisának javítása érdekében: http://www.curelung.eu/
([6]) http://www.imi.europa.eu
([7]) PREDICT-TB: http://www.predict-tb.eu/, PRO-ACTIVE: http://www.proactivecopd.com/, valamint U-BIOPRED: http://www.ubiopred.eu

A következő Közegészségügyi Programra irányuló – jelenleg tárgyalt – bizottsági javaslat az egészségügyi problémák széles skáláját öleli fel, köztük a krónikus betegségek megelőzését és kezelését is. A jelenlegi fázisban azonban még korai volna a finanszírozásban részesülő konkrét intézkedésekről nyilatkozni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009885/13
to the Commission
Csanád Szegedi (NI)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t4*Prevention and treatment of chronic respiratory diseases

Those chronic respiratory diseases which are known collectively as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) are among the serious diseases of our civilisation. One is chronic bronchitis, caused primarily by smoking; allergies; and bronchial asthma; which are caused by various allergens. In addition to these, the category can also include other lung diseases (TB, emphysema, etc.). Respiratory diseases cause breathing difficulties for decades and may ultimately lead to pulmonary insufficiency. From the point of view of their epidemiology, their prevalence is increasing slightly, both in the USA and in the European Union. In Europe, these diseases affect some 5% of the population in some form, while in Eastern Europe the figure may be as high as 10%.

It is primarily environmental factors that play the decisive role in the occurrence of the disease, which is associated with industrialisation, environmental pollution, life style, infectious diseases and deforestation. The growing and extremely large number of patients represents a significant burden on the health systems of individual Member States (accounting for some 3% of healthcare expenditure in Europe). It would be worth researching what proportion of the population is excluded from the labour market on account of the disease, and what impact this has on the economy.

There are large roles to be played in reducing morbidity by prevention (anti-smoking campaigns), healthy life styles, eradication of environmental pollution and elimination of allergens.

In my view, the phenomenon should be combated jointly by introducing comprehensive public health programmes and by involving the healthcare systems of the Member States.

What programme does the Commission have with regard to prevention and treatment of chronic respiratory diseases?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(03 O:tober 013u)

Smoking is the leading cause of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. The more a person smokes or is exposed to second-hand smoke, the more likely he or she is of developing chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases.

As such, current EC law on Tobacco Products, the European Commission proposal to revise such law, action to encourage Member States to adopt smoke free laws, and the campaign 'Ex-smokers are unstoppable' can all contribute to curbing chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

The Commission supported projects on chronic respiratory diseases through the Health Programme ([1]) and the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development. Under the Health programme, the Commission supported a project to develop 'Indicators for monitoring chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases and asthma' from 2005 to 2009.

Over EUR 215 million have been provided to 113 research projects covering such aspects as diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of respiratory infections, rare diseases, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma, allergies, as well as lung cancer. Examples of the projects include EvA ([2]), PREDICTA ([3]), MedALL ([4]), and CURELUNG ([5]). The public-private partnership on the Innovative Medicines Initiative ([6]) further funded three projects in this area for another EUR 30.5 million ([7]).

([1]) See at http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html
([2]) Markers for emphysema versus airway disease in COPD, http://www.eva-copd.eu/
([3]) Post-infectious immune reprogramming and its association with persistence and chronicity of respiratory allergic diseases, http://www.predicta.eu
([4]) Mechanisms of the Development of Allergy, http://medall-fp7.eu/
([5]) Determining (epi)genetic therapeutic signatures for improving lung cancer prognosis, http://www.curelung.eu/
([6]) http://www.imi.europa.eu
([7]) PREDICT-TB http://www.predict-tb.eu/, PRO-ACTIVE http://www.proactivecopd.com/, and U-BIOPRED http://www.ubiopred.eu

The Commission proposal for the next Health Programme, still under negotiation, covers a wide range of health issues including prevention and treatment of chronic diseases. It is however premature at this stage to predict the specific actions that will be funded.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-009886/13
a Bizottság számára
Szegedi Csanád (NI)
(2013. szeptember 4.)

Tárgy: a Szerb–Magyar Rádió fennmaradása

A Délvidéken (Szerbiában) élő jelentős számú magyar kisebbség számára nélkülözhetetlen, nagy múltra visszatekintő magyar rádiózás került veszélybe az utóbbi években. A Szerb Médiatanács sorozatos intézkedései (finanszírozás megvonása, frekvenciaelosztás miatti korlátozás stb.) nyomán próbálja ellehetetleníteni a 40 éve fennálló méltán híres magyar rádiót, amely a tartományban a 3. leghallgatottabb, a magyar kisebbség körében pedig a legnépszerűbb rádióadót jelenti.

A Bizottság milyen lépéseket tesz a délvidéki magyar rádió védelme érdekében?

Štefan Füle válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. október 25.)

Az Európai Bizottság az uniós tagság koppenhágai kritériumainak részeként valamennyi uniós tagjelölt országban – köztük Szerbiában is – szorosan nyomon követi a kisebbségek tiszteletben tartását és védelmét. Szerbia joganyaga rendelkezik a kisebbségek nyelvén történő tájékoztatásról, és a Bizottság elvárja az országtól, hogy ezeket a rendelkezéseket továbbra is végrehajtsa.

A magyar nyelvű műsorszolgáltatást elsősorban a Vajdasági Rádió és Televízió (RTV) biztosítja, a rádiós műsorszolgáltatást illetően pedig az RTV-csoportba tartozó Újvidéki Rádió (Radio Novi Sad 2) kizárólag magyar nyelven sugároz. A Bizottság tisztában van vele, hogy Szerbia nehéz társadalmi-gazdasági helyzete számos médiumra – köztük az állami tulajdonban levő RTV-re is – káros hatást gyakorolt. Felhívtuk a szerb hatóságok figyelmét erre a tényre, nyomatékosítva, hogy Szerbiának fenn kell tartania a kisebbségi nyelveken történő műsorszolgáltatást a vonatkozó európai normák, például az Európai Tanács nemzeti kisebbségek védelméről szóló keretegyezménye értelmében tett kötelezettségvállalásaival összhangban.

A Bizottság továbbra is szorosan nyomon követi a kisebbségvédelem alakulását, és a Szerbiáról szóló következő, 2013. október 16-án megjelenő eredményjelentésben beszámol róla.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009886/13
to the Commission
Csanád Szegedi (NI)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Survival of Hungarian-language radio in Serbia

In recent years, Hungarian-language radio broadcasting in Vojvodina (Serbia), which is essential to the large Hungarian-speaking minority there and which has a past that it can be rightly proud of, has come under threat. The Serbian Media Council is seeking by means of a series of measures (withdrawal of funding, restrictions arising from the allocation of frequencies, etc.) to make it impossible for the deservedly renowned Hungarian-language radio broadcasting service to continue; it has been in existence for 40 years and is the third most listened-to radio programme in the province, as well as the most popular among the Hungarian-speaking minority.

What steps will the Commission take to defend Hungarian-language radio broadcasting in Vojvodina?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(25 October 2013)

The European Commission closely monitors the respect for and protection of minorities by all EU-candidate countries, including Serbia, as part of the Copenhagen criteria for EU membership. Information in minority languages is provided for in the Serbian legislation and the Commission expects from Serbia that it continues to implement these provisions.

Broadcasting in Hungarian language is ensured mainly through the Radio Television of Vojvodina (RTV) and regarding radio broadcasting, Radio Novi Sad 2, a radio under the RTV, broadcasts only in Hungarian language. The Commission understands that the difficult socioeconomic context in Serbia has had an adverse effect on the situation of a number of media outlets, including the state owned RTV. We have brought this to the attention of the Serbian authorities, stressing the need for Serbia to maintain broadcasting in minority languages, in line with the country's commitments under the relevant European standards, such as the Council of Europe Framework Convention on National Minorities.

The Commission will continue to closely follow up and report on the protection of minority issues in the upcoming progress report on Serbia, released on 16 October 2013.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-009887/13
do Komisji
Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE)
(2 września 013. rB)

*drzem io:4*Negocjacje UE z USA w sprawie umowy o wolnym handlu

Konieczna jest analiza skutków ekonomicznych ewentualnej umowy o wolnym handlu z USA.

Wspomniana analiza powinna identyfikować ewentualne korzyści oraz zagrożenia dla poszczególnych działów gospodarski, w tym rolnictwa i jego sektorów.

Komisja powinna w tym raporcie przedstawić m.in. propozycje ewentualnych środków zapobiegających lub łagodzących potencjalne zagrożenia wynikające z liberalizacji handlu z USA.

W negocjacjach należy pamiętać o wrażliwości sektora rolnego i jego specyfiki. Należy mieć na uwadze europejski model rolnictwa oparty na rodzinnych gospodarstwach oraz wysokich standardach, jakie rolnicy muszą spełniać. Wydaje się, że negocjacje i przyszła umowa powinna zawierać również kwestie dobrostanu zwierząt.

Kiedy Komisja udostępni Parlamentowi analizę skutków ekonomicznych wynikających z ewentualnej umowy o wolnym handlu z USA, a zwłaszcza tych odnoszących się do sektora rolnego?

Jaki wpływ umowa może mieć na miejsca pracy w rolnictwie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Karela De Guchta w imieniu Komisji
(32 paźnziernika 013. rB)

Szczegółowa analiza ewentualnego wpływu transatlantyckiego partnerstwa w dziedzinie handlu i inwestycji, przeprowadzona przez Ośrodek Badań Polityki Gospodarczej (Centre for Economic Policy Research – CEPR) na zlecenie Komisji, została udostępniona dnia 12 marca 2013 r. ([1]). Z analizy makroekonomicznej wynika, że liberalizacja handlu między UE i Stanami Zjednoczonymi, a szczególnie możliwość zawarcia umowy o wolnym handlu, zwiększa dobrobyt obu stron.

W analizie zwrócono także uwagę na wrażliwość niektórych sektorów rolnictwa. Komisja jest w pełni świadoma tej sytuacji i weźmie ją pod uwagę podczas negocjacji. Jeżeli chodzi natomiast o prawdopodobny wpływ na miejsca pracy w rolnictwie, w tabelach 34 i 36 sprawozdania CEPR przedstawiono dane obrazujące wpływ na zatrudnienie zarówno bardziej, jak i mniej wykwalifikowanych pracowników, z podziałem na sektory.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/march/tradoc_150737.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009887/13
to the Commission
Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bœ:t4*EU-US negotiations on free trade agreement

The economic implications of a free trade agreement with the USA need to be carefully analysed.

That analysis needs to identify the benefits and threats the agreement is likely to bring for each economic sector, including the farming industry and its various branches.

The Commission should include in its analysis report proposals for neutralising or mitigating threats that could arise from the liberalisation of trade with the US.

It must be borne in mind during the negotiations that farming is a sensitive and specific sector. It must also be borne in mind that the European agricultural model is based on family farms and that EU farmers are required to meet high standards. What is more, the issue of animal welfare needs to be addressed during the negotiations and in the final agreement.

When will the Commission be able to provide Parliament with an analysis of the economic implications of a free trade agreement with the US, in particular for the farming industry?

What impact is the agreement likely to have on jobs in farming?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(32 O:tober 013u)

An in-depth study on the possible impacts of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) carried out by the Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR) at the request of the Commission was released on 12 March 2013 ([1]). This macroeconomic analysis shows that trade liberalisation between the EU and the US, and in particular the Free Trade Agreement option, improves overall welfare for both partners.

The analysis has also highlighted sensitivities in some agricultural sectors. The Commission is fully aware of these sensitivities and will take them into consideration during the negotiations. Regarding the likely impact on jobs in farming, tables 34 and 36 of the CEPR report outline the effects on employment by sector, both on more and on less skilled workers.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/march/tradoc_150737.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009888/13
an den Rat
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(4. September 2013)

Betrifft: Folgemaßnahmen: Bewegung im Kampf gegen Steueroasen — das Steuerabkommen mit Liechtenstein

Da die Fragen zum Thema Steuerabkommen mit Liechtenstein in der Antwort E-004258/2013 nur kursorisch beantwortet wurden und angesichts der Bedeutung dieses Themas wird der Rat erneut um die Beantwortung der folgenden Fragen ersucht:

1. Auf welchen Tagungen hat der Rat das Steuerabkommen mit Liechtenstein „aktiv erörtert“? Welche Ergebnisse gibt es?

2. Wann fanden die letzten Beratungen im Rat über den Entwurf dieses Steuerabkommens statt?

3. Wann wird der Rat die Beratungen über den Entwurf dieses Steuerabkommens wieder aufnehmen?

Antwort
(5. November 2013)

Zuletzt hat sich der Rat auf seiner Tagung vom 5. Juni 2013 speziell mit der Frage eines Betrugs-bekämpfungsabkommens mit Liechtenstein befasst ([1]). Bisher hat der Rat noch kein einmütiges Einver-nehmen über diesen Punkt erzielt, wie dies nach dem Vertrag über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union erforderlich ist.

Darüber hinaus sei angemerkt, dass der Rat kürzlich einen Beschluss über die Ermächtigung zur Aufnahme von Verhandlungen mit Liechtenstein und anderen Drittländern angenommen hat, die dazu dienen sollen, die Abkommen der EU mit diesen Ländern im Bereich der Besteuerung von Zinserträgen zu verbessern. Die Kommission unterrichtet den Rat regelmäßig über die Fortschritte bei den Verhandlungen.

([1]) CM 3034/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009888/13
to the Council
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Follow-up measures: progress in the fight against tax havens — the tax agreement with Liechtenstein

As the questions concerning the tax agreement with Liechtenstein were only answered cursorily in Reply E-004258/2013, and in view of the importance of the subject, the Council is asked once again to answer the following questions:

1. At which meetings did the Council 'actively discuss' the tax agreement with Liechtenstein? What were the results?

2. When was this draft tax agreement last discussed in the Council?

3. When will the Council resume discussion of this draft tax agreement?

Reply
(5 November 2013)

The latest discussion specifically concentrating on an anti-fraud agreement with Liechtenstein took place within the Council on 5 June 2013 ([1]). The Council has not yet reached unanimous agreement on this issue as required under the Treaty on Functioning of the European Union.

In addition, it is worth mentioning that the Council recently adopted a decision authorising the opening of negotiations with Liechtenstein and other third countries in order to improve the EU's agreements with those countries on savings taxation. The Commission is systematically reporting to the Council on the progress of the negotiations.

([1]) CM 3034/13.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009889/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(4 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Η περίπτωση της Γ.Μ.Μ.Α.Ε ΛΑΡΚΟ

Η ΛΑΡΚΟ είναι μια από τις 5 μεγαλύτερες εταιρείες παραγωγής σιδηρονικελίου στον κόσμο και η μόνη παραγωγός στην Ευρώπη με σαφή εξωστρεφή προσανατολισμό και ιδιαίτερα σημαντική προστιθέμενη αξία για την ευρωπαϊκή χαλυβουργία, καθώς είναι ο κύριος προμηθευτής των μεγαλύτερων ευρωπαϊκών βιομηχανιών ανοξείδωτου χάλυβα, επί 50 έτη. Οι μεταλλευτικοί της πόροι (μέση περιεκτικότητα Ni 0,94%) εκτιμώνται σε 113 εκατ. τόνους, με την τρέχουσα αξία τους να υπερβαίνει τα 16 δις δολάρια. Διαχρονικά αποτελεί πεδίο έρευνας και εφαρμογής σε συναφείς επιστημονικούς κλάδους με τα αντικείμενα της παραγωγικής της δραστηριότητας, ενώ στο πλαίσιο της λειτουργίας της αναπτύσσονται καινοτομίες που εφαρμόζονται διεθνώς και συγκεντρώνουν παγκόσμιο ενδιαφέρον. Ταυτόχρονα, το εξειδικευμένο-πλήρως καταρτισμένο ανθρώπινο δυναμικό που απασχολεί, καθώς και οι εγνωσμένες δυνατότητές της τόσο στην υιοθέτηση νέων μεθόδων (π.χ. υδρομεταλλουργική σιδηρουργία κ.λπ.), όσο και στη δραστηριοποίησή της σε νέους συναφείς παραγωγικούς τομείς (π.χ. προδιαμορφωμένος ανοξείδωτος χάλυβας υψηλών προδιαγραφών κ.ά.) πιστοποιούν την τεράστια αναπτυξιακή της προοπτική. Η εν λόγω επιχείρηση, όμως, αντιμετωπίζει μια σειρά ζητημάτων που υπονομεύουν την λειτουργία της.

Σε αυτήν την κατεύθυνση ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει στοιχεία για τη μέση τιμή (τιμολόγιο) διάθεσης ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας (Mwh) στις επιχειρήσεις χαλυβουργίας και ενεργοβόρου μεταλλουργίας;

2. Υπάρχει σχετική ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία (διάταξη ή οδηγία) που να απαγορεύει την ανανέωση των αδειών παραχώρησης των μεταλλευτικών εκμεταλλεύσεων και λειτουργίας της επιχείρησης;

3. Με δεδομένη, αφενός, τη σαφή δέσμευση της ΕΕ για προώθηση της καινοτομίας με στόχο την ενίσχυση της ανταγωνιστικότητάς της στην παγκόσμια αγορά και, αφετέρου, την υψηλή ποιότητα μεθόδων και προϊόντων παραγωγής της ΛΑΡΚΟ, πώς αξιολογεί το ενδεχόμενο κατάτμησης της εταιρείας, που θα οδηγήσει σε αποδυνάμωση ή οριστική απώλεια των χαρακτηριστικών της καινοτομίας, της ποιότητας των μεθόδων που εφαρμόζει και της μοναδικότητας που διαθέτει;

4. Το σύνολο των αποφάσεων για το μέλλον της ΛΑΡΚΟ στηρίζεται στην «εικασία» ότι θα επιβληθεί από την ΓΔ COMP η επιστροφή 130 εκ. ευρώ λόγω κρατικών ενισχύσεων. Έχει λάβει γνώση αν υπάρχει επίσημος καταλογισμός του ποσού αυτού ή σχετικά με το στάδιο στο οποίο βρίσκεται η διαδικασία διερεύνησης του συγκεκριμένου ζητήματος; Έχει κληθεί η ΛΑΡΚΟ να παρουσιάσει τις απόψεις και να τεκμηριώσει τις αντιρρήσεις της;

Απάντηση του κ. Almunia εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

1. Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει πληροφορίες σχετικά με τη μέση τιμή (τιμολόγιο) διάθεσης ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας (MWh) στις επιχειρήσεις χαλυβουργίας και ενεργοβόρου μεταλλουργίας.

2. Η ανανέωση των αδειών για δραστηριότητες εξόρυξης δεν απαγορεύεται κατ' αρχήν από τους κανόνες της ΕΕ, εφόσον τηρούνται οι σχετικές διατάξεις της Συνθήκης για τη λειτουργία της ΕΕ και της οδηγίας 2004/18/ΕΚ περί δημόσιων συμβάσεων.

3. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει απαιτήσει με κανένα τρόπο την κατάτμηση της ΛΑΡΚΟ. Ωστόσο, η Ελλάδα περιέλαβε την ΛΑΡΚΟ στον κατάλογο των προς ιδιωτικοποίηση κρατικών περιουσιακών στοιχείων. Η επιχείρηση ενδέχεται επίσης να έχει λάβει παράνομες και μη συμβατές ενισχύσεις στο παρελθόν, όπως αναφέρεται στην απόφαση της Επιτροπής, της 6ης Μαρτίου 2013, με την οποία κινήθηκε η επίσημη διαδικασία έρευνας. Εάν επιβεβαιωθεί η εν λόγω παράνομη ενίσχυση θα πρέπει να ανακτηθεί. Κατ' αρχήν, εάν η επιχείρηση πωληθεί συνεχίζοντας τη λειτουργία της, κάθε υποχρέωση ανάκτησης μεταβιβάζεται και, κατά συνέπεια, ο αγοραστής της ΛΑΡΚΟ θα πρέπει να επιστρέψει την παράνομη ενίσχυση. Εναλλακτικά, θα ήταν δυνατόν να πωληθούν μόνο μέρη της εταιρείας με τρόπο που να αποφευχθεί η οικονομική συνέχεια μεταξύ της ενισχυθείσας οντότητας και της νέας επιχείρησης.

4. Σύμφωνα με τις ισχύουσες διαδικασίες περί κρατικών ενισχύσεων, από τη στιγμή που κινήθηκε η επίσημη διαδικασία έρευνας, το κράτος μέλος και τρίτα μέρη, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της ΛΑΡΚΟ, είχαν την δυνατότητα να εκφράσουν τις απόψεις τους όσον αφορά τα υπό εξέταση μέτρα. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει ακόμη εκδώσει τελική απόφαση σχετικά με την εν λόγω υπόθεση.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009889/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: The case of LARCO GMMSA

LARCO is one of the 5 largest ferronickel production companies in the world and the only producer in Europe that is specifically export-oriented: it represents substantial added value for the European steel industry, having been the main supplier of the major European stainless steel companies for fifty years. Its mining resources (average Ni content of 0.94%) are estimated at 113 million tonnes, whose current value is in excess of USD 16 billion. Over the years, it has been a field of research and application in scientific disciplines related to its production activity, while innovations have been developed in the field in which it operates that are being applied internationally, attracting worldwide interest. At the same time its expert, fully trained workforce and its track record both in adopting new methods (e.g. the use of hydrometallurgy in iron production, etc) and in becoming involved in new related productive sectors (e.g. high quality preformed stainless steel, etc.) demonstrate its tremendous growth prospects. However, this company faces a number of issues that pose a threat its operations.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it have any information on the average price (tariff) of electricity (Mwh) supplied to steel and energy-intensive mining companies?

2. Is there any a relevant European legislation (orders or guidelines) prohibiting the renewal of concession licences for the company's mining activities and operations?

3. Given, firstly, the EU's clear commitment to promoting innovation in order to strengthen its competitiveness in the global market and, secondly, LARCO's high quality production methods and products, how does it view the possibility that the company might be split up, leading to a weakening or the permanent loss of its innovative characteristics, the quality of the methods it uses and its uniqueness?

4. All the decisions on LARCO's future are based on 'guesswork' that DG COMP will require it to refund EUR 130 million owing to state aid. Does it know whether this amount has been officially imputed or what stage has been reached in the process of investigating this issue? Has LARCO been called upon to present its views and to substantiate its objections?

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

1. The Commission does not have any information related to the average price (tariff) of electricity (Mwh) supplied to steel and energy-intensive mining companies.

2. Renewal of authorisations to perform mining activities is not in principle prohibited by the EU rules, provided that it is in line with the relevant provisions of the Treaty on the functioning of the EU and the directive 2004/18/EC on Public Procurement.

3. The Commission has not required any split of Larco. However, Larco has been included by Greece in the list of state assets to be privatised. The company may also have received illegal and incompatible aid in the past, as set out in the Commission decision of 6 March 2013 opening the formal investigation procedure. If confirmed such illegal aid would need to be recovered. In principle, if a company is sold as a going concern, any recovery obligations follow and a purchaser of Larco would then need to reimburse the illegal aid. An alternative could be to sell only parts of the company in a way that avoids economic continuity between the aided entity and the new business.

4. According to the applicable state aid procedures, after the opening of the formal investigation procedure, the Member State and third parties, including Larco, had the possibility to express their views regarding the measures in question. The Commission has not yet adopted a final decision in relation to this case.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009890/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(4 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Decreto ministeriale sull'applicazione della formula per il calcolo dell'efficienza energetica degli impianti di incenerimento in relazione alle condizioni climatiche

In data 7 agosto 2013 il Ministero dell'ambiente e della tutela del territorio e del mare ha adottato il decreto ministeriale sull'applicazione della formula per il calcolo dell'efficienza energetica degli impianti di incenerimento in relazione alle condizioni climatiche.

Nell'ambito della Conferenza delle Regioni — Commissione Ambiente ed Energia, la Regione Emilia-Romagna si è espressa in maniera non favorevole all'adozione di tale decreto, rilevando la non conformità alla direttiva 2008/98/CE del procedimento attraverso il quale si è addivenuti alla sua emanazione.

Pur prevedendo la possibilità di introdurre il fattore climatico nella formula indicata all'allegato II per il calcolo dell'efficienza energetica degli impianti di incenerimento, la direttiva 2008/98/CE prescrive infatti a tal fine una specifica procedura tesa a modificare correttamente la formula e il corrispondente punto della direttiva (cfr. gli articoli 38 e 39 della direttiva 2008/98/CE e l'articolo 5 bis della decisione 1999/468/CE, così come modificata dalla decisione 2006/512/CE).

L'adozione del decreto ministeriale citato non risulta quindi preceduta dal compiuto espletamento della procedura suddetta.

L'anticipazione da parte dello Stato italiano del fattore di correzione climatico senza che sia stato prima recepito, attraverso la procedura prevista, dalla Commissione potrebbe determinare una violazione della direttiva vigente che ancora non lo contempla e un conseguente possibile indebito vantaggio per le imprese di uno Stato membro a scapito di quelle degli altri.

È la Commissione al corrente dell'adozione da parte dell'Italia di tale decreto ministeriale? Come intende intervenire in merito?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(17 ottobre 2013)

La Commissione non sapeva che l'Italia avesse emanato un decreto ministeriale che autorizza l'applicazione di un fattore di conversione climatico locale alla formula di cui al punto R1 dell'allegato II della direttiva 2008/98/CE sui rifiuti ([1]).

La Commissione si informerà presso le autorità italiane competenti.

([1]) GU L 312 del 22.11.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009890/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Ministerial decree on the application of the formula for calculating the energy efficiency of incineration plants with reference to climatic conditions

On 7 August 2013 the Italian Ministry for the Environment and the Protection of the Land and Sea adopted a ministerial decree on the application of the formula for calculating the energy efficiency of incineration plants with reference to climatic conditions.

The Emilia-Romagna region has made it known within the Environment and Energy Commission of the Italian Conference of the Regions that it does not support the adoption of the decree on the grounds that the procedure used to draw it up was inconsistent with Directive 2008/98/EC.

Although Directive 2008/98/EC does provide for the possibility of including climatic conditions as a factor in the formula (set out in Annex II) for calculating the energy efficiency of incineration plants, it lays down a specific procedure for doing so (Articles 38 and 39 of the directive and Article 5a of Decision 1999/468/EC, as amended by Decision 2006/512/EC).

That procedure was not followed prior to the adoption of the above ministerial decree.

Italy jumped the gun when it included climatic conditions as a factor in the formula without the Commission having first given its approval under the above procedure. This could amount to a breach of the aforementioned directive, which, as yet, makes no provision for this approach, and could lead to companies in Italy gaining an unfair advantage over those in other Member States.

Is the Commission aware that Italy has adopted the aforementioned ministerial decree? How does it intend to respond?

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

The Commission was not aware of the adoption of the Ministerial Decree by Italy allowing the application of a local climate correction factor to the R1 formula set out in Annex II to the directive 2008/98/EC ([1]) on waste.

The Commission will request information from the competent Italian Authorities.

([1]) OJ L 312 of 22.11.2008.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009891/13
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(4 september 2013)

Betreft: Conformiteit van recordtransfers in het voetbal met staatssteunregels

Maandag 2 september werd bekend gemaakt dat Real Madrid de voetballer Gareth Bale voor de hoogste transfersom ooit heeft weggekocht bij Tottenham. Over de precieze hoogte van de transfersom bestaat nog wat onduidelijkheid, maar zeker lijkt dat het bedrag nabij de 90 à 100 miljoen euro ligt.

Afgezien van de ethische vragen die worden opgeroepen bij het betalen van dergelijke bedragen voor een persoon, zijn er nog enkele zaken die toch de wenkbrauwen doen fronsen. Zo is er de vaststelling dat Real Madrid een niet onaanzienlijke schuldenberg met zich meetorst (sommige schattingen hebben het over meer dan 500 miljoen euro). Daarnaast is er het wrange gevoel dat Real Madrid voor deze ophefmakende transfer een lening aangaat bij Bankia, een Spaanse bank die in grote moeilijkheden is geraakt en mede dankzij Europese steun drijvende wordt gehouden.

Het bedrag (het gaat om de duurste transfer ooit) alsook de context (onverantwoord lenen van banken was de hoofdoorzaak van de financiële crisis, zeker in Spanje) doen de vraag rijzen of er hier geen sprake is van marktverstorende elementen.

Is de commissie van plan om deze uitzonderlijke transfer in detail te bestuderen om er zeker van te zijn dat er hier geen sprake is van enige vorm van staatssteun of van onverantwoorde financiële praktijken?

Antwoord van de heer Almunia namens de Commissie
(17 oktober 2013)

De Commissie is niet voornemens deze voetbaltransfer te onderzoeken, omdat er geen aanwijzingen zijn dat er bij die bepaalde transactie van specifieke staatssteun sprake is. Wat Bankia betreft, verwijst de Commissie naar haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-8303/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009891/13
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Record transfer fees for footballers and compliance with rules on state aid

On Monday 2 September, it was announced that Real Madrid had signed on Tottenham player Gareth Bale for a record transfer fee, the exact amount of which is not altogether clear but is reported to be around EUR 90-100 million.

Aside from the ethical issues raised by the payment of such a sum for a single individual, considerable resentment is being caused by the fact that Real Madrid, which is already heavily in debt (to the tune of over EUR 500 m according to some), is financing this sensational transfer with a loan from Bankia, a Spanish bank which is itself in major difficulties, being kept afloat with European funding.

Both the amount involved (a record transfer fee) and the circumstances (irresponsible loans by banks having been — at least in Spain — the principal cause of the crisis in the first place) are raising questions regarding possible market distortion.

Will the Commission investigate this particularly high-profile transfer in order to ensure that it does not involve any form of state aid or irresponsible financial practices?

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

The Commission is not investigating this football player transfer, as there is nothing to suggest that specific state aid could be involved in that particular transaction. Regarding Bankia, the Commission refers to its answer to Written Question E-8303/2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-009892/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Atribuição de médicos de família em mais do que um país da UE

Numa recente visita ao Centro de Saúde do concelho de Almeida, no distrito da Guarda, tive conhecimento de que muitos dos utentes deste centro de saúde são emigrantes portugueses que, tendo residência e estando a trabalhar em outro país (Espanha, França, Bélgica…), passam grandes temporadas na sua terra natal, em Portugal. Esta situação coloca um problema à administração do Centro de Saúde, uma vez que se reconhece a necessidade de atribuição de um médico de família (médico regular) a estes utentes, de forma a seguir o seu historial clínico com mais proximidade, embora estes utentes estejam a trabalhar e a descontar para a segurança social no país onde estão emigrados.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Existe legislação europeia que preveja esta situação? Quais os direitos em termos de assistência médica para as pessoas que se encontram na situação acima descrita?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(29 de outubro de 2013)

Em conformidade com o artigo 11.° do Regulamento (CE) n.° 883/2004 ([1]), a segurança social das pessoas é apenas da competência de um só Estado-Membro. Regra geral, em conformidade com essa disposição, os trabalhadores estão inscritos no Estado-Membro onde trabalham. Mesmo que uma pessoa trabalhe num Estado-Membro diferente daquele em que reside habitualmente e se desloque para o/do emprego todos os dias ou, pelo menos, uma vez por semana, continua a estar segurada no Estado-Membro em que trabalha. De um modo geral, esse Estado-Membro também é responsável pelo pagamento das prestações sociais e pela emissão do cartão europeu de seguro de doença da pessoa.

Para ter igualmente acesso a cuidados de saúde no país de residência, o segurado tem de pedir à entidade responsável pela sua cobertura médica no Estado-Membro competente que emita um formulário S1, a fim de permitir a sua inscrição junto da instituição de segurança social do Estado-Membro da sua residência, nos termos do artigo 24.° do Regulamento (CE) n.° 987/2009 ([2]). A pessoa pode então receber prestações em espécie no Estado-Membro onde reside, como se estivesse aí segurada e, nas mesmas condições que os nacionais desse Estado-Membro (ver também o artigo 17.° do Regulamento (CE) n.° 883/2004). A instituição do Estado-Membro competente é responsável por reembolsar às instituições do Estado-Membro de residência os serviços prestados à pessoa segurada.

([1]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 883/2004 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 29 de abril de 2004, relativo à coordenação dos sistemas de segurança social, JO L 166 de 30.4.2004.

([2]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 987/2009 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 16 de setembro de 2009, que estabelece as modalidades de aplicação do Regulamento (CE) n.° 883/2004 relativo à coordenação dos sistemas de segurança social (JO L 284 de 30.10.2009).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009892/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Registration with general practitioners in more than one Member State

Not long ago, when I visited the Almeida municipal health centre, in the district of Guarda, I learned that many of its users are Portuguese emigrants who are habitually resident, and work, in another country (Spain, France, Belgium, etc.) but otherwise spend much of their time in their country of birth, Portugal. This situation poses an administrative problem for the health centre, as a general practitioner (family doctor) has to be assigned to such users — this is recognised to be necessary in order to keep track of their medical histories from a closer vantage-point — in spite of the fact that they are working, and paying social security contributions, in the country to which they have emigrated.

Is there any European legislation to cover this case? To what extent are patients entitled to medical treatment when they in the situation described?

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

In accordance with Article 11 of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 ([1]), only one Member State at a time is competent for a person's social security cover. As a rule, workers are insured in the Member State where they work, in line with those provisions. If a person works in a Member State other than that in which he/she habitually resides and he/she commutes between them each day or at least once a week, he/she continues to be insured in the Member State where he/she works. That Member State is generally also responsible for providing the benefits and for issuing the person's European Health Insurance Card.

To enjoy access to healthcare in the country of residence as well, the insured person must ask the healthcare authority in the competent Member State to issue an S1 form to allow him/her to register with the social security institution in the Member State of residence, pursuant to Article 24 of Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 ([2]). He or she can then receive benefits in kind in the Member State where he/she resides as if he/she were insured there and on the same conditions as nationals of the latter Member State (see also Article 17 of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004). The institution in the competent Member State is responsible for reimbursing the institutions in the Member State of residence for the services provided to the insured person.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the coordination of social security systems, OJ L 166, 30.4.2004.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 September 2009 laying down the procedure for implementing Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems, OJ L 284, 30.10.2009.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-009893/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Apoio às organizações de produtores pecuários

Visitei recentemente a Sanicobe, Associação de Defesa Sanitária da Cova da Beira, sediada no Fundão, visita na qual tomei conhecimento de muitos dos problemas com que se defrontam os produtores pecuários em Portugal. Hoje, em Portugal, as associações de produtores pecuários têm a seu cargo a prestação de diversos serviços, realizando às suas custas o controlo da sanidade animal, indispensável para a continuidade da sua atividade e fundamental para a saúde pública. Durante o ano de 2012 e no presente ano, as Associações de Produtores Pecuários não receberam qualquer apoio do Estado. A somar aos elevados custos da energia, os produtores têm agora a seu cargo os custos relacionados com a sanidade animal. Tal significa que muitos produtores, especialmente os mais pequenos, têm cada vez mais dificuldade em manter-se em atividade, abandonando-a muitas vezes, o que tem impactos profundamente negativos, não só para a vida e família dos próprios, mas para as regiões onde estão sediados, que sofrem já com o abandono e a desertificação. O abandono da atividade por muitos produtores tem também consequências profundamente negativas nas exportações nacionais, setor que, tanto o governo, como a «troika», dizem eleger como prioridade para o país.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que apoios pode a UE mobilizar para as atividades de controlo da sanidade animal, sejam eles apoios diretos aos produtores, sejam eles apoios ao Estado português?

2. Quais os países da UE em que o controlo da sanidade animal obrigatório é suportado pelos próprios produtores, e não pelo Estado?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(30 de outubro de 2013)

1. Os controlos zoossanitários obrigatórios são pagos pelo Estado em todos os Estados-Membros. Os criadores de gado pagam uma contribuição fixa às OPP em Portugal (ou a fundos sanitários, fundos destinados às doenças dos animais e fundos aviários, consoante o Estado-Membro) que é equiparada a uma taxa. A Decisão 2009/470/CE do Conselho, de 25 de maio de 2009, relativa a determinadas despesas no domínio veterinário [1] , nomeadamente o artigo 27.°, n.° 10, define os procedimentos que regulam a participação financeira da União em programas de erradicação, controlo e vigilância das doenças animais e zoonoses.

De acordo com o quadro jurídico atual, a UE pode apoiar controlos zoossanitários através do cofinanciamento de determinadas medidas consideradas elegíveis no âmbito dos programas cofinanciados, sob a forma de apoios concedidos aos Estados-Membros da UE.

2. Por exemplo, Portugal recebeu um total de 5 901 758,98 EUR, em 2011, para reembolsar os custos de medidas elegíveis executadas no âmbito dos programas de controlo e erradicação supervisionados pela autoridade competente (por exemplo, brucelose, tuberculose, febre catarral, gripe aviária, salmonelose, encefalopatias espongiformes transmissíveis, encefalopatia espongiforme bovina e tremor epizoótico).

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[1] JO L 155 de 18.6.2009, p. 30.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009893/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t4*Support for stockbreeders' organisations

Not long ago, when I visited SANICOBE, the Fundão-based Cova da Beira Health Protection Association, I learned about many of the problems which Portuguese stockbreeders are having to face. At this time in Portugal stockbreeders' organisations are being called upon to perform various services and have to pay the cost of animal health checks, which, as well as being essential to keep farms going, are vitally important for public health. The organisations did not receive any state support in 2012, nor have they received any this year. On top of high energy costs, stockbreeders are now having to meet costs related to animal health. What this means is that many of them, especially the smallest, are finding it increasingly difficult to remain viable; the fact that large numbers of stockbreeders are going out of business is doing great harm, not just to those concerned and their families, but also to farming regions, which are already undergoing depopulation and desertification. The large-scale abandonment of stockbreeding is also having a highly damaging effect on Portugal's exports, a sector which both the Government and the 'Troika' claim to be treating as a national priority.

1. By what means can the EU support animal health checks, whether such aid is in the form of direct support to stockbreeders or of support granted to the Portuguese state?

2. In which Member States are compulsory animal health checks paid for by stockbreeders themselves and not by the state?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(u1 O:tober 013u)

1. Compulsory animal health checks are paid by the state in all Member States. Stockbreeders pay a fixed contribution to OPPs in Portugal (or Sanitary Funds, Animal Disease Funds, Poultry Fund etc. depending on the Member State) which is assimilated to a tax. Council Decision 2009/470/EC of 25 May 2009 on expenditure in the veterinary field [1] , and in particular Article 27(10) thereof, lays down the procedures governing the Union financial contribution for programmes for the eradication, control and monitoring of animal diseases and zoonoses.

According to the current legal framework, the EU can support animal health checks by co-financing certain measures deemed eligible under the approved co-financed programmes in the form of support granted to the EU Member States.

2. For example, Portugal was granted a total of EUR 5 901 758.98 in 2011 to reimburse the costs of eligible measures implemented under the following monitoring, control and eradication programmes supervised by the competent authority such as brucellosis, tuberculosis, bluetongue, avian influenza, salmonella, transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, bovine spongiform encephalopathy and scrapie.

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(1) OJ L 155, 18.6.2009, p. 30.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009895/13
do Komisji
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE)
(2 września 013. rP)

*drzem io:4*Regulacje dotyczące obowiązkowego wyposażenia pojazdów – informowanie obywateli

Przemieszczanie się wewnątrz UE jest dla obywateli coraz łatwiejsze, a kolejne inicjatywy KE znoszą istniejące bariery i trudności. Niestety jedna bardzo ważna kwestia nie została nadal poruszona. Wciąż brak jest jakichkolwiek unijnych regulacji dotyczących obowiązkowego wyposażenia pojazdów. Państwa członkowskie mają własne, często bardzo odmienne wymagania w tej kwestii. Przepisy międzynarodowe w tym zakresie stanowi konwencja wiedeńska o ruchu drogowym. Wedle jej postanowień pojazd musi być wyposażony zgodne z przepisami kraju rejestracji, a nie kraju, przez który przejeżdża. Niestety świadomość społeczna, co do postanowień konwencji jest bardzo niska. W rejonach przygranicznych sprzedawcy często wprowadzają kierowców w błąd, przekonując o konieczności spełniania wymogów danego kraju i sprzedając rozmaite akcesoria. Zdarza się, że o postanowieniach konwencji wiedeńskiej nie wiedzą nawet funkcjonariusze policji krajów członkowskich karząc kierowców.

Czy Komisja uważa, że w tym zakresie konieczne jest harmonizacja przepisów na szczeblu UE, a jeśli takiej potrzeby zdaniem KE nie ma, to czy nie należałoby zadbać o interes obywateli informując ich o przysługujących im w świetle konwencji wiedeńskiej prawach i przeciwdziałać wprowadzaniu ich w błąd?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Siima Kallasa w imieniu Komisji
(31 paźnziernika 013. rP)

Komisja uprzejmie prosi Panią Poseł o zapoznanie się z odpowiedzią na pytanie nr E-4284/2012 ([1]) wymagające odpowiedzi na piśmie.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009895/13
to the Commission
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t4*Regulation on mandatory vehicle equipment — informing the public

It is becoming ever easier for citizens to move around within the EU, and further Commission initiatives are abolishing existing barriers and difficulties. Unfortunately, one very important question has still not been addressed. There are still no EU regulations whatsoever on mandatory vehicle equipment. The Member States have their own, often very different, requirements. International rules in this area are provided by the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic, according to which a vehicle must be equipped in accordance with the provisions of the country of registration, not the country through which it is travelling. Unfortunately, public awareness as far as the provisions of the Convention are concerned is very low. In border regions, salespeople often mislead drivers by convincing them that they need to meet a particular country's requirements, and sell them various accessories. Even police officers in the Member States can punish drivers mistakenly because they are unfamiliar with the provisions of the Vienna Convention.

Does the Commission consider that, in this respect, the rules should be harmonised at EU level? If the Commission does not believe this to be necessary then would it not be appropriate to inform the public of their rights under the Vienna Convention in order to prevent them from being misled?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(31 O:tober 013u)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-4284/2012 ([1]).

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-009896/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(5 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Έκτακτα μέτρα για την αντιμετώπιση της αναμενόμενης αύξησης του αριθμού των Σύρων προσφύγων

Σύμφωνα με δηλώσεις της αρμόδιας Επιτρόπου Διεθνούς Συνεργασίας, Ανθρωπιστικής Βοήθειας και Αντιμετώπισης Κρίσεων στις 3 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013, ο αριθμός των προσφύγων που εγκαταλείπουν τη Συρία καταφεύγοντας σε γειτονικές χώρες άγγιξε τον αριθμό-ορόσημο των 2 εκατομμυρίων. Επιπροσθέτως, η Επίτροπος υπογράμμισε την προοπτική ενίσχυσης του μαζικού προσφυγικού ρεύματος από τη Συρία, υπονοώντας σαφώς τις επιπτώσεις από μια ενδεχόμενη δραματική αύξηση της έντασης στη χώρα αυτή, μετά τη βάναυση και παράνομη από πλευράς διεθνούς δικαίου χρήση χημικών όπλων κατά αμάχων. Συγκεκριμένα, η Επίτροπος δήλωσε: «Όσο τραγικό και σκληρό και να είναι με τη χρήση βίας να γίνεται ολοένα και πιο άγρια, κτηνώδης και απάνθρωπη, είναι βέβαιο ότι το κύμα των προσφύγων θα ενισχυθεί.»

Σε συνέχεια των ανωτέρω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Σχεδιάζει έκτακτες δράσεις με στόχο να βοηθήσει τις χώρες που γειτονεύουν με τη Συρία (Λίβανο, Ιορδανία, Τουρκία και Ιράκ) και στις οποίες καταφεύγουν πρωτίστως οι Σύροι πρόσφυγες, λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τις εκτιμήσεις για επιδείνωση της προσφυγικής κρίσης; Εάν ναι, ποιες είναι αυτές;

2. Πώς προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να ενισχύσει εκείνα τα κράτη-μέλη που πλήττονται περισσότερο στην προσπάθειά τους να αντιμετωπίσουν τις συνέπειες μιας έκτακτης και δραματικής αύξησης του προσφυγικού ρεύματος από τη Συρία;

3. Σκοπεύει η Επιτροπή να παράσχει έκτακτη επιπλέον βοήθεια στην Ελλάδα, στις έκτακτες αυτές συνθήκες, για να αντιμετωπίσει τις συνέπειες του «ωστικού κύματος» ενός ολοένα αυξανόμενου αριθμού Σύρων προσφύγων, δεδομένου ότι είναι η πρώτη κοινοτική χώρα που θα τις υποστεί; Εάν ναι, ποιά μορφή θα έχει αυτή;

Απάντηση της κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Από την έναρξη της κρίσης στη Συρία, η ΕΕ έχει κινητοποιήσει ποσό ύψους 842 εκατ. ευρώ (ανθρωπιστική βοήθεια: 515 εκατ. ευρώ, οικονομική και αναπτυξιακή βοήθεια, καθώς και βοήθεια για τη σταθεροποίηση: 327 εκατ. ευρώ) για τη στήριξη δραστηριοτήτων τόσο εντός όσο και εκτός Συρίας: Η ανθρωπιστική βοήθεια της ΕΕ στηρίζει πρωτίστως την άμεση ιατρική ανταπόκριση σε καταστάσεις έκτακτης ανάγκης, την παροχή βασικών φαρμάκων, τροφίμων και ειδών διατροφής, πόσιμου νερού, εγκαταστάσεων αποχέτευσης και υγιεινής (WASH), στέγασης, διανομής βασικών ειδών εκτός τροφίμων (NFIs) και την προστασία για τη βοήθεια των πλέον ευάλωτων οικογενειών. Εκτός από το ποσό των 515 εκατ. ευρώ που διέθεσε για ανθρωπιστική βοήθεια, η Επιτροπή βρίσκεται σήμερα σε διαδικασία χορήγησης 250 εκατ. ευρώ για την αντιμετώπιση των τρεχουσών ανθρωπιστικών αναγκών, καθώς και την προετοιμασία για ενδεχόμενες μαζικές εισροές σε γειτονικές χώρες. Χορηγείται επίσης ένα πρόσθετο ποσό ύψους 150 εκατ. ευρώ για αναπτυξιακή βοήθεια ώστε να αντιμετωπιστούν οι πιο μακροπρόθεσμες ανάγκες των Σύρων και να ενισχυθεί η ικανότητα των χωρών υποδοχής για να αντιμετωπίσουν την αυξημένη εισροή των Σύρων προσφύγων.

Η Επιτροπή, σε συνεργασία με την Ευρωπαϊκή Υπηρεσία Υποστήριξης για το Άσυλο (ΕΥΥΑ) και τον Frontex, είναι έτοιμη να παρέχει βοήθεια ή να τη συντονίζει, συμπεριλαμβανομένης ιδίως της χρηματοοικονομικής συνδρομής και της στήριξης εκ μέρους των εμπειρογνωμόνων της ΕΥΥΑ προς εκείνα τα κράτη μέλη που ενδέχεται να υποστούν ιδιαίτερες πιέσεις, συμπληρώνοντας έτσι τα εθνικά μέτρα των κρατών μελών για την αντιμετώπιση περιπτώσεων έκτακτης ανάγκης.

Η Επιτροπή συνεργάζεται στενά με τις ελληνικές αρχές για την ενίσχυση του ελληνικού συστήματος ασύλου και μετανάστευσης. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, η Ελλάδα λαμβάνει επίσης ενίσχυση από την ΕΥΥΑ και τον Frontex. Η Ελλάδα μπορεί να επωφεληθεί επίσης από περαιτέρω πρωτοβουλίες που αναλαμβάνει η Επιτροπή για την υποστήριξη των κρατών μελών προκειμένου να αντιμετωπίσουν την εισροή προσφύγων από τη Συρία.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009896/13
to the Commission
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Emergency measures to cope with the expected increase in the number of Syrian refugees

According to statements made by the Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response on 3 September 2013, the number of refugees fleeing Syria for neighbouring countries has reached the milestone of two million. The Commissioner also emphasised that this mass exodus of refugees from Syria is set to increase: she was clearly referring here to the consequences of a potential dramatic increase in tension in the country following the savage use of chemical weapons against civilians, which is illegal under international law. Specifically, she said: 'Tragic and cruel as it is, the truth is that with violence becoming ever more ferocious, brutal and inhumane, the tide of refugees is bound to continue to rise.'

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it plan any emergency actions to help countries neighbouring Syria (Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq), the main destinations of Syrian refugees, taking into account the assessments about a worsening refugee crisis? If so, which actions?

2. How does it intend to help those Member States most affected as they attempt to cope with the consequences of an extraordinary and dramatic increase in the flow of refugees from Syria?

3. Will it provide additional emergency aid to Greece, under these exceptional circumstances, to address the consequences of the shock wave of an ever increasing number of Syrian refugees arriving on its territory, since it is the first EU country that will be affected? If so, what form will this aid take?

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

Since the beginning of the Syria crisis, the EU has mobilised EUR 842 million (humanitarian aid: EUR 515 million, economic, development and stabilisation assistance: EUR 327 million) to support activities both inside and outside Syria: The EU humanitarian assistance primarily supports life-saving medical emergency responses, the provision of essential drugs, food and nutritional items, safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), shelter, distribution of basic non-food items (NFIs) and protection to help the most vulnerable families. Out of the EUR 515 million mobilised for humanitarian assistance, the Commission is currently in the process of allocating EUR 250 million to respond to the current humanitarian needs but also to be prepared for potential massive influx in neighbouring countries. An additional EUR 150 million development assistance is also being allocated to address the longer-term needs of the Syrians and strengthen the capacity of host countries to deal with an increased influx of syrian refugees.

The Commission, in cooperation with the European Asylum Support Office and Frontex, is ready to provide or coordinate assistance, including in particular financial assistance and expert support from EASO, to those Member States that could find themselves under particular pressure, to complement Member States' national contingency arrangements.

The Commission is working in close cooperation with the Greek authorities to strengthen their asylum and migration system. In this context Greece also receives support from EASO and Frontex. Greece may also benefit from further initiatives that the Commission is undertaking to support Member States to cope with the influx of persons from Syria.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009897/13
to the Commission
Keith Taylor (Verts/ALE)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t5*Rights of ports regarding trade in live animals

The Commission has publicly stated that it will not amend or look at Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on live transport until 2015 at the earliest, which is when the current animal welfare strategy ends.

Furthermore, the live transport of animals from the UK to the European mainland recently moved to the port of Dover, despite large-scale local opposition. At present, the powers of any port to refuse to accept the transport of animals are limited. Under existing UK legislation, ports have no option other than to be open for trade in any goods when the appropriate fees are paid. Goods are not defined under this law, but this would include live animals.

With this in mind, can the Commission state:

1. whether a change in UK law allowing ports to choose whether their facilities may be used to transport live animals by sea would constitute a breach of EC law;

2. when it will publish its report regarding the UK's implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(0 O:tober 013u)

1. Article 1(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport ([1]) states that 'this regulation shall not be an obstacle to any stricter national measures aimed at improving the welfare of animals during transport taking place entirely within the territory of a Member State or during sea transport departing from the territory of a Member State.'

Yet, measures restricting the use of port facilities must be compliant with the EU Treaties and in particular with the fundamental freedom of free movement of goods.

2. While it does not constitute a legal obligation, the Commission publishes all Member States inspections reports in accordance with Article 27(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005. ([2])

Annual reports from Member States are already published up to 2011. The 2012 reports should be available within a month of this reply.

([1]) OJ L 3, 5.1.2005, p. 1.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/transport/inspections_reports_reg_1_2005_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009898/13
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D), Alejandro Cercas (S&D) y Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D)
(5 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Prácticas laborales abusivas en los contratos de prácticas en el sector de los servicios financieros

Distintos medios de comunicación han publicado recientemente la muerte en Londres de un joven alemán de 21 años, becario de Bank of America, después de haber realizado, según relatan diferentes testimonios, tres jornadas laborales consecutivas de 21 horas. Estas informaciones vuelven a suscitar preguntas sobre las condiciones de trabajo de los becarios en la Unión Europea, y especialmente en el sector de los servicios financieros.

¿Qué iniciativas ha adoptado o va adoptar la Comisión para evitar que la crisis y su impacto en el desempleo juvenil tengan como efecto la aceptación social de prácticas laborales abusivas? ¿Va a plantear medidas como el establecimiento de sistemas de control independientes, encuestas anónimas o la protección de aquellos que denuncian estas prácticas?

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

La Comisión está prestando mucha atención a la calidad de los periodos de prácticas en la EU. Una reciente encuesta de Eurobarómetro ([1]) confirma que las condiciones de trabajo de los becarios son con frecuencia peores que las de los trabajadores normales (23 % de los casos) y pone también de manifiesto otros aspectos problemáticos que pueden menoscabar la contribución positiva de los periodos de prácticas a la empleabilidad de los jóvenes, como, por ejemplo, la falta de contenidos de aprendizaje, la tendencia a ir acumulando un periodo de prácticas tras otro y unas remuneraciones muy bajas o inexistentes. La Comisión tiene previsto presentar en diciembre de 2013 una propuesta destinada a establecer un marco de calidad para los períodos de prácticas con el objetivo de garantizar que las prácticas contribuyan eficazmente a la mejor transición posible entre la educación y el trabajo y que las condiciones de trabajo de las mismas en la EU mejoren sustancialmente.

([1]) Está previsto que se publique el 7 de octubre de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009898/13
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D), Alejandro Cercas (S&D) and Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D)
(2 September 013u)

Sj bæ:t5 Unfair labour practices in internship contracts in the financial services sector

Several media sources have recently reported on the death of a 21-year-old German man, an intern at the Bank of America, who died in London after working three consecutive 21-hour days, according to various accounts. This information has once again raised questions about the working conditions of interns in the European Union, and particularly in the financial services sector.

What initiatives has the Commission adopted or will it adopt to ensure that the crisis and its impact on youth unemployment does not lead to unfair labour practices becoming socially acceptable? Will it put in place measures such as the establishment of independent control systems, anonymous inquiries or protection for people who report these practices?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(03 O:tober 013u)

The Commission is closely watching developments regarding the quality of traineeships in the EU. A recent Eurobarometer survey ([1]) confirms that the working conditions of trainees are often worse than those of normal employees (23% of cases). It also highlights other problematic issues that may weaken the positive contribution traineeships can make to increasing young people's employability. These include a lack of learning content, the tendency for the individual to have one traineeship after another, and the fact that traineeships may not be paid, or the pay may be very low. In December 2013 the Commission intends to put forward a proposal for a quality framework for traineeships, which will aim at ensuring that traineeships can contribute effectively to successful education-to-work transitions and improving traineeship working conditions within the EU.

([1]) To be published on 7 October 2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009899/13
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D), Luis Yáñez-Barnuevo García (S&D), Alejandro Cercas (S&D) y Cristina Gutiérrez-Cortines (PPE)
(5 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Sostenibilidad del fútbol en la Unión Europea

En el último mundial de fútbol, tres de las cuatro selecciones semifinalistas eran de Estados miembros de la Unión. Las ligas europeas han conseguido atraer a los mejores jugadores del mundo y son seguidas por las mayores audiencias globales. El fútbol es un activo y una parte importante de la vida en la Unión Europea que merece la máxima atención.

A lo largo de los últimos años, los precios en el mercado de traspasos de jugadores, así como las retribuciones de algunos deportistas de élite por sus clubes, han aumentado exponencialmente. Esta burbuja que no ha dejado de crecer a pesar de la crisis contrasta además con las dificultades financieras de algunos clubes, que han motivado su cambio de propiedad o el incumplimiento de sus obligaciones sociales y fiscales.

Algunos expertos han señalado que la deficiente gobernanza económica, la existencia de conflictos de intereses y de opacidad, los elevados costes de intermediación extradeportiva, las enormes diferencias en el reparto de los ingresos obtenidos por la emisión de competiciones, así como la ausencia de límites en las cláusulas de rescisión contractual y en los niveles salariales, pueden afectar a la libre circulación de trabajadores y la existencia de una competencia equilibrada, y llegar a minar la credibilidad y el apoyo social al mundo del fútbol, comprometiendo su futuro.

¿Comparte la Comisión esta preocupación? ¿Considera que es necesario abordar esta situación de una manera estructurada con el objeto de asegurar el ejercicio de las libertades fundamentales y la sostenibilidad del fútbol europeo?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de octubre de 2013)

La Comisión conoce los problemas a los que aluden Sus Señorías y tiene constancia de que los organismos y las partes interesadas con responsabilidades en el ámbito futbolístico a nivel europeo y nacional están trabajando, junto con las autoridades públicas, para remediarlos debidamente.

De acuerdo con las competencias que le asigna el Tratado, la Comisión participa en debates con la finalidad de respaldar los esfuerzos de las organizaciones deportivas y los Estados miembros para proteger la sostenibilidad del fútbol europeo. En este contexto, su empeño es garantizar que se respeten las libertades fundamentales del mercado interior y el Derecho de competencia europeo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009899/13
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D), Luis Yáñez-Barnuevo García (S&D), Alejandro Cercas (S&D) and Cristina Gutiérrez-Cortines (PPE)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t5*Sustainability of football in the European Union

In the last World Cup, three of the four semi-finalists were EU Member States. The European leagues have managed to attract the best players from across the world and have the greatest following in terms of global audiences. Football is an asset and an important part of life in the European Union which deserves the utmost attention.

In recent years, prices in the football transfers market, and the pay some elite players receive from their clubs, have risen exponentially. This bubble, which has continued to grow in spite of the crisis, is in stark contrast to the financial difficulties facing some clubs, which have led to changes in ownership or failure to fulfil their social and fiscal obligations.

According to some experts, conflicts of interest, the lack of economic governance and transparency, the high cost of non-sports mediation, the huge differences in the distribution of revenues obtained from broadcasting matches and the lack of restrictions in contract termination clauses and wage levels could affect the free movement of workers and fair competition, and ultimately undermine the credibility of and social support for the world of football, putting its future in jeopardy.

Does the Commission share this concern? Does it consider it necessary to take a structured approach to this situation in order to safeguard the exercise of fundamental freedoms and the sustainability of European football?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(u3 O:tober 013u)

The Commission is aware of the issues highlighted by the Honourable Members. The Commission understands that relevant football governing bodies and stakeholders at European and national level are working, together with public authorities, to find appropriate remedies.

In line with its competence under the Treaty, the Commission is participating in discussions with a view to assisting and accompanying the efforts of sports organisations and Member States to safeguard the sustainability of European football. In this context, the Commission will ensure the respect of the fundamental freedoms of the internal market and EU competition law.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009900/13
a la Comisión
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(5 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Extracción de hidrocarburos en la Comunidad Valenciana

Las concesiones para la extracción de hidrocarburos en el mar, que han sido otorgadas recientemente en la Comunidad Valenciana, están creando una gran alarma social debido no solamente a la falta de garantías de seguridad con las que se están planificando las mismas, sino también respecto a las supuestas afecciones medioambientales que estas actividades puedan tener para el medio ambiente de la zona.

Cabe destacar que dichos proyectos de perforación se sitúan a proximidad de áreas protegidas dentro de Natura 2000, como es el caso de la Albufera, donde cualquier vertido de hidrocarburos sería fatal para los hábitats y las especies que alberga.

Por otro lado, en zonas como la del Golfo de Valencia, donde la empresa Cairn acaba de obtener la concesión, conviven especies como gorgonias y corales que, en otras áreas de España, han dado motivo a figuras de protección específicas e incluso a la declaración de Reserva Marina de Interés dentro de la Red Natura 2000.

Dado que la Comisión Europea ya se ha dirigido a las autoridades españolas interesándose por la seguridad de dichas concesiones de extracción de hidrocarburos:

— ¿Puede la Comisión garantizar que los permisos han sido otorgados con arreglo a la legislación comunitaria para garantizar que no haya ningún accidente, fallo de seguridad o daño medioambiental provocado por dicha actividad de extracción?

— ¿Cree la Comisión que, dadas las especies y la rica biodiversidad que alberga la zona, esta podría optar a su inclusión en la futura ampliación de Natura 2000 como nueva Reserva Marina?

— ¿Podría la Comisión detallar de qué manera garantiza la salvaguarda de la legislación medioambiental vigente en el caso de las concesiones para extracción de hidrocarburos, cuyo número está viéndose incrementado últimamente en áreas como la Comunidad Valenciana?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de noviembre de 2013)

La Comisión ha solicitado información a las autoridades españolas sobre el asunto planteado y está evaluando en estos momentos la información recibida. De acuerdo con dicha información, los cinco permisos de investigación de hidrocarburos concedidos para la zona del Golfo de Valencia no eximen de la necesidad de obtener cualquier otra autorización que sea requerida en caso de obras, trabajos de construcción o trabajos de instalación.

La solicitud de autorización para realizar una campaña sísmica 3D en esta zona está siendo estudiada actualmente por las autoridades competentes, y queda supeditada a una evaluación del impacto ambiental. Puesto que estos procedimientos se encuentran todavía en curso, no ha sido posible constatar infracción alguna de la legislación de la UE sobre la base de los datos de que se dispone.

La Comisión ha ido perfeccionando progresivamente las normas de seguridad aplicables a las actividades marítimas, especialmente mediante la reciente adopción de la Directiva 2013/30/UE ([1]), sobre la seguridad de las operaciones relativas al petróleo y al gas mar adentro, y la adhesión de la UE al «Protocolo Offshore» del Convenio de Barcelona ([2]). Los Estados miembros deben adoptar las disposiciones legales y reglamentarias y los procedimientos administrativos necesarios para dar cumplimiento a lo establecido en la mencionada Directiva sobre seguridad mar adentro, a más tardar el 19 de julio de 2015.

En lo que respecta a la posible inclusión de esta zona en la red Natura 2000, hay actualmente en marcha un proyecto LIFE +, denominado Indemares ([3]), cuyo objetivo es ayudar a completar la designación de espacios marinos Natura 2000 en España.

([1]) DO L 178 de 28.6.2013.
([2]) http://www.unepmap.org/index.php?module=content2&catid=001001004
([3]) www.indemares.es

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009900/13
to the Commission
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(3 September 201u)

*Sj bæ:t5*Extraction of hydrocarbons in Valencia

Concessions for the extraction of hydrocarbons in the sea, which have recently been granted in Valencia, are causing a great deal of public concern, not only because of the lack of safety guarantees in the planning of these activities, but also because of the supposed environmental effects that these activities could have on the local environment.

It should be noted that these drilling projects are situated near protected areas within the Natura 2000 network, as is the case in Albufera, where any discharge of hydrocarbons would be fatal for the area's habitats and species.

However, in areas such as the Gulf of Valencia, where the Cairn company has just obtained a concession, there are species such as gorgonian and coral which, in other parts of Spain, have led to the introduction of specific protective measures and even declarations of Marine Reserves of Interest within the Natura 2000 network.

Given that the Commission has already referred this matter to the Spanish authorities with regard to the safety of these concessions for the extraction of hydrocarbons:

— Can the Commission ensure that the permits have been granted in accordance with EU legislation to ensure that there will not be any accidents, safety issues or environmental damage as a result of this extraction?

— Does the Commission believe that, considering the species and the rich biodiversity in the area, it could be chosen for inclusion in the upcoming expansion of the Natura 2000 network as a new Marine Reserve?

— Could the Commission provide details of how it ensures the safeguarding of environmental legislation in force with regard to concessions for the extraction of hydrocarbons, the number of which has recently been on the rise in areas such as Valencia?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(1u November 201u)

The Commission has requested information from the Spanish authorities on the matter raised and is currently assessing the information received. In accordance with this information, the five hydrocarbon prospection permits (HPPs) awarded in the Gulf of Valencia do not exempt from the need to obtain any other authorisation required in the event of work, construction or installation.

The request for an authorisation to carry out 3D seismic activity in this area is currently under consideration of the competent authorities, and subject of an environmental impact assessment. Since these procedures are still ongoing, it has not been possible, based on the information available, to identify any breach of the EU legislation.

The Commission has progressively upgraded the safety standards applicable to offshore activities, most notably through the recent adoption of Directive 2013/30/EU ([1]) on safety of offshore oil and gas operations, and the accession of the EU to the 'offshore protocol' of the Barcelona Convention ([2]). Member States shall bring into force the laws, regulations, and administrative procedures necessary to comply with the offshore safety Directive by 19 July 2015.

As regards the eventual inclusion of this area in the Natura 2000 network, the LIFE+ project INDEMARES ([3]) is currently ongoing in order to help complete the designation of marine Natura 2000 sites in Spain.

([1]) OJ L 178, 28.6.2013.
([2]) http://www.unepmap.org/index.php?module=content2&catid=001001004
([3]) www.indemares.es

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009901/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D) y María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D)
(5 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Protección de los derechos del colectivo LGTB en Rusia

En la Federación de Rusia, el Gobierno ha aprobado dos leyes homofóbicas que discriminan y persiguen la homosexualidad. La primera de ellas prohíbe bajo la consideración de «propaganda homosexual» cualquier actividad pública en defensa de los derechos del colectivo LGTB. La segunda prohíbe la adopción por parte de homosexuales extranjeros o solteros procedentes de países donde son legales los matrimonios o las uniones entre personas del mismo sexo.

Ambas leyes han contribuido a fomentar la homofobia, la estigmatización y la discriminación en contra de la población LGTB, produciéndose recientemente graves episodios de violencia por parte de grupos radicales que han agredido a homosexuales.

Atendiendo al principio de igualdad ante la ley y al principio de no discriminación de la Unión Europea, teniendo en cuenta que desde las instituciones trabajamos por la construcción de un espacio político, social y cultural realmente democrático, con leyes y valores que garanticen la libertad, igualdad y bienestar de los ciudadanos, y recordando que este tipo de leyes discriminatorias no pueden tolerarse en países con tan estrecha relación con la UE:

¿Qué tipo de respuesta y medidas contundentes pretende tomar la Alta Representante. Catherine Ashton, para atajar esta situación?

¿Piensa aprovechar la presidencia rusa del G20 para provocar el debate sobre la discriminación por motivos de orientación sexual? ¿Podría informarnos de los resultados de estas conversaciones bilaterales o multilaterales, si tienen lugar?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de octubre de 2013)

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta es plenamente consciente de los hechos a que se refiere Su Señoría y ha seguido con mucha atención su curso, habiendo expresado públicamente su decepción por la adopción, primero a escala regional y ahora también a nivel nacional, de leyes que prohíben la «propaganda homosexual». La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta considera que esta ley pueda estigmatizar a determinados grupos y personas, así como dar lugar a prácticas y discursos discriminatorios contra ellos y que, por lo tanto, se opone al Convenio Europeo de Derechos Humanos.

La UE ha aprovechado las dos últimas rondas de sus consultas de derechos humanos con la Federación de Rusia (diciembre de 2012 y mayo de 2013) para interesarse por la conformidad de la ley de «propaganda homosexual» con los compromisos internacionales de Rusia y, en particular, con el Convenio Europeo de Derechos Humanos, así como para instar a dicho país a atenerse a sus compromisos.

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta recuerda que la última reunión del G20 celebrada en San Petersburgo propició un debate profundo sobre temas de interés común para la comunidad internacional, sobre todo los esfuerzos por resolver el conflicto sirio y mejorar las perspectivas económicas mundiales, pero no permitió abordar cuestiones bilaterales, ya que no se habían previsto reuniones de este tipo con los dirigentes rusos.

La UE sigue atentamente este asunto y, en especial, la incidencia de esta legislación en la situación de los derechos humanos en Rusia y continuará apoyando a las organizaciones de la sociedad civil presentes en Rusia, sobre todo a través del Instrumento Europeo para la Democracia y los Derechos Humanos (IEDDH). La UE también planteará sus inquietudes de todas las maneras adecuadas y en todos los foros internacionales pertinentes en materia de derechos humanos, tal como procedió el 17 de septiembre de 2013 en el Consejo de Derechos Humanos de las Naciones Unidas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009901/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D) and María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t5*VP/HR — Protecting the rights of the LGBT community in Russia

In the Russian Federation, the Government has passed two homophobic laws which discriminate against and persecute homosexuals. The first bans any public activity defending the rights of the LGBT community that could be considered 'homosexual propaganda'. The second bans foreign homosexuals or single people from countries where gay marriage or civil partnership is legal from adopting children.

Both laws have played a part in encouraging homophobia, stigmatisation of and discrimination against the LGBT population, leading recently to serious episodes of violence by radical groups attacking homosexuals.

In view of the principle of equality before the law and the principle of non-discrimination in the EU, bearing in mind that here in the institutions we are working towards building a truly democratic political, social and cultural space, with laws and values that guarantee the freedom, equality and well-being of our citizens, and considering that discriminatory laws such as these cannot be tolerated in countries with such close ties to the EU:

What kind of powerful response and measures does the High Representative, Catherine Ashton, intend to take to address this situation?

Does she intend to use the Russian Presidency of the G20 to start the debate on discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation? Could she inform us of the outcome of these bilateral or multilateral talks, should they take place?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(00 O:tober 013u)

The HR/VP is fully aware of the developments referred to by the Honourable Members. She has been following these developments very closely, expressing publically her disappointment with the adoption, first at regional, and now also at national level, of bills prohibiting 'homosexual propaganda'. The HR/VP believes that this law could stigmatise particular groups and individuals and lead to discriminatory practices and discourse against them, and is therefore in contradiction with the European Convention on Human Rights.

The EU has used the last two recent rounds of its regular Human Rights Consultations with the Russian Federation (December 2012 and May 2013) to enquire about the conformity of the 'homosexual propaganda' law with Russia's international commitments, in particular with the European Convention on Human Rights, and to invite Russia to put them in conformity with its committments.

The HR/VP notes that the last G20 in St Petersburg allowed for an in-depth discussion of issues of common concern among the international community, in particular the efforts to solve the Syrian conflict and to improve the global economic outlook, but didn't allow touching on bilateral issues of concern, as no bilateral meetings were foreseen with the Russian leadership.

The EU is closely monitoring this issue and notably the impact of this legislation on the situation of human rights in Russia and will continue to support civil society organisations in Russia notably through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). The EU will also raise its concerns in all appropriate formats and in all relevant Human Rights international fora, as it most recently did on 17 September 2013 in the context of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009902/13
an die Kommission
Bernd Lange (S&D)
(5. September 2013)

Betrifft: Belastungen durch Stromleitungen in der EU

Angesichts der notwendigen Ertüchtigung und Neuerrichtung von Stromleitungen in der EU stellt sich zunehmend die Frage der Belastungen für Mensch und Natur.

Diese Fragen sind insbesondere für die Entscheidung zwischen Erdverkabelung oder Freileitung relevant.

Dies vorausgeschickt frage ich die Kommission:

1. Wie bewertet die Kommission die elektromagnetische Feldbelastung unter Freileitungen?

2. Welche europäischen Grenzwerte hält die Kommission für angemessen?

3. Welche Schritte wird die Kommission unternehmen, um die Belastungen für den Menschen durch strenge einheitliche Grenzwerte auf das gesundheitsungefährliche Maß zu beschränken?

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

Die Empfehlung des Rates zur Begrenzung der Exposition der Bevölkerung gegenüber elektromagnetischen Feldern (1999/519/EG) ([1]) wurde mit dem Ziel angenommen, einen gemeinsamen Rahmen von Schutzmaßnahmen zu schaffen, um einen Beitrag zur Gewährleistung der Einheitlichkeit zwischen nationalen Systemen zu leisten.

Der unabhängige Wissenschaftliche Ausschuss „Neu auftretende und neu identifizierte Gesundheitsrisiken" (SCENIHR) ([2]), der für die Kommission arbeitet, verfügt über ein ständiges Mandat für die Bewertung der durch elektromagnetische Felder (EMF) verursachten Risiken. Dies betrifft alle Frequenzen, einschließlich der Felder im Niederfrequenzbereich (ELF-Felder), die um Überlandleitungen herum entstehen. Die Risikobewertung fußt auf den wissenschaftlichen Erkenntnissen, die bei der Ausarbeitung der Stellungnahme vorliegen.

Die Kommission zieht diese Stellungnahmen heran, um zu prüfen, ob die in der Ratsempfehlung (1999/519/EG) vorgeschlagenen Expositionsgrenzwerte noch angemessen sind oder ob sie angepasst werden müssen.

Derzeit aktualisiert der SCENIHR seine EMF-Stellungnahme, die bis Ende 2013 vorliegen sollte. Diese Stellungnahme wird alle Frequenzbereiche abdecken, einschließlich möglicher Gesundheitsrisiken durch ELF-Felder entlang Stromleitungen.

Was Schutzmaßnahmen betrifft, so ist die EU gemäß den Artikeln 168 und 169 des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union nicht zum Erlass von Rechtsvorschriften zum Schutz der Bevölkerung vor möglichen Auswirkungen elektromagnetischer Felder zuständig, sondern diese Verantwortung liegt weiterhin in erster Linie bei den Mitgliedstaaten.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:1999:199:0059:0070:DE:PDF
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/emerging/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009902/13
to the Commission
Bernd Lange (S&D)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Effects of exposure to power lines in the EU

The need to upgrade and install power lines in the EU increasingly raises the issue of the effects of exposure on people and nature.

These issues are particularly relevant when it comes to deciding between underground cabling and overhead lines.

This being the case, I would like to ask the Commission:

1. How does it assess the level of exposure to electromagnetic fields under overhead lines?

2. Which European limits does it regard as appropriate?

3. What steps will it take to restrict the effects of exposure on people to a level harmless to health by imposing strict, uniform limits?

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

The Council Recommendation on the limitation of exposure to Electromagnetic fields (1999/519/EC) ([1]) was adopted with a view to establishing a common protective framework and in an effort to contribute to consistency between the various national approaches.

The independent Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR) ([2]) serving the Commission has a standing mandate to evaluate the risks from electromagnetic fields (EMF). This regards all frequency fields including extremely low frequency fields (ELF) generated by overhead lines. The risk assessment is based on the most available scientific evidence at the time when the opinion is prepared.

The Commission uses these opinions to check whether the exposure limits as proposed in the Council Recommendation on EMF (1999/519/EC) are still appropriate or if there is a need for revision.

An update of the SCENIHR EMF opinion is ongoing and it is expected to be finalised by the end of 2013. This opinion will cover all the frequency range including the possible health risk from ELF generated from power lines.

Regarding preventive measures, the provisions of Articles 168 and 169 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union do not confer the EU competence to legislate in the area of protection of the general public from the potential effects of EMF and leaves the primary responsibility with the Member States.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/electrical/files/lv/rec519_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/emerging/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009903/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Reclassification of electronic cigarettes as medicinal products

Could the Commission advise me of any impact assessment it has carried out in relation to the possible reclassification of electronic cigarettes as medicinal products?

What would be the impact on the industry in terms of the costs of testing these products?

What would be the effect in terms of job losses if the product were taken off the market either for the duration of the testing process or permanently?

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

The Commission's impact assessment ([1]) contains an analysis of the policy options available for the regulation of nicotine containing products such as e-cigarettes. This includes the expected impacts of subjecting nicotine containing products to the medicinal products' legislation (Directive 2001/83/EC ([2])).

The amount of tests and therefore the associated costs will depend on the existing data to which industry can refer at the time of market authorisation. On the other hand, these tests will allow the quality, safety and efficacy of such products to be ascertained, which will be of direct benefits to consumers.

The effect on jobs is estimated to be limited. The Commission proposal provides for a transitional period during which nicotine containing products not in compliance with the directive will continue to be allowed to be placed on the market, ensuring adequate time to obtain a marketing authorisation.

([1]) SWD (2012) 452 final.
([2]) Directive 2001/83/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 November 2001 on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009904/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(5 septembre 2013)

Objet: Distorsion de TVA entre la France et l'Italie concernant la TVA sur les grands bateaux de plaisance

En novembre 2012, la Commission européenne a demandé à la France de supprimer l'exonération de TVA appliquée à la location des grands bateaux de plaisance à des fins d'agrément. Suite à une plainte déposée par l'Italie devant la CJUE, cette suppression d'exonération a pris effet le 15 juillet 2013 sur proposition du gouvernement français. Depuis cette date, la taxation en Italie s'élève à 6,6 %, tandis qu'elle est désormais de 9,8 % en France, soit un différentiel de 3,2 points.

Certes, l'exonération de TVA sur cette catégorie d'activité était contestable mais la situation actuelle l'est plus encore car cette distorsion de concurrence entraîne une délocalisation des activités nautiques des côtes françaises.

La Corse est une région qui concentre une part importante de ces activités puisque 20 % de la flotte mondiale croise au large de ses côtes pendant la saison estivale. Dans une région durement touchée par le chômage et de nombreux handicaps géographiques, il est important de défendre l'ensemble des activités industrielles et touristiques qui se développent sur son territoire.

Dans ce contexte, il convient de trouver une solution pour un problème né de la réglementation communautaire.

La Commission souhaite-t-elle revoir son jugement sur la situation de la TVA dans le secteur avant le 15 juillet en France?

La Commission accepterait-elle un régime dérogatoire pour le secteur des grands bateaux de plaisance en termes de TVA?

La Commission souhaite-t-elle appeler les États membres à une harmonisation de la TVA dans l'ensemble des pays du Bassin méditerranéen dans ce domaine afin d'éviter les distorsions de concurrence?

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(11 octobre 2013)

En réalité, l'Italie et la France appliquent un taux normal de respectivement 21 % et de 19,6 % pour l'utilisation de bateaux de plaisance. Cependant, ces deux pays appliquent la clause ([1]) dite «d'utilisation et de consommation» lorsque le bateau croise en dehors des eaux de l'UE. Cette clause donne lieu à une réduction de la TVA acquittée pour ces prestations de services proportionnelle à l'utilisation du bateau en dehors des eaux de l'UE.

Les modifications de la TVA applicables en France depuis le 15 juillet 2013 sont une conséquence de l'arrêt rendu par la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne dans l'affaire Bacino ([2]), qui dispose que «l'exonération de la taxe sur la valeur ajoutée […] ne s'applique pas aux prestations de services consistant à mettre un bateau, contre rémunération, avec équipage, à la disposition de personnes physiques à des fins de voyages d'agrément en haute mer». Dans cette affaire, le rôle de la Commission s'est limité à s'assurer de la bonne application de cet arrêt.

Étant donné que les prestations de services portant sur l'usage de bateaux de plaisance sont soumises au taux de TVA normal, un régime dérogatoire de TVA ne peut leur être appliqué. Tout changement ultérieur du taux auquel sont soumises ces prestations de services s'appliquerait également à tous les biens et services soumis au taux de TVA normal. Chaque État membre a toute discrétion pour fixer son taux normal.

L'un des objectifs fondamentaux visé dans la communication de la Commission sur l'avenir de la TVA ([3]) est d'élargir l'assiette fiscale et de limiter le recours aux taux réduits, ainsi que d'encourager le principe de l'imposition au taux normal afin d'améliorer l'efficacité et la neutralité de la TVA. La création d'un régime dérogatoire pour le secteur des grands bateaux de plaisance en termes de TVA irait à l'encontre de cet objectif.

([1]) Article 59 bis de la directive TVA.
([2]) Affaire C-116/10, Bacino Charter Company.
([3]) COM(2011) 851 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009904/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t5*VAT rates on large recreational vessels distorting competition between France and Italy

In November 2012 the Commission asked France to discontinue the VAT exemption hitherto applying to large recreational vessels. Following a complaint lodged by Italy with the Court of Justice, the exemption was discontinued on 15 July 2013. Since then, the VAT rate on large recreational vessels has been 6.6% in Italy and 9.8% in France — a difference of 3.2 percentage points.

However difficult to justify the granting of a VAT exemption to firms operating in this sector may have been, the current disparity in rates is even more so because it is distorting competition and resulting in nautical business moving away from France's coasts.

Corsica, for instance, is a leading centre for such business, with 20% of the world's recreational fleet congregating around its coasts during the summer months. In view of the island's high levels of unemployment and many geographical handicaps, it is vitally important to protect local manufacturing and tourism-related businesses.

A solution therefore needs to be found to this problem, which has been created by the EU's regulatory system.

Will the Commission be reviewing its appraisal of the pre-15 July VAT situation in France?

Would it look favourably on the idea of a special VAT regime for large recreational craft?

Does it intend to call on Member States to standardise VAT rates in this sector in the Mediterranean area, in order to guard against any future distortion of competition?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(33 O:tober 013u)

Italy and France are in fact applying a standard rate of 21% and 19.6% respectively to the use of recreational vessels. However, both also apply the 'use and enjoyment' clause ([1]) in cases where the boat is used outside EU waters, which entails a reduction in the VAT paid for those services in proportion to the use outside EU waters.

The changes applying in France since 15 July 2013 were caused by the ruling of the Court of Justice of the European Union in Bacino ([2]) which determined that 'the exemption from value added tax … does not apply to services consisting of making a vessel available, for reward, with a crew, to natural persons for purposes of leisure travel on the high seas'. The role of the Commission in this case was limited to monitoring that the ruling was correctly implemented.

As services involving the use of recreational vessels are subject to the standard rate of VAT, it is not possible to apply a special rate to them. Subsequently, any change to the rate applied to these services would apply to all goods and services which are subject to the standard rate. It is at the discretion of each Member State to set their standard rate.

One of the fundamental features envisaged in the Commission's Communication on the future of VAT ([3]) was to broaden the tax base and to limit the use of reduced rates, as well as encouraging the principle of taxation at the standard rate to improve the efficiency and neutrality of VAT. Creating a special VAT regime for large recreational vessels would run counter to that objective.

([1]) Article 59a of the VAT Directive.
([2]) Case C-116/10 Bacino Charter Company.
([3]) COM(2011) 851 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009905/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(5 septembre 2013)

Objet: Interférences entre ondes TNT et 4G

Le déploiement en France des réseaux de quatrième génération (4G) de la téléphonie mobile a mis en évidence des interférences avec le réseau de la Télévision Numérique Terrestre (TNT). Ces deux normes permettent de répondre aux attentes des entreprises et des citoyens en termes de services et de rapidité d'accès à ces services.

Cependant, les interférences qui se produisent actuellement montrent la difficile cohabitation de ces normes et la nécessaire coordination des politiques industrielles dans ce domaine.

Suite à ces problèmes:

La Commission souhaite-t-elle accompagner les entreprises, les collectivités et les citoyens qui rencontrent des problèmes d'interférence?

La Commission souhaite-t-elle améliorer la coordination des normes qu'elle promeut pour éviter à l'avenir ce genre de problème?

La Commission procède-t-elle à une diffusion de l'information sur ce problème dans les pays membres afin d'éviter qu'il ne se reproduise ailleurs?

Réponse donnée par Mme Kroes au nom de la Commission
(10 octobre 2013)

La Commission est consciente des problèmes d'interférences pouvant survenir entre la radiodiffusion numérique terrestre et les systèmes de communications mobiles, et en particulier entre les terminaux mobiles et les récepteurs de télévision fonctionnant dans la même gamme de fréquences, comme le dividende numérique (790-862 MHz) et les bandes de fréquences voisines.

Il incombe aux États membres de résoudre les problèmes de perturbations radioélectriques sur leur territoire, conformément à la législation européenne. Selon la décision 2010/267/UE de la Commission sur l'harmonisation des conditions techniques d'utilisation de la bande de fréquences 790-862 MHz pour les systèmes de Terre permettant de fournir des services de communications électroniques dans l'Union européenne ([1]), les États membres doivent offrir une protection appropriée aux systèmes de radiodiffusion dans les bandes adjacentes et favoriser les accords de coordination transfrontalière.

La Commission suit de près l'évolution de la situation dans les États membres où des réseaux de communication mobile à haut débit LTE (Long Term Evolution) sont mis en place ([2]) et encourage la diffusion d'informations sur les cas de brouillage et les bonnes pratiques à mettre en œuvre pour les résoudre. En octobre 2012, les services de la Commission ont organisé un grand atelier réunissant les parties concernées, consacré à la situation en matière de normalisation et aux mesures à prendre. L'une des grandes questions soulevées était celle du brouillage et de l'immunité des récepteurs et des équipements de télévision par câble destinés au grand public.

En outre, dans une lettre à l'ETSI et au Cenelec datée du 13 février 2013, la Commission a demandé que des travaux supplémentaires soient menés sur les questions de compatibilité électromagnétique et de normalisation, afin de faciliter la mise en œuvre de la décision 2010/267/UE. Les deux organismes ont confirmé leur engagement à cet égard. La Commission prendra en compte cette expérience pour l'élaboration, avec toutes les parties concernées, d'une stratégie durable pour le développement de la bande de radiodiffusion UHF (470-790 MHz).

([1]) JO L 117 du 11.5.2010, p. 95.
([2]) Par exemple, l'Allemagne, la France, le Royaume-Uni et la Suède.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009905/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t5*Interference between terrestrial digital television and 4G signals

Problems are being encountered in France as a result of interference between the recently developed fourth generation (4G) mobile telephone networks and digital terrestrial television signals.

While both sets of standards provide companies and individuals with the services and speed of access they require, the problem of signal interference highlights the need for coordinated industrial strategies to ensure their smooth coexistence.

In view of this:

Does the Commission intend to assist companies, organisations and individual citizens encountering problems with signal interference?

Does it intend to improve coordination between the standards advocated by it so as to prevent such problems arising in future?

Is it taking action to inform Member States about this problem and avoid it occurring elsewhere?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(31 O:tober 013u)

The Commission is aware of potential interference issues between digital terrestrial broadcasting and mobile communications systems, in particular between mobile end user devices and TV receivers, operating within the same frequency range such as the digital dividend (the 790-862 MHz band) or in adjacent frequency bands.

It is Member States' responsibility to resolve radio interference problems on their territory in line with EC law. In this regard, Commission Decision 2010/267/EU on harmonised technical conditions of use in the 790-862 MHz frequency band for terrestrial systems capable of providing electronic communications services in the European Union ([1]) obliges Member States to ensure appropriate protection to broadcast systems in adjacent bands and facilitates cross-border coordination agreements.

The Commission closely monitors developments in the Member States, where LTE mobile broadband networks are being rolled out ([2]) and encourages the dissemination of information on interference cases and best practices for their resolution. In October 2012, the Commission services organised a broad stakeholder workshop devoted to relevant standardisation situation and the necessary next steps. One prominent issue was interference to and immunity of consumer TV and cable equipment.

Furthemore, in a letter to ETSI and CENELEC of 13 February 2013, the Commission requested additional work on electromagnetic compatibility and radio standardisation to support the implmentation of Decision 2010/267/EU. Both organisations have confirmed their commitment. The Commission will take this experience into account in developing with all relevant stakeholders a sustainable strategy for the UHF broadcasting band (470-790 MHz).

([1]) OJ L 117, 11.5.2010, p. 95.
([2]) (e.g. Germany, Sweden, France or the UK).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009907/13
aan de Commissie
Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE) en Esther de Lange (PPE)
(5 september 2013)

Betreft: Verspilling in de zorg: onnodig grote verpakkingen tegengaan

Verspilling in de zorg ondergraaft de solidariteit. In Nederland is het ministerie van VWS in samenwerking met patiënten- en ouderenorganisaties (CSO) het actieplan „Aanpak verspilling genees- en hulpmiddelen" gestart. Een onderdeel van het actieplan is een meldpunt voor burgers om verspilling in de zorg te melden. In ongeveer 70 % van de duizenden meldingen over geneesmiddelen wordt de grootte van de verpakking als oorzaak of één van de oorzaken genoemd. Het is aan de fabrikanten om de soort en de omvang van de verpakking van geneesmiddelen te bepalen. Hier ligt de Geneesmiddelenwet met gedetailleerde wetgeving aan ten grondslag. Dit deel van de Geneesmiddelenwet is voor 99 % implementatie van Europese regelgeving, dat wil zeggen dat er op nationaal niveau geen instrumenten zijn om de industrie/fabrikanten over te laten gaan tot kleinere verpakkingen. Fabrikanten kunnen enkel gevraagd worden om hiertoe vrijwillig over te gaan.

In het licht van het bovenstaande:

Welke mogelijkheden ziet de Commissie om bij fabrikanten invloed uit te oefenen op de verpakkingsgrootte van geneesmiddelen?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(18 november 2013)

Een vergunning voor het in de handel brengen van een geneesmiddel, die door de Commissie is verleend voor de hele EU of door een lidstaat voor het eigen grondgebied, stelt overeenkomstig de wetgeving inzake geneesmiddelen ([1]) ook de toegestane verpakkingsgrootten vast.

In het richtsnoer voor aanvragers, dat door de Commissie en de lidstaten is opgesteld ([2]), wordt vermeld dat het belangrijk is dat de principes van een rationeel gebruik van geneesmiddelen in acht worden genomen, en dat bij het vaststellen van de juiste verpakkingsgrootten rekening moet worden gehouden met de duur van de behandeling en met de dosering zoals die wordt vermeld in de productinformatie.

Bij de behandeling van een aanvraag voor een vergunning voor het in de handel brengen van geneesmiddelen wordt beoordeeld of de voorgestelde verpakking van het geneesmiddel de juiste grootte heeft, in het licht van een correct en veilig gebruik van het product. Als de Commissie de vergunning voor het in de handel brengen van het geneesmiddel verleent, wordt deze beoordeling uitgevoerd door het Comité voor Geneesmiddelen voor menselijk gebruik (CHMP) van het Europees Geneesmiddelenbureau.

Nadat een vergunning is verleend, kan de vergunninghouder beslissen om een aanvraag in te dienen voor aanvullende verpakkingsgrootte. Dezelfde principes zijn dan van toepassing en het CHMP zal een beoordeling uitvoeren van de gepastheid van de voorgestelde verpakkingsgrootte in het licht van een correct en veilig gebruik van het product.

De beslissingen met betrekking tot verpakkingsgrootte die dan worden genomen in het kader van de prijs en vergoeding vallen onder de bevoegdheid van de lidstaten.

([1]) Verordening (EG) nr. 726/2004 tot vaststelling van communautaire procedures voor het verlenen van vergunningen en het toezicht op geneesmiddelen voor menselijk en diergeneeskundig gebruik en tot oprichting van een Europees Geneesmiddelenbureau, PB L 136 van 30.4.2004, zoals gewijzigd, Richtlijn 2001/83/EG tot vaststelling van een communautair wetboek betreffende geneesmiddelen voor menselijk gebruik, PB L 311 van 28.11.2001, zoals gewijzigd.

([2]) *Guideline on the packaging information of medicinal products for Human use authorised by the Union* (richtsnoer betreffende de informatie die moet worden vermeld op de verpakking van geneesmiddelen voor menselijk gebruik waarvoor de Unie een vergunning heeft afgegeven), http://ec.europa.eu/health/files/eudralex/vol-2/c/bluebox_06_2013_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009907/13
to the Commission
Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE) and Esther de Lange (PPE)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Waste in the health service: combating needlessly large packaging

Waste in the health service undermines solidarity. In the Netherlands, the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport has launched, in collaboration with patient associations and organisations for the elderly (CSO), the action plan for tackling waste involving medicines and medical equipment. One aspect of the action plan is a website for citizens to report incidences of waste in the health service. Roughly 70% of the thousands of reports about medicines mention packaging size as the reason or one of the reasons for getting in contact. It is the manufacturers' job to determine the type and size of packaging for medicines. The detailed legislation in the Netherlands Medicines Act provides the basis for this. This part of the Netherlands Medicines Act is 99% implementation of European regulations. This means that there are no instruments available at national level allowing the industry/manufacturers to switch to smaller packaging. Manufacturers can only be requested to make this switch voluntarily.

In light of what has been said:

What opportunities does the Commission see for exerting influence on manufacturers with regard to packaging size for medicines?

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

In accordance with the pharmaceutical legislation ([1]), a marketing authorisation granted for a medicinal product either by the Commission for the entire EU or by a Member State for its own territory, includes also approved package sizes.

The guideline to applicants, agreed by the Commission and the Members States ([2]) states, that when presenting a range of pack sizes with the marketing authorisation application 'it is important that the principles of rational use of medicinal products are taken into consideration' and the appropriate range of pack sizes should be chosen in accordance with the duration of treatment and in accordance with the dosing as mentioned in the product information.

The evaluation of the marketing authorisation application includes assessment of the appropriateness of the proposed pack sizes in the view of the correct and safe use of the medicinal product. If the marketing authorisation is granted by the Commission, this assessment is performed by the Committee for Human Medicinal Products (CHMP) of the European Medicines Agency.

The marketing authorisation holder may decide to apply for additional pack size presentations after initial approval, the same principles as described above apply and the CHMP will assess the appropriateness of the proposed pack sizes in the view of the correct and safe use of the product.

The decisions on pack sizes which are then taken within the pricing and reimbursement framework are under the competence of the Member States.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 laying down Community procedures for the authorisation and supervision of medicinal products for human and veterinary use and establishing a European Medicines Agency, OJ L 136, 30.4.2004, as amended, Directive 2001/83/EC on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, OJ L 311, 28.11.2001, as amended.

([2]) Guideline on the packaging information of medicinal products for Human use authorised by the Union (July 2013), http://ec.europa.eu/health/files/eudralex/vol-2/c/bluebox_06_2013_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-009909/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(4 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Disputa sobre a ZEE das Ilhas Selvagens — 2

As Ilhas Selvagens são um subarquipélago do arquipélago da Madeira, localizado no Oceano Atlântico que, administrativamente, faz parte da freguesia da Sé, concelho do Funchal, da Região Autónoma da Madeira.

Ao abrigo da Convenção das Nações Unidas sobre o Direito do Mar, assinada em Montego Bay, na Jamaica, a 30 de abril de 1982, os países costeiros têm direito a declarar uma Zona Económica Exclusiva (ZEE) de espaço marítimo para além das suas águas territoriais, na qual têm prerrogativas na utilização dos recursos e responsabilidade na gestão ambiental.

Espanha contestou junto da ONU a pretensão de Portugal de alargar a sua ZEE de 200 para 350 milhas com base na jurisdição sobre as Ilhas Selvagens, insistindo em que a delimitação da ZEE se faça ignorando as Ilhas Selvagens ao considerá-las como rochedos, enquanto o Estado português insiste na sua classificação como ilhas, ampliando assim a ZEE portuguesa.

De acordo com o princípio da cooperação leal previsto no artigo 4.°, n.° 3, do Tratado da União Europeia, a União e os Estados-Membros assistem-se mutuamente no cumprimento das missões decorrentes dos Tratados.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Qual o seu parecer relativamente ao impacto dessa disputa na execução da política comum das pescas e noutras áreas do Direito da União?

2. Tendo em conta os seus efeitos ao nível do Direito da União, pretende tomar alguma iniciativa para evitar que este diferendo comprometa a realização dos objetivos da União?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-009917/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(4 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Disputa sobre a ZEE das Ilhas Selvagens — 1

Considerando o seguinte:

— As Ilhas Selvagens são um subarquipélago do arquipélago da Madeira, localizado no Oceano Atlântico e que, administrativamente, fazem parte da freguesia da Sé, concelho do Funchal, da Região Autónoma da Madeira;

— Ao abrigo da Convenção das Nações Unidas sobre o Direito do Mar, assinada em Montego Bay, na Jamaica, a 30 de abril de 1982, os países costeiros têm direito a declarar uma Zona Económica Exclusiva (ZEE) de espaço marítimo para além das suas águas territoriais, na qual têm prerrogativas na utilização dos recursos e responsabilidade na gestão ambiental dessa área;

— Embora Portugal detenha a soberania das Ilhas Selvagens e possa, por isso, alargar a fronteira da ZEE mais para sul, a Espanha defende que a fronteira da ZEE mais a sul entre Espanha e Portugal deve consistir numa linha equidistante delimitada a meia distância entre a Madeira e as Canárias, argumentando que as Ilhas Selvagens não formam uma plataforma continental separada, de acordo com o artigo 121 da Convenção das Nações Unidas sobre o Direito do Mar;

— A União Europeia possui competência exclusiva em matéria de política comum das pescas e competência partilhada com os vinte e oito Estados-Membros em várias matérias, nas quais uma questão sobre a delimitação e gestão da ZEE pode ter implicações, sendo necessário garantir não só o cumprimento das obrigações dos Estados-Membros ao abrigo do Tratado, mas também a realização dos objetivos da União Europeia;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Que informações possui, da parte dos Estados de Portugal e de Espanha, relativamente à jurisdição da ZEE em questão nesta disputa?

2. Quais os meios que a União Europeia e as suas instituições têm ao seu alcance para facilitar a resolução deste diferendo?

Resposta conjunta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(15 de novembro de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento do diferendo que opõe Portugal e Espanha sobre a delimitação das respetivas Zonas Económicas Exclusivas (ZEE) através das várias reivindicações coincidentes relativas, designadamente, à inclusão das Ilhas Selvagens nas águas situadas ao largo da Madeira, por um lado, e nas águas situadas ao largo das ilhas Canárias, por outro.

A declaração das ZEE e respetiva delimitação é da exclusiva competência nacional dos Estados-Membros da União Europeia que são Estados costeiros. Por esta razão, a Comissão não tem competência para intervir diretamente nestes diferendos.

No caso vertente, a Comissão gostaria de encorajar a resolução pacífica, equitativa e rápida deste diferendo sobre a delimitação do espaço marítimo entre os dois Estados-Membros em causa, em conformidade com as disposições pertinentes da Convenção das Nações Unidas sobre o Direito do Mar (Unclos), em especial o artigo 74, n.° 2, e os artigos 279.° e 280.°.

Sempre que um Estado-Membro declara uma ZEE, essas águas passam a ser «águas da União», de modo que a legislação da União adotada por força dos poderes reguladores da UE num domínio de competência exclusiva (p. ex., a Política Comum das Pescas) ou num domínio de competência partilhada (p. ex., legislação da União no domínio ambiental), se aplica plenamente a essas águas. Neste contexto, o diferendo sobre a delimitação entre Portugal e Espanha não prejudicou a aplicação do chamado Regulamento «Águas Ocidentais», ou seja, o Regulamento (CE) n.° 1954/2003 ([1]), que prevê um regime de conservação específico que também abarca as águas em causa. Do mesmo modo, o diferendo não é suscetível de afetar a concretização dos objetivos da Política Comum das Pescas ou os objetivos futuros de qualquer outra política da União na matéria.

([1]) JO L 289 de 7.11.2003.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009909/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Dispute over the Ilhas Selvagens exclusive economic zone — 2

The Ilhas Selvagens, in the Atlantic Ocean, are a sub-archipelago of the Madeira archipelago and, administratively, part of the parish of Sé in the municipality of Funchal, in the Autonomous Region of Madeira.

Under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, signed in Montego Bay, Jamaica, on 30 April 1982, coastal states are entitled to declare a maritime area beyond their territorial waters as an exclusive economic zone (EEZ), for which they have privileges relating to the use of resources and responsibility for environmental management.

Appealing to the UN, Spain has contested Portugal's intention of extending its EEZ from 200 to 350 miles on the grounds that it, Portugal, has jurisdiction over the Ilhas Selvagens. Spain insists that the EEZ should be delimited so as to exclude the Ilhas Selvagens, which it considers to be rocks, whereas Portugal maintains that they should be classified as islands and hence encompassed within an expanded Portuguese EEZ.

The principle of sincere cooperation laid down in Article 4(3) of the Treaty on European Union implies that the Union and the Member States should assist each other in carrying out tasks deriving from the Treaties.

1. What impact does the Commission think this dispute will have on the implementation of the common fisheries policy and on other areas of Union law?

2. Bearing in mind the implications for Union law, will it take any steps to prevent this dispute from jeopardising the attainment of EU objectives?

Question for written answer E-009917/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Dispute over the Selvagens Islands EEZ — 1

The Selvagens are a sub-archipelago of the archipelago of Madeira in the Atlantic Ocean which for administrative purposes belong to the parish of Sé in the municipality of Funchal in the Autonomous Region of Madeira. Under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea signed in Montego Bay, Jamaica, on 30 April 1982, coastal countries have the right to declare a sea area beyond their territorial waters as an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), where they enjoy certain prerogatives as regards the use of resources and are responsible for managing the marine environment.

Even though Portugal has sovereignty over the Selvagens and is therefore entitled to extend the southernmost boundary of the EEZ, Spain argues that the southernmost boundary of the EEZ between Spain and Portugal should be defined by an equidistant line halfway between Madeira and the Canaries, on the grounds that the Selvagens do not form a separate continental shelf pursuant to Article 121 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The European Union has exclusive competence with regard to the common fisheries policy and shares competence with the 28 Member States as regards various other matters which could be affected by issues concerning the demarcation and management of the EEZ, whereby it is necessary to guarantee both compliance with the Member States' obligations under the Treaty and achievement of the European Union's objectives.

1. What information has the Commission received from Portugal and Spain in relation to jurisdiction over the EEZ that is at the centre of this dispute?

2. What tools are available to the European Union and its institutions to facilitate a settlement to this dispute?

Joint answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission

(15 November 2013)

The Commission is aware of the dispute between Portugal and Spain about the delimitation of their respective Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) on account of overlapping claims pertaining among others to the appropriate treatment of the Selvagens Islands in the waters off Madeira, on the one side, and the waters off the Canary Islands, on the other.

The proclamation of EEZs and their delimitation is an entirely national competence of the Member States of the European Union, which are coastal States. For this reason, the Commission is not in a position to intervene directly in such disputes.

In the present instance, the Commission would encourage a peaceful, equitable and rapid resolution of this delimitation dispute between the two Member States concerned, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos), particularly articles74 paragraph 2, 279 and 280.

Once a Member State has proclaimed an EEZ, those waters become 'Union waters' such that Union legislation enacted by virtue of the Union's prescriptive jurisdiction in a field of exclusive competence (e.g. the common fisheries policy) or in an area of shared competence (e.g. environmental Union legislation), fully applies within those waters. In this vein, the delimitation dispute between Portugal and Spain has not adversely affected the application of the so-called Western Waters Regulation (EC) No 1954/2003 ([1]), which provides for a specific conservation regime that also covers the waters in question. Similarly, the dispute is not likely to affect the attainment of the objectives of the common fisheries policy or the objectives of any other relevant Union policy henceforth.

([1]) OJ L 289, 07.11.2003.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009910/13
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t5*Legality of low user standing changes in the energy market

An electricity supply company in Ireland has recently introduced a 'low user standing charge' which applies to customers who use an average of two units or less per day in any billing period. This additional charge has added a significant cost to customers' energy bills. While the charge was initially aimed at recouping costs from empty/vacant households and premises, in reality it is hitting low-income and vulnerable customers the hardest, as they seek to lower their energy usage in order to reduce their energy bills.

What is the Commission's position on 'low user standing charges' which vulnerable, low-income customers are obliged to pay regardless of their energy usage? Could the Commission comment on the legality of such charges?

Secondly, a public service organisation levy, which has been approved by the Commission, is also charged to all energy consumers in Ireland. At a time of economic hardship this levy is hitting vulnerable, elderly and low-income energy users the hardest.

Could the Commission comment on the possibility of suspending this levy for those facing economic hardship?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(u O:tober 013u)

In a competitive electricity (or gas) retail market, competing electricity suppliers have the freedom to set their prices according to their business strategies. According to the information provided to the Commission, the electricity market for household consumers is liberalised, so customers should be able to switch to another supplier who price offers fits customers better.

With respect to vulnerable customers, it appears that the electricity supplier in question takes into account consumers who receive the 'electricity allowance' and excludes them from the application of the 'low user standing charge' (https://www.electricireland.ie/ei/residential/price-plans/low-user-standing-charge.jsp).

For public service obligations (PSO) it is up to each Member State to decide the specific framework for their application, including any associated levies and their collection, provided it complies with the conditions set out in the Third Energy Package and in other relevant EU legislation.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor P-009911/13
za Komisijo
Romana Jordan (PPE)
(5. september 2013)

Zadeva: Zagotavljanje odkupnih cen energije na Hrvaškem

Zakonodaja Evropske unije na področju energije in okolja dovoljuje sheme spodbujanja obnovljivih virov energije, da se doseže večja energetska neodvisnost in zmanjša ogljični odtis evropske energetike. Tovrstne sheme morajo ustrezati pravilom skupnega notranjega trga, konkurence in državne pomoči.

Fotovoltaična industrija nas je obvestila o stanju na trgu nove države članice EU, Hrvaške. Na hrvaškem trgu je namreč višina zagotovljene odkupne cene energije odvisna od tega, kako proizvajalec prispeva k razvoju lokalnih skupnosti, pri čemer se kot lokalne skupnosti na podlagi hrvaške zakonodaje razumejo mesta in skupnosti na področju Republike Hrvaške. ([1]) ([2])

Zato Komisijo sprašujem:

1. Ali je takšna diskriminacija na hrvaškem trgu energije v skladu z zakonodajo EU?

2. Ali namerava Komisija pregledati hrvaško zakonodajo in prakso na tem področju?

3. Kako namerava Komisija ukrepati v primeru, da se izkaže neskladnost hrvaške nacionalne zakonodaje z zakonodajo Evropske unije?

Odgovor g. Oettingerja v imenu Komisije
(4. oktober 2013)

Hrvaška je uradno sporočila več pravnih aktov kot ukrepe za prenos Direktive o obnovljivih virih energije; presoja skladnosti teh aktov z zakonodajo EU že poteka. Če bo presoja pokazala, da Hrvaška zakonodaja ni v skladu z zakonodajo EU o obnovljivih virih energije ali drugo zakonodajo EU, predvsem o notranjem trgu, bo Komisija pravno ukrepala.

([1]) Energetski zakon: http://www.hep.hr/opskrba/Zakon_o_energiji_pocisceni_tekst.pdf in pravila za določanje tarif za proizvodnjo elektrike iz obnovljivih virov energije in kogeneracije http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2012_06_63_1508.html

([2]) Novice o tarifnem sistemu s strani ponudnikov http://microstar-elektronika.hr/elektronicki-uredaji/prodaja/suncane-elektrarne-opis-zakoni-prihodni-od-prodaje-struje in http://www.croenergo.eu/usvojen-novi-tarifni-sustav-za-proizvodnju-elektricne-energije-iz-obnovljivih-izvora-energije-i-kogeneracije-7237.aspx

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009911/13
to the Commission
Romana Jordan (PPE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Guaranteeing energy feed-in tariffs in Croatia

Under EU energy and environmental legislation, renewable energy incentive schemes may be implemented in order to achieve greater energy independence and reduce the carbon footprint of Europe's energy sector. Schemes of this kind have to be in accordance with the rules on the common internal market, competition, and state aid.

The photovoltaic industry has informed us about the market situation in the EU's new Member State, Croatia. On the Croatian market, the guaranteed energy feed-in tariff rate depends on the producer's contribution to the development of local communities, a term which, for the purposes of the Croatian legislation, means localities and communities in Croatia ([1]), [2].

1. Does EU legislation allow discrimination of the kind occurring on theCroatian energymarket?

2. Will the Commission examine Croatian law and practice in this area?

3. What steps will the Commission take if Croatian national law is found to be at variancewith EU legislation?

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

Croatia notified a number of legal acts as transposition measures under the Renewable Energy Directive; the assessment of these acts with EC law is ongoing. Should the assessment conclude that Croatia's legislation is not in line with the EU legislation on renewable energy or other EU legislation, notably on the internal market, legal action will be taken.

(1) Energy Act: http://www.hep.hr/opskrba/Zakon_o_energiji_pocisceni_tekst.pdf in pravila za določanje tarif za proizvodnjo elektrike iz obnovljivih virov energije in kogeneracije http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2012_06_63_1508.html
(2) News from providers concerning the tariff system: http://microstar-elektronika.hr/elektronicki-uredaji/prodaja/suncane-elektrarne-opis-zakoni-prihodni-od-prodaje-struje in http://www.croenergo.eu/usvojen-novi-tarifni-sustav-za-proizvodnju-elektricne-energije-iz-obnovljivih-izvora-energije-i-kogeneracije-7237.aspx

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009912/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 september 2013)

Betreft: Illegale subsidie voor hernieuwbare energie (vervolgvraag)

In haar antwoord op vraag nr. E-007675/2013 was de Commissie van mening dat huishoudens die elektriciteit opwekken via zonnepanelen en stroom leveren aan het net, voor btw-doeleinden als echte ondernemers met een economische activiteit worden beschouwd. De Commissie stelde voorts dat de btw-verplichting en de mogelijke belastingvermindering of -teruggave voor huishoudens die zonnepanelen installeren, voortvloeien uit de toepassing van de btw-richtlijn en bijgevolg niet kunnen worden beschouwd als overheidssubsidies in de zin van artikel 107 van het VWEU.

1. Kan de Commissie voor dit specifieke geval het verschil toelichten tussen de gevolgen van het vrijwaringsmechanisme tegen dubbele belasting en overheidssteun?

2. Is de Commissie van mening dat de toepassing van een Europese wetgevingshandeling betekent dat een maatregel automatisch in overeenstemming is met de Verdragen?

Enkele jaren geleden werd er in Nederland een overheidssubsidie ingevoerd voor met behulp van zonnepanelen opgewekte elektriciteit. Vorig jaar was de subsidie voor zonnepanelen vooral afkomstig uit de subsidieregeling voor de productie van duurzame energie in Nederland en maakte ongeveer de helft van de nieuwe zonnepaneelgebruikers gebruik van deze subsidie.

3. Heeft de Commissie weet van andere lidstaten waar dergelijke subsidies worden toegekend om de aankoop van zonnepanelen te stimuleren?

4. Is de Commissie het met mij eens dat deze specifieke groep ondernemers als gevolg van illegale overheidssteun een bijzonder voordelige plaats inneemt op de interne markt en dat dit tot een ernstige verstoring van de mededinging in de EU leidt?

5. Wat denkt de Commissie van het geval waarin een Nederlandse ondernemer elektriciteit levert aan het net in een andere lidstaat die geen zulke subsidies verleent? Vindt zij nog altijd dat dit in overeenstemming is met de voorschriften inzake mededinging?

Antwoord van de heer Almunia namens de Commissie
(24 oktober 2013)

1) Het btw-stelsel verleent personen die in de zin van artikel 9 van de btw-richtlijn ([1]) een economische activiteit uitoefenen, het recht op aftrek van voorbelasting; doel hiervan is ervoor te zorgen dat, anders dan bij de eindgebruikers, de belasting niet op de belastingplichtigen rust. Het recht voor belastingplichtigen om voorbelasting af te trekken van de output-btw vormt in de zin van artikel 107, lid 1, VWEU geen staatssteun, onder meer omdat dat recht niet door een lidstaat wordt verleend, maar het wordt opgelegd door de btw-richtlijn ([2]), en omdat het op alle economische sectoren van toepassing is. Het is derhalve niet selectief ([3]).

2) Het primaire recht van de EU kan niet worden geïnterpreteerd in het licht van of worden aangepast door secundaire EU-wetgeving.

3) Een aantal EU-lidstaten heeft steunregelingen die specifiek voor kleinschalige zonnepanelen bestemd zijn. Deze regelingen nemen verschillende vormen aan: een teruglevertarief, belastingverlagingen, leningen enz. Een overzicht van deze steunmaatregelen en de gesteunde technologieën is beschikbaar op www.res-legal.eu.

4) Ingevolge artikel 108, lid 3, VWEU is staatssteun onrechtmatig indien deze door de lidstaat ten uitvoer wordt gelegd zonder voorafgaande kennisgeving aan en goedkeuring van de Commissie. De Commissie heeft echter herhaaldelijk correct aangemelde Nederlandse steunregelingen ten behoeve van hernieuwbare energie (zie steunmaatregelen N 478/07 en SA.34411 (2012/N)) goedgekeurd, omdat de regelingen in overeenstemming waren met de communautaire richtsnoeren inzake staatssteun voor milieubescherming (PB C 82 van 1.4.2008, blz. 1).

([1]) PB L 347 van 11.12.2006, blz. 1.
([2]) Zie de artikelen 167 tot 172 van de btw-richtlijn.
([3]) Dit beginsel van btw-neutraliteit ligt aan de basis van het btw-stelsel (zie het antwoord van de Commissie op vraag nr. E-007675/2013).

5) Het feit dat een subsidie in één lidstaat wel en in een andere niet bestaat, is op zich geen schending van het mededingingsrecht ([4]).

([4]) Wanneer een subsidie aan een onderneming die elektriciteit aan een andere lidstaat verkoopt, staatssteun in de zin van artikel 107, lid 1, VWEU vormt, moet deze subsidie op haar verenigbaarheid met de interne markt worden getoetst. Op het gebied van de productie van hernieuwbare energie bevatten de communautaire richtsnoeren inzake staatssteun voor milieubescherming (PB C 82 van 1.4.2008, blz. 1) een reeks criteria op basis waarvan steun voor het gebruik van hernieuwbare energiebronnen met de interne markt verenigbaar kan worden verklaard. Het behoort echter tot de bevoegdheid van de lidstaten, mits de voorwaarden inzake kennisgeving en de materiële vereisten worden nageleefd, al dan niet een regeling in te voeren om steun te verlenen ten behoeve van de levering van bepaalde soorten van stroomproductie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009912/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Illegal subsidies for renewable energies (follow-up question)

In its answer to Question No E-007675/2013, the Commission took the view that households generating electricity from solar panels and delivering power to the grid are to be considered for VAT purposes as fully-fledged entrepreneurs carrying out economic activity. It further stated that the VAT liability and potential tax deductions or refunds for households installing solar panels result from the application of the VAT Directive and thus cannot be considered as state aid within the meaning of Article 107 TFEU.

1. Can the Commission specify the differences between the consequences of the 'safeguard mechanism against double taxation' and state aid in this case?

2. Does the Commission think that the application of a European legislative act means that a measure is automatically in accordance with the Treaties?

Furthermore, a few years ago a government subsidy for power generated by solar panels was introduced in the Netherlands. Last year, the subsidy scheme for durable energy production was the most important subsidy for solar panels in the Netherlands and about half of new solar panel users took advantage of this support.

3. Is the Commission aware of any other Member States where this kind of subsidy is granted in order to facilitate the purchase of solar panels?

4. Does the Commission agree with me that this particular group of entrepreneurs has a much more advantageous position in the internal market, due to illegal state aid which represents a serious distortion of competition in the EU?

5. How does the Commission view the situation in which a Dutch entrepreneur is delivering power to the grid in another Member State where this kind of subsidy is not granted? Does it still believe this is in accordance with the rules governing competition?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(24 October 2013)

1) The reason why the VAT system grants persons who carry out an economic activity in the sense of Article 9 the VAT Directive ([1]) the right to deduct input VAT is to ensure that, contrary to final consumers, taxable persons do not bear the burden of the tax. The right granted to taxable persons to deduct input VAT from output VAT does not constitute state aid in the sense of Article 107(1) TFEU, *inter alia* because that right is not granted by a Member State, but is mandatory under the VAT Directive ([2]), and because it applies across the board to economic sectors. It is thus not selective ([3]).

2) EU primary law cannot be interpreted in the light of or be modified by EU secondary legislation.

3) A number of EU Member States have support schemes dedicated to small-scale solar panels. These schemes take various forms: feed-in tariff, tax reductions, loans, etc. An overview of the support schemes and technologies supported can be found at www.res-legal.eu.

4) Under Article 108(3) TFEU, State aid is illegal if it is implemented by the Member State without prior notification to and approval by the Commission. However, the Commission has repeatedly approved duly notified Dutch state aid schemes on the support of renewable energy (see cases N 478/07 and SA.34411 2012/N), as the schemes complied with the Community guidelines on state aid for environmental protection (OJ C 82, 1.4.2008, p. 1).

([1]) OJ L 347,11.12.2006, p.1.
([2]) See Articles 167 to 172 of the VAT Directive.
([3]) This principle of neutrality of VAT is at the basis of the VAT system (see Commission's answer to Question No E-007675/2013).

5) The existence of a subsidy in one Member State and not another does not infringe competition law as such ([4]).

([4]) Where a subsidy given to an undertaking that sells electricity to another Member State constitutes state aid in the sense of Article 107(1) TFEU, it needs to be declared compatible with the internal market. In the field of renewable energy production, the Commission's Community guidelines on state aid for environmental protection (OJ C 82, 1.4.2008, p. 1) contain a set of criteria on which basis aid for renewable energy sources can be found compatible with the internal market. However, it is a matter for the discretion of Member States, subject to compliance with notification and substantive requirements, whether or not to put in place a scheme granting state aid to supply of certain types of electricity generation.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-009913/13
upućeno Komisiji
Tonino Picula (S&D) i Davor Ivo Stier (PPE)
(5. rujna 2013.)

Predmet: Institucionalna jednakost Hrvata u Bosni i Hercegovini

Provedba presude Sejdić-Finci bit će važna tema za raspravljanje na sastanku koji je Komisija sazvala za 1. listopada 2013. u Bruxellesu s političkim vođama Bosne i Hercegovine (BiH).

Kako će na sastanku u Bruxellesu biti riješeno pitanje institucionalne jednakosti Hrvata u BiH i koji će biti pristup Komisije u tom pogledu?

Odgovor gospodina Fülea u ime Komisije
(30. rujna 2013.)

Povjerenik Füle pozvao je predstavnike institucija Bosne i Hercegovine i sedam čelnika glavnih političkih stranaka na treći sastanak dijaloga na visokoj razini o pristupnom procesu koji će se održati u Bruxellesu 1. listopada. Jedna od točaka dnevnog reda bit će presuda u slučaju Sejdić-Finci. Bosna i Hercegovina nije, do današnjeg dana, provela odluku Europskog suda za ljudska prava iz slučaja Sejdić-Finci i stoga nije prekinula diskriminacijsku praksu prema kojoj su građani Bosne i Hercegovine koji se nisu izjasnili kao pripadnici jednog od triju konstitutivna naroda isključeni iz kandidature za Predsjedništvo Bosne i Hercegovine i/ili Doma naroda Parlamentarne skupštine. Neudovoljavanje Europskoj konvenciji o ljudskim pravima predstavlja kršenje Sporazuma o stabilizaciji i pridruživanju koji je Bosna i Hercegovina potpisala s EU.

Komisija očekuje da će sugovornici iz Bosne i Hercegovine na ovom sastanku predstaviti svoj plan provedbe presude Sejdić-Finci uključujući i vremenski rok za usvajanje ustavnih i zakonodavnih promjena. Vijeće je 22. srpnja ponovno pozvalo Bosnu i Hercegovinu da se složi s provedbom ove presude kao žurnog predmeta te da se, u ovom okviru, ponovno konstruktivno uključi u nju s EU-om putem posebnog predstavnika EU-a/voditelja delegacije. Nije na Komisiji da nameće bilo kakvo posebno rješenje, nego bi nadležna tijela i politički vođe Bosne i Hercegovine trebali postići dogovor prije sastanka u Bruxellesu. Na njima je da osiguraju jednak tretman svim građanima Bosne i Hercegovine u izbornom postupku.

Unutar EU postoje različiti pristupi kojima se jamče civilna i ljudska prava te se osigurava zastupljenost svih građana u javnim tijelima na nediskriminirajućoj osnovi neovisno o etničkoj pripadnosti. Pristup koji zauzima svaka država članica odražava njezine vlastite posebne okolnosti i stanovništvo. Komisija potiče nadležna tijela Bosne i Hercegovine da iskoriste ove različite pristupe kako bi izgradili konsenzus i osigurali jednak tretman svih etničkih skupina Bosne i Hercegovine u izbornom postupku.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009913/13
to the Commission
Tonino Picula (S&D) and Davor Ivo Stier (PPE)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t5*Institutional equality of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The implementation of the Sejdić-Finci ruling will be a prominent topic to be discussed at the meeting convened by the Commission with political leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) for 1 October 2013 in Brussels.

How will the Brussels meeting address the issue of institutional equality of Croats in BiH, and what will be the Commission's approach in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(u1 September 013u)

Commissioner Füle has invited representatives of the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the seven leaders of the main political parties to the third meeting of the High Level Dialogue on the Accession Process (HLDAP) planned to be held in Brussels on 1 October. One of the topics on the agenda is the Sejdić-Finci judgment. Bosnia and Herzegovina has, to date, not implemented the European Court of Human Rights ruling on the Sejdić-Finci case and thus not ended the discriminatory practice whereby citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina not declaring themselves as belonging to one of the three Constituent People are prevented to run for the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and/or the House of Peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Not complying with the European Convention of Human Rights represents a breach of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, which Bosnia and Herzegovina has signed with the EU.

The Commission expects the interlocutors of Bosnia and Herzegovina to present at this meeting how they intend to address the implementation of the Sejdić-Finci judgment including the timeline for the adoption of constitutional and legislative amendments this would require. On 22 July the Council has urged Bosnia and Herzegovina again to agree on the implementation of this judgment as a matter of urgency and, in this context, to reengage constructively with the EU, through the EU Special Representative/Head of Delegation. It is not for the Commission to impose any specific solution but for the competent Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities and political leaders to reach an agreement prior to the Brussels meeting. In particular, it is for them to ensure equal treatment of all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina in an electoral process.

There are different approaches within the EU to guaranteeing civil and human rights and ensuring representation in public bodies of all citizens on a non-discriminatory basis regardless of ethnicity. The approach taken by each Member State reflects its own specific circumstances and population. The Commission encourages the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to draw on these diverse approaches to build a consensus to ensure equal treatment of all ethnic groups of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the electoral process.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009914/13
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(5 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Chiarimenti in merito al rinvio dell'obiettivo comunitario del roaming zero

Il roaming viene utilizzato dagli operatori telefonici di telefonia cellulare per permettere agli utenti mobili di collegarsi tra loro eventualmente utilizzando anche una rete non di loro proprietà dietro una quota di pagamento all'altro operatore. Questo può accadere, ad esempio, quando l'utente si trova all'estero e l'operatore telefonico non possiede una rete propria («roaming internazionale»).

La Commissione europea, al fine di abolire gli elevati costi del roaming, ha incoraggiato le società di telefonia a stipulare accordi e alleanze transnazionali al fine di offrire pacchetti più vantaggiosi ai consumatori.

Ogni giorno milioni di cittadini utilizzano la telefonia mobile per telefonare, inviare e ricevere SMS o navigare in Internet, mentre il numero degli utenti di servizi Internet mobili aumenta quotidianamente. Parallelamente è in continua crescita anche il gruppo dei potenziali utenti dei servizi di roaming. In una recente indagine dell'Eurobarometro sul roaming, ad esempio, quasi tre quarti degli intervistati afferma di aver utilizzato durante un soggiorno all'estero servizi per la terminazione delle chiamate, l'invio di SMS o la navigazione in Internet. Nonostante tale tendenza, la maggior parte dei cittadini europei disattiva i servizi mobili all'estero per timore di ricevere bollette esorbitanti.

La proposta della Commissione (COM(2011)0402) prevede una riduzione del 90 per cento delle tariffe internazionali.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione fornire la motivazione circa il presunto rinvio dell'obiettivo comunitario del roaming zero?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(14 ottobre 2013)

La Commissione è decisa a trovare soluzioni alle tariffe di roaming elevate rendendo più competitive le condizioni di mercato. Ciò consentirà di conseguire l'obiettivo fissato dall'agenda digitale europea, ossia rendere praticamente inesistente la differenza fra le tariffe in roaming e le tariffe nazionali. Il COM(2011)402 definitivo è stato infine adottato come la modifica 2012 del regolamento sul roaming, il cui obiettivo che gli europei non debbano più pagare costi aggiuntivi per il roaming rimane valido. Le proposte relative al mercato unico delle telecomunicazioni presentate dalla Commissione l'11 settembre 2013 si basano su tale regolamento e mirano a realizzare un mercato unico autentico in cui le tariffe di roaming non esistano più. La Commissione confida nel fatto che, a seguito di tale proposta, gli utenti europei saranno in grado, quando viaggiano in un altro paese dell'UE, di beneficiare delle stesse tariffe che pagano nel proprio paese d'origine per le chiamate, gli SMS e i servizi di dati.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009914/13
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Clarification requested regarding the postponement of the EU goal to abolish roaming charges

Roaming is used by mobile telephone operators to allow mobile users to connect with each other, where necessary also by using a network belonging to another operator by paying a fee to that operator. This can happen, for example, when the user is abroad and the telephone operator does not have its own network ('international roaming').

In order to tackle the high cost of roaming, the Commission has encouraged phone companies to draw up agreements and make cross-border alliances in order to offer more attractive packages to consumers.

Each day millions of people use mobile phones to make phone calls, send and receive SMS messages or surf the Web, while the number of users of mobile Internet services is constantly growing. At the same time, the group of potential users of roaming services is also growing. In a recent Eurobarometer survey on roaming, for example, nearly three-quarters of respondents said that during a stay abroad they had used call termination services, sent text messages or surfed the Internet. Despite this trend, the majority of EU citizens disable their mobile services abroad, for fear of receiving exorbitant bills.

Commission proposal COM(2011) 0402 provides for a 90% reduction in international tariffs.

Can the Commission therefore say why the EU objective of abolishing roaming charges has allegedly been postponed?

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

The Commission is determined to find solutions to high roaming charges by reinforcing competitive market conditions. This will allow achieving the target set by the Digital Agenda for Europe, namely the difference between roaming and national tariffs approaching zero. COM(2011)402 was ultimately adopted as the 2012 amendment to one Roaming Regulation, and whose objective that Europeans no longer have to pay roaming premiums remains valid. The Telecoms Single Market proposals presented by the Commission on 11 September 2013 builds on that regulation, with the objective of reaching a genuine single market in which roaming charges no longer exist. The Commission trusts that as a result of its proposal, European users will be able, when roaming in any other EU country, to benefit from the same calling, texting, and data rates as in their home country.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009915/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(2 settembre 013O)

*g : : etto5*Conseguenze del «Quantitative Easing» della Fed

Nel corso della riunione informale dei banchieri centrali, svoltasi a Jackson Hole nel Wyoming alla fine d'agosto, la direttrice del FMI Christine Lagarde ha ammesso che con le nuove crisi delle economie emergenti «siamo in una nuova pericolosa fase che potrebbe far deragliare la fragile ripresa», mentre le riverberazioni sui mercati finanziari «potrebbero ritornare dove hanno avuto origine, cioè negli Usa». La prospettiva non è rosea e ci si chiede se la politica monetaria futura della Fed rimarrà identica a quella del recente passato, vale a dire all'immissione di liquidità nel sistema. Con la terza operazione QE, essa ha convogliato 85 miliardi di dollari al mese per acquistare nuove obbligazioni del Tesoro e altri titoli bancari meno solvibili, come i derivati asset-backed-security. Probabilmente anche in Europa si è capito che con una finanza drogata non si risolvono i problemi del debito pubblico e non si opera sulle cause che hanno prodotto la crisi sistemica.

Può la Commissione riferire:

1. se ha un'opinione sulle conseguenze della politica di Quantitative Easing della Fed;

2. quali risultati ha raggiunto tale politica per l'economia americana;

3. quali sono stati i risultati per il resto del mondo, Europa compresa;

4. quale impatto potrebbe avere la crisi delle economie emergenti sulle economie degli Stati membri dell'UE?

5. se ha proposte da presentare al prossimo G20 nel caso in cui la Fed modificasse la sua politica di QE?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(00 ottobre 013O)

La Commissione non commenta la politica monetaria della Federal Reserve degli Stati Uniti o di altre banche centrali e ne rispetta pienamente l'indipendenza.

La Commissione rimanda l'onorevole parlamentare alla dichiarazione rilasciata dai capi di Stato e di governo in occasione del vertice G20 tenutosi il 5-6 settembre 2013 a San Pietroburgo: «La stabilità dei prezzi interni e il sostegno della ripresa economica continuano ad essere gli obiettivi della politica monetaria, in conformità con il mandato impartito dalle rispettive banche centrali. Siamo consapevoli del sostegno apportato all'economia mondiale negli ultimi anni da politiche monetarie accomodanti, incluse le politiche monetarie straordinarie. Abbiamo ben presenti i rischi e gli effetti secondari negativi generati involontariamente da periodi prolungati di allentamento monetario. Siamo consapevoli del fatto che una crescita rafforzata e costante consentirà infine di normalizzare gradualmente le politiche monetarie. Le nostre banche centrali si impegnano affinché le modifiche future delle politiche monetarie siano attentamente calibrate e comunicate in modo chiaro.»

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009915/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t5*Consequences of the Federal Reserve's quantitative easing policy

At the informal meeting of central bankers held in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, at the end of August, the director of the IMF, Christine Lagarde, admitted that with the new crisis in the emerging economies 'we are in a dangerous new phase and risk seeing the fragile recovery derailed', while the reverberations in financial markets 'could go back to where they started — the United States.'

The outlook is not good and one cannot but wonder whether the future monetary policy of the Federal Reserve will remain the same, i.e. that of injecting liquidity into the system. With its third quantitative easing (QE) operation, it has funnelled USD 85 billion a month into buying new Treasury bonds and other less reliable bank stocks, such as asset-backed security derivatives. Probably even in Europe it has been understood that doping the finance system does not resolve government debt problems and does not work on the causes of the systemic crisis.

Can the Commission say:

1. whether it has an opinion on the consequences of the Federal Reserve's quantitativeeasing policy;

2. what results this policy has achieved for the US economy;

3. what results it has achieved for the rest of the world, including Europe;

4. what impact the crisis of the emerging economies could have on the economies of the EUMember States;

5. whether it has any proposals to present to the next G20 meeting should the FederalReserve change its QE policy?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(00 O:tober 013u)

The Commission does not comment on the monetary policy of the U.S. Federal Reserve or other central banks, in full respect of their independence.

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the statement of the G20 Leaders' Summit held in Saint Petesburg on 5-6 September 2013: 'Monetary policy will continue to be directed towards domestic price stability and supporting the economic recovery according to the respective mandates of central banks. We recognise the support that has been provided to the global economy in recent years from accommodative monetary policies, including unconventional monetary policies. We remain mindful of the risks and unintended negative side effects of extended periods of monetary easing. We recognise that strengthened and sustained growth will be accompanied by an eventual transition toward the normalization of monetary policies. Our central banks have committed that future changes to monetary policy settings will continue to be carefully calibrated and clearly communicated.'

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys P-009918/13
komissiolle
Tarja Cronberg (Verts/ALE)
(5. syyskuuta 2013)

Aihe: EU:n yhteinen metsästrategia

Maailman väkiluku lähenee yhdeksää miljardia vuonna 2050. Vaikkei väestönkasvu keskity Eurooppaan, on Euroopankin suunniteltava tarkasti niukkenevien luonnonvarojensa käyttöä. Uuden talouden tulee olla kestävä. Kilpailukykyä ja hyvinvointia voidaan lisätä vain uusiutuvien luonnonvarojen ehdoilla. Metsien osuus on tässä kiistaton. Metsätalous tarjoaa työtä, kaupallisia tuotteita ja ei-kaupallisia ekosysteemipalveluja. Metsässä on myös valtava innovaatiopotentiaali, sieltä haetaan ratkaisuja mm. ilmastonmuutokseen sekä veden ja ravinnon puutteeseen.

Metsäteollisuuden rooli EU:ssa on merkittävä: 350 miljardin euron tuotantoarvolla ja 120 miljardin euron kerrannaisvaikutuksilla on luotu yli kolme miljoonaa työpaikkaa. Biotalouden kautta vaikutus vain kasvaa: EU:n biotaloudessa työllistyy yli 22 miljoonaa työntekijää eli yhdeksän prosenttia Euroopan työllisistä. EU:n alueella on viisi prosenttia maailman metsistä. EU28:n maa-alasta on metsää 38 %, yhteensä 159 miljoonaa hehtaaria. Yksityismetsiä on 60 % ja niiden keskimääräinen pinta-ala vaihtelee jäsenmaittain 0,7 hehtaarista 130 hehtaariin.

EU:n ja jäsenmaiden metsäpolitiikka on pirstoutunutta. Sitä ohjataan kansallisista lähtökohdista ja myös toisten EU-politiikkojen näkökulmista. Voimassa oleva EU:n yhteinen metsästrategia on vuodelta 1998 ja auttamattomasti vanhentunut. Yksimielisyys uuden metsästrategian tarpeellisuudesta on olemassa. Useat tahot ovat antaneet panoksensa uuden strategian valmisteluun ja komission yksiköiden viralliset neuvottelut on saatu päätökseen alkuvuodesta. Komissio on silti jättänyt esityksen antamatta parlamentille ja neuvostolle.

Mikä todellisuudessa on metsän asema – ja mikä on siis myös biotalouden asema – EU:ssa, kun siltä puuttuu ajantasainen, kokoava ja tulevaisuusorientoitunut metsästrategia?

Miksi ja minne komission valmistelema uusi yhteinen metsästrategia on kadonnut?

Mikä on EU:n suhde vihreään talouteen ja globaaleihin ongelmiin, kun aivan keskeinen luonnonvara, metsät, on vailla uutta yhteistä kestävän metsänhoidon määrittelevää asiakirjaa?

Dacian Cioloşin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(30. syyskuuta 2013)

Euroopan komissio hyväksyi tiedonannon ”Uusi EU:n metsästrategia: metsien ja metsäalan puolesta” 20. syyskuuta 2013 ([1]). Tiedonannossa käsitellään keskeisiä haasteita, joita metsät ja metsäala kohtaavat EU:ssa nykyisin ja seuraavien kymmenen vuoden aikana, ja tavoitteena on varmistaa, että kaikki asiaan liittyvät EU:n toimintalinjat otetaan täysin huomioon metsäalaa koskevissa EU:n toimintalinjoissa ja aloitteissa. EU:n uudessa metsästrategiassa käsitellään eräässä jaksossa erityisesti (muun muassa) vihreää taloutta.

([1]) KOM(2013)0659 lopullinen.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009918/13
to the Commission
Tarja Cronberg (Verts/ALE)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: The EU's common forestry strategy

In 2050, the world population is expected to be approaching nine billion. Although population growth is not centred on Europe, even there it is necessary to plan carefully how to use the dwindling natural resources. The new economy needs to be sustainable. Competitiveness and prosperity can be increased only with the aid of renewable natural resources. The contribution to be made by forests is indisputable. Forestry provides employment, commercial products and non-commercial ecosystem services. There is also an enormous potential for innovation in forests: they are a source of solutions, *inter alia*, to the problem of climate change and shortages of water and food.

The forestry industry plays a substantial role in the EU: with the aid of EUR 350 billion in production value and EUR 120 billion in multiplier effects, more than three million jobs have been created. Through the bioeconomy, its influence is only growing: more than 22 million people are working in the EU's bioeconomy, thus accounting for 9% of employment in the EU. The EU has 5% of the world's forests. Of the EU-28's territory, 38% consists of forests — a total of 159 million hectares. 60% are privately owned, and their average area ranges from 0.7 hectares to 130 hectares, depending on the Member State.

In the EU and the Member States, forestry policy is fragmented. It is based on national considerations, and also on considerations derived from other EU policies. The EU common forestry strategy which is in force dates from 1998 and is hopelessly outdated. It is unanimously agreed that that a new forestry strategy is needed. Various parties have contributed to the preparation of a new strategy, and official negotiations by the Commission were completed at the beginning of the year. Yet the Commission has not submitted a proposal to Parliament and the Council.

What in reality is the position of forests — and therefore also of the bioeconomy — in the EU, given the lack of an up-to-date, comprehensive and future-oriented strategy for forests?

Why has the new common forestry strategy drafted by the Commission disappeared, and what has become of it?

What is the EU's relationship to the green economy and to global problems, bearing in mind that a vital natural resource — forests — lacks a new common document providing for sustainable forestry?

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

The communication on a New EU Forest Strategy: for forests and the forest-based sector was adopted by the European Commission on 20 September 2013 ([1]). It aims at addressing the key challenges that EU forests and the forest-based sector are facing and will face in the next decade and at ensuring that all relevant EU policies be fully integrated into EU-level forest-related policies and initiatives. One section of the new EU forest Strategy specifically addresses (*inter alia*) the green economy.

([1]) COM(2013) 659 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009919/13
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(5 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: El legado religioso-cultural de Europa

Según informaciones del Gobierno andorrano, la Unión Europea no ha permitido que las monedas de 10, 20 y 50 céntimos de los futuros euros andorranos, que entrarán en circulación a partir del 1 de enero de 2014, muestren la imagen del Pantocrátor de Sant Martí de la Cortinada, aduciendo que no quiere que se usen imágenes religiosas en el euro.

Fuentes gubernamentales andorranas han pedido que se reconsidere el diseño para no romper el principio de neutralidad en materia de creencias religiosas. En otros países europeos, como es el caso de Eslovaquia o España, se utilizan símbolos religiosos en sus monedas, como la doble cruz o los santos patrones Cirilo y Metodio en el caso eslovaco o la catedral de Burgos y de Santiago de Compostela, así como la mezquita de Córdoba, en el caso español, haciendo referencia a la historia de su país o al propio legado europeo.

A la luz de lo expuesto:

Me gustaría apuntar que el Pantocrátor es considerado un icono del arte románico del país de los Pirineos. Por este motivo, me gustaría conocer con mayor detalle el razonamiento que ha llevado a la Comisión a no permitir que los símbolos culturales e históricos de un país europeo puedan ser representados en sus monedas.

¿No considera la Comisión que esta voluntad de laicizar Europa no hace sino ignorar las raíces religioso-culturales que han hecho Europa tal y como la concebimos hoy en día en su plena diversidad y riqueza?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de octubre de 2013)

De conformidad con los Tratados, la Unión Europea y sus instituciones contribuyen al florecimiento de las culturas de los Estados miembros, en el respeto de su diversidad nacional y regional. La importancia del arte románico en la historia y sociedad andorrana es indiscutible.

Los Estados miembros y los terceros países que han firmado un convenio monetario con la UE, como Andorra, deben tener en cuenta al preparar un diseño para una moneda en euro que ya no no se trata de un asunto meramente nacional. Una moneda en euro circula en todos los Estados miembros de la zona del euro y en los países que han firmado un convenio monetario con la UE. Estos Estados miembros tienen diferentes tradiciones e historia.

Las dudas de la Comisión sobre el primer diseño para las futuras monedas andorranas de 10, 20 y 50 céntimos de euro no se referían a la imagen de la iglesia románica de Sant Martí de la Cortinada, la cual figura de hecho en el diseño definitivo y aprobado de la moneda en euro andorrana, sino al nimbo de San Bricio, ya que ese nimbo es, como tal, un signo de fe religiosa. En cambio, las imágenes de catedrales, por ejemplo, la de Santiago de Compostela en el caso de España, las utilizan frecuentemente los Estados miembros de la zona del euro como motivos de las monedas en euros, porque representan monumentos históricos y culturales. La doble cruz eslovaca ([1]) y la cruz de Malta ([2]) son símbolos nacionales.

Las personas de diversas creencias religiosas pueden considerar inconveniente que se les obligue a aceptar o usar una moneda ([3]) con claros elementos religiosos, los cuales también son problemáticos en los países en los que el carácter laico del Estado es un componente fundamental del Derecho público nacional, a veces hasta consagrado en su constitución. Por consiguiente, la Comisión aconsejó a Andorra evitar los motivos que puedan suscitar reacciones negativas entre los ciudadanos de otros Estados miembros cuya moneda es el euro.

([1]) Como figura en las monedas normales de 1 y 2 euros de Eslovaquia.
([2]) Como figura en las monedas normales de 1 y 2 euros de Malta.
([3]) Se trata de la propia definición de su curso legal.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009919/13
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t5*The link between religion and culture in Europe

According to information from the Andorran Government, the European Union has forbidden the future Andorran 10, 20 and 50 euro cent coins, which will enter into circulation from 1 January 2014, from bearing the image of the Christ Pantocrator of the Sant Martí de la Cortinada church, on the grounds that it does not want religious imagery to be used on the euro.

Andorran Government sources have asked for the coin to be redesigned so as not to breach the principle of neutrality with regard to religious beliefs. Other EU countries, like Slovakia or Spain, use religious symbols on their coins, such as the double cross or the patron saints Cyril and Methodius in the case of Slovakia, or the cathedrals of Burgos and Santiago de Compostela, as well as the Mosque-Cathedral of Cordoba, in the case of Spain, referring to the country's history or to its European legacy.

I would like to point out that the Christ Pantocrator is considered an icon of Andorran Romanesque art. For that reason, I would like to know more about the reasoning that led the Commission not to allow a European country's cultural and historic symbols to appear on its coins.

Does the Commission not think that this desire to secularise Europe only disregards the religious and cultural roots that have made Europe as we know it today, a place of diversity and richness?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(0u O:tober 013u)

In accordance with the Treaties, the EU and its institutions contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the MS, while respecting their national and regional diversity. The importance of the Roman art for the Andorran history and society is uncontested.

Member States and third countries having signed a monetary agreement with the EU, such as Andorra, have to take into account when preparing a design for a euro coin that this coin is no longer a mere national matter. A euro coin circulates in all euro area MS and in countries that have signed a monetary agreement with the EU. These States all have different traditions and backgrounds.

The Commission's concerns about the first design for the future Andorran 10, 20 and 50 euro cent coins regarded not the image of the Romanesque church of Sant Martí de la Cortinada — which is actually presented on the final and approved Andorran euro coin design — but the halo of St. Brice, given that the halo as such is sign of religious belief. In contrast, images of cathedrals, for example the one of Santiago de Compostela in the case of Spain, are widely accepted as designs of euro coins among the euro area MS as they represent historical and cultural monuments. The Slovak double cross ([1]) and the Maltese cross ([2]) are national symbols.

Persons of different religious belief may find it inappropriate to be forced to accept or use a coin ([3]) with clear religious elements, while the latter are also problematic in countries where secularism is a fundamental building block of national public law, sometimes even of constitutional nature. Therefore, the Commission advised Andorra to avoid designs which are likely to create adverse reactions among citizens in other States whose currency is the euro.

([1]) as pictured on the 1 and 2 Slovak regular euro coins.
([2]) as pictured on the 1 and 2 Maltese regular euro coins.
([3]) the very definition of their legal tender.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009920/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(5 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — La situación del pueblo uigur

El pasado 20 de agosto, 22 personas de etnia uigur y un policía de etnia han-la mayoritaria en China-murieron en un enfrentamiento en una zona desértica de la provincia de Xinjiang, y cuatro personas más fueron detenidas acusadas de supuesto terrorismo. Los 22 muertos fueron enterrados de manera inmediata sin que sus familiares fueran informados.

Este nuevo tiroteo se suma a la ola de violencia que ha azotado a la región de Xinjiang en los últimos meses, dando lugar a decenas de muertes y detenciones masivas. Por citar solo un ejemplo, a principios del mes de agosto, la policía abrió fuego contra un grupo de uigures que protestaban en contra de la restricción de rezar en la ciudad de Akyol, matando a tres personas e hiriendo a más de cincuenta, días antes de la fiesta que marca el final del mes sagrado del Islam.

A la luz de estos acontecimientos:

¿Está la Vice-Presidenta/Alta Representante al corriente de los sucesos recientes en contra la población uigur? ¿Qué opinión le merece al respecto?

¿Tiene la Sra. Vice-presidenta/Alta Representante previsto discutir próximamente la discriminación étnica que sufre la minoría uigur, así como el futuro del Turkestán Oriental, con las autoridades chinas?

En 2009, el 30 de agosto fue declarado por la Resolución 65/209 de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas como el Día Internacional de las Víctimas de Desapariciones Forzadas. La adopción de esta resolución coincidió con la entrada en vigor de la Convención Internacional para la Protección de Todas las Personas contra las Desapariciones Forzadas, consagrando en el derecho internacional el marco legal que tiene por objeto prevenir este delito. A pesar de que la República Popular China no ha ratificado dicha Convención, sí que es signataria del Pacto Internacional de Derechos Civiles y Políticos, que contiene varias de sus disposiciones. El Congreso Mundial Uigur ha documentado más de 30 casos de uigures que han sido víctimas de desapariciones forzadas ¿Cuál es la postura de la Vice-presidenta/Alta Representante con respecto a la situación aquí descrita?

Respuesta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de noviembre de 2013)

La UE plantea sistemáticamente la cuestión de los derechos humanos de las personas pertenecientes a minorías en China, incluidos los uigures, ante el Consejo de Derechos Humanos y la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas. Más recientemente, durante el vigésimo cuarto periodo de sesiones del Consejo de Derechos Humanos, en la declaración emitida con ocasión del debate sobre los derechos humanos que requieren la atención del Consejo, la UE manifestó su preocupación acerca de los «actuales denuncias de violaciones de los derechos humanos en China, en particular el uso de la fuerza contra manifestantes pacíficos, especialmente en zonas de población tibetana y en Xinjiang» e instó a China a «respetar plenamente los derechos a la libertad de expresión, de reunión y de asociación y los derechos de las personas pertenecientes a minorías».

El asunto se ha planteado recientemente con ocasión del diálogo UE-China sobre derechos humanos, que tuvo lugar en Guiyang (provincia de Guizhou) el 25 de junio, y durante la visita del Representante Especial de la UE para los derechos humanos, Stavros Lambrinidis, a China en septiembre, en la cual también se mantuvieron conversaciones con la Administración del Estado para Asuntos Religiosos. Además, en ambas ocasiones, la UE planteó la cuestión de la ratificación por parte de China del Pacto Internacional de Derechos Civiles y Políticos (PIDCP), firmado en 1998, sobre todo con vistas al examen periódico universal, ya que la pronta ratificación de este documento fue una de las recomendaciones aceptadas por China en 2009. El próximo examen periódico universal, previsto para el 22 de octubre, abordará la cuestión del seguimiento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009920/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(3 September 201u)

*Sj bæ:t5*VP/HR — Situation of the Uyghur people

On 20 August 2013, 22 Uyghurs and a policeman of Han Chinese ethnicity — the majority ethnic group in China — were killed in a clash in a desert area of Xinjiang province, and a further four people were arrested on terrorism charges. The 22 victims were buried immediately without their families being informed.

This skirmish is the latest in a wave of violence that has swept through the Xinjiang region in recent months, leaving dozens dead and leading to mass arrests. To give just one example, in early August the police opened fire on a group of Uyghurs who were protesting against the restriction on prayer in the town of Akyol, killing three people and wounding another 50, just days before the celebration marking the end of the Islamic holy month.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the recent attacks on the Uyghur people? What does she think about them?

Does the Vice-President/High Representative plan to discuss ethnic discrimination against the Uyghur minority, as well as the future of East Turkestan, with the Chinese authorities soon?

In 2009, the General Assembly of the United Nations, by Resolution 65/209, declared 30 August to be International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances. The adoption of that resolution coincided with the entry into force of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, enshrining in international law the legal framework for preventing such crimes. Although the People's Republic of China has not ratified that Convention, it is a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which contains several of the Convention's provisions. The World Uyghur Congress has documented over 30 cases involving Uyghurs who have been victims of enforced disappearances. What is the Vice-President/High Representative's position with regard to the above situation?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(12 November 201u)

The EU systematically raises the human rights of persons belonging to minorities in China, including the Uighurs, in the Human Rights council and the UN General Assembly. Most recently, during the 24th session of the Human Rights Council, in the statement delivered during the debate on Human Rights that require the Council's attention, the EU expressed its 'concerns about ongoing reports of human rights violations in China, particularly the use of force against peaceful protesters, especially in Tibetan-inhabited areas and Xinjiang' and urged China 'fully to respect the rights to freedom of expression, assembly and association, and rights of persons belonging to minorities. '

The issue was most recently raised at the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue, which took place in Guiyang (Guizhou Province) on 25 June, and during the visit of EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Mr Stavros Lambrinidis, to China in September where discussions were also held with the State Administration for Religious Affairs. Furthermore, on both occasions, the EU raised the question of the ratification by China of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), signed in 1998, especially in view of the Universal Periodic Review, as early ratification was one of the recommendations accepted by China in 2009. The next UPR, on 22 October, will address the issue of follow-up.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009921/13
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D), Alejandro Cercas (S&D), Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D), Luis Yáñez-Barnuevo García (S&D), Carmen Romero López (S&D), Antonio Masip Hidalgo (S&D) y María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D)
(5 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Prestaciones sociales y obligaciones fiscales de emigrantes en la EU

Miles de ciudadanos europeos que han sido emigrantes en otros Estados miembros y perciben pensiones de jubilación u otras prestaciones sociales de carácter económico desde estos países se ven en dificultades a su retorno para conocer su situación fiscal y cumplir con sus obligaciones tributarias en sus países de residencia a consecuencia de la ausencia de medidas a escala europea. Se debe asegurar:

1. Que disponen gratuitamente y en tiempo hábil de un certificado anual justificativo al menos de la cuantía de las percepciones, retenciones e impuestos hechos efectivos en el país de origen.

2. Que los certificados responden a un estándar o existen medidas para asegurar su efectividad en cualquier Estado miembro sin necesidad de traducción o sin que esta corra a cargo de los perceptores de la prestación.

3. Que el tratamiento fiscal de las prestaciones sociales no discrimina por razón del número o nacionalidad de los pagadores en el ámbito de la Unión Europea.

4. Que existe un sistema para que los beneficios, incluyendo las exenciones fiscales, reconocidos a las rentas de los trabajadores en los países de acogida, incluidos los relacionados con las prestaciones de incapacidad o invalidez y jubilación, no se vean distorsionados en el caso de los emigrantes a causa de su retorno a su país de origen o residencia en otro Estado miembro.

5. Que existe un marco europeo para evitar la doble imposición a los emigrantes retornados y para posibilitar el establecimiento y, en su caso, la modificación de Convenios entre Estados de forma consistente.

En la presente situación, determinadas prácticas y requerimientos fiscales en algunos Estados miembros son percibidos por los emigrantes retornados como actos de hostigamiento injusto, contrarios a los principios comunitarios y a las libertades fundamentales europeas.

¿Comparte la Comisión estos problemas? ¿Va a adoptar alguna iniciativa?

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

La fiscalidad directa compete principalmente a los Estados miembros de la UE, por lo que la Comisión se limita a actuar dentro de los límites de las competencias que los Estados miembros le atribuyen. Por esta razón, está facultada para formular propuestas de legislación de la UE dirigidas a mejorar el funcionamiento del mercado interior, pero esas propuestas solo podrán entrar en vigor si los Estados miembros de la UE las aprueban por unanimidad. A falta de legislación vigente de la UE en la materia, los Estados miembros tienen libertad para diseñar sus regímenes y procedimientos de imposición directa como prefieran, siempre que sus normas no sean discriminatorias o contrarias a los Tratados. No existe ninguna disposición en los Tratados de la UE relativa a los tratados fiscales y la doble imposición no se considera contraria al Derecho de la UE. A este respecto, la Comisión está tomando las medidas siguientes.

1. y 2. La Comisión ha determinado los ámbitos en los que las administraciones tributarias de los Estados miembros podrían facilitar la vida de los trabajadores transfronterizos ([1]). Entre las propuestas figuran la creación de ventanillas únicas centrales en que los trabajadores móviles podrían recibir todos los certificados necesarios de las autoridades fiscales de sus países, la puesta a disposición de formularios en varios idiomas y la adopción de normas especiales aplicables a los trabajadores móviles y fronterizos. La Comisión presentará en 2014 un informe sobre las mejores prácticas en la gestión de los problemas fiscales transfronterizos.

([1]) Comunicación Eliminar las barreras fiscales transfronterizas en beneficio de los ciudadanos de la UE, COM(2010) 769.

3. y 4. La Comisión está examinando las leyes fiscales de los Estados miembros para detectar indicios de medidas discriminatorias en los ámbitos concretos de las pensiones, las personas móviles y los trabajadores fronterizos. Además, incoará procedimientos de infracción contra los Estados miembros que incurran en este tipo de discriminación.

5. La Comisión está estudiando posibles soluciones a los problemas de doble imposición no resueltos en la actualidad mediante convenios fiscales bilaterales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009921/13
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D), Alejandro Cercas (S&D), Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D), Luis Yáñez Barnuevo García (S&D), Carmen Romero López (S&D), Antonio Masip Hidalgo (S&D) and María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Social welfare benefits and tax obligations of emigrants in the EU

Thousands of EU citizens who have emigrated to other Member States and receive retirement pensions or other financial benefits from those countries have difficulty, when they return home, finding out what their tax status is and complying with their tax obligations in their countries of residence, as a result of there being no EU-level measures in place. It should be ensured that:

1. They can obtain, free of charge and in good time, an annual certificate showing at least the amount of payments, deductions and taxes applicable in the country of origin.

2. The certificates conform to a standard or there are measures in place to ensure that the certificates are valid in any Member State without needing to be translated or without the cost of such translation being borne by benefit recipients.

3. The tax treatment of social welfare benefits does not discriminate on the basis of the number or nationality of agencies paying them within the European Union.

4. A system is in place so that benefits, including tax exemptions, applied to the income of workers in host countries, including those relating to disability or invalidity and retirement benefit, are not distorted for emigrants due to them returning to their country of origin or living in another Member State.

5. There is a European framework to avoid double taxation of returning emigrants and to make it possible to create and, where appropriate, consistently amend agreements between Member States.

In the current situation, certain tax practices and requirements in some Member States are felt by returning emigrants to amount to unfair harassment, at odds with the principles of the EU and fundamental European freedoms.

Does the Commission agree that these are problems? Will it take any action?

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

Direct taxation mainly falls under the competence of the EU Member States and the Commission is therefore confined to act within the boundaries of the competences that the Member States confer to it. Hence it has the power to make proposals for EU legislation to improve the functioning of the internal market but the proposals will only become law if EU Member States unanimously agree to them. In the absence of existing EU legislation, Member States are free to design their direct tax systems and procedures as they choose as long as their rules are not discriminatory or otherwise contrary to the Treaties. There is no provision in the EU Treaties concerning tax treaties and double taxation is not considered to be contrary to EC law. Within this framework, the Commission is taking the following actions:

1 and 2. The Commission has identified areas where Member States' tax administrations could make life easier for cross-border workers ([1]). Suggestions included setting up central one-stop-shops where mobile workers could receive all necessary certificates for their home countries' tax authorities; making forms available in several languages; and adopting special rules for frontier and mobile workers. The Commission will present a report on best practices in dealing with cross-border tax issues in 2014.

3 and 4. The Commission is examining Member States' tax laws for evidence of discriminatory measures in the specific areas of pensions, mobile persons and cross-border workers and will launch infringement procedures against any Member States practising such discrimination.

5. The Commission is currently examining possible solutions to double taxation problems that are not currently resolved by bilateral tax treaties.

([1]) Communication 'Removing cross-border tax obstacles for EU citizens' — COM(2010) 769.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009922/13
an die Kommission
Burkhard Balz (PPE) und Peter Simon (S&D)
(2. September 013B)

*i etrf::t5*SEPA Online-Lastschriftmandat

Ab Februar 2014 muss das SEPA-Verfahren für alle Überweisungen und Lastschriften in Euro angewendet werden. In vielen Mitgliedstaaten werden Lastschriften häufig für Internetzahlungen genutzt. Das bedeutet auch, dass die weitere Verfügbarkeit von Online-Lastschriften wichtig für einen reibungslosen Übergang zum SEPA-Verfahren ab Februar 2014 ist.

Der European Payment Council (EPC) war damit beauftragt, die zugehörigen Zahlungssysteme und Rahmenbedingungen zu entwickeln. Das vom EPC herausgebrachte SEPA Direct Debit (SDD) Rulebook legt verpflichtend fest, wie Zahlungsvorgänge durchgeführt werden sollen. Das Rulebook lässt momentan „physically signed" — also unterschriebene, in Papierform vorliegende — Ermächtigungen als die einzig mögliche Option zu, um Lastschriften durchzuführen. Ein digitales Mandat ist bisher nicht vorgesehen.

1. Wie schätzt die Kommission die Verbraucherfreundlichkeit des SEPA-Verfahrens in Bezug auf Online-Lastschriftmandate ein? Besteht die Gefahr, dass Verbraucher dies als hinderlich und nicht benutzerfreundlich empfinden könnten?

2. Wie bewertet die Kommission die rechtlichen Unsicherheiten für Onlinehändler und Banken in Bezug auf die weitere Verfügbarkeit von Online-Lastschriften?

3. Welche Auswirkungen wird SEPA auf die europäische Digitalwirtschaft haben, insbesondere vor dem Hintergrund, dass Lastschriften in vielen Mitgliedstaaten bevorzugt für Internetzahlungen genutzt werden?

4. Besteht die Gefahr, dass Onlinegeschäfte, die heute auf nicht papierhafte, digitale Mandate für Lastschriften vertrauen, eine Unterbrechung ihrer Zahlungsströme befürchten müssen und sogar eine Insolvenz riskieren, da diese Mandate für Lastschriften nicht mehr von Banken akzeptiert werden?

5. Wie bewertet die Kommission die Entwicklung von Alternativen zu unterschriebenen, in Papierform vorliegenden Ermächtigungen?

6. Wird das Problem bei Online-Lastschriften zwischen der Kommission und dem EPC diskutiert? Gibt es vonseiten der Kommission und des EPC Lösungsvorschläge?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(02. Oktober 013B)

Nach Auffassung der Kommission müssen SEPA-Zahlungsdienste zuverlässig sowie nutzer- und verbraucherfreundlich sein. Eine digitale Mandatserteilung für SEPA-Lastschriften wird in der SEPA-Verordnung nicht verlangt. Der Europäische Zahlungsverkehrsausschuss (EPC) spricht in seinem Regelwerk für SEPA-Lastschriften von eMandaten (Anhang VII). Die Umstellung auf SEPA-Lastschriftverfahren wird aber auch ohne eine solche eMandat-Lösung möglich sein. In Ermangelung eines (vom EPC geplanten, aber noch nicht entwickelten) EPC-„eMandats", das auf breiter Ebene verfügbar wäre, bleiben derzeit gängige Formen der Mandatserteilung und Unterzeichnungsmethoden auch nach dem 1. Februar 2014 gültig. Da die Banken Vorbehalte hinsichtlich der Verarbeitung von SEPA-Lastschriften haben könnten, die mittels eines der derzeitigen, nicht harmonisierten elektronischen Mandate in Auftrag gegeben werden, hat die Kommission den EPC dazu ermutigt, seinen Mitgliedern die klare Botschaft zu übermitteln, dass die derzeit verwendeten elektronischen Mandate für SEPA-Lastschriften nach dem 1. Februar 2014 weiterhin genutzt werden können. Dies sollte Zweifel und Unsicherheiten bei Verbrauchern und Händlern ausräumen.

Die Kommission sieht die Ausarbeitung einer harmonisierten Lösung für ein europäisches eMandat für SEPA-Lastschriften als Schritt in die richtige Richtung, der der Nutzung von SEPA-Lastschriften im elektronischen Handel — als Alternative zu Kreditkarten — förderlich wäre.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009922/13
to the Commission
Burkhard Balz (PPE) and Peter Simon (S&D)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t5*SEPA online direct debit mandate

As of February 2014, the SEPA process must be applied for all credit transfers and direct debits in euros. In many Member States, direct debits are frequently used for Internet payments. This also means that the continued availability of online direct debits is important for a smooth transition to the SEPA process from February 2014.

The European Payment Council (EPC) was tasked with developing the associated payment systems and framework conditions. The SEPA Direct Debit (SDD) Rulebook published by the EPC lays down mandatory requirements for how payment transactions are to be carried out. The Rulebook currently permits 'physically signed' authorisations — in other words signed, paper-based authorisations — as the only possible option for executing direct debits. No digital mandate has as yet been envisaged.

1. How consumer-friendly does the Commission believe the SEPA process to be with regard to online direct debit mandates? Is there a risk that consumers could view this as cumbersome and not user-friendly?

2. What is the Commission's assessment of the legal uncertainty for online traders and banks with regard to the continued availability of online direct debits?

3. What effects will SEPA have on the European digital economy, in particular in view of the fact that direct debits are the preferred method for Internet payments in many Member States?

4. Is there a danger that online shops which currently rely on non-paper-based digital mandates for direct debits are likely to suffer an interruption to their cash flow and even risk insolvency, as these direct debit mandates will no longer be accepted by banks?

5. What is the Commission's assessment of the development of alternatives to signed, paper-based authorisations?

6. Is the problem associated with online direct debits being discussed by the Commission and the EPC? Have the Commission and the EPC put forward any proposals to resolve this problem?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(02 O:tober 013u)

The Commission considers that SEPA-complying payment services must be reliable and user-friendly for consumers. An e-mandate for SEPA Direct Debits (SDDs) is not required by the SEPA Regulation. In its Rulebook on SDDs, the European Payments Council (EPC) refers to e-mandates (Annex VII). However, the migration to SDDs will be possible even without such an SDD e-mandate solution. In the absence of a widely available EPC 'e-mandate' (as envisaged by the EPC but not yet developed) mandate forms and methods of signature which are currently available will remain a valid option also after 1 February 2014. Since banks might be reluctant to process SDD payments based on the current non-harmonised electronic mandate solutions, the Commission has encouraged the EPC to send a clear message to its members, clarifying that currently used e-mandate solutions for collecting SDD mandates can continue to be used also after 1 February 2014. This should ensure clarity and reassurance to consumers and merchants.

The Commission considers that the development of a harmonised solution for a European e-mandate for SDDs would be a step in the right direction in order to improve the usage of SDDs in the domain of e-commerce — as an alternative to credit cards.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009923/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 september 2013)

Betreft: Grillige interpretatie van het Verdrag door de Europese Centrale Bank

Op 5 september 2013 heeft de Nederlandse krant *De Telegraaf* een artikel ([1]) gepubliceerd waarin wordt gesteld dat de centrale bank van Frankrijk en die van Portugal de terugbetaling van de Griekse staatsobligaties die zij bezitten en die binnenkort aflopen, echt verwachten, terwijl de voorzitter van de Europese Centrale Bank de voorbije maanden druk uitoefende op zijn collega's om „coulant” te zijn.

Kan de Commissie in het licht hiervan antwoorden op de volgende vragen:

1. Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat het mogelijke uitstel van de terugbetaling van de Griekse staatsobligaties die de centrale bank van Frankrijk en van Portugal bezitten, in feite hetzelfde gevolg zou hebben als rechtstreekse monetaire financiering, die door het Verdrag expliciet verboden is onder de zogenaamde „no bailout clause” (artikel 125 van het Verdrag van Lissabon)?

2. Zo ja, welke acties en/of initiatieven zal de Commissie, als hoedster van de Verdragen, nemen?

3. Zo nee, kan de Commissie uiteenzetten waarom, naar haar mening, dergelijk uitstel niet hetzelfde gevolg zou hebben als rechtstreekse monetaire financiering?

4. Is de Commissie van mening dat het gedrag van de voorzitter van de ECB strookt met de geest van het Protocol betreffende de statuten van het Europees stelsel van Centrale Banken en van de Europese Centrale Bank?

Antwoord van de heer Rehn namens de Commissie
(22 oktober 2013)

De Commissie spreekt zich niet uit over de mogelijke besluiten die het Eurosystem neemt in verband met het beheer van de obligaties die door het systeem worden aangehouden. Dit beheer is een onderdeel van het monetair beleid en de onafhankelijkheid van de ECB en de ncb's bij het voeren van dit beleid is beschermd door artikel 130 (VWEU).

([1]) http://www.telegraaf.nl/dft/nieuws_dft/21865269/__Centrale_bankiers_ruzien_over_Grieken__.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009923/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Fickle interpretation of the Treaty by European Central Bank

On 5 September 2013, the Dutch newspaper *De Telegraaf* published an article ([1]) which stated that although the central banks of France and Portugal are genuinely expecting the repayment of Greek bonds which they hold and which are set to expire in the very next future, the President of the European Central Bank (ECB) has been putting pressure on his colleagues in the past few months by asking them to be 'more lenient'.

In the light of the above:

1. Does the Commission agree that the possible postponement of the repayment of Greek bonds held by the central banks of France and Portugal would in fact have the same effect as direct monetary financing, which is explicitly forbidden under the Treaty by the so-called 'no bailout' clause (Article 125 of the Treaty of Lisbon)?

2. If so, what actions and/or initiatives does the Commission intend to undertake, it being the guardian of the Treaty?

3. If not, can the Commission explain why, in its view, such a postponement would not have the same effect as direct monetary financing?

4. Does the Commission think that the President of the ECB's behaviour is in line with the spirit of the Protocol on the Statute of the European System of Central Banks and of the European Central Bank?

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

The Commission does not comment on the possible decisions of the Eurosytem related to the management of the bonds it holds. This management is part of monetary policy, for the implementation of which the independence of the ECB and NCBs is protected by Article 130 (TFEU).

([1]) http://www.telegraaf.nl/dft/nieuws_dft/21865269/__Centrale_bankiers_ruzien_over_Grieken__.html

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009924/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 september 2013)

Betreft: De Europese Commissie, beschermster van de mensenrechten

In de krant *The Telegraph* stond te lezen ([1]) dat de ondervoorzitter van de Commissie, Viviane Reding, „een plan heeft uitgewerkt om de EU te laten uitgroeien tot de hoogste juridische instantie, die onafhankelijke rechtbanken en de grondrechten beschermt", en de Commissie aan de zijde van de invloedrijke Europese commissaris voor justitie een rol als quasi-juridische autoriteit wil toekennen.

1. Kan de Commissie de details van mevrouw Redings voorstel toelichten?

2. Kan de Commissie bevestigen dat dit initiatief een wijziging van de Verdragen zou vereisen en een verregaande impact zou hebben op de betrekkingen tussen de EU en de lidstaten, in het nadeel van deze laatsten?

3. Vindt de Commissie ook niet dat een dergelijk initiatief moet worden voorafgegaan door een referendum, om ervoor te zorgen dat de burgers van de EU zich bewust zijn van de overheveling van macht en bevoegdheden naar de Commissie en van het feit dat hun rechten en vrijheden als gevolg hiervan zouden worden gegarandeerd door de EU-administratie?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(17 oktober 2013)

In zijn beleidsverklaring van september 2013 herinnerde voorzitter Barroso eraan dat het vermogen van de Unie om bedreigingen voor de rechtsstaat binnen de EU aan te pakken moet worden versterkt door meer mogelijkheden te creëren dan de keuze tussen politieke overreding en gerichte inbreukprocedures enerzijds, en de „nucleaire optie" van artikel 7 van het Verdrag, dat wil zeggen de schorsing van bepaalde rechten van een lidstaat anderzijds.

De ervaring heeft het nut van de rol van de Commissie als een onafhankelijke en objectieve scheidsrechter bevestigd. Deze ervaring zou op basis van het beginsel van gelijkheid van de lidstaten aan de hand van een algemener kader moeten worden geconsolideerd, dat slechts geactiveerd wordt in situaties waarin van een ernstig, systemisch risico voor de rechtsstaat sprake is, en dat door vooraf bepaalde benchmarks op gang gebracht wordt.

De Commissie zal te gelegener tijd haar verdere beschouwingen over deze kwestie in een mededeling voorstellen.

([1]) http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/eu/10287411/Brussels-seeks-federalising-EU-powers-over-justice-and-human-rights.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009924/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: European Commission — saviour of human rights

The Telegraph newspaper has reported that the Vice-President of the Commission, Viviane Reding, 'has set out a plan for the EU to become the highest judicial authority safeguarding independent courts and fundamental rights' ([1]), with the Commission acting as a quasi-judicial authority alongside the powerful Commissioner for Justice.

1. Could the Commission specify the details of Ms Reding's proposal?

2. Can the Commission confirm that this initiative would require a Treaty change and a complete transformation of relationships between the EU and the Member States at the expense of the latter?

3. Does the Commission agree that any such initiative should be preceded by a referendum to ensure that EU citizens are aware of the shift in powers and competences to the Commission, which would result in the protection of their rights and freedoms by the EU administration?

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

In his State of the Union address of September 2013, President Barroso recalled the need to strengthen the Union's capacity to address threats to the rule of law within the EU by making a bridge between political persuasion and targeted infringement procedures on the one hand, and the 'nuclear option' of Article 7 of the Treaty, namely suspension of a Member State's rights, on the other hand.

Experience has confirmed the usefulness of the Commission's role as an independent and objective referee. This experience should be consolidated through a more general framework, based on the principle of equality between Member States, activated only in situations where there is a serious, systemic risk to the rule of law and triggered through pre-defined benchmarks.

The Commission will in due time present its further reflections on this matter in a communication.

([1]) http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/eu/10287411/Brussels-seeks-federalising-EU-powers-over-justice-and-human-rights.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009925/13
to the Commission
Alyn Smith (Verts/ALE)
(3 September 201u)

*Sj bæ:t5*Buyer's premium

The Commission may be aware of the buyer's premium; an increasingly common charge introduced by auction houses in addition to the seller's commission.

While vendors selling an item are justifiably charged by the auction house for the service provided, the auctioneer does not provide any service to the buyer which would support an additional charge on the hammer price. Consequently, the buyer's premium — kept by the auction house and not passed on to the vendor — could be described as a levy upon the sale.

Could the Commission confirm whether the widespread practice of charging both the seller and the buyer a fee on the same auction lot is deemed to be illegal under EC law?

Is the Commission planning to investigate practices among auction houses and address the issue of buyer's premiums as appropriate?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(3 November 201u)

The Commission does not interfere with the freedom of companies to decide their business model and the applicable policy concerning prices and charges. Under EC law, nothing prevents an auction house from charging both the seller and the buyer a premium or fee; however, consumers should be properly informed in advance about the charges applicable to them. In this connection, Directive 2005/29/EC on Unfair Commercial Practices requires traders to adequately and timely inform consumers about the total price of a service, inclusive of taxes and other charges.

National competent authorities are best placed to investigate individual cases and make an appraisal of all relevant facts.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009926/13
à la Commission
François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE) et Michèle Rivasi (Verts/ALE)
(5 septembre 2013)

Objet: Lutte contre le dégazage en mer Méditerranée

Le lundi 2 septembre 2013, en fin d'après-midi, les côtes ouest de la Corse, comprenant la réserve de Scàndula, zone classée au patrimoine mondial de l'Unesco, ont été menacées par le dégazage d'un navire, à ce jour non identifié. Une nappe de pétrole de plus de 40 km de long aurait pu provoquer une catastrophe écologique. Par chance, la météo en a décidé autrement.

Néanmoins, il faut s'interroger sur les défaillances qui ont conduit à une telle situation. Chaque année, près de 1,5 million de tonnes d'hydrocarbures sont déversées en Méditerranée, l'équivalent de 20 marées noires.

Il est notoire que les ports de la Méditerranée ne disposent pas d'infrastructures homologuées suffisantes pour le dégazage légal des navires. L'Europe ne devrait-elle pas intervenir pour mettre fin à cette carence?

Des moyens satellitaires existent pour réagir rapidement et trouver les coupables en cas de pollution. Quelle est donc l'efficacité du système CleanSeaNet, mis en place en 2007 et visant à détecter la pollution maritime afin d'empêcher les comportements criminels de certains armateurs? Les autorités françaises ont-elles été alertées dans la demi-heure comme le prévoit ce programme? Le bateau incriminé a-t-il été identifié comme cela devrait être possible? La Commission juge-t-elle ce système de surveillance efficace ou envisage-t-elle de l'améliorer? Si oui, comment?

Au vu du faible respect des normes mises en place en matière de dégazage, que compte faire la Commission en matière de durcissement de la législation actuelle? Et que compte-t-elle faire pour, ensuite, contrôler sa mise en œuvre?

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

La directive 2000/59/CE ([1]) impose aux États membres de fournir aux navires des installations de réception portuaires adéquates pour les déchets qu'ils ne peuvent rejeter en mer. Tous les ports sont tenus de prévoir des installations et des services adéquats de réception portuaires.

CleanSeaNet est un service de surveillance des marées noires et de détection des navires par satellite un temps réel ou quasi réel. Il n'assure pas une surveillance continue et dépend des contraintes imposées par les orbites des satellites. Lorsqu'un satellite passe au-dessus d'une région à surveiller, l'image est traitée et les États côtiers sont avertis en moins de 30 minutes.

Grâce à CleanSeaNet, il est plus risqué pour les commandants de bord de déverser des déchets de façon illégale ou de ne pas notifier les rejets accidentels dont ils sont responsables. La preuve de son effet dissuasif est que le nombre de rejets détectés pour chaque zone de 1000x1000 km est tombé de 11 en 2008 à 4,5 en 2012.

Il est prévu d'améliorer encore CleanSeaNet, sous réserve des disponibilités budgétaires:

— nouvelles capacités d'observation afin d'accroître la couverture globale, dans le cadre du programme Copernicus ([2]) grâce au lancement de 2 missions satellites supplémentaires et à la fourniture d'informations sur les courants marins;

— amélioration de la capacité de traitement des images pour garantir une meilleure fiabilité de la détection.

([1]) Directive 2000/59/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 27 novembre 2000 sur les installations de réception portuaires pour les déchets d'exploitation des navires et les résidus de cargaison — Déclaration de la Commission, JO L 332 du 28.12.2000.

([2]) COM(2013) 312 final.

La directive 2005/35/CE ([3]) relative à la pollution causée par les navires, telle que modifiée par la directive 2009/123/CE ([4]), oblige les États membres à introduire des «sanctions effectives, proportionnées et dissuasives». La Commission procède actuellement à l'évaluation de cette législation afin de déterminer si des mesures supplémentaires sont nécessaires.

En outre, le fait que les marées noires soient considérées comme des rejets de déchets a des conséquences juridiques, notamment l'application de la directive 2008/98/CE ([5]) relative aux déchets.

([3]) JO L 255 du 30.9.2005.
([4]) JO L 280 du 27.10.2009.
([5]) JO L 312 du 22.11.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009926/13
to the Commission
François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE) and Michèle Rivasi (Verts/ALE)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t5*Combating the dumping of oil in the Mediterranean Sea

In the late afternoon of Monday 2 September 2013, the west coast of Corsica, including the Scandola reserve, a Unesco World Heritage Site, was put in danger by an as yet unidentified ship dumping oil. An oil slick over 40 km long could have caused an environmental disaster. As luck would have it, the weather averted such a disaster.

Nonetheless, questions need to be asked about the failings that led to this situation. Every year, nearly 1.5 million tonnes of hydrocarbons are dumped into the Mediterranean, which is the equivalent of 20 oil spills.

It is common knowledge that Mediterranean ports do not have enough approved infrastructure for ships to dump oil legally. Should the EU not take action to rectify this situation?

Rapid-response satellite systems are in place to trace those responsible for pollution. How effective, then, is the CleanSeaNet system, which was rolled out in 2007 with the aim of detecting marine pollution in order to prevent illegal dumping by certain shipowners? Were the French authorities notified within half an hour, as provided for by that system? Has the ship responsible been identified, as should be possible? Does the Commission think that this monitoring system is effective or does it plan to make it more effective? If so, how?

In view of the low level of compliance with rules on oil dumping, what does the Commission plan to do to strengthen current legislation? What does it plan to do subsequently to check such legislation is being implemented?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(32 O:tober 013u)

Directive 2000/59/EC ([1]) requires Member States to provide adequate port reception facilities (PRF) to receive ship waste that may not be discharged into the sea. All ports are required to provide appropriate PRF infrastructure and services.

CleanSeanet is a near real time satellite based oil spill monitoring and vessel detection service. It does not provide continuous monitoring and depends on the constraints imposed by available satellite orbits. When a satellite passes over an area to monitor, the image is processed and coastal States are alerted in less than 30 minutes.

CleanSeaNet makes it more risky for ship masters to discharge illegally or not to report accidental spills they may have caused. Proof of its deterrent effect is that whilst in 2008 there were 11 detections for each area of 1000x1000 km this number decreased to 4.5 in 2012.

Further improvements to CleanSeaNet are planned, subject to budget availability:

— new observation capacities to increase the overall coverage via the Copernicus programme ([2]) through the launch of 2 additional satellite missions and providing information on sea currents.

— improving image processing capability to ensure better reliability of detection.

Directive 2005/35/EC ([3]) on ship-sourced pollution as amended by Directive 2009/123/EC ([4]) obliges Member States to introduce 'effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions'. The Commission is currently evaluating this legislation to determine whether further action is required.

In addition, the classification of oil spills as waste implies legal consequences, including the application of Directive 2008/98/EC ([5]) on waste.

([1]) Directive 2000/59/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 November 2000 on port reception facilities for ship-generated waste and cargo residues — Commission declaration, OJ L 332, 28.12.2000.
([2]) COM(2013) 312 final.
([3]) OJ L 255 of 30.9.2005.
([4]) OJ L 280 of 27.10.2009.
([5]) OJ L 312 of 22.11.2008.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009927/13
aan de Commissie
Philip Claeys (NI)
(5 september 2013)

Betreft: Turkse premier zegt dat traangas in overeenstemming met het acquis communautaire is

De Turkse premier Erdogan haalde tijdens een Ombudsman-symposium op 3 september uit naar de Europese Unie, die volgens hem via desinformatie een „smear campaign" voert tegen de Turkse regering.

De heer Erdogan beweert dat de EU de publieke opinie misleidt over de situatie van de mensenrechten in zijn land, onder meer voor wat betreft het arresteren en veroordelen van journalisten. Tot tweemaal toe zei hij dat het gebruik van traangas tijdens de demonstraties in Gezi-park „in overeenstemming is met het acquis communautaire" en dat „traangas al bestaat in het acquis communautaire van de EU".

Wat is de reactie van de Commissie op deze uitspraken m.b.t. het acquis communautaire? De Commissie gaf geen specifiek antwoord op eerdere schriftelijke vragen over eerdere, gelijksoortige uitlatingen van de heer Erdogan (onder meer vraag E-007260/2013).

Ondanks het langdurige, buitensporige en extreme politiegeweld op Taksim en Gezi werd besloten om dit jaar nog nieuwe onderhandelingshoofdstukken te openen, zij het iets later dan voorzien. In plaats van daarvoor dankbaarheid te betonen, laat de Turkse premier zich gaan in anti-westerse en anti-EU-retoriek. Hoe interpreteert de Commissie deze in hevigheid en frequentie toenemende retoriek van de heer Erdogan en andere Turkse regeringsverantwoordelijken?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(23 oktober 2013)

De Commissie kan geen opmerkingen maken over elke verklaring die de pers aan leden van de Turkse regering toeschrijft.

Het Europees Hof voor de rechten van de mens lette in de zaak Abdullah Yaşa e.a. vs. Turkije op het feit dat de waarborgen voor het juiste gebruik van traangasgranaten moeten worden versterkt, teneinde het overlijdensrisico en letsels ten gevolge van het gebruik ervan te beperken. In juni heeft het ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken naar aanleiding van de betogingen in heel Turkije en beschuldigingen van buitensporig politiegeweld een circulaire doen uitgaan, waarin strenge regels voor het gebruik van traangas of pepperspray door de politie werden beschreven. Het wetgevende kader en de praktijk inzake de interventie voor rechtshandhavingsambtenaren moeten echter in overeenstemming met de Europese normen worden gebracht, teneinde te waarborgen dat in alle omstandigheden de mensenrechten, en met name het recht op vrijheid van vergadering, worden geëerbiedigd.

De Commissie is verheugd over het feit dat eerste minister Erdoğan bij de aankondiging op 30 september 2013 van een pakket van democratiseringsmaatregelen verwees naar de leidende rol van het EU-*acquis* in de hervormingen van Turkije.

De Commissie verstrekt in haar voortgangsverslag van 16 oktober 2013 een volledige evaluatie over de naleving door Turkije van de politieke criteria.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009927/13
to the Commission
Philip Claeys (NI)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t5*Turkish Prime Minister maintains that use of teargas is in line with the EU *Ωaj is*

In a speech delivered during an Ombudsman Symposium on 3 September, Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan lashed out at the EU for what he described as a 'smear campaign' against the Turkish Government through misinformation.

He accused the EU of misleading the public regarding the human rights situation in Turkey, for example through allegations concerning the arrest and sentencing of journalists. On two occasions he indicated that the use of teargas to quell the protests in Gezi Park was in accordance with, or embodied in, basic EU tenets.

What view does the Commission take of these utterances, having failed to give specific replies to previous written questions prompted by similar statements issued by Mr Erdogan (for example, E-007260/2013)?

Notwithstanding the protracted, excessive and extremely violent police clampdown in Taksim and Gezi, it has been decided to open further negotiating chapters, albeit somewhat later than planned. Far from expressing any appreciation, the Turkish Prime Minister is now choosing to indulge in anti-western and anti-EU rhetoric. What view does the Commission take of such increasingly frequent and vituperative tirades by Mr Erdogan and other Turkish Government representatives?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(0u q :tober 013u)

The Commission is not in a position to comment on every statement attributed by the press to members of the Turkish Government.

The European Court of Human Rights in the case of Abdullah Yaşa and Others v. Turkey considered that the safeguards surrounding the proper use of tear-gas grenades need to be strengthened in order to minimise the risk of death and injury resulting from their use. In June, following the demonstrations across Turkey and accusations of excessive use of force by the police, the Ministry of the Interior issued a circular detailing stringent rules governing the use of teargas and pepper spray by the police. However, the legal framework and practice on the intervention of law enforcement officers should be brought in line with European standards so as to guarantee under all circumstances respect for human rights and, in particular, the right to freedom of assembly.

The Commission welcomes that Prime Minister Erdoğan, when announcing on 30 September 2013 a package of democratisation measures, referred to the guiding role of the EU *Ωaj is* in Turkey's reforms.

The Commission gives a full assessment on compliance by Turkey with the political criteria in its 2013 Progress Report, published on 16 October 2013.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009928/13
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI) en Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(5 september 2013)

Betreft: Vervolgvragen (3) subsidieverlening aan Egypte

Op 3 september 2013 heeft de heer Füle namens de Commissie antwoord gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-007098/2013. Daarin schrijft hij: „De Commissie en de hoge vertegenwoordiger verwelkomen het toezicht van de Rekenkamer op de bijstandsprogramma's van de EU. […] De opmerkingen van de Rekenkamer en veel van haar aanbevelingen zijn door de Commissie en de hoge vertegenwoordiger aanvaard."

1. Indien de Commissie het toezicht van de Rekenkamer werkelijk verwelkomt en de opmerkingen/aanbevelingen van de Rekenkamer werkelijk aanvaardt, hoe reageert de Commissie dan op en welke consequenties vloeien voort uit de kritiek van de Rekenkamer dat men simpelweg niet weet „hoe het geld is besteed, dus ook niet hoe fout" ([1])?

Voorts schrijft de heer Füle: „De Commissie en de hoge vertegenwoordiger benadrukken dat de EU erin is geslaagd om in de loop der jaren met Egypte een dialoog en concrete samenwerking tot stand te brengen over gevoelige onderwerpen als bestuur, democratie en mensenrechten."

2. Welke concrete positieve resultaten hebben de door de Commissie genoemde dialoog en samenwerking met Egypte gehad? Welke concrete vooruitgang ziet de Commissie in Egypte wat betreft bestuur, democratie en mensenrechten?

3. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de situatie in Egypte sinds het begin van de „islamitische winter" louter is verslechterd? Zo neen, waarop is de naïeve rozebrilvisie van de Commissie gestoeld?

Voorts schrijft de heer Füle: „De Commissie eist bij haar uitbetalingen dat vooruitgang is geboekt met de hervormingen en dat de voorwaarden strikt zijn nageleefd. Voor aanvullende steun via het Spring-programma zijn bovendien duidelijke voorwaarden gesteld met betrekking tot hervorming en democratie."

4. Is bij de tot dusverre uitbetaalde EU-gelden aan Egypte de vereiste vooruitgang wel of niet geboekt, en op welke meetbare resultaten baseert de Commissie zich daarbij?

5. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat — ten gevolge van de almaar verslechterende situatie in Egypte — de in het kader van zogenaamde „hervormingen" verstrekte EU-gelden illegitiem zijn? Zo neen, hoe serieus neemt de Commissie dan de door haarzelf geëiste vooruitgang? Zo ja, is de Commissie er aldus toe bereid de verstrekte EU-gelden direct terug te vorderen?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(24 oktober 2013)

1. De aangehaalde bewering is in het verslag van de Rekenkamer niet in dergelijke bewoordingen geformuleerd. In het verslag is er sprake van „tekortkomingen", die volgens de Commissie en de hoge vertegenwoordiger het gevolg waren van externe factoren waarop zij geen invloed hadden. De Rekenkamer erkende in haar verslag dat de EU-steun onder moeilijke omstandigheden is verleend, maar gaf geen concrete aanwijzingen dat efficiëntere alternatieven beschikbaar of mogelijk waren.

2. De meeste aanbevelingen van de Rekenkamer zijn sinds de verslagperiode reeds opgevolgd. Zo heeft de Commissie bijvoorbeeld haar interne regels voor de toekenning van begrotingssteun, die sinds januari 2013 van kracht zijn, aanzienlijk verscherpt.

Dank zij de aanhoudende druk van de Commissie en de hoge vertegenwoordiger werd bijvoorbeeld een subcomité mensenrechten opgericht en werd 10 % van de bilaterale begroting gereserveerd voor de ondersteuning van mensenrechten, goed bestuur en democratie, met inbegrip van steun voor kinder- en vrouwenrechten. Dit heeft concrete positieve en meetbare gevolgen gehad.

([1]) http://www.telegraaf.nl/binnenland/21658141/___EU-steun_in_zwart_gat___.html

3. De Raad Buitenlandse Zaken (RBZ) heeft op 21 augustus 2013 besloten de uitvoervergunningen voor uitrusting die voor binnenlandse repressie kan worden gebruikt, op te schorten, en de hoge vertegenwoordiger op te dragen om, samen met de Commissie, de bijstand van de EU aan Egypte in het kader van het Europees nabuurschapsbeleid te evalueren.

4. Sinds augustus 2011 werden geen nieuwe maatregelen voor begrotingssteun vastgesteld. Aanvullende steun in het kader van het SPRING-programma, waarvoor Egypte in beginsel in aanmerking komt, werd evenmin verleend aangezien deze steun sterk verbonden is met de vooruitgang op het gebied van democratische hervormingen.

5. De Commissie zal nauw toezicht houden op alle aspecten die verband houden met het beheer van de overheidsfinanciën. Bovendien zullen de voor 2013 vastgestelde programma's uitsluitend steun voor de sociaal-economische ontwikkeling en het maatschappelijk middenveld inhouden, overeenkomstig de conclusies van de Raad Buitenlandse Zaken.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009928/13
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI) and Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Follow-up questions concerning subsidies granted to Egypt (3)

On 3 September 2013, Mr Füle replied to Written Question E-007098/2013, on behalf of the Commission. In his reply Mr Füle writes 'The Commission and the High Representative welcome the European Court of Auditors' monitoring of the EU's assistance programmes. […] The Commission and the High Representative have accepted the Court of Auditors' observations and many of its recommendations.'

1. If the Commission really welcomes the European Court of Auditors' monitoring and really accepts its observations / recommendations, how is the Commission responding and what consequences are ensuing from the European Court of Auditors' criticism that it 'simply does not know how the money is being spent, so it does not know if it is being spent wrongly' ([1])?

Mr Füle also writes as follows: 'The Commission and the High Representative stress that the EU has succeeded over the years in establishing a dialogue and practical cooperation with Egypt on the difficult issues of governance, democracy and human rights.'

2. What specific positive results have the dialogue and cooperation with Egypt, specified by the Commission, had? What concrete progress does the Commission see in Egypt as regards governance, democracy and human rights?

3. Does the Commission share the view that the situation in Egypt has merely deteriorated since the beginning of the 'Islamist Winter'? If not, what is the basis for the Commission's naïve rose-tinted vision?

Mr Füle also writes as follows: 'The Commission makes the provision of assistance conditional on recording progress with reforms and strict compliance with the conditions. Clear requirements have also been set with regard to reform and democracy, for additional support via the SPRING programme.'

4. Has the required progress been recorded or not, for the EU funds paid to Egypt to date, and on what measurable results has the Commission based this conclusion?

5. Does the Commission share the view that, as a result of the ever-deteriorating situation in Egypt, the EU funds provided with respect to so-called 'reforms' are unlawful? If not, how seriously is the Commission taking the progress that the Commission itself has demanded? If so, is the Commission therefore prepared to demand the immediate return of the EU funds provided?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(25 October 2013)

1. The quoted allegation does not appear in this formulation in the Court of Auditors' (CoA) report. The CoA mentions 'shortcomings', which in the view of the Commission and the High Representative (HR) resulted from external factors outside their control. The CoA recognised in its report that EU support has been provided under difficult conditions, and did not provide concrete evidence that more effective alternatives were available or possible.

2. The majority of the CoA recommendations have already been acted upon since the reporting period. For example, the Commission has significantly strengthened its internal rules for granting Budget Support (BS), effective since January 2013.

The continuous pressure of the Commission and the HR has led e.g. to the establishment of a subcommittee on human rights, the earmarking of 10% of the bilateral budget to support human rights, good governance and democracy, including support for children's and women's rights, with concrete positive and measureable impact.

3. The Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) of 21 August 2013 decided to suspend export licences for any equipment which might be used for internal repression, and to task the HR, in cooperation with the Commission, to review EU assistance to Egypt under the European Neighbourhood Policy.

([1]) http://www.telegraaf.nl/binnenland/21658141/___EU-steun_in_zwart_gat___.html

4. No new BS operations have been decided since August 2011. Additional support under the SPRING programme, for which Egypt could in principle be eligible, is closely linked to progress in democratic reforms and has thus not been granted.

5. While the Commission will closely monitor all Public Finance Management related aspects, the programmes identified for 2013 will support solely socioeconomic development and civil society, as required by the FAC conclusions.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009929/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(5 september 2013)

Betreft: Erdoğan kwaad op EU

De Turkse premier Erdoğan heeft alle 28 EU-lidstaten beschuldigd van een zogenaamde „lastercampagne tegen Turkije". Volgens Erdoğan zou de EU „valse informatie" over Turkije verstrekken, waardoor de publieke opinie zich tegen het land keert. Als voorbeeld noemde hij het in de EU sterk bekritiseerde gebruik van grote hoeveelheden traangas door de Turkse politie tegen de demonstranten afgelopen juni in Istanbul.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met de beschuldiging van Erdoğan jegens de EU ([1])? Hoe ervaart de Commissie deze?

2. Is de Commissie het wel/niet met Erdoğan eens dat alle 28 EU-lidstaten een zogenaamde „lastercampagne tegen Turkije" zouden voeren en daarbij „valse informatie" over Turkije zouden verstrekken? Waarom wel/niet?

3. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de beschuldiging van Erdoğan jegens de EU vals is en slechts ertoe dient om — autoritair met zijn vinger naar anderen wijzend — zijn eigen verwerpelijke, EU-onwaardige schrikbewind te verdoezelen? Zo neen, impliceert de Commissie daarmee dat de beschuldiging van Erdoğan jegens de EU terecht is?

4. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat alle 28 EU-lidstaten Turkije — nota bene een kandidaat-EU-lidstaat! — vrijelijk moeten kunnen bekritiseren? Zo neen, waarom niet?

5. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat Erdoğan resp. Turkije met zijn beschuldiging jegens de EU aantoont onze westerse normen en waarden níet te onderschrijven en nóóit deel uit kan / wil maken van de EU? Zo neen, waarop baseert de Commissie dan het tegendeel?

6. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat het beter zou zijn te stoppen met eindeloos doormodderen en dat de toetredingsonderhandelingen met Turkije nu eindelijk dienen te worden beëindigd? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(4 november 2013)

De Commissie is van mening dat het toetredingsproces nog altijd het meest geschikte kader blijft om EU-gerelateerde hervormingen in Turkije te stimuleren en dat aan de toetredingsonderhandelingen een nieuwe impuls moet worden gegeven binnen de verbintenissen van de EU en de gestelde voorwaarden. De Commissie was verheugd over het feit dat eerste minister Erdoğan bij de presentatie op 30 september 2013 van een pakket democratiseringsmaatregelen verwees naar de leidende rol van de EU-wetgeving in de hervormingen van Turkije.

Het voortgangsverslag van de Commissie van 16 oktober 2013 bevatte een volledige evaluatie over de naleving door Turkije van de politieke criteria ([2]).

([1]) De Telegraaf, 5-9-2013.
([2]) Http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/brochures/turkey_2013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009929/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Erdoğan angry with EU

The Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, has accused all 28 EU Member States of a 'smear campaign against Turkey'. According to Erdoğan, the EU has provided 'misleading information' about Turkey, which has turned public opinion against the country. As an example he mentioned the use of large quantities of tear gas, heavily criticised by the EU, by the Turkish police against demonstrators in Istanbul last June.

1. Is the Commission aware of Erdoğan's accusation against the EU ([1]) ? What is the Commission's reaction to this accusation?

2. Does the Commission agree / disagree with Erdoğan's claim that all 28 EU Member States are conducting a 'smear campaign against Turkey' and providing 'misleading information' about Turkey? If so, why? / If not, why not?

3. Does the Commission share the view that Erdoğan's accusation against the EU is false and is merely designed to cover up his own despicable reign of terror, unworthy of an EU candidate country, through pointing his authoritarian finger at others? If not, does the Commission therefore imply that Erdoğan's accusation against the EU is justified?

4. Does the Commission share the view that all 28 EU Member States should be able to level criticism freely at Turkey — N.B. an EU candidate country! If not, why not?

5. Does the Commission share the view that, through his accusation against the EU, Erdoğan, or Turkey, is demonstrating a refusal to sign up to our Western standards and values and is neither able nor willing to form part of the EU? If not, on what basis does the Commission conclude otherwise?

6. Does the Commission share the view that it would be better to draw a line under the endless muddling along and that accession negotiations with Turkey should now be finally terminated? If not, why not?

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

The Commission believes that the accession process remains the most suitable framework for promoting EU-related reforms in Turkey and that accession negotiations need to regain momentum, respecting the EU's commitments and the established conditionality. The Commission has welcomed that Prime Minister Erdoğan, when announcing on 30 September 2013 a package of democratisation measures, referred to the guiding role of the EU *acquis* in Turkey's reforms.

The Commission gave a full assessment on compliance by Turkey with the political criteria in its 2013 Progress Report, published on 16 October 2013 ([2]).

([1]) *De Telegraaf*, 5 September 2013.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/brochures/turkey_2013.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009930/13
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(5 september 2013)

Betreft: Steunverlening culturele commissie Cyprus

Vandaag maakte uw Commissie bekend 2 miljoen euro steun te verlenen aan de Technische Commissie inzake cultuureel erfgoed op Cyprus in het kader van het Hulpverleningsprogramma 2012 aan de Turks-Cypriotische gemeenschap. Uw Commissie meldt onder andere dat „many sites unfortunately have been allowed to fall into a poor state and need immediate action". In dat kader de volgende vragen:

1. Uit vele publicaties en eigen werkbezoek is gebleken dat de Turks-Cypriotische bezetter een actief beleid voert om Grieks-Cypriotisch cultureel erfgoed te vernietigen. Er kan gerust gesproken worden van een „culturele genocide". Waarom spreekt uw Commissie dan in zulke omfloerste termen als „have been allowed"? Waarom wordt de veroorzaker van de culturele afbraak op Cyprus niet duidelijk benoemd?

2. Waarom wordt wel EU-steun verleend aan de Turks-Cypriotische gemeenschap, maar niet aan de gemeenschap van de volledig democratische gelegitimeerde lidstaat Cyprus? Vanwaar deze ongelijkwaardige behandeling, nog even afgezien van de vraag of steunverlening überhaupt zinvol en effectief is?

Uw Commissie vermeldt verder dat de werkzaamheden zullen worden geïmplementeerd door de „United Nations Development Programme's Partnership for the Future".

3. Is de EU kennelijk niet in staat de door haar verleende steunverlening zelf te implementeren en controleren? Zo nee, hoe komt dat?

Het Speciaal Verslag van de Europese Rekenkamer inzake steunverlening aan de Turks-Cypriotische gemeenschap ([1]) gaf als specifieke aanbeveling „de toekomstige bijdrage in overeenkomsten met partnerorganisaties, met name met het UNDP, beter te beschrijven om een correcte financiële en operationele verslaglegging te waarborgen, inclusief meer relevante en actuele prestatie-indicatoren".

4. Kunt u gedetailleerd aangeven in hoeverre u gevolg heeft gegeven aan deze aanbeveling?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(22 oktober 2013)

De Commissie ondersteunt via haar steunprogramma voor de Turks-Cypriotische commissie de werkzaamheden van de technische commissie voor cultureel erfgoed van beide gemeenschappen, die onder auspiciën van de Verenigde Naties werkzaam is. Deze door beide gemeenschappen beheerde commissie is in april 2008 opgericht en is samengesteld uit leden van zowel de Grieks-Cypriotische als de Turks-Cypriotische gemeenschap. De commissie heeft een lijst opgesteld van 11 prioritaire monumenten op heel Cyprus waarvoor de EU dringende maatregelen voor monumentenzorg zou financieren. Het gaat om religieuze en niet-religieuze monumenten aan weerszijden van de groene lijn en deze monumenten maken deel uit van een langere lijst van 40 monumenten die door de leiders van beide gemeenschappen is overeengekomen ([2]).

Bij het uitvoeren van de steunregeling maakt de Commissie gebruik van een reeks „beheersvormen" die een maximale efficiëntie moeten bereiken, met inbegrip van „gedeeld beheer" met het ontwikkelingsprogramma van de VN (UNDP). Op het gebied van het cultureel erfgoed beschikt het UNDP reeds over ruime ervaring met de technische aspecten van restauratie van monumenten op Cyprus. De „bijdrageovereenkomst" tussen de commissie en het UNDP omvat controle- en sturingsregelingen en prestatie-indicatoren.

([1]) http://eca.europa.eu/portal/pls/portal/docs/1/15542767. PDF.
([2]) De lijst omvat 25 kerken, acht moskeeën, drie badhuizen, de Famagustacitadel/Othellotoren, één klooster, één madrasa en één aquaduct/molenhuis.

In haar controle stelde de Europese Rekenkamer in de eerste bijdrageovereenkomsten tussen de Commissie en het UNDP tekortkomingen vast op drie gebieden (Comité Vermiste Personen (CMP), lokale en stedelijke infrastructuur en ontmijningsoperaties). Alleen voor het CMP-programma zijn later nog bijdrageovereenkomsten gesloten, waarin een aantal verbeteringen is doorgevoerd, bv. een betere definitie van de indicatoren met betrekking tot EU-financiering, betere definities van het aantal opgegraven en geïdentificeerde vermisten en doorgaans een betere verhouding tussen output en input. Sinds de controle wordt de rapportage ook beter gecoördineerd met het UNDP.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009930/13
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Providing assistance to the Committee on Cultural Heritage in Cyprus

Today your Commission announced a EUR 2 million contribution to the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage in Cyprus, under the 2012 Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community. Your Commission states, *inter alia*, that 'many sites unfortunately have been allowed to fall into a poor state and need immediate action'. Allow me to ask the following questions with regard thereto:

1. Numerous publications and my own working visit have revealed that the Turkish Cypriot occupying force is actively pursuing a policy designed to destroy Greek Cypriot cultural heritage. We can safely describe this as a 'cultural genocide'. Why then does your Commission speak in such veiled terms as 'have been allowed'? Why is the party that is responsible for the cultural destruction in Cyprus not being clearly identified?

2. Why is EU aid being granted to the Turkish Cypriot community, but not to the community belonging to the fully democratic, legitimate EU Member State, Cyprus? What is the reason for this unequal treatment, leaving aside the issue of whether the provision of assistance is remotely meaningful or effective?

Your Committee also states that the work is to be performed by the 'United Nations Development Programme's Partnership for the Future'.

3. Is it right to conclude that the EU is manifestly incapable of performing and monitoring the provision of assistance itself? If not, why is this the case?

One of the specific recommendations put forward by the European Court of Auditors in the Special Report on European Union Assistance to the Turkish Cypriot Community ([1]) was to 'better define future contribution agreements with partner organisations, notably the UNDP, in order to ensure proper financial and operational reporting, including more relevant and up-to-date performance indicators'.

4. Can you specify in detail the extent to which you have complied with this recommendation?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(22 October 2013)

The Commission supports, through its Aid Programme to the Turkish Cypriot committee, the work of the bi-communal Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage operating under United Nations auspices. This bi-communal committee was established in April 2008 and is composed of members of both the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot communities. The committee has identified a list of 11 priority monuments, in the whole island of Cyprus, for which the EU would fund emergency conservation measures. These include religious and non-religious monuments on both sides of the Green Line and are part of a wider list of 40 monuments agreed by the leaders of the two communities ([2]).

In implementing the aid programme, the Commission uses a range of 'management modes' to achieve maximum efficiency, including 'joint management' with the UN Development Programme (UNDP). In the case of cultural heritage, UNDP already has a track record of experience with the technical aspects of restoration of monuments in Cyprus. The 'Contribution Agreement' between the Commission and UNDP includes monitoring, steering arrangements and performance indicators.

The European Court of Auditors' audit found weaknesses in early Contribution Agreements between the Commission and the UNDP in three fields (Committee on Missing Persons (CMP), Local and Urban Infrastructure and Demining Operations). Subsequent Contribution Agreements have only been made for the CMP programme, for which improvements include better definition of indicators related to EU funding, better definitions of numbers of missing persons exhumed and identified, better general output-input relation. Reporting coordination with UNDP has also been enhanced since the audit.

([1]) http://eca.europa.eu/portal/pls/portal/docs/1/15542767.PDF
([2]) The list includes 25 churches, eight mosques, three baths, the Famagusta citadel/Othello tower, one monastery, one madrasa, and one aqueduct/mill house.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009931/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(5 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Wzmożona aktywność rosyjskiej armii

Od pewnego czasu daje się zaobserwować systematyczny wzrost aktywności rosyjskiego wojska. Jak podkreślają obserwatorzy, siły zbrojne Rosji nie wykazywały tak wysokiego stopnia zaangażowania od lat osiemdziesiątych. Moskwa dokonuje gigantycznych inwestycji w zbrojenia, regularnie przeprowadza również manewry. W opinii komentatorów rosyjska armia jest obecnie znacznie bardziej groźna niż się powszechnie przyjmuje.

Niepokój może wzbudzać zwłaszcza nasilenie niezapowiedzianych (obok rutynowych) ćwiczeń bojowych oraz nieustanna obecność rosyjskiej floty wojennej na Morzu Śródziemnym. W bieżącym okresie szkoleniowym (czerwiec-listopad 2013 r.) prawdopodobne jest przeprowadzenie ponad pięciuset ćwiczeń poligonowych (wobec 170 – co już jest znaczącą liczbą – zrealizowanych w minionym cyklu zimowym). Zdaniem ekspertów, tak wzmożona aktywność nie miała precedensu w najnowszej historii Rosji. Szereg z tych manewrów odbywa się ponadto na obszarach pozostających w bliskim sąsiedztwie państw Wspólnoty.

Mając na uwadze bezpieczeństwo Unii Europejskiej oraz mojego kraju zwracam się z prośbą o informacje:

1. Czy ESDZ monitoruje działania rosyjskiej armii pod kątem ewentualnego zagrożenia bezpieczeństwa UE?

2. Czy Wysoka Przedstawiciel dysponuje aktualnymi informacjami dotyczącymi liczby oraz trybu przeprowadzania rosyjskich manewrów wojskowych?

3. Jakie jest stanowisko Wysokiej Przedstawiciel wobec stałej już obecności rosyjskich okrętów wojskowych na Morzu Śródziemnym?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(29 listopada 2013 r.)

Dyrekcja ds. Wywiadu Sztabu Wojskowego UE obserwuje rozwój operacyjny organizacji wojskowych poza UE i NATO przede wszystkim na celu oceny wojskowych wydarzeń politycznych i rzeczywistego potencjału wojskowego różnych krajów, ale także z punktu widzenia potencjalnych zagrożeń.

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca ma zawsze prawo do zażądania wszelkich informacji od Dyrekcji ds. Wywiadu Sztabu Wojskowego UE, która dostarcza dane wywiadowcze w oparciu o własne źródła informacji i źródła wywiadowcze państw członkowskich.

Należy zauważyć, że chociaż od 2007 r. flota rosyjska jest stale obecna w basenie Morza Śródziemnego, jej wielkość jest mniejsza od poprzednio demonstrowanych zdolności, a powrót do poprzednich rozmiarów wymagałby dużych nakładów czasowych.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009931/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — increase in the activities of the Russian army

For some time now there has been a clear rise in the level of activity of the Russian armed forces, which according to observers have not been this active since the 1980s. Moscow is making massive investments in armaments, maneouvres are carried out regularly and commentators believe that the Russian army currently poses a significantly greater threat than is generally assumed.

The increase in unannounced (non-routine) military exercises and the continued presence of the Russian naval fleet in the Mediterranean are particularly alarming. It is likely that over 500 exercises will be carried out during the current training cycle (June-November 2013) compared to last winter's figure of 170, which in itself was a significant number. Experts believe that an increase in activity of this kind is unprecedented in recent Russian history. What is more, a number of these maneouvres are being carried out close to the borders of EU Member States.

In the interests of the security of the European Union and my country, I would like to ask the following questions:

1. Is the EEAS monitoring the activities of the Russian army with regard to the potential threat to the security of the EU?

2. Does the High Representative have access to up-to-date information on the number of Russian military manoeuvres being carried out or the details of these manoeuvres?

3. What is the High Representative's opinion regarding the now constant presence of Russian naval vessels in the Mediterranean?

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

The EU Military Staff Intelligence Directorate observes the operational development of military organisations outside EU and NATO, primarily with the goal to assess military political developments and actual military capabilities of different countries but also from a point of view of potential threats.

The HR/VP is always in a position to request any information from the EU Military Staff Intelligence Directorate which provides intelligence based on its own source information and member state intelligence support.

It should be noted that although Russia has established a permanent naval presence in the Mediterranean as of 2007 it is below the level of capability previously sustained, which it would take a considerable amount of time to re-establish.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009932/13
do Komisji
Marek Józef Gróbarczyk (ECR)
(2 września 013. rP)

drzem io:5 Zapytanie do Komisji Europejskiej w sprawie realizacji nałożonego na nią obowiązku przedstawienia sprawozdania Parlamentowi i Radzie

W myśl art. 27 Rozporządzenia Rady (WE) nr 2187/2005 na Komisję Europejską został nałożony obowiązek zapewnienia w terminie do 1 stycznia 2008 r. przeprowadzenia naukowej oceny skutków używania w szczególności sieci skrzelowych, trójściennych i oplątujących dla waleni i przedstawienia jej wyników Parlamentowi Europejskiemu i Radzie. Komisja w wyznaczonym jej terminie nie wywiązała się z nałożonego na nią obowiązku. Jeden spośród polskich rybaków wystosował do Europejskiego Rzecznika Praw Obywatelskich skargę na niewłaściwe administrowanie Komisji Europejskiej (sygn. 427/2011/MHZ).

W trakcie dochodzenia Europejski Rzecznik Praw Obywatelskich ustalił, iż „Komisja nie udowodniła, że z przyczyn obiektywnych niemożliwe było wywiązanie się przez nią z obowiązku dopilnowania, aby ocena naukowa skutków korzystania z sieci skrzelowych, trójściennych i sieci oplątujących dla waleni została przeprowadzona w terminie do dnia 1 stycznia 2008 r." Ponadto Rzecznik zamykając dochodzenie w dniu 22 listopada 2011 r. w sprawie tej skargi stwierdził, iż „Komisja oświadczyła, że w 2011 r. przedstawi sprawozdanie w sprawie skutków stosowania pławnic dla waleni w komunikacie skierowanym do Parlamentu i Rady, Rzecznik Praw Obywatelskich nie uznaje za uzasadnione wypracowania rozwiązania polubownego lub sporządzenia projektu zalecenia w sprawie niniejszej skargi".

W związku z powyższym wnoszę o udzielenie informacji czy Komisja w ciągu 2011 r. wywiązała się z nałożonego na nią obowiązku przedstawienia tego sprawozdania Parlamentowi i Radzie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Marię Damanaki w imieniu Komisji
(0. paźnziernika 013. rP)

Sprawozdanie, o które Szanowny Pan Poseł pyta, zostało przyjęte przez Komisję we wrześniu 2011 r. ([1]).

([1]) COM(2011) 578 Komunikat Komisji do Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady w sprawie wdrożenia niektórych przepisów rozporządzenia Rady (WE) nr 812/2004 ustanawiającego środki dotyczące przypadkowych odłowów waleni na łowiskach i zmieniającego rozporządzenie (WE) nr 88/98.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009932/13
to the Commission
Marek Józef Gróbarczyk (ECR)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t5*Question to the European Commission regarding the fulfilment of its obligation to report to Parliament and the Council

Article 27 of Council Regulation (EC) No 2187/2005 obliged the European Commission to ensure that a scientific assessment of the effects of using in particular gillnets, trammel nets and entangling nets on cetaceans was conducted and its findings presented to the European Parliament and the Council by 1 January 2008. The Commission did not fulfil this obligation within the deadline specified, and a Polish fisherman submitted a complaint to the European Ombudsman (427/2011/MHZ) accusing the European Commission of maladministration.

Following an inquiry, the Ombudsman concluded that, 'the Commission failed to demonstrate that it was objectively impossible for it to ensure that the scientific assessment of the effects of using in particular gillnets, trammel nets and entangling nets on cetaceans was carried out by 1 January 2008.' The Ombudsman closed his inquiry into the complaint on 22 November 2011, and stated that, 'Since, in a communication to Parliament and the Council, the Commission declared that in 2011 it would submit a report on the effects of using driftnets on cetaceans, the Ombudsman does not consider that either a proposal for a friendly solution, or a draft recommendation, would serve any useful purpose in the present case.'

I would therefore like to ask whether the Commission fulfilled its obligation to present such a report to Parliament and the Council in 2011.

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(0u O:tober 013u)

The report referred to by the Honourable Member was adopted by the Commission in September 2011 (1).

(1) COM(2011) 578 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of certain provisions of Council Regulation (EC) No 812/2004 laying down measures concerning incidental catches of cetaceans in fisheries and amending Regulation (EC) No 88/98.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-009933/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(5 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Exclusão e discriminação dos sem-abrigo por parte da UE

De acordo com notícias recentes, a Federação Europeia de Organizações Nacionais para os Sem-abrigo (Feantsa, na sigla em inglês) acusou a União Europeia de discriminação e exclusão dos sem-abrigo da participação em determinadas iniciativas.

É sabido que, em virtude da aplicação das políticas da UE, particularmente nos países que são alvo de intervenções FMI-UE, a pobreza e a exclusão social dispararam, levando a um aumento muito substancial do número de sem-abrigo.

Apesar disto e de 2013 ter sido declarado «Ano Europeu dos Cidadãos» (iniciativa que tem sido pretexto para diversas ações de propaganda), de acordo com a Feantsa, a ausência de uma casa ou de uma morada fixa pode ser uma barreira no acesso a «vários conceitos básicos» de cidadania e participação na sociedade. A Feantsa avança alguns exemplos concretos desta discriminação por parte da Comissão Europeia.

Perguntamos à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento das críticas da Federação Europeia de Organizações Nacionais para os Sem-abrigo?

2. Quais as iniciativas da Comissão em que os sem-abrigo são excluídos da participação?

3. Tomou ou vai tomar alguma medida para corrigir esta situação?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(29 de outubro de 2013)

A Comissão não tem conhecimento de tal declaração por parte da Feantsa ([1]); não obstante, chama a atenção ([2]) para o facto de algumas normas nacionais dos Estados-Membros não permitirem que pessoas sem endereço e/ou sem bilhete de identidade votem e, consequentemente, participem na «Iniciativa de Cidadania Europeia» (ICE) ([3]). A Comissão incentivou os Estados-Membros a assegurar a todos os cidadãos uma participação plena na ICE. No âmbito do Ano Europeu dos Cidadãos de 2013, a aliança de organizações da sociedade civil apresentará, em dezembro de 2013, recomendações políticas sobre cidadania e participação cívica.

O artigo 21.° da Carta dos Direitos Fundamentais da União Europeia proíbe estritamente qualquer discriminação em razão da origem social, e a Comissão é obrigada a respeitar esse princípio.

Os Estados-Membros são os principais responsáveis pela existência de pessoas sem-abrigo; no entanto, a Comissão apoia a integração dessa questão no processo de governação da estratégia «Europa 2020», por meio de recomendações específicas por país centradas na pobreza e nos mercados de habitação, bem como a utilização dos fundos da UE nesse sentido. Além disso, o Pacote de Investimento Social ([4]) salienta que garantir uma participação dos sem-abrigo é uma característica essencial das estratégias integradas para combater o fenómeno dos sem-abrigo.

([1]) Federação Europeia de Associações Nacionais que Trabalham com os Sem-Abrigo.
([2]) «Homeless People Excluded from Citizenship, Not Allowed to Participate in European Citizens' Initiatives» («Sem Abrigo excluídos da Cidadania, Impedidos de Participar nas Iniciativas de Cidadania Europeia»),.
Comunicado de imprensa de 3 de setembro de 2013, disponível em:
http://www.feantsa.org/spip.php?article1368&lang=en
([3]) Iniciativa de Cidadania Europeia, ver Regulamento (UE) n.° 211/2011, de 16 de fevereiro de 2011, sobre a iniciativa de cidadania.
([4]) Informações suplementares sobre o Pacote de Investimento Social estão disponíveis em:
http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en&newsId=1807&moreDocuments=yes&tableName=news

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009933/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(5 September 2013)

Subject: Exclusion of homeless people and discrimination against them by the EU

According to recent reports, the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA) has accused the European Union of discriminating against homeless people and excluding them from participation in certain initiatives.

The implementation of EU policies, particularly in countries receiving bailouts from the International Monetary Fund and the EU, has caused soaring levels of poverty and social exclusion, resulting in a very significant increase in the number of homeless people.

In spite of this and despite 2013 being the European Year of Citizens (an initiative that has been an excuse for several propaganda exercises), according to FEANTSA, not having a home or a fixed address can be a barrier to accessing 'many basic concepts' of citizenship and participation in society. FEANTSA has posited several concrete examples of such discrimination on the part of the Commission.

1. Is the Commission aware of the criticisms made by the Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless?

2. Which Commission initiatives are the homeless excluded from participating in?

3. Has the Commission taken or will it take any action to remedy this situation?

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

The Commission is not aware of such a claim by FEANTSA ([1]) however, it draws attention ([2]) to the fact that certain Member States' national rules do not allow persons with no address and/or no identity card to vote, consequently to take part in the ECI ([3]).The Commission has encouraged these Member States to ensure the full participation in the ECI for all citizens. In the framework of the European Year of Citizens 2013 the Alliance of civil society organisations will present policy recommendations on citizenship and civic participation in December 2013.

Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union strictly prohibits discrimination based on social origin and the Commission is bound to respect that principle.

The Member States have primary responsibility for homelessness, however, the Commission supports integrating homelessness into the Europe 2020 governance process through country specific recommendations with a focus on poverty and housing markets, and use of EU Funds for that. Furthermore, the Social Investment Package ([4]) stresses that ensuring homeless people's participation is vital features of integrated homelessness strategies.

([1]) European Federation of National Organisations working with the Homeless.
([2]) 'Homeless People Excluded from Citizenship, Not Allowed to Participate in European Citizens' Initiatives'. Press release of 3 September 2013, available at: http://www.feantsa.org/spip.php?article1368&lang=en
([3]) European Citizens' Initiative, Regulation No 211/2011 of 16 February 2011 on the citizens' initiative.
([4]) More information on the Social Investment Package is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en&newsId=1807&moreDocuments=yes&tableName=news

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-009934/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(5 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Financiamento pela UE de projetos internacionais para construção de gasodutos

Relativamente a projetos de gasodutos transcontinentais, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que projetos foram ou vão ser financiados pela UE? Quais os projetos em causa e quais os montantes envolvidos?

2. Concretamente no que diz respeito ao projeto «Nabucco», qual a participação da UE?

Resposta dada por Günther Oettinger em nome da Comissão
(5 de novembro de 2013)

1. Os apoios financeiros da UE para gasodutos transcontinentais têm sido concedidos através da política das redes transeuropeias (Decisão n.° 1364/2006/CE — RTE-E) e do Programa Energético Europeu para o Relançamento da Economia (Regulamento (CE) n.° 663/2009, Regulamento EEPR, na sigla inglesa). Todas as informações sobre os projetos, o financiamento, as subvenções concedidas e os pagamentos efetivos estão disponíveis no seguinte sítio Web:

— EEPR: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/eepr/

— RTE-E: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/tent_e/financial_aid_en.htm

Nos termos do novo regulamento relativo às orientações para as infraestruturas energéticas transeuropeias, adotado em 2013, e do Mecanismo Interligar a Europa, os projetos definidos como projetos de interesse comum (PIC) podem, potencialmente, beneficiar de apoio financeiro da UE. A Comissão adotou a primeira lista de projetos de interesse comum em 14 de outubro de 2013.

2. Ao *Nabucco Gas Pipeline International GmbH* foi atribuído um montante de 4,8 milhões de euros em 2005 e de 3 milhões de euros em 2009, no âmbito do apoio financeiro a projetos de interesse comum da rede transeuropeia de energia (RTE-E). Além disso, no quadro do programa EEPR, foram inicialmente reservados para o gasoduto Nabucco 200 milhões de euros. No entanto, esta verba não foi mobilizada dado que o promotor não tomou a decisão final de investimento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009934/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(3 September 201u)

*Sj bæ:t5*EU funding of international gas pipeline construction projects

With regard to transcontinental gas pipeline projects:

1. Which projects have been or will be funded by the EU? What are the projects in question and what are the sums involved?

2. How much is the EU contributing to the 'Nabucco' project in particular?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(3 November 201u)

1. Financial supports for trans-continental gas pipelines have been granted by the EU through the Trans-European network policy (Decision 1364/2006/EC — TEN-E) and the European Energy Programme for Recovery (Regulation 663/2009 — EEPR). All details about the projects, the scope of financing, the grants awarded and the actual payments are available on the following webpages:

— EEPR: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/eepr/

— TEN-E: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/tent_e/financial_aid_en.htm

Under the new Regulation on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure adopted in 2013 and the Connecting Europe Facility, trans-continental projects identified as Projects of Common Interest (PCIs) can potentially benefit from EU financial assistance. The first list of PCIs was adopted by the Commission on 14 October 2013.

2. Nabucco Gas Pipeline International GmbH has been awarded EUR 4.8 million in 2005 and EUR 3 million in 2009 under the financial support for projects of common interest in the Trans-European Energy Network (TEN-E). In addition, EUR 200 million have been initially provisioned for Nabucco under the EEPR programme. However, this grant has not been drawn as the promoter did not take the final investment decision.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009936/13
do Komisji
Paweł Robert Kowal (ECR)
(2 września 013. rP)

*drzem io:5*Problemy polskich pracowników w Holandii

Pracować i mieszkać w UE to podstawowe prawo obywatela każdego z 28 krajów Unii. Artykuł 45 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej (TFUE) ustanawia prawo obywateli UE do przemieszczania się do innego państwa Unii także w celu podjęcia pracy. Prawo to obejmuje w szczególności prawo nie bycia dyskryminowanym ze względu na narodowość w zakresie dostępu do zatrudnienia oraz wynagrodzenia.

Od 1 maja 2007 r. Polacy dostali możliwość pracy w Holandii bez konieczności uzyskania pozwolenia na pracę. Holandia zawsze była uważana za kraj otwarty i tolerancyjny. Jednak, obywatele polscy nadal napotykają na problemy dyskryminacji w tym kraju np. nie tak dawno, holenderska Partia Wolności domagała się surowszej polityki wobec bezrobotnych imigrantów, którzy otrzymują pomoc społeczną.

Jakie działania zamierza podjąć Komisja, żeby zagwarantować bardziej skuteczne i jednolite stosowanie prawa UE we wszystkich krajach unijnych dotyczące swobodnego przemieszczania się pracowników?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(03 paźmziernika 013. rP)

Komisja jest świadoma, że pracownicy migrujący potrzebują lepszej informacji i większego wsparcia w kontekście krajowym. Z tego względu przedstawiła wniosek ([1]) w sprawie dyrektywy mającej poprawić na szczeblu krajowym egzekwowanie praw związanych ze swobodnym przepływem pracowników. Wniosek przewiduje zaangażowanie wszystkich zainteresowanych stron (partnerów społecznych, administracji krajowych, organizacji pozarządowych i służb wspierających na szczeblu UE) na rzecz skuteczniejszego informowania i wspierania obywateli UE poszukujących pracy, pracowników mobilnych i członków ich rodzin. W szczególności, państwa członkowskie zostałyby zobowiązane do powołania organu krajowego lub punktu kontaktowego, który byłby odpowiedzialny za informowanie i doradztwo na rzecz pracowników w UE oraz pomógłby dopilnować, by ich prawa były przestrzegane. Organy takie byłyby zobowiązane m.in. do przedstawiania opracowań i wydawania zaleceń krajowych dotyczących likwidacji zjawiska dyskryminacji w rozumieniu art. 45 TFUE.

Ponadto Komisja nadal monitoruje zmiany lub proponowane zmiany w ustawodawstwie krajowym, które mogą mieć wpływ na prawa obywateli UE przemieszczających się z jednego państwa członkowskiego do drugiego. Komisja pozostaje w kontakcie z władzami niderlandzkimi w sprawie nowych propozycji mających na celu ograniczenie dostępu do pomocy społecznej w przypadku obywateli UE poszukujących pracy i nieaktywnych zawodowo. Jak zawsze, celem Komisji jest zapewnienie, by przestrzegano dorobku prawnego UE.

([1]) Wniosek dotyczący dyrektywy Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady w sprawie środków ułatwiających korzystanie z praw przyznanych pracownikom w kontekście swobodnego przepływu pracowników (COM(2013) 236 z dnia 26 kwietnia 2013 r.).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009936/13
to the Commission
Paweł Robert Kowal (ECR)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t5*Problems encountered by Polish citizens working in the Netherlands

The right to work and live in the EU is one of the fundamental rights granted to the citizens of each of the 28 Member States. The right of EU citizens to move to another Member State, *inter OiiO* for work purposes, is enshrined in Article 45 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), and means in particular that discrimination on the grounds of nationality is prohibited in the context of employment and salaries.

On 1 May 2007 the work permit requirement was abolished for Polish citizens wishing to work in the Netherlands, which has always enjoyed a reputation as an open and tolerant country. Yet the Polish citizens living there continue to experience discrimination-related problems; for example, the Dutch Freedom Party recently called for more stringent policies on social benefits for unemployed immigrants.

What measures does the Commission intend to take to guarantee a more effective and uniform application of EU legislation on the free movement of workers in all of the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(03 a :tober 013u)

The Commission is very aware of EU migrant workers' need for better information and support in a national context. It has accordingly put forward a proposal [1] for a directive to improve the enforcement at national level of existing EU rights concerning the free movement of workers. The proposal provides for the involvement of all stakeholders (the social partners, national administrations, NGOs and assistance services at EU level) with a view to improving information and assistance for EU jobseekers, EU mobile workers and their family members. In particular, Member States would be required to ensure the existence of a national body or contact point to inform and advise EU workers and to help ensure their rights are respected. Such bodies would be required, among other things, to produce studies and make recommendations at national level concerning the elimination of discrimination within the meaning of Article 45 TFEU.

The Commission also continues to monitor changes or proposed changes to national legislation which may have an impact on the rights of EU citizens moving from one Member State to the other. The Commission is in contact with the Dutch authorities concerning nascent proposals to restrict access to social assistance for EU jobseekers and non-active EU citizens. The Commission's aim, as always, is to ensure the EU *Oqj is* is respected.

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[1] Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and the Council on measures facilitating the exercise of rights conferred on workers in the context of freedom of movement of workers (COM(2013) 236 of 26 April 2013).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-009937/13
an die Kommission
Hermann Winkler (PPE)
(6. September 2013)

Betrifft: Mehrwertsteuer bei Personenbeförderung

In einer Anfrage vom 4. Februar 2013 wurden ich der EU-Kommission die Probleme für deutsche Taxifahrer im deutsch-polnischen Grenzraum aufgrund einer nichtvorhandenen Ausnahmeregelung im polnischen Mehrwertsteuerrecht für Personenbeförderung für Fahrten nach Polen geschildert. Nach der Rechtslage in Polen müssen sich deutsche Taxifahrer selbst für kurze Strecken nach Polen zur Erfüllung ihrer mehrwertsteuerlichen Pflichten in Polen mit einem komplizierten Verfahren anmelden. Für polnische Taxifahrer in Deutschland greifen hingegen Ausnahmeregelungen.

Die EU-Kommission verwies in ihrer Antwort E-001400/2013 auf die Mitteilung KOM(2011)0851, in der ein Vorschlag über einfachere Mehrwertsteuerbestimmungen im Bereich der Personenbeförderung angekündigt wurde.

Wann plant die Kommission den genannten Vorschlag vorzulegen?

Was sind die geplanten Inhalte des Vorschlags?

Könnten diese Inhalte gegebenenfalls bei oben genanntem Problem Abhilfe schaffen?

Kommissionsmitglied Šemeta antwortete, Polen könne selbst entscheiden, ob bestimmte durch die MwSt.-Richtlinie auferlegte Pflichten zweckmäßig seien und könne entsprechend diese Pflichten in den durch die aktuelle Richtlinie auferlegten Grenzen gegebenenfalls lockern.

Hat die Kommission Kenntnis davon, ob in Polen möglicherweise mittlerweile Bewegung in dieser Frage entstanden ist und eine Ausnahme von der Steueranmeldepflicht für Fahrten von deutschen Personenbeförderern in einem geringen Radius wie beispielsweise 10 km auf polnischem Gebiet angestrebt wird?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(4. Oktober 2013)

In ihrer Mitteilung [1] hat die Kommission keinen Termin für die Vorlage eines Vorschlags zur Mehrwertsteuer auf Personenbeförderungsdienstleistungen festgelegt. Die zeitliche Planung hängt von der laufenden Studie zur Ermittlung und Quantifizierung der Probleme im Zusammenhang mit den MwSt.-Vorschriften für den Personenverkehr und den sich möglicherweise daran anschließenden, für eine Folgenabschätzung erforderlichen Arbeiten ab.

Der Anwendungsbereich eines möglichen künftigen Vorschlags würde natürlich von den Ergebnissen einer Folgenabschätzung abhängen, und daher ist zum jetzigen Zeitpunkt noch nicht bekannt, ob Taxidienstleistungen in diesen Anwendungsbereich fallen würden.

Die Ausnahmeregelung für polnische Taxifahrer im deutschen Grenzgebiet wird derzeit von den Kommissionsdienststellen geprüft. Solange das Ergebnis dieser Analyse noch aussteht, sollte nach Ansicht der Kommission eine ähnliche spezifische Ausnahmeregelung, nach der Polen von deutschen Taxifahrern im polnischen Grenzgebiet erbrachte Beförderungsdienstleistungen nicht besteuern muss, nicht in Betracht gezogen werden.

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[1] KOM(2011)851 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009937/13
to the Commission
Hermann Winkler (PPE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: VAT on passenger transport

In a question of 4 February 2013 (E-001400/2013) I described to the Commission the problems for German taxi drivers in the German-Polish border area owing to the absence of a derogation under Polish VAT law for passenger transport into Poland. Under Polish law, German taxi drivers have to go through a complicated registration procedure to comply with their VAT requirements, even for short journeys into Poland. On the other hand, there is a derogation scheme in place for Polish taxi drivers in Germany.

In its answer to my question the Commission referred to its communication COM(2011) 851 in which it stated its intention of proposing a simpler VAT framework for passenger transport activities.

When does the Commission propose to submit the proposal referred to?

What provisions is the proposal due to contain?

Might these provisions help alleviate the problem I have described?

Commissioner Šemeta said that it is for Poland to decide whether and how, where appropriate, to adapt certain obligations laid down by the VAT Directive, within the limits provided for by the current directive.

Does the Commission know whether there has since been any movement in Poland on this issue, towards a derogation from the VAT registration requirement for German passenger transport service providers in respect of journeys within a limited distance of, say, 10 km from the Polish border?

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

The Commission has set no date for presenting a VAT proposal on passenger transport services in its communication ([1]). The timing will depend on the ongoing study to identify and quantify any problems related to the VAT rules on passenger transport and thereafter any subsequent work required for an impact assessment.

The scope of any future proposal would obviously depend on the results of an impact assessment and therefore it is unknown at this stage whether taxi services would be covered.

The derogation scheme in place for Polish taxi drivers in Germany in the border area is currently being examined by the Commission services. Pending the outcome of this analysis, the Commission considers that a similar specific derogation allowing Poland not to tax transport supplies carried out by German taxi drivers in the border area should not be envisaged.

([1]) COM(2011) 851 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-009938/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(6 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εφαρμογή στην Ελλάδα νομοθεσίας για πώληση τροφίμων περασμένης ημερομηνίας λήξης

Από την 1η Σεπτεμβρίου τέθηκε σε εφαρμογή το μέτρο στην Ελλάδα για τη διάθεση προϊόντων «περιορισμένης διατηρησιμότητας» στα ράφια των σούπερ μάρκετ και των καταστημάτων τροφίμων σε τιμές χαμηλότερες από τις κανονικές. Παράλληλα, σε πρόσφατη ανακοίνωσή της η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή αναφέρει ότι τα τρόφιμα μπορούν να καταναλωθούν με ασφάλεια ακόμα και μετά την αναγραφόμενη ημερομηνία «κατά προτίμηση μέχρι» υπό τον όρο ότι έχουν τηρηθεί οι οδηγίες αποθήκευσης και δεν έχει φθαρεί η συσκευασία, ενδεχομένως όμως το προϊόν να έχει αρχίσει να χάνει τη γεύση και την υφή του.

Με αφορμή τα παραπάνω και την απάντηση της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής σε προηγούμενη ερώτηση με αριθμό: E-009356/2012 και τίτλο «Πώληση τροφίμων με περασμένη ημερομηνία λήξης σε φθηνότερη τιμή», ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει συγκεντρώσει τα στοιχεία για την ύπαρξη παρόμοιου νομοθετικού πλαισίου σε άλλα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ; Αν ναι, με ποιό τρόπο διασφαλίζεται η προστασία της υγείας των καταναλωτών;

2. Πώς επιτρέπεται η πώληση προϊόντων περασμένης ημερομηνίας λήξης με την ένδειξη «ανάλωση κατά προτίμηση πριν από» από τη στιγμή που υπάρχει το ενδεχόμενο το προϊόν να έχει χάσει τη γεύση του και την υφή του; Δεν υπάρχει κίνδυνος για την υγεία των καταναλωτών από την κατανάλωση ληγμένων χημικών συντηρητικών στα εν λόγω προϊόντα;

3. Ποιό είναι το νόημα της ύπαρξης ημερομηνίας ή έτους λήξης στα προϊόντα με αναγραφή «ανάλωση κατά προτίμηση πριν από» από τη στιγμή που αυτό με την εν λόγω νομοθεσία παρακάμπτεται;

4. Σκοπεύει η Επιτροπή να προβεί σε συστάσεις προς τα κράτη μέλη, έτσι ώστε τέτοιου είδους προϊόντα να μην καταναλώνονται από συγκεκριμένες ομάδες πληθυσμού (όπως παιδιά, εγκύους, ηλικιωμένους με προβλήματα υγείας), δεδομένου ότι τα εν λόγω προϊόντα έχουν χάσει την θρεπτική τους αξία;

5. Με γνώμονα το γεγονός ότι επίσημοι έλεγχοι από τα κράτη μέλη πρέπει να διεξάγονται τακτικά, σύμφωνα με τα στοιχεία που διαθέτει η Επιτροπή, ο Ενιαίος Φορέας Ελέγχου Τροφίμων στην Ελλάδα θα μπορέσει να ανταπεξέλθει στους πρόσθετους ελέγχους που πρόκειται να προκύψουν με τη νέα αυτή νομοθεσία, στο μέτρο που, σύμφωνα με τα υπάρχοντα σχέδια, θα τεθεί σε διαθεσιμότητα μεγάλο μέρος των εργαζομένων του εν λόγω οργανισμού;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(15 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Τα προσυσκευασμένα τρόφιμα, εκτός από λίγες εξαιρέσεις, πρέπει να φέρουν την ημερομηνία ελάχιστης διάρκειας (ημερομηνία «ανάλωση κατά προτίμηση πριν από») ή την ημερομηνία «ανάλωση έως». Η «ημερομηνία ανάλωσης κατά προτίμηση πριν από» δείχνει την ημερομηνία μέχρι την οποία το φαγητό διατηρεί την προσδοκώμενη ποιότητα του. Η υπάρχουσα ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία ([1]) διευκρινίζει ότι η ημερομηνία «ανάλωση κατά προτίμηση πρίν από» πρέπει να αντικατασταθεί από την ημερομηνία «ανάλωση έως» όταν, μικροβιολογικώς, κάποιο τρόφιμο είναι εξαιρετικά αλλοιώσιμο και ενδέχεται επομένως μετά από ένα σύντομο χρονικό διάστημα να αποτελέσει άμεσο κίνδυνο για την ανθρώπινη υγεία. Εναπόκειται στην ευθύνη του υπεύθυνου της επιχείρησης τροφίμων να αποφασίσει αν ένα προϊόν πρέπει να φέρει την ετικέτα για ημερομηνία «ανάλωση έως». Ο νέο κανονισμός σχετικά με την παροχή πληροφοριών για τα τρόφιμα στους καταναλωτές ([2]) διατηρεί τους υπάρχοντες κανόνες ([3]).

([1]) Οδηγία 2000/13/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου της 20ής Μαρτίου 2000 για προσέγγιση των νομοθεσιών των κρατών μελών σχετικά με την σήμανση, την παρουσίαση και τη διαφήμιση των τροφίμων (ΕΕ L 109 της 6.5.2000, σ. 29).

([2]) Κανονισμός (ΕΕ) αριθ. 1169/2011 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου της 25ης Οκτωβρίου 2011 σχετικά με την παροχή πληροφοριών για τα τρόφιμα στους καταναλωτές, την τροποποίηση των κανονισμών (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1924/2006 και (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1925/2006 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου και την κατάργηση της οδηγίας 87/250/ΕΟΚ της Επιτροπής, της οδηγίας 90/496/ΕΟΚ του Συμβουλίου, της οδηγίας 1999/10/ΕΚ της Επιτροπής, της οδηγίας 2000/13/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, των οδηγιών 2002/67/ΕΚ και 2008/5/ΕΚ της Επιτροπής και του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 608/2004 της Επιτροπής (ΕΕ L 304 της 22.11.2011, σ. 18-63). Ο κανονισμός (ΕΕ) αριθ. 1169/2011 θα καταργήσει και θα αντικαταστήσει την οδηγία 2000/13/ΕΚ της 13ης Δεκεμβρίου 2014.

([3]) Επιπρόσθετα, το άρθρο 24 του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1169/2011 προβλέπει ότι μετά το πέρας της ημερομηνίας «ανάλωση έως» ένα τρόφιμο θεωρείται ότι δεν είναι ασφαλές σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 14(2) με (5) του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 178/2002 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου της 28ης Ιανουαρίου 2002 για τον καθορισμό των γενικών αρχών και απαιτήσεων της νομοθεσίας για τα τρόφιμα, για την ίδρυση της Ευρωπαϊκής Αρχής Ασφάλειας των Τροφίμων και τον καθορισμό διαδικασιών σε θέματα ασφάλειας τροφίμων, (ΕΕ L 31 της 1.2.2012, σ. 1).

Τα ελληνικά μέτρα στο επίμαχο θέμα αφορούν τρόφιμα πέραν της ημερομηνίας «ανάλωση κατά προτίμηση πριν από» και όχι τρόφιμα με ημερομηνία λήξης «ανάλωση έως». Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 17(1) και το άρθρο 19 του κανονισμού 178/2002, οι υπεύθυνοι επιχείρησης τροφίμων πρέπει να διασφαλίσουν ότι η προμήθεια τροφίμων είναι ασφαλής. Πέραν των ειδικών νομοθετικών διατάξεων, όπως για τα αυγά, η εμπορία των τροφίμων μετά τη λήξη της ημερομηνίας ελάχιστης διατηρησιμότητας επιτρέπεται βάσει της νομοθεσίας της Ένωσης, υπό την προϋπόθεση ότι τα εν λόγω τρόφιμα εξακολουθούν να είναι ασφαλή και η παρουσίασή τους δεν είναι παραπλανητική. Αυτό θα μπορούσε να δικαιολογήσει τη ξεχωριστή τοποθέτηση τους σε επίπεδο λιανικής πώλησης και σε χαμηλότερη τιμή, γεγονός που προβλέπεται από το ελληνικό μέτρο. Η Επιτροπή δεν γνωρίζει την ύπαρξη παρόμοιου ρυθμιστικού πλαισίου σε άλλα κράτη μέλη. Δεν προτίθεται να υποβάλλει συστάσεις προς τα κράτη μέλη σχετικά με την κατανάλωση τροφίμων πέραν των ημερομηνιών «ανάλωση κατά προτίμηση πριν από» από ειδικές ομάδες του πληθυσμού. Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει πληροφορίες που να οδηγούν στο συμπέρασμα ότι οι αρμόδιες ελληνικές αρχές δεν θα είναι σε θέση να εξασφαλίσουν το κατάλληλο επίπεδο επίσημων ελέγχων για την εξακρίβωση της συμμόρφωσης με τους νέους κανόνες.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009938/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Implementation in Greece of legislation regarding the sale of food past its expiration date

1 September saw the entry into force in Greece of measures for placing 'limited durability' products on the shelves of supermarkets and food stores at prices lower than normal. Furthermore, in a recent communication, the Commission has stated that food may be consumed safely even after the 'best before' date, provided that the storage guidelines have been complied with and the packaging has not been damaged, but that the product may have begun to lose its flavour and texture.

In view of the above and the Commission's answer to a previous question, E-009356/2012 entitled 'Sale of food at reduced prices after expiry date', will the Commission state:

1. Has it gathered information about the existence of a legislative framework of this kind in other EU Member States? If so, how will it ensure that consumers' health is protected?

2. How can the sale of products past their expiration date labelled 'best before' be permitted since there is the possibility that the product may have lost its flavour and texture? Is there no risk to consumer health from the consumption of chemical preservatives in these products which are also past their expiration date?

3. What is the point of labelling a product 'best before' a given date or year, since that date is being circumvented through this legislation?

4. Does the Commission intend to make recommendations to Member States so that such products are not consumed by specific population groups (such as children, pregnant women, elderly people with health problems), since these products will have lost their nutritional value?

5. In the light of the fact that Member States should conduct official inspections on a regular basis, according to information available to the Commission, will the Single Food Inspection Agency in Greece be able to cope with the additional controls that will arise from this new legislation, given that it is planned to make a large number of employees of this Agency redundant?

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

Pre-packed foods, with few exceptions, must bear a date of minimum durability ('best before' date) or a 'use by' date. The 'best before' date indicates the date until which the food retains its expected qualities. The existing EU legislation ([1]) specifies that the 'best before' date should be replaced by a 'use by' date when, from a microbiological point of view, a food is highly perishable and is therefore likely after a short period to constitute an immediate danger to human health. It is the responsibility of the food business operator to determine when a product should be labelled with a use by date. The new Regulation on the provision of food information to consumers ([2]) maintains the existing rules. ([3])

([1]) Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 March 2000 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs (OJ L 109, 6.5.2000, p. 29).

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, 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). Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 will repeal and replace Directive 2000/13/EC as of 13 December 2014.

([3]) Furthermore, Article 24 of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 provides that after the 'use by' date a food shall be deemed to be unsafe in accordance with Article 14(2) to (5) of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety, (OJ L 31, 1.2.2002, p.1).

The Greek measure at issue concerns foods beyond their ‘best before’ date and not foods with expired ‘use by’ dates. According to Article 17(1) and Article 19 of Regulation 178/2002 food business operators have to ensure that the food supply is safe. Apart from specific legislation, such as for eggs, the marketing of foods after expiry of their date of minimum durability is allowed under Union law, provided that the foods concerned are still safe and their presentation is not misleading. This could justify their separate placement at retail level and lower pricing, foreseen by the Greek measure. The Commission is not aware of the existence of similar framework rules in other Member States. It does not intend to make recommendations to Member States regarding the consumption of foods beyond their ‘best before’ dates by specific population groups. The Commission has no information that would lead to conclude that the Greek competent authorities will not be able to ensure the appropriate level of official controls to verify compliance with the new rules.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-009939/13
aan de Commissie
Corien Wortmann-Kool (PPE)
(6 september 2013)

Betreft: Stakingen Duitse sluizen

Op 31 juli heeft KSV „Schuttevaer” een klacht bij de Commissie van de EU ingediend wegens niet-naleving van het Gemeenschapsrecht, met name het beginsel van vrij verkeer van goederen door de Bondsrepubliek Duitsland (art. 34, 35, 36 VWEU juncto art. 4 lid 3 VEU).

De reeds weken durende stakingen zorgen voor een enorme economische en imagoschade voor de binnenvaart in Europa, brengen de betrouwbaarheid van de dienstverlening in gevaar en dreigen ook op langere termijn schade te veroorzaken. De stakingen zijn niet proportioneel, reden waarom KSV „Schuttevaer” een klacht heeft ingediend die ik als lid van het Europees Parlement graag ondersteun.

Ik roep u op de klacht met grote spoed te behandelen en in dat verband stel ik u de volgende vragen.

1. Heeft u deze klacht ontvangen?

2. Bent u zich bewust van de urgentie van deze zaak?

3. Bent u bereid met spoed uitsluitsel te verstrekken over de ontvankelijkheid van de klacht en verdere maatregelen?

Antwoord van de heer Tajani namens de Commissie
(7 oktober 2013)

1. De Commissie heeft de klacht van de Nederlandse redersvereniging ontvangen en deze formeel geregistreerd. Op 22 augustus 2013 is een ontvangstbevestiging naar de klagers gestuurd. De klacht zal zo spoedig mogelijk worden behandeld.

2. De Commissie volgt de beschreven situatie op de voet gezien het risico van ernstige verstoring van het vrije verkeer van goederen en derhalve van schending van de desbetreffende verdragsbepalingen (de artikelen 34-36) en Verordening (EG) nr. 2679/98.

De lidstaten hebben de verantwoordelijkheid alle noodzakelijke adequate maatregelen te nemen teneinde het vrije verkeer van goederen te waarborgen en te verhinderen dat acties van particulieren dit vrije verkeer belemmeren ([1]).

Hiertoe is bij Verordening (EG) nr. 2679/98 een mechanisme voor de uitwisseling van informatie bij belemmeringen van het vrije verkeer van goederen ingesteld, en bepaalt deze verordening dat een lidstaat „zo spoedig mogelijk [reageert] op verzoeken om informatie van de Commissie en van andere lidstaten over de aard van de belemmering of dreigende belemmering, en over de actie die hij heeft ondernomen of voornemens is te ondernemen”. De Commissie heeft op 22 augustus 2013 contact met de Duitse autoriteiten opgenomen en blijft de situatie op de voet volgen.

3. Gezien de informatie waarover de Commissie beschikt, lijken de Duitse autoriteiten de passende maatregelen te hebben genomen om aan hun verplichtingen uit hoofde van zowel de verordening als de artikelen 34 tot en met 36 van het VWEU te voldoen.

In dit verband zij erop gewezen dat de lidstaten weliswaar de noodzakelijke adequate maatregelen moeten treffen teneinde het vrije verkeer van goederen op hun grondgebied te waarborgen, maar dat zij daarbij ook rekening moeten houden met andere beschermde rechten en vrijheden, zoals het stakingsrecht.

([1]) Arrest van 9 december 1997 in zaak C-265/95, Commissie/Frankrijk, Jurispr. 1997, blz. I-6959.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009939/13
to the Commission
Corien Wortmann-Kool (PPE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Strike by German lock-keepers

On 31 July 2013 the Dutch inland shipping association KSV Schuttevaer lodged a complaint with the Commission against the Federal Republic of Germany for failure to comply with EC law, and specifically with the principle of free movement of goods (Articles 34, 35 and 36 TFEU in conjunction with Article 4(3) TEU).

The strikes which have been going on for several weeks now are causing terrible economic damage to inland waterways transport, as well as to its image, are jeopardising the reliability of the service and threatening to cause longer-term damage. The strikes are disproportionate: this is why KSV Schuttevaer has lodged a complaint which I as an MEP am happy to support.

I call on the Commission to deal with this complaint as speedily as possible, and in this connection I have the following questions:

1. Has the Commission received the complaint?

2. Is it aware of the urgency of the matter?

3. Is it prepared to give a definitive ruling without delay on the admissibility of the complaint and on further measures to be taken?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(7 October 2013)

1. The Commission has received and formally registered the complaint of the Dutch shipping association. An acknowledgement of receipt was sent to the complainants on 22 August 2013. The complaint will be handled as quickly as possible.

2. The situation described is being surveyed by the Commission due to the possible risk of seriously disrupting the free movement of goods and thus violating the related Treaty provisions (Articles 34-36) and Reg. (EC) 2679/98.

Member States have the responsibility to take all necessary and proportionate measures in order to ensure the free movement of goods and to prevent it from being obstructed by actions of private individuals [1] .

To that effect Reg. (EC) 2679/98 has established a mechanism for the exchange of information when obstacles to the free movement of goods occur and it provides that Member States should '(…) respond as soon as possible to requests for information from the Commission and from other Member States concerning the nature of the obstacle or threat and the action which it has taken or proposes to take'. The Commission undertook the necessary contacts with the German authorities on 22 August 2013 and continues to closely follow the situation.

3. In the light of the information available to the Commission, the German authorities seem to have taken appropriate measures to fulfil their obligations both under the regulation and under Art.34-36 TFEU.

In this respect it must be highlighted that while Member States must take necessary and proportionate measures in order to ensure the free movement of goods in their territory, they also have to take into account other protected rights and freedoms, such as the right to strike.

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[1] Case C 265/95 Commission vs French Republic, ECR 1997 p. I 06959.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-009940/13
до Комисията
Mariya Gabriel (PPE)
(6 септември 2013 г.)

Относно: Неусвояване на средства по Програмата за развитие на селските райони в Република България

ЕС е на финалната права в оформянето на Обща селскостопанска политика (ОСП) за следващия програмен период 2014—2020 г. В рамките на ОСП, освен на директни плащания, българското земеделие разчита и на Програмата за развитие на селските райони, като за настоящия период 2007—2013 г. средствата по нея са 2, 609 млрд. евро от ЕС и 632 млн. евро от държавния бюджет.

По информация на българските медии съществува реална опасност ситуацията в България и промените във фонд „Земеделие" да доведат до забавяне на проекти по програмата, което ще лиши България от европейско финансиране. Според медиите има вероятност България да загуби до 300 млн. евро по Програмата за развитие на селските райони до края на тази година.

В тази връзка може ли Комисията да предостави повече информация и в частност относно това:

Има ли опасност от подобни загуби и какъв е техният размер?

Разполага ли Комисията с информация на какво се дължат забавянията по проекти?

Какви са договорените и усвоени средства по програмата от месец февруари 2013 г. насам?

Съществува ли опасност ниската усвояемост да се отрази върху средствата, които България ще получи по програмата за 2014—2020 г?

Отговор, даден от от г-н Cioloş от името на Комисията
(9 октомври 2013 г.)

От началото на програмния период 2007—2013 г. до и включително второто тримесечие на 2013 г. Комисията е изплатила на България 1,42 млрд. евро, което представлява 55 % от общия пакет по Програмата за развитие на селските райони.

Едва в началото на следващата година ще стане ясно дали България ще загуби част от средствата по Европейския земеделски фонд за развитие на селските райони (ЕЗФРСР) за 2013 г. Крайният срок за подаване на последните искания за плащане за 2013 г. е до края на януари 2014 г. За първите две тримесечия на 2013 г. България е представила искания за възстановяване на разходи в размер на 60 млн. евро, които са ѝ били изплатени. Още 338 млн. евро ще трябва да бъдат изразходвани и декларирани през 2013 г. с цел да се избегне отмяна на бюджетни кредити в резултат от прилагането на правилото „година n + 2".

Българските власти изготвиха план за действие, чиято цел е да се ускори изпълнението на програмата до края на годината и да се намали рискът от отмяна на бюджетни кредити. Очаква се плащанията също да се извършват с по-бързи темпове поради нарасналия през 2013 г. интерес към акроекологичната мярка.

Що се отнася до забавянето по проектите, Комисията продължава да следи съвместно с българските власти темпото, с което се изпълнява Програмата за развитие на селските райони. Общото впечатление е, че наблюдаваното в миналото забавяне при обработката на проектите е до голяма степен преодоляно. При все това е необходимо да се ускори изпълнението на отделни проекти, за да се генерират разходи и да се повиши усвояването на средства.

По отношение на размера на финансирането на страната за периода 2014—2020 г. то се определя на базата на обективни критерии и предходно финансиране, а не въз основа на изпълнението на програмата за предишен период.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009940/13
to the Commission
Mariya Gabriel (PPE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Non-absorption of Rural Development Programme funds in Bulgaria

The EU is in the home straight in terms of drafting the common agricultural policy (CAP) for the forthcoming 2014-2020 programming period. As part of the CAP, apart from receiving direct payments, Bulgarian agriculture is also counting on the Rural Development Programme, with the funds allocated under it for the current 2007-2013 period amounting to EUR 2.609 billion from the EU and EUR 632 million from the State budget.

According to reports in the Bulgarian media, there is a real danger that the situation in Bulgaria and the changes to the 'Agriculture' fund in Bulgaria will delay projects under the programme, which will leave Bulgaria without any European funding. According to the media, Bulgaria is likely to lose as much as EUR 300 million under the Rural Development Programme by the end of this year.

In regard to this, can the Commission provide any further information and, in particular, about the following matters?

Is there a risk that such losses might occur and how large will they be?

Does the Commission have any information about what the project delays are attributable to?

What funds have been agreed and absorbed under the programme since February 2013?

Is there a risk of the low absorption rate having an impact on the funds which Bulgaria will receive under the 2014-2020 programme?

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

From the beginning of the 2007-2013 programming period up to and including the second quarter of 2013, the Commission has paid to Bulgaria EUR 1.42 billion, equal to 55% of the total Rural Development programme (RDP) envelope. 7% of this was paid as an advance at the beginning of the programming period.

Whether Bulgaria will lose EAFRD funding in 2013 will only become clear at the beginning of next year. The deadline for submitting the last payment claims for 2013 is the end of January 2014. For the first two quarters of 2013 the level of expenditure claimed by Bulgaria and reimbursed equals EUR 60 million. A further EUR 338 million would need to be spent and declared in 2013 in order to avoid de-commitment as a result of applying the n+2 rule.

The Bulgarian authorities have elaborated an Action Plan aiming to speed up programme implementation by the end of the year and reduce the de-commitment risk. An acceleration of payments is also expected as a result of increased interest in the agri-environmental measure in 2013.

With respect to project delays, the Commission continues to monitor the pace of RDP implementation with the Bulgarian authorities. The general impression is that past delays in processing projects have been overcome to a large extent. However, an acceleration in the implementation of individual projects is necessary in order to generate expenditure and increase financial absorption.

With respect to Member State financial envelopes for 2014-2020, these are determined on the basis of objective criteria and past financial envelopes, and not on past programme execution.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009942/13
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(6 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Drones y legislación europea

Los pequeños vehículos aéreos sin piloto llamados drones son conocidos en la sociedad, sobre todo, por su uso en operaciones militares. Sin embargo, el posible uso de este tipo de vehículos supera ampliamente ese uso y se pueden prever múltiples posibilidades como, por ejemplo, el control de las cosechas, el control del tráfico, tareas de rescate, etc.

Ese tipo de uso puede considerarse beneficioso, pero rápidamente se nos pueden ocurrir otros más maliciosos, como controlar las personas, espiar al vecino o perseguir a personas famosas por *paparazzis* y similares.

Estos vehículos pueden ser muy pequeños, muy precisos y muy baratos, con lo que podrían utilizarse de manera masiva y sin ser apenas percibidos.

El uso de ese tipo de vehículos tanto por las administraciones públicas como por entes privados puede conllevar una invasión de la privacidad de las personas, que pueden ser espiadas con impunidad.

El uso de estos vehículos por usuarios privados no está regulado en la mayoría de los países, aunque se suele autorizar su uso por las administraciones. Por ejemplo, en España, estos aparatos no podrían legalmente volar por falta de marco regulatorio específico sobre su certificación de aeronavegabilidad.

1. ¿Es consciente la Comisión de esa situación?

2. ¿Considera la Comisión que el uso indiscriminado de drones puede ser un riesgo para la privacidad de la ciudadanía de la Unión?

3. ¿Está la Comisión considerando el desarrollo de algún tipo de marco legal sobre los diferentes aspectos concernidos por el uso de drones (técnicos, sociales, etc.), incluida la salvaguarda de la privacidad de la ciudadanía?

Respuesta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de octubre de 2013)

La Comisión es consciente de los problemas de privacidad y de protección de datos que podrían derivarse de la futura utilización de los drones en lo que respecta, fundamentalmente, a la vigilancia por vídeo y a la divulgación de datos personales.

Europa tiene un marco jurídico global sobre privacidad y protección de datos ([1]) que deben respetar los operadores de los drones. Garantizar el cumplimiento de estas normas es fundamentalmente responsabilidad de los Estados miembros. Las autoridades competentes deben supervisar continuamente la evolución de las aplicaciones de los drones para que los ciudadanos estén plenamente protegidos contra usos abusivos de esta nueva tecnología tan prometedora.

La Comisión está estudiando actualmente la preparación de un marco de medidas que posibiliten y favorezcan el uso civil de los drones, también denominados sistemas de aeronaves dirigidas por control remoto. El marco político puede incluir normas de seguridad y otros temas de interés, como la privacidad y la protección de datos. En general, el marco debe garantizar al mismo tiempo la promoción de nuevas tecnologías para permitir el despegue de este sector tan prometedor y la protección de los ciudadanos con los niveles más altos de seguridad, protección y privacidad. Especialmente en lo referente a la protección de datos, la Comisión llevará a cabo un estudio para identificar posibles fallos en el actual marco regulador y para buscar el modo de garantizar que los drones cumplan con las normas de protección de datos y los derechos fundamentales de la protección de la intimidad de las personas. La Comisión también fomentará la adopción de medidas pertinentes en ámbitos de competencia nacional y velará por un seguimiento permanente de las cuestiones de privacidad y protección de datos.

([1]) La Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la UE establece, en particular, el derecho al respeto de la vida privada y familiar, del domicilio y de las comunicaciones de los ciudadanos (artículo 7) y se refiere a la protección de los datos de carácter personal (artículo 8). Estos derechos se plasman en disposiciones y actos específicos de la UE y de las legislaciones nacionales (el artículo 16 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea, la Directiva 95/46/CE, relativa a la protección de las personas físicas en lo que respecta al tratamiento de datos personales y a la libre circulación de estos datos, la Decisión Marco 2008/977/JAI, relativa a la protección de datos personales tratados en el marco de la cooperación policial y judicial en materia penal, así como legislación nacional sobre protección de datos, vigilancia por vídeo, etc.).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009942/13
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(3 September 201u)

*Sj bæ:t6*Drones and EU legislation

People are aware of the small unmanned aerial vehicles known as drones, largely as a result of their use in military operations. However, the potential uses for these vehicles far exceed this application and numerous possibilities can be envisaged, such as monitoring crops, monitoring traffic and rescue operations.

These uses can be considered beneficial; however, other, more malicious uses for them may soon be found, such as monitoring people, spying on neighbours and enabling paparazzi and the like to hound celebrities.

Drones can be very small, very accurate and very cheap, and could be used on a massive scale, going largely unnoticed.

The use of such vehicles by both public authorities and private entities may lead to an invasion of personal privacy, as people could be spied on with impunity.

The use of drones by private users is unregulated in most countries, although their use by the authorities is often authorised. For example, in Spain these devices could not legally fly as there is no specific regulatory framework for their airworthiness certification.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. Does it believe that the indiscriminate use of drones may pose a risk to EU citizens' privacy?

3. Is it considering developing some kind of legal framework for the different aspects of drone use (technical, social, etc.) including the protection of citizens' privacy?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(u0 O:tober 201u)

The Commission is aware of the privacy and data protection concerns that might result from the future use of drones which are mainly linked to video surveillance and disclosure of personal information.

Europe has a comprehensive framework of privacy and data protection legislation ([1]) with which operators of drones must comply. Ensuring compliance with these rules is primarily a responsibility of the Member States. The evolution of drones' applications needs continuous monitoring by the competent authorities so that citizens are fully protected against misuse of this new and promising technology.

The Commission is currently considering the preparation of a supportive and enabling policy framework for the civilian use of drones, also known under the term Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS). The policy framework may include safety regulation and other relevant topics like security, privacy and data protection. In all, the framework should ensure at the same time the promotion of new technologies to let this promising industry take off and the protection of citizens with the highest levels of safety, security and privacy. With regard to data protection in particular, the Commission will conduct a study to identify potential shortfalls in the current regulatory framework and ways to ensure drones comply with data protection rules and fundamental rights to privacy. The Commission will also promote the adoption of relevant measures under national competence and ensure continuous monitoring of privacy and data protection issues.

([1]) The Charter for Fundamental Rights of the EU establishes, in particular, the rights to respect private and family life, home and communications (Article 7) and addresses the protection of personal data (Article 8). These rights are implemented through specific EU and national regulations (Article 16 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Directive 95/46/EC on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, Framework Decision 2008/977/JHA on the protection of personal data processed in the framework of police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters.as well as national laws on data protection, video surveillance etc.).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009943/13
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(6 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Presa en la cuenca del río Bergantes

La Confederación Hidrográfica del Ebro ha presentado un proyecto para construir una presa en la cuenca del río Bergantes, en Aragón, en el término municipal de Aiguaviva. Para el mismo se ha abierto un periodo de información pública al que se están presentando numerosas alegaciones, ya que existe una fuerte oposición popular a dicho proyecto en la zona afectada. Las autoridades presentan esta obra como una mera presa de laminación de avenidas para aumentar la seguridad de la presa de Calanda, pero todo indica que no es sino un nuevo embalse de agua, pues su capacidad (60,87 hm^3) y superficie (402,69 ha) superan los del propio embalse de Calanda (54,25 hm^3 y 312 ha). La oposición al proyecto se basa en que la mejora de la seguridad de la presa de Calanda se lograría satisfactoriamente con la construcción de un nuevo aliviadero (proyectado desde hace años y nunca ejecutado), en la inexistencia de demanda de abastecimiento para usos agrarios, industriales o urbanos en ese sector de la cuenca del Ebro y en la destrucción de un espacio que forma parte de la Red Natura 2000, al encontrarse allí el Lugar de Interés Comunitarío (LIC) «Río Bergantes». Dicho LIC está destinado a proteger una especie endémica de esa zona, la petrocoptis pardoi, que se encuentra amenazada, así como especies como la madrilla, el barbo, la nutria, el martín pescador, el alimoche común, el águila azor perdicera o el *thymus serpyllum*.

1. ¿Conoce la Comisión la existencia de este proyecto?

2. ¿Cree la Comisión que la construcción de este gran embalse es compatible con la existencia del LIC «Río Bergantes» y con la legislación de la Unión Europea, especialmente la Directiva 92/43/CEE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres?

3. ¿Va a tomar la Comisión alguna medida al respecto?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de octubre de 2013)

La Comisión no tiene conocimiento de los detalles de este proyecto.

De conformidad con el artículo 6, apartado 3, de la Directiva sobre hábitats ([1]), cualquier plan o proyecto que pueda tener un impacto significativo en un espacio de la Red Natura 2000 se someterá a una adecuada evaluación teniendo en cuenta los objetivos de conservación de dicho espacio, y las autoridades nacionales sólo se declararán de acuerdo con dicho plan o proyecto tras haberse asegurado de que no causará perjuicio a la integridad del espacio en cuestión.

El artículo 4, apartado 7, de la Directiva marco del agua (DMA ([2])) dispone que cualquier proyecto, por ejemplo una presa de gran tamaño, que pueda impedir la consecución de un buen estado ecológico o provoque un deterioro del estado de las masas de agua sólo podrá llevarse a cabo si se cumplen las condiciones establecidas en dicho artículo. Corresponde a las autoridades nacionales velar por el respeto de estas obligaciones.

De la información proporcionada por Su Señoría, parece desprenderse que el proyecto de construcción de una presa en el Río Bergantes no ha sido autorizado, dado que todavía hay un periodo de información pública en curso. Por consiguiente, no se ha podido constatar infracción alguna de la Directiva sobre hábitats ni de otros actos legislativos de la UE en este momento, y la Comisión no tiene previsto adoptar ninguna otra medida al respecto.

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

([2]) Directiva 2000/60/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 23 de octubre de 2000, por la que se establece un marco comunitario de actuación en el ámbito de la política de aguas (DO L 327 de 22.12.2000).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009943/13
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Dam in the Bergantes River basin

The Ebro Hydrographic Confederation has presented a plan to build a dam in the Bergantes River basin, in Aragon, in the municipality of Aiguaviva. A public information period for the project has been opened and numerous claims are being made, as there is strong public opposition to it in the affected area. The authorities are presenting the project as a simple flood control dam designed to enhance the safety of the Calanda dam. However, all indications suggest that it is nothing more than a new reservoir, as its capacity (60.87 hm^3) and area (402.69 ha) exceed those of the Calanda reservoir itself (54.25 hm^3 and 312 ha). Opposition to the project is based on the fact that the Calanda dam's safety would be adequately enhanced by constructing a new spillway (planned for years and never built), that there is no demand for water for agricultural, industrial or urban uses in that area of the Ebro basin, and that it would destroy an area that forms part of the Natura 2000 network, namely the 'Río Bergantes' Site of Community Interest (SCI). This SCI is intended to protect a species endemic to the area, Petrocoptis pardoi, which is under threat, as well as species such as the nase, barbel, otter, kingfisher, Egyptian vulture, Bonelli's eagle and *Thymus serpyllum*.

1. Is the Commission aware of this project?

2. Does it believe that the construction of this large reservoir is compatible with the existence of the 'Río Bergantes' SCI and with EU legislation, in particular Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora?

3. Will the Commission take any action in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(15 October 2013)

The Commission is not aware of the details of this project.

In accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive ([1]) any plan or project likely to have a significant impact on a Natura 2000 site must be subject to an appropriate assessment in view of the site's conservation objectives, and the national authorities shall only agree to the plan or project after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned.

Article 4(7) of the Water Framework Directive (WFD ([2])) establishes that any project, such as a large dam, that is liable to cause failure to achieve good ecological status or deterioration of status of water bodies can only be implemented if the conditions set out in that article are fulfilled. It is for the national authorities to ensure that these obligations are respected.

According to the information provided by the Honourable Member, it appears that the project of a dam in the Bergantes River has not been authorised, as a public information period is still ongoing. Therefore, it has not been possible to identify any breach of the Habitats Directive or other EU legislation at this stage, and the Commission does not intend to take any further action in this regard.

([1]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC, of 21 May 1992, on the protection of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206 of 22.7.1992).
([2]) Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-009944/13
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(6 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Directiva privind consolidarea echilibrului de gen în rândul administratorilor neexecutivi ai societăților cotate la bursă și măsuri conexe

Comisia Europeană a adoptat la 14 noiembrie 2012 propunerea de Directivă privind consolidarea echilibrului de gen în rândul administratorilor neexecutivi ai societăților cotate la bursă și măsuri conexe.

Acest act legislativ stabilește obiectivul ca un procent de 40%, în rândul administratorilor neexecutivi ai societăților cotate la bursă, să fie ocupat de membrii sexului subreprezentat.

Statele membre ar trebui să se asigure că, la selectarea administratorilor neexecutivi în cadrul unei companii cotate la bursă, se va acorda prioritate candidatului aparținând sexului subreprezentat, dacă respectivul candidat are aceleași calificări precum candidatul de sex opus.

În cazul în care la termenul-limită pentru atingerea obiectivului (2018 pentru întreprinderile publice și 2020 pentru cele private) anumite societăți pot face dovada faptului că au respectat toate condițiile prevăzute în directivă, fără însă a atinge procentul de 40%, din motive obiective (spre exemplu, lipsa candidaților din categoria sexului subreprezentat), în ce temei pot fi acestea sancționate? Care este poziția Comisiei în această ipoteză?

Dată fiind amploarea sferei de aplicare a directivei (5000 de societăți din UE) și termenul relativ scurt de implementare, are în vedere Comisia elaborarea unor orientări menite să faciliteze, dar și să catalizeze întregul proces în statele membre?

Care sunt criteriile pe baza cărora a fost decis termenul de expirare al directivei — anul 2028? În opinia Comisiei, acest termen este de natură să asigure ireversibilitatea echilibrului de gen care se va crea în urma implementării directivei?

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(16 octombrie 2013)

În temeiul directivei propuse, societățile nu vor fi sancționate pentru faptul că nu au atins obiectivul de 40 % dacă dispun de proceduri corespunzătoare aplicabile selecționării candidaților care vor fi numiți în funcții de conducere.

Inițiativa Comisiei a sensibilizat deja opinia publică în privința problemei reprezentării insuficiente a femeilor în organele de conducere ale societăților cotate la bursă și a dat un impuls îmbunătățirii echilibrului de gen în cadrul acestor organe. Acest lucru este reflectat de progresele accelerate înregistrate la nivelul UE din momentul lansării discuțiilor, după cum demonstrează rapoartele publicate de Comisie cu privire la acest subiect ([1]). Comunicarea Comisiei care însoțește propunerea de directivă ([2]) cuprinde măsuri de politică complementare care ar putea ajuta societățile și statele membre să atingă obiectivele directivei.

În conformitate cu principiul proporționalității, directiva ar trebui să rămână în vigoare până la asigurarea unui echilibru durabil în structura de gen a organelor de conducere ale întreprinderilor. Progresele rapide înregistrate de statele membre care au introdus acte legislative privind echilibrul de gen în organele de conducere sugerează faptul că directiva își poate atinge obiectivul până în 2028. În temeiul directivei propuse, Comisia va analiza, până cel târziu la 31 decembrie 2021, dacă progresele înregistrare sunt durabile, dacă este necesar să se prelungească durata de aplicare a directivei sau dacă aceasta trebuie modificată. În orice caz, statele membre vor fi libere să mențină actele legislative naționale care transpun directiva dincolo de această dată.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-decision-making/index_en.htm
([2]) COM(2012) 615.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009944/13
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 September 201u)

Sj bæ:t6 Directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures

The Commission adopted the proposal for a directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures on 14 November 2012.

The purpose of this piece of legislation is to ensure that 40% of posts among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges are held by members of the under-represented sex.

Member States should ensure, when selecting non-executive directors in a company listed on a stock exchange, that priority will be given to the candidate of the under-represented sex if that candidate is equally qualified as the candidate of the other sex.

If, by the deadline for achieving the target (2018 for public companies and 2020 for private companies), some companies can prove that they have met all the conditions stipulated in the directive, but without reaching the 40% target, for objective reasons (for instance, due to a lack of relevant candidates from the other sex), on what basis can they be penalised? What stance does the Commission take on this hypothetical situation?

Given the directive's extensive scope of application (5 000 companies in the EU) and the relatively short period for implementation, does the Commission intend to draft a set of guidelines designed not only to facilitate, but also to give some impetus to the whole process in Member States?

What criteria were used as the basis for deciding on 2028 as the year for the directive's expiry? Does the Commission believe that this deadline can ensure that the gender balance which will be created following the directive's implementation will be irreversible?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(13 O:tober 201u)

Under the proposed Directive companies would not face sanctions for failing to reach the 40% objective if they have in place appropriate procedures applying to the selection of candidates for board appointments.

The Commission initiative has already raised the awareness of the problem of underrepresentation of women on boards of listed companies and given impetus to the process of improving gender balance on boards. This is reflected in the accelerated progress on the EU level since the discussions were launched as demonstrated by the reports published by the Commission on the topic ([1]). The Commission Communication accompanying the proposed directive ([2]) proposes complementary policy measures which can help companies and Member States to achieve the aims of the directive.

In line with the principle of proportionality, the directive should only stay in force until a sustainable balance in the gender composition of company boards is ensured. The quick progress achieved by Member States which introduced legislation concerning gender balance on boards suggests that the directive can achieve its aim by 2028. Under the proposed directive, the Commission will review by 31 December 2021 at the latest, whether the progress is sustainable or whether there is a need to extend its duration or to amend it otherwise. In any event Member States will be free to maintain national legislation transposing the directive beyond that date.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-decision-making/index_en.htm
([2]) COM(2012) 615.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009945/13
a la Comisión
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(6 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Acuerdo de asociación UE-Mercosur

La última Reunión Ministerial entre la UE y el Mercosur tuvo lugar el pasado 26 de enero de este mismo año en el marco de la Cumbre UE-CELAC que se celebró en Santiago de Chile. En ella, ambas partes acordaron que el intercambio de ofertas concretas en lo relativo a las obligaciones aduaneras y las cuotas tendría lugar en el último cuatrimestre del año 2013.

Los últimos acontecimientos muestran una serie de cambios significativos que han tenido lugar a nivel interno dentro del Mercosur: especialmente, la voluntad del bloque de levantar la suspensión a Paraguay como miembro tras su normalización institucional con la toma de posesión del presidente Cartes el pasado 15 de agosto.

Por ello, y dado que nos encontramos ya en el último cuatrimestre del año 2013, pregunto a la Comisión:

¿Cuál es el estado actual de las negociaciones y en qué punto preciso se encuentran las mismas?

¿Cuándo se espera que se produzca el intercambio de ofertas concretas?

¿Cuándo prevé la Comisión que podrán concluir con éxito estas negociaciones?

¿Sigue existiendo voluntad política por parte de los países del Mercosur de concluir este acuerdo?

Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de octubre de 2013)

Después de haber sido suspendidas en 2004, las negociaciones de un Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Mercosur se reanudaron en 2010. Desde entonces se han celebrado nueve rondas de negociación, que se han centrado en la parte «normativa» (normas) sobre comercio e inversiones en el futuro acuerdo.

En la última reunión ministerial EU-Mercosur, que se celebró el 26 de enero de 2013 en Santiago de Chile, se acordó el intercambio de ofertas de acceso al mercado de bienes, servicios y contratos públicos «a más tardar en el último trimestre de 2013».

Ambas partes están trabajando en ello. Al parecer, los distintos países de Mercosur han preparado sus proyectos de oferta, pero todavía tienen que acordar una oferta conjunta. La Comisión se está preparando también activamente para un posible intercambio de ofertas.

Resulta, por lo tanto, difícil fijar plazos concretos para concluir dichas negociaciones. Sin embargo, el intercambio de ofertas de acceso al mercado bastante ambiciosas constituiría un avance importante. El claro compromiso de intercambiar pronto ofertas que contrajeron los miembros de Mercosur en Santiago y el ulterior trabajo preparatorio de cada una de las partes refleja el nivel de compromiso de Mercosur en estas negociaciones.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009945/13
to the Commission
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: EU-Mercosur Association Agreement

The last EU-Mercosur ministerial meeting took place on 26 January 2013 as part of the EU-CELAC Summit held in Santiago de Chile. At the meeting, both parties agreed that the exchange of specific offers regarding customs duties and quotas would take place in the last quarter of 2013.

Recent events reveal a number of significant changes that have taken place internally within Mercosur: in particular, the bloc's willingness to lift Paraguay's suspension as a member following its institutional normalisation with the inauguration of President Cartes on 15 August 2013.

Therefore, and as we are already in the last quarter of 2013:

What is the current state of negotiations and precisely what stage are they at?

When does the Commission expect specific offers to be exchanged?

When does it expect these negotiations to be successfully concluded?

Do the Mercosur countries still have the political will to conclude these negotiations?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(25 October 2013)

After being suspended in 2004, negotiations of an EU-Mercosur Association agreement resumed in 2010. Since then, there have been nine negotiating rounds, which have focused on the 'normative' part (rules) on trade and investment in the future agreement.

The last EU-Mercosur ministerial meeting on 26 January 2013 in Santiago de Chile agreed on the exchange of market access offers on goods, services and government procurement 'not later than the last quarter of 2013'.

Follow-up on both sides is ongoing. Reportedly, individual Mercosur countries have been preparing their draft offers but would still have to agree on a joint offer. The Commission is also actively preparing for a possible exchange of offers.

It is therefore difficult to set concrete timelines to conclude these negotiations. However, the exchange of sufficiently ambitious market access offers would be an important step forward.

The clear commitment made by Mercosur members in Santiago to exchange offers soon, and their internal preparatory work thereafter, reflects the level of engagement of Mercosur in these negotiations.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009946/13
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(6. September 2013)

Betrifft: Aufwand und Kosten durch die Verwaltung der Tabakabkommen

Seit 2004 hat die Kommission Kooperationsabkommen mit vier großen Tabakherstellern (Philip Morris International, Japan Tobacco International, Imperial Tobacco Limited und British American Tobacco) abgeschlossen. Insgesamt geht es um mehr als 1,7 Mrd. EUR an regelmäßigen Zahlungen bis 2029 auf ein verzinstes Konto außerhalb des Haushaltsplans der EU.

Anwaltskosten innerhalb des Haushaltsplans der EU

1. Wie viel Vollzeitäquivalente (FTE = full time equivalents) wendete der Juristische Dienst der Kommission im Jahr 2010, 2011 und 2012 auf, um diese Tabakabkommen zu verwalten?

2. Welche sonstigen Kosten entstanden in den jeweiligen Jahren beim Juristischen Dienst? Wofür?

3. Wie hoch waren die Anwaltskosten für die Betreuung/Verwaltung/Beratung dieser Tabakabkommen?

4. Wofür fielen diese Anwaltskosten genau an? Und wie wurden diese Kosten ermittelt?

5. Von welcher Haushaltslinie wurden diese Anwaltskosten gedeckt?

6. Welche Anwaltskanzleien wurden im Rahmen dieser Tabakabkommen für die Europäische Union aktiv?

Anwaltskosten außerhalb des Haushaltsplans der EU

7. Im Zuge der Tabakabkommen wurden 268 Mio. USD für Anwälte außerhalb des Haushaltsplans der EU gezahlt?

8. Wofür fielen diese Kosten an?

9. Wie wurden diese Kosten ermittelt?

10. Welche Anwaltskanzleien wurden von diesen Geldern bezahlt?

11. Welche weiteren Kosten wurden von diesem Konto beglichen? In welcher Höhe?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(30. Oktober 2013)

Die Verwaltung der mit Zigarettenherstellern geschlossenen Kooperationsabkommen über die Bekämpfung von Schmuggel und Betrug im Zollbereich liegt in erster Linie in der Verantwortung des OLAF. Der Juristische Dienst der Kommission leistet in diesem Zusammenhang Rechtsberatung und vertritt die Kommission vor Gericht.

Was die internen juristischen Kosten anbelangt, so sind alle Bediensteten des Juristischen Dienstes mit mehreren Themen und Rechtssachen befasst. Es ist daher nicht möglich, zuverlässig anzugeben, wie viele Vollzeitäquivalente zur Behandlung von Fragen im Zusammenhang mit den Abkommen mit Zigarettenherstellern aufgewendet wurden.

Bezüglich der Vereinbarungen mit Rechtsanwälten ist anzumerken, dass solche Vereinbarungen sich teilweise auf Rechtsstreitigkeiten beziehen, die noch bei Gericht anhängig ist. Darüber hinaus enthalten diese Vereinbarungen vertrauliche Geschäftsinformationen über die beteiligten Anwaltskanzleien. Derartige Informationen können daher nicht in einer Antwort auf eine parlamentarische Anfrage offengelegt werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009946/13
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(3 September 201u)

*Sj bæ:t6*Work and costs involved in administering the tobacco agreements

Since 2004, the Commission has signed Cooperation Agreements with four large tobacco manufacturers (Philip Morris International, Japan Tobacco International, Imperial Tobacco Group and British American Tobacco). Regular payments amounting in total to more than EUR 1.7 billion will be made in the period up to 2029 to an interest-bearing account outside the EU budget.

Lawyers' costs within the EU budget

1. How many full-time equivalents (FTEs) were needed by the Commission's Legal Service in 2010, 2011 and 2012 to administer these tobacco agreements?

2. Which other costs were incurred during this period by the Legal Service? What for?

3. How much was spent on lawyers' costs for supporting, administering and advising on these tobacco agreements?

4. What exactly were these lawyers' costs incurred for? How were these costs identified?

5. Which budget line covered these lawyers' costs?

6. Which law firms worked on these tobacco agreements on behalf of the European Union?

Lawyers' costs outside the EU budget

7. As part of the tobacco agreements, was USD 268 million spent on lawyers outside the EU budget?

8. What were these costs incurred for?

9. How were these costs identified?

10. Which law firms was this money paid to?

11. Which other costs were settled from this account? What were the amounts?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(u0 O:tober 201u)

The administration of the cooperation agreements with cigarette manufacturers, with the purpose of combatting smuggling and customs fraud, is primarily the responsibility of OLAF. The Commission's Legal Service provides legal advice in this context, and is in charge of representing the Commission in court.

As regards in-house legal costs, all Members of the Legal Service work on multiple issues and cases. It is therefore not possible to indicate reliably how many FTEs have been dedicated to issues relating to the agreements with cigarette manufacturers.

As regards arrangements with lawyers, it should be noted that such arrangements relate partially to litigation which is still pending in court. Moreover, these arrangements contain business confidential information relating to the law firms involved. Such information can therefore not be divulged in a reply to a parliamentary question.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009947/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(6 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εθνικές εντάσεις στην Κροατία

Την Δευτέρα, 2 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013, στην πόλη Βούκοβαρ της Κροατίας, πάνω από 50 διαδηλωτές, τόσο πολίτες του Βούκοβαρ όσο και μέλη της οργάνωσης «Επιτελείο για την Άμυνα του Κροατικού Βούκοβαρ», σε μια κίνηση βαθύτατα πολιτικού περιεχομένου, κατέστρεψαν επιγραφές διοικητικών κτηρίων, επειδή αυτές ήταν γραμμένες όχι μόνο με το λατινικό αλλά και με το κυριλλικό αλφάβητο. Την ίδια ημέρα συνελήφθησαν διάφορα άτομα, με την υποψία εγκληματικής δράσης κατά τη διάρκεια της διαδήλωσης.

Την Τρίτη, 3 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013, στο κλίμα των διαδηλώσεων στο Βούκοβαρ, εμφανίστηκαν γκράφιτι στο Ντουμπρόβνικ με σοβινιστικό και αντι-σερβικό περιεχόμενο, εκ των οποίων ένα στον τοίχο ορθόδοξης σέρβικης εκκλησίας. Οι διαδηλώσεις συνεχίστηκαν και την Τετάρτη, χωρίς όμως κανένα σοβαρό επεισόδιο, ενώ την Πέμπτη, 5 Σεπτεμβρίου, πραγματοποιήθηκε συγκέντρωση οργανώσεων θυμάτων του πολέμου από όλη την Κροατία, προκειμένου να διατυπώσουν ένα περαιτέρω σχέδιο δράσης σε συνεργασία με το «Επιτελείο για την Άμυνα του Κροατικού Βούκοβαρ». Επιπλέον αξίζει αναφοράς το εθνικιστικό περιεχόμενο των δηλώσεων του ηγέτη της οργάνωσης αυτής, Τόμισλαβ Γιόσιτς.

Σύμφωνα με το Σύνταγμα της Κροατίας, μια εθνική μειονότητα, που αποτελεί τουλάχιστον το εν τρίτο της εκάστοτε τοπικής κοινότητας, δικαιούται να ζητήσει την αναγραφή των διοικητικών επιγραφών και στην γλώσσα της.

Στο πλαίσιο αυτό και βάσει του άρθρου 2 της Συνθήκης της ΕΕ περί σεβασμού των μειονοτήτων, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Καταδικάζει τα συμβάντα που έλαβαν μέρος την τελευταία εβδομάδα, μόλις δύο μήνες μετά την ένταξη της Κροατίας στην ΕΕ;

2. Προτίθεται να προβεί σε συστάσεις προς τις κροατικές αρχές, σχετικά με την προώθηση κάποιου είδους εκστρατείας για «εθνική συμφιλίωση»;

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

Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 2 της Συνθήκης για την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, ο σεβασμός των δικαιωμάτων των προσώπων που ανήκουν σε μειονότητες αποτελεί μία από τις βασικές αρχές της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Επιπροσθέτως, τα άρθρα 21 και 22 του Χάρτη των Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης απαγορεύουν τις διακρίσεις βάσει της ιδιότητας μέλους εθνικής μειονότητας και ζητούν από την Ένωση να σεβασθεί την πολιτιστική, θρησκευτική και γλωσσική πολυμορφία.

Η Επιτροπή καταδικάζει οποιαδήποτε μορφή βίας κατά των μειονοτήτων ή οποιασδήποτε άλλης ομάδας. Ωστόσο, όπως διευκρίνισε π.χ. στην απάντησή της στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-006204/2013, η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει γενικές αρμοδιότητες σε ό,τι αφορά τις μειονότητες. Ειδικότερα, η Επιτροπή δεν έχει αρμοδιότητα όσον αφορά τον ορισμό και την αναγνώριση των εθνικών μειονοτήτων, τον αυτοπροσδιορισμό και την αυτονομία τους ή τη χρήση των περιφερειακών ή μειονοτικών γλωσσών, ζητήματα που εμπίπτουν στην αρμοδιότητα των κρατών μελών. Σε τέτοιες περιπτώσεις η Επιτροπή δεν απευθύνει συστάσεις στα κράτη μέλη. Ταυτοχρόνως, η Επιτροπή έχει επίγνωση των συνεχών προσπαθειών που καταβάλλει η Κροατία με στόχο αφενός την προστασία των δικαιωμάτων των ατόμων που ανήκουν σε μειονότητες και αφετέρου την ευαισθητοποίηση του πληθυσμού για τα άτομα αυτά ώστε να διασφαλίζεται η άσκηση των δικαιωμάτων τους. Σύμφωνα με τις δεσμεύσεις που ανέλαβε η Κροατία κατά τη διάρκεια της διαδικασίας προσχώρησης, η εφαρμογή του κροατικού συνταγματικού νόμου για τα δικαιώματα των εθνικών μειονοτήτων συνεχίζεται με σταθερούς ρυθμούς.

Στο πλαίσιο του πεδίου εφαρμογής της νομοθεσίας της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, η Επιτροπή διασφαλίζει ότι τα κράτη μέλη, κατά την εφαρμογή της νομοθεσίας αυτής, σέβονται τα θεμελιώδη δικαιώματα που ορίζει ο Χάρτης. Επίσης, τα νομοθετικά και χρηματοδοτικά προγράμματα της ΕΕ αντιμετωπίζουν τις διακρίσεις και την παρακίνηση σε βία ή μίσος λόγω φυλής ή εθνικής ή εθνοτικής καταγωγής που ενδέχεται να έχουν αρνητικές συνέπειες για άτομα που ανήκουν σε μειονότητες.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009947/13
to the Commission
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: National tensions in Croatia

On Monday, 2 September 2013, during a highly political demonstration in the town of Vukovar in Croatia, over 50 demonstrators, both citizens of Vukovar and members of the Headquarters for the Defence of Croatian Vukovar, tore down signs on State buildings because they were written in both the Latin and Cyrillic alphabets. On the same day, various people were arrested on suspicion of criminal activity during the demonstration.

On Tuesday, 3 September 2013, and in the same vein as the demonstrations in Vukovar, chauvinist and anti-Serbian graffiti appeared in Dubrovnik, including on the wall of an Orthodox Serbian church. The demonstrations continued on Wednesday, without any serious incident, but on Thursday, 5 September, war veteran organisations rallied from throughout Croatia in order to form another action plan, in cooperation with the Headquarters for the Defence of Croatian Vukovar. The ethnic content of the statements by Tomislav Josic, leader of that organisation, should also be mentioned.

Under the Croatian Constitution, an ethnic minority comprising at least one-third of a local community is entitled to request that signs on State buildings be written in their language.

In view of the above, and in light of Article 2 of the EU Treaty on respect for minorities, will the Commission say:

1. Does it condemn the events which took place last week, just two months after the accession of Croatia to the EU?

2. Does it intend to make recommendations to the Croatian authorities in order to promote some sort of national reconciliation campaign?

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

According to Article 2 of the Treaty on the European Union, the respect for the rights of persons belonging to minorities constitutes one of the founding values of the European Union. Furthermore, Articles 21 and 22 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union prohibit discrimination based on membership of a national minority and provide for the respect by the Union of cultural, religious and linguistic diversity.

The Commission condemns any form of violence against minorities or against any other group. However, as explained e.g. in its reply to Written Question E-006204/2013, the Commission has no general powers as regards minorities. In particular, the Commission has no competence over the definition and recognition of national minorities, their self-determination and autonomy or the use of regional or minority languages, which fall under the responsibility of the Member States. In such cases the Commission does not make recommendations to Member States. At the same time the Commission is aware of the continued efforts of Croatia aimed at protecting the rights of and raising awareness for persons belonging to minorities in order to ensure the exercise of their rights. In line with the commitments made during the accession process, the implementation of the Croatian Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities has continued at a steady pace.

Within the scope of European Union law, the Commission ensures that Member States, when implementing this law, respect fundamental rights laid down in the Charter. Furthermore, EU legislation and financing programmes address discrimination and incitement to violence or hatred based on race or national or ethnic origin which may affect persons belonging to minorities.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-009948/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(6 september 2013)

Angående: Viljeöverensstämmelse bland företag som begränsar konkurrensen för strömningstjänster

I sitt svar på skriftlig fråga E-005128/2013 förklarar kommissionen kortfattat hur den ser på processen med att fastställa standarder enligt artikel 101 i EUF-fördraget i förhållande till den europeiska konkurrensramen. Syftet med frågan var dock inte att få en redogörelse för kommissionens inställning till standardiseringsprocessen, utan att kommissionen skulle förklara standardernas inverkan på marknaden när de väl införts.

Det torde vara uppenbart att de aktörer som deltar i diskussionerna om standarder i World Wide Web-konsortiet (W3C) är företag i den mening som avses i konkurrenslagstiftningen. Företag får normalt sett inte ingå en viljeöverensstämmelse eller sluta ett avtal som skulle begränsa konkurrensen på den inre marknaden.

När det gäller den viljeöverensstämmelse som för närvarande diskuteras inom W3C verkar det troligt att resultatet kommer att bli en begränsning av affärsmodellerna till ett särskilt användningsfall som just nu förs fram av ett fåtal stora icke-europeiska aktörer på EU:s marknad. Det användningsfall som förespråkas kommer högst sannolikt att avskräcka från användning av alla andra affärsmodeller, och den standardiseringsprocess som används för att driva igenom det kommer nästan helt säkert att antas av alla större webbläsarleverantörer, något som påverkar i princip alla europeiska aktörer uppströms och nedströms på marknaderna för innehållsdistribution, inklusive slutkonsumenterna.

Vilka verktyg står till kommissionens förfogande för att se till att viljeöverensstämmelsen bland de deltagande företagen i den standardiseringsprocess som avses i skriftlig fråga E-005128/2013 inte medför ett befästande av en konkurrensbegränsning på marknaden för strömningstjänster riktade till slutkonsumenterna?

Svar från Joaquín Almunia på kommissionens vägnar
(5 november 2013)

Det stämmer att företag enligt artikel 101 i EUF-fördraget inte får ingå ”viljeöverensstämmelse” eller sluta konkurrenshämmande avtal. Det är emellertid omöjligt att fastställa branschstandarder utan att företag kommer överens om vilka tekniska lösningar som ska ingå. När man väljer en viss teknik är det en naturlig följd att andra tekniker utesluts. Även om sådana uteslutningar är en naturlig del av standardiseringsprocesser, är det möjligt att det kan ge upphov till konkurrenshämmande effekter.

Som framgår av svaret på den skriftliga frågan E-005128/2013 strävar kommissionen efter att utnyttja standardiseringsprocessens positiva effekter och samtidigt hämma de konkurrensbegränsande effekterna genom att föreskriva vissa villkor (som att standarden ska vara utan begränsningar, öppen för insyn och att det finns tillgång till standardiserad teknik) som måste uppfyllas för att ett standardiseringsavtal ska falla utanför tillämpningsområdet för artikel 101.1 i EUF-fördraget.

Kommissionen har inte fått någon information som tyder på att fastställandet av standarder inom W3C inte skulle uppfylla ett eller flera av dessa villkor. W3C har mycket skiftande medlemmar, bland annat universitet och icke-vinstdrivande organisationer som Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF), och frågan huruvida förvaltningen av digitala rättigheter i HTML 5 ska inkluderas eller ej har varit och är fortfarande öppen för diskussion inom och utanför den relevanta arbetsgruppen för W3C.

Inte desto mindre kommer kommissionen att fortsätta följa standardiseringsprocessen av HTML 5 och se till att EU:s konkurrensregler efterlevs till fullo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009948/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: 'Meeting of minds' of undertakings restrict competition of streaming services

In its reply to Written Question E-005128/2013, the Commission explains in a concise way how it views the process of setting standards under Article 101 TFEU as it pertains to the European competition framework. However, the purpose of the Written Question was to invite the Commission to clarify the effects of the standards on the market once they are in place, not to explain its approach to the standardisation process.

It should be self-evident that the entities involved in the standards discussions at the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) are undertakings in the meaning of competition law. Undertakings cannot normally engage in a 'meeting of minds', or enter into an agreement, that would restrict competition on the internal market.

In the case of the 'meeting of minds' currently being pursued within the W3C, it seems likely that the outcome will be a restriction of business models to a specific use case currently being advanced by a few, large non-European actors on the European market. The use case in question is highly likely to discourage other business models, and the standardisation process used to push it will almost certainly be adopted by all major browser vendors, thereby affecting virtually all European actors on the content distribution markets, upstream as well as downstream, including the end-consumers.

What tools does the Commission have at its disposal to ensure that the 'meeting of minds' of undertakings participating in the standardisation process referred to in Written Question E-005128/2013 does not entail the codification of a restriction of competition on the market for streaming services targeting end-consumers?

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

It is correct that undertakings are not allowed to engage in a 'meeting of minds' or to enter into agreements that restrict competition in contravention of Article 101 TFEU. However, industry standardisation is not possible without undertakings agreeing on which technological solutions to include in a standard. The corollary of choosing a certain technology is the exclusion of other technologies. Whilst this exclusion is an inherent feature of standardisation, it does not come without potential risks for competition.

As explained in the reply to Written Question E-005128/2013, the Commission's approach consists of seeking to harness the significant positive effects of standardisation, while reducing the possibility of restrictive effects on competition by laying out certain conditions, such as unrestricted participation, transparency and access to the standardised technology, under which a standardisation agreement would normally fall outside the scope of Article 101(1) TFEU.

The Commission does not have any information at its disposal suggesting that the standard-setting within W3C does not fulfil one or more of these conditions. W3C has a diverse membership including universities and non-profit organisations, such as the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF), and the question whether or not to include digital rights management in HTML 5 was, and continues to be, openly debated within and outside of the relevant W3C working group.

The Commission will nevertheless continue to follow the standardisation process with respect to HTML 5 so as to ensure that the EU competition rules are fully complied with.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009949/13
to the Commission
Brian Simpson (S&D)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Animal welfare — exemption from cross-compliance rules

Council Directive 98/58/EC establishes general rules concerning the protection of farmed animals, irrespective of species. It requires farmers to guarantee *inter alia* that their animals have freedom of movement, an appropriate environment and suitable accommodation, equipment, feed, water and other necessities, and that artificial breeding that may cause suffering or injury is avoided. However, it refers only to animals kept for farming purposes, excluding from its scope animals intended for use in competitions, shows or cultural or sporting events or activities, e.g. bulls reared for bullfighting.

The directive is listed as one of the Statutory Management Requirements under cross-compliance rules in the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP). It means that farmers must protect the welfare of their animals in order to receive EU CAP subsidies. With regard to animal welfare standards, currently only this general farm directive and the directives on the welfare of pigs and calves are included in cross-compliance.

Under the current CAP rules farmers rearing bulls for bullfighting are entitled to receive direct payments. This is already unacceptable for millions of taxpayers who are strongly against this barbaric sport. The exemption from the scope of Directive 98/58/EC moreover means that these farmers receive EU subsidies without needing to comply with any EU animal welfare rules.

Does the Commission not agree that all farmers in receipt of EU agricultural subsidies must guarantee the welfare of their farmed animals?

Does the Commission intend to revise the directive in order to guarantee the welfare of all farmed animals, not only those kept for farming purposes? If not, what will the Commission do to ensure the welfare of the animals excluded from the directive's scope?

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

Article 13 on the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union places a legal duty on the European Commission to pay full regard to the welfare of animals when formulating and implementing, amongst others, agriculture policy, while respecting provisions and customs of the Member States relating in particular to religious rites, cultural traditions and regional heritage. It needs to be noted, however, that the European Union operates under the principles of conferred competences and subsidiarity. Competences not conferred upon the Union in the Treaties remain with the Member States under the principle of subsidiarity. In areas that do not fall within its exclusive competence, the Union shall act only if, and in so far as, the objectives cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States (Articles 1, 4 and 5 of the EU Treaty).

As a consequence, certain topics related to animal protection remain under the responsibility of the Member States (e.g. the use of animals in competitions, shows, cultural or sporting events).

There is no specific EU financial aid designed to support the breeding of bulls for fighting, under either pillar of the common agricultural policy (CAP).

Direct support to farmers is mostly paid irrespective of the crops they grow or the animals they breed (decoupling) and no specific payments are made for the breeding of bulls. EU second pillar support through rural development measures can be granted to holdings for several purposes independently from the final use of the agricultural production of the farm.

The Commission is currently not proposing to alter the scope of Directive 98/58 ([1]) to include animals used in competitions, shows or cultural events.

([1]) Council Directive 98/58/EC of 20 July 1998 concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes; OJ L 221, 8.8.1998, p. 23.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009950/13
a la Comisión
Romana Jordan (PPE), Ivo Belet (PPE) y Pilar del Castillo Vera (PPE)
(6 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Financiación de patentes en la Unión Europea

El año pasado, la gran mayoría de los Estados miembros de la UE acordaron el establecimiento de una patente unitaria. Pese a que actualmente los innovadores europeos pueden proteger sus inventos mediante un único procedimiento, los costes económicos del proceso aún podrían suponer un obstáculo para las empresas europeas. Además, el documento de la Comisión sobre el Estado de la Unión por la innovación 2012 señala que el potencial innovador de Europa puede liberarse, entre otros, abaratando el coste de la protección por patente ([1]).

En las páginas web de la Comisión ([2]) se informa de que se está llevando a cabo un proceso tras el cual un grupo de expertos presentará un informe sobre la posibilidad de crear un fondo de patentes de la UE.

En consecuencia, se ruega a la Comisión que responda a las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Cuándo se prevé la publicación del informe previamente mencionado?

2. ¿Cómo se utilizarán los resultados del informe del grupo de expertos?

3. ¿Qué medidas contempla la Comisión para apoyar a las empresas europeas en la adquisición de protección por patente?

Respuesta de la Sra. Geoghegan-Quinn en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de noviembre de 2013)

1. La Comisión espera que la entrega, en mayo de 2014, del informe de un grupo de expertos sobre las opciones de actuación de la UE o de la actuación apoyada por la UE, en su caso, fomente el mercado de las patentes. Con ello se podría impulsar la agregación de patentes mediante un fondo, el corretaje de patentes, los consorcios de patentes u otras formas de agregación. Este grupo se va a reunir para abordar algunos de los problemas señalados en un documento de trabajo de los servicios de la Comisión (DSC) ([3]), que representa una contribución a la realización del compromiso n° 22 de la Unión por la innovación sobre el desarrollo de un mercado de patentes y licencias. El DSC agrupó estos elementos bajo el paraguas de la agregación de patentes. El grupo de expertos tendrá en cuenta las iniciativas existentes y propondrá medidas en caso de señalarse claramente un fallo del mercado que podría solucionarse de forma eficaz mediante la intervención de la UE.

2. La Comisión tendrá en cuenta el informe del grupo de expertos en sus deliberaciones sobre la decisión de financiar o apoyar financieramente la actuación de terceros en este ámbito, o de introducir medidas reglamentarias encaminadas a promover el mercado de patentes y licencias.

3. La Comisión dirige varios servicios de asistencia sobre derechos de propiedad intelectual (DPI) en Europa, China y la región de la ASEAN ([4]) para apoyar a las empresas europeas y, en particular, a las PYME, para que protejan sus DPI. Ello incluye la protección y la observancia de las patentes. Actualmente se está creando otro servicio de asistencia sobre derechos de propiedad intelectual de las PYME para el Mercosur. Además, la patente europea de efecto unitario se ha concebido para reducir los costes de protección de las patentes en Europa.

([1]) Comisión Europea, Estado de la «Unión por la innovación» 2012 — Acelerar el cambio, COM(2013) 149 final, 21.3.2013, Bruselas. Disponible en: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0149:FIN:es:PDF
([2]) Comisión Europea, Empresa e Industria, Derechos de propiedad intelectual. Disponible en versión inglesa: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/policy/intellectual-property/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/files/swd-2012-458_en.pdf
([4]) www.iprhelpdesk.eu, www.china-iprhelpdesk.eu, www.asean-iprhelpdesk.eu

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-009950/13
aan de Commissie
Romana Jordan (PPE), Ivo Belet (PPE) en Pilar del Castillo Vera (PPE)
(6 september 2013)

Betreft: Financiering van octrooien in de Europese Unie

Vorig jaar heeft een ruime meerderheid van de EU-lidstaten overeenstemming bereikt over de invoering van een unitair octrooi. Hoewel Europese innoverende bedrijven hun uitvindingen nu in een enkele procedure kunnen beschermen, vormen de kosten hiervan nog steeds een mogelijke belemmering voor Europese ondernemingen. Ook wordt in het document van de Commissie over de „Stand van zaken rond de Innovatie-Unie 2012” verklaard dat het innovatieve potentieel van Europa kan worden vrijgegeven door o.a. een goedkopere verwerving van patentbescherming ([1]).

Op de website van de Commissie ([2]) wordt medegedeeld dat er momenteel een proces aan de gang is, in het kader waarvan een deskundigengroep een rapport zal uitbrengen over de mogelijkheid van een EU-patentfonds.

Daarom vragen wij de Commissie het volgende:

1. Wanneer kan bovengenoemd rapport worden verwacht?

2. Wat wordt er gedaan met de resultaten van het rapport van de deskundigengroep?

3. Welke maatregelen voorziet de Commissie om Europese ondernemingen te ondersteunen bij de verwerving van patentbescherming?

Antwoord van mevrouw Geoghegan-Quinn namens de Commissie
(4 november 2013)

1. De Commissie verwacht dat de deskundigengroep in mei 2014 een verslag zal indienen over eventuele EU-maatregelen of door de EU ondersteunde maatregelen ter bevordering van de octrooienmarkt. Overwogen zou kunnen worden de samenvoeging van octrooien te bevorderen via een octrooifonds, octrooimakelaardijen, octrooipools of andere vormen van samenvoeging. De deskundigengroep moet een aantal van de in een werkdocument van de diensten van de Commissie vermelde kwesties aanpakken ([3]) en zo agendapunt 22 van de Innovatie-Unie inzake de ontwikkeling van een markt voor octrooien en vergunningen helpen verwezenlijken. In het werkdocument worden deze kwesties gegroepeerd onder het algemene concept „samenvoeging van octrooien”. De deskundigengroep zal bestaande initiatieven in overweging nemen en maatregelen voorstellen als een marktfalen wordt vastgesteld dat met behulp van EU-maatregelen doeltreffend kan worden verholpen.

2. De Commissie zal met het verslag van de deskundigengroep rekening houden bij haar overleg over de vraag of de maatregelen van derde partijen op dit gebied gefinancierd of financieel ondersteund moeten worden, of voor regelgeving ter bevordering van de markt voor octrooien en vergunningen moet worden gezorgd.

3. De Commissie beheert verschillende IPR Helpdesks in Europa, China en de ASEAN-regio ([4]) om Europese bedrijven — en vooral kmo's — te helpen hun intellectuele-eigendomsrechten te beschermen. Daarbij wordt ook aandacht geschonken aan octrooibescherming. Momenteel wordt ook een Mercosur IPR SME Helpdesk opgezet. Bovendien wordt een Europees octrooi met eenheidswerking ontwikkeld om de kosten van octrooibescherming in Europa te verminderen.

([1]) Europese Commissie, „Stand van zaken rond de Innovatie-Unie 2012 — Verandering versnellen”, COM(2013) 149 final, 21.3.2013, Brussel. Beschikbaar op: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0149:FIN:nl:PDF.

([2]) Europese Commissie, Ondernemingen en industrie, Intellectuele eigendomsrechten. Beschikbaar op: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/policy/intellectual-property/index_en.htm.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/files/swd-2012-458_en.pdf

([4]) www.iprhelpdesk.eu, www.china-iprhelpdesk.eu, www.asean-iprhelpdesk.eu.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-009950/13
za Komisijo
Romana Jordan (PPE), Ivo Belet (PPE) in Pilar del Castillo Vera (PPE)
(6. september 2013)

Zadeva: Financiranje patentov v Evropski uniji

Lani je velika večina držav članic dosegla sporazum o uvedbi enotnega patenta. Zdaj lahko evropski inovatorji svoje izume zaščitijo po enotnem postopku, vendar finančni stroški tega postopka za evropska podjetja še vedno pomenijo oviro. Poleg tega je v poročilu Komisije z naslovom „Stanje Unije inovacij 2012“ navedeno, da bi bilo mogoče inovativni potencial Evrope med drugim sprostiti s pocenitvijo postopka za pridobitev patentnega varstva ([1]).

Na spletnih straneh Komisije ([2]) smo izvedeli, da poteka postopek, ki se bo končal s poročilom skupine strokovnjakov o možnosti sklada EU za patente.

Zato Komisiji zastavljamo naslednja vprašanja:

1. Kdaj lahko pričakujemo omenjeno poročilo?

2. Kako se bodo uporabili rezultati poročila skupine strokovnjakov?

3. Katere ukrepe namerava Komisija sprejeti za podporo evropskim podjetjem pri pridobivanju patentnega varstva?

Odgovor komisarke Geoghegan-Quinn v imenu Komisije
(4. november 2013)

1. Komisija maja 2014 pričakuje poročilo strokovne skupine o morebitnih možnostih za ukrepanje EU ali ukrepanje, ki ga podpira EU, za spodbujanje trga za patente, in sicer v obliki spodbujanja agregacije patentov v okviru sklada za patente, posredniških družb za patente, združevanja patentov v skupine ali drugih oblik agregacije. Ta skupina se skliče za obravnavo nekaterih vprašanj, opredeljenih v delovnem dokumentu služb Komisije ([3]), ki prispeva k uresničitvi zaveze Unije inovacij št. 22 o razvoju trga za patente in licence. Delovni dokument služb Komisije te elemente združuje v okviru agregacije patentov. Strokovna skupina bo preučila obstoječe pobude in predlagala ukrepe, če bo jasno opredeljeno nedelovanje trga, ki bi se lahko učinkovito odpravilo s posredovanjem EU.

2. Komisija bo poročilo strokovne skupine obravnavala med svojim razmislekom, ali bo financirala ali finančno podprla ukrepe tretjih oseb na tem področju ali uvedla regulativne ukrepe za spodbujanje trga za patente in licence.

3. Komisija upravlja več služb za pomoč uporabnikom pravic intelektualne lastnine v Evropi, na Kitajskem in v regiji ASEAN ([4]) v podporo evropskim podjetjem in zlasti MSP pri zaščiti njihovih pravic intelektualne lastnine. To vključuje patentno varstvo in uveljavljanje patentov. Trenutno se vzpostavlja dodatna služba za pomoč uporabnikom pravic intelektualne lastnine Mercosur za MSP. Poleg tega se oblikuje evropski patent z enotnim učinkom za zmanjšanje stroškov patentnega varstva v Evropi.

([1]) Evropska komisija, Stanje Unije inovacij 2012 – pospeševanje sprememb, COM(2013)0149, 21. marec 2013, Bruselj. Dostopno na: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0149:FIN:SL:HTML
([2]) Evropska komisija, podjetništvo in industrija, pravice intelektualne lastnine. Dostopno na: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/policy/intellectual–property/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/files/swd-2012-458_en.pdf
([4]) www.iprhelpdesk.eu, www.china-iprhelpdesk.eu, www.asean-iprhelpdesk.eu

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009950/13
to the Commission
Romana Jordan (PPE), Ivo Belet (PPE) and Pilar del Castillo Vera (PPE)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Financing of patents in the European Union

Last year, an overwhelming majority of Member States reached an agreement on the establishment of a unitary patent. While it is now possible for European innovators to protect their inventions under a single procedure, the financial costs of this process can still represent an obstacle for European businesses. In addition, the Commission's report 'State of the Innovation Union 2012' states that Europe's innovative potential can be unleashed, inter alia, by making it less expensive to obtain patent protection. ([1])

From the web pages of the Commission ([2]) we have learned that a process is currently under way which will lead to a report from an expert group on the possibility of an EU patent fund.

We therefore ask the Commission:

1. When can the abovementioned report be expected?

2. How will the outcomes of the expert group report be used?

3. What measures does the Commission envisage for supporting European businesses in acquiring patent protection?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(6 November 2013)

1. The Commission expects delivery of the report by an expert group in May 2014 on the options for EU action or EU supported action, if any, to promote the market in patents. This could take the form of fostering of aggregation of patents via a patent fund, patent brokerages, patent pools or other forms of aggregation. This group is being convened to address some of the issues identified in a Commission Staff Working Document (SWD) ([3]) which represents a contribution to the realisation of Innovation Union commitment 22 on the development of a market for patenting and licencing. The SWD grouped these items under the umbrella of patent aggregation. The expert group will consider existing initiatives and propose action if a market failure that could be addressed effectively by EU intervention has been clearly identified.

2. The report of the expert group will thus be considered by the Commission in its deliberation on the decision on whether to finance or financially support action by third parties in this area or to introduce regulatory measures to promote the market for patents and licencing.

3. The Commission is running several IPR Helpdesks in Europe, China and the ASEAN region ([4]) to support European businesses and in particular SMEs in protecting their IPR. This includes patent protection and enforcement. An additional Mercosur IPR SME Helpdesk is currently being set up. In addition, the European patent with unitary effect is designed to reduce patent protection costs in Europe.

([1]) European Commission, State of the Innovation Union 2012 — Accelerating change, COM(2013)0149, 21 March 2013, Brussels. Accessible at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu//LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0149:FIN:en:PDF
([2]) European Commission, Enterprise and Industry, Intellectual property rights. Accessible at: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/policy/intellectual-property/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/files/swd-2012-458_en.pdf
([4]) www.iprhelpdesk.eu, www.china-iprhelpdesk.eu, www.asean-iprhelpdesk.eu

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009951/13
to the Council
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Syria

What action is being taken to help Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries and what action is being taken to address this humanitarian crisis?

Reply
(16 December 2013)

In addition to over EUR 1 billion of humanitarian assistance provided by Member States, since the end of 2011 and in direct response to the crisis, the EU budget has mobilised EUR 927 million (humanitarian aid: EUR 515 million; economic, development and stabilisation assistance: EUR 412 million) of total support for activities inside Syria and in neighbouring countries. 56% of the Commission's humanitarian assistance caters for the needs of Syrian refugees and host-communities in the neighbouring countries of Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Turkey. The remainder of the allocation is spent on assisting beneficiaries inside Syria.

The Commission has also set in train initiatives at political level in order to: 1) Improve humanitarian access in Syria and ensure respect of International Humanitarian Law; 2) Elaborate a regional gaps analysis and strategy in order to bring all instruments at its and other donors' disposal to bear. This includes humanitarian aid, development and macro-financial assistance needed to tackle the protracted crisis.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009952/13
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(3 September 201u)

*Sj bœ:t6*Syria

What action is being taken to help Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries and what action is being taken to address this humanitarian crisis?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(u0 O:tober 201u)

In addition to over EUR 1 billion of humanitarian assistance provided by Member States, the EU budget has, since the end of 2011 and in direct response to the crises, mobilised EUR 943 million (humanitarian aid: EUR 515 million; economic, development and stabilisation assistance: EUR 428 million) of total support for activities inside Syria and in neighbouring countries. 68% of the assistance provided by the Commission to date responds to needs of Syrian refugees and host-communities in the neighbouring countries of Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Turkey. The remaining allocation is spent to assist beneficiaries inside Syria. Supporting neighbouring countries and communities that are now hosting more than 2 million Syrian refugees is a particular focus of our assistance, to avoid destabilisation of the region and mitigate growing tensions between refugees and host communities.

The Commission has also set in train initiatives at political level in order to: 1) Improve humanitarian access in Syria and ensure respect of International Humanitarian Law; 2) Elaborate a regional gaps analysis and strategy in order to bring all instruments at our and other donors' disposal to bear. This includes humanitarian aid, development and macro-financial assistance needed to tackle the protracted crisis.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees has called on the international community for resettlement of 2 000 most vulnerable Syrians from the region and humanitarian admission of 10 000 Syrians in 2013, and to submit up to 30 000 Syrian refugees for resettlement on humanitarian admission by the end of 2014. The Commission supports this call. So far, several Member States have responded by offering resettlement and humanitarian admission places.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009953/13
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Gibraltar

Can the Commission update Parliament on what action is being taken to help to resolve the situation in Gibraltar?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to Written Question E- 009281/2013 by Mr Daniel Hannan, E-009591/2013 by Ms Diane Dodds.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009954/13
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(4 September 2013)

Subject: Neonicotinoids

As Member States begin implementing new rules on the restriction of plant treatments containing certain neonicotinoids, which should come into effect by December 2013, what guidance is being given to those who have to find alternative treatments?

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

Advice on best alternatives to combat pests in a specific crop is preferably given at the local level. Directive 2009/128/EC ([1]) on the sustainable use of pesticides requires Member States to ensure that professional users have at their disposal information and tools for pest monitoring and decision making, as well as advisory services on integrated pest management.

A plant protection product shall not be used unless it has been authorised in the Member State concerned according to Article 28 of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 ([2]). Hence, the available alternatives to the restricted neonicotinoids depend on the authorisations for use in place in each Member State. Authorisations are based on applications for plant protection products containing active substances that have been approved at EU level. Besides plant protection products for seed treatment, also granular formulations and products for foliar application require Member State approval. Thus, specific guidance can only be given at national level.

For approved active substances the EU Pesticide database can be consulted via the link below ([3]).

([1]) OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 71.
([2]) OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 1.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/plant_protection_products/pesticides_database/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009955/13
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Toddler milk

Following the changes to the rules on follow-on formula milk, can the Commission state what action will be taken to address the serious concerns around the marketing and promotion of toddler milk? The recent report on toddler milk by the consumer group *Which?* states that the market for these products is increasing, but they contain more sugar and less calcium than cow's milk and government advice is that they are not needed.

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

Regulation (EU) No 609/2013 ([1]) revises the framework applicable to 'foods for particular nutritional uses' and requires the Commission to adopt specific rules for, among others, infant formulae and follow-on formulae by 20 July 2015. The regulation also requires the Commission to present by the same date to the European Parliament and to the Council, after consulting the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), a report on the necessity, if any, of special provisions for milk-based drinks and similar products intended for young children (so-called 'growing up milks' or 'toddlers' milks') regarding compositional and labelling requirements and, if appropriate, other types of requirements.

The Commission has given a mandate ([2]) to EFSA to provide a scientific opinion on milk-based drinks and similar products intended for infants and young children. After having received EFSA's advice, the Commission will finalise the report requested by the regulation and will submit it to the European Parliament and to the Council.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:181:0035:0056:EN:PDF
([2]) Nr M-2013-0088, accessible at http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionsListLoader?panel=ALL

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009958/13
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Michel Dantin (PPE)
(3 septembre 2010)

*j b:et6*VP/HR — Élections démocratiques en Haïti

L'Union européenne apporte depuis de longues années un soutien actif à Haïti, l'un des pays les plus pauvres du monde. Ce soutien est relayé sur le terrain dans l'Union européenne par de nombreuses structures locales (collectivités, associations, fondations, etc.).

Celles-ci s'inquiètent aujourd'hui du recul de la démocratie en Haïti. Ainsi, les élections municipales prévues en mai 2011 n'ont toujours pas été organisées et le gouvernement procède depuis l'automne 2011 à la nomination « d'agents intérimaires».

L'expert indépendant de l'ONU, démissionnaire, a critiqué dans un rapport les ingérences du gouvernement dans diverses affaires.

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante de l'Union européenne pour les affaires étrangères Catherine Ashton peut-elle indiquer les mesures mises en œuvre par l'Union européenne pour obtenir du Président de la République et du gouvernement haïtiens le rétablissement sans délai d'un fonctionnement démocratique du pays?

Réponse donnée par M^me Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(22 octobre 2010)

L'UE est pleinement consciente de la préoccupation croissante d'organisations de surveillance et de défenseurs des Droits de l'homme, au sujet de l'évolution récente de la situation des Droits de l'homme, de la démocratie et de l'État de droit, en Haïti. Faire avancer ces questions n'est pas chose aisée en Haïti, compte tenu de l'histoire difficile et de la fragilité des institutions démocratiques du pays et des défis socio-économiques de taille auxquels il se trouve toujours confronté. L'important retard pris dans la tenue des élections sénatoriales partielles et communales constitue, du reste, une source profonde d'inquiétude. La question a été soulevée à plusieurs reprises avec le gouvernement haïtien et, plus récemment, avec le Premier ministre Laurent Lamothe lors de sa venue dans l'Union les 12 et 13 septembre 2013. Afin de favoriser le processus électoral, l'UE a débloqué 6 millions d'euros au titre de l'instrument de stabilité: 4 millions contribueront au fonds fiduciaire du PNUD pour l'organisation des élections et 2 millions permettront de soutenir le conseil électoral permanent, dès que celui-ci sera institué. L'UE continuera de soulever des questions liées aux Droits de l'homme, à la démocratie et à l'État de droit dans le cadre de son dialogue politique constant et de ses programmes de coopération au développement avec Haïti, sur la base d'éléments positifs tels que l'existence de mécanismes démocratiques et d'une grande liberté d'expression et la présence d'une société civile dynamique. Enfin, l'UE soutient cette dernière à hauteur de 7,8 millions d'euros à travers un programme spécifique financé au titre du 10^e FED ([1]).

([1]) Consulter le site du programme PARSCH: http://www.parsch-haiti.org/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009958/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michel Dantin (PPE)
(3 September 201u)

*Sj bœ:t6*VP/HR — Democratic elections in Haiti

For many years, the EU has actively supported Haiti, one of the poorest countries in the world. This support is taken up on the ground in the EU by many local organisations (including local government, charities, foundations, etc.).

The latter are today concerned about the decline of democracy in Haiti. In particular, the municipal elections scheduled for May 2011 have still not been held and, since the autumn of 2011, the Government has been appointing 'temporary agents'.

A report from the UN's outgoing independent expert has criticised government interference in various matters.

Can Catherine Ashton, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, indicate what measures the EU has implemented to get Haiti's President and Government to restore the country to democracy immediately?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(22 O:tober 201u)

The EU is fully aware of the growing concern of some HR watchdog organisations and HR defenders as regards recent developments on human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Haiti. Advancing these domains in Haiti is a complex endeavour, affected by the country's difficult past, the fragility of its democratic institutions and the enormous socioeconomic challenges that it is still confronted with. The long delays in holding local and partial senatorial elections are indeed a source of grave concern that the EU has raised on several occasions with the Haitian government, most recently with Prime Minister Lamothe during his visit to the EU on 12/13 September 2013. In order to assist the electoral process, the EU has made EUR 6 million available from the Instrument for Stability, out of which EUR 4 million for contributing to the PNUD-led trust fund for the organisation of the elections and EUR 2 million for supporting the Permanent Electoral Council, once is formally established. The EU will continue to raise human rights/rule of law/democracy issues in the framework of its continued political dialogue and development cooperation programmes with Haiti, building on positive elements such as the existence of democratic mechanisms, substantial freedom of expression and presence of a lively civil society. Last but not least, this latter is being supported by the EU through a specific EUR 7.8 million programme funded under the 10th EDF ([1]).

([1]) PARSCH: http://www.parsch-haiti.org/

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009959/13
à la Commission
Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(6 septembre 2013)

Objet: Pilule contraceptive Diane 35®

Le 30 juillet 2013, la Commission européenne a confirmé sa décision concernant le caractère inoffensif de la pilule anti-acnéique et contraceptive Diane 35®. Cette décision va contraindre la France à remettre ce médicament en vente sur le marché, en dépit de l'interdiction de ce traitement et de ses génériques par l'Agence nationale de sécurité du médicament (ANSM).

En effet, l'ANSM a fait part de ses craintes concernant des risques de thrombose et d'embolies pulmonaires liés à la prise de cette pilule. Conformément au principe de précaution, et à la suite de la plainte de plusieurs patientes victimes d'un accident vasculaire cérébral dû à la prise de ce médicament, la France avait souhaité son interdiction. Le 17 mai dernier, l'Agence européenne du médicament (EMA) a jugé que les bénéfices de Diane 35® étaient toujours supérieurs aux risques, du moins pour «certaines populations de patientes». Cet avis a été suivi par la Commission européenne, qui a cependant imposé des restrictions sur la prescription de ce médicament.

Compte tenu de ces éléments, la Commission ne considère-t-elle pas qu'il serait nécessaire de mener des études scientifiques afin de savoir quels sont les risques liés à ce traitement?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(9 octobre 2013)

L'Honorable Parlementaire est invité à se référer à la réponse donnée à la question précédente E-006231/2013 ([1]).

La procédure de saisine engagée par les autorités françaises a permis la réévaluation des risques/bénéfices de Diane 35 et de ses génériques (médicaments contenant de l'acétate de cyprotérone/éthinylestradiol). La décision de la Commission est fondée sur la recommandation scientifique du 16 mai 2013 du comité pour l'évaluation des risques en matière de pharmacovigilance de l'Agence européenne des médicaments, qui a procédé à cette réévaluation.

Le comité a conclu que les bénéfices de Diane 35 et de ses génériques étaient supérieurs aux risques encourus, pourvu que certaines mesures soient prises pour réduire au minimimum le risque de thromboembolie (formation de caillots de sang dans les veines et les artères). Il a recommandé en particulier des activités spécifiques de pharmacovigilance, comportant des études prospectives sur l'utilisation du médicament visant à évaluer les futures habitudes de prescription à la suite des modifications des informations sur le produit, ainsi qu'une étude de sécurité post-autorisation pour évaluer l'efficacité des mesures de réduction des risques.

Compte tenu de cette dernière étude, Diane 35 et ses génériques ont été ajoutés à la liste de médicaments soumis à une surveillance supplémentaire. Cela signifie que l'avertissement «ce médicament est soumis à une surveillance supplémentaire» ainsi que le «symbole noir» consistant en un triangle noir inversé figureront sur la notice de ces médicaments. Ces avertissements encourageront les patients à signaler tout effet indésirable suspecté du médicament à leur médecin, leur pharmacien, tout autre professionnel de santé ou leur système national de notification (les détails sont indiqués sur la notice).

Compte tenu de ces éléments, la Commission n'envisage pas pour le moment de réaliser des études supplémentaires.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009959/13
to the Commission
Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Diane 35® contraceptive pill

On 30 July 2013, the Commission confirmed its decision that the Diane 35® acne treatment and contraceptive pill is harmless. This decision will force France to put this drug back onto the market, despite it and its generics being prohibited by the French National Agency for Medicines (ANSM).

ANSM has made known its fears of the risks of thrombosis and pulmonary embolisms linked to the taking of this pill. In accordance with the precaution principle, and following complaints from several patients who suffered strokes after taking this medicine, France wanted to see it banned. On 17 May, the European Medicines Agency (EMA) determined that the benefits of Diane 35® always outweigh the risks, at least in 'certain patient groups'. This view was supported by the Commission, although it imposed restrictions on the prescription of this drug.

Accordingly, does the Commission not consider it necessary to carry out scientific studies to identify what risks are related to this treatment?

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

The Honourable Member is referred to the answer given to the previous Question E-006231/2013 ([1]).

The referral procedure initiated by the French authorities allowed the re-evaluation of the risk benefit of Diane 35 and its generics (medicinal products containing cyproterone acetate/ethinylestradiol). The scientific recommendation of 16 May 2013 of the European Medicines Agency's Pharmacovigilance Risk Assessment Committee (PRAC), which performed this re-evaluation, is the grounds for the Commission decision.

The committee concluded that the benefits of Diane 35 and its generics outweigh the risks, provided that certain measures are taken to minimise the risk of thromboembolism (formation of blood clots in the veins and arteries). In particular, the PRAC recommended specific pharmacovigilance activities, including prospective drug utilisation studies to assess future prescription patterns following the changes to the product information, as well as a post authorisation safety study to assess the effectiveness of the risk minimisation measures.

In view of the latter study, Diane 35 and its generics have been added to the list of medicinal products subject to additional monitoring. This means that the statement 'this medicinal product is subject to additional monitoring' and the 'black symbol' which is an inverted black triangle will be included on the package leaflet of these medicinal products. This is to encourage patients to report suspected adverse reaction to the medicine to their doctor, pharmacists, other healthcare professionals or their national reporting systems (details are provided in the package leaflets).

In view of these elements, the Commission does not consider at this stage to conduct further studies.

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

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009960/13
à la Commission
Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D) et Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(6 septembre 2013)

Objet: Contamination de la chaîne alimentaire maritime japonaise

Depuis la catastrophe de la centrale nucléaire de Fukushima en mars 2011, les fonds marins proches de la zone accidentée n'ont pas échappé aux fuites radioactives des réacteurs endommagés. De nombreuses études japonaises révèlent d'ailleurs des taux anormalement élevés de césium 134 et 137 (particules radioactives) dans les entrailles de vertébrés à branchies, algues et crustacés. Même à faible taux de radiations, c'est-à-dire celui qui est autorisé par le gouvernement japonais, les particules de césium se fixent sur le foie, l'estomac, les organes et peuvent provoquer en quelques années des dégâts importants.

De plus, le 21 août 2013, TEPCO, le gérant de la centrale, a reconnu publiquement que 300 tonnes d'eaux hautement radioactives étaient en train de fuir d'un réservoir accidenté. Il s'agissait d'une eau contaminée, qui se mêlait aux liquides radioactifs qui se déversaient déjà quotidiennement dans l'océan via des voies souterraines.

1. Compte tenu de ces éléments, la Commission ne considère-t-elle pas qu'il serait nécessaire de mener des études/recherches pour garantir aux citoyens européens que les poissons consommés en provenance du Japon ne mettent pas en danger leur santé?

2. Quels sont les dispositifs que la Commission a mis en place afin de s'assurer que les produits en provenance du Japon font l'objet de contrôles renforcés dans l'Union européenne?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(17 octobre 2013)

Le règlement d'exécution (UE) n° 996/2012 de la Commission du 26 octobre 2012 ([1]) impose des conditions particulières à l'importation de certains aliments pour animaux et denrées alimentaires, y compris les poissons, originaires ou en provenance de régions du Japon touchées par l'accident survenu à la centrale nucléaire de Fukushima.

Les mesures prévues exigent que les poissons provenant d'origines déterminées au Japon soient soumis à un test de radioactivité par les autorités japonaises avant d'être exportés vers l'Union européenne (UE) et chaque lot de poisson doit être accompagné par une déclaration et par le rapport d'analyse. Il est prévu qu'à l'arrivée dans l'UE, 5 % des envois en provenance du Japon soient échantillonnés et analysés pour détecter la présence de radioactivité. Tous les résultats des contrôles effectués sur les poissons à l'importation sont favorables et aucun manquement n'a été constaté.

Les mesures restrictives en place en ce qui concerne l'importation de certains aliments pour animaux et denrées alimentaires du Japon garantissent un haut niveau de protection de la santé à la population de l'UE.

La Commission surveille en permanence les résultats des contrôles à l'importation et des contrôles effectués par les autorités japonaises. Au cas où un accroissement de la radioactivité dans certains aliments, y compris le poisson, serait constaté, la Commission prendrait immédiatement les mesures supplémentaires appropriées pour garantir la sécurité des aliments pour animaux et denrées alimentaires, y compris le poisson et les produits de la pêche provenant du Japon et de la région du Pacifique et mis sur le marché de l'UE.

([1]) Règlement d'exécution (UE) n° 996/2012 de la Commission du 26 octobre 2012 imposant des conditions particulières à l'importation de denrées alimentaires et d'aliments pour animaux originaires ou en provenance du Japon à la suite de l'accident survenu à la centrale nucléaire de Fukushima (JO L 299 du 27.10.2012, p. 31), tel que modifié par le règlement d'exécution (UE) n° 495/2013 du 29 mai 2013 (JO L 143 du 30.5.2013, p. 3).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009960/13
to the Commission
Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D) and Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Contamination of the Japanese marine food chain

Since the disaster at the Fukushima nuclear power station in March 2011, the seabed close to the accident has been affected by the radioactive leaks from the damaged reactors. Many Japanese studies have revealed the presence of abnormally high levels of caesium-134 and 137 (radioactive particles) in the guts of aquatic vertebrates, in algae and in crustaceans. Even at low radiation levels, in other words those permitted by the Japanese Government, caesium particles become attached to the liver, stomach and other organs and can cause major damage within a few years.

Furthermore, on 21 August 2013, TEPCO, which manages the power station, publicly admitted that 300 tonnes of highly radioactive water were leaking from a damaged tank. This was contaminated water that was mixing with the radioactive liquids that were already running into the sea on a daily basis via underground channels.

1. Accordingly, does the Commission not consider that it will be necessary to carry out studies/research to guarantee to EU citizens that eating fish from Japan will pose no risks to health?

2. What measures has the Commission introduced to ensure that products from Japan will be subject to increased controls in the European Union?

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

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 996/2012 of 26 October ([1]) imposes special conditions governing the import of certain feed and food, including fish, originating in or consigned from affected regions in Japan following the accident at the Fukushima nuclear power station.

The measures require that fish from defined origins in Japan have to be tested on radioactivity by the Japanese authorities before export to the EU and each consignment of fish has to be accompanied by a declaration and the analytical report. At import in the EU it is provided that 5% of the consignments from Japan have to be sampled and analysed for the presence of radioactivity. All results of the controls performed on fish at import are favourable and no non-compliances have been observed.

The current restrictive measures in place as regards the import of feed and food from Japan provide a high level of human health protection for the EU population.

The Commission is continuously monitoring the results from import controls and controls performed by the Japanese authorities. In case an increase of radioactivity in certain foods, including fish, would be observed, the Commission would take immediately appropriate additional measures to ensure the safety of feed and food, including fish and fishery products from Japan and the Pacific region, placed on the EU market.

([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) No 495/2013 of 29 May 2013 (OJ L 143, 30.5.2013, p. 3).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009961/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(6 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Progettazione di opere di messa in sicurezza e nuova viabilità lungo l'intero corso del fiume Entella e realizzazione di un'area di colmata lungo la sua foce

Le amministrazioni della Regione Liguria, della ex Provincia di Genova e dei Comuni di Lavagna, Chiavari, Cogorno, Carasco e Sestri Levante hanno progettato di realizzare opere di messa in sicurezza e nuova viabilità lungo l'intero corso del fiume Entella. Tali progetti prevedono un'area di colmata nella foce del fiume per l'installazione di un impianto di depurazione delle acque fognarie dei distinti bacini imbriferi di Lavagna, Sestri Levante e rispettivi entroterra.

La costituzione della nuova colmata rappresenterebbe un vero e proprio «tappo» che determinerà, secondo le dichiarazioni pubbliche rese dall'Iren, la società incaricata dell'esecuzione del progetto, un innalzamento del livello delle acque di circa 20 centimetri, cui le Amministrazioni prevedono di porre rimedio con nuove arginature sulle rive del fiume, volte anche ad un nuovo sviluppo di strade a lato delle stesse ([1]).

Tale pretesa messa in sicurezza, considerata la relativa mitigazione del rischio idrogeologico, risulterebbe invece aggravata dalle predette opere che non tengono alcun conto del bacino imbrifero del fiume Entella. Al riguardo manca uno studio puntuale, che giustifichi la riclassificazione di aree golenali del fiume e dei suoi affluenti dall'attuale zona rossa consentendo, quindi, nuove edificazioni. Ne risulta la completa artificializzazione del corso d'acqua, costretto in una sorta di imbuto insieme ai rii che sfociano in esso.

L'intervento progettato, inoltre, non terrebbe conto del fatto che la zona è un SIC IT 1332717 e che la canalizzazione del fiume danneggerebbe la naturalità delle sponde nonché l'oasi faunistica, contraddicendo di fatto gli impegni assunti dalla Regione Liguria di fronte all'UE in materia di protezione della biodiversità con l'istituzione della «Rete Natura 2000». Un simile intervento si porrebbe, inoltre, in contrasto con i principi stabiliti dalla direttiva 2000/60/CE sulla tutela dei corpi idrici. Il quadro è aggravato dal fatto che la Regione Liguria ha adottato il regolamento n. 3 del 14.7.2011 che introduce deroghe alle norme che contemplano il divieto di copertura e di edificazione in prossimità degli argini.

È la Commissione a conoscenza del citato progetto e delle gravi problematiche in termini di sicurezza idrogeologica e di peggioramento ambientale e paesaggistico che la realizzazione dello stesso comporterebbe in contrasto con le norme comunitarie poste a tutela dei corpi idrici? Ritiene di dover intervenire in attuazione dei propri poteri/doveri di vigilanza riguardanti il rispetto della normativa comunitaria da parte degli Stati membri?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(29 ottobre 2013)

In base alle informazioni fornite dall'onorevole deputato sembrerebbe che il progetto possa rientrare nel campo di applicazione della direttiva quadro sulle acque ([2]) a titolo di «nuova modifica» delle caratteristiche fisiche dei corpi idrici interessati. Il progetto sarebbe pertanto soggetto alle condizioni di cui all'articolo 4, paragrafo 7, della direttiva.

Inoltre, tenuto conto della posizione e degli impatti potenziali sulla zona Natura 2000 SIC IT1332717, è necessario sottoporre tale progetto a un'adeguata valutazione a norma dell'articolo 6 della direttiva 92/43/CE ([3]) (direttiva Habitat).

La Commissione si metterà in contatto con le autorità italiane per ottenere informazioni sulle modalità con cui sono stati rispettati i requisiti sopra esposti nel caso in oggetto.

([1]) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YW5pgwfnSvl.
([2]) GU L 327 del 22.12.2000, pag. 1.
([3]) GU L 206 del 22.12.2000, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009961/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Planning of safety works and a new road system along the length of the River Entella and reclamation of an area of land along the river mouth

The authorities of the Liguria Region, the former Province of Genoa and the municipalities of Lavagna, Chiavari, Cogorno, Carasco and Sestri Levante are planning to carry out safety works and to create a new road system along the length of the River Entella. The plans include reclaiming an area of land at the river mouth for the construction of a plant to treat sewage from the separate catchment areas of Lavagna, Sestri Levante and their hinterlands.

The new area of reclaimed land will literally act as a 'plug' which, according to the public statements made by Iren, the company in charge of carrying out the project, will cause the water level to rise by some 20 centimetres. The authorities plan to remedy this by building new embankments along the banks of the river, and to use these for a new road development adjacent to them ([1]).

These apparent efforts to make the river safe, taking into account their mitigation of the hydrogeological risk, would be adversely affected by the aforesaid works, which completely disregard the River Entella's catchment area. There is no specific study on this issue that justifies reclassifying floodplain areas of the river and its tributaries from the current red zone so as to allow for new construction to take place. The result is a completely artificial river that is forced into a kind of bottleneck along with the streams that flow into it.

Furthermore, the planned measure overlooks the fact that the zone is an SCI IT1332717 site and that canalising the river would harm the natural character of its banks and wildlife sanctuary, *de facto* undermining the commitments made by the Liguria Region to the EU with regard to the protection of biodiversity through the establishment of the Natura 2000 network. Such a measure would also be contrary to the principles laid down by Directive 2000/60/EC on water protection. The situation is aggravated by the fact that the Liguria Region has adopted Regulation No 3 of 14 July 2011, which provides for exemptions from the rules prohibiting covering and building near banks.

Is the Commission aware of the aforesaid project and of the serious problems in terms of hydrogeological safety and deterioration of the environment and landscape that its implementation would cause, in contravention of EU water protection rules? Does it believe it should intervene, exercising its supervisory powers/duties regarding compliance with EU legislation by Member States?

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

Based on the information provided by the Honourable Member, it appears that the project may qualify under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) ([2]) as a 'new modification' that changes the physical characteristics of the affected water bodies. This would be subject to the conditions laid down in Article 4(7) of the WFD.

Moreover, considering the location and the potential impacts on Natura 2000 area SCI IT1332717, there is a need for an appropriate assessment under Art. 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EC ([3]).

The Commission will contact the Italian authorities requesting information on how the abovementioned requirements have been respected in this case.

([1]) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YW5pgwfnSvl
([2]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.
([3]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009962/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(6 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Genitore 1 e Genitore 2 nei moduli scolastici italiani — Politiche di uguaglianza di genere e politiche comunitarie

In Svezia, nel 2010 è stato aperto il primo asilo «gender free» d'Europa caratterizzato da un approccio educativo basato sull'abolizione delle differenze di sesso tra maschi e femmine: stessi giochi per tutti, cancellati pronomi maschili o femminili. In Francia il governo si prepara ad introdurre un nuovo corso di educazione sessuale finalizzato a sostituire categorie mentali come quella di «sesso» con il concetto di «genere» per dimostrare che le differenze tra uomo e donna non sono basate sulla natura, ma prodotte e replicate dalle condizioni sociali. In Italia è stata avanzata la proposta di togliere dai moduli d'iscrizione ad asili e scuole la denominazione «padre» e «madre» per lasciare invece spazio a «genitore 1» e «genitore 2.»

Secondo i risultati della ricerca svolta nel 2009 dall'agenzia esecutiva Eurydice su «Differenze di genere nei risultati educativi: Studio sulle misure adottate e sulla situazione attuale in Europa», la percezione degli insegnanti sulle peculiarità maschili e femminili sono fondamentali per i loro rapporti con gli allievi e possono rappresentare un fattore importante per promuovere l'equità tra i generi nella scuola.

Nelle conclusioni del Consiglio «Investire nell'istruzione e nella formazione in risposta a Ripensare l'istruzione: investire nelle abilità in vista di migliori risultati socioeconomici» e nell'analisi annuale della crescita per il 2013, il Consiglio riconosce il ruolo centrale assegnato all'istruzione e alla formazione quali forze trainanti per la crescita e la competitività e per prevenire la disoccupazione.

Sebbene l'organizzazione e i contenuti dei sistemi d'istruzione e di formazione siano di competenza dei singoli Stati membri, la cooperazione a livello europeo insieme al ricorso a programmi dell'UE, può contribuire allo sviluppo di un'istruzione e una formazione di qualità sostenendo e integrando le misure prese a livello nazionale e assistendo gli Stati membri a fronteggiare le sfide comuni.

Può la Commissione precisare come intende affrontare la tematica delle politiche di genere nei propri programmi e nelle prossime comunicazioni che avranno ad oggetto istruzione e formazione?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(15 ottobre 2013)

La tematica della parità di genere è presente in tutte le politiche e in tutti i programmi della Comunità, compreso il programma per l'apprendimento permanente (2007-2013) che ha sostenuto numerosi progetti imperniati sulle tematiche del genere e ha promosso la mobilità sensibile alle specificità di genere. Il nuovo programma Erasmus+ per l'istruzione, la formazione, la gioventù e lo sport (2014-2020) continuerà a promuovere la parità di genere e le azioni contro la discriminazione di genere.

Annualmente, la Commissione pubblica il documento «Education and Training Monitor» che fornisce, tra l'altro, raffronti tra paesi per quanto concerne le questioni di genere e informazioni sulle tendenze educative. La pubblicazione del prossimo Monitor è prevista per l'ottobre di quest'anno.

Per quanto concerne le attività in corso che affrontano le questioni del genere nell'ambito dell'istruzione e della formazione, i lavori che la Commissione porta avanti con gli Stati membri per attuare la propria comunicazione «Ripensare l'istruzione» ribadiscono la necessità di rendere più interessante per le donne l'acquisizione di abilità nell'area STEM (scienza, tecnologia, ingegneria e matematica). Uno dei documenti di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione che corredano la comunicazione evidenzia lo squilibrio di genere tra i docenti e i dirigenti scolastici e sollecita gli Stati membri a procedere a interventi correttivi.

Analogamente, il progetto per la modernizzazione dei sistemi di istruzione superiore [1] dell'UE indica che l'eliminazione degli stereotipi e degli ostacoli contro cui si scontrano le donne nell'istruzione post-laurea e nella ricerca presenta valide potenzialità per valorizzare talenti altrimenti inutilizzati.

(1) COM(2011)567 definitivo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009962/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Parent 1 and Parent 2 on Italian school forms — Gender equality policies and Community policies

In 2010 Europe's first 'gender-free' nursery school was opened in Sweden. It is characterised by an educational approach based on the elimination of gender differences between males and females: everyone plays the same games and masculine and feminine pronouns are dispensed with. In France, the government is preparing to introduce a new sex education course aimed at replacing mental categories such as 'sex' with the concept of 'gender' to demonstrate that the differences between men and women are not caused by nature, but are produced and reproduced as a result of social conditions. In Italy a proposal has been made to remove the names 'father' and 'mother' from nursery and school registration forms and to replace them with 'parent 1' and 'parent 2' instead.

According to the results of the research carried out in 2009 by the Eurydice executive agency on 'Gender Differences in Educational Outcomes: Study on the Measures Taken and the Current Situation in Europe', teachers' perceptions of male- and femaleness are crucial for their relations with pupils and can be an important factor in generating gender equity in schools.

In the Council Conclusions on investing in education and training — a response to 'Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socioeconomic outcomes' and the '2013 Annual Growth Survey', the Council recognises the central role assigned to education and training as a key driver for growth and competitiveness and for preventing unemployment.

While each Member State is responsible for the organisation and content of its education and training systems, European cooperation, together with recourse to EU programmes, can contribute to the development of quality education and training by supporting and supplementing national measures and helping Member States to address common challenges.

Can the Commission say how it intends to approach the subject of gender policies in its programmes and in future communications on education and training?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(15 October 2013)

Gender equality is mainstreamed in all Community policies and programmes, including in the Lifelong Learning programme (2007-2013) which has supported a large number of projects on gender issues and has enabled gender-sensitive mobility. The new Erasmus+ programme for education, training, youth and sport (2014-2020) will continue to promote gender equality and actions against gender discrimination.

Every year, the Commission publishes the 'Education and Training Monitor' which provides, inter alia, gender-related cross-country comparisons and information on educational trends. The next Monitor is due in October this year.

Among current activities which address issues of gender in education and training, the Commission's work with Member States to implement its communication 'Rethinking Education' stresses the need to make STEM-related skills more attractive to women. One of the staff working documents accompanying the communication underlines the gender imbalance among teachers and school-leaders and urges Member States to take action.

Similarly, the EU Agenda for modernising higher education systems ([1]) shows that tackling stereotyping and dismantling barriers faced by women in postgraduate education and research carries the potential to liberate untapped talent.

([1]) COM(2011) 567 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009963/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(6 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Richiesta di intervento dell'Europa e del FEG a sostegno dei lavoratori dei cementifici della Provincia di Padova

Il Veneto, e in particolare la Provincia di Padova, già pesantemente colpiti dalla crisi economica e occupazionale internazionale, vengono oggi messi in ulteriore difficoltà dal crollo del settore edilizio e conseguentemente di quello della produzione del cemento.

Almeno 900 persone, impiegate o legate alla filiera produttiva di tre cementifici (l'Italcementi di Monselice e la Cementizillo di Este e Monselice) rischiano di perdere il loro posto di lavoro. Il 99 % dei lavoratori della Cementizillo di Este e il 67 % dei lavoratori dell'Italcementi di Monselice sono in cassa integrazione. Recentemente, inoltre, il cementificio di Monselice che sarebbe dovuto restare in attività, anche se ridotta, fino al 2015, ha definitivamente programmato la chiusura per il prossimo 31 dicembre 2013. L'Italcementi invece ha ufficialmente comunicato ai sindacati l'intenzione di chiudere lo stabilimento monselicense entro il prossimo gennaio 2014, anticipando di un anno quanto previsto dal piano industriale.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza di queste circostanze;

2. se ha intenzione, considerata la gravità della situazione e al fine di ridurre la perdita di posti di lavoro e consentire la continuazione dell'attività dei tre cementifici, di concedere al Veneto una particolare deroga alla disciplina degli aiuti di Stato, così come previsto dal regolamento (CE) n. 2204/2002 della Commissione, del 12 dicembre 2002, relativo all'applicazione degli articoli 87 e 88 del trattato CE agli aiuti di Stato a favore dell'occupazione;

3. se non ritiene indispensabile una revisione del meccanismo di funzionamento del Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione (FEG) affinché, nel caso dei cementifici della Provincia di Padova come in tutti gli altri casi di licenziamento selvaggio, tale meccanismo possa essere attivato in modo rapido e diretto dalla stessa Commissione e possa diventare uno strumento di sostegno alle emergenze occupazionali e sociali sempre più frequenti negli Stati membri;

4. se intende attivare il Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione (FEG) a favore dei lavoratori coinvolti nella vicenda?

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

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza delle circostanze cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputata.

2. Per quanto concerne il riferimento alle regole sugli aiuti di Stato si noti che il regolamento (CE) n. 2204/2002 della Commissione ([1]) è stato sostituito dal regolamento generale di esenzione per categoria (RGEC) ([2]), che stabilisce le condizioni alle quali certe categorie di aiuti sono compatibili con il mercato comune e non sono soggette al requisito di notifica di cui all'articolo 88, paragrafo 3, del trattato, compresi gli aiuti per l'occupazione. Tuttavia, sia il regolamento n. 2204/2002 della Commissione, sia il RGEC fanno riferimento ad aiuti per la creazione di posti di lavoro. Di converso, le possibilità per gli Stati membri di concedere aiuti alle imprese in difficoltà per il mantenimento dell'occupazione sono estremamente restrittive e, in linea di principio, accessibili soltanto nel contesto di piani di ristrutturazione che devono essere notificati alla Commissione ([3]).

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 2204/2002 della Commissione, del 12 dicembre 2002, relativo all'applicazione degli articoli 87 e 88 del trattato CE agli aiuti di Stato a favore dell'occupazione.
([2]) Regolamento (CE) n. 800/2008 della Commissione, del 6 agosto 2008, che dichiara alcune categorie di aiuti compatibili con il mercato comune in applicazione degli articoli 87 e 88 del trattato (regolamento generale di esenzione per categoria), considerando 4.
([3]) Comunicazione della Commissione — Orientamenti comunitari sugli aiuti di Stato per il salvataggio e la ristrutturazione di imprese in difficoltà, GU C 244 dell'1.10.2004.

3. Sono attualmente in corso negoziati tra il Parlamento e il Consiglio in merito alla proposta della Commissione ([4]) di regolamento sul FEG ([5]) per il periodo 2014 — 2020 al fine della sua implementazione a decorrere dal 1º gennaio 2014. Sin d'ora gli Stati membri richiedenti possono attivare in modo celere e diretto il meccanismo del FEG. Le misure ammissibili possono essere attivate prima che venga presentata la domanda di cofinanziamento del FEG. La Commissione fa anche tutto il possibile per ridurre i tempi richiesti dalle procedure di cui al regolamento FEG in modo da far sì che il contributo del FEG sia versato quanto più celermente possibile. Essa plaude al fatto che il Parlamento proponga di ridurre i tempi necessari per approvare le richieste.

4. A tutt'oggi l'Italia non ha informato la Commissione se intende chiedere un contributo del FEG per i lavoratori menzionati in questa interrogazione. L'onorevole deputata può verificare la situazione rivolgendosi alla persona di contatto del FEG responsabile per l'Italia ([6]).

([4]) Proposta di regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio sul Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione 2014 — 2020 [COM(2011)608 definitivo, del 6 ottobre 2011].
([5]) Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione.
([6]) Cfr. i contatti menzionati all'indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=en.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009963/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Request for EU and EGF intervention to support cement company workers in the Province of Padua

The Veneto Region, and in particular the Province of Padua, which have already been severely affected by the global economic and employment crisis, are today facing further difficulties due to the collapse of the construction industry and of the cement production industry along with it.

At least 900 people employed in, or linked to, the production chain of three cement plants (Italcementi in Monselice and Cementizillo in Este and Monselice) are in danger of losing their jobs. Ninety-nine per cent of the workers at Cementizillo's Este plant and 67% of the workers at Italcementi's Monselice plant have been temporarily laid off. Furthermore, the Monselice plant, which was due to continue production — albeit on a reduced scale — until 2015, recently finalised plans for its closure on 31 December 2013. Italcementi, however, has officially informed the trade unions that it plans to close the Monselice plant by January 2014, one year earlier than the date set in its business plan.

1. Is the Commission aware of these circumstances?

2. Given the seriousness of the situation, and in order to reduce the number of job losses and enable the three cement plants to carry on operating, will the Commission grant the Veneto Region a special exemption from the framework on state aid, as provided for by Commission Regulation (EC) No 2204/2002 of 12 December 2002 on the application of Articles 87 and 88 of the EC Treaty to state aid for employment?

3. Does it not consider it essential to review the mechanism for operating the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) so that, in the case of the cement plants in the Province of Padua and in all other cases of brutal job cuts, the mechanism can be activated quickly and directly by the Commission and can be a support instrument for use in the employment and social crises that are becoming increasingly common in the Member States?

4. Does it intend to activate the EGF to support the workers affected in this case?

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

1. The Commission is aware of the circumstances to which the Honourable Member refers.

2. As regards the reference to state aid rules, please note that the Commission Regulation (EC) No 2204/2002 [1] has been replaced by the General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) [2], which lays down the conditions under which certain categories of aid are compatible with the common market and not subject to the notification requirement of Article 88(3) of the Treaty, including aid for employment. However, both the Commission Regulation No 2204/2002 and the GBER refer to aid measures for the creation of employment. On the contrary, the possibilities for Member States of granting aid to undertaking in difficulties for the maintenance of employment are very restrictive and in principle only accessible in the context of restructuring plans that must be notified to the Commission [3].

3. Negotiations are currently under way between Parliament and the Council on the Commission proposal [4] for a regulation on the EGF [5] for 2014 to 2020 with a view to its implementation from 1 January 2014. As of now applicant Member States can activate the EGF mechanism quickly and directly. Eligible measures may be set in motion before applications for EGF co-funding are presented. The Commission is also doing its utmost to reduce the time required for the procedures laid down in the EGF Regulation so that the EGF contribution can be paid as quickly as possible. It welcomes the fact that Parliament is proposing to reduce the time it requires to approve applications.

(1) Commission Regulation (EC) No 2204/2002 of 12 December 2002 on the application of Articles 87 and 88 of the EC Treaty to state aid for employment.
(2) Commission Regulation (EC) No 800/2008 of 6 August 2008 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the common market in application of Article 87 and 88 of the Treaty (General block exemption Regulation), Recital 4.
(3) Communication from the Commission — Community guidelines on state aid for rescuing and restructuring firms in difficulty, OJ C 244, 1.10.2004.
(4) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (2014 — 2020) (COM(2011) 608 final of 6 October 2011).
(5) European Globalisation Adjustment Fund.

4. To date Italy has not informed the Commission of whether it intends to apply for an EGF contribution for the workers concerned in this case. The Honourable Member may wish to check this with the EGF Contact Person for Italy ([6]).

([6]) See contact details at: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=en

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009964/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(6 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Antidumping China

La investigación antidumping en relación con la fabricación de paneles fotovoltaicos por parte de China culminó el 6 de junio con la aplicación de cargas provisionales a las importaciones por la UE de paneles chinos. Las cargas debían imponerse en dos momentos: el primero, el 6 de junio, con un 11,8 %,y el segundo, el 6 de agosto, con un 47,6 %.

El 3 de agosto, sin embargo, la Comisión llegó a un acuerdo con la Cámara de Comercio de China para adoptar una posición de consenso, fijando unos precios mínimos para ciertas cuotas. Según parece, el acuerdo permitirá dejar inalterado el 60 % de la exportación de paneles fotovoltaicos de China a la UE. Entre las condiciones fijadas para aceptar el acuerdo, además del precio mínimo, se encuentran:

— un seguimiento por parte de la Comisión para asegurarse de que el daño causado por las políticas chinas desaparece;

— las consideraciones de política general pueden influir en la modificación de las mismas, incluyendo la estabilidad de los suministros.

Pro Sun, que motivó la investigación por parte de la Comisión, ha mostrado su desacuerdo con al acuerdo al que han llegado la UE y China, pues considera que la situación de dumping se mantiene.

Los datos de la Comisión indican que todas las investigaciones llevadas a cabo este año han sido en relación a China. Sin embargo, es preocupante que en 2012 se iniciasen 19 investigaciones, y que en junio de este año solo se hubiesen abierto 4. De no abrirse más investigaciones, nos encontraríamos con un descenso de alrededor de un 475 % respecto al año anterior.

¿Qué opina la Comisión de la oposición de Pro Sun a la medida acordada entre la UE y el Gobierno chino? ¿Investiga también la Comisión los casos de dumping social? ¿Cuál es la razón del elevado descenso en los casos de investigación de casos de violación del derecho de la competencia?

Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de noviembre de 2013)

En su Reglamento por el que se establecen medidas provisionales el 5 de junio de 2013, la Comisión llegó a la conclusión de que, en efecto, existía un alto nivel de dumping de los productores exportadores chinos, pero que bastaría con aplicar un nivel más bajo de derechos para eliminar el perjuicio sufrido por la industria de la UE. En consecuencia, impuso medidas provisionales en un nivel medio del 47 % (11 % en los dos primeros meses).

Mediante la Decisión de 2 de agosto de 2013, publicada en el Diario Oficial el 3 de agosto de 2013, la Comisión aceptó un compromiso ofrecido por un grupo de productores exportadores junto con la Cámara de Comercio china de Maquinaria y Equipos. Todas las importaciones no cubiertas por el compromiso estarán sujetas al derecho íntegro. La Comisión ha aceptado dicho compromiso relativo a la aplicación de derechos provisionales porque la evaluación realizada puso de manifiesto que elimina el efecto perjudicial del dumping por los motivos expuestos en la Decisión por la que se acepta el compromiso.

El Acuerdo de la Organización Mundial del Comercio no contempla el «dumping social». Por consiguiente, la Comisión Europea no puede ampararse en ninguna base jurídica del Acuerdo Antidumping para actuar contra un supuesto «dumping social».

El número de nuevas investigaciones antidumping y antisubvenciones iniciadas en la primera mitad de 2013 es, en efecto, inferior al del año anterior. Ello se debe a que el número de casos presentados por la industria de la Unión ha disminuido. La Comisión examina los casos una vez presentados y tiene la obligación de iniciar una investigación cuando se cumplen las condiciones jurídicas.

La experiencia nos enseña que el número de investigaciones iniciadas fluctúa, como puede observarse de la actividad desarrollada en los últimos diez años.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009964/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(2 September 013u)

*Sj bæ:t6*China: Anti-dumping

The anti-dumping investigation into the Chinese manufacturing of photovoltaic panels ended on 6 June 2013 with the application of provisional duties on EU imports of Chinese panels. The levies should be imposed in two stages: the first (11.8%) on 6 June, and the second (47.6%) on 6 August.

On 3 August, however, the Commission reached an agreement with the Chinese Chamber of Commerce to adopt a consensus position, setting minimum prices for certain quotas. The deal appears to mean that 60% of Chinese solar panel exports to the EU will remain unchanged. In addition to the minimum price, the terms of the agreement include:

— monitoring by the Commission to ensure that the damage caused by Chinese policies disappears;

— general policy considerations may lead to the amendment thereof, including the stability of supplies.

Pro Sun, which prompted the Commission investigation, has expressed its dissatisfaction with the agreement reached between EU and China, as it believes that the dumping is continuing.

According to Commission figures, all investigations conducted this year have been in relation to China. However, it is cause for concern that 19 investigations were opened in 2012, whereas only 4 had been opened by June this year. If more investigations are not opened, it will mean a drop of around 475% compared with the previous year.

What does the Commission think about Pro Sun's opposition to the measures agreed between the EU and the Chinese Government? Is the Commission also investigating cases of social dumping? Why has there been such a large drop in investigations concerning breaches of competition law?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(30 November 013u)

In the Commission Regulation imposing provisional measures on 5 June 2013, the Commission concluded that there was indeed a high level of dumping by the Chinese exporting producers but that a lower level of duties was sufficient to elimnate the injury being suffered by the EU industry. As a consequence it imposed provisional measures at an average level of 47% (11% for the first 2 months).

The Commission has acceped an undertaking offered by a group of exporting producers, together with the Chinese Chamber of Commerce for Machinery and Equipment by decision of 2 August 2013, published in the Official Journal on 3 August 2013. All imports that are not covered by the undertaking will be subject to the full duty. The Commission has accepted that undertaking with regards to the application of provisional duties, because the assessment carried out showed that it removes the injurious effect of dumping for the reasons set out in the decision accepting the undertaking.

The World Trade Organisation Anti-dumping Agreement does not refer to 'social dumping'. The European Commission has therefore no legal basis in the WTO Anti-dumping Agreement for acting against any alleged 'social dumping'.

The number of new anti-dumping and anti-subsidy investigations initiated in the first half of 2013 is indeed lower than last year. This is due to the fact that the number of cases the Union industry has lodged has decreased. The Commission analyses them once they are lodged and is obliged to initiate an investigation should the legal conditions be met.

Experience shows that the number of investigations initiated fluctuates, as it can be observed over the activity of the last 10 years.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009965/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(6 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Patrimonio nacional

«Para hacer frente a sus déficits, España vende un cuarto de su patrimonio nacional, incluidas joyas naturales», afirmó recientemente el diario Le Monde ([1]), detallando el plan del Gobierno para vender 15 000 propiedades del Estado, entras las que destaca La Almoraina, «una pequeña joya natural única en Europa, de 14 000 hectáreas, de las que el 90 % pertenecen al Parque Natural de los Alcornocales, uno de los ejemplos más espectaculares de bosque mediterráneo primario». Añaden que «Para facilitar la venta de La Almoraina, cuyo precio de mercado actual rebasaría los 180 millones de euros, el Gobierno aprobó un plan de desarrollo para el lugar, incluyendo el permiso para crear dos campos de golf y la construcción de un hotel de cinco estrellas y un aeropuerto, condición sine qua non para atraer a los ricos clientes rusos o del Golfo acostumbrados a Marbella, el Saint-Tropez local».

Al mismo tiempo, el Primer Ministro de Finlandia, Jyrki Katainen, afirmó en declaraciones al semanario *Der Spiegel* que «A los países en dificultades, ahora mismo no les puede interesar vender participaciones estatales porque el precio será muy bajo. En lugar de ello, pueden usar ese patrimonio para garantizar sus bonos».

¿Se han llevado a cabo estas actuaciones bajo recomendación de la Comisión? ¿Son el medioambiente y la protección de nuestro patrimonio nacional elementos de menor prioridad que los objetivos de déficit o la recuperación de los mercados?

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

1. Tales actuaciones no han sido adoptadas a raíz de la Recomendación de la Comisión.

2. Un entorno macroeconómico estable y saneado permite asignar más recursos a la protección del medio ambiente y a la conservación del patrimonio cultural.

([1]) http://www.radiocable.com/monde-venta-joyas-naturales2437.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009965/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: National heritage

The newspaper *Le Monde* ([1]) recently reported that in order to address its deficits, Spain was selling a quarter of its national heritage, including some natural treasures. It detailed the Government's plan to sell 15 000 state-owned properties, most notably including La Almoraina, a small natural treasure which is one of a kind in Europe; it comprises 14 000 hectares, 90% of which belong to Los Alcornocales Natural Park, one of the most spectacular examples of primary Mediterranean forest. It went on to say that in order to facilitate the sale of La Almoraina, the current market price of which would exceed EUR 180 million, the Government had approved a development plan for the site, including permission to build two golf courses, a five-star hotel and an airport, *sine qua non*-to attract wealthy clients from Russia and the Gulf who are accustomed to Marbella, the local Saint-Tropez.

At the same time, the Finnish Prime Minister, Jyrki Katainen, has told *Der Spiegel* that: 'At the moment, it's probably not worth it for the ailing countries to sell state assets when prices are so low. Instead, they could use these holdings to secure loans.'

Have these actions been taken on the Commission's recommendation? Are the environment and the protection of our national heritage less important than deficit targets and market recovery?

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

1. Such actions have not been taken on the Commission's recommendation.

2. A sound and stable macroeconomic context allows allocating more resources to environmental protection and the preservation of cultural heritage.

([1]) http://www.radiocable.com/monde-venta-joyas-naturales2437.html

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