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Hinweis für den Leser

Diese Veröffentlichung enthält Anfragen der Mitglieder des Europäischen Parlaments zur schriftlichen Beantwortung und die entsprechenden Antworten eines Organs der Europäischen Union.

Jede Anfrage und ihre Antwort werden zunächst in der Originalsprache und anschließend in den eventuellen Übersetzungen angegeben.

In einigen Fällen kann es vorkommen, dass die Antwort in einer anderen Sprache verfasst ist als die Anfrage. Dies hängt von der Arbeitssprache des Gremiums ab, das mit der Beantwortung beauftragt wurde.

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ABKÜRZUNGEN DER FRAKTIONEN

PPE	Fraktion der Europäischen Volkspartei (Christdemokraten)
S&D	Fraktion der Progressiven Allianz der Sozialisten und Demokraten im Europäischen Parlament
ALDE	Fraktion der Allianz der Liberalen und Demokraten für Europa
Verts/ALE	Fraktion der Grünen/Freie Europäische Allianz
ECR	Europäische Konservative und Reformisten
GUE/NGL	Konföderale Fraktion der Vereinigten Europäischen Linken/Nordische Grüne Linke
EFD	Fraktion „Europa der Freiheit und der Demokratie"
NI	Fraktionslos

IV

(Informationen)

INFORMATIONEN DER ORGANE, EINRICHTUNGEN UND SONSTIGEN STELLEN DER EUROPÄISCHEN UNION

EUROPÄISCHES PARLAMENT

ANFRAGEN ZUR SCHRIFTLICHEN BEANTWORTUNG MIT ANTWORT

Anfragen der Mitglieder des Europäischen Parlaments zur schriftlichen Beantwortung und die entsprechenden Antworten eines Organs der Europäischen Union

(2014/C 197/01)

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(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009966/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(6 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Sytuacja chrześcijan koptyjskich w Egipcie

Od 3 lipca 2013 r. Stowarzyszenie Braci Muzułmanów spaliło 85 kościołów w Egipcie i zaatakowało wielu ludzi, niszcząc ich mienie i naruszając ich prawo do szacunku i nietykalności cielesnej.

Egipscy chrześcijanie żyją w strachu po serii ataków na ich kościoły, firmy i domy. W piątek 17 sierpnia zwolennicy obalonego prezydenta Mursiego zgromadzili się po modlitwie i podpalili dwa kościoły oraz kilka prowadzonych przez chrześcijan sklepów w Mallawi niedaleko miasta Al-Minja w Egipcie. Odnotowano wiele podobnych przypadków, które zostały dobrze udokumentowane za pomocą zdjęć i nagrań wideo, dostępnych obecnie w internecie.

Christian Science Monitor opublikował raport wskazujący, że co najmniej kilka takich ataków dokonano z premedytacją: domy i sklepy chrześcijan w jednej wiosce zostały oznaczone czerwonym napisem o treści „Ślubujemy przelać krew, aby bronić mandatu wyborczego Mursiego".

Przemoc na tle religijnym nie jest w Egipcie zjawiskiem nowym, ale przybiera obecnie nowy wymiar – stwierdził Ishak Ibrahim, pracownik badawczy Egipskiej Inicjatywy na rzecz Praw Osobistych. W Egipcie nigdy nie dochodziło do tak brutalnych napaści.

1. Jakie kroki podjęła Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych (ESDZ) oraz delegatura UE w Kairze w celu ochrony praw podstawowych Koptów, jednej z najstarszych wspólnot chrześcijańskich na świecie?

2. Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel uważa, że władze UE traktują tę kwestię z należytym zainteresowaniem i uwagą?

3. Jakie działania polityczne można zrealizować, aby nakłonić władze egipskie do wzięcia odpowiedzialności za sytuację prześladowanych chrześcijan i podjęcia bardziej stanowczych kroków w celu ochrony ich praw?

4. Jak opisywane wydarzenia wpłyną na stosunki dwustronne między UE a Egiptem, przy uwzględnieniu faktu, że Egipt jest prawnie związany układem o stowarzyszeniu, który wszedł w życie w 2004 r.?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(13 listopada 2013 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca wyraźnie potępiła przypadki skrajnej przemocy, zabójstw i ataków, np. na kościoły, które nastąpiły w wyniku rozpędzenia w połowie sierpnia demonstracji wspieranych przez Stowarzyszenie Braci Muzułmanów. W dniu 21 sierpnia Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca Komisji zwołała nadzwyczajne posiedzenie Rady do Spraw Zagranicznych w sprawie Egiptu, gdzie ministrowie spraw zagranicznych państw UE przyjęli konkluzje, w których odnieśli się w szczególności do licznych przypadków zniszczeń kościołów i ataków na wspólnotę koptyjską.

UE jest zaniepokojona ograniczeniami, jakim podlegają różne mniejszości religijne w Egipcie, i potępia wszelkie formy nietolerancji, dyskryminacji i przemocy ze względu na religię lub przekonania, niezależnie od tego, gdzie ma to miejsce i o jaką religię chodzi. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca regularnie wzywa egipskie władze do zapewnienia wolności wyznania i przekonań w tym kraju.

Delegatura UE w Kairze uważnie śledzi przypadki przemocy na tle wyznaniowym i w swoich kontaktach z władzami egipskimi podkreśla znaczenie unikania dyskryminacji z przyczyn religijnych. Aby wesprzeć poprawę wolności wyznania lub przekonań w Egipcie, Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca z zaangażowaniem współpracuje z wszelkimi zainteresowanymi stronami w tym kraju, a także z regionalnymi i międzynarodowymi organizacjami podzielającymi wartości i cele UE w tym zakresie. UE stwierdza, że współpraca i dialog polityczny są najbardziej odpowiednimi kanałami zachęcania rządu i wywierania na niego presji, aby podjął konkretne działania w celu ochrony Koptów i innych mniejszości religijnych.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009966/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Situation of Coptic Christians in Egypt

Since 3 July 2013, the Muslim Brotherhood has burned 85 churches in Egypt and attacked numerous people, destroying their property and violating their right to respect and bodily integrity.

Egypt's Christians are living in fear after a string of attacks against their churches, businesses and homes. On Friday 17 August, supporters of ousted president Morsi gathered after prayer and burned two churches and some Christian-owned shops in the village of Mallawi near Minya, Egypt. Many similar cases were noted and are well documented with pictures and movies that are available online.

The *Christian Science Monitor* published a report suggesting that at least some of the attacks were premeditated, with Christian homes and shops in one village being marked with red graffiti 'vowing to protect Morsi's electoral legitimacy with blood'.

'Sectarian violence is nothing new in Egypt, but it takes a new dimension' said Ishak Ibrahim, a researcher for the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights. Such a violent onslaught has never happened before in Egypt.

1. What steps have been taken by the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the EU Delegation in Cairo to protect the basic human rights of the Copts, one of the world's oldest Christian communities?

2. Does the Vice-President/High Representative think that the issue is being treated with adequate seriousness and attention by EU authorities?

3. What kind of political action can be taken to urge the Egyptian authorities to take responsibility for the situation of persecuted Christians and start making more decisive moves to protect their rights?

4. How will these events affect bilateral relations between the EU and Egypt, taking into account the fact that Egypt is legally bound by the Association Agreement which came into force in 2004?

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

HR/VP condemned in the clearest possible terms the extreme violence, killings and attacks e.g. on churches that followed the dispersal in mid-August of the Muslim Brotherhood supported sit-ins. On 21 August, the HR/VP convened an extra-ordinary Foreign Affairs Council on Egypt where EU Foreign Ministers adopted conclusions which also specifically referred to the destruction of many churches and the targeting of the Coptic community.

The EU is aware and concerned about the constraints that different religious minorities face in Egypt and condemns all forms of intolerance, discrimination and violence against persons because of their religion or belief, wherever it takes place and regardless of the religion. The HR/VP is repeatedly calling on the Egyptian authorities to ensure freedom of religion or belief in the country.

The EU Delegation in Cairo is closely following cases of sectarian violence and emphasises the importance of avoiding discrimination on religious grounds in its contacts with Egyptian authorities. In order to support the improvement of freedom of religion or belief in Egypt, the HR/VP is keen to engage with the relevant stakeholders in the country as well as with the regional and international organisations sharing EU's values and objectives in this respect. The EU considers that cooperation and political dialogue are the most appropriate channels to encourage and put pressure on the government so that it will undertake concrete actions in order to protect Copts and other religious minorities.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009967/13
do Komisji
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(6 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Naruszenie konwencji TIR przez Rosję

Od dnia 14 września rosyjscy celnicy zaczną wymagać od przewoźników, by kupowali w Rosji dodatkowe gwarancje uiszczenia cła i podatków, niezależne od karnetów TIR. Z powodu tej decyzji Federalnej Służby Celnej Rosji nasilają się obawy o paraliż transportu drogowego z Rosją, na co szczególnie narażona jest Polska, jako kraj sąsiedzki.

Ponadto Federalna Służba Celna Rosji ogłosiła, że od 1 grudnia wypowiada umowę gwarancyjną z rosyjskim stowarzyszeniem międzynarodowych przewoźników ASMAP, które odpowiada w Rosji za realizację zobowiązań z tytułu konwencji TIR.

Decyzje te doprowadzą do powstania zatorów na granicach, podniesienia kosztów przewozu towarów oraz zatamują międzynarodowy handel.

Jest to naruszenie przez Rosję nie tylko konwencji TIR, ale także przepisów porozumienia UE – Rosja z 2005 r., porozumienia w sprawie taryf celnych i handlu GATT oraz konwencji wiedeńskiej o prawie traktatów międzynarodowych.

Czy Komisja podjęła jakąkolwiek interwencję w celu wpłynięcia na zmianę decyzji Rosji i jeśli tak, z jakim skutkiem?

Jakie działania zamierza podjąć Komisja w tym celu i w jaki sposób zareaguje na takie naruszenie?

Czy sprawa ta zostanie podjęta w relacjach dwustronnych UE-Rosja na najbliższym szczycie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Algirdasa Šemetę w imieniu Komisji
(28 października 2013 r.)

Komisja podjęła bezzwłoczne działania: Komisarz Šemeta przystąpił do wymiany listów z szefem rosyjskiej Federalnej Służby Celnej (FCS), Andriejem Bieljaninowem , i wezwał do odroczenia podjęcia środków ze względu na ich ewentualne wycofanie. Następnie przeprowadzono telekonferencję z rosyjską służbą celną i misję wyjaśniającą w Moskwie. Ponadto Komisja aktywnie zajmowała się tą kwestią na szczeblu wielostronnym. Jej działania obejmowały wystosowanie pisma do Sekretarza Wykonawczego Europejskiej Komisji Gospodarczej ONZ, zwołanie nadzwyczajnego posiedzenia Rady Wykonawczej TIR, a także podjęcie konsultacji z Międzynarodowym Związkiem Transportu Drogowego i jego członkami spoza UE, którzy graniczą z Rosją. Działania te były koordynowane z państwami członkowskimi, zwłaszcza na forum Komitetu Kodeksu Celnego. W następstwie tych działań FCS zdecydowała się na ograniczenie wdrożenia tych środków od dnia 14 września w okręgach celnych Syberii i Dalekiego Wschodu, a od dnia 9 października odnosić się to będzie także do okręgu nadwołżańskiego i uralskiego, co de facto odroczy ich stosowanie przy granicy z UE i tym samym będzie dotyczyło większości działalności transportowej przewoźników unijnych do dnia 1 grudnia 2013 r.

FCS rozwiązał umowę ze stowarzyszeniem poręczającym z dniem 1 grudnia. Od tej daty poręczenia TIR nie będą dłużej stosowane w Rosji, jednak formalnie kraj ten nie może naruszać warunków Konwencji TIR. Komisja będzie w dalszym ciągu poruszać tę kwestię na odpowiednich forach wielostronnych (tj. w organach Konwencji TIR w ramach EKG ONZ) oraz dwustronnych, by zapewnić, że poręczenia TIR będą dostępne w Rosji także po tej dacie. W zależności od rozwoju sytuacji, Komisja będzie podejmowała odpowiednie działania, w tym działania na szczeblu politycznym.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009967/13
to the Commission
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Infringement of the TIR Convention by Russia

From 14 September Russian customs officials will require hauliers to purchase extra customs and duty payment guarantees when entering Russia, in addition to the TIR carnet. This decision by Russia's Federal Customs Service has intensified fears that road links with Russia will come to a standstill, which would have a particularly adverse impact on the neighbouring county of Poland.

Russia's Federal Customs Service has also announced that from 1 December it will terminate its guarantee agreement with the Russian Association of International Road Transport Carriers (ASMAP), which is responsible for meeting the country's obligations under the TIR Convention.

These decisions will mean hold-ups at border crossings, an increase in freight haulage costs and barriers to international trade.

Russia is infringing not only the TIR Convention, but also the provisions of the EU-Russia agreement signed in 2005, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties.

Has the Commission taken any action to influence Russia's decision, and, if so, what was the outcome?

What measures does the Commission intend to take in this respect, and how will it respond to this infringement?

Will this issue be raised in bilateral talks between the EU and Russia at the forthcoming summit?

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

The Commission acted promptly: Commissioner Šemeta engaged in an exchange of letters with the Head of Russia's Federal Customs Service (FCS), Andrey Belyaninov, and called for a postponement of the measures with a view to their eventual withdrawal. A teleconference with Russian Customs and a fact-finding mission to Moscow followed. In addition, the Commission was active in handling the issue at the multilateral level, which included a letter to the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, an extraordinary session of the TIR Executive Board, as well as consultations with the International Road Transport Union and its non-EU members sharing land borders with Russia. These activities were coordinated with Member States, notably in the Customs Code Committee. Subsequent to this, the FCS decided to limit the implementation of the measures as of 14 September to the Siberian and Far East customs districts, extended on 9 October to the Volga and Ural districts, *de facto* postponing their application at the border with the EU, and thus with regard to most transport operations performed by EU hauliers, to 1 December 2013.

The FCS has revoked the contract of the national guaranteeing association as of 1 December. From that date TIR guarantees will no longer be applicable in Russia but, formally, the country might not be in breach of the TIR Convention. The Commission will nevertheless continue to raise this issue in the appropriate multilateral (i.e. the TIR bodies within the UNECE framework) and bilateral fora with a view to ensuring that TIR guarantees remain available in Russia after that date. Depending on the development of the situation the Commission will take appropriate initiatives including at the political level.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys P-009968/13
komissiolle
Sari Essayah (PPE)
(6. syyskuuta 2013)

Aihe: Pienten yritysten ALV-velvoitteiden erityisjärjestelmästä

ALV-direktiivissä 2006/112/EY säädetään pieniä yrityksiä koskevasta erityisjärjestelmästä, jonka tarkoituksena on yksinkertaistaa ja keventää pienten yritysten ALV-velvoitteita. Erityisjärjestelmän mukaan jäsenvaltiot voivat vapauttaa pienet yritykset ALV-velvoitteista, mikäli yrityksen liikevaihto ei ylitä direktiivissä määrättyjä enimmäisraja-arvoja. Nämä liikevaihdon enimmäisraja-arvot kuitenkin vaihtelevat jäsenvaltioista toiseen, johtuen muun muassa historiallisista syistä ja EU:n laajentumisen yhteydessä jäsenvaltioille myönnetyistä poikkeuksista. Komissio on myöntänyt, että näiden säännösten seurauksena jäsenvaltiot eivät ole lainkaan samanarvoisessa asemassa. Komissio on myös aika ajoin ehdottanut järjestelmän yhtenäistämistä, esimerkiksi säätämällä erityisjärjestelmästä hyötyvien pienten yritysten liikevaihdon enimmäisraja-arvon 100 000 euron tasolle kaikissa jäsenvaltioissa. Näin jäsenvaltiot voisivat oman harkintansa mukaan soveltaa pienten yritysten erityisjärjestelmää kansallisella tasolla tämän enimmäisraja-arvon sallimissa rajoissa.

1. Mihin toimiin komissio aikoo ryhtyä, jotta ALV-direktiivin pienten yritysten erityisjärjestelmä ei johtaisi jäsenvaltioiden väliseen epätasa-arvoon?

2. Aikooko komissio ryhtyä toimiin, jotta ALV-direktiivin salliman pienten yritysten erityisjärjestelmän mukainen liikevaihdon enimmäisraja-arvo olisi sama, esimerkiksi 100 000 euroa tai vastaava määrä, kaikissa jäsenvaltioissa?

Algirdas Šemetan komission puolesta antama vastaus
(30. syyskuuta 2013)

Jäsenvaltioille annetaan ALV-direktiivillä mahdollisuus soveltaa pieniin yrityksiin tiettyjä yksinkertaistettuja yksityiskohtaisia sääntöjä ([1]) niiden vaikeuksien ratkaisemiseksi, joita yrityksillä voi olla ALV-velvoitteidensa noudattamisessa. Tarkemmin sanottuna jäsenvaltiot voivat vapauttaa arvonlisäverosta erittäin pienet yritykset (yleisesti ottaen ne, joiden liikevaihto on alle 5 000 euroa vuodessa, joskin muutamille jäsenvaltioille on annettu erityislupa soveltaa korkeampaa raja-arvoa). Yritykset, joihin tällaista järjestelmää sovelletaan, eivät kanna myynneistään arvonlisäveroa, joten niillä ei ole myöskään ostoihin liittyvää vähennysoikeutta.

Komissio teki vuonna 2004 ehdotuksen ([2]), jolla jäsenvaltioille annetaan oikeus asettaa 100 000 euroa liikevaihdon ylärajaksi, jonka alle jäävät yritykset voidaan vapauttaa arvonlisäverosta. Komissio katsoo, että jäsenvaltioilla olisi säilyttävä vapaus määritellä raja-arvo joustavasti, jotta ne voisivat luoda itsenäisesti sellaisen järjestelmän, jota pitävät maansa talouden rakenteen kannalta tarkoituksenmukaisimpana. Ehdotuksen myötä kaikkia jäsenvaltioita kohdeltaisiin kuitenkin samalla tavalla. Ehdotuksesta ei ole vielä päästy neuvostossa yksimielisyyteen.

Komissio toteaa arvonlisäveron tulevaisuudesta antamassaan tiedonannossa ([3]), että yritysten, ja erityisesti kaikkein pienimpien yritysten taakan keventäminen on sille edelleen keskeinen painopiste. Erityisesti pk-yrityksiä koskevista lisätoimenpiteistä ei ole kuitenkaan vielä päätetty.

([1]) Direktiivin 2006/112/EY 281-292 artikla.
([2]) KOM(2004) 728.
([3]) Komission tiedonanto Euroopan parlamentille, neuvostolle ja Euroopan talous- ja sosiaalikomitealle arvonlisäveron tulevaisuudesta – Kohti yksinkertaisempaa, vakaampaa ja tehokkaampaa sisämarkkinoiden tarpeisiin suunniteltua alv-järjestelmää. (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0851:FIN:FI:PDF)

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009968/13
to the Commission
Sari Essayah (PPE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Special scheme for small enterprises concerning VAT obligations

The VAT Directive 2006/112/EC provides for a special scheme for small enterprises, the purpose of which is to simplify and alleviate VAT obligations for SMEs. Under this special scheme, the Member States may exempt small enterprises from VAT obligations if the firm's turnover does not exceed the ceilings specified in the directive. However, these turnover ceilings vary from one Member State to another, partly for historical reasons and because of exemptions granted to the Member States in the course of EU enlargement. The Commission concedes that, as a result of these rules, the Member States do not enjoy anything like a level playing field. It has also from time to time proposed harmonising the system, e.g. by setting the turnover ceiling for small enterprises benefiting from the special scheme at EUR 100 000 for all Member States. This would enable the Member States to adapt the special scheme for SMEs at national level at their own discretion within the limits of this ceiling.

1. What measures does the Commission propose to take to ensure that the special scheme for small enterprises under the VAT Directive does not lead to inequality between the Member States?

2. Does the Commission propose to take measures to ensure that the turnover ceiling allowed under the special scheme for small enterprises in the VAT Directive is the same in all Member States, say EUR 100 000 or equivalent?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(30 September 2013)

The VAT Directive provides an option for Member States to apply certain simplified procedures for small enterprises ([1]) to address possible difficulties such enterprises might have in complying with their VAT obligations. Specifically, Member States are allowed to exempt from VAT very small businesses (generally those with a turnover of less than EUR 5 000 per year, although a number of Member States have been specifically authorised to apply a higher threshold). Businesses benefitting from such a regime do not charge VAT on their sales, and accordingly have no right of deduction on their purchases.

The Commission adopted a proposal in 2004 ([2]) which gives the Member States the right to set a threshold of up to EUR 100 000 below which businesses can be exempted from VAT. The Commission considers that Member States should keep flexibility in determining the threshold which should give them the autonomy to set up a regime they consider the most appropriate in view of the structure of their national economy. The proposal would however treat all Member states in the same way. However, no unanimous agreement has yet been reached in Council on this proposal.

In the communication on the future of VAT ([3]), easing the burdens on businesses and notably on the smallest ones, remains a key priority for the Commission. No decision has however yet been taken on additional measures specifically targeted at SMEs.

([1]) Directive 2006/112/EC Articles 281 to 292.
([2]) COM(2004)728.
([3]) Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee on the future of VAT — Towards a simpler, more robust and efficient VAT system tailored to the single market (http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/vat/key_documents/communications/com_2011_851_en.pdf).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009969/13
to the Council
Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Kurdish political settlement

President-in-Office of the Council Lucinda Creighton spoke in a debate in Parliament on 6 February 2013 of how the 'terrible and brutal killings of three PKK activists in Paris' in January 'serve to underline to all of us the importance of settling the Kurdish issue […] in the interests of all concerned. A settlement would play a vital role in helping ensure the security and the stability of the region'.

In contrast to this sentiment, however, Adem Uzun of the Kurdistan National Congress (KNK), one of the main Kurdish negotiators meeting with high-level Turkish government representatives in the so-called 'Oslo Process' to achieve peace through the resumption of negotiations between Turkey and the Kurds, remains detained without trial in France, having been arrested in France on 6 October 2012.

Would the Council consider it appropriate to delist the PKK as a terrorist organisation in order to help promote a political settlement and give recognition to the contribution that the Kurdish community in the EU can make to the attainment of this objective?

Reply
(28 October 2013)

The Council has not discussed the specific question raised by the Honourable Member.

The PKK remains on the EU list of terrorist organisations. On 21 March 2013, the EU High Representative and Commissioner Füle welcomed the call on the PKK to lay down arms and withdraw beyond Turkey's borders and the positive reactions to that call. They recalled that the EU had repeatedly encouraged all parties to work unremittingly to bring peace and prosperity for all citizens of Turkey. Finally, they indicated that the EU gave its full support to this process and stood ready to help, including through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009970/13
to the Commission
Vicky Ford (ECR)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Health and Safety at Work Framework Directive

Given that the 'Top 10' consultation has identified the Health and Safety at Work Framework Directive as one of the most burdensome pieces of EU legislation for SMEs, how will the Commission now act to reduce the costs that this legislation causes small businesses?

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

The Commission follow-up to the top 10 consultation is set out in a recent Communication which, as regards this directive, mainly refers to the ongoing *ex-post* evaluation of OSH Directives ([1]). The outcome is expected for 2015. It will address relevance, research and new scientific knowledge in the various fields in question, and include an assessment of the benefits and costs of the directives, including for SMEs and the society. This evaluation will cover compliance costs and administrative burdens but also the benefits in terms of reduced number of accidents and work related health problems. The recent evaluation of the EU Occupational Safety and Health Strategy has shown that EU level action is efficient and necessary ([2]). The Commission will inform the other EU institutions and bodies of the results and of any suggestions on how to improve the operation of the regulatory framework. Pending the results, it is not envisaged to propose at this stage any initiative to repeal or consolidate existing legislation in the area of health and safety at work ([3]).

([1]) Commission follow-up to the 'TOP TEN' Consultation of SMEs on EU Regulation, COM(2013) 446, point 2.3.
([2]) Commission staff working document, Evaluation of the European Strategy 2007-2012 on health and safety at work, SWD (2013) 202.
([3]) Regulatory Fitness and Performance Programme (REFIT): Initial Results of the Mapping of the Acquis, SWD (2013) 401.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009971/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(6 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αύξηση των μεταναστευτικών πιέσεων στα θαλάσσια σύνορα της ΕΕ

Κατά τη διάρκεια του καλοκαιριού παρατηρήθηκε αύξηση των μεταναστευτικών πιέσεων στα σύνορα των κρατών μελών που βρίσκονται στην περιοχή της Μεσογείου. Μάλιστα, η συγκεκριμένη αύξηση απειλεί να υπερβεί τις δυνατότητες φιλοξενίας που έχουν τα κέντρα φιλοξενίας και πρώτης υποδοχής των κρατών μελών.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Διαθέτει στοιχεία αναφορικά με τις διαδρομές στη Μεσόγειο όπου παρατηρήθηκαν οι μεγαλύτερες αυξήσεις μεταναστευτικών ροών;

Απάντηση της κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Σύμφωνα με τις πληροφορίες που συνέλεξε η Frontex και οι οποίες αντικατοπτρίζουν την κατάσταση μεταξύ Ιανουαρίου και Αυγούστου 2013, η μεγαλύτερη αύξηση της μεταναστευτικής ροής, σε σύγκριση με την ίδια περίοδο του 2012, σημειώθηκε στη μεταναστευτική διαδρομή της Κεντρικής Μεσογείου. Ακριβέστερα, κατά την εν λόγω χρονική περίοδο ανιχνεύθηκαν 19 599 παράτυποι μετανάστες, αριθμός που αντιστοιχεί σε αύξηση 217%.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009971/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Increasing immigration pressures on the EU's maritime borders

Over the summer, there has been an increase in immigration pressures on Member State frontiers in the Mediterranean region. Moreover, the increase threatens to exceed the hosting resources available at the hospitality and initial reception centres of the Member States.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Does it have data on the routes in the Mediterranean area that have recorded the greatest increases in immigration flows?

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

According to the information obtained from Frontex and which reflects the situation between January and August 2013, the Central Mediterranean migratory route has recorded the greatest increases in immigration flows compared to the same period of 2012. More precisely, within that period 19 599 irregular immigrants were detected, which represents a 217% increase.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009972/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(6 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Δανειακές ανάγκες της Ελλάδας μέχρι το 2020

Σε επίσημο έγγραφο του γερμανικού υπουργείου Οικονομικών από τον Σεπτέμβριο του 2012, που επικαλείται η γερμανική εφημερίδα Bild και που φέρεται να υπογράφει ο υφυπουργός οικονομικών, επισημαίνεται ότι «η Ελλάδα χρειάζεται ακόμα 77,7 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ» για τις χρηματοδοτικές της ανάγκες κατά την περίοδο 2015-2020. Από την πλευρά του, το Υπουργείο Οικονομικών απέρριψε τον ισχυρισμό αυτό, κάνοντας λόγο για «σύγχυση μεταξύ μικτού και καθαρού ποσού».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Οι εκτιμήσεις που αναφέρονται στο έγγραφο επιβεβαιώνονται από τα επίσημα στοιχεία της Επιτροπής; Το γερμανικό Υπουργείο Οικονομικών συμβουλεύτηκε την Επιτροπή προκειμένου να εκτιμήσει το ύψος του ποσού;

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

Οι ακαθάριστες κρατικές δανειακές ανάγκες περιλαμβάνουν τα εξής:

— το έλλειμμα της Γενικής Κυβέρνησης (πρωτογενές έλλειμμα και πληρωμές τόκων)

— εξαγορές (βραχυπρόθεσμες και μακροπρόθεσμες, εμπορεύσιμες και μη εμπορεύσιμες)

— λοιπές ανάγκες χρηματοδότησης (π.χ. ανακεφαλαιοποίηση των τραπεζών).

Οι καθαρές δανειακές ανάγκες, με τη σειρά τους, αποτελούν το αναμενόμενο ποσό δανεισμού που θα χρειαστεί μετά την προσφυγή σε προγραμματισμένη μείωση των περιουσιακών στοιχείων (π.χ. χρήση ταμειακών αποθεμάτων ασφαλείας, ιδιωτικοποιήσεις, άλλα έσοδα).

Οι υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής δημοσιεύουν τακτικά εκτιμήσεις των δανειακών αναγκών της Ελλάδας στις σχετικές εκθέσεις ανασκόπησης — η τελευταία δημοσιεύτηκε τον Ιούλιο του 2013 ([1]). Κατά την τρέχουσα ανασκόπηση καταρτίζεται επικαιροποιημένη εκτίμηση των δανειακών αναγκών της Ελλάδας και θα κοινοποιηθεί στα σχετικά έγγραφα του προγράμματος.

Τα 77 δισ. ευρώ που αναφέρει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος δεν προέρχονται από εκτιμήσεις της Επιτροπής.

([1]) Βλέπε: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp159_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009972/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Greece's borrowing requirements up to 2020

An official German Finance Ministry document of September 2012, quoted by the German newspaper *Bild* and reportedly signed by the Deputy Finance Minister, states that 'Greece still needs EUR 77.7 billion' for its funding needs during the 2015-2020 period. The Finance Ministry, however, has rejected this statement, claiming that there is confusion between the gross and net sum.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Are the estimates mentioned in the documents confirmed by the Commission's official data? Did the German Finance Ministry consult the Commission when estimating the size of the sum?

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

Sovereign gross financing needs include:

— General government deficit (primary deficit and interest payments)

— Sovereign redemptions (short- and long-term, market and non-market)

— Other financing needs (e.g. bank recapitalisations.).

Net financing needs, in turn, represent the expected amount of borrowing that would be needed following the recourse to planned reduction of assets (e.g. use of cash buffer, privatisations, other income).

The Commission services publish regularly the assessment of Greece's financing needs in their review reports — the latest in July 2013. ([1]) An updated assessment of Greece's financing needs is being prepared during the ongoing review and will be communicated in the related programme documents.

The EUR 77 billion mentioned by the Honourable Member does not come from estimates made by the Commission.

([1]) See at: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp159_en.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009973/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(6 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Διαχείριση τροφίμων

Σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο, υπολογίζεται ότι περίπου το 40% των παραγόμενων τροφίμων καταλήγουν στα σκουπίδια των ανεπτυγμένων χωρών.

Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει η Επιτροπή για τα συγκριτικά στοιχεία που προκύπτουν για το συγκεκριμένο ζήτημα στα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ; Διαπιστώνει ότι βελτιώνεται η ικανότητα των κρατών μελών όσον αφορά την ορθή διαχείριση των τροφίμων; Ποια η περίπτωση της Ελλάδας;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(18 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Σύμφωνα με τη χρηματοδοτούμενη από την ΕΕ «Προπαρασκευαστική μελέτη για τα απορρίμματα τροφίμων στην ΕΕ των 27 ([1])» το 45% του συνόλου των απορριμμάτων τροφίμων που παρήχθησαν στην Ευρώπη το 2006, διατέθηκε σε χωματερές. Πρόκειται για περίπου 40 εκατομμύρια τόνους.

Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει καμία πληροφορία σχετικά με τις ιδιαιτερότητες κάθε κράτους μέλους και τη συγκεκριμένη κατάταξη της Ελλάδας.

Η Επιτροπή έχει αρχίσει να εξετάζει με τους ενδιαφερομένους τον τρόπο ελαχιστοποίησης των απορριμμάτων τροφίμων, χωρίς να τεθεί σε κίνδυνο η ασφάλεια των τροφίμων. Επίσης, η Επιτροπή θα ζητήσει τη γνώμη των κρατών μελών και των εμπειρογνωμόνων, προκειμένου να καθοριστούν οι πλέον κατάλληλες ενέργειες σε επίπεδο ΕΕ ώστε να ολοκληρωθούν οι δράσεις που διεξάγονται σε εθνικό και τοπικό επίπεδο.

Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή έχει ως στόχο να διευκολύνει την ανταλλαγή ορθών πρακτικών σχετικά με τη μείωση των απορριμμάτων τροφίμων και για αυτό το λόγο θα δημιουργήσει μια βάση δεδομένων που θα αποτελείται από ορθές πρακτικές σχετικά με τη μείωση των απορριμμάτων τροφίμων.

Επιπλέον, η δημόσια διαβούλευση για τα «βιώσιμα τρόφιμα ([2])», που περιλαμβάνει ένα κεφάλαιο για τα απορρίμματα τροφίμων, ξεκίνησε από την Επιτροπή στις 9 Ιουλίου 2013 και διήρκεσε έως την 1η Οκτωβρίου 2013.

([1]) Bio Intelligence Service, Οκτώβριος 2010 — http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/reports.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/sustainability/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009973/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Managing food

Worldwide, it is estimated that 40% of food that is produced goes to waste in developed countries.

Can the Commission provide comparative data on this specific issue in respect of the EU Member States? Does it consider that the ability of Member States is improving concerning the proper management of food? How does Greece rank?

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

The EU funded 'Preparatory study on food waste across EU 27 ([1])' estimates that 45% of the total amount of food waste generated in Europe in 2006 was disposed of to landfills. This is about 40 million tonnes.

The Commission has no information about the specific situation in each Member State and the particular ranking of Greece.

The Commission has started to analyse with relevant stakeholders how to minimise food waste without compromising food safety. The Commission will also consult Member States and experts in order to define the most appropriate actions at EU level to complement the actions carried out at national and local level.

Furthermore, the Commission aims to facilitate the exchange of good practices on food waste reduction and will set up a data base consisting of good practices on food waste reduction[2].

In addition, the public consultation on 'Sustainable Food ([2])', including a chapter on food waste, was launched by the Commission on 9 July 2013 and was open till 1 October 2013.

([1]) Bio Intelligence Service, October 2010 — http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/reports.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/sustainability/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009974/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(6 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εξαφανισμένα παιδιά

Συγκεντρώνει η Επιτροπή συγκριτικά στοιχεία από τα κράτη μέλη αναφορικά με τον αριθμό των εξαφανισμένων παιδιών στην Ένωση; Είναι σε θέση να μου τα παραθέσει; Αξιολογεί ότι το νομοθετικό πλαίσιο των κρατών μελών στον τομέα πρόληψης και αποτροπής σχετικών περιστατικών είναι επαρκές; Διαπιστώνει διευρυμένη και ικανοποιητική συνεργασία των κρατών μελών για την επίλυση του προβλήματος;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(11 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή συλλέγει στοιχεία από τα κράτη μέλη μέσω της μελέτης με τίτλο «Study on missing children: Mapping, data collection and statistics on missing children in the European Union» (Μελέτη για τα εξαφανισμένα παιδιά: χαρτογράφηση, συλλογή δεδομένων και στατιστικών για τα εξαφανισμένα παιδιά στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση) ([1]) η οποία περιλαμβάνει τη συγκέντρωση συγκρίσιμων στοιχείων. Η μελέτη βρίσκεται στο τελικό στάδιο και αναμένεται να δημοσιευθεί σύντομα.

Εκτός από τη συλλογή και ανάλυση των διαθέσιμων επίσημων στοιχείων για τα εξαφανισμένα παιδιά, η μελέτη συγκέντρωσε παρατηρήσεις, ορθές πρακτικές και συστάσεις από τις αρχές των κρατών μελών και άλλα ενδιαφερόμενα μέρη που δραστηριοποιούνται στον τομέα, ιδίως όσον αφορά την καταγραφή και επεξεργασία δεδομένων.

Οι συστάσεις επικεντρώνονται κατά κύριο λόγο σε τρεις τομείς: πρακτικές καταγραφής δεδομένων· λειτουργικοί κανόνες και ορισμοί· και ευαισθητοποίηση και ενημέρωση.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/contracts/2012_90538_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009974/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Missing children

Is the Commission compiling comparative data from the Member States on the number of children that go missing in the EU? Is it in a position to provide this information? Does it consider that the legislative framework of the Member States in the area of prevention and avoidance of such incidents is adequate? Does it believe that there is broader and satisfactory cooperation between Member States in addressing this problem?

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

The Commission has been gathering data from the Member States through its 'Study on missing children: Mapping, data collection and statistics on missing children in the European Union' ([1]) which includes the compilation of comparative data. The study has reached its final stages and should be published soon.

In addition to collecting and analysing the available official data on missing children, the study has gathered observations and good practices and recommendations from Member State authorities and other stakeholders working in the field, specifically related to data recording and handling.

The recommendations focus primarily on three areas: data recording practices; operational rules and definitions; and awareness-raising and information.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/contracts/2012_90538_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009975/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(6 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εφαρμογή της πολιτικής «εγγύηση για τους νέους»

Στις 27 Ιουνίου 2013 το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο και η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή συμφώνησαν στην άμεση κινητοποίηση πόρων 8 δισεκατομμυρίων ευρώ για την αντιμετώπιση της νεανικής ανεργίας σε χώρες που αντιμετωπίζουν ιδιαίτερο πρόβλημα. Προτεραιότητα δόθηκε στη χρηματοδότηση των «εγγυήσεων για τους νέους».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει για την κατανομή των πόρων ανά κράτος και για το πόσα προγράμματα (αντίστοιχα και το ύψος χρηματοδότησής τους) βρίσκονται σήμερα σε εξέλιξη στην ΕΕ και στα κράτη μέλη ειδικότερα;

— Καθώς το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο έχει τον τελευταίο χρόνο επανειλημμένως καλέσει τα κράτη μέλη να εφαρμόσουν την πολιτική των «εγγυήσεων για τους νέους», είναι σε θέση να γνωρίζει ποια από αυτά το έχουν ήδη κάνει;

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

Σε εξέλιξη βρίσκονται οι διαπραγματεύσεις για τα κριτήρια επιλεξιμότητας σχετικά με τη χρηματοδότηση της πρωτοβουλίας για την απασχόληση των νέων, η υλοποίηση της οποίας θα ξεκινήσει το 2014. Επομένως, η Επιτροπή δεν είναι ακόμη σε θέση να αναφέρει τα πραγματικά ποσά που θα κατανεμηθούν σε κάθε κράτος μέλος.

Το 50% των 6 δισεκατομμυρίων ευρώ του προϋπολογισμού στο πλαίσιο της πρωτοβουλίας για την απασχόληση των νέων, πρέπει να διατεθεί από εθνικές χορηγήσεις του ΕΚΤ για την περίοδο 2014-20. Ωστόσο, τα κράτη μέλη μπορούν επίσης να επενδύσουν σε άλλους πόρους του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Ταμείου για τους νέους για την περίοδο 2014-20, πέρα από εκείνους που προορίζονται στο πλαίσιο της πρωτοβουλίας για την απασχόληση των νέων.

Τα κράτη μέλη που είναι επιλέξιμα για ενίσχυση στο πλαίσιο της πρωτοβουλίας για την απασχόληση των νέων πρέπει να υποβάλουν σχέδια υλοποίησης εγγυήσεων για τη νεολαία έως το τέλος του 2013, ενώ τα άλλα κράτη μέλη πρέπει να υποβάλουν τα σχέδια αυτά έως την άνοιξη του 2014. Είναι επομένως πολύ νωρίς για την Επιτροπή να παράσχει κατάλογο των κρατών μελών που έχουν ήδη εφαρμόσει εγγυητικούς μηχανισμούς για τους νέους. Ωστόσο, το έγγραφο εργασίας που συνοδεύει την πρόταση σύστασης του Συμβουλίου για τη θέσπιση ενός εγγυητικού μηχανισμού για τους νέους ([1]) παρέχει ορισμένα καλά παραδείγματα μέτρων που εφαρμόζονται από τα κράτη μέλη και που προσομοιάζουν με σχέδια εγγυήσεων για τους νέους.

([1]) COM(2012)409 τελικό της 5ης Δεκεμβρίου 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009975/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Implementation of the 'Youth Guarantee' scheme

On 27 June 2013, the European Council and the European Commission agreed on the immediate mobilisation of EUR 8 billion to combat youth unemployment in countries facing particular difficulties. Priority has been given to funding the 'Youth Guarantee' scheme.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Can it inform me about State distribution of the funds and the number of programmes currently under way in the EU and in specific Member States, and their levels of funding?

— As the European Parliament has repeatedly called on Member States over the past year to implement the 'Youth Guarantee' scheme, does the Commission know which Member States have already done so?

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

Negotiations are currently under way on the eligibility criteria for allocations under the Youth Employment Initiative, the implementation of which will begin in 2014. The Commission is therefore not yet able to state the actual amounts to be allocated to individual Member States.

Half of the EUR 6 billion budget for the Youth Employment Initiative is to be earmarked among ESF national allocations for 2014-20. However, the Member States may also invest other European Social Fund resources in young people in 2014-20, in addition to those earmarked for the Youth Employment Initiative.

The Member States eligible for support under the Youth Employment Initiative need to submit Youth Guarantee implementation plans by the end of 2013 and the other Member States are to submit such plans by spring 2014. It is therefore too early for the Commission to provide a list of Member States that have already implemented Youth Guarantee schemes. Nonetheless, the Staff Working Document accompanying the proposal for a Council Recommendation on Establishing a Youth Guarantee ([1]) provides several good examples of measures implemented by Member States and approximating to Youth Guarantee schemes.

([1]) SWD(2012) 409 final of 5 December 2012.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009976/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(6 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Μη ευαλλοίωτα τρόφιμα και ασφάλεια καταναλωτών

Σε ολοένα και περισσότερα κράτη μέλη, σταδιακά, επιτρέπεται η τοποθέτηση μη ευαλλοίωτων τροφίμων με περασμένη ημερομηνία λήξης και σε χαμηλότερες τιμές σε ράφια των καταστημάτων και επομένως η διάθεσή τους προς τους καταναλωτές.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Υπάρχουν σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο συστηματοποιημένες μελέτες για τις αλλαγές που υφίστανται, με την πάροδο του χρόνου, τα μη ευαλλοίωτα τρόφιμα; Προκύπτουν κίνδυνοι για την ανθρώπινη υγεία;

— Σε ποια κράτη μέλη σήμερα διαθέτονται προς κατανάλωση μη ευαλλοίωτα τρόφιμα με περασμένη αρχική ημερομηνία λήξης;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Τα προσυσκευασμένα τρόφιμα, με λίγες εξαιρέσεις, πρέπει να φέρουν την ημερομηνία ελάχιστης διατηρησιμότητας με την ένδειξη «ανάλωση κατά προτίμηση πριν από» ή «ημερομηνία λήξης …». Η ημερομηνία της κατα προτίμηση ανάλωσης του προϊόντος είναι η ημερομηνία έως την οποία το τρόφιμο διατηρεί τις αναμενόμενες ιδιότητες. Η ισχύουσα νομοθεσία της ΕΕ ([1]) ορίζει ότι η «ανάλωση κατά προτίμηση πριν από …» πρέπει να αντικατασταθεί από την τελική ημερομηνία ανάλωσης «ημερομηνία λήξης …» όταν, από μικροβιολογική άποψη, ένα τρόφιμο είναι εξαιρετικά ευαλλοίωτο και συνεπώς, ενδέχεται, έπειτα από σύντομο χρονικό διάστημα να αποτελέσει άμεσο κίνδυνο για την ανθρώπινη υγεία. Τρόφιμα με ληγμένη ημερομηνία ανάλωσης δεν πρέπει να διατίθενται στην αγορά της Ένωσης. Ωστόσο, τα τρόφιμα εξακολουθούν να είναι ασφαλή για κατανάλωση και μετά τη λήξη της ημερομηνίας για την «ανάλωση κατά προτίμηση πριν από …», υπό την προϋπόθεση ότι τηρούνται οι οδηγίες αποθήκευσης και η συσκευασία δεν είναι φθαρμένη. Ο υπεύθυνος της επιχείρησης τροφίμων είναι αρμόδιος να προσδιορίσει πότε ένα προϊόν θα πρέπει να φέρει επισήμανση χρησιμοποίησης κατά ημερομηνία. Ο νέος κανονισμός σχετικά με την παροχή πληροφοριών για τα τρόφιμα στους καταναλωτές ([2]) διατηρεί τις ισχύουσες διατάξεις ([3]).

Πρόσφατα, η Επιτροπή ενημερώθηκε για το ελληνικό μέτρο αυτό που απαιτείται ότι τα τρόφιμα των οποίων η ημερομηνία «ανάλωσης κατά προτίμηση πριν από …» έχει λήξει θα πρέπει να τοποθετούνται σε χωριστά ράφια σε επίπεδο λιανικής πώλησης με μειωμένες τιμές. Το μέτρο αυτό δεν έρχεται σε αντίθεση με τους ισχύοντες κανόνες της Ένωσης.

Όσον αφορά τα τρόφιμα των οποίων η ημερομηνία «ανάλωσης κατά προτίμηση πριν από …» έχει λήξει, η Επιτροπή δεν έχει εκπονήσει συστηματικές μελέτες για τις αλλοιώσεις που επέρχονται στα τρόφιμα με την πάροδο του χρόνου από την άποψη των κινδύνων για την υγεία, επειδή τα τρόφιμα αυτά θα πρέπει να είναι ασφαλή για κατανάλωση· διαφορετικά, η ημερομηνία «ανάλωση κατά προτίμηση πριν από …» θα έπρεπε να είχε αντικατασταθεί από την ένδειξη «ημερομηνία λήξης …». Η Επιτροπή δεν γνωρίζει τυχόν περιπτώσεις στις οποίες κάποια τρόφιμα με περασμένη «ημερομηνία λήξης …» διατίθενται στην αγορά της Ένωσης.

([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 επισήμανση, 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). Ο κανονισμός (ΕΕ) αριθ. 1169/2011 θα καταργήσει και θα αντικαταστήσει την οδηγία 2000/13/ΕΚ από τις 13 Δεκεμβρίου 2014.

([3]) Επιπλέον, το άρθρο 24 του κανονισμού (ΕΕ) αριθ. 1169/2011 προβλέπει ότι μετά την τελική ημερομηνία ανάλωσης, το τρόφιμο θεωρείται μη ασφαλές σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 14 παράγραφοι 2 έως 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 για την Ασφάλεια των Τροφίμων και τον καθορισμό διαδικασιών σε θέματα ασφαλείας των τροφίμων (ΕΕ L 31 της 1.2.2002, σ. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009976/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Non-perishable food and consumer safety

An increasing number of Member States are allowing non-perishable food beyond its use-by date to be placed on retail shelves at reduced prices, and thus made available to the consumers.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Have any systematic studies been conducted focusing on the changes that take place in non-perishable food over time? Are there any consequent risks to human health?

— In which Member States is non-perishable food that is past the original use-by date now available for consumption?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(4 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. Foods with expired 'use by' date must not be placed on the Union market. However, foods beyond their 'best before' date are still safe to be consumed, provided that storage instructions are respected and packaging is not damaged. 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])

Recently, the Commission has been informed of a Greek measure that required that foods beyond their 'best before' date should be placed in separate shelves at retail level at reduced prices. This measure is not in contradiction with the existing Union rules.

As regards foods beyond their 'best before' date, the Commission has not conducted systematic studies on the changes that take place over time in terms of health hazards, as such foods should be safe to be consumed; otherwise, the 'best before' date should have been replaced with a 'use by' date. The Commission is not aware of any cases where foods with expired 'use by' dates are placed on the Union market.

([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).

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009977/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(6 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Συνέχιση της δράσης «Εναρμόνιση Οικογενειακής και Επαγγελματικής ζωής» στην Ελλάδα από το 2014

Η δράση «Εναρμόνιση Οικογενειακής και Επαγγελματικής ζωής» έχει αποδειχθεί ιδιαίτερα επιτυχημένη στην Ελλάδα. Ενδεικτικά, σε μια δύσκολη οικονομική συγκυρία, χιλιάδες οικογένειες εξασφάλισαν και φέτος πρόσβαση των παιδιών τους με πολύ μειωμένο κόστος σε παιδικούς και βρεφονηπιακούς σταθμούς για το νέο σχολικό έτος. Καθώς το 2013 ολοκληρώνεται το τρέχον πολυετές δημοσιονομικό πλαίσιο από το οποίο υποστηρίζεται η συγκεκριμένη δράση, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Δεδομένου ότι ανάλογες πολιτικές έχουν ισχυρό θετικό κοινωνικό αντίκτυπο και βοηθούν σημαντικά οικογένειες με σοβαρά οικονομικά προβλήματα, σκοπεύει η Επιτροπή να συνεχίσει να ενισχύει τα χρηματοδοτικά μέσα σχετικών δράσεων κατά την ερχόμενη δημοσιονομική περίοδο;

— Καθώς η ζήτηση για την συγκεκριμένη δράση είναι τόσο αυξημένη, ώστε στο μέλλον δεν είναι δεδομένη η ικανοποίηση του συνόλου των αιτημάτων και των οικογενειών που χρήζουν βοήθειας στην Ελλάδα, εκτιμά η Επιτροπή ότι σε ενδεχόμενο σχετικό αίτημα κράτους μέλους, θα μπορούσαν να αυξηθούν οι διαθέσιμοι κοινοτικοί πόροι προς αυτή την κατεύθυνση;

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

Σύμφωνα με τις προτάσεις για τους κανονισμούς περί της πολιτικής συνοχής ([1]), οι εν λόγω επενδυτικές προτεραιότητες, όπως ο συνδυασμός της επαγγελματικής και της ιδιωτικής ζωής μπορεί να επιλεγούν να χρηματοδοτηθούν από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο (ΕΚΤ) στο πλαίσιο του θεματικού στόχου για την *προώθηση της απασχόλησης και την υποστήριξη της κινητικότητας του εργατικού δυναμικού* κατά την προσεχή περίοδο προγραμματισμού (2014-20). Κατά τον ίδιο τρόπο, οι δράσεις για τη βελτίωση της πρόσβασης σε οικονομικά προσιτές, βιώσιμες και υψηλής ποιότητας υπηρεσίες, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των κοινωνικών υπηρεσιών γενικού συμφέροντος, μπορεί να επιλεγούν για υποστήριξη από το ΕΚΤ στο πλαίσιο του θεματικού στόχου για την *προώθηση της κοινωνικής ένταξης και την καταπολέμηση της φτώχειας*. Η παροχή χρηματοδότησης στο πλαίσιο θεματικών στόχων θα υπόκεινται σε διαπραγμάτευση μεταξύ του ενδιαφερόμενου κράτους μέλους και της Επιτροπής, με βάση την πρόταση των κρατών μελών και τους ισχύοντες κανόνες.

Σύμφωνα με το κανονιστικό πλαίσιο που διέπει το ΕΚΤ, τα κράτη μέλη είναι υπεύθυνα για την επιλογή, το σχεδιασμό και τη διαχείριση των μεμονωμένων έργων που συγχρηματοδοτούνται από το ΕΚΤ. Μέχρι σήμερα, η Επιτροπή δεν έχει λάβει καμία αίτηση από την Ελλάδα για αύξηση του προϋπολογισμού για το *συνδυασμό της επαγγελματικής και της οικογενειακής ζωής*, ο οποίος θα πρέπει να συζητηθεί και να αποφασιστεί σε εθνικό επίπεδο, τηρουμένων όλων των στόχων του ΕΚΤ και των επιδιώξεων που καθορίζονται στα επιχειρησιακά προγράμματα του ΕΚΤ.

Επιπλέον, πρόσφατα η Επιτροπή τόνισε ότι η παροχή εγκαταστάσεων παιδικής μέριμνας στην ΕΕ εξακολουθεί να μην είναι σύμφωνη με τους στόχους της Βαρκελώνης. Αυτό αντιμετωπίστηκε στην πρόσφατη δέσμη μέτρων για κοινωνικές επενδύσεις και έγιναν πολλές ειδικές συστάσεις ανά χώρα στο πλαίσιο του ευρωπαϊκού εξαμήνου. Η Ελλάδα ιδίως, δεν πέτυχε κανέναν από τους στόχους της Βαρκελώνης όσον αφορά τη μέριμνα για τα παιδιά ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/what/future/index_el.cfm#4
([2]) COM(2013)322.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009977/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Continuation of the 'Work-Life Balance' initiative in Greece after 2014

The 'Work-Life Balance' initiative has proved particularly successful in Greece. In difficult economic circumstances, thousands of families secured access to nurseries and kindergartens for their children in the new academic year at a greatly reduced cost. As the current multiannual budgetary framework which supports this initiative is coming to an end in 2013, will the Commission say:

— Given that such policies have a strong positive social impact and provide important assistance to families in serious financial difficulty, does the Commission intend to strengthen financial support for the relevant initiatives further during the coming financial period?

— As demand for the initiative has increased to the extent that meeting all therequests from families that need assistance in Greece cannot be ensured inthe future, will the Commission consider increasing the Community funds available inthis area if so requested by a Member State?

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

In accordance with the proposals for the Cohesion Policy Regulations ([1]), such investment priorities as reconciling work and private life may be selected for European Social Fund (ESF) support under the thematic objective for Promoting employment and supporting labour mobility in the forthcoming programming period (2014-20). In the same way, actions to improve access to affordable, sustainable and high-quality services, including social services of general interest, may be selected for ESF support under the thematic objective for Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty. Allocation of funding under thematic objectives will be subject to negotiation, between the Member State concerned and the Commission, based on the Member States' proposal and applicable rules.

In accordance with the regulatory framework governing the ESF, the Member States are responsible for selecting, designing and managing individual projects co-financed by the ESF. To date the Commission has received no request from Greece for an increase in the budget for Reconciling work and family life, which should be discussed and decided at national level in full respect for the ESF's objectives and the objectives and targets set in the ESF operational programmes.

Moreover, the Commission recently stressed that the provision of childcare facilities in the EU is still not in line with the Barcelona targets. This has been addresses in the recent Social Investment Package and several country specific recommendations in the context of the European Semester. Greece, in particular, has not met any of the Barcelone targets on childcare ([2])

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/what/future/index_en.cfm#4
([2]) COM(2013) 322.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-009978/13
à la Commission
Alain Cadec (PPE)
(6 septembre 2013)

Objet: Application du règlement (CE) n° 812/2004 établissant des mesures relatives aux captures accidentelles de cétacés

Le 14 août, les autorités britanniques ont contrôlé un navire fileyeur breton sur lequel elles ont relevé l'absence de répulsifs acoustiques. Ce fileyeur doit dès lors s'en équiper d'ici le 1er septembre 2013, ce qui est un investissement coûteux.

Si le règlement du Conseil (CE) n° 812/2004 rend les répulsifs acoustiques obligatoires sur tous les navires d'une longueur de plus de 12 mètres dans la zone VII, l'application de ce règlement semble avoir été reportée étant donné les difficultés techniques de sa mise en œuvre.

Un citoyen français nous a signalé des difficultés d'application du règlement qui entraîneraient une différence de traitement entre professionnels de la pêche en fonction des États membres dans lesquels ils sont contrôlés. Il s'ensuit également une différence de sanctions étant donné l'absence d'harmonisation au niveau européen des sanctions liées aux infractions en matière de pêche.

La Commission peut-elle indiquer s'il existe des difficultés d'application de ce règlement?

La Commission peut-elle publier une synthèse de l'état d'avancement de l'application du règlement précité?

La Commission compte-t-elle réviser ce règlement lors de l'application de la nouvelle politique commune de la pêche le 1er janvier 2014?

Réponse donnée par Mme Damanaki au nom de la Commission
(23 octobre 2013)

La Commission a procédé à deux réexamens distincts du règlement (CE) n° 812/2004 en 2009 ([1]) et 2011 ([2]). Ils soulignent tous les deux des améliorations dans la mise en œuvre dudit règlement mais constatent également des faiblesses inhérentes au système d'échantillonnage requis par le présent règlement ainsi que la réticence des pêcheurs à utiliser des dispositifs de dissuasion acoustiques en raison de problèmes pratiques et économiques.

Dans sa dernière communication, la Commission a indiqué que la modification du règlement ne serait pas efficace car la procédure serait longue et ne serait finalement pas conforme à l'objectif de la nouvelle politique commune de la pêche (PCP) visant la régionalisation de la prise de décisions, lorsque des mesures sont adaptées aux différentes activités de pêche.

Sur cette base la Commission envisage d'introduire des mesures de réduction des risques dans un nouveau cadre de mesures techniques qui reflèterait cette approche régionalisée. La présente proposition doit être adoptée par la Commission en 2014. La surveillance des cétacés et d'autres espèces protégées sera intégrée dans le nouveau cadre applicable à la collecte de données ([3]).

([1]) COM(2009) 368.
([2]) COM(2011) 578.
([3]) Article 37 du nouveau règlement de base régissant la politique commune de la pêche.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009978/13
to the Commission
Alain Cadec (PPE)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Application of Regulation (EC) No 812/2004 laying down measures concerning incidental catches of cetaceans

On 14 August 2013 the UK authorities carried out an inspection aboard a driftnetter from Brittany, and found that it had no acoustic deterrent devices. The vessel must therefore be fitted with the devices by 1 September 2013, which is a costly investment.

Although Council Regulation (EC) No 812/2004 makes acoustic deterrent devices mandatory on all vessels of more than 12 metres in length in area VII, the application of this regulation seems to have been held up due to the technical difficulties in implementing it.

A French citizen has drawn our attention to some difficulties in applying the regulation, which see fishing operators treated differently depending on the Member State in which they are inspected. Penalties also differ, because of the absence of harmonised penalties for fisheries infringements at EU level.

Can the Commission say whether there are any difficulties in applying this regulation?

Can it publish a summary report on the progress made in applying this regulation?

Does it intend to revise this regulation when the new common fisheries policy is implemented on 1 January 2014?

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

The Commission has carried out two separate reviews of Regulation (EC) No 812/2004 in 2009 ([1]) and 2011 ([2]). Both of them highlight improvements in the implementation of the Regulation but also conclude that there are inherent weaknesses relating to the sampling regime required under the regulation and also the reluctance of fishermen to use acoustic deterrent devices due to practical and economic concerns.

In the latest Communication, the Commission indicated that amending this regulation would not be on effective way forward as the procedure would be lengthy and would ultimately not be in accordance with the objective of the reformed Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) of moving to regionalised decision-making, where measures are tailored to different fisheries.

On this basis the Commission is considering introducing mitigation measures into a new framework for technical measures that would reflect this regionalised approach. This proposal is scheduled to be adopted by the Commission in 2014. The monitoring of cetaceans and other protected species will be incorporated under the new Data Collection Framework ([3]).

([1]) COM(2009) 368.
([2]) COM(2011) 578.
([3]) Article 37 of the new Basic Regulation of the common fisheries policy.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009979/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(6 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Odejście Armenii od integracji z UE

Prezydent Armenii Serż Sarkisjan, podczas niedawnego spotkania z przywódcą Rosji wyraził gotowość przystąpienia swojego kraju do Unii Celnej oraz zadeklarował chęć tworzenia Eurazjatyckiej Unii Gospodarczej. Decyzja ta oznacza diametralny zwrot w polityce zagranicznej Erywania, jednoznacznie przekreślając proeuropejskie dotychczas aspiracje kraju. Pod znakiem zapytania staje możliwość podpisania wynegocjowanego już układu stowarzyszeniowego, co odczytywać należy jako prestiżową porażkę europejskiej dyplomacji i jej strategii w zakresie Partnerstwa Wschodniego.

W związku z powyższym zwracam się z prośbą o wyjaśnienie:

1. Na skutek jakich błędów w polityce wschodniej Bruksela utraciła zainteresowanie integracją ze strony armeńskich władz?

2. Czy w zaistniałej sytuacji możliwe jest jeszcze parafowanie umowy stowarzyszeniowej z Armenią, planowane podczas listopadowego szczytu Partnerstwa Wschodniego, czy też przedsięwzięcie to uznać należy za bezpodstawne?

3. Czy i w jaki sposób stanowisko Armenii wpłynie na europejski kierunek polityki innych członków Partnerstwa, przede wszystkim Ukrainy, Gruzji i Mołdawii?

4. Zmiana kursu politycznego, w szczególności odejście od polityki integracji z Unią Europejską, może zostać oprotestowane przez armeńskie społeczeństwo. Czy ESDZ dysponuje odpowiednią strategią dyplomatyczną na wypadek zaistnienia powyższej sytuacji, celem podtrzymania proeuropejskich aspiracji Ormian?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Štefana Füleg w imieniu Komisji
(29 października 2013 r.)

1. UE została poinformowana przez Armenię, że jej niedawna decyzja wynika z kilku okoliczności, w tym także z silnych powiązań Armenii z Rosją. Ponadto armeńskie władze wyraźnie zasygnalizowały, że są zainteresowane kontynuacją współpracy z UE we wszystkich obszarach zgodnych z ich niedawnym wyborem politycznym.

2. UE zawsze informowała Armenię, że układ o stowarzyszeniu / umowa DCFTA i członkostwo w unii celnej byłyby niespójne. Ze względu na tę niezgodność, plan Armenii by przystąpić do unii celnej, jak zostało to zapowiedziane w dniu 3 września 2013 r., spowodował wycofanie się z parafowania układu o stowarzyszeniu / umowy DCFTA.

3. Na tle innych krajów Partnerstwa Wschodniego, sytuacja Armenii jest wyjątkowa. Ukraina, Gruzja i Mołdawia nadal demonstrują swoją gotowość do podpisania/parafowania układu o stowarzyszeniu / umowy DCFTA na nadchodzącym szczycie Partnerstwa Wschodniego w Wilnie. Nie ma zatem przesłanek wskazujących na „efekt domina" wywołanego wyborem Armenii, jeśli chodzi o politykę proeuropejską w innych krajach Partnerstwa Wschodniego.

4. UE powinna zbudować fundament pod przyszłe stosunki z Armenią w świetle jej decyzji o przystąpieniu do unii celnej. UE w dalszym ciągu wykazuje zaangażowanie i zobowiązuje się do ścisłej dwustronnej współpracy z Armenią.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009979/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Armenia's move away from EU integration

During a recent meeting with the Russian President, the Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan said that his country was willing to join the Customs Union and intended to help establish a Eurasian Economic Union. This decision represents a complete U-turn in Yerevan's foreign policy, which has to date been clearly focused on the country's pro-European ambitions. A question mark now hangs over the signature of the association agreement which has already been negotiated, signifying a high-profile failure of European diplomacy and its Eastern Partnership strategy.

I should therefore like to ask the following questions:

1. What errors in Brussels' Eastern Partnership policy have led to the Armenian authorities losing interest in integration?

2. As things stand, is there still any chance of the association agreement with Armenia being initialled during the November Eastern Partnership summit as planned, or would this be pointless?

3. Will Armenia's position affect the pro-European policies of other members of the Eastern Partnership, in particular Ukraine, Georgia and Moldavia, and if so how?

4. Armenian society may protest at this policy swing, in particular the move away from political integration with the EU. Does the EEAS have an appropriate diplomatic strategy in place for such an eventuality, in order to support the pro-European ambitions of the Armenian people?

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

1. The EU has been informed by Armenia that its recent decision was based on a number of circumstances, including Armenia's deep ties with Russia. Moreover, Armenian authorities clearly signalled that they are interested in pursuing cooperation with the EU in all areas compatible with their recent policy choice.

2. The EU had always communicated to Armenia that the Association Agreement/ Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (AA/DCFTA) and membership of the Customs Union would be incompatible. Due to this incompatibility, Armenia's intention to join the Customs Union, as announced on 3 September 2013, has put the initialling of an AA/DCFTA off the table.

3. Armenia's situation is unique among Eastern Partnership countries. Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova continue to demonstrate their commitment for signing/initialling the AA/DCFTA at the upcoming Eastern Partnership summit in Vilnius. Thus, there are no indications of any 'domino effect' of Armenia's choice as concerns the pro-European policies of other members of the Eastern Partnership.

4. The EU should establish the future basis for its relations with Armenia in the light of Armenia's decision to join the Customs Union. The EU remains engaged and is committed to a strong bilateral relationship with Armenia.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-009980/13
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(6 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Problemy z transportem towarów za wschodnią granicę UE

Pod zarzutem naruszania w przeszłości przepisów celnych, białoruscy celnicy od kilku tygodni przetrzymują na brzeskim przejściu kilkanaście polskich ciężarówek. Szczegółowe zarzuty dotyczą nielegalnych przewozów na terenie Unii Celnej. Przewoźnicy są wzywani na kosztowne rozprawy sądowe. W sprawie interweniowało polskie Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych, dotychczas jednak bezskutecznie.

W kontekście bieżących wydarzeń związanych ze zbliżającym się szczytem Partnerstwa Wschodniego nietrudno dopatrzyć się, w przytoczonym działaniu Białorusinów, rosyjskiej inspiracji. Tym bardziej, że służby celne Rosji nie rezygnują z prób zaostrzenia przepisów dotyczących transportu na swoim terytorium towarów z wykorzystaniem karnetów TIR, co zostało już oprotestowane przez Brukselę i ONZ. Forsowane przez Moskwę zmiany uderzą w szczególności w polskie firmy spedycyjne, realizujące większość zleceń przewozowych do krajów WNP.

W oparciu o powyższe zwracam się z prośbą o następujące informacje:

1. Czy Komisji znana jest sytuacja związana z przetrzymywaniem polskich transportów w Brześciu i czy rozważane jest jej zaangażowanie, celem wsparcia polskiego MSZ w dążeniu do osiągnięcia porozumienia?

2. Jakie działania zostały, bądź są podejmowane w celu powstrzymania Rosji przed wprowadzeniem niekorzystnych dla europejskich przewoźników zmian w zakresie stosowania konwencji TIR?

3. Czy możliwe są unijne rekompensaty dla przedsiębiorców, którzy ponieśli straty na skutek zatrzymania ich transportów do Białorusi?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Algirdasa Šemetę w imieniu Komisji
(29 października 2013 r.)

Komisja otrzymała od polskiego Ministerstwa Finansów szczegółowe informacje o przetrzymywaniu polskich samochodów ciężarowych przez władze białoruskie. Ewentualne działania podejmowane przez Komisję zależą od rozwoju sytuacji i będą koordynowane z polską administracją.

Jeśli chodzi o stosowanie konwencji TIR w Rosji, Komisja podjęła konkretne kroki, by wyegzekwować zmianę decyzji przez Rosję natychmiast po otrzymaniu informacji o nowych wymogach TIR. Podjęto działania w wymiarze dwustronnym, jak i na odpowiednich forach wielostronnych. W ramach wspomnianych działań wystosowano pisma: od członka Komisji odpowiedzialnego za podatki do szefa rosyjskiej służby celnej oraz od służb Komisji do Sekretarza Wykonawczego Europejskiej Komisji Gospodarczej ONZ. Zorganizowano ponadto: sesję specjalną Komitetu Kodeksu Celnego w Brukseli i Rady Wykonawczej TIR w Genewie, telekonferencję pomiędzy Komisją i rosyjską służbą celną oraz specjalną misję Komisji do Moskwy. Komisja koordynuje swoje działania z państwami członkowskimi.

Na chwilę obecną rosyjska służba celna podjęła decyzję o niewdrażaniu środków, jednak z wyjątkiem okręgów celnych Uralu, Syberii, Dalekiego Wschodu i Wołgi, gdzie dotyczy to bardzo niewielkiej liczby przedsiębiorstw unijnych. Rozwój sytuacji jest stale monitorowany.

Obecnie wygląda na to, że w tym przypadku nie ma możliwości uzyskania rekompensaty UE, jednak przewoźnicy mogą w tej sprawie przedstawić wniosek do władz państw trzecich, jeżeli krajowe ustawodawstwo na to pozwala.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009980/13
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(6 September 2013)

Subject: Problems concerning the transport of goods beyond the EU's eastern border

Belarusian customs officials at the Brest border crossing have been detaining around a dozen Polish lorries for several weeks due to alleged past violations of customs rules, or more specifically illegal shipments into the territory of the Customs Union. The hauliers have been summoned to appear in court, which will cost them a great deal of money. The interventions undertaken by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs have so far been unsuccessful.

Given the recent events in the run-up to the forthcoming Eastern Partnership summit, it is not hard to imagine that Russia might be behind these measures by Belarus, particularly since the Russian customs services are still attempting to tighten up the rules regarding use of the TIR carnet for freight shipments into Russian territory, even though both Brussels and the UN have already registered their protests at such a move. These changes being pushed through by Moscow will have a particularly adverse impact on Polish shipping companies, which deliver most of their freight to CIS countries.

I should therefore like to ask the following questions:

1. Is the Commission aware of the detention of Polish lorries in Brest, and does it intend to intervene to support the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in its attempts to reach an agreement?

2. What measures have been or will be taken with a view to dissuading Russia from changing its rules on the application of the TIR Convention, to the disadvantage of European hauliers?

3. Is there any possibility that the EU will pay compensation to the entrepreneurs who have suffered losses as a result of the detention of their shipments to Belarus?

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

The Commission has received detailed information from the Polish Ministry of Finance about the detention of Polish lorries by Belarusian authorities. Possible actions by the Commission depend on future developments and will be coordinated with the Polish administration.

Concerning the application of TIR Convention in Russia, the Commission has taken concrete steps to request the change of the decision by Russia immediately after receiving information on the new TIR requirements. Steps have been taken at the bilateral level and via the relevant multilateral forums, including a letter from the Member of the Commission responsible for Taxation to the Head of Russian Customs, a letter from the Commission services to the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the organisation of a special session of the Customs Code Committee in Brussels and of the TIR Executive Board in Geneva, a teleconference between the Commission and the Russian Customs, and a specific Commission mission to Moscow. The Commission has coordinated its activities with Member States.

Russian Customs have decided not to implement the measures for the time being, except in the Ural, Siberian, Far East and Volga customs districts, where extremely limited EU businesses are concerned. The development of the situation is being monitored.

At present there appears to be no possibility for EU compensation in this case but hauliers may present such request to the third countries authorities, if the national legislation so allows it.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009981/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(9 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Comune di Buonconvento: possibile violazione delle norme sulla vendita di terreni edificabili tramite asta pubblica

Nel 2005 il Comune di Buonconvento, in provincia di Siena, ha messo in vendita undici lotti di terreni edificabili di sua proprietà in località Poderuccio attraverso un avviso di asta pubblica. Secondo la ricostruzione effettuata da due consiglieri comunali in un esposto del 2009, vi sarebbero state macroscopiche irregolarità nello svolgimento dell'asta pubblica. In particolare, sarebbe stato ammesso a partecipare un soggetto privato già titolare di un'impresa edile, in contrasto con quanto espressamente previsto dal bando stesso che vietava la partecipazione di soggetti privati già titolari di imprese edili o di cooperative edilizie. Inoltre, nell'offerta depositata da tale soggetto figurerebbe un importo complessivo per un lotto non determinato, lasciando così all'Amministrazione comunale la facoltà di decidere quale lotto degli undici messi all'asta assegnare a questa impresa in netto contrasto con quanto stabilito dal bando. Infine, conclusa l'asta, sembrerebbe che nell'assegnazione definitiva dei lotti sia stato assegnato a questo soggetto un lotto di valore di gran lunga superiore all'offerta, creando un danno erariale all'Amministrazione comunale.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se siano state violate le norme a tutela della concorrenza;

2. se la situazione descritta contiene elementi che fanno ravvisare aiuti di Stato;

3. se siano state violate le norme della direttiva 2004/18/CE in materia di appalti pubblici;

4. se è in grado di fornire un quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(25 novembre 2013)

La Commissione ringrazia l'onorevole deputato per averle segnalato l'eventualità che l'asta pubblica indetta dal Comune di Buonconvento per la vendita di terreni edificabili non sia compatibile con le norme UE in materia di appalti pubblici, concorrenza e aiuti di Stato.

Sulla base delle informazioni limitate fornite dall'onorevole deputato, la Commissione non è in grado di indicare se la suddetta asta sia compatibile o meno con il diritto dell'UE.

La Commissione, in primo luogo, osserva tuttavia che la vendita di beni, compresi i terreni edificabili, non è considerata un appalto pubblico ai sensi del diritto dell'UE; pertanto la direttiva 2004/18/CE, relativa al coordinamento delle procedure di aggiudicazione degli appalti pubblici, non si applica all'asta contestata.

In secondo luogo, al fine di determinare se la vendita contestata contiene elementi di aiuto di Stato, la Commissione rimanda l'onorevole deputato alla sua comunicazione relativa agli elementi di aiuto di Stato connessi alle vendite di terreni e fabbricati da parte di pubbliche autorità ([1]). Detta comunicazione offre alle autorità pubbliche due metodi per escludere la presenza di aiuti di Stato nelle transazioni fondiarie: la vendita di terreni ed edifici tramite una procedura d'offerta aperta e incondizionata (simile ad una vendita all'asta) e aggiudicata al migliore o all'unico offerente, oppure una valutazione preliminare eseguita da un perito indipendente per stabilire il valore di mercato, che rappresenta il prezzo minimo di vendita che può essere accettato senza configurare un aiuto di Stato. Quando non viene applicato nessuno di questi due metodi, la presenza di un aiuto di Stato dipende dal fatto che il prezzo di vendita del terreno ne rifletta adeguatamente il valore di mercato, in modo da escludere la possibilità che la vendita in questione conferisca un vantaggio economico all'acquirente di tale terreno.

([1]) GU C 209 del 18.12.1997, pag. 3.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009981/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: Municipality of Buonconvento — possible infringement of the rules on the sale of building land through public auctions

In 2005, the municipality of Buonconvento, in the province of Siena, announced that it was selling 11 lots of building land in the Poderuccio district by public auction. According to the review carried out by two town councillors in 2009, there were gross irregularities in the way the public auction was conducted. More specifically, a private person who already owns a construction company was apparently allowed to take part, contrary to the express provisions of the auction notice which prohibited the participation of private owners of construction companies or building cooperatives. Moreover, that person allegedly submitted a bid which consisted of a specific amount for an unspecified lot, leaving it up to the municipal authority to decide which of the 11 lots put up for auction to assign to that company, contrary to the provisions of the auction notice. In the end, in the final allocation of the lots after the auction, this person was apparently assigned a lot the value of which far exceeded the bid, thus resulting in a loss of revenue for the Town Council.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following questions:

1. Have competition rules been infringed?

2. Does the situation described contain elements which constitute state aid?

3. Have the provisions of Directive 2004/18/EC concerning public contracts been infringed?

4. Can it give an overview of the situation?

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

The Commission thanks the Honourable Member for drawing its attention to possible concerns related to the compatibility of the public auction for the sale of building land by the the municipality of Buonconvento with EU rules on public procurement, competition and state aid.

On the basis of the limited information provided by the Honourable Member, the Commission cannot provide an indication of whether the abovementioned auction might raise concerns of compatibility with EC law.

However, the Commission notes, first, that the sale of goods, including building land, is not considered as public procurement according to EC law; therefore Directive 2004/18/EC on the coordination of procedures for the award of public contracts does not apply to the contested auction.

Second, for the purpose of determining whether the contested sale contains state aid elements, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to its communication on state aid elements in sales of land and buildings by public authorities ([1]). That Communication provides two methods for public authorities to rule out the presence of state aid from land sale transactions: first, a sale of land and buildings following a well-publicised, open and unconditional bidding procedure, comparable to an auction, accepting the best or only bid; and, second, an *ex-ante* valuation report prepared by an independent expert in order to establish the market value, which is the minimum purchase price that can be agreed without granting state aid. Where neither of these methods has been followed, the presence of state aid depends on whether the price at which the land was sold adequately reflects the market value of that land, so as to rule out that that sale confers an economic advantage on the purchaser of that land.

([1]) OJ 1997 C 209, p. 3.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-009982/13
alla Commissione
Francesca Barracciu (S&D)
(9 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Nuova emergenza Blue Tongue nella Regione Sardegna — Inadempienze e inefficienze

Il fenomeno Blue Tongue nella Regione Sardegna vive una nuova emergenza: più di 5 000 capi morti e più di 2 500 focolai in 15 000 aziende. Anni di emergenze con conseguenze devastanti sul lungo periodo.

L'articolo 18 della direttiva 2000/75/CE del 20 novembre 2000 stabilisce che «La Commissione esamina i piani (di intervento) allo scopo di determinare se essi consentano di raggiungere l'obiettivo perseguito e suggerisce allo Stato membro interessato qualsiasi modifica necessaria» e che il piano di profilassi regionale individuava gli interventi integrati di bonifica e di sanificazione/disinfestazione quale obiettivo contro il riemergere della Blue Tongue.

Il periodo utile alle vaccinazioni contro la febbre catarrale degli ovini va da gennaio a marzo, per le più basse temperature di quel periodo e per non incidere sulla stagione della riproduzione e degli allattamenti mentre, da notizie fornite dalla stampa e dalle organizzazioni di categoria, si apprende che esse sono iniziate a luglio e proseguono in questi giorni provocando aborti e cali di produzione di latte.

Si ricorda anche che il regolamento (CE) n. 349/2005, all'articolo 2, lettera a), definisce «indennizzo rapido ed adeguato» quello versato entro 90 giorni dall'abbattimento degli animali.

Infine, in data 31 gennaio 2013, l'interrogante ha presentato una interrogazione sul tema, classificata col numero P-001022/2013, e nella risposta fornita in data 25 febbraio 2013, si legge che da novembre 2012 a febbraio 2013 non sono pervenute alla Commissione altre informazioni dall'Italia circa il pagamento degli indennizzi mentre, da notizie fornite dalla stampa e dalle organizzazioni di categoria, numerosi allevatori, in particolare nel Sulcis, non hanno ancora ricevuto gli indennizzi per capi morti nel 2012.

Secondo la Commissione vi sono state inadempienze da parte delle autorità italiane nel dare attuazione al piano di profilassi? In caso di risposta positiva, in capo a chi devono ascriversi tali responsabilità? In quale modo intende intervenire affinché la drammatica situazione arrivi a un punto di svolta positiva?

Quali informazioni ha ricevuto in merito agli indennizzi dopo novembre 2012? Può confermare che gli allevatori i cui capi sono morti nel 2012 non hanno ancora ricevuto gli indennizzi, in chiara violazione del regolamento (CE) n. 349/2005? È a conoscenza di altri ritardi? È a conoscenza dei ritardi nelle vaccinazioni ed ha notizia delle ragioni per cui essi si sono determinati?

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

La Commissione è consapevole del fatto che in Sardegna, Sicilia e Corsica si sono manifestati e sono in corso focolai di febbre catarrale degli ovini e che la situazione è particolarmente grave in Sardegna.

La Commissione non ha motivi per ritenere che le autorità italiane abbiano violato la normativa sulla febbre catarrale degli ovini. Secondo le informazioni fornite dalle autorità italiane in occasione della riunione del *Comitato permanente per la catena alimentare e la salute degli animali* (SCOFCAH), svoltasi il 10 e l'11 aprile 2013, nella Sardegna meridionale era in pieno svolgimento un piano di vaccinazione mirante a ottenere una protezione immunitaria di massa degli animali delle specie ovina e caprina.

La situazione della febbre catarrale degli ovini e l'esito del suddetto piano di vaccinazione saranno esaminati durante la riunione SCOFCAH prevista per il 7 ottobre 2013.

La Commissione non ha ricevuto alcuna informazione né richiesta di sostegno finanziario da parte dell'Italia, nel quadro del regolamento (CE) n. 349/2005 o della decisione 2009/470/CE del Consiglio. Il contributo finanziario UE previsto dai suddetti atti riguarda comunque solo le spese sostenute dagli Stati membri per indennizzare i proprietari i cui animali siano stati abbattuti e distrutti e non per animali deceduti a causa della malattia.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009982/13
to the Commission
Francesca Barracciu (S&D)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: New bluetongue emergency in Sardinia — non-compliance and inefficiency

Bluetongue disease has once again broken out in Sardinia: more than 5 000 sheep have died and there have been more than 2 500 outbreaks on 15 000 farms. Such emergencies have been going on for years, with devastating long-term consequences.

Article 18 of Directive 2000/75/EC of 20 November 2000 states that 'The Commission shall examine the (contingency) plans, in order to determine whether they enable the desired objective to be attained, and shall suggest to the Member State concerned any modification required'. The regional prevention plan is supposed to set a target relating to integrated remediation measures and cleaning/disinfecting measures in order to prevent the re-emergence of bluetongue.

The vaccination period for bluetongue in sheep is from January to March, due to the lower temperatures in that period and so as not to affect the breeding and suckling season. However, according to information provided by the press and professional organisations, the vaccinations apparently began in July and are still continuing, leading to miscarriages and a decline in milk production.

It should also be noted that Article 2(a) of Regulation (EC) No 349/2005 defines the payment to be made within 90 days of the animals' slaughter as being 'swift and adequate compensation'.

On 31 January 2013, I tabled a question on this subject, registered as No P-001022/2013. The Commission's reply, dated 25 February 2013, states that from November 2012 to February 2013 the Commission received no further information from Italy regarding the payment of compensation. However, according to information from the press and professional organisations, many farmers, especially in the Sulcis area, have not yet received any compensation for the head of livestock that died in 2012.

In the Commission's view, have there been any infringements on the part of the Italian authorities with regard to the implementation of the prevention plan? If so, who is responsible? What action will the Commission take to ensure that this terrible situation can be resolved?

What information has the Commission received about compensation after November 2012? Can it confirm that the farmers whose sheep died in 2012 have not yet received any compensation, in clear breach of Regulation (EC) No 349/2005? Is it aware of any other delays? Is it aware of the delays in carrying out vaccinations and does it know why this has occurred?

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

The Commission is aware that bluetongue outbreaks are ongoing in Sardinia, Sicily and Corsica and that the disease situation is particularly serious in Sardinia.

The Commission does not have grounds to consider the Italian authorities to have infringed EU legislation on bluetongue. In accordance with the information provided by Italy at the meeting of the Standing Commitee of the Food Chain and Animal Health (SCOFCAH) held on 10 and 11 April 2013, a vaccination plan was ongoing in southern Sardinia in order to ensure massive immunization of sheep and goats.

The bluetongue situation including the outcome of the above vaccination plan will be reviewed at the SCOFCAH meeting scheduled for 7 October 2013.

The Commission has not received any information nor financial claim from Italy in the context of Regulation (EC) No 349/2005 or Council Decision 2009/470/EC. However, the EU financial contribution provided by these rules only concerns the costs incurred by the Member States in compensating livestock owners for slaughter and destruction of animals and not for animals that died due to the disease.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés P-009983/13
a Bizottság számára
Gáll-Pelcz Ildikó (PPE)
(2013. szeptember 9.)

Tárgy: A közlekedés tehermentesítésének uniós szintű szabályozása és az e-útdíj mértékének meghatározása

A „fenntartható mobilitás", azaz a mobilitásnak az általa okozott káros hatásoktól való elválasztása, már jó néhány éve kiemelt helyet foglal el az EU közlekedéspolitikájában. Az EU politikájának célja a leginkább túlterhelt közlekedési módok fokozatos tehermentesítése, ezzel párhuzamosan pedig közös díjszabási keretek kidolgozása volt. Jelenleg a nehéz gépjárművek esetében fizetni kell egyes infrastruktúrák használatáért, és speciális előírások vannak hatályban a vasúti infrastruktúrát illetően is. Egyes tagállamokban a probléma kezelésére eltérő gyakorlatok alakultak ki, s ez különösen igaz az e-útdíj mértékének meghatározására. Az évek során a Bizottság kitartóan hangsúlyozta, hogy a politikai célkitűzések eléréséhez mennyire fontos a gazdasági eszközök felhasználása.

Ezzel kapcsolatban a következő kérdéseket szeretném feltenni az Bizottságnak:

1. Tervezi-e a Bizottság egy olyan egységes modell létrehozását, amely a gyakorlatban is segítené a fent említett célkitűzések elérését?

2. Tervezi-e a Bizottság az e-útdíjak mértékének uniós szinten történő meghatározását?

3. Tervezi-e a Bizottság a meglévő rendszerek összehasonlítását működési modell és díjak tekintetében?

Siim Kallas válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. szeptember 25.)

1. és 2. kérdés: A nehéz tehergépjárművekre egyes infrastruktúrák használatáért kivetett díjakról szóló, 1999. június 17-i, 1999/62/EK európai parlamenti és tanácsi rendelet ([1]) („Euromatrica-irányelv") meghatározta a nehéz tehergépjárművekre kivetett járműadók és úthasználati díjak uniós kereteit. Az irányelv 2006-os és 2011-es módosítása nagyobb összhangot teremtett az uniós útdíjszedési keretrendszerben, és lehetővé tette, hogy az útdíjak jobban tükrözzék a közlekedés igénybevevői által okozott költségeket.

A 2011-ben megjelent, közlekedésről szóló fehér könyv ([2]) olyan stratégiára tett javaslatot, melynek alapján kötelező úthasználati díjak fokozatos bevezetésére kerülne sor, egységes árstruktúrával és költségelemekkel. Képviselő asszony kérdésére válaszolva: jelenleg a Bizottság nincs abban a helyzetben, hogy kijelentse, fogja-e javasolni (és ha igen, mikor) egy közös modell létrehozását és a díjak szintjének egységesítését a tagállamok között.

3. kérdés: A jelenleg hatályos jogszabályok előírják, hogy a tagállamok tájékoztassák a Bizottságot a nehéz tehergépjárművekre vonatkozó új útdíjszedési intézkedéseikről, és alátámasszák az általuk alkalmazott útdíjszámítási módszert. A Bizottság ezen információk alapján véleményt ad ki az intézkedésekről. 2014. október 16-ig a tagállamoknak jelentést kell benyújtaniuk a Bizottságnak a területükön alkalmazott, nehéz tehergépjárművekre kivetett díjakról. A tagállami jelentések és egyéb információk alapján a Bizottság is jelentést fog készíteni az 1999/62/EK irányelv végrehajtásáról és hatásairól az Európai Parlament és a Tanács részére.

([1]) HL L 187., 1999.7.20., 1. o.
([2]) Útiterv az egységes európai közlekedési térség megvalósításához – Úton egy versenyképes és erőforrás-hatékony közlekedési rendszer felé, COM(2011) 0144 végleges.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-009983/13
to the Commission
Ildikó Gáll-Pelcz (PPE)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: EU legislation to ease transport congestion, and determination of the level of E-tolls

'Sustainable mobility' — separating mobility from its damaging impact — has already been a prominent element in the EU's transport policy for some years. The aim of EU policy has been to gradually ease pressure on the most overloaded modes of transport, while in parallel devising common frameworks for charging. At present, operators of heavy vehicles have to pay for the use of some infrastructure, and special rules are in force regarding rail infrastructure too. In some Member States, disparate practices have developed to tackle the problem, and this is particularly the case as regards determining the level of E-tolls. Over the years, the Commission has consistently stressed how important it is to use economic tools to attain the aims of policies.

1. Is the Commission planning to establish a uniform model which would also help to attain the above aims in practice?

2. Is the Commission planning to standardise the amounts of E-tolls at EU level?

3. Is the Commission planning to compare the existing systems with regard to their operating models and charges?

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

1 and 2. Directive 1999/62/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 1999 on the charging of heavy goods vehicles for the use of certain infrastructure ([1]) ('Eurovignette Directive') sets the framework for vehicle taxes, tolls and user charges imposed on heavy goods vehicles in the EU. With the amendments made to this directive in 2006 and 2011, the framework gained a greater consistency in road charging across the EU and made road charges better reflect the different costs generated by transport users.

The 2011 Transport White Paper ([2]) proposed a strategy to phase in mandatory charges for road transport, with common tariff structure and cost components. At this moment, the Commission is not in a position to say whether and when it would propose the establishment of a uniform model and standardisation of toll levels across Member States, as asked by the Honourable Member.

3. Current legislation requires Member States to notify to the Commission their new tolling arrangements applied to heavy goods vehicles and explain the rationale at the basis of the calculation of the tolls, on which the Commission gives its opinion. By 16 October 2014, Member States will have to report to the Commission on the heavy goods vehicle tolls levied on their territories. On the basis of these reports and other sources of information, the Commission will present a report to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation and effects of Directive 1999/62/EC.

([1]) OJ L 187, 20.7.1999.
([2]) Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area — Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system COM(2011) 0144 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009984/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(9. September 2013)

Betrifft: Gemeinsame Donauraumstrategie — Hochwasserschutz

Die Flutkatastrophe im Mai/Juni 2013 an Donau und Elbe hat in diesem Jahr offensichtlich gemacht, dass Hochwasserschutz nicht nur aus fortwährendem Deichausbau bestehen kann. Würden Deiche in Deutschland und Österreich an der Donau einfach immer weiter erhöht werden, würde das Wasser der Donau nur umso schneller und massiver stromabwärts preschen und dann ungeschützte Bereiche in anderen Mitgliedstaaten der EU überfluten. Hochwasserschutz betrifft folglich alle Anrainerstaaten der Donau und die Aktionen von einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten haben Auswirkungen auf die Bedrohungen anderer Mitgliedstaaten. Dazu ergeben sich eine Reihe von Fragen:

1. Beinhaltet die Donauraumstrategie der EU auch das Thema Hochwasserschutz?

2. Wenn ja, wie gedenkt die Kommission die dargestellten Abhängigkeiten des zunehmenden Deichbaus zu verhindern?

3. Sind zum Deichbau alternative Lösungsvorschläge wie eine Renaturierungen mit natürlichen Überschwemmungsflächen (Auen) oder andere Ideen vorhanden?

4. Sieht die Kommission die Möglichkeit, im Rahmen der Donauraumstrategie vernetzte Flächenwidmungs- und Bebauungspläne unter den „Donau"-Mitgliedstaaten zu erwirken, um die Abstimmung und damit den Schutz aller „Donau"-Mitgliedstaaten zu erhöhen?

5. Wie steht die Kommission einer Idee gegenüber, ein modernes und vernetztes Hochwasserfrühwarnsystem einzurichten, das unter Verwendung digitalisierter und analoger Wetterdaten, den Pegeldaten, Social-Media-Daten und ggf. Satellitendaten zur Bodenfeuchte, eine europaweite (beinahe) Echtzeitprognose von Hochwassergefahren ermöglichen würde?

Antwort von Herrn Hahn im Namen der Kommission
(5. November 2013)

1. Eines der Schwerpunktgebiete der EU-Strategie für den Donauraum sind „Umweltrisiken", worunter auch die Hochwasservorsorge fällt.

2. Im Rahmen des Projekts „Danube Floodrisk" wurden abgestimmte Gefahren- und Risikokarten erstellt, die die Grundlage für einen gemeinsamen übergreifenden Hochwasserrisikomanagementplan bis 2015 bilden sollen. Das Projekt SEERISK ([1]), das derzeit umgesetzt wird, hat eine schnellere und effizientere gemeinsame Reaktion im Katastrophenfall zum Ziel.

3. Die derzeitige EU-Politik zur ländlichen Entwicklung sieht den Erhalt und die Wiederherstellung von Auen und natürlichen Überschwemmungsgebieten als Alternative zum Deichbau vor; dieser Ansatz wird auch im Zeitraum 2014-2020 weiterverfolgt.

4. Die beschriebenen Wechselwirkungen zwischen Ober- und Unterlieger sollten durch die korrekte Umsetzung der Hochwasserrichtlinie ([2]) geregelt werden, die auf Flusseinzugsgebietsebene koordinierte Hochwasserrisikomanagementpläne vorsieht; diese dürfen keine Maßnahmen enthalten, die das Hochwasserrisiko anderer Länder flussaufwärts oder flussabwärts im selben Einzugsgebiet oder Teileinzugsgebiet erheblich erhöhen, es sei denn, es wurde zwischen den betroffenen Mitgliedstaaten eine gemeinsame Lösung gefunden. In den Plänen sind Gebiete mit dem Potenzial zur Retention von Hochwasser, z. B. natürliche Überschwemmungsgebiete, zu berücksichtigen. Bevor Infrastrukturprojekte zur Hochwasservorsorge und zum Hochwasserschutz ins Auge gefasst werden, sollte ein Ansatz verfolgt werden, der natürliche Methoden des Hochwasserrisikomanagements umfasst.

([1]) „Joint Disaster Management Risk Assessment and Preparedness in the Danube Region".
([2]) Richtlinie 2007/60/EG, ABl. L 288 vom 6.11.2007.

5. Das Europäische Hochwasserfrühwarnsystem (EFAS) ([3]) bietet allen Donau-Anrainerstaaten zweimal täglich Hochwasserfrühwarnungen. Ferner ist es Aufgabe der Mitgliedstaaten, künftige Maßnahmen zur Hochwasservorsorge und die strategische Zuweisung von Finanzmitteln für den Zeitraum 2014-2020 zu planen, wobei sie die EU-Strategie für den Donauraum als Plattform zur verbesserten Koordinierung nutzen und alle relevanten Akteure, u. a. die Arbeitsgremien der EU-Strategie und Partnerschaften mit Experten ([4]), mobilisieren sollten.

([3]) www.efas.eu
([4]) z. B. die Internationale Kommission zum Schutz der Donau.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009984/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: Common strategy for the Danube region — flood protection

The disastrous flooding of the Danube and the Elbe in May and June 2013 clearly showed that flood protection in the form of continuous dyke reinforcement is not adequate. If dykes along the Danube in Germany and Austria were simply made higher and higher, the waters of the Danube would flow more and more quickly as one body downstream and flood unprotected areas in other Member States. Flood protection thus affects all countries through which the Danube flows, and the actions of individual Member States will have an impact on the risks faced by others. This gives rise to a number of questions:

1. Does the EU's strategy for the Danube region include the issue of flood protection?

2. If so, how does the Commission intend to prevent the abovementioned dependencies caused by increased dyke construction?

3. Are any alternatives to dyke construction available, such as renaturalisation by means of natural flood areas?

4. In the Commission's view, would it be possible, under the strategy for the Danube region, for integrated zoning and development plans to be drawn up among the 'Danube' Member States, with the aim of increasing coordination and, as a result, the protection of all the countries involved?

5. How does the Commission view the idea of installing a modern, integrated flood early warning system which would use digital and analogue weather data, water level information, social media information and possibly also satellite data on soil moisture content to produce a Europe-wide, virtually real-time forecast of flood risk?

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

1 The EU Strategy for the Danube region has a priority area dealing with 'Environmental risks', which covers flood prevention.

2 The Danube Floodrisk project established harmonised hazard and risk maps, as a first step towards the adoption of a single overarching flood management plan for 2015. The SEERISK ([1]) project, under implementation, is working towards faster and more effective joint response to disasters.

3 As an alternative to dyke construction, the conservation and restoration of wetlands and floodplains is currently offered by the EU's rural development policy and will continue to be available in the period 2014-2020.

4 The mentioned dependencies should be addressed by properly implementing the Floods Directive ([2]) which requires that Flood Risk Management Plans ensure coordination within river basin districts, avoiding measures that significantly increase flood risks upstream or downstream, unless agreed between the concerned Member States. They should take into account areas which have the potential to retain flood water, such as natural floodplains. A natural flood risk management approach should be considered prior to infrastructure projects for flood prevention and protection.

5 The European Flood Awareness System (EFAS) ([3]) provides early flood forecasting information twice daily to all Danube countries. Furthermore, it is for the Member States to take forward future flood prevention actions and plan strategic deployment of funds available in 2014-2020, using the EU Strategy for the Danube region as a platform to increase coordination, through the mobilisation of all relevant actors, including the working bodies of the strategy and expert partners ([4])

([1]) 'Joint Disaster Management Risk Assessment and Preparedness in the Danube Region'.
([2]) Directive 2007/60/EC, OJ L 288, 6.11.2007.
([3]) www.efas.eu
([4]) Such as the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009985/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(9. September 2013)

Betrifft: Ökodesignrichtlinie und Überarbeitung EU-F-Gas-Verordnung

Die EU arbeitet im Moment an der Novelle der F-Gase-Verordnung aus dem Jahr 2006. Zusammen mit der Ökodesignrichtlinie zielt diese darauf ab, die anthropogenen Treibhausgasemissionen zu reduzieren. Dabei scheint vorwiegend der GWP-Wert (Global Warming Potential) der verwendeten Kältemittel im Fokus der Überlegungen zu stehen. Auch im Rahmen der Ökodesignrichtlinie werden Raumklimageräte bis 12 kW mit einem 10 % Bonus in den Leistungs- und Arbeitszahlen versehen, sofern sie mit Kältemitteln unter einem GWP-Wert von 150 arbeiten. Leider setzen sich diese Geräte bisher kaum durch. Dazu ergeben sich eine Reihe von Fragen:

1. Wurden bei der Entscheidung, Kältemittel mit GWP-Werten unter 150 zu verlangen und zu fördern, auch der Stromverbrauch im Lebenszyklus eines jeweiligen Gerätes sowie die Grenzen der Anwendbarkeit in Hinblick auf Entflammbarkeit und Sicherheit bedacht?

2. Hält die Kommission in Anbetracht der schlechteren Effizienz (20-40 %), die solche Geräte mit Kältemitteln unter einem GWP-Wert von 150 aufweisen, den Anreiz von 10 % in den Kennzahlen (siehe oben) für ausreichend?

3. Welche Kältemittel mit GWP-Wert unter 150 sind der Kommission bekannt, die über den gesamten durchschnittlichen Lebenszyklus betrachtet, also GWP-Wert des Kältemittels plus Emissionen des Stromverbrauchs in dessen Betrieb, bessere Werte als das momentan moderne Kältemittel R32 (GWP-Wert 675) besitzen?

4. Warum wurde der Tatsache, dass bei der Gesamtbetrachtung der Emissionen eines Klimagerätes in seinem Lebenszyklus bis zu 90 % indirekt durch den Stromverbrauch im Betrieb entstehen, bei der Gesetzgebung scheinbar nicht ausreichend Rechnung getragen? Wie ist diese verkürzte, rein GWP-basierte Betrachtung, zu erklären?

5. Welche Unternehmen oder Interessensvertretungen haben die Kommission bei der Ökodesignrichtlinie konkret beraten? Welche machten/machen dies im Moment bei der Überarbeitung der EU-F-Gas-Verordnung? Wie setzt sich der legislative Fußabdruck exakt zusammen?

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

1. Ja. Die Verordnung (EU) Nr. 206/2012 ([1]) über Raumklimageräte berücksichtigt den Stromverbrauch und die damit zusammenhängenden Emissionen während des gesamten Lebenszyklus eines Geräts. Danach werden effiziente Geräte, in denen Kältemittel mit höherem Treibhauspotenzial (GWP) verwendet werden, und etwas weniger effiziente Geräte, in denen Kältemittel mit geringem Treibhauspotenzial zum Einsatz kommen, gleich behandelt.

Bei der Ausarbeitung der Verordnung wurden die Entflammbarkeit, andere Sicherheitsaspekte und die Kosten der verschiedenen Kältemittel berücksichtigt.

2. Ja, 10 % ist der beste Kompromiss zwischen der Förderung der Effizienz und der Förderung des Einsatzes von Kältemitteln mit geringem Treibhauspotenzial. Bei einem anderen Prozentsatz wären die Emissionen höher.

3. Geräte, in denen Kältemittel wie Propan, CO_2 und HFO1234yf eingesetzt werden, können ähnlich effizient sein wie Geräte mit R32. So ist beispielsweise Propan beim Heizen und Kühlen etwa 7 % effizienter als traditionelle Kältemittel.

4. Die Tatsache, dass die meisten der CO_2-äquivalenten Emissionen von Raumklimageräten indirekt entstehen, wird berücksichtigt. Der Grund für den relativ niedrigen Bonus für Raumklimageräte mit Kältemittel mit geringem GWP-Wert sind die beim Betrieb entstehenden indirekten Emissionen, die höher als die direkten Emissionen sind.

([1]) ABl. L 72 vom 10.3.2012, S. 7.

5. Die Frage der Raumklimageräte wurde in einer vorbereitenden Studie analysiert, an der die Stakeholder und die Mitgliedstaaten beteiligt waren. Am 22. Juni 2009 fand eine Sitzung des Ökodesign-Konsultationsforums statt. Daran nahmen Sachverständige aus den Mitgliedstaaten und der Industrie sowie von nichtstaatlichen Umwelt- und Verbraucherschutzverbänden teil. Für den Vorschlag für die F-Gas-Verordnung erstellten technische Sachverständige eine vorbereitende Studie mit Unterstützung einer Expertengruppe aus Vertretern der Mitgliedstaaten, der Industrie und nichtstaatlicher Organisationen. Anschließend wurde eine Online-Konsultation der Stakeholder durchgeführt, und am 13. Februar 2012 fand ein offenes Stakeholder-Treffen statt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009985/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: Eco-design directive and revision of the EU F-Gas regulation

The EU is currently working on the revision of the 2006 F-Gas regulation. The aim of both this regulation and the eco-design directive is to reduce man-made greenhouse gas emissions. The main focus appears to be on the GWP (global warming potential) value of the coolants used. Under the eco-design directive, air-conditioning appliances up to 12 kW receive a 10% bonus on their performance data provided that they use refrigerants with less than 150 GWP. Unfortunately, very few of these appliances have been sold to date.

1. Did the decision to require and promote refrigerants with less than 150 GWP also take account of electricity consumption throughout the life-cycle of the product concerned and the limits on possible use in terms of flammability and safety?

2. Does the Commission consider the above 10% incentive to be sufficient, given the lower level of efficiency (20-40%) achieved by appliances using refrigerants with less than 150 GWP?

3. What refrigerants with less than 150 GWP does the Commission know of which show better values than the present-day modern refrigerant R32 (675 GWP) over the entire average product life-cycle, i.e. GWP of the refrigerant plus emissions from electricity consumption during operation?

4. Why was the fact that an overall calculation of the emissions produced by an air-conditioning appliance throughout its life-cycle shows that up to 90% are indirect emissions in the form of electricity consumption apparently not adequately taken into account when the legislation was drawn up? What is the explanation for this abbreviated calculation based on GWP alone?

5. What undertakings or interest groups provided specific advice to the Commission in relation to the eco-design directive? What undertakings or interest groups have provided or are currently providing such advice in relation to the EU F-Gas regulation? What is the precise composition of the legislative footprint?

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

1. Yes. Regulation 206/2012 ([1]) on air conditioners takes into account the electricity consumption and associated emissions throughout the life cycle of the appliance. The approach gives an equal treatment to both efficient appliances that use a refrigerant with higher GWP and slightly less efficient appliances using a low GWP refrigerant.

Flammability, other safety issues and the cost of different refrigerants were taken into account when developing the regulation.

2. Yes, 10% represents the best compromise between promoting efficiency and low GWP refrigerants. A different value would result in increased emissions.

3. Refrigerants such as propane, CO_2 and HFO1234yf allow for products with efficiencies comparable to those of products using R32. For instance, propane is some 7% more efficient in heating and cooling mode than traditional refrigerants.

4. The fact that most of the equivalent CO_2 emissions for air conditioners are indirect is taken into account.The relatively small bonus given for air conditioners using a low GWP refrigerant is a result of higher indirect emissions during the use phase than direct emisions.

([1]) OJ L 72, 10.3.2012, p. 7.

5. Air Conditioners were analysed during a preparatory study which involved stakeholders and Member States. A Consultation Forum meeting under the Ecodesign Directive took place on 22 June 2009. The participants in this meeting included experts from Member States, industry and environmental and consumer NGOs. For the F-gas proposal, a preparatory study carried out by technical experts was accompanied by an expert group composed of Member States, industry and NGOs. Subsequently an online stakeholder consultation took place and an open stakeholder meeting was held on 13 February 2012.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009986/13
al Consejo
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Espionaje del Reino Unido a Estados miembros de la UE

En recientes informaciones aparecidas en el periódico británico *The Guardian* a raíz de las filtraciones facilitadas por Snowden, el Cuartel General de Comunicaciones (GCHQ por sus siglas en inglés) intercepta todo tipo de comunicaciones de los Estados miembros de la Unión a través de los cables submarinos de comunicaciones.

Esta agencia del Gobierno británico, según las informaciones aparecidas en la prensa, habría contado con la colaboración, voluntaria o no, de las grandes empresas multinacionales al cargo de estos cables submarinos de comunicaciones para intervenir 14 de ellos y tener acceso a la práctica totalidad de las comunicaciones de los Estados miembros.

Esta información puede suponer un escándalo para la Unión Europea, puesto que uno de sus Estados miembros intercepta las comunicaciones de todos los demás miembros y además las facilita a Estados Unidos. Se trata de un ataque directo a las bases de la colaboración y cooperación que supone la Unión Europea por parte de uno de sus Estados miembros, que ha violado masivamente los derechos fundamentales de todos los demás, no solo por su propio interés, sino también para facilitar información a un tercer país.

¿Está el Consejo investigando las informaciones aparecidas para confirmar las intercepciones?

¿Ha solicitado información sobre estos hechos a las empresas potencialmente implicadas?

¿Planteará el Consejo la detección y eliminación de las citadas intercepciones en los cables submarinos de telecomunicaciones para garantizar el derecho a la intimidad de los ciudadanos europeos?

¿Qué sanciones plantea interponer el Consejo al Gobierno británico por la violación masiva de los derechos de los ciudadanos europeos y los demás Estados miembros?

Respuesta
(21 de octubre de 2013)

No corresponde al Consejo comentar artículos publicados en la prensa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009986/13
to the Council
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: UK spying on EU Member States

According to recent reports in the British newspaper *The Guardian*, documents leaked by Edward Snowden reveal that GCHQ, the British Government's listening agency, has been intercepting all kinds of communications from EU Member States, by tapping undersea communications cables.

According to the newspaper, GCHQ collected vast amounts of data from EU Member States by tapping 14 undersea communications cables, to which they were given access, voluntarily or not, by the large multinational firms that operate them.

This could blow up into a scandal for the European Union, since one of its Member States has been found to be intercepting data from all the others and, what is more, passing it on to the United States. It is a direct attack by a Member State on the principles of collaboration and cooperation on which the European Union is built and constitutes a massive violation of the fundamental rights of all the other Member States. The UK has engaged in these activities not only to further its own interests, but also to provide information to a non-Member State.

Is the Council investigating the details contained in these reports in order to verify the allegations?

Has it asked the companies allegedly involved to provide relevant information?

Does the Council see scope for locating and removing the taps installed on these undersea communications cables so as to safeguard the right to privacy in the EU?

How does the Council intend to penalise the British Government for this massive violation of rights, not just those of Member States but also those of individual European citizens?

Reply
(21 October 2013)

It is not for the Council to comment on articles appearing in the press.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009987/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 de septiembre de 2013)

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Esta información puede suponer un escándalo para la Unión Europea, puesto que uno de sus Estados miembros intercepta las comunicaciones de todos los demás miembros y además las facilita a los Estados Unidos. Se trata de un ataque directo a las bases de la colaboración y cooperación que supone la Unión Europea por parte de uno de sus Estados miembros, que ha violado masivamente los derechos fundamentales de todos los demás, no solo por su propio interés, sino también para facilitar información a un tercer país.

¿Está la Comisión investigando las informaciones aparecidas para confirmar las intercepciones?

¿Ha solicitado la Comisión información sobre estos hechos a las empresas potencialmente implicadas?

¿Planteará la Comisión la detección y eliminación de las citadas intercepciones en los cables submarinos de telecomunicaciones, a fin de garantizar el derecho a la intimidad de los ciudadanos europeos?

¿Qué sanciones plantea interponer la Comisión al Gobierno británico por la violación masiva de los derechos de los ciudadanos europeos y los demás Estados miembros?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de noviembre de 2013)

Se remite a Su Señoría a las respuestas de la Comisión a las preguntas escritas E-006783/2013 y E-007934/2013.

Además, la Comisión toma nota de que el Comité de seguridad e inteligencia del Parlamento del Reino Unido ha anunciado una revisión de las disposiciones legales que regulan el acceso a información de carácter privado por parte de los servicios de inteligencia en dicho país, así como una investigación para estudiar el equilibrio adecuado entre el derecho a la privacidad y la seguridad.

(English version)

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Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
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Is the Commission investigating the details contained in these reports in order to verify the allegations?

Has it asked the companies allegedly involved to provide relevant information?

Does the Commission see scope for locating and removing the taps installed on these undersea communications cables so as to safeguard the right to privacy in the EU?

How does the Commission intend to penalise the British Government for this massive violation of rights, not just those of Member States but also those of individual European citizens?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-006783/2013 and E-007934/2013.

The Commission also takes note that the Intelligence and Security Committee of the UK Parliament announced a review of the UK's laws governing the intelligence agencies' access to private information and an inquiry to examine the appropriate balance between privacy and security.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-009988/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Anteproyecto de Ley de Parques Nacionales

El Consejo de Ministros del Gobierno de España aprobó a principios de septiembre un anteproyecto de nueva Ley de Parques Nacionales. Estos parques han supuesto históricamente la más importante figura de protección ambiental que existe en la legislación española, y el anteproyecto prevé el desarrollo de actividades económicas que podrían poner en peligro el patrimonio ecológico del país.

El anteproyecto de ley pretende arrebatar la gestión de dichas áreas de conservación a las Comunidades Autónomas, así como dar más protagonismo a los propietarios en la misma.

Entre las actividades permitidas se incluyen como posibles usos la navegación o el vuelo sin motor, abriendo la puerta a actividades turísticas que pueden poner en peligro los diferentes hábitats que se encuentran protegidos bajo esta figura del Parque Nacional. Fauna y flora de dichas áreas gozan de especial protección por su escasez y singularidad, y el impacto que puede generar este tipo de actividades, por pequeño que sea, puede suponer pérdidas irreparables.

Las actividades que se podrían permitir entran en claro conflicto con el acervo ambiental europeo, debido a que degradarían la forma de protección del Parque Nacional a niveles que pueden entrar en conflicto con determinadas directivas europeas.

¿Ha examinado la Comisión el citado anteproyecto de ley?

¿Considera que dicho anteproyecto cumple con lo establecido en 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?

¿Considera que dicho anteproyecto cumple con lo establecido en la Directiva 2009/147/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 30 de noviembre de 2009, relativa a la conservación de las aves silvestres?

¿Qué medidas prevé para que el Gobierno de España plantee un anteproyecto de ley que se atenga a las citadas *directivas y a los principios de la conservación ambiental en los Parques Nacionales?*

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de octubre de 2013)

La Comisión ha examinado el anteproyecto de nueva Ley de Parques Nacionales, que ha sido examinado con el Consejo de Ministros español y se encuentra actualmente en fase de consulta pública ([1]).

Las áreas cubiertas por los parques nacionales españoles se solapan en muchos casos con los lugares Natura 2000 designados en virtud de las Directivas sobre Hábitats ([2]) y Aves ([3]). El desarrollo de actividades económicas en los lugares Natura 2000, en particular las actividades turísticas, el uso público y la participación activa de los propietarios de los terrenos en la gestión de dichos lugares, puede ser compatible, si se lleva a cabo adecuadamente, con los objetivos de conservación de los lugares Natura 2002. Además, la Ley citada no transpone las Directivas sobre Hábitats y Aves, sino que se circunscribe a abordar el estatuto de los parques nacionales designados a nivel nacional. El grado en el que ciertas actividades estén o no permitidas en los parques nacionales, siempre que estas sean conformes con la normativa de la UE, es competencia exclusiva de los Estados miembros.

Teniendo en cuenta la información facilitada por Su Señoría, la Comisión no ha detectado ninguna incompatibilidad entre el anteproyecto de Ley sobre Parques Nacionales español y las Directivas sobre Hábitats y Aves.

([1]) http://www.magrama.gob.es/es/parques-nacionales-oapn/participacion-publica/ley-parques-nacionales.aspx
([2]) 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 22.07.1992).
([3]) Directiva 2009/147/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 30 de noviembre de 2009, relativa a la conservación de las aves silvestres (DO L 20 de 26.1.2010), que codifica la Directiva 79/409/CEE del Consejo, de 2 de abril de 1079, relativa a la conservación de las aves silvestres.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009988/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: Preliminary draft bill on national parks

The Spanish cabinet approved a preliminary draft bill on national parks in early September 2013. National parks have historically represented the highest form of environmental protection afforded by Spanish law, yet this preliminary draft bill opens the way for economic activities to take place that could destroy the natural heritage of the country.

The new bill seeks to wrest control over conservation areas from regional authorities and would give a more active role to landowners.

Among the activities to be permitted are sailing and gliding, paving the way for use by tourists that could threaten habitats protected under existing national park legislation. The flora and fauna of these areas are subject to special protection because they are rare and unique, and the impact that these kind of activities would have, however minimal, could cause irreparable losses.

The activities that could be allowed are clearly at odds with the traditions of environmental protection in Europe. They would downgrade the protection normally afforded by a National Park to levels that could be in breach of certain EU directives.

Has the Commission examined this preliminary draft bill?

Does it consider it to be in compliance with the rules laid down by Council Directive 92/43/EC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora?

Does it consider it to be in compliance with the rules laid down by Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds?

What action does the Commission intend to take to ensure that the Spanish Government draws up a preliminary draft bill that complies with the above directives and the principles of environmental protection in national parks?

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

The Commission has examined the preliminary draft bill on national parks, which has been discussed by the Spanish Council of Ministers and is currently subject to a process of public consultation ([1]).

The areas covered by the Spanish National Parks overlap in many cases with Natura 2000 sites designated under the Habitats ([2]) and the Birds ([3]) Directives. The development of economic activities in Natura 2000 sites — including tourist activities, public use and the active involvement of land owners in the management of these sites — can if properly designed, be compatible with the conservation objectives of the Natura 2000 sites. Moreover, this bill does not transpose the Habitats and Birds Directives, but addresses the stricter status of nationally designated National Parks. The level to which certain activities are allowed or not in National Parks is — as long as these are in line with the provisions of the EU legislation — entirely a competence of the Member States.

In view of the information provided by the Honourable Member, the Commission has not identified any incompatibility between the preliminary draft bill on national parks and the Habitats or the Birds Directives.

([1]) http://www.magrama.gob.es/es/parques-nacionales-oapn/participacion-publica/ley-parques-nacionales.aspx
([2]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC, of 21 May 1992, on the protection of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992).
([3]) Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (OJ L 20/7, 26.1.2010) that codifies the Council Directive 79/409/EEC of 2 April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009990/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(9 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Μυστικές αεροπορικές μεταφορές χρημάτων

Πρόσφατο δημοσίευμα της βρετανικής εφημερίδας Daily Mail, αποκαλύπτει μυστικές αεροπορικές μεταφορές χρημάτων στην Ελλάδα και την Κύπρο, με εντολή της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας και της τρόικας. Ο βρετανός οικονομικός δημοσιογράφος Φαϊζάλ Ισλάμ παραθέτει στοιχεία σύμφωνα με τα οποία ελληνικά στρατιωτικά αεροσκάφη και αεροσκάφη της εταιρείας Maersk, χρησιμοποιήθηκαν για αποστολές χρημάτων, με την πρώτη πτήση να πραγματοποιείται τον Ιούνιο του 2011 προς την Αθήνα. Σύμφωνα με τον συγγραφέα, στόχος αυτών των «μυστικών αερομεταφορών» ήταν η προστασία και η παράταση της ζωής του ευρώ.

Ερωτάται λοιπόν η Επιτροπή:

— Έχουν όντως πραγματοποιηθεί τέτοιου είδους μεταφορές χρημάτων;

— Αν η απάντηση στο πιο πάνω ερώτημα είναι θετική, ποιος ήταν ο άμεσος στόχος αυτών των μεταφορών;

— Έχουν γίνει τέτοιου είδους μυστικές αποστολές και σε άλλες χώρες μέλη της ΕΕ, όπου αντιμετωπίζονται προβλήματα για διάσωση της ευρωζώνης και του κοινού νομίσματος;

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

Το Ευρωσύστημα είναι αρμόδιο για τη διασφάλιση του ομαλού εφοδιασμού της ζώνης του ευρώ σε τραπεζογραμμάτια. Το Αξιότιμο Μέλος καλείται να απευθύνει την ερώτησή του στην ΕΚΤ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009990/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: Secret airlifts of funds

According to a recent report by the British Daily Mail newspaper, secret airlifts of funds to Greece and Cyprus have been taking place on the instructions of the European Central Bank and the Troika. British economics editor Faisal Islam indicates that the funds were transferred in Maersk cargo planes and Greek military aircraft, commencing with a flight to Athens in June 2011, the purpose being to protect and sustain the euro.

In view of this:

— Can the Commission say whether such airlifts have in fact been organised?

— If so, what was the immediate purpose thereof?

— Have similar clandestine consignments been received by other EU Member States struggling to ensure the continued survival of the euro area and the common currency?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(24 October 2013)

The Eurosystem is responsible for ensuring a smooth supply of banknotes to the euro area. The Honourable Member is therefore invited to address his question to the ECB.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009991/13
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: Import controls on IUU fisheries products

Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 is the legal tool in the EU's fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. In conjunction with Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 (the Control Regulation), it provides a framework allowing illegal fish to be seized at European ports, flag states to be incentivised to improve their monitoring and control, and European nationals to be sanctioned for involvement in IUU fishing around the world.

In its Article 55, Regulation No 1005/2008 requires the Commission to draw up a report on its application. The report, based on information provided by Member States every two years, as well as on the Commission's own observations, shall provide 'an evaluation of the impact of this regulation on IUU fishing'.

Accurate information on the levels of controls on imports of fish in each Member State is crucial in order to identify the potential risk areas for entry of IUU fisheries products into the EU market and pinpoint where the Commission's increased focus is required to ensure the equitable application of the regulation across the EU. In this regard, could the Commission report on whether the abovementioned report will include:

1. data on the volume of imports of fisheries products in each Member State;

2. data on consignment verifications and import rejections in each Member State;

3. data on Member States' efforts to identify EU nationals supporting or engaged in IUU fishing and sanctions imposed in accordance;

4. the Commission's proposed actions for strengthening the implementation of the EU IUU Regulation by Member States?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(13 November 2013)

Article 55 (2) Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 (IUU Regulation) requires the Commission to prepare a report for submission to the European Parliament and the Council on the application of the IUU Regulation, based on reports transmitted by EU Member States to the Commission (Art. 55 (1) IUU Regulation) and its own observations.

In order to have best available and up-to-date information on the state of play of implementation of all aspects of the IUU Regulation by various stakeholders, and in particular Member States, the Commission has also launched a study. The study will analyse available trade and statistical data, including data submitted or made available by Member States. It should be noted that the IUU Regulation does not create additional or specific requirements for the collection of data for imports of fisheries products; such data is collected by Eurostat.

Based on the outcome of this study and all other available information, the Commission will draw up its report and outline what follow-up may be appropriate. This could include as appropriate actions to strengthen the implementation of the regulation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009992/13
to the Commission
Phil Prendergast (S&D)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: European civil service recruitment

In the year 2010, how many Irish nationals were recruited to full-time positions in the European civil service having successfully passed the 'concours' examination?

In the year 2011, how many Irish nationals were recruited to full-time positions in the European civil service having successfully passed the 'concours' examination?

In the year 2012, how many Irish nationals were recruited to full-time positions in the European civil service having successfully passed the 'concours' examination?

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

The European Commission can only provide information as regards its own staff.

In 2010, two Irish nationals having successfully passed a competition were recruited by the Commission.

In 2011, one Irish national having successfully passed a competition was recruited by the Commission.

In 2012, four Irish nationals having successfully passed a competition were recruited by the Commission.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009993/13
to the Commission
Jill Evans (Verts/ALE)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: Genetically modified animals

I have received a large amount of correspondence from constituents concerned about the use of genetically modified (GM) animals in farming in the EU.

There are a number of reasons why the EU should not allow the use of GM animals in farming. The first relates to animal welfare: the methods for producing GM animals can have unpredictable results and lead to GM animals suffering from diseases, organ failure and deformities. Furthermore, a large number of animals are needed in order to carry out tests and these animals are often kept in deplorable conditions.

There is also an ethical issue about changing the genetic makeup of species and mixing genes from different species. Huge problems could also occur if GM animals are allowed to breed with non-GM animals.

Finally, there is a risk to human health. There has been a great deal of debate surrounding GMOs, especially following the publication by Professor Gilles-Éric Séralini of the results of his research on the effects of GMOs on rats. These results showed that GMOs caused the rats to develop large tumours. In light of these findings, the EU needs a real debate on whether GM animals have a legitimate role to play in its farming.

1. Does the Commission agree that there are many issues surrounding GM animals, such as animal welfare and ethical issues?

2. Does the Commission agree that Professor Séralini's report has highlighted the dangers of GMOs?

3. Does the Commission agree that the EU needs a proper debate on the issue of GMOs, including GM animals, and that such a debate should take place as soon as possible?

4. When is such a debate on the future of GMOs likely to be held?

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

1, 3 and 4. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions P-8721/2013 and E-8934/2013 ([1]). The Commission would also like to inform the Member that it has organised three open debates with stakeholders and the civil society ([2]) in 2011 and 2012 on risk assessment and management of GMOs, socioeconomic impacts of GMOs, and Environmental Monitoring of GMOs.

2. GMOs can be authorised in the EU only after having been through a stringent risk assessment performed by EFSA ([3]) demonstrating that they are safe for human and animal health and for the environment. On 28 November 2012 EFSA published its final scientific review on the study by Seralini et al ([4]), which reaffirmed its initial assessment, along with opinions already provided by six food safety agencies of the Member States, that the authors' conclusions cannot be regarded as scientifically sound because of inadequacies in the design, reporting and analysis of the study. EFSA finds there is no need to re-examine its previous safety evaluations of the GM maize NK 603 or to consider these findings in the ongoing assessment of glyphosate.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biotechnology/index_en.htm
([3]) The European Food Safety Authority.
([4]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/press/news/121128.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009994/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Educazione ambientale: quali sfide per l'Europa

Insegnare già nelle scuole di educazione primaria a rapportarsi in modo sostenibile con gli ecosistemi, potrebbe essere una nuova sfida per tutti gli Stati membri e per l'Europa. Inserire l'educazione ambientale nei programmi ambientali e negli accordi di partenariato con gli Stati membri potrebbe essere un ulteriore strumento per rendere più efficace la conoscenza e l'attuazione delle politiche ambientali. La cosiddetta enviromental education in realtà era già stata oggetto di dibattito all'Università del Michigan e poi, ufficializzata dall'Unesco come missione pedagogica, alla conferenza di Tbilisi. Oggi i dibattiti sui temi ambientali e la diffusione delle tecnologie legate alle città intelligenti sono oramai all'ordine del giorno ed evidentemente i risultati educativi sono molto variabili.

Il tema dell'educazione ambientale andrebbe affrontato con un approccio integrato ed europeo, coinvolgendo maggiormente tutti gli attori interessati, in primis le famiglie e in particolare i bambini.

Può la Commissione far sapere se intende predisporre linee guida che incoraggino e promuovano l'educazione ambientale attraverso la figura degli educatori ambientali nella comunità di insegnanti e formatori, affrontando con gli strumenti educativi i problemi reali, quali quelli della sostenibilità ambientale, che spesso le stesse istituzioni non arrivano a cogliere, ad esempio, promuovendo campagne che legano i temi ambientali all'educazione tradizionale, come lo stile di vita, la sostenibilità e l'avvicinamento alla natura dei cittadini europei?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(4 novembre 2013)

L'onorevole deputato senz'altro saprà che, conformemente all'articolo 165 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea, la responsabilità del contenuto e dell'organizzazione dei sistemi di istruzione e formazione compete esclusivamente agli Stati membri.

Tuttavia, la raccomandazione relativa a competenze chiave per l'apprendimento permanente (Gazzetta ufficiale L 394 del 30.12.2006) definisce le conoscenze, le abilità e le attitudini in relazione all'ambiente naturale quali componenti essenziali delle competenze di base nel campo della scienza e tecnologia.

Attraverso il metodo di coordinamento aperto (MCA) la Commissione aiuta gli Stati membri a identificare le pratiche ottimali nel campo dell'educazione scientifica e promuove l'inclusione delle conoscenze, abilità e attitudini ambientali tra gli obiettivi generali dell'educazione scientifica. Essa aiuta inoltre gli Stati membri a prendere in carico tutte le competenze chiave. Tuttavia, l'elaborazione di linee guida specifiche, quali suggerite nell'interrogazione dell'onorevole deputato, esulerebbe dalle competenze della Commissione statuite nel trattato.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009994/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: Environmental education: challenges for Europe

Teaching children as young as primary school age to interact sustainably with the environment is a new challenge for Member States and Europe as a whole. Incorporating environmental education into environmental programmes and partnership agreements with Member States could raise environmental awareness and make environmental policies more effective. Environmental education had already been the subject of debate at the University of Michigan before it was officially established as an educational discipline by Unesco at the Tbilisi Conference. Although the environment and smart city technologies are now highly topical issues, environmental education in general remains very patchy.

A holistic, EU-wide approach needs to be taken to environmental education, based on the closer involvement of all stakeholders, including families and, in particular, children.

Does the Commission intend to draw up guidelines promoting environmental education through the appointment of environmental educators who will use bespoke teaching methods to address real issues, such as environmental sustainability, which schools are often unable to cover themselves, and implement campaigns which seek to make green topics such as lifestyles, sustainability and closeness to nature part of the standard curriculum?

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

The Honourable Member will be aware that, in accordance with Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the responsibility for the content and organisation of education and training systems rests entirely with Member States.

However, the recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning (Official Journal L 394 of 30.12.2006) highlights environmental knowledge, skills and attitudes as essential component of basic competences in science and technology.

The Commission, through the open method for coordination (OMC), helps Member States to identify best practices in science education and promotes the inclusion of environmental knowledge, skills and attitudes within the overall goals of science education. It also supports Member States in addressing all key competences. However, drafting specific guidelines as suggested in the Honourable Member's question would fall outside the Commission's competence as foreseen in the Treaty.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-009995/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Ennesimo attacco contro Camp Ashraf — Revisione delle regole di ingaggio dell'ONU

Lo scorso 1º settembre si è assistito, ancora una volta sotto la noncuranza delle istituzioni europee e nel silenzio della comunità internazionale, all'ennesimo attacco contro Camp Ashraf, che è costato la vita a 52 profughi residenti. L'esecuzione fatta per le strade e all'interno dell'ospedale è stata di una violenza inaudita, un vero atto di guerra da parte di soldati armati e con il volto coperto. I media mostrano l'azione delle milizie irachene e gli iraniani feriti, che verranno poi trovati morti, giustiziati con un colpo alla testa. Da ormai troppo tempo numerose associazioni umanitarie denunciano le stragi compiute ai danni di questi oppositori al regime iraniano, tuttavia le loro denunce rimangono inascoltate. I residenti di Camp Ashraf — originariamente sede di 3 400 esuli iraniani, per la maggior parte membri e sostenitori dell'Organizzazione dei mojahedeen del popolo iraniano che erano stati accolti in Iraq da Saddam Hussein negli anni Ottanta — hanno riferito che le forze di sicurezza irachene hanno attaccato il campo uccidendo decine di persone, parecchie delle quali arrestate e ammanettate prima di essere giustiziate. Le autorità irachene hanno invece attribuito le morti a scontri avvenuti all'interno del campo.

Già in occasione di precedenti attacchi, le autorità irachene non hanno indagato in modo efficace né trasparente, lasciando gli abitanti del campo in uno stato di paura permanente. Camp Ashraf ospitava un centinaio di persone dopo che negli ultimi anni la maggior parte dei residenti era stata trasferita a Camp Liberty, a nordest della capitale Baghdad.

Anche Camp Liberty è stato attaccato nel corso del 2013, con decine di feriti e oltre 10 morti, in due attacchi avvenuti il 9 febbraio e il 15 giugno, e rivendicati dall'Esercito del mukhtar, una milizia sciita.

Si chiede allora all'Alto Rappresentante dell'UE:

— Può inserire come assolutamente prioritaria nell'agenda politica estera e di sicurezza comune, l'incolumità dei residenti di Camp Ashraf, poiché l'UE non può e non deve tollerare alcuna forma di violenza, da qualsiasi parte provenga?

— Può chiedere un'indagine approfondita e pubblica alle autorità irachene?

— Può prendere una ferma posizione di condanna di tali atti nei confronti della comunità internazionale e farsi portatore presso l'ONU della necessità di rivedere le regole d'ingaggio, le competenze, le responsabilità di tale organizzazione, affinché tutta la comunità internazionale ed europea sia chiamata a rispondere delle proprie azioni, disponendo come necessario un mandato ai sensi del Capitolo VII della Carta dell'ONU, con chiare regole di ingaggio che autorizzino l'uso della forza, specialmente per prevenire simili attacchi contro i civili, i campi profughi, i villaggi e gli operatori umanitari, gli agenti di polizia, nonché a fini di autodifesa?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente segue da vicino la situazione in Iraq, compresi gli sviluppi riguardanti i residenti di Camp Hurriya e Camp Achraf.

All'indomani dell'attacco del 1º settembre, l'AR/VP ha espresso pubblicamente la sua ferma condanna e ha chiesto che i responsabili siano chiamati a risponderne, ribadendo la sua posizione l'11 settembre, durante una conversazione telefonica con il ministro degli Esteri iracheno Hoshyar Zebari, e il 24 settembre, quando si è recata personalmente a New York.

L'AR/VP continuerà a insistere affinché il governo dell'Iraq svolga indagini approfondite sull'attacco e si assuma le proprie responsabilità garantendo la sicurezza dei residenti, che da allora si sono trasferiti tutti a Camp Hurriya, in conformità del protocollo d'intesa del 25 dicembre 2011 tra il governo dell'Iraq e le Nazioni Unite.

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha sottolineato ripetutamente il suo pieno sostegno al processo in atto per il reinsediamento dei residenti dei campi in paesi terzi giudicandolo l'unica soluzione pacifica e duratura. L'UE ha dato il contributo più ingente al processo, cofinanziando l'operazione con una dotazione finanziaria di 14 milioni di euro insieme alle agenzie delle Nazioni Unite interessate, in particolare l'UNHCR e l'UNOPS. Gli attacchi a Camp Ashraf e Camp Hurriya ribadiscono l'urgente necessità di accelerare tale processo, in collaborazione con i residenti e con i paesi terzi disposti ad accoglierli.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009995/13
to the Commission (Vice-Présidente / Haute Représentante)
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Still another attack on Camp Ashraf — review of UN Rules of Engagement

On 1 September 2013, 52 refugees lost their lives in yet another attack on Camp Ashraf — once again amid the indifference of the European institutions and silence from the international community. An unprecedented level of violence was used in the attack, which was carried out by masked gunmen in the camp's streets and hospital. Media reports show images of the acts committed by the Iraqi militia men and of wounded Iranians, who were later finished off with a bullet to the head. Although numerous humanitarian organisations have long condemned the attacks on these opponents of the Iranian regime, their calls for action continue to fall on deaf ears. Residents of Camp Ashraf — once home to 3 400 Iranian exiles, most of whom were members and supporters of the People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran who were allowed to settle in Iraq by Saddam Hussein during the 1980s — have reported that Iraqi security forces attacked the camp, killing dozens of people, many of whom were captured and restrained before being executed. The Iraqi authorities, however, maintain that the deaths were caused by fighting inside the camp.

Following previous attacks, the Iraqi authorities have failed to conduct effective, transparent investigations, leaving camp residents in a permanent state of fear. At the time of the latest attack, Camp Ashraf was home to some 100 people, as most of the residents have been transferred to Camp Liberty, to the north-east of Baghdad, over the past few years.

Camp Liberty has itself been targeted in 2013, with dozens injured and more than 10 people killed in attacks on 9 February and 15 June, for which the Mukhtar Army, a Shi'a militia, claimed responsibility.

— Given that the EU cannot and must not tolerate any form of violence from any group whatsoever, will the High Representative make the safety of the residents of Camp Ashraf an absolute priority of EU common foreign and security policy?

— Will she call on the Iraqi authorities to conduct an in-depth public inquiry?

— Will she firmly condemn such acts and press within the UN for a review of the organisation's Rules of Engagement, duties and responsibilities, in order to ensure that Europe and the international community as a whole shoulder their responsibility, where necessary on the basis of a mandate pursuant to Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, laying down clear rules of engagement authorising the use of force to prevent similar attacks on civilians, refugee camps, villages, aid workers and police officers in particular, and in self-defence?

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

The HR/VP is following the situation in Iraq very closely including developments concerning the residents from Camp Hurriya and Achraf.

In the wake of the 1 September attack, the HR/VP publicly condemned the attack and called for those responsible to be held accountable. She has since repeated this call when speaking by telephone with Iraq's Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari on 11 September and again in person in New York on 24 September.

The HR/VP will continue to insist that the Government of Iraq conducts a full investigation into to the attack. She will also continue to call on the Government of Iraq to fulfill its duties and responsibilities by ensuring the safety of the residents, who have since all moved to Camp Hurriya, in accordance with the memorandum of understanding of 25 December 2011 between the Government of Iraq and the United Nations.

The HR/VP has repeatedly stressed her full support to the ongoing process of resettlement of the camp residents to third countries as the only peaceful and durable solution. The EU has been the biggest contributor to this effort, co-financing the operation with an envelope of 14 million euro together with the United Nations agencies involved — notably the UNHCR and UNOPS. The attacks on Camp Ashraf and the previous on Camp Hurriya, remind us of the urgency to accelerate this process, with the cooperation of both the residents and third countries that are ready to receive them.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-009996/13
an die Kommission
Evelyne Gebhardt (S&D)
(9. September 2013)

Betrifft: Entnehmbarkeit von Altbatterien und -akkumulatoren

Nach Artikel 11 der Richtlinie 2006/66/EG über Batterien und Akkumulatoren sowie Altbatterien und Altakkumulatoren müssen Mitgliedstaaten sicherstellen, „dass die Hersteller die Geräte so entwerfen, dass Altbatterien und -akkumulatoren problemlos entnommen werden können". Weiterhin werden jedoch Produkte auf den Markt gebracht, die dieser Anforderung nicht genügen. Es ist zu bezweifeln, dass im Falle von Geräten wie Mobiltelefonen oder GPS-Navigationssystemen Gründe, die das Fehlen problemlos entnehmbarer Altbatterien oder -akkumulatoren rechtfertigen würden, wie die Notwendigkeit einer ununterbrochene Stromversorgung und einer ständigen Verbindung zwischen dem Gerät und der Batterie oder dem Akkumulator, vorliegen.

Welche Erkenntnisse liegen der Kommission über die Umsetzung einer Entnehmbarkeitspflicht für Geräte, in die Batterien und Akkumulatoren eingebaut sind, in den Mitgliedstaaten vor?

Wie lässt sich das Inverkehrbringen von innerhalb des Binnenmarktes hergestellten Produkten ohne problemlos entnehmbare Batterien bzw. Akkumulatoren rechtfertigen?

Welche Schritte gedenkt die Kommission zu unternehmen, sofern die Mitgliedstaaten keine ausreichenden Maßnahmen unternehmen, um der gleichermaßen verbraucher- wie auch umweltpolitischen Zielsetzung problemlos entnehmbarer Altbatterien und -akkumulatoren nachzukommen?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(19. November 2013)

Die Kommission hat die Anwendung von Artikel 11 der Richtlinie 2006/66/EG ([1]) in der Sitzung des zuständigen Ausschusses für technische Anpassung am 5. November 2012 ([2]) mit Mitgliedstaaten erörtert. Eine genaue Übersicht über die diesbezüglich in den Mitgliedstaaten getroffenen Maßnahmen liegt jedoch nicht vor.

Im Rahmen der jüngsten interinstitutionellen Beratungen zur Änderung der Richtlinie 2006/66/EG ([3]) wurde vereinbart, bestimmte Aspekte von Artikel 11 (etwa die Frage, wer Batterien aus den Geräten entnehmen darf, oder Anleitungen zum Entnehmen von Batterien) zu klären.

Um den Mitgliedstaaten weitere Hinweise zur Umsetzung der Richtlinie auch in Bezug auf den neuen Wortlaut von Artikel 11 und Aspekte der Entnehmbarkeit zu geben, wird die Kommission in Kürze das Dokument mit den häufig gestellten Fragen zu der Richtlinie überprüfen und aktualisieren.

Die Kommission wird die Umsetzung der überarbeiteten Richtlinie durch die Mitgliedstaaten überwachen.

([1]) Richtlinie 2006/66/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates über Batterien und Akkumulatoren sowie Altbatterien und Altakkumulatoren und zur Aufhebung der Richtlinie 91/157/EWG (Text von Bedeutung für den EWR), ABl. L 266 vom 26.9.2006.

([2]) Vgl. TOP 7 unter: http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regcomitology/index.cfm?do=search.documentdetail&strFCI2yFUd69YnB6gnJSwGKoqk9yLBnrGHb7ji6owQDftvKFOKx2dvStAkgOQoq

([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=en&reference=COM(2012)0136

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009996/13
to the Commission
Evelyne Gebhardt (S&D)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: Removability of waste batteries and accumulators

In accordance with Article 11 of Directive 2006/66/EC on batteries and accumulators and waste batteries and accumulators, Member States must ensure 'that manufacturers design appliances in such a way that waste batteries and accumulators can be readily removed'. However, products that do not meet this requirement continue to be placed on the market. In the case of devices like mobile phones or GPS navigation systems, it is doubtful whether there are any reasons that would justify the absence of waste batteries or accumulators that can be readily removed, such as the need for continuity of power supply or a permanent connection between the device and the battery or accumulator.

What information does the Commission have concerning the implementation of a ready removability obligation for appliances into which batteries and accumulators are incorporated in the Member States?

How can the placing on the market of products manufactured within the internal market without readily removable batteries or accumulators be justified?

What steps does the Commission intend to take if the Member States do not take adequate measures to meet the objective of both consumer and environmental policy alike of readily removable waste batteries and accumulators?

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

The Commission discussed the implementation of Article 11 of Directive 2006/66/EC ([1]) with Member States at a meeting of the relevant Technical Adaption Committee held on 5 November 2012 ([2]). However, there is no detailed overview of measures taken at national level in this respect.

In the context of the recent interinstitutional discussions on the amendment of Directive 2006/66/EC ([3]) it was agreed to clarify certain aspects of Article 11 (e.g. who should be able to remove batteries from appliances and instructions for the removal of batteries).

To give further guidance to Member States on the implementation of the directive, including as regards the new wording of Article 11 and removability aspects, the Commission will shortly review and update the Frequently Asked Questions document on the directive.

The Commission will monitor the implementation of the revised directive by Member States.

([1]) on batteries and accumulators and waste batteries and accumulators and repealing Directive 91/157/EEC (Text with EEA relevance), OJ L 266, 26.9.2006.

([2]) Under agenda item 7, see:
http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regcomitology/index.cfm?
do=search.documentdetail&strFCI2yFUd69YnB6gnJSwGKoqk9yLBnrGHb7ji6owQDftvKFOKx2dvStAkgOQoq

([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=en&reference=COM(2012)0136

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009997/13
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(9 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κίνδυνοι ξεπλύματος χρήματος και χρηματοδότησης της τρομοκρατίας

Σύμφωνα με στοιχεία που περιλαμβάνονται στο Basel AML Index 2013, τα οποία δόθηκαν πρόσφατα στη δημοσιότητα από το Basel Institute on Governance ([1]), αρκετά κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ βρίσκονται ψηλά στο δείκτη κινδύνου ξεπλύματος χρήματος και χρηματοδότησης της τρομοκρατίας. Τέτοιες χώρες είναι η Ελλάδα (6,39), το Λουξεμβούργο (6,24), η Αυστρία (5,79), η Γερμανία (5,79), η Ιταλία (5,54), η Ισπανία (5,18) κ.λπ. (όσο πιο ψηλή η τιμή του δείκτη τόσο πιο μεγάλος ο κίνδυνος).

Η Κύπρος με 5,03, κατατάσσεται πιο χαμηλά από τις πιο πάνω χώρες και αξιολογείται ως χώρα μέσου κινδύνου, ευρισκόμενη περίπου στα ίδια επίπεδα με την Ολλανδία (5,01), τη Λεττονία 4,93 και το ΗΒ (4,81). Και όμως, η Κύπρος είναι η μοναδική χώρα στην οποία εντελώς προσχηματικά και ατεκμηρίωτα επιβλήθηκαν βαρύτατες κυρώσεις για το πιο πάνω θέμα.

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

— Είναι ενήμερο σχετικά με τα πιο πάνω στοιχεία και την πραγματική κατάσταση που επικρατεί στα διάφορα κράτη μέλη όσον αφορά το ξέπλυμα χρήματος και τον κίνδυνο χρηματοδότησης της τρομοκρατίας;

— Ποια μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει έναντι των χωρών υψηλού κινδύνου, ώστε να ελαχιστοποιηθούν οι κίνδυνοι από τέτοιες παράνομες δραστηριότητες;

— Γιατί εξαντλήθηκε όλη η αυστηρότητα έναντι της Κύπρου, ενώ δεν φαίνεται να έχουν ληφθεί οποιαδήποτε μέτρα κατά άλλων κρατών μελών, πολλά από τα οποία μάλιστα εμφανίζουν υψηλότερο κίνδυνο παράνομων ενεργειών;

— Αντιλαμβάνεται το Συμβούλιο ότι με την εφαρμογή δύο μέτρων και δύο σταθμών τίθεται σε κίνδυνο η ίδια η συνοχή της Ένωσης και δημιουργούνται αντιευρωπαϊκά αισθήματα στους πολίτες των κρατών μελών που καθίστανται θύματα τέτοιων δυσμενών διακρίσεων;

— Τι προτίθεται να πράξει το Συμβούλιο για την αποκατάσταση των ζημιών που έχουν υποστεί χιλιάδες κυπριακά νοικοκυριά και επιχειρήσεις από τις άδικες και αψυχολόγητες αποφάσεις της ΕΕ και του Eurogroup για την Κύπρο;

Απάντηση
(25 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Στις 22 Μαΐου 2013, Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο αποφάσισε ότι η φοροδιαφυγή, η φορολογική απάτη και η νομιμοποίηση εσόδων από παράνομες δραστηριότητες πρέπει να καταπολεμηθούν τόσο εντός της εσωτερικής αγοράς όσο και έναντι μη συνεργάσιμων τρίτων χωρών και εδαφών, κατά τρόπο ολοκληρωμένο. Και στις δύο περιπτώσεις, είναι σημαντικό ρόλο να οριστεί ο πραγματικός δικαιούχος, όσον αφορά, π.χ. εταιρίες, ενώσεις εταιριών και ιδρύματα. Η αναθεώρηση της τρίτης οδηγίας για την καταπολέμηση της νομιμοποίησης εσόδων από παράνομες δραστηριότητες πρέπει να εγκριθεί έως το τέλος του έτους ([2]).

Όσον αφορά την Κύπρο, στις 13 Μαΐου 2013, η Ευρωομάδα εξέφρασε ικανοποίηση για την ολοκλήρωση των ανεξάρτητων αξιολογήσεων συμμόρφωσης με το πλαίσιο καταπολέμησης της νομιμοποίησης προσόδων από παράνομες δραστηριότητες στην Κύπρο. Τα θεσμικά όργανα της τρόικας υπέβαλαν τα κυριότερα πορίσματά τους στην Ευρωομάδα, ενώ συστάσεις για τη διόρθωση των αδυναμιών περιλήφθηκαν στο σχέδιο δράσης κατά της νομιμοποίησης προσόδων από παράνομες δραστηριότητες, το οποίο συμφωνήθηκε μεταξύ της τρόικας και των κυπριακών αρχών.

Σύμφωνα με την εκτελεστική απόφαση του Συμβουλίου της 13ης Σεπτεμβρίου 2013 για την έγκριση προγράμματος μακροοικονομικής σταθερότητας για την Κύπρο και την κατάργηση της απόφασης 2013/236/ΕΕ ([3]) του Συμβουλίου, το πρόγραμμα προβλέπει την περαιτέρω ενίσχυση του πλαισίου καταπολέμησης της νομιμοποίησης εσόδων από παράνομες δραστηριότητες και την εκτέλεση σχεδίου δράσης που διασφαλίζει την εφαρμογή βελτιωμένων πρακτικών όσον αφορά τη δέουσα επιμέλεια για τον πελάτη και τη διαφάνεια των οικονομικών οντοτήτων, σύμφωνα με τις βέλτιστες πρακτικές.

([1]) http://index.baselgovernance.org/index/Index.html#ranking
([2]) EUCO 75/1/2013.
([3]) ΕΕ L 250/40 της 20.9.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009997/13
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: Risks of money laundering and financing of terrorism

According to information contained in the Basel AML Index 2013 published recently by the Basel Institute on Governance, ([1]) several EU Member States have high risk indices for money laundering and financing of terrorism. They include Greece (6.39), Luxembourg (6.24), Austria (5.79), Germany (5.79), Italy (5.54), Spain (5.18) and others (the higher the number the greater the risk).

Cyprus (5.03) is lower than the above countries and is classed as a medium-risk country, on a par with the Netherlands (5.01), Latvia (4.93) and the UK (4.81). However, Cyprus is the only country on which serious penalties have been imposed for the above activities on wholly untenable and unsubstantiated grounds.

In view of the above, will the Council say:

— Is it aware of the above figures and the actual situation in the various Member States as regards money laundering and the risk of financing of terrorism?

— What measures does it intend to take against high-risk countries in order to minimise the risk of such illegal activities?

— Why is Cyprus the only country to have been on the receiving end of this strict approach and why do no measures appear to have been taken against other Member States, many of which present a greater risk of illegal activities?

— Does the Council understand that the application of double standards is putting the very cohesion of the Union at risk and giving rising to anti-European sentiment among the citizens of the Member States which are being made into the butt of this discrimination?

— What does the Council intend to do to compensate for the losses sustained by thousands of Cypriot households and businesses from unfair and ill-considered decisions passed by the EU and the Eurogroup on Cyprus?

Reply
(25 November 2013)

On 22 May 2013, the European Council concluded that there is a need to deal with tax evasion and fraud and to fight money laundering, within the internal market and vis-à-vis non-cooperative third countries and jurisdictions, in a comprehensive manner. In both cases the identification of beneficial ownership in respect of, for instance, companies, trusts and foundations, is essential. The revision of the third anti-money laundering Directive should be adopted by the end of the year ([2]).

As regards Cyprus, on 13 May 2013 the Eurogroup welcomed the completion of independent assessments of compliance with the anti-money laundering framework in Cyprus. The Troika institutions have reported the key findings to the Eurogroup, and recommendations to rectify deficiencies were integrated in the anti-money laundering action plan agreed between the Troika institutions and the Cyprus authorities.

According to the Council Implementing Decision of 13 September 2013 on approving the macroeconomic adjustment programme for Cyprus and repealing Decision 2013/236/EU ([3]), the programme shall provide for further strengthening of the anti-money laundering framework and implement an action plan designed to improve practice on customer due diligence and entity transparency, in line with best practice.

([1]) http://index.baselgovernance.org/index/Index.html#ranking
([2]) EUCO 75/1/2013.
([3]) OJ L 250/40, 20.09.2013.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009998/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(9 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κίνδυνοι ξεπλύματος χρήματος και χρηματοδότησης της τρομοκρατίας

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Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Είναι ενήμερη σχετικά με τα πιο πάνω στοιχεία και την πραγματική κατάσταση που επικρατεί στα διάφορα κράτη μέλη όσον αφορά το ξέπλυμα χρήματος και τον κίνδυνο χρηματοδότησης της τρομοκρατίας;

— Ποια μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει έναντι των χωρών υψηλού κινδύνου, ώστε να ελαχιστοποιηθούν οι κίνδυνοι από τέτοιες παράνομες δραστηριότητες;

— Γιατί εξαντλήθηκε όλη η αυστηρότητα έναντι της Κύπρου, ενώ δεν φαίνεται να έχουν ληφθεί οποιαδήποτε μέτρα κατά άλλων κρατών μελών, πολλά από τα οποία μάλιστα εμφανίζουν υψηλότερο κίνδυνο παράνομων ενεργειών;

— Αντιλαμβάνεται η Επιτροπή ότι με την εφαρμογή δύο μέτρων και δύο σταθμών τίθεται σε κίνδυνο η ίδια η συνοχή της Ένωσης και δημιουργούνται αντιευρωπαϊκά αισθήματα στους πολίτες των κρατών μελών που καθίστανται θύματα τέτοιων δυσμενών διακρίσεων;

— Τι προτίθεται να πράξει η Επιτροπή για την αποκατάσταση των ζημιών που έχουν υποστεί χιλιάδες κυπριακά νοικοκυριά και επιχειρήσεις από τις άδικες και αψυχολόγητες αποφάσεις της ΕΕ και του Eurogroup για την Κύπρο;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(31 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη σχετικά με τον Basel Index, ο οποίος βασίζεται σε συλλογή παραγόντων όπως είναι οι εκθέσεις αξιολόγησης από την ομάδα χρηματοοικονομικής δράσης (της οποίας η Επιτροπή είναι πλήρες μέλος) και της ομάδας Moneyval (όπου είναι παρατηρητής).

Η Επιτροπή επιβεβαιώνει ότι παρακολουθεί τη συμμόρφωση των κρατών μελών με τη νομοθεσία της ΕΕ και την πρόοδο των αξιολογήσεων των κρατών μελών και των διαδικασιών παρακολούθησης που θεσπίστηκαν από την ειδική ομάδα χρηματοοικονομικής δράσης και την MONEYVAL, οι οποίες παρέχουν λεπτομερή συμπεράσματα και επακόλουθες ενέργειες παρά με μια γενική κατάταξη. Κατά συνέπεια, η Επιτροπή θεωρεί ότι είναι σκοπιμότερο να εξετάσουμε τη συνολική εικόνα αντί της κατάταξης.

Η Επιτροπή δεν θεωρεί ότι τα μέτρα που λαμβάνονται σε σχέση με την Κύπρο συνιστούν διπλά μέτρα και σταθμά. Οι περιστάσεις στην Κύπρο ήταν πρωτοφανείς και, κατά συνέπεια, διενεργήθηκαν δύο επικεντρωμένοι έλεγχοι σε συμφωνία με τις κυπριακές αρχές.

Όπως έχει ήδη αναγνωριστεί ευρέως, επίσης από τις κυπριακές αρχές, η οικονομική κατάσταση στην Κύπρο δεν ήταν βιώσιμη και απαιτείτο η διόρθωσή τους. Η Επιτροπή έχει επίγνωση των δυσκολιών των προσαρμογών που συνεπάγονται για τον πληθυσμό γενικότερα. Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή σημειώνει επίσης ότι τουλάχιστον ορισμένα από τα βάρη αυτά επωμίζονται και μη μόνιμοι κάτοικοι. Επιπλέον, πρέπει να σημειωθεί ότι η διεθνής βοήθεια υπό μορφήν δανείου που χορηγήθηκε από τον ΕΜΣ, ο οποίος παρέχει το μεγαλύτερο μέρος της χρηματοδοτικής στήριξης, έχει δοθεί με πολύ ευνοϊκό επιτόκιο (σήμερα περίπου 0,25%) σε σύγκριση με τα επιτόκια της αγοράς. Εξάλλου, η Επιτροπή έχει επιταχύνει και αυξήσει την καταβολή κονδυλίων από τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία της ΕΕ στην Κύπρο και είναι έτοιμη να υποστηρίξει τον κυπριακό πληθυσμό με κάθε δυνατό τρόπο σε αυτούς τους δύσκολους καιρούς.

([1]) http://index.baselgovernance.org/index/Index.html#ranking

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009998/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: Risks of money laundering and financing of terrorism

According to information contained in the Basel AML Index 2013 published recently by the Basel Institute on Governance, ([1]) several EU Member States have high risk indices for money laundering and financing of terrorism. They include Greece (6.39), Luxembourg (6.24), Austria (5.79), Germany (5.79), Italy (5.54), Spain (5.18) and others (the higher the number the greater the risk).

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In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Is it aware of the above figures and the actual situation in the various Member States as regards money laundering and the risk of financing of terrorism?

— What measures does it intend to take against high-risk countries in order to minimise the risk of such illegal activities?

— Why is Cyprus the only country to have been on the receiving end of this strict approach and why do no measures appear to have been taken against other Member States, many of which present a greater risk of illegal activities?

— Does the Commission understand that the application of double standards is putting the very cohesion of the Union at risk and giving rising to anti-European sentiment among the citizens of the Member States which are being made into the butt of this discrimination?

— What does the Commission intend to do to compensate for the losses sustained by thousands of Cypriot households and businesses from unfair and ill-considered decisions passed by the EU and the Eurogroup on Cyprus?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(31 October 2013)

The Commission is aware of the Basel Index, which is based on a collection of factors including evaluation reports from the Financial Action Task Force (where the Commission is a full member) and MONEYVAL (where it is an observer).

The Commission can confirm that it monitors Member States' compliance with the relevant EU legislation and the progress of Member State evaluations and follow-up procedures established by the Financial Action Task Force and MONEYVAL, which provide detailed findings and follow-up rather than an overall ranking. The Commission, therefore, considers it more relevant to look at the overall picture, rather than a ranking.

The Commission does not consider the action taken in relation to Cyprus as imposing double standards. The circumstances in Cyprus were unprecedented, and thus two focused audits were carried out in agreement with the Cypriot authorities.

As has been widely recognised, also by the Cypriot authorities themselves, the financial situation in Cyprus was unsustainable and needed to be corrected. The Commission is aware of the hardship the adjustments entail for the population at large. However, the Commission also notes that at least some of the burden is also shared by non-residents. Moreover, it should be noticed that the international assistance loan granted by the ESM, which provides for the bulk of the financial support, has been given at a very favourable interest rate (currently around 0,25%) compared to the rates on the market. Moreover, the Commission has accelerated and increased the payment of EU Structural Funds to Cyprus and stands ready to support the Cypriot population in any way it can in these difficult times.

([1]) http://index.baselgovernance.org/index/Index.html#ranking

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-009999/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(9 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κατανάλωση και διακίνηση τροφίμων περασμένης διατηρησιμότητας

Η ελληνική κυβέρνηση, από την 1.9.2013, έθεσε σε εφαρμογή το άρθρο 9 της Οδηγίας 2000/13/ΕΚ, που επιτρέπει τη διάθεση τροφίμων περασμένης χρονολογίας, ελάχιστης διατηρησιμότητας. Τα τρόφιμα αυτά θα πωλούνται σαφώς διαχωρισμένα από τα υπόλοιπα τρόφιμα, ενώ σε πινακίδα που θα αναρτάται σε αυτά, θα αναγράφεται, με κεφαλαία γράμματα, η φράση «ΤΡΟΦΙΜΑ ΠΕΡΑΣΜΕΝΗΣ ΔΙΑΤΗΡΗΣΙΜΟΤΗΤΑΣ».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Από τη θέσπιση της σχετικής με την επισήμανση, την παρουσίαση και τη διαφήμιση των τροφίμων Οδηγίας 2000/13/ΕΚ και των τροποποιήσεών της, ποια κράτη μέλη έχουν εφαρμόσει το μέτρο αυτό; Υπό ποιες υγειονομικές προϋποθέσεις;

— Επιτρέπει η κοινοτική οδηγία την ελεύθερη διακίνηση τροφίμων περασμένης διατηρησιμότητας εντός της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης καθώς και την εισαγωγή τους από τρίτες χώρες;

— Επιτρέπεται από την κοινοτική νομοθεσία η εντός του αυτού επιχειρηματικού ομίλου διακίνηση τροφίμων περασμένης διατηρησιμότητας εντός της ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Νοεμβρίου 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 «ανάλωση κατά προτίμηση πριν από» δείχνει την ημερομηνία έως την οποία το τρόφιμο 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.

Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 17 παράγραφος 1 και το άρθρο 19 του κανονισμού 178/2002, οι υπεύθυνοι επιχείρησης τροφίμων πρέπει να διασφαλίσουν ότι η προμήθεια τροφίμων είναι ασφαλής. Εναπόκειται επίσης στην ευθύνη τους να αποφασίσουν 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]).

Πρόσφατα, η Επιτροπή ενημερώθηκε για το ελληνικό μέτρο που απαιτούσε τα τρόφιμα πέραν της ημερομηνίας «ανάλωση κατά προτίμηση πριν από» και όχι τα τρόφιμα με ληγμένες ημερομηνίες «ανάλωση έως», να τοποθετούνται σε χωριστά ράφια σε επίπεδο λιανικής σε μειωμένες τιμές. Πέραν των ειδικών νομοθετικών διατάξεων, όπως στην περίπτωση των αυγών για άμεση κατανάλωσή τους από τον άνθρωπο ([4]), η εμπορία των τροφίμων μετά τη λήξη της ημερομηνίας τους ελάχιστης διατηρησιμότητας δεν απαγορεύεται από τη νομοθεσία της Ένωσης, υπό την προϋπόθεση ότι τα εν λόγω τρόφιμα εξακολουθούν να είναι ασφαλή και η παρουσίασή τους δεν είναι παραπλανητική.

Η Επιτροπή δεν γνωρίζει την ύπαρξη παρόμοιου ρυθμιστικού πλαισίου σε άλλα κράτη μέλη.

([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 επισήμανση, 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 παράγραφος 2 με παράγραφο 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).

([4]) Ο κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 589/2008 ορίζει ότι τα αυγά δεν μπορούν να πωλούνται στον τελικό καταναλωτή σε περίπτωση που παρέλθει η «ημερομηνία λήξης» τους. Έτσι, τα αυγά αυτά διοχετεύονται στη βιομηχανία τροφίμων ή στο μη διατροφικό κλάδο.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-009999/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: Consumption and distribution of foodstuffs past their 'best before' date

The Greek Government started to apply Article 9 of Directive 2000/13/EC, which allows highly perishable foodstuffs past their 'best before' date to be distributed, on 1 September 2013. These foodstuffs will be sold while clearly separated from other foodstuffs and under a sign on which the words 'FOOD PAST ITS BEST BEFORE DATE' are written in capital letters.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— since Directive 2000/13/EC relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs and the amendments thereto were enacted, which Member States have applied this measure? Subject to what public health requirements:

— does the Community Directive permit the free distribution of foodstuffs past their 'best before' date within the European Union and their importation by third countries?

— does Community legislation allow foodstuffs past their 'best before' date to be distributed within the same business group in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(4 November 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.

According to Article 17(1) and Article 19 of Regulation 178/2002 food business operators have to ensure that the food supply is safe. It is also their responsibility to determine when a product may be labelled with a 'use by' date. The new Regulation on the provision of food information to consumers ([2]) maintains the existing rules ([3]).

Recently, the Commission has been informed of a Greek measure that required that foods beyond their 'best before' date, and not foods with expired 'use by' dates, should be placed in separate shelves at retail level at reduced prices. Apart from specific legislation, such as for eggs for direct human consumption ([4]), the marketing of foods after their date of minimum durability is not prohibited by Union law, provided that the foods concerned are still safe and their presentation is not misleading.

The Commission is not aware of the existence of similar framework rules in other Member States.

([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).

([4]) Regulation (EC) No 589/2008 establishes that eggs trespassing the 'sell-by' date cannot be sold to the final consumer. Thus, such eggs are diverted to the food or non-food industry.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010000/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(9 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εκτίναξη του ελληνικού δημόσιου χρέους

Σύμφωνα με την έκθεση της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής για το Δεύτερο Πρόγραμμα Οικονομικής Προσαρμογής του Μαρτίου 2012 (Occasional Paper 94), το χρέος της Γενικής Κυβέρνησης της Ελλάδας για το 2013 προβλεπόταν στο 164,3% του ΑΕΠ. Αντίστοιχα, στην πιο πρόσφατη αναθεώρηση (τρίτη αναθεώρηση — Occasional Paper 159, Ιούλιος 2013) του Δεύτερου Προγράμματος Οικονομικής Προσαρμογής της Ελλάδας, το δημόσιο χρέος για το 2013 προβλεπόταν να φτάσει στο μέγιστο επίπεδο, το οποίο προσδιοριζόταν στο 175,6% του ΑΕΠ.

Ωστόσο, σύμφωνα με την ανακοίνωση του ελληνικού Υπουργείου Οικονομικών στις 25.8.2013, το Δημόσιο Χρέος της Κεντρικής Κυβέρνησης για το πρώτο εξάμηνο του 2013 ανήλθε σε 321 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ ή σε 180% του ΑΕΠ. Αν συνυπολογιστεί και το χρέος των υπόλοιπων δημόσιων θεσμικών μονάδων, τότε εύκολα συμπεραίνουμε ότι το Δημόσιο Χρέος της Γενικής Κυβέρνησης είναι πολύ μεγαλύτερο.

Με δεδομένα τα παραπάνω στοιχεία, που αποδεικνύουν την πλήρη αποτυχία των προβλέψεων της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής, αλλά και το γεγονός ότι, από το 2010, στην Ελλάδα εφαρμόζεται ένα σκληρό πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής, με καταστροφικά αποτελέσματα στην ελληνική οικονομία και κοινωνία, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Για ποιους λόγους, αυτή τη φορά, «ξέφυγε» το ελληνικό χρέος από τους στόχους που είχαν οριστεί από την τρόικα;

— Πόσο υπολογίζεται το χρηματοδοτικό κενό της Ελλάδας, μετά και την τελευταία αξιολόγηση της τρόικας; Ποια μέτρα προτίθεται να εισηγηθεί η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή στο Eurogroup για την κάλυψη αυτού του κενού;

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

Όπως και στο παρελθόν, το χρέος της κεντρικής κυβέρνησης είναι υψηλότερο από το χρέος της γενικής κυβέρνησης, λόγω της ενοποίησης που λαμβάνει χώρα επειδή και άλλοι τομείς της κυβέρνησης κατέχουν μέρος του χρέους της κεντρικής κυβέρνησης. Επομένως, δεν είναι σωστό να χρησιμοποιείται το χρέος της κεντρικής κυβέρνησης για τους πρώτους έξι μήνες προκειμένου να συναχθούν συμπεράσματα όσον αφορά τις εξελίξεις του χρέους της γενικής κυβέρνησης.

Στο πλαίσιο του δεύτερου προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής, έχει σημειωθεί σημαντική πρόοδος όσον αφορά την εξασφάλιση της βιωσιμότητας του ελληνικού χρέους. Ο λόγος του χρέους προς το ΑΕΠ προβλέπεται να συνεχίσει την πτωτική πορεία του το 2014, και να διαμορφωθεί σε επίπεδο κάτω του 120% έως το 2021, με την προϋπόθεση της συνέχισης της πλήρους εφαρμογής του προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής.

Στον πίνακα 9 της έκθεσης συμμόρφωσης ([1]) που δημοσιεύθηκε από την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή μετά την τρίτη αποστολή ελέγχου, εμφαίνεται ένα σχετικά μικρό χρηματοδοτικό κενό της τάξης των 3,8 δισ. ευρώ μέχρι το τέλος του 2014. Ετοιμάζεται μια ενημερωμένη εκτίμηση των χρηματοδοτικών αναγκών της Ελλάδας στο πλαίσιο της εν εξελίξει αναθεώρησης, εκτίμηση που θα κοινοποιηθεί στα σχετικά έγγραφα του προγράμματος. Στο παρόν στάδιο, δεν δικαιολογείται να διακινδυνεύσουμε οποιεσδήποτε προβλέψεις για το μέγεθος του χρηματοδοτικού κενού και τους πιθανούς τρόπους κάλυψής του.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/greek_loan_facility/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010000/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: Spiralling Greek public debt

According to a report by the European Commission on the Second Economic Adjustment Programme for March 2012 (Occasional Paper 94), Greece's general government debt was expected to be 164.3% of GDP in 2013. Similarly, in the most recent (third) review of the Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece (Occasional Paper 159, July 2013), the public debt was forecast to peak at 175.6% of GDP in 2013.

However, according to a press release by the Greek Ministry of Finance dated 25 August 2013, central government public debt for the first half of 2013 was EUR 321 billion or 180% of GDP. If the debt of the other institutional units is added, this suggests that general government public debt is much higher.

In view of the above figures, which illustrate that the European Commission's forecast was completely off the mark, and the fact that a harsh economic adjustment programme has been in force in Greece since 2010, with catastrophic results for the Greek economy and society, will the Commission say:

— Why, this time, has the Greek debt overshot the targets set by the Troika?

— What is Greece's funding gap calculated to be following the Troika's last assessment? What measures does the European Commission intend to propose to the Eurogroup in order to bridge that gap?

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

Historically, central government debt is higher than general government debt because of the consolidation that takes place as other government sectors hold part of the debt of central government. It is therefore not correct to use the central government debt figure for the first six months to infer the general government debt developments.

In the context of the second Economic Adjustment Programme, significant progress is being made towards securing the sustainability of the Greek debt. The debt-to-GDP ratio is forecast to resume a declining path in 2014, and should become lower than 120% by 2021, assuming that the economic adjustment programme continues to be fully implemented.

Table 9 of the compliance report ([1]) published by European Commission following the third review mission reflects a relatively small financing gap of EUR 3.8 billion until the end of 2014. An updated assessment of Greece's financing needs is being prepared during the ongoing review and will be communicated in the related programme documents. Speculation at this stage about the size of the gap and possible ways to cover it is not warranted.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/greek_loan_facility/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010001/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(9 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: ΠΕΠ Θεσσαλίας-Στερεάς Ελλάδας-Ηπείρου

Η ύφεση που πλήττει την ελληνική οικονομία έχει οδηγήσει, για 5η συνεχόμενη χρονιά, σε μια οικονομική και κοινωνική καταστροφή. Οι ελληνικές περιφέρειες, που για δεκαετίες προσπαθούσαν να συγκλίνουν προς τον εθνικό και κοινοτικό μέσο όρο, αποκλίνουν επικίνδυνα, με τα ποσοστά ανεργίας να είναι από τα μεγαλύτερα στην ΕΕ.

Χαρακτηριστικά παραδείγματα είναι οι περιφέρειες της Θεσσαλίας με ανεργία στο 22,6%, της Ηπείρου, με ανεργία στο 22,9% και της Στερεάς Ελλάδας, με ανεργία στο 27,8%.

Με δεδομένα τα παραπάνω, αλλά και το γεγονός ότι η αξιοποίηση και η καλύτερη χρήση των κοινοτικών κονδυλίων και συγκεκριμένα των Περιφερειακών Επιχειρησιακών Προγραμμάτων θα μπορούσαν να βοηθήσουν στην ανάσχεση της οικονομικής κατάρρευσης των ελληνικών περιφερειών, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Ποιο είναι το ποσοστό απορροφητικότητας του ΠΕΠ Θεσσαλίας-Στερεάς Ελλάδας-Ηπείρου της περιόδου 2007-2013 για κάθε χωρική ενότητα και για τους αντίστοιχους Άξονες Προτεραιότητας; Ποιοι από αυτούς τους άξονες παρουσιάζουν τα μεγαλύτερα προβλήματα και καθυστερήσεις και γιατί; Διαθέτει σχετικούς πίνακες;

— Ποια είναι, κατά τη γνώμη της Επιτροπής, τα σημαντικότερα έργα που παρουσιάζουν καθυστερήσεις και τι μέτρα προτείνει για την αύξηση της απορροφητικότητας του συγκεκριμένου ΠΕΠ; Έχουν δρομολογηθεί αλλαγές στη δομή και την κατεύθυνσή του, ώστε να συνάδει με τις νέες οικονομικές και κοινωνικές ανάγκες των συγκεκριμένων περιφερειών;

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

1. Ο κ. βουλευτής μπορεί να βρει συνημμένο πίνακα (στοιχεία που απέστειλαν οι ελληνικές αρχές στις 15 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013), ο οποίος παρουσιάζει τη δημοσιονομική πρόοδο ανά περιφέρεια και προτεραιότητα για το πρόγραμμα «Θεσσαλία-Στερεά Ελλάδα-Ήπειρος».

Παρ' όλο που το ποσοστό απορροφητικότητας του προγράμματος είναι ικανοποιητικό, ορισμένα έργα αντιμετωπίζουν καθυστερήσεις που οφείλονται στις οικονομικές δυσκολίες που αντιμετωπίζουν οι τελικοί δικαιούχοι, στη διαδικασία υποβολής προσφορών για τις συμβάσεις και στις χρονοβόρες διαδικασίες απαλλοτρίωσης ή σε διάφορες ανάγκες αδειοδότησης. Περαιτέρω πληροφορίες σχετικά με την πρόοδο της εφαρμογής των έργων που υποστηρίζονται από το πρόγραμμα «Θεσσαλία-Στερεά Ελλάδα-Ήπειρος» διατίθενται στον ακόλουθο δικτυακό τόπο: www.anaptyxi.gov.gr

2. Όσον αφορά τα μέτρα που λαμβάνονται από την Επιτροπή υπέρ της Ελλάδας για να αντισταθμίσουν τις αρνητικές επιπτώσεις της κρίσης, η Επιτροπή θα ήθελε να παραπέμψει τον κ. βουλευτή στην απάντησή της στις γραπτές ερωτήσεις E-9221/2013 και E-9608/2013. Το πρόγραμμα «Θεσσαλία-Στερεά Ελλάδα-Ήπειρος» έχει επωφεληθεί, ιδίως, από την αύξηση του ποσοστού συγχρηματοδότησης σε 85% για τις περιφέρειες της Θεσσαλίας και της Ηπείρου και από την αναθεώρηση όλων των περιφερειακών ελληνικών προγραμμάτων, που πραγματοποιήθηκε τον Δεκέμβριο του 2012, με στόχο την ενίσχυση της ανταγωνιστικότητας μέσω στοχοθετημένων δράσεων για την υποστήριξη των ΜΜΕ. Με σκοπό την ενίσχυση, κυρίως, της προτεραιότητας προσβασιμότητας για τη Θεσσαλία, οι ελληνικές αρχές υπέβαλαν περαιτέρω αναθεώρηση του προγράμματος στην Επιτροπή, το οποίο και βρίσκεται, επί του παρόντος, στο στάδιο της αξιολόγησης.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010001/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: ROP Thessaly — Mainland Greece — Epirus

The recession which is now in its fifth consecutive year has brought Greece to the brink of economic and social collapse. The Greek regions, which for decades have been endeavouring to converge towards the national and EU average, are now dangerously adrift, with unemployment rates among the highest in the EU.

Typical examples are the regions of Thessaly, with unemployment at 22.6%, Epirus, with unemployment at 22.9%, and Mainland Greece, with unemployment at 27.8%.

Given the above, and the fact that the utilisation or better use of EU funds, in particular the Regional Operational Programmes, could help check the economic collapse of the Greek regions, will the Commission say:

1. What is the take-up rate for the ROP Thessaly — Mainland Greece — Epirus in 2007-2013 for each territorial unit and the corresponding Priority Axes? Which of these axes faces the greatest problems and delays and why? Does it have any tables on this matter?

2. What, in the Commission's opinion, are the most important projects facing delays and what measures does it propose to increase the take-up rate for this specific ROP? Have any changes been initiated in the structure and orientation of this programme in order to reflect the new economic and social needs of specific regions?

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

1. The Honourable Member will find attached a table (data sent by the Greek authorities on 15 September 2013) which presents the financial progress by region and priority for the 'Thessaly — Mainland Greece — Epirus' programme.

Even though the absorption rate of the programme is satisfactory, some projects face delays due to financial difficulties the final beneficiaries are facing, the tendering procedure for contracts and the lengthy expropriation procedures or various needs of licensing. Further information concerning progress of implementation of projects supported by the 'Thessaly — Mainland Greece — Epirus' programme can be found on the following website: www.anaptyxi.gov.gr

2. As regards measures taken by the Commission in favour of Greece to offset the negative effects of the crisis the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written questions E-9221/2013 and E-9608/2013. The 'Thessaly — Mainland Greece — Epirus' programme has benefited, in particular, from an increase of the co-financing rate to 85% for the regions of Thessaly and Epirus and from the revision of all the regional Greek programmes, which took place in December 2012 with a view to reinforcing competitiveness through targeted actions for SME support. With the view to boosting, mainly, the accessibility priority for Thessaly, the Greek authorities have submitted a further revision of the programme to the Commission and it is currently under assessment.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010002/13
aan de Commissie
Derk Jan Eppink (ECR)
(9 september 2013)

Betreft: „Bale out" bij Real Madrid

Op 1 september 2013 kondigde de Spaanse voetbalploeg Real Madrid de transfer van Gareth Bale aan voor een recordbedrag van 100 miljoen euro. Real Madrid heeft de afgelopen jaren een aanzienlijke schuldenberg opgebouwd. De aankoop van Bale wordt voor een groot deel gefinancierd door de Spaanse regionale bank Caja de Madrid, die nu deel uitmaakt van Bankia. Nog niet zo lang geleden werd Bankia gered door middel van een „bail out" in het kader van het Europees stabiliteitsmechanisme voor niet minder dan 18 miljard euro. Bijgevolg lijkt het dat Europese middelen worden gebruikt ter ondersteuning van onhoudbare praktijken in het Spaanse voetbal.

1. Beschouwt de Commissie deze financiële regelingen als een verstoring van de concurrentie tussen de clubs die strijden op Europees niveau?

2. Keurt de Commissie de betrokkenheid goed van een door het Europees stabiliteitsmechanisme gesteunde bank bij dergelijke buitensporige recordtransfer, met de Europese belastingbetaler als uiteindelijk vangnet?

Antwoord van de heer Almunia namens de Commissie
(24 oktober 2013)

De Commissie heeft geen standpunt ingenomen over de voetbaltransfer waarnaar het geachte Parlementslid verwijst.

Zoals vermeld in haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-8303/2013 bekijkt de Commissie niet elke lening die Bankia aan ondernemingen verstrekt. Zij houdt daarentegen toezicht op de uitvoering van het in 2012 door de Commissie goedgekeurde herstructureringsplan en de daarin aangegane verbintenissen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010002/13
to the Commission
Derk Jan Eppink (ECR)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: Real Madrid 'Bale out'

On 1 September 2013, the Spanish football club Real Madrid announced the signing of Gareth Bale for the record price of EUR 100 million. Real Madrid has built up a considerable amount of debt in recent years. The acquisition of Bale is in large part financed by the Spanish regional bank Caja de Madrid, which is now part of Bankia. Recently, Bankia has been bailed out by the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) for no less than EUR 18 billion. Therefore, it appears that European funds are being used as a backstop for unsustainable practices in Spanish football.

1. Does the Commission regard these financial arrangements as a distortion of competition between clubs competing on a Europe-wide level?

2. Does the Commission approve of the involvement of an ESM-backed bank in such an extravagant record deal with the European taxpayer as its ultimate backstop?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(24 October 2013)

The Commission has not taken a view on the football player transfer referred to by the Honourable Member.

As indicated in its answer to Written Question E-8303/2013, the Commission does not review every loan that Bankia grants to undertakings. Rather, it monitors the implementation of the restructuring plan approved by the Commission in November 2012 and the commitments contained in it.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-010003/13
upućeno Komisiji
Dubravka Šuica (PPE)
(9. rujna 2013.)

Predmet: Provedba Uredbe (EU) br. 531/2012 u Hrvatskoj

Budući da je nova Uredba o roamingu jedno od najznačajnijih postignuća na putu prema ujedinjenom europskom telekomunikacijskom tržištu te budući da velik broj korisnika hrvatskog pružatelja usluga VIPnet-a još uvijek plaća bitno više naknade za roaming od standardnih, smatra li Komisija da je hrvatski nacionalni regulator HAKOM postupio ispravno kad je 29. srpnja 2013. o tome donio rješenje kojim potvrđuje da je VIPnet djelovao u skladu s Uredbom (EU) br. 531/2012 Europskog parlamenta i Vijeća o roamingu u javnim pokretnim komunikacijskim mrežama u Uniji?

Smatra li Komisija da je HAKOM prekršio Direktivu 2002/21/EZ kad je onemogućio udrugu potrošača koja je prijavila nepravilnost VIPnet-a i uložila žalbu protiv odluke HAKOM-a o naknadama za roaming?

Ako VIP-net i HAKOM ne djeluju u skladu s pravom EU-a, koje mjere Komisija namjerava poduzeti kako bi osigurala da korisnici telekomunikacija u Republici Hrvatskoj imaju standardne cijene roaminga u skladu s novom Uredbom o roamingu?

Ako je odluka VIPnet-a i HAKOM-a u skladu s propisima EU-a, smatra li Komisija da se Uredbom o roamingu prikladno štite prava njezinih korisnika?

Odgovor gđe Kroes u ime Komisije
(28. listopada 2013.)

Europska komisija potvrđuje važnost smanjenja cijena *roaminga* za građane EU-a te u tom smislu osigurava da se sve države članice pridržavaju Uredbe 531/2012. Uredba o roamingu primjenjuje se izravno, a pri nadzoru i provedbi glavnu ulogu imaju nacionalna regulatorna tijela u državama članicama koja osiguravaju da se telekomunikacijski operateri u njihovom području nadležnosti pridržavaju Uredbe. U slučaju Hrvatske odluku je donio HAKOM kao nadležno regulatorno tijelo.

Kako je navedeno i u samoj odluci HAKOM-a, protiv odluke može se uložiti žalba Visokom upravnom sudu Republike Hrvatske, što je u skladu s Člankom 4. Direktive 2002/21/EZ (Pravo žalbe).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010003/13
to the Commission
Dubravka Šuica (PPE)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: Implementation of Regulation (EU) No 531/2012 in Croatia

As the new regulation on roaming is one of the most significant achievements on the way towards a unified European telecommunications market, and given that a large number of users of the Croatian provider VIPnet still pay significantly higher charges than standard roaming charges, does the Commission consider that the Croatian national regulator, HAKOM, proceeded correctly when it issued a decision on 29 July 2013 to the effect that actions taken by VIPnet were in compliance with Regulation (EU) No 531/2012 of the European Parliament and Council on roaming on public mobile communications networks within the Union?

Does the Commission consider HAKOM to have breached Directive 2002/21/EC when it disable d the consumer association, which reported the VIPnet irregularity and brought an appeal against the HAKOM decision on roaming fees?

If VIPnet and HAKOM are not acting in accordance with EC law, what measures does the Commission intend to take in order to ensure that telecommunications customers in the Republic of Croatia enjoy standard roaming prices pursuant to the new regulation on roaming?

If VIPnet and the HAKOM decision comply with EU regulations, does the Commission consider that the regulation on roaming adequately protects the rights of its users?

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

The European Commission recognises importance of reducing roaming prices for EU citizens and in this respect it is ensuring that regulation 531/2012 is respected across all member states. The Roaming Regulation applies directly and national regulatory authorities (NRA) in Member States play the primary supervision and enforcement role to ensure compliance of telecoms operators with the regulation within their jurisdictions. In the specific case, Croatian NRA (HAKOM) took a decision.

As indicated in the concerned HAKOM's decision itself the decision can be challenged before the administrative court 'Visoki upravni sud Republike Hrvatske'. This is in accordance with Article 4 of the directive 2002/21/EC (Right of appeal).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010004/13
à la Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(9 septembre 2013)

Objet: Fermetures d'usines et licenciements dépourvus de motifs économiques en Europe

Le 30 août, le conseil des prud'hommes en France annonçait dans son jugement sur le licenciement de plus de 1 113 travailleurs de Continental-Clairoix, qui faisait suite à la fermeture de l'usine en 2009, que celui-ci était dépourvu de motifs économiques.

Ce jugement affirme que «la suppression du site de production de Clairoix et donc de l'emploi des salariés ne se justifiait que par la volonté d'accroître encore davantage les profits au bénéfice du groupe».

Malheureusement pour les salariés des grandes multinationales, les fermetures d'usines et les licenciements sont aujourd'hui un des moyens privilégiés pour accroître les profits de ces grandes entreprises, qui délocalisent dans le seul but d'augmenter les dividendes.

1. La Commission dispose-t-elle de données fiables des profits générés par les grands groupes industriels qui annoncent des fermetures dans plusieurs pays européens?

2. Quelles mesures envisage la Commission afin de protéger les travailleurs de ces licenciements dépourvus de motifs économiques?

3. La Commission n'estime-t-elle pas qu'il y a lieu de considérer ces fermetures et licenciements comme une fraude à l'ensemble de l'économie de l'Union?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(5 novembre 2013)

1.-2. La Commission ne dispose pas d'informations sur les profits générés par les entreprises qui procèdent à des restructurations et n'a pas le pouvoir d'intervenir dans leurs décisions spécifiques. Elle les incite, cependant, à suivre de bonnes pratiques en matière d'anticipation des besoins en capital humain et de gestion socialement responsable des restructurations.

Dans le prolongement de son livre vert de janvier 2012 ([1]) et de l'adoption par le Parlement européen, le 15 janvier 2013, du rapport Cercas, la Commission publiera une communication établissant un cadre de qualité, qui encadrera la législation de l'UE ainsi que les initiatives concernant les restructurations et présentera les meilleures pratiques à suivre par les parties concernées.

En particulier, dans le secteur automobile, la Commission élabore, dans le cadre du plan d'action CARS 2020 ([2]) et en étroite coopération avec toutes les parties concernées, des actions de politique industrielle ciblées visant à améliorer la compétitivité de ce secteur et à protéger la production et les emplois européens.

La Commission souligne qu'en cas de restructuration, les employeurs doivent se conformer à leurs obligations en matière d'information et de consultation, conformément à la législation de l'UE ([3]).

La Commission souligne aussi que les travailleurs touchés par une restructuration peuvent prétendre à un soutien du Fonds social européen et, si les conditions requises sont remplies, du Fonds européen d'ajustement à la mondialisation.

3. Les autorités et parties intéressées devraient évaluer chaque opération de restructuration en fonction de ses caractéristiques propres et à la lumière des circonstances particulières de chaque cas.

([1]) «Restructurations et anticipation du changement: quelles leçons tirer de l'expérience récente?» [COM(2012) 7 final du 17 janvier 2012]. Voir la réponse à la consultation et un résumé sur le site: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/automotive/cars-2020/index_en.htm

([3]) En particulier, la directive 2002/14/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 11 mars 2002 établissant un cadre général relatif à l'information et la consultation des travailleurs dans la Communauté européenne, JO L 80 du 23.3.2002; la directive 98/59/CE du Conseil du 20 juillet 1998 concernant le rapprochement des législations des États membres relatives aux licenciements collectifs, JO L 225 du 12.8.1998; la directive 2009/38/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 6 mai 2009 concernant l'institution d'un comité d'entreprise européen ou d'une procédure dans les entreprises de dimension communautaire et les groupes d'entreprises de dimension communautaire en vue d'informer et de consulter les travailleurs, JO L 122 du 16.5.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010004/13
to the Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: Factory closures and layoffs in Europe for no economic reason

On 30 August, the French Industrial Tribunal ruled that there were no economic grounds for laying off over 1 113 workers from Continental Clairoix, following the closure of its plant in 2009.

This ruling states that 'the only grounds for removal of the production site at Clairoix and the subsequent loss of jobs was the desire to further increase the group's profits'.

Unfortunately for the employees of large multinationals, factory closures and layoffs are now one of the preferred means of increasing the profits of these big companies, who are turning to outsourcing for the sole purpose of increasing dividends.

1. Does the Commission have reliable data on the profits generated by the large industrial groups who are announcing closures in a number of EU countries?

2. What measures does the Commission envisage to protect workers from job losses of this kind where there are no economic reasons?

3. Does the Commission not think these closures and layoffs should be considered as defrauding the entire EU economy?

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

1 and 2. The Commission has no information on profits generated by companies that engage in restructuring and has no power to interfere in specific company decisions. It urges them, however, to follow good practice in the anticipation of human capital needs and socially responsible management of restructuring.

Following its January 2012 Green Paper ([1]) and Parliament's adoption of the Cercas report on 15 January 2013, the Commission will issue a communication establishing a Quality Framework that will frame the EU legislation and initiatives relating to restructuring and will present best practice to be followed by stakeholders.

Specifically in the automotive sector, the Commission develops in the framework of the CARS 2020 Action Plan ([2]) and in close cooperation with all the stakeholders concerned, targeted industrial policy actions aimed at improving the competitiveness of the industry and at safeguarding European production and jobs.

The Commission would point out that, in the event of the restructuring, the employers must comply with their obligations relating to worker information and consultation in accordance with EC law ([3]).

The Commission would also point out that workers affected by restructuring may qualify for support from the European Social Fund and, provided the relevant conditions are met, from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund.

3. The stakeholders and authorities should assess each restructuring operation on its own merits and in the light of the special circumstances of each case.

([1]) 'Restructuring and anticipation of change: what lessons from recent experience?' (COM(2012) 7 final of 17 January 2012). See the response to the consultation and a summary at: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/automotive/cars-2020/index_en.htm

([3]) In particular, Directive 2002/14/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2002 establishing a general framework for informing and consulting employees in the European Community, OJ L 80, 23.3.2002; Council Directive 98/59/EC of 20 July 1998 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to collective redundancies, OJ L 225, 12.8.1998; Directive 2009/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 May 2009 on the establishment of a European Works Council or a procedure in Community-scale undertakings and Community-scale groups of undertakings for the purposes of informing and consulting employees, OJ L 122, 16.5.2009.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010005/13
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(9 septembre 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Plan de paix au Proche-Orient

Malgré les négociations de paix directes qui sont en jeu, une fois de plus, des soldats israéliens ont abattu trois Palestiniens et en ont blessé une vingtaine d'autres le lundi 26 août lors d'affrontements dans le camp palestinien de Qalandiya, près de Jérusalem. Ces violences ont eu lieu après l'intervention avant l'aube d'unités de gardes-frontières israéliens qui ont pénétré dans le camp pour procéder à l'arrestation d'un activiste présumé qui venait d'être libéré.

Ce scénario est le même que dans le camp de Jénine, où un jeune a été abattu la semaine dernière lors d'un raid de l'armée. Ces deux incursions ont eu lieu en zone A, une nouvelle fois en violation des accords d'Oslo.

Depuis le début de l'année, 13 Palestiniens sont morts lors d'affrontements avec l'armée israélienne. C'est trois fois plus que l'année dernière sur la même période.

Par ailleurs, le gouvernement israélien a annoncé la construction de plus de 2 000 logements dans les colonies de Cisjordanie et à Jérusalem-Est.

Au vu de l'attitude d'Israël et des événements, tels que massacres, violations des Droits de l'homme, poursuite de la politique de colonisation, qui ont lieu tous les jours en violation flagrante du droit international, les questions suivantes se posent.

1. Quelle est la position de la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante?

2. Quel rôle compte jouer la Commission, en tant que négociateur des traités, vis-à-vis d'Israël, qui continue dans son escalade de violence et qui n'a aucune intention de dialoguer avec l'Autorité palestinienne?

3. La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante ne pense-t-elle pas que l'attitude d'Israël a pour but de détruire le processus de paix?

4. La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante ne pense-t-elle pas que l'Union doit dénoncer et sanctionner les provocations israéliennes?

5. La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante compte-t-elle demander la constitution d'une commission internationale pour enquêter sur ces nouveaux crimes commis par les forces d'occupation israéliennes ou soutenir la demande du gouvernement palestinien en ce sens?

Réponse donnée par Mme Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(25 octobre 2013)

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante se félicite des efforts déployés récemment par les parties et par les autres acteurs clés pour relancer des négociations approfondies et structurées en vue de trouver une solution globale au conflit israélo-palestinien et les encourage à poursuivre dans ce sens. Elle salue et soutient l'initiative diplomatique américaine visant à faciliter ce processus. La conclusion d'un accord ouvrirait la voie à l'instauration d'une coopération approfondie et renforcée entre l'Union européenne et l'ensemble des pays de la région.

Dans le même temps, la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante suit de près l'évolution de la situation sur le terrain et reste préoccupée par tous les problèmes qui menacent la viabilité de la solution fondée sur la coexistence de deux États. Elle reconnaît la gravité de la situation en Cisjordanie occupée, où le droit international humanitaire et les Droits de l'homme ne sont pas respectés. Elle demeure fermement opposée à l'implantation de colonies de peuplement israéliennes et l'a fait savoir à ses homologues israéliens à tous les niveaux ainsi qu'au sein de diverses enceintes internationales.

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante déplore les récentes violences et pertes de vies humaines, tout en reconnaissant pleinement les préoccupations légitimes d'Israël en matière de sécurité, et a souligné à plusieurs reprises que ses interventions militaires doivent être retenues et proportionnées. À cet effet, l'UE a également renforcé sa coopération avec l'Autorité palestinienne dans les domaines de la justice et des affaires intérieures.

L'UE doit appuyer sans réserve les engagements politiques courageux pris tant par le président Abbas que par le premier ministre Netanyahou de relancer les négociations directes en vue de parvenir à une solution fondée sur la coexistence de deux États ainsi que les efforts qu'ils déploient pour surmonter tous les obstacles liés à la politique, à l'économie et à la sécurité et toute forme d'incitation pour préserver la dynamique actuelle du processus de paix au Proche-Orient.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010005/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Middle East Peace Plan

Despite direct peace talks being at stake, once again, Israeli troops killed 3 Palestinians and wounded some 20 others on Monday, 26 August during clashes in the Palestinian camp of Qalandiya near Jerusalem. The violence occurred during an early morning raid by Israeli border police who entered the camp to arrest an alleged activist who had just been released.

This is the same scenario that we saw in the Jenin refugee camp, where a young man was gunned down last week during an army raid. Both raids took place in zone A, yet another breach of the Oslo Accords.

Since the beginning of the year, 13 Palestinians have been killed in clashes with the Israeli army. This number is three times greater than over the same period last year.

What is more, the Israeli Government has announced the construction of more than 2 000 homes in settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Given Israel's attitude and given the daily occurrence of massacres, human rights violations and the continued policy of settlement-building in flagrant violation of international law, the following questions need to be asked.

1. What is the position of the VP/HR?

2. What role does the Commission intend to play, as treaty negotiator, with regard to Israel, which continues to step up the violence and has no intention of entering into dialogue with the Palestinian Authority?

3. Does the VP/HR not think that the intention behind Israel's attitude is to destroy the peace process?

4. Does the VP/HR not think that the EU should denounce and punish Israeli provocations?

5. Does the VP/HR intend to call for the establishment of an international commission to investigate these new crimes committed by the Israeli occupying forces or support the Palestinian Government's demands in this regard?

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

The HR/VP has welcomed and further encourages recent efforts by the parties and by other key actors to re-launch substantial and structured negotiations aiming at a comprehensive solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. She commends and supports the United States diplomatic initiative to facilitate this process. If an agreement is reached, the door would open to deepened and enhanced cooperation between the European Union and all the countries of the region.

At the same time, the HR/VP closely follows developments on the ground and continues to address all issues that put the viability of the two-state solution at risk. She recognises the gravity of the situation in the occupied West Bank in breach of the international humanitarian law and human rights law. The HR/VP remains firmly opposed to Israeli settlement activities and this message has been conveyed to the EU's Israeli counterparts at all levels as well as in various international fora.

The HR/VP regrets recent cases of violence and loss of life, and while fully recognising Israel's legitimate security concerns, has repeteadly stressed that its military interventions must be restrained and proportioned. Towards this end, the EU has also enhanced its cooperation in justice and interior fields with the Palestinian Authority.

Current momentum in the Middle East peace process demands the EU's full support for courageous political commitments by both President Abbas and Prime Minister Netanyahu to resumption of direct negotiations leading to a two-state solution and for their efforts to overcome all political, economic and security related obstacles and forms of incitement.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010006/13
à la Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(9 septembre 2013)

Objet: Tuberculose bovine en Europe

Selon le *Sunday Times* du 7 juillet dernier, 28 000 carcasses de bœuf infectées par le bacille de la tuberculose bovine en provenance du Royaume-Uni seraient exportées chaque année vers la France, la Belgique et les Pays-Bas et destinées à la consommation. Il est clair que la traçabilité n'est pas assurée, puisque les lots sont expédiés en Europe sans mention particulière. De quoi inquiéter les éleveurs français puisque, si la France est indemne de tuberculose bovine, l'Angleterre est fortement touchée.

Des contrôles sur plusieurs cheptels bovins en France, en Belgique et en Espagne ont confirmé la présence d'un foyer de *Mycobacterium bovis*, ce qui provoque une grande préoccupation parmi les exploitants qui sont obligés de sacrifier les animaux infectés.

La tuberculose bovine — due à *Mycobacterium bovis* — se transmet dans les troupeaux par inhalation de gouttelettes infectées par le bacille et consommation d'herbages souillés par la bactérie. Cette forme de tuberculose peut affecter les bovins mais aussi nombre d'autres animaux sauvages ou domestiques.

Depuis 2001, la France est considérée comme «officiellement indemne de tuberculose bovine»; cependant, chaque année, il persiste en élevage une centaine de foyers malgré les mesures de lutte mises en place.

1. La Commission est-elle au courant de ces nouveaux cas de tuberculose bovine?

2. La Commission prend-elle des mesures pour aider les exploitations touchées par le bacille *Mycobacterium bovis*?

3. Quelles mesures sont prises pour contenir et prévenir la propagation de la maladie dans l'ensemble de l'Union?

4. Quelles mesures la Commission a-t-elle l'intention de prendre afin de revoir ses politiques en matière d'étiquetage et de traçabilité des produits à base de viande et en matière de surveillance des circuits alimentaires? Comment envisage-t-elle d'effectuer des contrôles plus efficaces des aliments issus de la production animale à chaque étape de la chaîne alimentaire y compris dans les pays d'origine?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(28 octobre 2013)

La Commission suit de près la situation de la tuberculose bovine dans l'ensemble de l'UE. De plus, tous les foyers de tuberculose bovine qui se déclarent dans des États membres ou régions officiellement indemnes de cette maladie doivent être notifiés à la Commission dans un délai d'une semaine après leur confirmation. La Commission est donc dûment informée en temps voulu de ces foyers.

Des programmes d'éradication de la tuberculose bovine sont en place dans les États membres qui ne sont pas officiellement indemnes de tuberculose bovine et une contribution financière importante de l'Union, s'élevant 136 650 000 euros, a été accordée à ces programmes ces deux dernières années, pour couvrir notamment 50 % des coûts encourus par les États membres pour la compensation versée aux propriétaires pour la valeur des animaux infectés abattus.

En plus des dispositions de l'UE sur l'éradication ([1]) obligatoire de la tuberculose bovine, il existe dans la directive 64/432/CEE du Conseil ([2]) des règles strictes relatives aux mouvements du bétail en ce qui concerne la tuberculose bovine.

La viande n'est mise sur le marché qu'après de rigoureux contrôles à l'abattoir, incluant à la fois des contrôles sanitaires de l'animal vivant et des contrôles après l'abattage.

De plus, des règles très sévères de traçabilité sont appliquées à tous les aliments, et notamment à la viande bovine.

([1]) Directive 77/391/CEE du Conseil du 17 mai 1977 instaurant une action de la Communauté en vue de l'éradication de la brucellose, de la tuberculose et de la leucose des bovins.

([2]) Directive 64/432/CEE du Conseil du 26 juin 1964 relative à des problèmes de police sanitaire en matière d'échanges intracommunautaires d'animaux des espèces bovine et porcine (JO n° 121 du 29.7.1964).

La Commission ne s'est pas engagée à revoir ses politiques proprement dites en matière d'étiquetage des produits à base de viande, mais à procéder aux actions nécessaires prévues dans le règlement (UE) n° 1169/2011 ([3]), qui entrera en vigueur le 13 décembre 2014, concernant l'information des consommateurs sur les denrées alimentaires.

([3]) Article 26 du règlement (UE) n° 1169/2011 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 25 octobre 2011 concernant l'information des consommateurs sur les denrées alimentaires, modifiant les règlements (CE) n° 1924/2006 et (CE) n° 1925/2006 du Parlement européen et du Conseil et abrogeant la directive 87/250/CEE de la Commission, la directive 90/496/CEE du Conseil, la directive 1999/10/CE de la Commission, la directive 2000/13/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil, les directives 2002/67/CE et 2008/5/CE de la Commission et le règlement (CE) n° 608/2004 de la Commission (JO L 304 du 22.11.2011, p. 18).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010006/13
to the Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: Bovine tuberculosis in Europe

According to the *Sunday Times* on 7 July 2013, 28 000 carcasses of cattle infected with the bovine tuberculosis bacillus are being exported from the UK each year to France, Belgium and the Netherlands for consumption. Traceability is obviously not ensured, as the batches are being shipped to Europe without any specific reference. French farmers are rightly worried by this because, although France is free of bovine tuberculosis, it has hit England hard.

Controls on a number of cattle herds in France, Belgium and Spain have confirmed the outbreak of *Mycobacterium bovis*, causing great alarm among farmers who have had to have their infected animals slaughtered.

Bovine tuberculosis — caused by *Mycobacterium bovis* — is spread among cattle through the inhalation of droplets infected by the bacillus and the consumption of grass contaminated by the bacteria. This form of TB can affect cattle but also many other wild or domestic animals.

Since 2001, France has been considered 'officially free of bovine tuberculosis'; however, every year, it still affects a hundred or so farms despite the control measures in place.

1. Is the Commission aware of these new cases of bovine tuberculosis?

2. Is the Commission taking action to help farms affected by the *Mycobacterium bovis* bacillus?

3. What measures are being taken to contain and prevent the spread of the disease across the EU?

4. What measures does the Commission intend to take to review its policies on meat product labelling and traceability, and monitoring of the food supply chain? How will the Commission ensure that more stringent checks are carried out at every stage in the meat production chain, including in the country of origin?

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

The Commission follows closely the bovine tuberculosis (bTB) situation in the whole EU. Furthermore, all bTB outbreaks occurring in officially bTB-free Member States or regions thereof must be notified to the Commisison within one week of its confirmation. Therefore, the Commission is fully and timely aware of these outbreaks.

EU co-financed programmes for the eradication of bTB are in place in Member States not officially bTB-free and a susbstantial Union financial contribution has been allocated to these programmes in the last two years amounting to 136 650 000 EUR, in particular to cover 50% of the costs incurred by the Member States for the compensation paid to owners for the value of infected animals slaughtered.

On top of the EU provisions on compulsory bTB eradication ([1]) there are stringent rules on the requirements for the movements of cattle as regards bTB laid down in Council Directive 64/432/EEC ([2]).

Meat is placed on the market only after stringent controls at the slaughterhouse which includes both health checks of the live animal and checks following the slaughter. In addition, stringent rules on traceability are applied to all food, in particular bovine meat.

The Commission has not committed to review its policies on meat product labelling as such, but to proceed with necessary actions foreseen in Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 ([3]) on the provision of food information to consumers, which will enter into application on 13 December 2014.

([1]) Council Directive 77/391/EEC of 17 May 1977 introducing Community measures for the eradication of brucellosis, tuberculosis and leucosis in cattle.

([2]) Council Directive No 64/432/EEC of 26 June 1974 on health problems affecting intra-Community trade in bovine animals and swine (OJ No 121, 29.7.1964).

([3]) Article 26 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.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010007/13
aan de Commissie
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(9 september 2013)

Betreft: Aanbevelingen nationaal hervormingsprogramma 2013 België — dienstensector

Eerder dit jaar formuleerde de Europese Commissie aanbevelingen over het nationale hervormingsprogramma 2013 van België. De derde aanbeveling betrof het loonvormingsmechanisme.

De Commissie raadde aan om de loonindexering te hervormen om zo het concurrentievermogen te herstellen.

1. Acht de Commissie het nodig om een loonindexering zoals momenteel toegepast in België af te schaffen of kan een hervorming voldoende zijn om het concurrentievermogen te verhogen?

2. Is enige vorm van loonindexering nefast voor de concurrentiepositie van een land?

3. Welke andere maatregelen acht de Commissie noodzakelijk om loonvorming te laten aansluiten bij de productiviteitsontwikkelingen?

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(29 oktober 2013)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar de aanbeveling van de Raad ([1]) over het nationale hervormingsprogramma 2013 van België en met een advies van de Raad over het stabiliteitsprogramma van België voor de periode 2012-2016 en op het begeleidend werkdocument van de diensten van de Commissie ([2]).

1. Het erom dat België op lange termijn concurrentievermogen verliest door verschillende oorzaken, waaronder het loonvormingsmechanisme maar ook inefficiënte productmarkten en concurrentiekwesties die niet met kosten te maken hebben. Het zal duidelijk zijn dat de Commissie nooit heeft opgeroepen tot de afschaffing van de Belgische praktijk van automatische loonindexering. Het loonvormingsmechanisme zou echter wel kunnen worden hervormd om het doel ervan (bescherming van de koopkracht) beter te laten aansluiten op de noodzaak om werkgelegenheid te beschermen en zelfs te doen groeien. Verbeteringen kunnen worden overwogen in de wijze waarop het loonvormingsmechanisme op veranderingen van de productiviteit reageert, subregionale en lokale verschillen in productiviteit en arbeidsmarktvoorwaarden weerspiegelt, en automatische correcties toepast wanneer de loonontwikkelingen het kostenconcurrentievermogen dreigen te ondermijnen.

2. Loonindexeringssystemen kunnen de ontwikkeling van het concurrentievermogen van een land schaden indien daardoor de ontwikkelingen van lonen niet in overeenstemming zijn met de ontwikkeling van de productiviteit. Tegelijkertijd dragen zij bij tot de bescherming van de koopkracht van de werknemers, die op haar beurt de economische activiteit en de werkgelegenheid tijdens ernstige neergang ondersteunt.

3. Het is niet aan de Commissie om aanbevelingen te doen voor gedetailleerde maatregelen om loonvorming op een lijn te brengen met de ontwikkeling van de productiviteit. Dergelijke maatregelen dienen te worden vastgesteld in overleg met de sociale partners en in overeenstemming met de nationale praktijk.

([1]) Aanbeveling van de Raad van 9 juli 2013 over het nationale hervormingsprogramma 2013 van België en met een advies van de Raad over het stabiliteitsprogramma van België voor de periode 2012-2016, PB C 217 van 30.7.2013.

([2]) „Beoordeling van het nationale hervormingsprogramma 2013 en het stabiliteitsprogramma voor België" (SWD (2013) 351 def. van 29 mei 2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010007/13
to the Commission
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: Recommendations — Belgian 2013 National Reform Programme — service sector

Earlier this year the European Commission compiled recommendations on Belgium's 2013 National Reform Programme. The third recommendation related to the wage-setting mechanism.

The Commission recommended reforming wage indexation in order to restore competitiveness.

1. Does the Commission feel that wage indexation, as currently applied in Belgium, should be abolished or might reform be sufficient to boost competitiveness?

2. Is any form of wage indexation detrimental to a country's competitiveness?

3. What other measures does the Commission feel are necessary to align wage setting with productivity trends?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the Council Recommendation ([1]) on Belgium's National Reform Programme for 2013 and delivering a Council opinion on Belgium's Stability Programme for 2012-16 and to the accompanying Commission Staff Working Document ([2]).

1. The issue is Belgium's long-term loss of competitiveness, which is due to several factors, including the wage-setting mechanism but also inefficient product markets and non-cost competitiveness issues. It should be clear that the Commission has never called for the abolition of the Belgian practice of automatic wage indexation. Nevertheless, the wage-setting mechanism could be reformed in order to better reconcile its goal of purchasing power protection more aptly with the vital need to safeguard and even enhance employment. Improvements could be considered in the way the wage setting mechanism responds to productivity developments, reflects sub-regional and local differences in productivity and labour-market conditions, and applies automatic corrections when wage developments threaten to undermine cost-competitiveness.

2. Wage-indexation systems may be detrimental to the development of a country's competitiveness if they result in wage developments that are not in line with developments in productivity. At the same time they help to protect workers' purchasing power, which in turn supports economic activity and employment during severe downturns.

3. It is not for the Commission to recommend a detailed set of measures necessary to bring wage-setting into line with productivity developments. Such measures should be identified in consultation with the social partners and in accordance with national practice.

([1]) Council Recommendation of 9 July 2013 on the National Reform Programme 2013 of Belgium and delivering a Council opinion on the Stability Programme of Belgium, 2012-2016, OJ C 217, 30.7.2013.

([2]) 'Assessment of the 2013 national reform programme and stability programme for Belgium' (SWD(2013) 351 final of 29 May 2013).

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010008/13
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D)
(9 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Disponibilitatea informațiilor și documentelor de pe site-urile web ale Comisiei și ale celorlalte instituții europene în toate cele 24 de limbi oficiale

Uniunea Europeană are 24 de limbi oficiale și de lucru: bulgară, cehă, croată, daneză, engleză, estonă, finlandeză, franceză, germană, greacă, italiană, irlandeză, letonă, lituaniană, maghiară, malteză, olandeză, polonă, portugheză, română, slovacă, slovenă, spaniolă și suedeză. Cu toate acestea, informații și documente importante de pe paginile web ale Comisiei Europene și ale altor instituții europene nu sunt disponibile în toate aceste limbi.

Anul 2013 a fost desemnat „Anul european al cetățenilor", cu scopul de a spori gradul de conștientizare și nivelul cunoștințelor cu privire la drepturile și responsabilitățile legate de cetățenia Uniunii. De aceea, aș dori să întreb Comisia ce măsuri are în vedere pentru ca informațiile și documentele importante ce se regăsesc pe site-urile web ale Comisiei și ale celorlalte instituții europene, în principal în engleză, să poată fi disponibile cetățenilor europeni în toate cele 24 de limbi oficiale ale Uniunii Europene?

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(4 noiembrie 2013)

Comisia depune eforturi considerabile pentru a oferi cât mai multe informații în toate limbile oficiale ale UE pe site-urile sale internet. Cu toate acestea, în cadrul politicii sale privind traducerile, Comisia are obligația de a respecta o serie de obligații legale. Înainte de toate, Comisia trebuie să traducă toate actele cu putere de lege și documentele de importanță politică în toate limbile oficiale ale UE. După ce și-a îndeplinit obligațiile legale, Comisia stabilește priorități în cadrul activității sale de traducere, pentru a valorifica cât mai bine resursele rămase. În acest sens, Comisia trebuie să reconcilieze cererile concurente, printre care traducerea paginilor de internet.

Prin urmare, din motive de rentabilitate, paginile de internet ale Comisiei de interes general și direct pentru cetățeni sunt traduse în cât mai multe limbi oficiale ale UE. Site-urile mai specializate, care se adresează unui public mai specific, sunt disponibile în doar câteva limbi, accesibile cititorilor potențiali.

În prezent, Comisia derulează un proces de raționalizare a site-urilor sale de internet, pentru a avea o prezență mai focalizată și mai relevantă. În acest context, se caută soluții durabile pentru a asigura o acoperire lingvistică mai coerentă a site-urilor, luând în considerare necesitățile utilizatorilor.

În plus, site-urile reprezentanțelor Comisiei în statele membre oferă întotdeauna informații privind afacerile europene în limba (limbile) națională (naționale). Aceasta este o modalitate focalizată și eficientă din punctul de vedere al costurilor de a se adresa cetățenilor în propria lor limbă cu privire la chestiuni care pot prezenta un interes deosebit pentru ei ([1]).

Comisia nu are nicio autoritate asupra politicilor lingvistice pe care alte instituții ale UE le aplică site-urilor lor de internet.

([1]) Aceste site-uri pot fi accesate la adresa: http://ec.europa.eu/represent_ro.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010008/13
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: Availability of information and documents on the websites of the Commission and the other EU institutions in all 24 official languages

The European Union has 24 official and working languages: Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovene, Spanish and Swedish. However, important information and documents on the websites of the Commission and other European institutions are not available in all these languages.

With the aim of increasing the level of awareness and knowledge about the rights and responsibilities associated with EU citizenship, 2013 was designated as the European Year of Citizens. Therefore, can the Commission tell me what measures it intends to take to ensure that the important information and documents found on the websites of the Commission and the other EU institutions, mainly in English, can be made available to European citizens in all 24 official languages of the European Union?

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

The Commission puts considerable effort into providing as much information as possible in all EU languages on its websites. However, in its translation policy, the Commission has a duty to respect a number of legal obligations. Above all, the Commission must translate all legislation and documents of political importance into all the official languages of the EU. Once it has fulfilled its legal obligations, the Commission then continues to prioritise its translation activity so as to make best use of remaining resources. In doing so, the Commission needs to reconcile competing demands, the translation of web-pages being one such demand.

Therefore, for reasons of cost-effectiveness, Commission websites of general and direct interest to citizens are provided in as many official EU languages as possible, while more specialised websites, targeting a more specific public, are provided in a limited number of languages, that the readership of the pages can be expected to understand.

The Commission is currently rationalising of its websites to make its presence more focused and relevant. In this context, sustainable solutions are being sought to ensure a more coherent language coverage of websites, taking into account the user's needs.

Furthermore, the sites of Commission Representations in Member States always offer information on EU matters in the national language(s). This is a targeted and cost-effective way to reach out to citizens in their own language on issues that may be of particular interest to them ([1]).

The Commission has no power over the language policies that other EU institutions apply to their respective websites.

([1]) These sites can be accessed at: http://ec.europa.eu/represent_en.htm

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010009/13
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D)
(9 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Revizuirea Strategiei tematice privind poluarea atmosferică și a actelor legislative conexe

În programul de lucru al Comisiei pentru anul 2013 este prevăzută revizuirea strategiei tematice privind poluarea atmosferică și a actelor legislative conexe. Prin această acțiune, Comisia își propunea să evalueze punerea în aplicare și rezultatele politicilor actuale privind calitatea aerului și poluarea atmosferică și să includă propuneri legislative de revizuire a Directivei privind plafoanele naționale de emisii și a altor acte legislative privind calitatea aerului, după caz, pentru a oferi o protecție sporită împotriva impactului poluării atmosferice asupra sănătății umane și a mediului natural, contribuind în același timp la strategia Europa 2020.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia când va prezenta această revizuire a strategiei tematice privind poluarea atmosferică și a actelor legislative conexe?

Răspuns dat de dl Potočnik în numele Comisiei
(23 octombrie 2013)

În prezent, Comisia finalizează revizuirea actualei politici a UE privind calitatea aerului și intenționează să formuleze propuneri înainte de sfârșitul anului.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010009/13
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: Review of the Thematic Strategy on Air Pollution and associated legislation

The Commission's Work Programme for 2013 makes provision for the review of the Thematic Strategy on Air Pollution and associated legislation. By taking this action, the Commission was intending to assess the implementation and outcomes of the current policies on air quality and air pollution and to include legislative proposals for reviewing the National Emission Ceilings Directive and other air quality legislation, if appropriate, in order to provide increased protection against the impact of air pollution on human health and the natural environment, while also contributing to the Europe 2020 strategy.

Can the Commission tell me when it is going to present this review of the Thematic Strategy on Air Pollution and associated legislation?

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

The Commission is in the process of finalising the review of the current EU policy on air and plans to come forward with proposals before the end of the year.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010011/13
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D)
(9 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Stadiul de realizare a acțiunii pregătitoare „Monitorizarea ecologică a bazinului Mării Negre și un Program-cadru european comun pentru dezvoltarea regiunii Mării Negre”

În cadrul proiectului de buget pentru 2014 este prevăzută linia bugetară pentru acțiunea pregătitoare „Monitorizarea ecologică a bazinului Mării Negre și un Program-cadru european comun pentru dezvoltarea regiunii Mării Negre”, cu scopul de a acoperi angajamentele restante din anii precedenți în cadrul acțiunii pregătitoare.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia care este stadiul de realizare a acestei acțiuni pregătitoare și care sunt rezultatele obținute până în prezent?

Răspuns dat de dl Potočnik în numele Comisiei
(22 octombrie 2013)

Pe baza acțiunii pregătitoare menționate de distinsul membru, au fost lansate patru proiecte de către Comisie.

Primul dintre acestea a contribuit la adaptarea la schimbările climatice a resurselor de apă potabilă și a infrastructurii de tratare a apelor reziduale din Moldova, în special pentru comunitățile rurale mici ([1]). Cel de al doilea proiect („Baltic to Black” ([2])) sprijină schimbul de informații privind evaluarea și combaterea poluării marine, punând accentul pe fenomenul de eutrofizare. Cel de al treilea proiect (proiectul „MISIS” ([3])) urmărește să îmbunătățească disponibilitatea și calitatea datelor chimice și biologice, contribuind la programele naționale de monitorizare integrată și la creșterea numărului și a suprafeței zonelor marine protejate în conformitate cu Directiva-cadru „Strategia pentru mediul marin” ([4]). Cel de al patrulea proiect ([5]) se referă la monitorizarea populațiilor de păsări marine în Marea Neagră.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/marine/international-cooperation/index_en.htm
([2]) http://www.blacksea-commission.org/_projects_Baltic2Black.asp
([3]) www.misisproject.eu
([4]) Directiva 2008/56/CE de instituire a unui cadru de acțiune comunitară în domeniul politicii privind mediul marin (Directiva-cadru „Strategia pentru mediul marin”), JO L 164, 25.6.2008.
([5]) http://dogadernegi.org/karadeniz-deniz-kuslari.aspx

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010011/13
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: Status report on the preparatory action 'Environmental monitoring of the Black Sea Basin and a common European framework programme for development of the Black Sea region'

The 2014 draft budget makes provision for a budget line for the preparatory action 'Environmental monitoring of the Black Sea Basin and a common European framework programme for development of the Black Sea region', with the aim of covering outstanding commitments in the framework of the preparatory action from previous years.

Can the Commission tell me what stage this preparatory action has reached and what results have been achieved so far?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(22 October 2013)

On the basis of the preparatory action referred to by the Honourable Member, four projects were launched by the Commission.

One contributed to adaptation of Moldova's drinking water supply and wastewater treatment infrastructure to climate change, in particular for small rural communities ([1]). The second ('Baltic to Black' ([2])) supports knowledge exchange on assessing and combating marine pollution, with emphasis on eutrophication. The third ('MISIS' project ([3])) aims to improve availability and quality of chemical and biological data, contributing to national integrated monitoring programs and to increasing the number and size of marine protected areas in line with the Marine Strategy Framework Directive ([4]). The fourth project ([5]) deals with the monitoring of sea bird populations in the Black Sea.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/marine/international-cooperation/index_en.htm
([2]) http://www.blacksea-commission.org/_projects_Baltic2Black.asp
([3]) www.misisproject.eu
([4]) DIRECTIVE 2008/56/EC establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive), OJ L164, 25.06.2008.
([5]) http://dogadernegi.org/karadeniz-deniz-kuslari.aspx

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010012/13
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D)
(9 septembrie 2013)

Subiect: Creșterea eficienței energetice a sistemelor de transport urban

Conform raportului „A Tale of Renewed Cities" al Agenției Internaționale a Energiei, politicile pentru îmbunătățirea eficienței energetice, la nivel global, a sistemelor de transport urban ar putea ajuta la salvarea a circa 70 de trilioane de dolari din cheltuielile pentru infrastructura de vehicule, de combustibil și de transport până în 2050.

Raportul „A Tale of Renewed Cities" se bazează pe exemple din mai mult de 30 de orașe din întreaga lume pentru a arăta modul de îmbunătățire a eficienței transportului printr-o mai bună planificare urbană și de gestionare a cererii de transport. Beneficiile suplimentare includ reducerea emisiilor de gaze cu efect de seră și o calitate mai bună a vieții.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia dacă are în vedere realizarea unui site web unde să se prezinte publicului, într-un mod integrat, toate politicile și măsurile UE destinate creșterii eficienței energetice a sistemelor de transport la nivelul orașelor europene?

Răspuns dat de dl Kallas în numele Comisiei
(31 octombrie 2013)

Comisia este pe deplin conștientă de potențialul transportului urban de a îmbunătăți eficiența și independența energetică.

Timp de mulți ani, Comisia a sprijinit Serviciul european de informare privind transportul local (ELTIS), disponibil gratuit la www.eltis.org. Site-ul oferă, printre altele, funcții de căutare și informații concise cu privire la sute de studii de caz utile despre mobilitatea urbană, precum și date de contact pentru cei care doresc să afle mai mult. Aproape toate exemplele prezentate contribuie la îmbunătățirea eficienței energetice a sistemelor de transport urban.

Comisia intenționează să dezvolte, în 2014, site-ul ELTIS și să îl transforme într-un observator virtual al mobilității urbane. Domeniul de aplicare și calitatea portalului vor fi îmbunătățite, în timp ce actualul portal dedicat planurilor de mobilitate urbană va fi integrat ([1]) într-un centru de cunoștințe și competențe menit să consolideze experiența și informațiile cu privire la planificarea transporturilor urbane de pe întreg teritoriul UE.

Cu toate acestea, pentru a crea cadrul și stimulentele necesare catalizării numeroaselor bune practici deja disponibile, este necesar ca statele membre, în special, să depună un efort mai susținut pentru a stimula și sprijini mobilitatea urbană integrată la nivel local.

([1]) www.mobilityplans.eu

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010012/13
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(9 September 2013)

Subject: Increasing the energy efficiency of urban transport systems

According to the report entitled 'A Tale of Renewed Cities' published by the International Energy Agency, policies aimed at improving the energy efficiency of urban transport systems across the globe could help save around USD 70 trillion in expenditure on vehicle, fuel and transport infrastructure by 2050.

This report is based on examples taken from more than 30 cities around the world, to show how to improve transport efficiency through better urban planning and to manage transport demand. The additional benefits of this include reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving quality of life.

Does the Commission intend to create a website where all the EU policies and measures aimed at improving the energy efficiency of transport systems across European cities are available to the public in one location?

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

The Commission is well aware of the potential of urban transport to improve energy efficiency and energy independence.

For many years the Commission has been supporting the European Local Transport Information Service (ELTIS) available for free at www.eltis.org. Inter alia the site provides searchable and consise information about hundreds of useful case studies on urban mobility, as well as contact details for those who wish to find out more. Almost all the examples given contribute to improving the energy efficiency of urban transport systems.

In 2014 the Commission plans to develop the existing ELTIS website into a virtual Urban Mobility Observatory, by improving the scope and quality of the portal further and by integrating the present separate Mobility Plans portal ([1]) into a comprehensive knowledge and competence centre which will consolidate experiences and information on urban transport planning from across the EU.

However to create the necessary frameworks and incentives to catalyse the takeup of the many best practices already available more effort is required, in particular by the Member States, to stimulate and support intergrated urban mobility at the local level.

([1]) www.mobilityplans.eu

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-010013/13
an die Kommission
Bernd Lange (S&D)
(10. September 2013)

Betrifft: Sicherheit in Schwimmbädern

Zunehmend gibt es Berichte über Unfälle in Schwimmbädern. Insbesondere haben sich tödliche Vorfälle durch das Verfangen von Haaren im Ansaugstrudel der Umwälzpumpen zugetragen, da der Ansaugdruck zu groß ist und die Ansaugöffnungen zu klein sind.

1. Welche Erkenntnisse hat die Kommission über Unfälle in Schwimmbädern und wie bewertet die Kommission die unzureichende Umsetzung der seit 2008 geltenden Norm EN 15288?

2. Welche Maßnahmen wird die Kommission ergreifen, um sicherzustellen, dass öffentliche Schwimmbäder und Hotelschwimmbäder sicherer werden und keine Gefährdungen mehr von Ansauganlagen ausgehen?

3. Welche Maßnahmen wird die Kommission ergreifen, um europäische Reiseveranstalter zu ermutigen, bei Urlaubsangeboten europäische Sicherheitsstandards in Schwimmbädern zu garantieren?

Antwort von Herrn Mimica im Namen der Kommission
(1. Oktober 2013)

1. Die Kommission verfügt über keine eigenen Statistiken zu Unfällen oder Verletzungen in Schwimmbädern. Sie erhielt auf der Tagung des Netzwerks für Verbrauchersicherheit im Mai 2012 einige Informationen von der Blue Cap Foundation ([1]).

Die europäische Norm EN 15288 ([2]) ist eine freiwillige Norm, die auf alle neu klassifizierten, privaten oder öffentlichen Schwimmbäder, und ggf. auf spezifische Sanierungen bereits bestehender Schwimmbäder angewendet werden kann. Die Einhaltung der Norm ist jedoch nicht verpflichtend.

2. Die Sicherheit von Schwimmbädern, einschließlich Hotelschwimmbädern, liegt nach wie vor in der Verantwortung der Bauunternehmen und Betreiber. Dies muss von nationalen Behörden durchgesetzt werden.

Die Kommission konsultierte die Mitgliedstaaten im Juni 2013 bezüglich des Umfangs und Inhalts verbindlicher und unverbindlicher staatlicher Maßnahmen zur Sicherheit bestimmter Dienstleistungen einschließlich Schwimmbädern. Die Ergebnisse dieser Zusammenstellung werden zu gegebener Zeit auf der Website der Kommission verfügbar sein ([3]). Die Kommission holt derzeit auch Informationen bei Sicherheitsexperten für Schwimmbäder ein.

3. Die Kommission fördert Maßnahmen von Interessenträgern zur Verhinderung künftiger Unfälle. Reiseunternehmen werden daran erinnert, dass sie die zuständigen nationalen Behörden über jegliche Sicherheitsmängel informieren müssen, so dass diese behoben werden können.

([1]) Nachzulesen unter: http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/committees/docs/sum_25052012_csn_en.pdf
([2]) EN 15288-1:2008 Schwimmbäder — Teil 1 Sicherheitstechnische Anforderungen an Planung und Bau und Teil 2 Sicherheitsanforderungen an den Betrieb.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/serv_background/documents_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010013/13
to the Commission
Bernd Lange (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Safety in swimming pools

More and more accidents in swimming pools are being reported. In particular there have been deaths caused by people's hair becoming caught in the suction outlets of circulating pumps, due to the suction being too strong and the suction holes being too small.

1. How much does the Commission know about accidents in swimming pools? What is its assessment of the inadequate implementation of the EN 15288 standard, which has been in force since 2008?

2. What measures will the Commission take to ensure that public swimming pools and hotel pools are made safer and that suction systems no longer pose a threat?

3. What measures will the Commission take to encourage European tour operators to guarantee that European safety standards apply to the swimming pools used in the holidays which they organise?

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(1 October 2013)

1. The Commission has no own statistics about accidents or injuries related to swimming pools. It received some information from the Blue Cap Foundation at the Consumer Safety Network meeting in May 2012 ([1]).

The European standard EN15288 ([2]) is a voluntary standard which can be used for all new classified, private or public pools, and, as appropriate, for specific refurbishments of existing pools. However, there is no obligation to comply with the standard.

2. The safety of swimming pools including hotel pools remains a responsibility of constructors and operators which is to be enforced by national authorities.

In June 2013, the Commission consulted Member States on the extent and content of national regulatory and non-regulatory measures on the safety of certain services, including swimming pools. The results of this compilation will be available on the Commission's website in due course ([3]). The Commission is also, at present, gathering information from swimming pool safety experts.

3. The Commission encourages action by stakeholders with the aim to prevent future accidents. Tour-operators are reminded that they must inform the competent national authorities of any safety issues so that they can be remedied.

([1]) Reported in http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/committees/docs/sum_25052012_csn_en.pdf
([2]) EN 15288-1: 2008 Swimming pools — Part 1: Safety Requirements for Design and Part 2: Safety Requirements for Operation.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/serv_background/documents_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010014/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(10 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Σοβαρή ρύπανση στο ποταμό Νέστο

Ο ποταμός Νέστος είναι από τις πιο σημαντικές αρτηρίες γλυκού νερού στα Βαλκάνια, δίνοντας ζωή στις περιοχές από τις οποίες περνάει, τόσο στη Νότια Βουλγαρία όσο και στη Βόρεια Ελλάδα. Η ρύπανση του από τις χωματερές της Βουλγαρίας συνεχίζεται μέχρι και σήμερα, σε σημείο που η κατάσταση να μην είναι αναστρέψιμη. Το θέμα αυτό έχει απασχολήσει πολλάκις πλειάδα διοικητικών αρχών, από το επίπεδο της τοπικής αυτοδιοίκησης μέχρι και την ίδια την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή.

Η Βουλγαρία είχε υποχρέωση μέχρι τις 22.12.2009 να έχει εφαρμόσει σχέδιο διαχείρισης λεκάνης απορροής του ποταμού, με διασυνοριακή συνεργασία, σύμφωνα με την ΟΠΥ (Οδηγία πλαίσιο για τα ύδατα) 2000/60/ΕΚ (άρθρα 3, 13(2)). Επίσης, στο πρόγραμμα διασυνοριακής συνεργασίας 2007-2013 ανάμεσα σε Βουλγαρία και Ελλάδα, προβλέπεται ειδική ρύθμιση για το θέμα του Νέστου. Μέχρι την επίσημη ενημέρωση της Επιτροπής, στις 14.11.2012, σχετικά με την ενσωμάτωση της οδηγίας ΟΠΥ 2000/60/ΕΚ στη βουλγαρική νομοθεσία, δεν υπήρξε κανένας συντονιστικός μηχανισμός σχετικά με την εφαρμογή ενός διεθνούς σχεδίου διαχείρισης λεκάνης απορροής του Νέστου, ούτε και υπήρξαν σημαντικές εξελίξεις στη συνεργασία των δύο χωρών για το θέμα αυτό.

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή είχε δεσμευτεί να ζητήσει ενημέρωση από τις βουλγαρικές αρχές σχετικά με τις πιθανές πηγές ρύπανσης και την εφαρμογή της Οδηγίας για την επεξεργασία αστικών λυμάτων, την Οδηγία για την υγειονομική ταφή και την Οδηγία ΟΠΕΡ (ολοκληρωμένη πρόληψη και έλεγχος της ρύπανσης), καθώς και να ελέγξει το επίπεδο συμμόρφωσης της νομοθετικής εκτέλεσης της ΟΠΥ, τονίζοντας ότι σε περίπτωση μη συμμόρφωσης θα ελάμβανε τα αναγκαία μέτρα για τη διασφάλιση της.

Στο πλαίσιο αυτό και σύμφωνα με τη σχετική νομοθεσία, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Ποια είναι τα αποτελέσματα της ενημέρωσης από τις βουλγαρικές αρχές σχετικά με τα ζητήματα αυτά; Σε ποιο στάδιο της μεταβατικής περιόδου για την εφαρμογή των οδηγιών βρίσκεται η Βουλγαρία; Δεδομένου ότι το πρόγραμμα διασυνοριακής συνεργασίας 2007-2013 πλησιάζει στο τέλος του, σε ποιο στάδιο βρίσκονται τα σχέδια σχετικά για την προστασία του Νέστου; Τι μέτρα σχεδιάζει να πάρει η Επιτροπή σχετικά με την προστασία του ποταμού, που παρά την διοικητική κινητοποίηση των τελευταίων ετών, εξακολουθεί να δέχεται την ρύπανση που προέρχεται από τη Βουλγαρία;

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

Η Επιτροπή αξιολόγησε τα Σχέδια διαχείρισης λεκάνης ποταμού που υπέβαλε η Βουλγαρία το και η αξιολόγηση υπάρχει στον ιστότοπο http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/pdf/CWD-2012-379_EN-Vol3_BG.pdf. Μετά την αξιολόγηση αυτή, η Επιτροπή πραγματοποιεί διμερείς συναντήσεις προκειμένου να συζητήσει, μεταξύ άλλων, ποια μέτρα απαιτούνται ώστε να υλοποιηθούν οι στόχοι της οδηγίας πλαίσιο για τα ύδατα ([1]) (ΟΠΥ). Η ΟΠΥ απαιτεί, όσον αφορά τα Σχέδια διαχείρισης λεκάνης ποταμού, να περιλαμβάνουν μέτρα προστασίας των υδάτινων πόρων από κάθε είδους ρύπανση, καθώς και μέτρα διεθνούς συνεργασίας, ιδίως με τα άλλα κράτη μέλη. Τα ζητήματα αυτά θα συζητηθούν στη διμερή συνάντηση με τις βουλγαρικές αρχές και τη συνέχειά τους θα αναλάβει η Επιτροπή.

([1]) Directive 2000/60/EC, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010014/13
to the Commission
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Heavy pollution of the River Nestos

The River Nestos is one of the most important fresh waterways in the Balkans, bringing life to the areas which it crosses in both southern Bulgaria and northern Greece. It is still being polluted to by landfills in Bulgaria, to the point at which the situation cannot be reversed. This issue has been addressed by numerous authorities, from local government through to the European Commission.

Bulgaria has been under obligation to apply a river basin management plan and to engage in cross-border cooperation in accordance with the Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC, Articles 3 and 13(2)) since 22 December 2009. The 2007-2013 cross-border cooperation programme between Bulgaria and Greece also contains specific provisions for the River Nestos. Before the Commission was official notified of the transposition of Directive 2000/60/EC into Bulgarian legislation on 14 November 2012, there was no mechanism for coordinating the application of an international management plan for the Nestos basin or any significant developments in cooperation between the two countries on this issue.

The European Commission promised to ask for information from the Bulgarian authorities on the possible causes of pollution and on the application of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive, the Landfill Directive and the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Directive, to verify its level of compliance in terms of legislative implementation of the Water Framework Directive and to take the necessary measures in the event of non-compliance.

In view of the above, and based on the relevant legislation, will the Commission say:

What conclusions have been drawn from the information received from the Bulgarian authorities on these issues? What stage in the transitional period for the application of the directives has Bulgaria reached? Given that the 2007-2013 cross-border cooperation programme is drawing to a close, what stage has been reached in plans to protect the River Nestos? What measures does the Commission intend to take to protect the river which, despite administrative action over recent years, is still being polluted by Bulgaria?

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

The Commission has assessed the River Basin Plans submitted by Bulgaria in 2010 and the assessment is available at http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/pdf/CWD-2012-379_EN-Vol3_BG.pdf. Following this assessment the Commission is holding bilateral meetings to discuss among other issues, what measures are required to address the objectives of the Water Framework Directive ([1]) (WFD). The WFD requires the river Basin Management Plans to include measures to protect water resources from pollution as well as international collaboration, especially with other Member States. These issues will be discussed in the bilateral meeting with Bulgarian authorities and will be followed up by the Commission.

([1]) Directive 2000/60/EC, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010015/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Protecting small, external vendors from restrictive standardisation practices inside standard-setting organisations

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(1) 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 standard discussions in the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) are undertakings within 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 the 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 end-consumers. The standardisation procedure could also have negative implications for those small browser vendors that are presently excluded from the W3C, thereby forcing those who wish to be interoperable or standard-compliant to implement features that restrict competition.

What tools does the Commission have at its disposal to ensure that the 'meeting of minds' of a few large market actors inside a standard-setting organisation does not lead to the restriction of competition for other market actors excluded from or looking to become members of a standard-setting organisation under Article 101 TFEU?

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

The Honourable Member's question is very similar to the Written Question E-009948/2013 and the Commission respectfully refers to its reply to that question. The Commission is following the standardisation process with respect to HTML 5 so as to ensure that EU competition rules are fully complied with.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010016/13
an den Rat
Alexander Alvaro (ALDE)
(10. September 2013)

Betrifft: Verstöße gegen den Beschluss des Rates über den Abschluss des TFTP-Abkommens

Artikel 2 des Beschlusses des Rates vom 13. Juli 2010 über den Abschluss des Abkommens zwischen der Europäischen Union und den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika über die Verarbeitung von Zahlungsverkehrsdaten und deren Übermittlung aus der Europäischen Union an die Vereinigten Staaten für die Zwecke des Programms zum Aufspüren der Finanzierung des Terrorismus enthält folgende Bestimmung: „Innerhalb von drei Jahren nach dem Inkrafttreten des Abkommens legt die Kommission einen Bericht über den Fortschritt bei der Entwicklung des vergleichbaren EU-Systems in Bezug auf Artikel 11 des Abkommens vor".

Hält der Rat die Maßnahmen der Kommission der vergangenen drei Jahre für vereinbar mit Artikel 2 des Beschlusses 2010/412/EU des Rates?

Antwort
(25. November 2013)

Der Rat möchte den Herrn Abgeordneten darüber in Kenntnis setzen, dass der Rat über diese Frage nicht beraten hat, da der Bericht der Kommission nach Artikel 2 Absatz 2 des Beschlusses 2010/412/EU des Rates bislang nicht beim Rat eingegangen ist.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010016/13
to the Council
Alexander Alvaro (ALDE)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Breaches of the Council decision on the conclusion of the TFTP Agreement

Article 2 of Council Decision 2010/412/EU of 13 July 2010 on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and the United States of America on the processing and transfer of Financial Messaging Data from the European Union to the United States for the purposes of the Terrorist Finance Tracking Program contains the following provision: 'Within three years from the date of entry into force of the Agreement, the Commission is invited to present a report of progress on the development of the equivalent EU system with regard to Article 11 of the Agreement'.

Does the Council consider the actions of the Commission in the last three years to be in accordance with Article 2 of Council Decision 2010/412/EU?

Reply
(25 November 2013)

The Council would like to inform the Honourable Member that since to date it has not received the report referred in Article 2(2) of Council Decision 2010/412/EU from the Commission, the Council has not discussed the issue.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010017/13
an die Kommission
Alexander Alvaro (ALDE)
(10. September 2013)

Betrifft: Verstöße gegen den Beschluss des Rates über den Abschluss des TFTP-Abkommens

Artikel 2 des Beschlusses des Rates vom 13. Juli 2010 über den Abschluss des Abkommens zwischen der Europäischen Union und den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika über die Verarbeitung von Zahlungsverkehrsdaten und deren Übermittlung aus der Europäischen Union an die Vereinigten Staaten für die Zwecke des Programms zum Aufspüren der Finanzierung des Terrorismus enthält folgende Bestimmung: „Innerhalb von drei Jahren nach dem Inkrafttreten des Abkommens legt die Kommission einen Bericht über den Fortschritt bei der Entwicklung des vergleichbaren EU-Systems in Bezug auf Artikel 11 des Abkommens vor".

Die Kommission wird ausdrücklich gebeten, jede der folgenden Fragen getrennt zu beantworten:

1. Hat die Kommission sich bereiterklärt, innerhalb von drei Jahren einen solchen Fortschrittbericht vorzulegen?

2. Warum hat die Kommission innerhalb von drei Jahren keinen solchen Fortschrittbericht vorgelegt?

3. Wann wird die Kommission einen solchen Fortschrittsbericht vorlegen?

4. Wird die Kommission einen Legislativvorschlag über die Schaffung eines Rahmens für die Extraktion von Daten im Hoheitsgebiet der EU vorlegen?

5. Hält die Kommission ihre Maßnahmen der vergangenen drei Jahre für vereinbar mit Artikel 2 des Beschlusses 2010/412/EU des Rates?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(23. Oktober 2013)

Die Kommission hat bereits notwendige Schritte unternommen mit Blick auf die Vorlage eines Berichts über den Fortschritt bei der Entwicklung eines vergleichbaren EU-Systems im Einklang mit Artikel 11 des EU-US-TFTP-Abkommens ([1]) („das Abkommen") und Artikel 2 des Beschlusses 2010/412/EU des Rates vom 13. Juli 2010 über den Abschluss des Abkommens.

Angesichts der in Medienberichten erhobenen schweren Vorwürfe und der möglichen Konsequenzen für die Durchführung des Abkommens hat die Kommission jedoch Konsultationen nach Artikel 19 des Abkommens aufgenommen, um sich ein Urteil darüber bilden zu können, inwieweit die Vorwürfe gerechtfertigt sind.

Die Ergebnisse der Konsultationen können sich auch auf die Entscheidung über ein gleichwertiges EU-System auswirken. Daher hat die Kommission beschlossen, ihre diesbezüglichen Schlussfolgerungen erst dann zu formulieren, wenn ihr die Ergebnisse der Konsultationen vorliegen.

([1]) Abkommen zwischen der Europäischen Union und den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika über die Verarbeitung von Zahlungsverkehrsdaten und deren Übermittlung aus der Europäischen Union an die Vereinigten Staaten für die Zwecke des Programms zum Aufspüren der Finanzierung des Terrorismus.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010017/13
to the Commission
Alexander Alvaro (ALDE)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Breaches of the Council Decision on the conclusion of the TFTP Agreement

Article 2 of Council Decision 2010/412/EU of 13 July 2010 on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and the United States of America on the processing and transfer of Financial Messaging Data from the European Union to the United States for the purposes of the Terrorist Finance Tracking Program contains the following provision: 'Within three years from the date of entry into force of the Agreement, the Commission is invited to present a report of progress on the development of the equivalent EU system with regard to Article 11 of the Agreement'.

The Commission is specifically requested to answer each of the following questions separately:

1. Did the Commission agree to present such a report of progress within three years?

2. Why has the Commission not presented such a report of progress within three years?

3. When will the Commission present such a report of progress?

4. Will the Commission submit a legal proposal on the establishment of a framework for the extraction of data on EU territory?

5. Does the Commission consider its actions in the last three years to be in accordance with Article 2 of Council Decision 2010/412/EU?

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

The Commission has taken necessary steps with a view to report on the progress on the development of an equivalent EU system with regard to Article 11 of the EU-US TFTP Agreement ('Agreement') ([1]) and in accordance with Article 2 of Council Decision 2010/412/EU of 13 July 2010 on the conclusion of the Agreement.

Nevertheless, in light of the serious allegations in media reports, which might have an impact on the implementation of the Agreement, the Commission has initiated consultations under Article 19 of the Agreement to assess the soundness of these allegations.

The results of these consultations may also have an impact on the decision concerning an EU equivalent system. The Commission has therefore decided to present its conclusions in this regard only once this can be done in the light of the outcome of the consultation.

([1]) Agreement between the European Union and the United States of America on the processing and transfer of Financial messaging data from the European Union to the United States for the purposes of the Terrorist Finance Tracking Program.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010019/13
an die Kommission
Alexander Alvaro (ALDE)
(10. September 2013)

Betrifft: Vertragsverletzungen beim Abkommen über das Programm zum Aufspüren der Finanzierung des Terrorismus II

Die Kommission wird ausdrücklich gebeten, die folgenden Fragen zu dem Bericht über die zweite gemeinsame Überprüfung der Umsetzung des Abkommens über das Programm zum Aufspüren der Finanzierung des Terrorismus (TFTP-Abkommen) ausschließlich mit „Ja“ oder „Nein“ zu beantworten.

Datenminimierung

Trifft es zu, dass Ersuchen des US-Finanzministeriums um Herausgabe von Daten zu den Zwecken des Abkommens gemäß Artikel 4 des TFTP-Abkommens so eng wie möglich gefasst sein müssen?

Trifft es zu, dass der weitaus größte Teil der vom US-Finanzministerium seit dem Inkrafttreten des TFTP-Abkommens beantragten Daten nie zur Verfügung gestellt werden?

Rechte der betroffenen Personen

Trifft es zu, dass jede Person gemäß Artikel 16 des TFTP-Abkommens das Recht hat, die Berichtigung ihrer vom US-Finanzministerium verarbeiteten personenbezogenen Daten zu verlangen?

Trifft es zu, dass die Berichtigung von Daten im engeren Sinne seit dem Inkrafttreten des TFTP-Abkommens sich als technisch nicht durchführbar erwiesen hat?

Aufbewahrungsfrist von Daten

Trifft es zu, dass alle nicht extrahierten Daten, die am 20. Juli 2007 oder später beim US-Finanzministerium eingegangen sind, gemäß Artikel 6 des TFTP-Abkommens spätestens fünf Jahre nach Eingang gelöscht werden?

Trifft es zu, dass die Daten, die zwischen dem 20. Juli 2007 und dem 20. Oktober 2007 beim US-Finanzministerium eingegangen sind, in Wirklichkeit nicht vor dem 21. Oktober 2012 gelöscht wurden?

Aufsicht

Trifft es zu, dass gemäß Artikel 12 des TFTP-Abkommens einem von der Europäischen Kommission benannten Prüfer die Befugnis übertragen wird, alle Suchabfragen der bereitgestellten Daten in Echtzeit und nachträglich zu überprüfen?

Trifft es zu, dass es seit dem Inkrafttreten des TFTP-Abkommens gewisse Einschränkungen gegeben hat, die den Prüfer der EU daran gehindert haben, einige Daten einzusehen?

Transparenz

Trifft es zu, dass die Parteien gemäß Artikel 13 des TFTP-Abkommens gemeinsam die im Abkommen enthaltenen Bestimmungen, insbesondere in Bezug auf die Anzahl der abgerufenen Zahlungsverkehrsdaten, überprüfen?

Trifft es zu, dass insbesondere die Anzahl der abgerufenen Zahlungsverkehrsdaten seit dem Inkrafttreten des TFTP-Abkommens nie Gegenstand der gemeinsamen Überprüfungen war?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(5. November 2013)

Die Kommission möchte den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre ergänzende Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-000351/2013 verweisen.

Was die Frage der Datenlöschung betrifft, so hat das US-Finanzministerium nach Gesprächen im Rahmen der zweiten gemeinsamen Überprüfung und auf Empfehlung des gemeinsamen Überprüfungsteams der EU seine Verfahren geändert, um weitere Datenlöschungen vorzunehmen und damit sicherzustellen, dass alle Löschungen nicht extrahierter Daten vollständig innerhalb der Fünfjahresfrist erfolgen. Folglich wurden sämtliche nicht extrahierten Daten, die beim US-Finanzministerium vor dem 20. Juli 2007 eingingen, und alle zwischen dem 20. Juli 2007 und dem 31. Dezember 2008 eingegangenen Daten bereits gelöscht.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010019/13
to the Commission
Alexander Alvaro (ALDE)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Breaches of the Terrorist Finance Tracking Programme II Agreement

The Commission is specifically requested to answer the following questions regarding the report on the second joint review of the implementation of the Terrorist Finance Tracking Programme (TFTP) Agreement with a 'yes' or 'no' answer only:

Data minimisation

Is it correct that according to Article 4 of the TFTP Agreement, the requests of the US Treasury Department to obtain data necessary for the purpose of the Agreement will be tailored as narrowly as possible?

Is it correct that the vast majority of the data that have been requested by the US Treasury Department since the entry into force of the TFTP Agreement will never be made available?

Rights of data subjects

Is it correct that according to Article 16 of the TFTP Agreement, any person has the right to seek the rectification of personal data processed by the US Treasury Department?

Is it correct that since the entry into force of the TFTP Agreement, the rectification of data in the strict sense has, in fact, not been technically feasible?

Data retention period

Is it correct that according to Article 6 of the TFTP Agreement, all non-extracted data received by the US Treasury Department on or after20 July 2007 should be deleted no later than five years following the date of receipt?

Is it correct that the data received by the US Treasury Department between 20 July 2007 and 20 October 2007 was, in fact, not deleted before 21 October 2012?

Oversight

Is it correct that according to Article 12 of the TFTP Agreement, an overseer appointed by the Commission shall have the authority to review, in real time and retrospectively, all inspections made of the data provided?

Is it correct that since the entry into force of the TFTP Agreement, there have been certain restrictions placed upon the data made available to the EU overseer?

Transparency

Is it correct that according to Article 13 of the TFTP Agreement, the relevant parties shall review jointly the provisions set out in the TFTP Agreement, paying particular attention to the number of communications accessed which relate to financial payment?

Is it correct that since the entry into force of the TFTP Agreement, none of the joint reviews has paid particular attention to the number of communications accessed which relate to financial payment?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its supplementary answer to Written Question E-000351/2013.

With regard to the issue of data deletion: following conversations during the second joint review, and at the recommendation of the EU joint review team, the US Treasury Department revised its procedures to accommodate additional deletion exercises to ensure that all deletions of non-extracted data be fully completed by the five-year mark. Subsequently, all non-extracted data received by the US Treasury prior to 20 July 2007 as well as all non-extracted data received between 20 July 2007 and 31 December 2008 have already been deleted.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-010020/13
Komisii
Eduard Kukan (PPE)
(10. septembra 2013)

Vec: Rastúce napätie medzi etnickými skupinami v Chorvátsku

Nedávny nárast napätia v meste Vukovar spôsobil počas týždňa začínajúceho 2. septembrom 2013 na chorvátskej domácej politickej scéne znepokojenie.

Ako mieni Komisia reagovať na toto napätie – ktoré sa týka srbskej menšiny v Chorvátsku – a ako zaručí dodržiavanie práv menšín v celom regióne?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(11. novembra 2013)

Komisia odsudzuje akúkoľvek formu násilia páchaného voči menšinám alebo akejkoľvek inej skupine. Podľa článku 2 Zmluvy o Európskej únii predstavuje rešpektovanie práv osôb patriacich medzi menšiny jednu zo základných hodnôt Európskej únie. Na základe článkov 21 a 22 Charty základných práv Európskej únie je navyše zakázaná diskriminácia na základe príslušnosti k národnostnej menšine a ustanovuje sa rešpektovanie kultúrnej, náboženskej a jazykovej rozmanitosti v Únii.

Ako je však vysvetlené napr. v odpovedi na písomnú otázku E-09947/13, Komisia, pokiaľ ide o menšiny, nedisponuje žiadnymi všeobecnými právomocami. Komisia najmä nemá žiadnu právomoc nad vymedzením a uznávaním národnostných menšín, ich sebaurčením a autonómiou alebo používaním regionálnych či menšinových jazykov, čo sú aspekty patriace do právomoci členských štátov. Komisia si je vedomá toho, že Chorvátsko sa neustále snaží chrániť práva osôb patriacich medzi menšiny a zvyšovať povedomie o nich s cieľom zabezpečiť, aby tieto osoby mohli využívať svoje práva.

V rámci pôsobnosti právnych predpisov Európskej únie Komisia zabezpečuje, aby členské štáty pri implementácii týchto právnych predpisov rešpektovali základné práva ustanovené v charte. Legislatívou a programami financovania EÚ sa navyše rieši diskriminácia a podnecovanie k násiliu či nenávisti na základe rasy alebo národnostného či etnického pôvodu, ktoré môžu mať vplyv na osoby patriace medzi menšiny ([1]).

([1]) Rámcové rozhodnutie Rady 2008/913/SVV z 28. novembra 2008 o boji proti niektorým formám a prejavom rasizmu a xenofóbie prostredníctvom trestného práva (Ú. v. EÚ L 328, 6.12.2008); smernica Rady 2000/43/ES z 29. júna 2000, ktorou sa zavádza zásada rovnakého zaobchádzania s osobami bez ohľadu na rasový alebo etnický pôvod (Ú. v. ES L 180, 19.7.2000). Ďalšie informácie nájdete na webovej lokalite GR pre spravodlivosť: http://ec.europa.eu/justice.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010020/13
to the Commission
Eduard Kukan (PPE)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Rising interethnic tensions in Croatia

Recent rising tensions in the city of Vukovar were a cause for concern on the domestic political scene in Croatia during the week of 2 September 2013.

How will the Commission respond to these tensions — which concern the Serbian minority in Croatia — and guarantee that the rights of minorities are respected throughout the whole region?

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

The Commission condemns any form of violence against minorities or against any other group. 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.

However, as explained e.g. in its reply to Written Question E-09947/13, the Commission has no general powers as regards minorities. In particular, the Commission has no competence over the definition and recognition of national minorities, their self-determination and autonomy or the use of regional or minority languages, which fall under the responsibility of the Member States. 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.

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 ([1]).

([1]) Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, OJ L 328, 6.12.2008; Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin (OJ L 180, 19.7.2000). For further information, please see DG Justice website at: http://ec.europa.eu/justice

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010021/13
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance

1. How will the Commission ensure that pre-accession funds to each of the following countries for Transition Assistance and Institution Building are properly spent?

List of countries:

Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Macedonia, Iceland, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey

2. How will the Commission ensure that pre-accession funds to each of the following countries for Cross-Border Cooperation are properly spent?

List of countries:

Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey

3. How will the Commission ensure that pre-accession funds to each of the following countries for Regional Development, Rural Development and Human Resource Development are properly spent?

List of countries:

Macedonia, Montenegro and Turkey

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to previous written questions E-008049/2013, E-008065/2013, E-008066/2013, E-008067/2013, E-008068/2013, E-008069/2013, E-008070/2013, E-008708/2013, E-008709/2013, E-008710/2013, E-008711/2013, E-008712/2013 and E-008725/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010022/13
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership Negotiations

On 10 July 2013, Jean-Luc Demarty addressed the International Trade Committee. He spoke at length on a series of issues, including the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations. However, because of time constraints, he did not adequately address four questions. Could the Commission respond to the following questions?

1. How does the Commission provide representation to customs union countries during its trade negotiations with other countries?

2. Are there any formal or informal mechanisms in place?

3. Does the Commission have specific mechanisms in place for Turkey?

4. Will Turkish officials be present during the TTIP negotiations?

5. How will Turkish interests be represented during the TTIP negotiations?

6. Could the Commission provide data showing how the TTIP will impact upon Turkey?

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

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its previous answers to questions E-008729/2013 and E-008730/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010023/13
to the Commission (Vice-Présidente / Haute Représentante)
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Decision by Pakistani Government to downsize the Federal Ministry of Human Rights

It has been brought to my attention by a London constituent that the Pakistani Government has decided to downsize the Federal Ministry of Human Rights and merge it with the Ministry of Law and Justice.

Taking into consideration the ongoing plight of minorities in Pakistan and the reported disproportionate misuse of the blasphemy laws against religious minorities such as Christians and Ahmadiyyas, this decision raises serious concerns as to what adverse impact this 'downsizing' will have on upholding fundamental human rights in Pakistan.

Can the High Representative raise these concerns with the Pakistani Government through the EU Delegation in Islamabad?

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

It is premature to assess the impact of the merger. With a few exceptions, the Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR), set up under Pakistan's last government, was regarded as comparatively weak. The Government of Pakistan makes the case that a combined Ministry of Law, Justice and Human Rights (MoLJ&HR) is more likely to lead real reform.

Issues of minorities including those of Christians and Ahmadis are addressed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Inter-faith Harmony. The recent attack on a church in Peshawar has reinvigorated debate in Pakistan on the failures of government to protect minorities adequately. The Council of Islamic Ideology debated the need to prevent abuse of the blasphemy laws. Although amendment of those laws is currently unlikely, were the Government to give the instruction the MoLJ&HR would be the most likely drafter. In that case, the Human Rights department would be uniquely placed to influence the process.

The EU regularly raises concerns about the situation of minorities and abuse of the blasphemy laws in its political dialogue with Pakistan. Moreover the EU is preparing a EUR 4.5 m programme, co-funded with Denmark, to support the Government of Pakistan in building capacity to uphold the rights of Pakistani citizens. The support will address all aspects of discrimination in Pakistan, with a focus on women, children and religious minorities. During the implementation of the programme, the EU's Delegation in Islamabad will be in a position to observe and assess the effectiveness of the bodies and mechanisms which support human rights in Pakistan. This will help inform dialogue with the Government of Pakistan on the promotion and protection of human rights.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010024/13
an die Kommission
Franziska Katharina Brantner (Verts/ALE)
(10. September 2013)

Betrifft: Baden-württembergisches Landeswohnraumförderprogramm 2013

Die Landesregierung von Baden-Württemberg (Deutschland) hat vor einigen Monaten der Kommission das „Landeswohnraumförderprogramm 2013" zur beihilferechtlichen Prüfung vorgelegt. Kann die Kommission in diesem Zusammenhang folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Wie ist der Stand des Verfahrens, und bis wann rechnet die Kommission mit einem Ergebnis ihrer Prüfung?

2. Sieht bzw. sah die Kommission zusätzlichen Klärungsbedarf, und hat sie dazu Nachfragen bei der Landesregierung gestellt? Falls ja, welche Fragen waren dies?

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

Nach den Vorschriften über staatliche Beihilfen für Dienstleistungen von allgemeinem wirtschaftlichem Interesse ist die staatliche Unterstützung für den sozialen Wohnungsbau in der Regel mit dem Binnenmarkt vereinbar und von der Meldepflicht an die Kommission freigestellt, sofern die Voraussetzungen gemäß dem Beschluss 2012/21/EU der Kommission erfüllt sind. Nichtsdestoweniger können sich die Mitgliedstaaten bei Klärungsbedarf hinsichtlich der Einhaltung dieser Bedingungen an die Kommissionsdienststellen wenden. Angesichts des vertraulichen Charakters dieser Kontakte kann die Kommission auf deren Art oder diesbezügliche Einzelheiten nicht weiter eingehen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010024/13
to the Commission
Franziska Katharina Brantner (Verts/ALE)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Baden-Württemberg state housing support programme 2013

A few months ago, the Baden-Württemberg State Government (Germany) submitted the 'Landeswohnraumförderprogramm 2013' [federal state housing support programme 2013] to the Commission for examination of its compatibility with state aid rules.

1. What stage has the procedure reached and when does the Commission expect its examination to have reached a conclusion?

2. Does or did the Commission see the need for any additional clarification and has it put questions to the State Government in this regard? If so, what were these questions?

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

Under state aid rules for services of general economic interest, State support to social housing is normally compatible with the internal market and exempted from the obligation to notify to the Commission, provided that it meets the conditions laid down in the Commission Decision 2012/21/EU. Nevertheless, Member States have the possibility to enter into contact with the Commission services and ask for guidance about compliance with these conditions. However, due to the confidentiality of these contacts, the Commission cannot further develop on the nature and detail thereof.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010025/13
an die Kommission
Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE)
(10. September 2013)

Betrifft: Militärische Übungsstadt der deutschen Bundeswehr in der Altmark (Bundesland Sachsen-Anhalt) — Nachfrage zu vorausgegangener Anfrage und Antwort E-008442/2013

Die Fragestellerin bezieht sich auf die Anfrage E-008442/2013 und die Antwort der Kommission vom 20.8.2013 zur geplanten militärischen Übungsstadt der deutschen Bundeswehr in der Altmark, die vollständig im FFH-Gebiet DE 3535-301 Colbitz-Letzinger Heide sowie im gemeldeten Vogelschutzgebiet DE 3635-401 Colbitz-Letzlinger Heide liegt. Kann die Kommission weitere Informationen zu folgenden Fragen liefern:

1. Wie ist der Stand und Zeitplan der Bearbeitung der hierzu bei der Kommission eingereichten Beschwerde des Abgeordneten des Landtags Sachsen-Anhalt Dietmar Weihrich zum Verstoß gegen Gemeinschaftsrecht (Aktenzeichen CHAP(2013)00103)?

Die Kommission schreibt in Ihrer Antwort auf die Anfrage E-008442/2013: „Die Kommission ist der Auffassung, dass jedes Gebiet, das von einem Mitgliedstaat als besonderes Schutzgebiet im Sinne der Vogelschutzrichtlinie notifiziert wurde, aber im nationalen Recht nicht als solches ausgewiesen ist, de facto ein besonderes Schutzgebiet darstellt. Entsprechend kann ein Projekt, das Vögeln in Schutzgebieten schaden oder sie stören könnte, nur auf der Grundlage von Artikel 4 Absatz 4 der Richtlinie 79/409/EWG bewertet werden. Artikel 6 der Richtlinie 92/43/EWG findet in diesem Fall nicht Anwendung".

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

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

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

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

1. Die Kommission wird in Kürze ihre Prüfung zu CHAP(2013)00103 abschließen. Das Gebiet DE 3635-401 wurde von Deutschland gemeldet ([1]) und darüber hinaus in der „Verordnung über die Errichtung des ökologischen Netzes Natura 2000" (23.3.2007) und im „Mitteilungsblatt für das Land Sachsen-Anhalt" (28.11.2011) als Vogelschutzgebiet ausgewiesen. Artikel 7 der Habitat-Richtlinie gilt für alle Vogelschutzgebiete.

2. Die Rolle der Kommission ist es, dafür zu sorgen, dass die Mitgliedstaaten das EU-Recht ordnungsgemäß anwenden und nicht, einzelne Projekte zu genehmigen oder zu stoppen. Im Einklang mit Artikel 6 Absatz 4 Unterabsatz 1 der Habitat-Richtlinie ([2]) hat Deutschland der Kommission ([3]) die Ausgleichsmaßnahmen in den Gebieten DE 3635-401 und DE 3535-301 gemeldet, mit denen die globale Kohärenz von Natura 2000 gesichert wird.

3. Nach dem Subsidiaritätsprinzip sind die zuständigen Behörden der Mitgliedstaaten für die Prüfung von Alternativlösungen verantwortlich. Dabei müssen alle für die Erhaltung des Gebiets und seiner ökologischen Funktionen wichtigen Faktoren berücksichtigt werden. Laut der nach Artikel 6 Absatz 4 zu diesem Projekt eingegangenen Meldung wurde eine solche Bewertung durchgeführt.

4. Der gemäß Artikel 6 Absatz 4 erhaltenen Meldung zufolge stützte sich diese Bewertung auf eine biologische Bestandsaufnahme des Gebiets.

([1]) Meldung von Vogelschutzgebieten an die Europäische Kommission durch das Land Sachsen-Anhalt (Schreiben der Ständigen Vertretung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland vom 27.10.2000 und 30.4.2004).

([2]) Richtlinie 92/43/EWG des Rates vom 21.5.1992 zur Erhaltung der natürlichen Lebensräume sowie der wildlebenden Tiere und Pflanzen (ABl. L 206 vom 22.7.1992).

([3]) Unterrichtung der Europäischen Kommission gemäß Artikel 6 Absatz 4 der Habitat-Richtlinie über eine neue militärische Übungsstadt auf dem Truppenübungsplatz Altmark (übermittelt von der Ständigen Vertretung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland am 16.9.2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010025/13
to the Commission
Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Mock town for German army training in the Altmark region (Land of Saxony-Anhalt) — supplementary question relating to previous question and answer E-008442/2013

The author refers to Question E-008442/2013 and the Commission's answer of 20 August 2013 concerning the planned mock town for German army training in the Altmark region, which lies entirely within the Colbitz-Letzlinger Heide FFH area DE-3535-301 and the Colbitz-Letzlinger Heide registered bird protection area DE-3635-401.

1. What stage has the complaint submitted to the Commission in this regard by member of the Saxony-Anhalt regional parliament Dietmar Weihrich concerning a breach of EC law (registered under CHAP(2013)00103) reached, and how long is the procedure expected to take?

In its reply to Question E-008442/2013, the Commission wrote: 'The Commission considers that any site notified by a Member State as a special protection area under the Birds Directive but not designated as such under national law constitutes a de facto special protection area. Under these circumstances any project which might damage or disturb birdlife can only be evaluated on the basis of the provisions of Article 4(4) of Directive 79/409/EEC. Article 6 of Directive 92/43/EEC does not apply in that case.'

2. What means does the Commission have for stopping projects like the aforementioned mock army training town if approval is granted pursuant to Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, but the project should instead be evaluated under Article 4(4) of the Birds Directive?

3. What requirements need to be imposed in connection with the aforementioned project to demonstrate that no alternative solution in the sense of Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive is available?

4. Does the Commission believe that a proper evaluation of a project under Article 4(4) of the Birds Directive or Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive is possible without a complete inventory of the sites?

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

1. The Commission is finalising its analysis of CHAP(2013)00103. In addition to its formal notification by Germany ([1]), Site DE3635-401 was designated as Special Protection Area (SPA) at national level according to 'Verordnung über die Errichtung des ökologischen Netzes Natura 2000' (23.3.2007) and 'Mitteilungsblatt für das Land Sachsen-Anhalt' (28.11.2011). Art. 7 of the Habitats Directive applies to all SPAs.

2. The role of the Commission is to ensure that Member States correctly apply EC law and not to authorise or stop projects. In accordance with Art. 6(4), subparagraph one of the Habitats Directive ([2]), Germany notified to the Commission ([3]) the compensatory measures at Sites DE3635-401 and DE 3535-301 in order to ensure the overall coherence of Natura 2000.

3. In conformity with the principle of subsidiarity, the Member States' competent authorities are responsible for examining alternative solutions. All aspects relevant to the conservation and maintenance of integrity of the site and of its ecological functions should be assessed. According to the notification provided pursuant to Art. 6(4) for this project, this evaluation was carried out.

4. According to the Art. 6(4) notification received by the Commission, the evaluation of this project was based on the biological inventory of the site.

([1]) Notification of Special Protection Areas by Saxony-Anhalt to the European Commission (letter by the Permanent Representation of Germany, dated 27.10.2000 and 30.4.2004).
([2]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21.5.1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora; OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([3]) Information to the European Commission according to Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive concerning a new mock town in the Altmark military training area (submitted by the Permanent Representation of Germany, dated 16.9.2013).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010026/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(10 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per la risoluzione di danni causati all'agricoltura dalla fauna selvatica o inselvatichita

Negli ultimi anni nel territorio della Provincia di Siena, in particolare nella zona della Val d'Orcia, l'attività di numerosi allevatori di ovini è stata fortemente condizionata da attacchi al bestiame da parte di lupi e canidi. Ciò sta causando notevoli danni economici (diretti e indiretti) e zootecnici, con la conseguente cessazione dell'attività di molte aziende operanti nel settore, oltre che seri rischi per l'incolumità degli allevatori e delle loro famiglie.

La salvaguardia e la tutela della fauna selvatica e inselvatichita deve conciliarsi con la difesa e la salvaguardia degli allevatori e delle imprese operanti in queste terre (spesso piccole aziende a conduzione familiare), che fanno della conservazione e valorizzazione del territorio in cui vivono e lavorano un'eccellenza riconosciuta a livello europeo e nazionale.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è al corrente della situazione sulla Provincia di Siena, se è stata accertata storicamente o meno la presenza del lupo nel territorio della Provincia di Siena sia per quantità che per aree e se è stata considerata la possibilità di allargare il monitoraggio all'intera Regione Toscana;

2. quali misure sono state adottate in altri paesi europei per prevenire questi fenomeni, valutando quanto avviene in Spagna, Francia, Germania come anche nelle nazioni del nord Europa;

3. quali normative sono applicabili a tutela delle persone e delle imprese colpite da questi fenomeni;

4. quali misure e azioni possono essere adottate per una sana gestione del territorio, in grado di conciliare le esigenze di tutela ambientale e quelle connesse con l'esercizio delle attività economiche, tra cui forme di sostegno per i danni diretti ed indiretti (come ad esempio l'indennizzo per lo smaltimento delle carcasse, il reintegro della consistenza del gregge, la minor produzione di latte dopo gli attacchi e altri danni indotti);

5. quali misure di sostegno sono previste per le aziende che intendono sviluppare sistemi atti a prevenire i danni da fauna selvatica;

6. se in altri territori sono state trovate delle soluzioni a difesa del bestiame?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloș a nome della Commissione
(13 novembre 2013)

È possibile, nell'ambito delle norme attuali e future che disciplinano il Fondo europeo agricolo per lo sviluppo rurale (FEASR), offrire un sostegno agli investimenti in attrezzature destinate a proteggere il bestiame contro le aggressioni da parte di animali selvatici.

Tuttavia, l'indennizzo per danni subiti non è coperto dalle attuali norme del FEASR e non è prevista una copertura nel prossimo periodo di programmazione.

In numerose decisioni in materia di aiuti di Stato ([1]) la Commissione ha autorizzato semplici misure di finanziamento nazionale volte a compensare i danni provocati dai carnivori direttamente a norma del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea.

Nel contesto della revisione degli orientamenti comunitari per il settore agricolo e forestale 2007-2013, è attualmente in corso di esame la possibilità di includere disposizioni specifiche in materia di aiuti di Stato per i danni provocati dagli animali predatori. Tuttavia nessuna decisione è stata ancora adottata in tal senso.

([1]) N. 723/2009 — «Indennizzo per danni causati da carnivori» (Sassonia); SA.34622 Compensazione finanziaria dai «Fondi di indennizzo per i grandi predatori» per danni causati da lupi, linci e orsi (Baviera); SA.33040 Compensazione per danni causati da lupi (Brandeburgo). Le decisioni sono disponibili al seguente indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/register

Inoltre, i cani selvatici, spesso responsabili di danni al bestiame, non sono coperti dalla normativa UE per la protezione della natura e la loro gestione rientra pienamente nell'ambito della legislazione nazionale. Per quanto riguarda i lupi e altre specie protette, la Commissione ha promosso e sostenuto strategie per garantire una pacifica coesistenza con le attività umane e la gestione dei potenziali conflitti mediante il programma LIFE e altri strumenti ([2]).

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/publications/lifepublications/lifefocus/documents/carnivores.pdf
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/index_en.htm
https://circabc.europa.eu/w/browse/5d75d1b4-c767-4af0-b33a-004b32c33fc4

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010026/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Possible funding for repairing the damage done to agriculture by wild or feral animals

In recent years in the province of Siena, particularly in the Val d'Orcia area, the activity of a number of sheep farmers has been greatly affected by wolves and canids attacking their livestock. This is causing significant (direct and indirect) economic damage as well as damage in terms of animal husbandry, resulting in many farms in the sector going out of business, as well as posing serious risks to the safety of farmers and their families.

The safeguarding and protection of wild and feral animals has to be reconciled with the protection and safeguarding of farmers and businesses in these areas (often small, family-run farms), whose conservation and promotion of the land on which they live and work is recognised in Italy and across Europe as second to none.

1. Is the Commission aware of the situation in the Province of Siena and has it been ascertained whether wolves are actually present in that province, in what numbers and in which areas? Has the Commission considered the possibility of extending monitoring to the entire region of Tuscany?

2. What steps have been taken in other EU countries to prevent such attacks, with reference to Spain, France, Germany and countries in northern Europe?

3. What applicable legislation can protect people and businesses affected by these attacks?

4. What steps and measures can be taken with regard to good land management that can reconcile the requirements of environmental protection with those relating to running a business, including forms of support for direct and indirect damage (such as compensation for the destruction of carcasses, the restoration of flock sizes, the reduced production of milk after the attacks, and other related damage)?

5. What support is available for farms that intend to develop systems to prevent damage caused by wild animals?

6. Have other areas found any solutions for defending livestock?

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

It is possible, under the current and future rules governing the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), to offer support for investments in equipment to protect livestock against attacks by wild animals.

However, compensation for damage suffered is not covered by current EAFRD rules and there are no plans to cover it during the next programming period.

In several state aid decisions ([1]), the Commission has authorised pure national financing measures aiming at compensating for damages caused by carnivores directly under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

In the context of the revision of the Community Guidelines for agriculture and forestry 2007-2013, the possibility is being considered to include specific provisions on state aid for damages caused by predatory animals. But no decision has yet been made.

Moreover, feral dogs, often responsible for damage to livestock, are not covered by EU nature protection legislation and their management falls entirely under national legislation. As regards wolves and other protected species, the Commission has been promoting and supporting ways to ensure their successful coexistence with human activities and the management of potential conflicts through the LIFE programme and other instruments ([2]).

([1]) N 723/2009-'Compensation for damages caused by carnivores' (Saxony); SA.34622 Financial compensation by the 'Compensation funds large predators' for damages caused by wolfs, lynxes and bears (Bavaria); SA.33040 Compensation for damages caused by wolves (Brandenburg). Decisions are available at: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/register/

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/publications/lifepublications/lifefocus/documents/carnivores.pdf
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/index_en.htm
https://circabc.europa.eu/w/browse/5d75d1b4-c767-4af0-b33a-004b32c33fc4

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-010027/13
za Komisijo
Tanja Fajon (S&D)
(10. september 2013)

Zadeva: Dodatno vprašanje k odgovoru komisarja Mimice št. E-007391/2013

G. Mimica je v imenu Komisije 8. 8. 2013 podal odgovor št. E-007391/2013 na moje parlamentarno vprašanje št. E-007391/2013 z dne 21. 6. 2013. Prejela sem tudi obvestilo, da je OLAF uvedel preiskavo v Republiki Sloveniji (RS) v zvezi z Evropskim potrošniškim centrom (EPC), in nove dokaze o domnevnih nezakonitostih gostiteljske organizacije.

Iz prijavne dokumentacije za prijavo na razpis Agencije je razvidno, da je prijavitelj moral prijavi priložiti dokument, ki dokazuje nominacijo s strani matične države. Ali je gostiteljska organizacija na javni razpis EU za sofinanciranje EPC: za leto 2008 priložila dokument, ki dokazuje, da je bila za leto 2008 nominirana s strani RS; za leto 2009 priložila dokument, ki dokazuje, da je bila za leto 2009 nominirana s strani RS; za leto 2010 priložila dokument, ki dokazuje, da je bila za leto 2010 nominirana s strani RS? Ali je RS zadostila zahtevam Sklepa št. 1926/2006/ES, če pa so bile finančne izjave v imenu RS v letih 2007, 2008 in 2009 izdane gostiteljski organizaciji pred javnim razpisom v RS za navedena leta?

V preiskavi Ministrstva za gospodarski razvoj in tehnologijo (MGRT) je bilo ugotovljeno, da se je gostiteljska organizacija za leto 2012 prijavila na razpis Agencije brez predhodne nominacije in preglednega postopka s strani MGRT, kar je Agencija glede na predhodno pisno komunikacijo med MGRT in Agencijo vedela. Zakaj Agencija ni zavrnila prijave gostiteljske organizacije za leto 2012, če je vedela, da prijavitelj ni bil izbran in nominiran s strani države na pregleden način?

Iz prijav Zavoda PIP je razvidno, da je bila Agencija obveščena, da se je gostiteljska organizacija na razpis Agencije za leto 2013 prijavila samostojno, brez predhodne nominacije s strani države, in da prijavne dokumentacije, ki ni prosto dostopna, gostiteljska organizacija ni prejela od MGRT. Zakaj Agencija ni zavrnila prijave gostiteljske organizacije za leto 2013, če je vedela, da prijavitelj ni bil izbran in nominiran s strani države na pregleden način?

Ali je običajno, da Izvršna agencija za zdravje in potrošnike še pred dokončno odločitvijo o morebitni korupciji in goljufiji ponovno izbere in financira gostiteljsko organizacijo, katere zakonita zastopnica je osumljena korupcije in goljufije?

Ali se je Komisija odločila za nadaljnje ukrepe glede na dosedanje ugotovitve?

Odgovor g. Mimice v imenu Komisije
(6. november 2013)

Komisija pozorno spremlja, da se spoštujejo načela dobrega finančnega poslovodenja in stroga skladnost z ustreznimi pravili.

Skupaj z Izvajalsko agencijo za zdravje in potrošnike trenutno podrobno proučuje primer, na katerega je opozorila poslanka. To vključuje tudi preučitev razpisov za zbiranje predlogov za Evropski potrošniški center v Sloveniji za obdobje 2008–2013.

Komisija in Izvajalska agencija za zdravje in potrošnike zelo resno obravnavata vsak primer za ugotavljanje korupcije in goljufije ter preučita vse trditve o domnevnih takšnih praksah, da se hitro ugotovi, ali so utemeljene. Evropskemu uradu za boj proti goljufijam sta ponudili polno sodelovanje pri preiskavi, ki je v teku.

Komisija bo ob upoštevanju tekoče preiskave Evropskega urada za boj proti goljufijam in poglobljene analize primera, ki jo izvaja skupaj z Izvajalsko agencijo za zdravje in potrošnike, sprejela vse potrebne ukrepe, da bi zagotovila popolno skladnost z ustreznimi finančnimi pravili.

Komisija, Izvajalska agencija za zdravje in potrošnike ter Evropski urad za boj proti goljufijam so seznanjeni s podrobnimi informacijami, ki jih navaja poslanka. Komisija ne more podati dodatnih pripomb, dokler Evropski urad za boj proti goljufijam ne zaključi preiskave.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010027/13
to the Commission
Tanja Fajon (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Follow-up question to Commissioner Mimica's answer no E-007391/2013

On 8 August 2013, Mr Mimica provided answer no E-007391/2013 on behalf of the Commission to my parliamentary question no E-007391/2013 of 21 June 2013. I have also been informed that OLAF has opened an investigation in the Republic of Slovenia (RS) in connection with the Slovenian European Consumer Centre (ECC) and I have new evidence of suspected irregularities in the host organisation.

The documentation submitted in response to the call for tender by The Executive Agency for Health and Consumers (the Agency) shows that the tenderer was required to enclose with the tender a document proving nomination by the home country. Did the host organisation, in response to the EU's call for tender for the co-financing of the ECC, enclose a document, for 2008, which proves that it was nominated by RS for 2008; enclose a document, for 2009, which proves that it was nominated by RS for 2009; enclose a document, for 2010, which proves that it was nominated by RS for 2010? Did RS meet the requirements of Decision No 1926/2006/EC if the financial statements were, indeed, issued to the host organisation on behalf of RS in 2007, 2008 and 2009 before the public tender took place in RS for these years?

The investigation of the Slovenian Ministry for Economic Development and Technology (MEDT) has found that, in 2012, the host organisation responded to the Agency's call for tender without a prior nomination or transparent procedure from MEDT, and the Agency was aware of this from its previous correspondence with MEDT. Why did the Agency fail to reject the host organisation's tender for 2012 if it already knew that the tenderer had not been selected and nominated by the Slovenian Government in a transparent manner?

It is clear from the Slovenian PIP Institute's reports that the Agency was informed that the host organisation had responded to the Agency's 2013 call for tender without the Government's prior nomination and that the host organisation had not received the tender documents from MEDT, these not being freely available. Why did the Agency fail to reject the host organisation's tender for 2013 if the Agency knew that the tenderer was not selected and nominated by the Government in a transparent manner?

Is it customary for the Agency to re-select and fund a host organisation whose legal representative has been suspected of corruption and fraud before a final decision on this possible corruption or fraudulent activity has been made?

Has the Commission decided what further action to take on the basis of the findings so far?

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

The Commission pays utmost attention to sound financial management and strict compliance with the relevant rules.

Together with the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers, the Commission is currently analysing in detail the case raised by the Honourable Member. This analysis also covers the calls for proposals for the ECC in Slovenia for the years 2008-2013.

Both the Commission and the Agency are extremely sensitive to detect any case of corruption and fraud, and to inquire on any allegations of such practices, with a view to rapidly establishing whether they are founded. They have offered full cooperation to OLAF for the ongoing investigation.

In light of the ongoing investigation by OLAF and its in-depth analysis of the case together with the Agency, the Commission will take all necessary measures in order to ensure full compliance with the relevant financial rules.

The detailed elements mentioned by the Honourable Member in the question are known to the Commission, to EAHC and to OLAF. The Commission cannot make further comments until the OLAF investigation is completed.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010028/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(10 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Acuerdo por el trabajo digno de Inditex

En la respuesta que el Comisario de Empleo, Asuntos Sociales e Inclusión ha dado a mi pregunta E-004352/2013, la Comisión Europea señala que la empresa española Inditex ha celebrado un acuerdo mundial con los sindicatos para «el respeto y la promoción del trabajo digno y los derechos laborales». No obstante, el citado acuerdo fue firmado en 2009 y los hechos de esclavismo denunciados en mi anterior pregunta datan de 2013.

Según la información puesta a disposición por la Comisión referente a dicho acuerdo, Inditex ha dispuesto de unos fondos de 15 900 millones de euros hasta 2012 para la promoción del trabajo digno. Sin embargo, este acuerdo multimillonario no ha hecho variar en nada los sistemas de explotación esclavistas empleados por los subcontratistas que trabajan con la multinacional española. Tanto los casos ya denunciados con anterioridad como los descubiertos en Argentina y Brasil durante 2013, después de cuatro años de proyecto, bastan para ejemplificar la escasa o nula efectividad de dicho acuerdo. Sin embargo, la dirección general de la Comisión mantiene publicado dicho acuerdo en su página web, en una base de datos sobre acuerdos de empresas transnacionales. Esa base de datos fue creada en un programa dirigido a «los interesados que pueden ayudar a dar forma al desarrollo de una legislación social y laboral adecuada y efectiva».

A la luz de los ya expresados casos de esclavismo y explotación laboral empleados por los subcontratistas de la citada empresa, ¿considera la Comisión adecuado dar publicidad en sus plataformas y bases de datos a un acuerdo que la propia empresa incumple reiteradamente, al subcontratar a esclavistas?

¿Cómo evalúa la Comisión dicho contrato a la luz de los citados hechos de prácticas esclavistas? ¿Considera la Comisión que es una prueba fehaciente de la escasa efectividad de este tipo de acuerdos y, por tanto, se plantea tomar la vía de la creación de una normativa vinculante para las multinacionales?

¿No considera la Comisión que debería borrar dicho acuerdo de la citada base de datos al no suponer ningún avance en el «desarrollo de una legislación social y laboral adecuada y efectiva» y tan solo suponer una farsa para maquillar una empresa que subcontrata a esclavistas?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de noviembre de 2013)

La Comisión ha creado una base de datos en línea con función de búsqueda que contiene todos los acuerdos de empresas transnacionales y textos que ha identificado. Su objetivo es facilitar información sobre la existencia y el contenido de los acuerdos de empresas transnacionales a fin de apoyar el debate en curso sobre las oportunidades y los retos derivados de dichos acuerdos. La Comisión no comenta ni respalda de ninguna manera el fondo o la aplicación de los acuerdos recogidos en la base de datos.

Actualmente, se está actualizando, en cooperación con la Organización Internacional del Trabajo, la recopilación de acuerdos mundiales. Esto muestra que Inditex concluyó en 2012 otro acuerdo global con la Federación Internacional de Trabajadores de la Industria Textil, de la Confección y del Cuero que expone detalladamente el papel de los sindicatos en la ejecución del acuerdo marco internacional dentro de la cadena de suministro de Inditex respecto de sus proveedores y fabricantes externos. Ni el acuerdo de 2012 ni el de 2009 deben suprimirse de la base de datos porque aportan información para el debate sobre los acuerdos de empresas transnacionales.

La Comisión adopta generalmente un enfoque no preceptivo en el ámbito de la responsabilidad social de las empresas y anima a estas a seguir las directrices internacionales. Sin embargo, la Comisión propuso legislación en un ámbito conexo (publicación de información no financiera). Además, la nuevas Directivas sobre contratación pública, que se han aprobado recientemente, prevén que las autoridades públicas tengan en cuenta determinadas consideraciones sociales en sus compras al sector privado.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010028/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Inditex's agreement for decent work

In the answer given by the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion to my Question E-004352/2013, the Commission stated that the Spanish company Inditex had concluded a global agreement with trade unions for 'implementation of fundamental labour rights and decent work.' However, the aforementioned agreement was signed in 2009 and the incidents of slave labour mentioned in my previous question took place in 2013.

According to information made available by the Commission regarding this agreement, Inditex had funds of some EUR 15.9 billion as of 2012 for promoting decent work. However, this multimillion-euro agreement has not made the slightest difference to the slave labour systems used by subcontractors working with the Spanish multinational. The cases reported in the past and those that came to light in Argentina and Brazil in 2013, four years after the project was launched, are enough to show that this agreement is barely effective, if at all. However, the Commission's Directorate-General keeps this agreement publicly available on its website, in a database of transnational company agreements. This database was created as part of a programme aimed at 'all stakeholders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation.'

In view of the reported cases of slavery and labour exploitation practised by the aforementioned company's subcontractors, does the Commission think it is appropriate to publicise on its platforms and in its databases an agreement that the company itself has repeatedly failed to adhere to, by subcontracting work to slave-drivers?

What does the Commission think of this contract in the light of the abovementioned slave labour practices? Does the Commission believe that this is convincing proof that this kind of agreement is largely ineffective and does it therefore plan to set about drafting binding legislation for multinationals?

Does the Commission not think that it should remove this agreement from the database because it in no way advances 'the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation' and is merely a sham to make a company that subcontracts work to slave-drivers look good?

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

The Commission has set up an online searchable database containing all transnational company agreements and texts it has identified. The objective is to provide information on the existence and substance of transnational company agreements and thus to support discussion under way on the opportunities and challenges arising from such agreements. The Commission does not comment on or in any way endorse the substance or implementation of the agreements in the database.

The collection of global agreements is currently being updated in cooperation with the International Labour Organisation. This shows notably that in 2012 Inditex concluded another global agreement with the International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation spelling out the trade unions' role in enforcing the international framework agreement within Inditex's supply chain *vis-à-vis* its suppliers and external manufacturers. Neither the 2012 agreement nor the 2009 agreement should be deleted from the database as they contribute information for the debate on transnational company agreements.

The Commission follows generally a non-prescriptive approach in the area of Corporate Social Responsibility and aims at encouraging enterprises to adhere to international guidelines. Still, the Commission proposed legislation in a related area (non-financial information disclosure). In addition, the new public procurement Directives approved recently provide for the public authorities to take certain social considerations into account when making purchases from the private sector.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010029/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(10 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Διαδικτυακοί ιστότοποι έκθεσης εντυπώσεων και προστασία των επιχειρήσεων και των καταναλωτών στην ΕΕ

Οι διαδικτυακοί ιστότοποι έκθεσης εντυπώσεων αποτελούν ένα από τα σημαντικότερα εργαλεία του σύγχρονου τουριστικού μάρκετινγκ. Σύμφωνα με πρόσφατη έρευνα της εταιρείας Emarketer, τον Μάρτιο του 2013, οι δημοσιευμένες κριτικές στον ιστότοπο TripAdvisor ξεπέρασαν το 1 000 000, σημειώνοντας αύξηση της τάξης του 50% εντός του τρέχοντος έτους. Επιπλέον, σύμφωνα με το TripBarometer του TripAdvisor, το 49% των συμμετεχόντων δήλωσε ότι εμπιστεύεται τους διαδικτυακούς ιστότοπους έκθεσης εντυπώσεων περισσότερο από κάθε άλλη πηγή.

Παρά το γεγονός ότι οι διαδικτυακοί ιστότοποι έκθεσης εντυπώσεων αποτελούν ένα σημαντικό μέσο προβολής και καθιέρωσης των ξενοδοχείων, δημιουργούν ταυτόχρονα μία σειρά ζητημάτων για τις επιχειρήσεις του χώρου και ιδιαίτερα τις μικρομεσαίες επιχειρήσεις (ΜΜΕ): φαινόμενα απάτης (ψευδείς κριτικές υπέρ ή εις βάρος επιχειρήσεων), αθέμιτες εμπορικές πρακτικές (εκφοβισμός, μονομερή συμβόλαια), νέες αυξημένες απαιτήσεις για την στρατηγική μάρκετινγκ των τουριστικών επιχειρήσεων που βαραίνουν ιδιαίτερα τις ΜΜΕ κ.λπ.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει στοιχεία σχετικά με τη διείσδυση και τον αντίκτυπο των διαδικτυακών ιστότοπων έκθεσης εντυπώσεων στην ευρωπαϊκή τουριστική αγορά, καθώς επίσης και σχετικά με περιπτώσεις αθέμιτων πρακτικών τέτοιων ιστοτόπων ή τουριστικών επιχειρήσεων;

2. Έχει αντιμετωπίσει ή προτίθεται να αντιμετωπίσει τα ζητήματα που ανακύπτουν για την ευρωπαϊκή τουριστική αγορά από την άνοδο της σημασίας των διαδικτυακών ιστοτόπων έκθεσης εντυπώσεων στο πλαίσιο της πρωτοβουλίας Τεχνολογίες της Πληροφορίας και της Επικοινωνίας & Τουρισμός (ICT & Tourism Business Initiative), με απώτερο στόχο την μελλοντική ανάληψη σχετικής πολιτικής πρωτοβουλίας;

3. Προτίθεται να αντιμετωπίσει το φαινόμενο των ψευδών κριτικών, πέραν της εφαρμογής του σημείου 22 του παραρτήματος I της Οδηγίας 2005/29/ΕΚ, για τις αθέμιτες εμπορικές πρακτικές, προκειμένου να προστατέψει όχι μόνο τους καταναλωτές από τις επιχειρήσεις (περιπτώσεις που επιχειρηματίες υποδύονται ψευδώς τον καταναλωτή) αλλά και τις επιχειρήσεις από ψευδείς κριτικές καταναλωτών, καθώς ιστότοποι όπως το TripAdvisor δεν απαιτούν απόδειξη διαμονής για την κατάθεση κριτικής;

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

1. Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη για το γενικό πρόβλημα της ψευδούς έκθεσης εντυπώσεων στο διαδίκτυο, παρά το γεγονός ότι δεν διαθέτει στατιστικά στοιχεία σχετικά με τον αντίκτυπο αυτών των αθέμιτων πρακτικών στην αγορά τουρισμού της ΕΕ.

2. Αυτό το πρόβλημα, το οποίο ουσιαστικά αφορά πληροφορίες από καταναλωτές σε άλλους καταναλωτές, δεν θα αντιμετωπιστεί, προς το παρόν, στο πλαίσιο της πρωτοβουλίας στους τομείς ΤΠΕ και Τουρισμού (ICT & Tourism Business Initiative).

3. Η ανακοίνωση σχετικά με την εφαρμογή της οδηγίας 2005/29/ΕΚ ([1]), και της συνοδευτικής έκθεσης ([2]), που εγκρίθηκε στις 14 Μαρτίου 2013 προσδιορίζουν βασικούς τομείς για τις ενέργειες στις οποίες θα πρέπει να ενταθούν οι προσπάθειες για την επιβολή της νομοθεσίας, μεταξύ των οποίων συμπεριλαμβάνεται και ο τομέας του Διαδικτύου (online), όπου επισημαίνεται ειδικά το θέμα των εργαλείων αξιολόγησης που παρέχονται στους πελάτες ([3]). Επί του παρόντος διεξάγονται εργασίες για να επικαιροποιηθούν οι κατευθυντήριες γραμμές του 2009 σχετικά με την εφαρμογή της οδηγίας 2005/29/ΕΚ και να επιτραπεί στις εθνικές αρχές επιβολής του νόμου να περιορίσουν τις επιζήμιες αυτές πρακτικές.

([1]) «Επίτευξη υψηλού επιπέδου προστασίας των καταναλωτών — Δημιουργία εμπιστοσύνης στην εσωτερική αγορά» COM(2013)138 τελικό.
([2]) COM(2013)139 τελικό.
([3]) COM(2013)139, σημείο 3.4.2 Εργαλεία αξιολόγησης που παρέχονται στους καταναλωτές και δικτυακοί τόποι σύγκρισης τιμών, σ. 22-24.

Οι συμμετέχοντες φορείς στον πλειονομερή διάλογο επί των εργαλείων αξιολόγησης συνέστησαν ([4]) να λαμβάνονται μέτρα από τους φορείς εκμετάλλευσης των εργαλείων αξιολόγησης, ώστε να εξασφαλίζεται η γνησιότητα των αξιολογήσεων των χρηστών και της βαθμολογίας που παρουσιάζουν. Σε συνέχεια στον διάλογο αυτό, η Επιτροπή έχει δρομολογήσει διεξοδική μελέτη σχετικά με τα επιχειρηματικά μοντέλα και την επίδραση των εργαλείων αξιολόγησης στους καταναλωτές στο πλαίσιο της ΕΕ. Τα συμπεράσματα της μελέτης αυτής αναμένονται τον Ιούλιο του 2014.

Τον Οκτώβριο, η Επιτροπή δρομολόγησε δημόσια διαβούλευση σχετικά με την αναθεώρηση του κανονισμού 2006/2004/ΕΚ σχετικά με τη συνεργασία για την προστασία των καταναλωτών (ΣΠΚ) ([5]). Στην επανεξέταση διερευνώνται τρόποι για τη βελτίωση της εποπτείας της αγοράς και τον εντοπισμό των παραβάσεων, καθώς και δυνατότητες για τη λήψη οικονομικά αποδοτικών και ταχέων κατασταλτικών μέτρων σε περίπτωση παραβάσεων όσον αφορά μεγάλο πλήθος καταναλωτών σε ολόκληρη την ΕΕ.

Επιπλέον, προετοιμάζεται εκστρατεία ευαισθητοποίησης σε επίπεδο ΕΕ με σκοπό να αυξηθούν οι συνολικές γνώσεις τόσο για τα δικαιώματα των καταναλωτών όσο και για τις δυνατότητες επιβολής της νομοθεσίας σε διάφορους τομείς.

([4]) Έκθεση από τον πλειονομερή διάλογο για τα εργαλεία αξιολόγησης: http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/documents/consumer-summit-2013-msdct-report_en.pdf

([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/dgs_consultations/ca/consumer_protection_cooperation_ regulation_201310_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010029/13
to the Commission
Spyros Danellis (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Review websites and protection of EU businesses and consumers

Review websites are one of the most important marketing tools for the modern tourism industry. According to a recent survey by eMarketer in March 2013, over 1 000 000 reviews have been posted on the TripAdvisor website; this represents an increase in the order of 50% during the current year. Also, according to TripAdvisor's TripBarometer, 49% of those questioned stated that they trusted review websites more than any other source.

Despite the fact that review websites are an important channel for promoting and establishing hotels, they also raise a number of questions for businesses in the sector, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), such as: fraud (bogus positive or negative reviews of businesses), unfair commercial practices (coercion, unilateral contracts), new and enhanced demands in terms of business marketing strategies, which are especially onerous for SMEs, and so on.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it have statistics on the penetration and impact of review websites on the European tourism market and on cases of unfair practices by such websites or tourist businesses?

2. Has it addressed or does it intend to address the issues emerging for the European tourism market from the increased importance of review websites within the framework of the ICT & Tourism Business Initiative), in the ultimate aim of adopting some such initiative policy in future?

3. Does it intend to address the problem of bogus criticism, other than applying point 22 of Annex I to Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair commercial practices, in order to protect both consumers from businesses (where businesses falsely represent themselves as consumers) and businesses from bogus consumer reviews, given that websites such as TripAdvisor do not require reviewers to prove they went where they said they went in order to post a review?

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

1. The Commission is aware of the general problem of online fake reviews, although it does not have statistics on the impact of such unfair practices on the EU tourism market.

2. This problem, which essentially pertains to information from consumers to other consumers, will not be addressed, for the time being, within the ICT and Tourism Business Initiative.

3. The communication on the application of Directive 2005/29/EC ([1]) and its accompanying Report ([2]) adopted on 14 March 2013 identify key areas for actions where enforcement should be stepped up, including the online sector, where the issue of customer review tools ([3]) is specifically highlighted. Work is currently ongoing to update the 2009 Guidance on the implementation of Directive 2005/29/EC and make it easier for national enforcers to curb such harmful practices.

Participants to the Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Comparison Tools recommended ([4]) that comparison tools operators take measures to ensure the authenticity of the user reviews and ratings they feature. As a follow-up, the Commission is launching an in-depth study on the business models and influence on consumers of comparison tools in the EU, whose findings are expected by July 2014.

([1]) 'Achieving a high level of consumer protection — Building trust in the internal market' COM(2013) 138 final.
([2]) COM(2013) 139 final.
([3]) COM(2013) 139, Section 3.4.2 Customer Review Tools and Price Comparison Websites, p. 22-24.
([4]) Report from the Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Comparison Tools:. http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/documents/consumer-summit-2013-msdct-report_en.pdf

In October the Commission launched a public consultation on the review of the Consumer Protection Cooperation (CPC) Regulation 2006/2004/EC ([5]). The review explores ways to improve market surveillance and infringements detection and options to provide a cost-efficient and fast enforcement response to infringements concerning a large number of consumers across the EU.

Furthermore, an EU-wide awareness raising campaign is currently being prepared in order to increase the overall knowledge of both consumer rights and enforcement options in various areas.

([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/dgs_consultations/ca/consumer_protection_cooperation_ regulation_201310_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010030/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(10 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Άσκηση εποπτείας μετά το πρόγραμμα. Εφαρμογή Οικονομικής Διακυβέρνησης

Ο έλληνας Πρωθυπουργός, σε ομιλία του στη Διεθνή Έκθεση Θεσσαλονίκης, στις 7.9.2013, συνέδεσε τη δημιουργία πρωτογενών πλεονασμάτων από την Ελλάδα με την έξοδό της από το καθεστώς των μνημονίων και της διεθνούς επιτήρησης. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, ο Έλληνας Πρωθυπουργός ανέφερε, μεταξύ άλλων, ότι το «πρωτογενές πλεόνασμα είναι το πρώτο αποφασιστικό βήμα για να βγούμε από τη μνημονιακή πολιτική» και ότι «σε λίγο θα μπορούμε να πούμε: τέλος και η εποχή των μνημονίων! όπου άλλοι καθόριζαν την πολιτική μας …».

Με δεδομένο τον Κανονισμό (ΕΕ) 472/2013 για την ενίσχυση της οικονομικής και δημοσιονομικής εποπτείας στη ζώνη του ευρώ, και συγκεκριμένα, το άρθρο 14, σχετικά με την άσκηση εποπτείας μετά το πρόγραμμα, το οποίο αναφέρει ότι «τα κράτη μέλη παραμένουν υπό εποπτεία μετά το πρόγραμμα εφόσον δεν έχει εξοφληθεί τουλάχιστον το 75% της χρηματοδοτικής συνδρομής που έχει ληφθεί από ένα ή περισσότερα άλλα κράτη μέλη, τον ΕΜΧΣ (EFSM), τον ΕΜΣ (ESM) ή το ΕΤΧΣ (EFSF). Το Συμβούλιο, μετά από πρόταση της Επιτροπής, μπορεί να παρατείνει τη διάρκεια άσκησης εποπτείας μετά το πρόγραμμα σε περίπτωση που εξακολουθεί να υπάρχει κίνδυνος για τη δημοσιονομική βιωσιμότητα του οικείου κράτους μέλους», χωρίς μάλιστα το εν λόγω κράτος μέλος να έχει δικαίωμα ψήφου στο Συμβούλιο (άρθρο 15), ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Μπορεί να καταστήσει σαφές ότι, ο Κανονισμός 1173/2011, ο Κανονισμός 1174/2011, ο Κανονισμός 1175/2011, ο Κανονισμός 1176/2011, ο Κανονισμός 1177/2011, η Οδηγία 2011/85/ΕΕ, ο Κανονισμός 472/2013, ο Κανονισμός 473/2013, κατατείνουν στον περιορισμό των κυριαρχικών και δημοκρατικών δικαιωμάτων των κρατών μελών και στη θεσμοποίηση πρωτοφανών παρεμβάσεων των θεσμικών οργάνων της ΕΕ, αλλά και των ισχυρών κρατών μελών, στην άσκηση κυρίαρχης οικονομικής και δημοσιονομικής πολιτικής και στη μονιμοποίηση ενός καθεστώτος αυστηρής λιτότητας σε βάρος των λαών της Ευρώπης;

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

Οι προαναφερθέντες κανονισμοί έχουν συμφωνηθεί από τα κράτη μέλη στο πλαίσιο του Συμβουλίου. Στοχεύουν στον ομαλό και αποτελεσματικό συντονισμό των οικονομικών πολιτικών, καθώς και στην καλύτερη διασύνδεση μεταξύ των διακυβερνητικών μέσων για τη χορήγηση χρηματοδοτικής συνδρομής και του πλαισίου της ΕΕ. Είναι αναγκαία η χρηστή διαχείριση των δημόσιων οικονομικών ώστε να διασφαλιστεί η βιωσιμότητα του ευρωπαϊκού κοινωνικού μοντέλου, προς όφελος των ευρωπαίων πολιτών.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010030/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Post-programme surveillance and economic governance

In a speech to the Thessaloniki International Exhibition on 7 September 2013, the Greek Prime Minister linked the primary surpluses generated by Greece with its exit from memorandum status and international surveillance. In fact, he stated during his speech that the 'primary surplus is the first step towards our exit from the policy imposed by the memoranda' and that 'soon we shall be able to say: the time for memoranda — when others dictated our policy — is over'.

In view of the fact that regulation (EU) No 472/2013 on the strengthening of economic and budgetary surveillance of Member States in the euro area and, more specifically, Article 14 on post-programme surveillance states that 'A Member State shall be under post-programme surveillance as long as a minimum of 75% of the financial assistance received from one or several other Member States, the EFSM, the ESM or the EFSF has not been repaid. The Council, on a proposal from the Commission, may extend the duration of the post-programme surveillance in the event of a persistent risk to the … fiscal sustainability of the Member State concerned', without the Member State concerned being entitled to vote in the Council (Article 15), will the Commission say:

Can it clarify that regulation (EU) No 1173/2011, Regulation (EU) No 1174/2011, Regulation (EU) No 1175/2011, Regulation (EU) No 1176/2011, Regulation (EU) No 1177/2011, Directive 2011/85/EU, Regulation (EU) No 472/2013 and Regulation (EU) No 473/2013 tend to limit the sovereign and democratic rights of the Member States, institutionalise unprecedented intervention by the EU institutions and the strong Member States in sovereign economic and budget policy and establish a permanent regime of strict austerity to the detriment of the people of Europe?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(25 October 2013)

The abovementioned regulations were agreed by Member States in the Council. They aim at ensuring a smooth and effective coordination of economic policies and a better articulation between the intergovernmental financial assistance instruments and the EU framework. A sound management of public finances is necessary for ensuring the sustainability of the European social model, to the benefit of the people of Europe.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010031/13
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: EU Guidelines on support to Israeli entities and Horizon 2020

On 17 July 2013 the Commission published guidelines (2013/C 205/05) under which it is to implement the award of EU support to Israeli entities or to their activities in territories occupied by Israel since June 1967.

1. As Israel participates in the framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development, can the Commission clarify whether these guidelines will apply to the Horizon 2020 Programme?

2. Has the Commission taken any steps to encourage individual Member States to apply the principles enshrined in the guidelines to any bilateral agreements with Israel or with Israeli organisations?

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

The Commission Notice No 2013/C-205/05 establishing guidelines on the eligibility of Israeli entities and their activities in the occupied territories for EU-funded grants, prizes and financial instruments applies horizontally to all EU programmes that will be implemented as from the start of the 2014-2020 financial framework. This includes the 'Horizon 2020' framework programme for research and innovation. The guidelines are applicable to financial support from the Union budget and do not apply to funding opportunities under the national budgets of Member States. At the moment, the Commission's main priority is to ensure that the various implementing instruments of EU programmes under preparation (work programmes, calls for proposals, etc.) properly reflect the eligibility criteria and the implementing arrangements outlined in the guidelines.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010032/13
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Company directorships

Council Regulation (EC) No 2157/2001 sets out the framework for the establishment of *Societas Europaea*, European public companies. Member States such as the United Kingdom have legislation (the Companies Directors Disqualifications Act 1986) that sets out under what circumstances company directors can be disqualified for certain types of misconduct. For instance, unfitness to be a company director can be established before a court where the directors have failed to prepare or approve the annual accounts.

1. What rules exist to determine the fitness of company directors across the European Union?

2. Has the Commission considered the implementation of EU-wide legislation to ensure that company directors are fit to hold office within the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(31 October 2013)

1. Pursuant to Article 47 of the European Company (SE) Statute ([1]), mentioned in the Honourable Member's question, a person may not be a member of any European Company's board if the person concerned is disqualified from serving on a corresponding board of a national public limited liability company (a) under the law of the Member State where this SE has its registered office or (b) owing to a judicial or administrative decision delivered in a Member State. There are currently no other specific harmonised rules at EU level as regards disqualification of directors.

On the related issue of liability of directors, a study on directors' duties and liabilities was recently produced for the Commission by an external contractor, providing an overview and analysis of national laws and corporate practice across the EU. This study was published in April 2013 ([2]).

2. As regards the fitness of company directors in credit institutions and investment firms, the recently adopted Capital Requirements Directive ([3]) provides that members of the management body shall at all times be of sufficiently good repute and possess sufficient knowledge, skills and experience to perform their duties. They shall act with honesty, integrity and independence of mind. The European Banking Authority will issue guidelines on some of the key issues concerning the composition of the boards of banks and the duties and competences of their members by the end of 2015 ([4]). There are currently no plans to propose EU-wide legislation for the non-financial sector on this issue.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 2157/2001, OJ L 294, 10.11.2001, p.1.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/company/independence/index_en.htm
([3]) Directive 2013/36/EU, OJ L 176, 27.6.2013, p. 338. It entered into force on 17 July 2013 as part of the 'CRD IV' package.
([4]) See Articles 88(1), (8) and (12) of Directive 2013/36/EU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010033/13
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Gibraltar and collaboration on tax, financial services and money laundering matters

The International Monetary Fund's report of May 2007 (Country Report No 07/154) noted that 'Gibraltar has a well-regulated financial sector. The Gibraltar authorities are concerned with protecting the reputation and integrity of Gibraltar as a financial centre, and are cognizant of the importance of adopting and applying international regulatory standards and best supervisory practices. Gibraltar has a good reputation internationally for cooperation and information sharing.'

Can the Commission state whether it has ever received a well-founded complaint regarding an alleged failure by the Government of Gibraltar to provide or exchange information or failure to collaborate generally on tax, financial services or money laundering matters?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(31 October 2013)

To date the Commission has not received complaints meeting the description given by the Honourable Member.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010034/13
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Gibraltar and European Union law

Gibraltar joined the European Community alongside the rest of the United Kingdom in 1973, and it is obligated to comply with EC law by virtue of Article 355(3) TFEU.

In the light of the above, can the Commission:

1. Confirm that there are no directives on financial services outstanding for transposition in Gibraltar?

2. Confirm that there are no directives on the exchange of information or mutual assistance on tax matters outstanding for transposition in Gibraltar?

3. Say what directives to combat money laundering have been transposed in Gibraltar and whether any remain outstanding?

4. Confirm, based on more general legislation, that all EU directives, the transposition deadline of which has passed, have been transposed in Gibraltar?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(31 October 2013)

1. Currently there are no infringement proceedings pending against the United Kingdom concerning the non-transposition of Directives on financial services in Gibraltar.

2. Council Directive 2011/16/EU of 15 February 2011 on administrative cooperation in the field of taxation and replacing Directive 77/799/EEC was transposed in Gibraltar by means of the Income Tax Act 2010 (Amendment) Regulations 2013, which were published in the Second Supplement to the Gibraltar Gazette No 3977 of 17 January 2013. The said legislation entered into force on 1 January 2013.

3. Directive 2005/60/EC on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering and terrorist financing and Directive 2006/70/EC laying down implementing measures for Directive 2005/60/EC were transposed via two legal acts (No 37 of 2007, and No 38 of 2007, both published in the Gibraltar Gazette on 20 December 2007).

4. As regards all Directives, the Commission points out that, pursuant to the Treaties, it initiates infringement proceedings only against Member States. This being so, it can state that in this instance, as at 30 September 2013, there were 14 cases pending against the United Kingdom for failure to notify national transposition measures.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010035/13
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Study on the potential for reducing mercury pollution from dental amalgam and batteries, final report

The 'Study on the potential for reducing mercury pollution from dental amalgam and batteries — Final report' of 11 July 2012 was conducted on behalf of the Commission and recommended phasing out the use of dental amalgam owing to mercury's negative impact on the environment. The researchers point out that mercury is released from natural deterioration of amalgam fillings in people's mouths, cremation and burial and residual emissions into urban wastewater treatment plants. The report also highlights the fact that with mercury disappearing from use in other industries dentistry will soon become the largest mercury user in Europe.

The study suggested a possible ban could be implemented by adding the use of mercury in dentistry to Annex XVII of the REACH Regulation (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals), which is the EU regulatory framework for chemicals that aims to enhance the protection of human health and the environment.

Can the Commission confirm whether it has accepted the findings of this study?

Has it decided to move forward with any recommendations from the study, and if so, how is this progressing?

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

The Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks (SCHER) concluded in 2008 that on the basis of the information available, it was not possible to 'comprehensively assess the environmental risks and indirect health effects from use of dental amalgam', and identified a number of gaps that would have to be addressed ([1]).

In reviewing in 2010 the EU Strategy on Mercury, the Commission identified dental amalgam as one of the biggest remaining uses of mercury in the EU and undertook the study mentioned by the Honourable Member.

In view of the final report of the study ([2]) the Commission requested SCHER to update its 2008 opinion on the basis of the latest scientific information available. SCHER has recently published a preliminary opinion ([3]) focusing on environmental effects of dental amalgam, which is currently open for public consultation. A public hearing is scheduled in Luxembourg on 6 November 2013.

The Commission is awaiting the outcome of this process, as well as a corresponding opinion by the Scientific Committee for Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR) focusing on effects of dental amalgam on human health before concluding on the appropriateness of any next steps.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_risk/committees/04_scher/docs/scher_o_089.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/mercury/pdf/final_report_110712_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/environmental_risks/docs/scher_o_164.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010036/13
to the Commission
Peter Skinner (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Helicopters ferrying workers to offshore drilling installations

In the light of the crash of a Eurocopter AS332 L2 on 23 August 2013 which resulted in four deaths, and a similar accident which took place four years ago, could the Commission respond to the following questions:

While the EU has made significant steps to improve the safety of workers involved in oil and gas drilling, does it not agree that the highest level of safety in travel to and from offshore installations remains an integral part of this process?

Will the protection afforded to whistleblowers in the recently adopted Parliament resolution of 21 May 2013 on safety of offshore oil and gas prospection, exploration and production activities ([1]) be extended to protect workers who raise safety concerns before leaving the mainland for the offshore platform and who are often fearful of being issued an NRB (not required back) notice, thereby endangering their careers?

Also, what action will the European Aviation Safety Agency take following its recent emergency directive calling for accelerated inspections to detect potential corrosion on AS350 and ECC130 models?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(29 November 2013)

The Commission agrees that the highest level of safety in travel to and from offshore installations is an issue of key importance as referred to by the Honourable Member.

The Parliament resolution referred to by the honourable member was important for the negotiations on the directive 2013/30/EU on safety of offshore oil and gas operations which was subsequently adopted in June 2013. While the directive focuses on improving the safety of offshore oil and gas operations not including helicopter accidents outside the safety zones around platforms, it requests Member States to ensure conditions for 'confidential reporting of safety and environmental concerns relating to offshore oil and gas operations from any source' (Article 22).

Council Directive 92/91/EEC lays down minimum requirements for the safety and protection of workers in the mineral-extracting industries through drilling. Whereas it does not specifically address the issue of traveling to or from the offshore platform it is without prejudice to the possibility of Member States to include this aspect in the national transposing provisions in accordance with Article 153 (4) of TFEU.

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) addresses any potential unsafe condition by issuing Airworthiness Directives (AD) when this is deemed necessary. In this context EASA issued an Emergency AD (EAD) 2013-0191-E to account for the effect of salt laden atmosphere for offshore operating helicopters and to address an error in a modification installation procedure. This EAD requires periodical inspections for corrosion, installation of protection against corrosive environment, and testing for insulation and operation of the switches in the engine 'IDLE' / 'FLIGHT' control system.

([1]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0200.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010037/13
to the Commission
Peter Skinner (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Biofuels

Current Commission proposals on biofuels with regard to their adverse effects on food security in developing countries have been the subject of much controversy recently.

Does the Commission plan to introduce a full list of rules and ethical criteria in line with EU goals on development and in other areas (incorporating social as well as environmental effects), to be applied to all means used to cut the EU's transport emissions?

Will this be applied to biomass and biofuels being developed in the UK?

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

Under the current and proposed EU legislation on sustainability of biofuels and bioliquids ([1]), harmonised EU sustainability criteria as well as monitoring and reporting requirements ([2]) cover various environmental and social sustainability considerations. Also many voluntary schemes recognised by the European Commission for demonstrating compliance with the EU sustainability criteria do require respect of additional environmental and social requirements from their members.

Biofuels consumed in the EU must be compliant with these criteria to be eligible for final support and to measure compliance towards targets and obligations specified under the Renewable Energy and Fuel Quality Directives. Voluntary schemes are free to choose their scope and geographical coverage.

Technologies with relevance to GHG emission savings in transport may additionally be covered by various sectoral and horizontal measures in the EU, as well as by bilateral and international cooperation instruments of the EU and its Member States with third countries and international institutions. All these elements apply to biofuels that have been developed in the UK.

The Commission is currently analysing the sustainability issues associated with increased use of solid and gaseous biomass for electricity, heating and cooling in the EU in order to determine whether additional action is needed and if so, under which form it would be appropriate.

([1]) Directives 2009/28/EC and 2009/30/EC, legislative proposal COM(2012) 595 final.
([2]) Directive 2009/28/EC, in particular in Articles 17, 22 and 23.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010038/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 septembre 2013)

Objet: États «îlots énergétiques»

Certains États membres, véritables «îlots énergétiques», sont entièrement coupés des réseaux européens de gaz et d'électricité et continuent de payer à des prix plus élevés leurs ressources énergétiques, ce qui altère leur compétitivité.

1. La Commission estime-t-elle que ces États membres, à moins d'investissements considérables dans leurs infrastructures, ne seront pas en mesure de respecter l'engagement réitéré du Conseil européen pour 2015?

2. La Commission, à la demande de ces États membres, ne devrait-elle pas participer aux négociations avec les fournisseurs de pays tiers sur les prix des ressources énergétiques, par exemple pour l'achat de gaz?

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

1. La Commission estime que — afin d'atteindre les objectifs fixés par le Conseil européen — les infrastructures énergétiques devront connaître des développements importants dans l'ensemble de l'Union européenne pour parachever le marché intérieur et rompre l'isolement de certains États membres. La liste des projets d'intérêt commun de l'Union, récemment adoptée, constitue une première étape dans cette direction.

2. À la demande d'un État membre, la Commission peut lui apporter son aide dans les négociations avec les fournisseurs de gaz. L'aide apportée par la Commission doit porter sur des questions relevant de sa compétence, notamment le respect des règles du marché intérieur et de la législation en matière de concurrence.

En outre, le Conseil peut adopter des décisions autorisant la Commission européenne à mener, au nom de l'Union européenne, des négociations liées aux accords intergouvernementaux portant sur des projets d'infrastructures énergétiques d'une importance stratégique. Un État membre peut également inviter la Commission européenne à négocier des accords intergouvernementaux en son nom. Ces mandats peuvent renforcer la position des États membres lors des négociations et assurer la parfaite concordance des accords intergouvernementaux avec l'acquis de l'Union européenne.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010038/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: 'Energy island' states

Some Member States, being energy islands, are still totally isolated from the European gas and electricity networks and continue to pay higher prices for energy resources, which affect their competitiveness.

1. Does the Commission believe that, without substantial infrastructure investment, those Member States will not be able to achieve the commitment reiterated by the Council by 2015?

2. Should not the Commission, at the request of those Member States, take part in negotiations with non-EU energy suppliers on the subject of energy prices, for instance where the purchase of gas is concerned?

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

1. The Commission believes that in order to meet the objectives set by the European Council, i.e. to complete the internal market and end the isolation of certain Member states, significant energy infrastructure developments are needed throughout the whole European Union. The recently adopted Union list of Projects of Common Interest (PCIs) constitutes a step in this sense.

2. The Commission, upon request of a Member State, may assist in its negotiations with gas suppliers. The Commission's assistance should focus on issues falling within its competence, such as the compliance with internal market and competition legislation.

In addition, the Council can adopt Decisions authorising the European Commission to conduct negotiations related to Inter-Governmental Agreements (IGAs) for energy infrastructure projects of strategic importance on behalf of the European Union. Individual Member States can also invite the European Commission to negotiate such IGAs on their behalf. These mandates can strengthen Member States' negotiating position and ensure full compliance of the IGAs with EU *acquis*.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010039/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 septembre 2013)

Objet: Définition de la solidarité énergétique

La solidarité entre États membres, voulue par le traité sur l'Union européenne, devrait régner aussi bien dans le travail quotidien que dans la gestion de crise pour ce qui touche aux volets intérieur et extérieur de la politique de l'énergie.

La Commission ne devrait-elle pas fournir une définition claire de la «solidarité énergétique», afin d'en assurer le respect par tous les États membres?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(6 novembre 2013)

La mise en place d'une solidarité réelle entre les États membres dans le domaine de l'énergie est l'un des principaux sujets qui sous-tend la politique énergétique de l'Union européenne. Nous y contribuons grâce aux dispositions figurant dans de nombreux actes législatifs de l'UE (comme par exemple, le règlement (UE) n° 994/2010 concernant des mesures visant à garantir la sécurité de l'approvisionnement en gaz naturel, la directive 2005/89/CE concernant des mesures visant à garantir la sécurité de l'approvisionnement en électricité et les investissements dans les infrastructures et le règlement (UE) n° 347/2013 concernant des orientations pour les infrastructures énergétiques transeuropéennes).

L'existence d'un marché intérieur de l'énergie fonctionnant correctement est la principale condition d'une solidarité efficace dans le domaine de l'énergie. L'achèvement de celui-ci est donc une priorité pour la Commission.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010039/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Definition of energy solidarity

The solidarity between Member States called for by the EU Treaty should apply to both the daily working and the crisis management of the internal and external energy policy.

Should the Commission not provide a clear definition of 'energy solidarity' in order to ensure that it is respected by all Member States?

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

Achieving tangible solidarity between Member States in the field of energy is one of the main underlying themes of EU energy policy. It is pursued through provisions in many pieces of EU legislation (e.g. Regulation (EU) 994/2010 on measures to safeguard security of gas supplies; Directive 2005/89/EC concerning measures to safeguard security of electricity supply and infrastructure investment; and the TEN-E Regulation (347/2013) on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure).

The main prerequisite for solidarity to work well in the area of energy is the existence of a well-functioning internal energy market, the completion of which is a key priority of the Commission.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010040/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 septembre 2013)

Objet: Conséquences des décisions adoptées en matière d'approvisionnement en énergie sur les prix payés par les consommateurs

Un marché intérieur ouvert et transparent, sur lequel toutes les compagnies de l'Union ou de pays tiers respectent l'acquis communautaire dans le domaine de l'énergie, peut contribuer au renforcement de la position des fournisseurs européens d'énergie lors de leurs négociations avec des concurrents extérieurs, ce qui est particulièrement important dans la perspective d'une éventuelle coordination ultérieure, à l'échelon de l'Union, des achats d'énergie auprès de sources tierces.

1. La Commission partage-t-elle l'avis selon lequel l'établissement d'une agence d'achat groupé de gaz, avec les mécanismes que cela suppose, afin de contrebalancer la position de monopole des fournisseurs extérieurs dominants serait profitable?

2. Dans ses relations avec les fournisseurs d'énergie de pays tiers, la Commission compte-t-elle, comme le suggère le Parlement, prendre en considération les conséquences de ses décisions sur les prix payés par les consommateurs et faire preuve de transparence à cet égard?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(30 octobre 2013)

1. La Commission ne souscrit pas à la proposition de l'Honorable Parlementaire. L'achat groupé n'est pas une solution propre à garantir que tous les opérateurs du marché respectent les règles du marché intérieur et que les prix à la consommation soient maîtrisés. En outre, la tendance au niveau de l'approvisionnement mondial en gaz consiste à davantage diversifier l'approvisionnement, et à abandonner une offre monopolistique. Au sein de l'UE, cette solution réside dans une meilleure interconnexion et la libre circulation du gaz afin d'offrir le choix aux consommateurs.

2. Oui, dans la mesure où il est possible de déterminer ces conséquences.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010040/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Impact of energy supply decisions on consumer prices

An open and transparent internal market, where all EU and third-country companies respect the *acquis communautaire* in the field of energy, can help strengthen the negotiating position of EU energy suppliers with regard to external competitors, which is particularly important for the potential of further coordinating external energy purchasing at EU level.

1. Does the Commission agree that the establishment of a joint gas purchase agency, and the mechanisms needed for this, in order to counterbalance the monopolistic position of dominant external suppliers would be beneficial?

2. In its relations with third-country energy suppliers, will the Commission act on Parliament's suggestion that it should take into account, and be transparent about, the impact of its decisions on consumer prices?

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

1. The Commission does not agree with the Honourable Member's proposal. Joint purchasing is no solution to ensure that all market operators respect the rules of the internal market or that consumer prices remain under control. Furthermore, the trend in global gas supply is into more diversity and away from a monopolistic supply. Within the EU the solution lies in more interconnectedness and free flow of gas so that consumers have a choice.

2. Yes, to the extent that it is possible to know this impact.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010041/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 septembre 2013)

Objet: Négociations sur les projets d'infrastructure

La Commission partage-t-elle l'avis du Parlement selon lequel elle devrait avoir des mandats lui permettant de mener les négociations sur les projets d'infrastructure d'importance stratégique qui touchent à la sécurité de l'approvisionnement de l'Union européenne dans son ensemble? De tels mandats devraient être également envisagés dans le cas d'autres accords intergouvernementaux considérés comme ayant un impact significatif sur la politique énergétique à long terme de l'Union, en particulier sur son indépendance énergétique.

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

La Commission convient que les mandats de négociation confiés par le Conseil à la Commission européenne afin de mener les négociations dans le cadre d'accords intergouvernementaux sur les projets d'infrastructures énergétiques d'importance stratégique sont susceptibles de renforcer la position de négociation des États membres et d'assurer la parfaite concordance des accords intergouvernementaux avec l'acquis de l'Union européenne.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010041/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Negotiations on infrastructure projects

Does the Commission share Parliament's view that the Commission should be granted mandates to conduct negotiations on infrastructure projects of strategic importance that affect the security of supply to the EU as a whole? Such mandates should also be considered in the instances of other intergovernmental agreements considered to have a significant impact on the EU's long-term energy policy objectives, in particular its energy independence.

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

The Commission agrees that negotiation directives granted by the Council to the European Commission in order to conduct negotiations related to Inter-Governmental Agreements (IGAs) for energy infrastructure projects of strategic importance can strengthen Member States' negotiating position and ensure full compliance of the IGAs with EU *acquis*.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010042/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 septembre 2013)

Objet: Infractions en relation avec le «paquet énergie»

Les États membres doivent transposer et mettre en œuvre intégralement et de toute urgence toute la législation pertinente de l'Union, notamment le troisième «paquet énergie».

1. Quelles mesures la Commission compte-t-elle prendre contre les États membres où la mise en œuvre a été indûment retardée?

2. La Commission a déjà lancé des procédures officielles d'enquête pour infraction au droit de l'Union. Quel est l'état d'avancement de ces procédures?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(15 novembre 2013)

1. La Commission considère la mise en œuvre du troisième «paquet énergie» (directive électricité 2009/72/CE et directive gaz 2009/73/CE) comme une priorité essentielle. C'est pourquoi elle prend des mesures visant à garantir que cette mise en œuvre soit effective et réalisée en temps utile.

Après expiration du délai de transposition ([1]) prévu pour le troisième paquet, la Commission a ouvert une procédure d'infraction contre tous les États membres qui n'avaient pas (pleinement) transposé les directives, en formant 38 recours pour non-transposition (partielle) entre septembre et novembre 2011.

2. Cette action a été suivie, en 2012 et 2013, par une évaluation de l'ensemble des notifications des États membres. Certaines de ces procédures ont été clôturées lorsque les EM se sont acquittés de leurs obligations. Depuis octobre 2012 jusqu'à ce jour, quatorze procédures ont été ouvertes à l'encontre de sept EM ([2]). Après le 30 septembre 2013, trois de ces actions ont été clôturées, tandis que les autres sont toujours pendantes. Il existe également trois affaires en cours au stade de l'avis motivé ([3]). Les États membres contre lesquels des procédures d'infraction ont été ouvertes notifient régulièrement des mesures de transposition. Ceux qui sont visés par des actions en cours continuent de notifier des mesures de transposition. Lesdites mesures sont évaluées actuellement par la Commission et seront prises en compte dans la procédure.

Outre le suivi des questions de non-transposition (partielle), la Commission traite les questions de non-conformité et procède actuellement à des contrôles détaillés de non-conformité. Pour un certain nombre de pays, les premiers stades de l'enquête dans les procédures d'infraction ont, dans l'intervalle, été lancés.

([1]) 3 mars 2011.
([2]) Procédures engagées contre la Pologne, la Slovénie et la Finlande en octobre et en novembre 2012, contre la Bulgarie, l'Estonie et le Royaume-Uni en janvier 2013 et contre la Roumanie en mars 2013.
([3]) Contre l'Irlande pour la directive sur l'électricité et contre la Lituanie pour les deux directives électricité et gaz.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010042/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Infringements in relation to the energy package

The Member States must transpose and implement fully all relevant EU legislation, in particular the third energy package, as a matter of urgency.

1. What action will the Commission take against those Member States in which implementation has been unduly delayed?

2. The Commission has already opened formal proceedings to investigate breaches of EU rules. What is the status of those proceedings?

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

1. The Commission considers the implementation of the Third Energy Package (Electricity Directive 2009/72/EC and Gas Directive 2009/73/EC) as a key priority. Therefore, it is taking action to ensure the Package's effective and timely implementation. .

Following the transposition deadline ([1]) for the Third Package, the Commission took action against all MS which had failed to (fully) transpose the directives by launching 38 cases for (partial) non-transposition between September 2011 and November 2011.

2. This was followed in 2012 and 2013 by an assessment of all incoming notifications. A number of these proceedings were closed when the MS complied with their obligations. Fourteen cases against seven MS were referred to Court from October 2012 until present. ([2]) As of 30th September 2013, three of these cases were closed while the others are still ongoing. There are also three ongoing cases at the stage of reasoned opinion. ([3]) Transposition measures are regularly notified by those Member States against which ongoing infringement procedures are initiated. Notifications of transposition measures continue to arrive from the MS against which cases are ongoing. These are being assessed by the Commission and will be taken into account in the proceedings.

In addition to following up issues of (partial) non- transposition, the Commission pursues issues of non-conformity and currently conducts detailed non-conformity checks. For a number of countries, the initial investigative stages of infringement proceedings have meanwhile been launched.

([1]) 3rd March 2011.
([2]) The cases against Poland, Slovenia and Finland in October and November 2012, Bulgaria, Estonia and the UK in January 2013 and Romania in March 2013.
([3]) Against Ireland for the Electricity Directive and against Lithuania for both the Electricity and the Gas Directives.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010043/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 septembre 2013)

Objet: Étude sur les capacités de production

Nous constatons que toutes les pannes générales qui se sont produites jusqu'à présent sont la conséquence d'une défaillance opérationnelle, et non d'un manque de capacités. Il faut reconnaître qu'en raison de la récession économique, des prix élevés du gaz naturel et de la part croissante de la production intermittente d'électricité renouvelable, les investisseurs au sein de l'Union européenne sont confrontés à une grande incertitude lors du développement des capacités flexibles de production d'électricité.

La Commission entend-elle, comme le lui demande le Parlement, mener une évaluation complète du caractère approprié des capacités de production, selon une méthode harmonisée, et fournir des orientations sur la manière d'améliorer la flexibilité et d'assurer l'approvisionnement?

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010050/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 septembre 2013)

Objet: Marché intérieur de l'electricité

Quand la Commission, en ce qui concerne le marché intérieur de l'électricité, compte-t-elle fournir une analyse approfondie de l'adéquation du réseau et de la flexibilité des capacités nationales de production de chaque État membre, à court terme et à long terme, tout en tenant pleinement compte de la contribution potentielle de toutes les mesures d'adaptation telles que la réaction du côté de la demande, le stockage de l'énergie ou l'interconnexion?

Compte-t-elle présenter un rapport sur les conséquences de l'application de mesures nationales relatives à l'évaluation de la capacité et à la planification du développement pour le marché intérieur de l'énergie et les règles de concurrence, en prenant en considération tant leur incidence sur la sécurité d'approvisionnement que les aspects transfrontaliers de cette politique complémentaire de conception des marchés?

Nous demandons à cet égard de redoubler d'efforts concernant l'adoption future des technologies de stockage de l'énergie et la réaction du côté de la demande, qui représentent toutes deux des sources de flexibilité.

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010052/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 septembre 2013)

Objet: Adéquation de la production électrique en Europe

La Commission et le Réseau européen des gestionnaires de réseau de transport comptent-ils élaborer une méthodologie cohérente et harmonisée pour garantir l'adéquation de la production d'électricité en Europe, y compris par la contribution positive de sources renouvelables d'énergie et, notamment, de celles qui sont variables?

Réponse commune donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(7 novembre 2013)

Lorsque l'intervention publique est jugée nécessaire pour garantir l'adéquation des capacités de production, les États membres doivent choisir l'intervention qui perturbe le moins les échanges transfrontaliers et le bon fonctionnement du marché intérieur de l'électricité. Dans sa communication «Réaliser le marché intérieur de l'électricité et tirer le meilleur parti de l'intervention publique» qui devrait être adoptée prochainement et dans le document de travail des services qui l'accompagne, la Commission a défini des orientations générales pour aider à garantir une intervention publique en accord avec l'adéquation des capacités de production afin de remplir les objectifs de la politique énergétique de l'Union. La communication abordera également les sujets des aides publiques en faveur des énergies renouvelables et de la contribution de l'effacement de consommation pour atteindre les objectifs de la politique énergétique de l'Union.

En vertu de la directive 2009/72/CE ([1]) et de la directive 2005/89/CE ([2]), les États membres présentent des rapports biennaux sur la sécurité de l'approvisionnement. Le REGRT-E évalue l'adéquation des capacités de production à l'échelle de l'Union conformément au règlement (CE) n° 714/2009 ([3]). Au sein du groupe de coordination pour l'électricité, la Commission collabore avec les États membres, l'Agence de coopération des régulateurs de l'énergie (ACER) et le REGRT-E pour examiner comment l'évaluation de l'adéquation des capacités de production peut être améliorée. Ces travaux examinent l'emploi de l'interconnexion, les corrélations entre la demande et les conditions météorologiques et la flexibilité des ressources. En fonction des conclusions de ces travaux, la Commission pourrait proposer une nouvelle législation.

Lorsque l'intervention publique implique une aide d'État, en vertu de l'article 107, paragraphe 1, du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne, les États membres doivent répondre à l'obligation d'information et à la suspension de la mise à exécution prévues par l'article 108, paragraphe 3, du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne. La Commission examinera la question des mécanismes de capacité et des aides d'État en détail à mesure qu'elle élaborera, en consultation avec les États membres, des orientations sur les aides d'État dans le domaine de l'énergie et de l'environnement.

([1]) Directive 2009/72/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 13 juillet 2009 concernant des règles communes pour le marché intérieur de l'électricité et abrogeant la directive 2003/54/CE (JO L 211 du 14.8.2009, p.55).

([2]) Directive 2005/89/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 18 janvier 2006 concernant des mesures visant à garantir la sécurité de l'approvisionnement en électricité et les investissements dans les infrastructures (JO L 33 du 4.2.2005).

([3]) Règlement (CE) n° 714/2009 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 13 juillet 2009 sur les conditions d'accès au réseau pour les échanges transfrontaliers d'électricité et abrogeant le règlement (CE) n° 1228/2003 (JO L 211 du 14.8.2009, p.15).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010043/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Study on generation capacities

Parliament notes that all blackouts so far have been the result of operational failures, not capacity shortages. It must be acknowledged that as a result of the economic recession, high natural gas prices and the increasing share of intermittent renewable electricity production, investors in the EU face considerable uncertainty when developing flexible electricity generation capacities.

Will the Commission grant Parliament's request for it to conduct a comprehensive assessment of generation adequacy, based on a harmonised methodology, and to provide guidance on how to enhance flexibility and maintain supply?

Question for written answer E-010050/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Internal electricity market

With regard to the internal electricity market, when will the Commission provide a thorough analysis of the system adequacy and flexibility of national generation capacities in the short and long term, fully taking into account the potential contribution of all flexible measures, such as demand response, energy storage and interconnection?

Will it report on the impact of the applied national measures relating to capacity assessment and development planning on the internal energy market and competition rules, taking into account the consequences in terms of both security of supply and the cross-border aspects of this complementary market design policy?

Parliament calls, in this regard, for further efforts to be made with regard to the future uptake of energy storage technologies and demand-side responsiveness, all of which are additional sources of flexibility.

Question for written answer E-010052/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Generation adequacy in Europe

Do the Commission and the European Network of Transmission System Operators intend to develop a coherent and aligned methodology for ensuring generation adequacy in Europe, including the positive contribution of renewable energy sources and, in particular, variable renewables?

Joint answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(7 November 2013)

When public intervention is considered necessary to ensure generation adequacy, Member States should choose the intervention which least distorts cross border trade and the effective functioning of the internal electricity market. In its communication 'Delivering the internal electricity market and making the most of public intervention' due for adoption soon and the accompanying Staff Working Document, the Commission sets out Guidance to help ensure public intervention in relation to generation adequacy meets the aims of the Union energy policy. The communication will also address public support for renewables and the contribution of demand response to meeting Union energy policy goals.

Under Directive 2009/72EC ([1]) and Directive 2005/89/EC ([2]), Member States produce bi-annual security of supply reports. ENTSO-E produces Union-wide generation adequacy assessments in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 714/2009 ([3]). In the Electricity Coordination Group, the Commission is working with the Member States, the Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER) and ENTSO-E to examine how generation adequacy assessment can be improved. This work considers interconnector use, correlations in demand and weather patterns, and flexibility of resources. Depending on the conclusions of this work, the Commission could propose new legislation.

Where public intervention comprises state aid pursuant to Article 107 (1) TFEU, Member States have to comply with the notification and stand-still obligation of Article 108 (3) TFEU. The Commission will consider the topic of capacity mechanisms and state aid in detail as it develops, in consultation with Member States, Guidelines on state aid in energy and environment.

([1]) Directive 2009/72/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 concerning common rules for the internal market in electricity and repealing Directive 2003/54/EC, OJ L 211/55, 14.8.2009.

([2]) Directive 2005/89/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 January 2006 concerning measures to safeguard security of electricity supply and infrastructure investment , OJ L 33, 4.2.2006.

([3]) Regulation (EC) No 714/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 on cross border exchanges in electricity and Repealing Regulation (EC) No 1228/2003 OJ L 211/15, 14.8.2009.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010044/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 septembre 2013)

Objet: Coordination des projets d'infrastructure

Comment la Commission compte-t-elle faire pour mieux coordonner les projets d'infrastructure et planifier le développement des réseaux afin de veiller à ce qu'ils puissent être reliés en un système pleinement connecté à l'échelle de l'Union et présentent un bon rapport coût-efficacité en s'appuyant sur les synergies transfrontalières et une mise en réseau plus efficace des infrastructures énergétiques?

Estime-t-elle qu'il convient de promouvoir une approche intégrée, qui inclue les gestionnaires des réseaux de distribution, et de veiller à cette fin à la rapidité dans l'évaluation, la sélection, l'autorisation et la mise en œuvre de projets d'intérêt européen commun, notamment en ce qui concerne les connexions transfrontalières des réseaux électriques et gaziers, y compris les mécanismes de flux inversés, la liquéfaction du gaz naturel, les infrastructures de stockage de l'énergie et les réseaux intelligents de transport et de distribution, qui sont essentiels à une bonne intégration et à un bon fonctionnement du marché de l'énergie?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(28 octobre 2013)

La Commission coordonne le développement des infrastructures au moyen d'instruments issus du troisième paquet (par exemple, la création du REGRT-E et du REGRT-G ([1]) ou le plan décennal de développement du réseau) et du règlement (UE) n° 347/2013 ([2]) (orientations RTE-E).

Les orientations RTE-E répondent au besoin urgent d'investissements dans les infrastructures énergétiques. En particulier, le mécanisme pour l'interconnexion en Europe (MIE) jouera un rôle clé dans la mobilisation des fonds privés et publics nécessaires. En favorisant une coopération plus étroite et une communication renforcée entre les GRT et les GRD dans un environnement de réseau intelligent, les orientations RTE-E visent à assurer une meilleure intégration dans le système pour la production d'énergies renouvelables volatiles et la production décentralisée à grande échelle, qui ont une grande incidence sur la stabilité du système, tout en garantissant une meilleure capacité d'adaptation de la production aux besoins du système. Les exigences techniques relatives aux PIC portant sur les réseaux intelligents prévoient également la présentation de projets communs par les opérateurs des GRD et des GRT.

Enfin, la Commission soutient également la coordination par le recensement des PIC ([3]) Conformément aux orientations RTE-E, tous les PIC potentiels font l'objet d'une analyse coûts/avantages approfondie visant à garantir que seuls les projets présentant la plus grande valeur ajoutée européenne sont sélectionnés. L'approbation de la liste de l'Union par la Commission au moyen d'un acte délégué constitue la dernière étape d'un long processus de recensement et d'évaluation. Les PDDR ([4]) établis par le REGRT-E et le REGRT-G sont la principale source utilisée pour la sélection des projets. Pour la première liste de l'Union, des projets hors PDDR ont aussi été pris en considération.

([1]) Réseau européen des gestionnaires de réseau de transport d'électricité et de gaz.
([2]) Règlement concernant les orientations pour les infrastructures énergétiques transeuropéennes.
([3]) Projets d'intérêt commun.
([4]) Plans décennaux de développement du réseau.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010044/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Coordination of infrastructure projects

How will the Commission coordinate infrastructure projects more effectively and plan network development so as to ensure full, EU-wide system connectivity and cost-effectiveness by taking advantage of cross-border synergies and a more efficient energy infrastructure network?

Does it think it should promote an integrated approach, which includes the distribution operators, and ensure, to that end, the rapid assessment, selection, authorisation and implementation of projects of common European interest, especially with regard to electricity and gas trans-border interconnectors, including reverse flow mechanisms, liquefied natural gas, energy storage infrastructures and smart transmission and distribution networks, which are vital for a well-integrated and well-functioning energy market?

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

The Commission coordinates infrastructure development through the instruments deriving from the Third Package (e.g. the establishment of ENTSO-E and ENTSO-G ([1]) or the 10 year network development plan or) and Regulation (EU) No 347/2013 ([2]) (TEN-E Guidelines).

The TEN-E Guidelines address the urgent need for investment in energy infrastructure. In particular, the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) will play a key role in leveraging the necessary private and public funding. Through the promotion of closer cooperation and increased communication between TSOs and DSOs in a smart grid environment, the TEN-E Guidelines aim at ensuring a better integration in the system for large scale volatile renewable and distributed generation, since they have an important impact on system stability, as well as guaranteeing better responsiveness of their production to system needs. The technical requirements for Smart Grid PCIs also foresee joint projects submitted by DSO and TSO operators.

Finally, the Commission also supports coordination through the identification of PCIs ([3]). According to the TEN-E Guidelines, all potential PCIs are subject to a thorough cost-benefit-analysis to ensure that only those projects are chosen that provide the highest European added value. The endorsement of the Union list by the Commission via a delegated act is the finalisation of a long identification and evaluation process. The main pool for project selection is the TYNDP ([4]) prepared by ENTSO-E and ENTSO-G. For the first Union list, non-TYNDP projects have also been considered.

([1]) European Network of Transmission System Operators in electricity and gas.
([2]) Regulation on the Guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure.
([3]) Projects of common interest.
([4]) 10 Year Network Development Plans.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010045/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 septembre 2013)

Objet: Interconnexion en matière énergétique

La Commission, dans la mise en œuvre des dispositions du mécanisme pour l'interconnexion en Europe en matière énergétique, compte-t-elle accorder la priorité aux projets ayant la plus forte incidence sur le fonctionnement du marché intérieur, de manière à promouvoir la concurrence, à favoriser l'utilisation de sources d'énergie renouvelables, à créer les interconnexions transfrontalières nécessaires et à renforcer la sécurité de l'approvisionnement?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(6 novembre 2013)

Les dispositions du mécanisme pour l'interconnexion en Europe (MIE) prévoient la possibilité de soutenir des projets d'intérêt commun dans le secteur de l'énergie sélectionnés conformément au règlement concernant des orientations pour les infrastructures énergétiques ([1]). Ce règlement fixe les critères d'admissibilité pour bénéficier des diverses formes d'aide financière de l'Union au titre du MIE.

Dans les deux premiers programmes de travail annuels, les projets d'intérêt commun seront privilégiés, en particulier ceux visant à mettre un terme à l'isolement énergétique, à supprimer les goulets d'étranglement dans le secteur de l'énergie et à faciliter l'achèvement du marché intérieur de l'énergie.

Conformément au règlement relatif au MIE, les critères de sélection et d'attribution des subventions au titre du MIE seront établis dans les programmes de travail.

([1]) Règlement (UE) n° 347/2013 concernant des orientations pour les infrastructures énergétiques transeuropéennes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010045/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Energy interconnection

When implementing the energy budget of the 'Connecting Europe' facility, will the Commission give priority to projects having the greatest impact on the functioning of the internal market, thereby boosting competition, speeding up the market penetration of renewables, creating necessary cross-border interconnections and enhancing security of supply?

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

The provisions of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) foresee the possibility of supporting projects of common interest in the energy sector identified in line with the energy infrastructure guidelines regulation ([1]). This guidelines regulation sets out the eligibility criteria for the various forms of the Union financial assistance under the CEF.

In the first two annual work programmes, priority consideration will be given to projects of common interest specifically aiming at ending energy isolation, eliminating energy bottlenecks and facilitating the completion of the internal energy market.

In line with the CEF regulation, the selection and award criteria for grants under the CEF will be determined in the work programmes.

([1]) Regulation No 347/2013 on the guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010046/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 septembre 2013)

Objet: Construction de terminaux régionaux de gaz naturel liquéfié

La Commission compte-t-elle accéder à la demande du Parlement visant à réexaminer les projets existants dans le domaine énergétique — notamment les projets de construction de terminaux régionaux de gaz naturel liquéfié, qui s'étendront au-delà d'une décennie –, à évaluer leurs avantages économiques — en tenant compte des terminaux nationaux de gaz naturel liquéfié qui sont déjà en construction ou en préparation dans différents États membres et qui, dans un proche avenir, contribueront au renforcement de la sécurité énergétique d'États membres concernés par l'insularité énergétique — et à contribuer au financement de tels projets?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(28 octobre 2013)

La Commission a évalué un grand nombre de projets au cours du processus de recensement des projets d'intérêt commun (PIC) conformément au règlement (UE) n° 347/2013. Les projets dans le secteur gazier, et notamment les deux terminaux GNL, le stockage et les gazoducs, ont été évalués en fonction de leur contribution aux objectifs de la politique énergétique de l'Union européenne (l'achèvement du marché intérieur et la fin de l'isolement énergétique, la sécurité de l'approvisionnement et la durabilité). Des PIC ont été retenus à l'issue d'un examen réalisé par les groupes de travail régionaux, composés de représentants des États membres, de promoteurs de projets et des autorités de régulation. Un projet doit avoir obtenu le statut de PIC pour pouvoir solliciter le soutien financier de l'Union au titre du mécanisme pour l'interconnexion en Europe. La première liste de projets d'intérêt commun a été adoptée le 14 octobre 2013. Elle sera réexaminée tous les deux ans.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010046/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Construction of regional liquefied natural gas terminals

Does the Commission intend to agree to the request made by Parliament to conduct a fresh review of existing plans for energy projects, especially for the construction of new liquefied natural gas terminals scheduled to take more than 10 years to complete, to assess their economic benefit — taking account of the liquefied natural gas terminals which are already under construction or at the planning stage in individual Member States and which, in the near future, will contribute to energy supply security in Member States classed as 'energy islands' — and to contribute to the financing of such projects?

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

The Commission assessed a large number of projects during the process of identification of projects of common interest (PCI) under the regulation 347/2013. Projects in the gas sector including both LNG terminals, storage and pipelines were assessed according to their contribution to the EU energy policy objectives (completion of internal market and ending of isolation, security of supply and sustainability). PCIs have been identified after thorough analysis by the regional working groups, consisting of Member States, project promoters and regulatory authorities. Having a PCI status is a prerequisite for any project for requesting EU financial support under the Connecting Europe Facility. The first PCI list was adopted on 14 October 2013 and will be reviewed every two years.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010047/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 septembre 2013)

Objet: Gestion de la congestion énergétique

Comment la Commission va-t-elle mettre en place un système efficace de gestion de la congestion en vue d'encourager l'utilisation efficace de la capacité de transport existante de gaz et d'électricité, tout en réduisant le coût lié au développement des capacités du réseau, et de faciliter la connexion croissante des sources de production renouvelables au réseau électrique?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(30 octobre 2013)

En ce qui concerne l'électricité, le principal instrument permettant d'instaurer un système efficace de gestion de la congestion est la mise en œuvre d'un couplage du marché à un jour et du marché intrajournalier afin d'utiliser efficacement l'infrastructure du réseau au moyen de ventes aux enchères implicites ([1]). Le couplage du marché à un jour est déjà en place dans plusieurs régions, mais il existe une déconnexion entre régions. La prochaine étape importante vers un couplage du marché paneuropéen est le couplage de l'Europe du Nord-Ouest, qui comprend l'Europe du Centre-Ouest, le Royaume-Uni, les pays nordiques et les pays baltes. Les règles destinées à promouvoir le développement du couplage de marché sont élaborées dans le contexte des codes de réseau prévus par le troisième paquet de mesures concernant le marché de l'énergie de 2009. L'élaboration des codes de réseau repose sur la procédure définie dans le règlement (CE) n° 714/2009 sur les conditions d'accès au réseau pour les échanges transfrontaliers d'électricité. Actuellement, la Commission européenne lance une procédure de comitologie en vue d'adopter un «code de réseau pour la répartition des capacités et la gestion de la congestion et une ligne directrice sur la gouvernance», qui est le code le plus pertinent pour la gestion de la congestion.

Dans le secteur du gaz, la Commission a adopté en 2012 des lignes directrices sur les procédures de gestion de la congestion ([2]) qui établissent des règles au niveau de l'UE en matière de lutte contre la congestion contractuelle. L'objectif de cette nouvelle mesure, destinée à être mise en œuvre dans l'UE au plus tard le 1er octobre de cette année, est précisément de mettre en place des mécanismes efficaces et peu coûteux permettant de libérer les capacités inutilisées, de manière à éviter des investissements inutiles. La Commission suit de près la mise en œuvre de cette mesure afin de garantir son efficacité.

([1]) La vente aux enchères implicite est une méthode de répartition des capacités transfrontalières fondée sur le marché par laquelle la capacité de transmission et l'énergie sont attribuées en même temps.

([2]) Décision de la Commission du 24 août 2012 modifiant l'annexe I du règlement (CE) n° 715/2009 du Parlement européen et du Conseil concernant les conditions d'accès aux réseaux de transport de gaz naturel.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010047/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Congestion management

How does the Commission intend to put in place an efficient congestion management system to foster the efficient use of existing gas and electricity transmission capacity while reducing the cost of expanding network capabilities, and facilitate the growing connection of renewable generation sources to the electricity network?

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

Regarding electricity the main instrument for developing an efficient congestion management system is the implementation of day-ahead and intra-day market coupling which aim to use the grid infrastructure efficiently using implicit auctions ([1]). Day-ahead coupling is already in place in several regions but there is a disconnection between regions. The next important step towards a pan-European market coupling is the North West Europe coupling which covers the Central Western Europe, UK, the Nordic and the Baltic countries. The rules to promote further market coupling development are developed in the context of the network codes following the third energy market package from 2009. Network codes development is made following the process defined in Regulation 714/2009 on conditions for access to the network for cross-border exchanges in electricity. Currently the European Commission is starting a comitology process to adopt a 'Network code on Capacity Allocation and Congestion Management and a Guideline on Governance' which is the most relevant code regarding congestion management.

In the gas sector the Commission has adopted Guidelines for Congestion Management Procedures ([2]) in 2012 that create EU-wide rules for tackling contractual congestion. The aim of this new measure to be be implemented across the EU by 1 October this year is precisely to put in place cost efficient mechanisms for freeing up unused capacity so as to avoid investment where this is not necessary. The Commission is closely following the implementation of this measure to ensure its effectiveness.

([1]) Implicit auction is a market based method to allocate cross-border capacity in which transmission capacity and energy are allocated at the same time.

([2]) Commission decision of 24 August 2012 on amending Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 715/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council on conditions for access to the natural gas transmission networks.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010048/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 septembre 2013)

Objet: Gaz — abus de position dominante

Nous accueillons favorablement la détermination de la Commission de faire respecter les règles relatives aux monopoles et aux aides d'État par toutes les entreprises du secteur de l'énergie et leurs filiales actives sur le territoire de l'Union européenne, en veillant à la mise en place d'un cadre équitable offrant les mêmes conditions d'accès à tous les acteurs sur le marché.

1. La Commission compte-t-elle publier des lignes directrices sur la manière d'évaluer l'abus de position dominante par une entreprise sur les marchés du gaz et de l'électricité ainsi que des orientations sur les bonnes pratiques et l'expérience acquise en matière de régimes d'aide aux sources d'énergie renouvelables, comme le demande le Parlement?

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

Les entreprises des secteurs du gaz et de l'électricité sont toutes tenues de respecter les mêmes règles de concurrence de l'UE que les entreprises présentes dans d'autres secteurs. La pratique décisionnelle de la Commission dans les secteurs du gaz et de l'électricité ([1]) et la jurisprudence des juridictions de l'UE concernant l'article 102 du TFUE fournissent les orientations nécessaires pour ces secteurs.

Quant aux aides d'État s'inscrivant dans les régimes d'aides en faveur des énergies renouvelables, la Commission procède actuellement au réexamen des lignes directrices concernant les aides d'État à la protection de l'environnement ([2]). L'un des objectifs de ce réexamen est d'éviter que les régimes en question ne débouchent sur une surcompensation, en améliorant leur efficience et en réduisant leurs effets de distorsion de la concurrence.

En outre, en novembre, la Commission a adopté une communication intitulée «Réaliser le marché intérieur de l'électricité et tirer le meilleur parti de l'intervention publique», accompagnée d'un document de travail de ses services fournissant des orientations détaillées supplémentaires sur les meilleures pratiques en matière de conception et de réforme des régimes d'aides en faveur des énergies renouvelables ([3]). Le but de ce document est de donner aux États membres des indications claires pour qu'ils assurent le bon rapport coût-efficacité des régimes d'aides en faveur des énergies renouvelables par une meilleure intégration du marché et le recours à des mécanismes de coopération, tout en veillant à la stabilité, à la transparence et à la crédibilité des processus de conception et de réforme de ces régimes.

([1]) Exemples d'affaires récentes: COMP/37.966 — Distrigaz; COMP/39.388 et COMP/39.389 — E.on; COMP/39.402 — RWE; COMP/39.315 — ENI; COMP/39.316 — GDF; COMP/39.317 — E.on gas; COMP/39.386 EDF; COMP/39.351 — SVK. Exemples d'enquêtes en cours: IP-12-937 Antitrust: la Commission ouvre une procédure à l'encontre de Gazprom; IP-13-656 et IP-12-1307 Antitrust: la Commission ouvre deux procédures à l'encontre de Bulgarian Energy Holding, l'une dans le secteur du gaz, l'autre dans celui de l'électricité; IP-12-1355 Antitrust: la Commission ouvre une procédure contre la bourse d'électricité roumaine.

([2]) Lignes directrices concernant les aides d'État à la protection de l'environnement (JO C 82 du 1.4.2008).

([3]) Ces documents sont consultables sur le site http://ec.europa.eu/energy/gas_electricity/internal_market_fr.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010048/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Gas — abuse of a dominant position

Parliament welcomes the Commission's determination to enforce anti-trust and State-aid rules with regard to all energy sector undertakings and their subsidiaries operating on the territory of the European Union, ensuring that a level playing field is established with equal conditions of access for all market players.

1. Will the Commission grant Parliament's request for it to issue guidelines on how to assess the abuse of a dominant position in gas and electricity markets by any company, as well as to provide guidance on best practices and on experiences gained in renewable energy support schemes?

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

Any company in the gas and electricity sectors has to abide with the same EU competition rules as companies in other sectors. The Commission's past decisional practice in the gas and electricity sectors ([1]) and the case law of the EU courts on Article 102 TFEU provide the necessary guidance in the sector.

As to state aid involved in the renewable energy support schemes, the Commission is currently reviewing the Environmental State Aid Guidelines ([2]). One of the objectives of the review is to avoid that such schemes result in overcompensation, by making them more efficient and by reducing their competitive distortions.

Moreover, in November, the Commission adopted a communication on Delivering the internal electricity market and making the most of public intervention, accompanied by a staff working document providing further detailed guidance on best practice of renewables support schemes design and reform ([3]). The aim of this document is to give clear guidance to Member States to make renewables support schemes cost effective through better market integration and use of cooperation mechanisms, and at the same time to be stable, transparent and credible in their design and reform.

([1]) Recent cases include COMP/37.966 — Distrigaz; COMP/39.388 and COMP/39.389 — E.on; COMP/39.402 — RWE; COMP/39.315 — ENI; COMP/39.316 — GDF; COMP/39.317 — E.on gas; COMP/39.386 EDF; and COMP/39.351 — SVK. Pending investigations include for instance IP-12-937 Antitrust: Commission opens proceedings against Gazprom; IP-13-656 and IP-12-1307Antitrust: Commission opens proceedings against Bulgarian Energy Holding in two investigations, one relating to gas, the other to electricity; and IP-12-1355 Antitrust: Commission opens proceedings against Romanian Power Exchange.

([2]) Community guidelines on state aid for environmental protection; OJ C 82, 1.4.2008.

([3]) The documents are available on this website: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/gas_electricity/internal_market_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010049/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 septembre 2013)

Objet: Mécanismes nationaux d'aide

1. Le Parlement recommande à la Commission d'user de ses pouvoirs de contrôle des aides d'État dans l'optique d'encourager le développement d'infrastructures transfrontalières. Quelle est la position de la Commission?

2. La Commission ne devrait-elle pas subordonner l'approbation des mécanismes nationaux d'aide (en faveur du développement des capacités ou des sources d'énergie renouvelables) à l'engagement de l'État membre en faveur du financement et de la construction d'infrastructures transfrontalières?

3. De telles connexions joueraient-elles, comme le pense le Parlement, un rôle essentiel permettant d'accroître la capacité de puiser dans l'offre du voisinage, en cas d'urgence ou de déséquilibre énergétique, et de réduire au fil du temps les subventions?

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

La Commission étudie actuellement la révision des lignes directrices concernant les aides d'État à la protection de l'environnement, dans le but de soumettre un projet à la consultation publique à l'automne. Une partie importante de la discussion porte sur la promotion de l'investissement dans certains types d'infrastructures énergétiques, plus particulièrement les infrastructures transfrontalières. Toutefois, la Commission n'a pas arrêté de position définitive à ce stade.

Pour le développement de certains types de capacités, la Commission envisage d'intégrer, dans son évaluation des mesures adoptées par les États membres, une analyse des investissements actuels et futurs dans les interconnexions. Toutefois, une stricte conditionnalité à cet égard ne sera probablement pas indiquée, en ce sens que dans certains cas, l'interconnexion ne peut répondre de manière adéquate aux préoccupations d'un État membre ou ne constitue pas une option viable d'un point de vue technique.

Le développement des infrastructures est urgent et critique pour la réussite du marché unique et l'intégration des énergies renouvelables. La diversité des conditions naturelles et des décisions relatives au bouquet énergétique dans les États membres offre un potentiel que l'Union doit exploiter pour pouvoir achever sa transition vers un système énergétique à faible intensité de carbone. L'autre solution, consistant à dépendre de réseaux nationaux peu interconnectés, s'avérerait bien plus onéreuse au bout du compte. Une étude récente laisse entendre que vouloir garantir la sécurité de l'approvisionnement au niveau national pourrait coûter à l'Union entre 3 et 7 milliards d'euros supplémentaires par an ([1]).

([1]) Booz and Co., «Benefits of an integrated European energy market»: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/studies/doc/20130902_energy_integration_benefits.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010049/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: National support mechanisms

1. Parliament recommends that the Commission use its state aid scrutiny powers to encourage the development of cross-border infrastructure. What is the Commission's position?

2. Should the Commission not make the approval of national support mechanisms (for the development of capacity or renewables) conditional on the commitment of the Member State in question to the financing and building of cross-border infrastructure?

3. Would such interconnectors play a vital role, as Parliament believes, when it comes to increasing the ability to draw on a neighbour's supplies in the event of an energy emergency or imbalance and to reducing subsidies over time?

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

The Commission is currently discussing the revision of the Environmental Aid Guidelines, with the aim of proposing a draft for public consultation in the autumn. An important part of the discussion is focusing on promoting investment in certain types of energy infrastructure, and in particular cross-border infrastructure. However there is no definitive Commission position at this stage.

For the development of certain types of capacity the Commission is considering including, in its assessment of Member States' measures, a review of current and prospective investments in interconnectors. However strict conditionality on this issue is unlikely to be appropriate, in that there might be situations where interconnection cannot adequately address a Member State's concern or is not a technically viable option.

Infrastructure development is urgent and critical for the success of the single market and for the integration of renewable energy. The diverging energy mix decisions and natural conditions in our Member States offers a potential that the Union needs to harvest to enable to the transition to an affordable low carbon energy system. The alternative, namely to stay locked in to weakly interconnected national systems, will end up being much more expensive. A recent study suggests that trying to ensure security of supply on a national basis could cost the EU EURO 3-7 bn extra per year ([1]).

([1]) Booz and Co. Benefits of an integrated European energy market: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/studies/doc/20130902_energy_integration_benefits.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010051/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 septembre 2013)

Objet: Déploiement des ressources de flexibilité

La Commission ne devrait-elle pas élaborer des orientations sur l'utilisation et le déploiement des ressources de flexibilité, telles que la gestion de la demande, le stockage, les infrastructures matérielles, notamment transfrontalières, pour que les États membres puissent préparer et mettre en œuvre des stratégies nationales visant à déployer des ressources de flexibilité sur leur territoire?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(30 octobre 2013)

La Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à se reporter à sa prochaine communication consacrée à l'intervention des pouvoirs publics sur le marché intérieur de l'électricité, qui devrait être publiée dans les semaines à venir, et qui, avec les documents de travail qui l'accompagnent, prévoit d'aborder l'évolution de la réponse de la demande, les interconnexions, etc.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010051/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Deployment of flexibility resources

Should the Commission not prepare guidance on the use and deployment of flexibility resources, such as demand-side management, storage and physical infrastructures, including cross-border infrastructures, so that Member States can prepare and implement national strategies to deploy flexibility resources in their regions?

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

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its upcoming communication that addresses public intervention in the internal electricity market that is foreseen to be published in the coming weeks, and that, together with the accompanying Staff Working Documents, foresees to address the development of demand response, interconnections, etc.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010053/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 septembre 2013)

Objet: Services auxiliaires

Quand et comment la Commission va-t-elle élaborer des règles visant à poursuivre le développement d'un marché pour les services auxiliaires qui permette la participation de toutes les sources d'énergie, dont les sources d'énergie renouvelables?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(7 novembre 2013)

Les règles destinées à promouvoir la poursuite du développement d'un marché pour les services auxiliaires sont adoptées dans le cadre des codes du réseau à la suite du troisième paquet «Énergie» de 2009. Ces règles sont applicables à toutes les technologies de production, et notamment à partir de sources renouvelables. L'élaboration des codes du réseau repose sur le processus défini dans le règlement (CE) n° 714/2009 ([1]) sur les conditions d'accès au réseau pour les échanges transfrontaliers d'électricité. Le réseau européen des gestionnaires de réseaux de transport d'électricité (REGRT-E) achève actuellement le code pour l'équilibrage de l'électricité ([2]), qui est le code le plus pertinent pour ce qui concerne les services auxiliaires.

([1]) Règlement (CE) n° 714/2009 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 13 juillet 2009 sur les conditions d'accès au réseau pour les échanges transfrontaliers d'électricité et abrogeant le règlement (CE) n° 1228/2003 (JO L 211 du 14.8.2009).
([2]) https://www.entsoe.eu/major-projects/network-code-development/electricity-balancing/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010053/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Ancillary services

When and how will the Commission draw up rules to promote the further development of a market for ancillary services open to the participation of all energy sources, including renewables?

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

The rules to promote the further development of a market for ancillary services are adopted in the context of the network codes following the Third Energy Package from 2009. Such rules should be applicable to all production technologies, including renewables. The network codes are developed based on the process defined in Regulation 714/2009 ([1]) on conditions for access to the network for cross-border exchanges in electricity. The European Network of Transmission System Operators for Electricity (ENTSO-E) is currently finalising the code for electricity balancing ([2]) which is the most relevant code regarding the ancillary services.

([1]) Regulation (ec) no 714/2009 of the european parliament and of the council of 13 July 2009, on conditions for access to the network for cross-border exchanges in electricity and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1228/2003, OJ 14.08.2009 L 2011.
([2]) https://www.entsoe.eu/major-projects/network-code-development/electricity-balancing/

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010054/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 septembre 2013)

Objet: Nouvelles structures rentables du marché

1. La Commission compte-t-elle lancer une étude recensant de nouvelles manières de structurer le marché européen de l'électricité visant à le rendre rentable, en vue de s'assurer que les consommateurs paient leur électricité à un prix raisonnable et d'éviter les fuites de carbone?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(30 octobre 2013)

Aucune étude n'est actuellement prévue sur ce sujet particulier mais la politique énergétique européenne vise précisément à créer un marché unique européen de l'énergie assurant la durabilité et la sécurité de l'approvisionnement en énergie à des prix concurrentiels pour l'industrie et à des prix abordables pour les ménages ([1]).

([1]) Étude sur les bénéfices du marché européen de l'énergie intégré:
http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/studies/doc/20130902_energy_integration_benefits.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010054/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Profitable new market structures

1. Does the Commission intend to launch a study analysing new ways of structuring the EU electricity market to make it more profitable, with a view to ensuring that consumers receive reasonably priced electricity and preventing carbon leakage?

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

No studies are currently planned on this specific topic, but European energy policy aims precisely to create a single European energy market that provides sustainable and secure supplies at competitive prices for industry and affordable prices for households ([1]).

([1]) Study on the Benefits of an Integrated European Energy market . http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/studies/doc/20130902_energy_integration_benefits.pdf

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-010055/13
upućeno Komisiji
Nikola Vuljanić (GUE/NGL)
(10. rujna 2013.)

Predmet: Fiskalizacija na otvorenim prostorima

Obraćam Vam se pitanjem koje na prvi pogled može izgledati kao unutarnje pitanje Republike Hrvatske, no njegove implikacije, čini mi se, tiču se nekih temeljnih načela funkcioniranja Europske unije.

Naime, tijekom 2013. godine u Republici Hrvatskoj otpočeo je tzv. postupak fiskalizacije, odnosno bilježenja svih financijskih transakcija gotovim novcem kroz fiskalne blagajne, povezane direktno s Ministarstvom financija, odnosno njegovim poreznim uredom. To je hvalevrijedan pokušaj da se uvede više discipline u gotovinske transakcije, smanji na minimum porezna evazija i siva ekonomija dovede na podnošljivu razinu. Te su mjere, u načelu, naišle na opću pohvalu ne samo političkih krugova nego i široke javnosti. Pokazalo se da je prikazani promet u nekim djelatnostima (npr. ugostiteljstvu) porastao trostruko pa i više.

No početkom ljeta fiskalizacija se počela primjenjivati na tzv. zelenim otvorenim tržnicama, dakle na štandovima preprodavača. Tu je došlo do najvećeg otpora uvođenju fiskalnih blagajni, kako zbog nepraktičnosti rada s uređajima na otvorenom, tako i zbog nemogućnosti mijenjanja cijena tijekom dana (cjenkanja). Porezna uprava striktno se držala donesenih propisa te uz sve poteškoće provodi fiskalizaciju i na tom području.

Na otvorenim tržnicama, kako su me upozorili rukovoditelji udruge tržnica u Hrvatskoj, također se odvijaju tradicionalne međunarodne manifestacije — pogranični sajmovi, prekogranične vjerske i druge tradicijske manifestacije — na kojima se desetljećima pa i stoljećima prodavala roba (rukotvorine, odjeća i drugo) ne samo iz Hrvatske već i iz susjednih zemalja. Hrvatski susjedi zemlje su članice EU-a (Italija, Slovenija, Mađarska), ali i neke koje to nisu ili će eventualno tek postati (Srbija, Bosna i Hercegovina, Crna Gora). Obrtnici i trgovci iz tih zemalja ne mogu prodavati svoju robu u RH jer ne mogu provoditi hrvatski Zakon o fiskalizaciji (pribaviti certifikat Financijske agencije, naplatni uređaj i knjigu računa ovjerenu od Porezne uprave) jer kao pravne osobe nisu registrirani u RH, mada su oni iz zemalja EU-a registrirani u tim zemljama.

Smatram da se takvim krutim pridržavanjem propisa ne samo uništava jedna lijepa srednjoeuropska tradicija koja je u svim turbulentnim vremenima približavala susjedne narode, već se krše i temeljna načela EU o slobodnoj trgovini, pa Vas molim da me izvijestite kakav je Vaš stav o tom pitanju i možete li na bilo koji način pomoći ispravljanju ove nepravde.

Odgovor g. Tajanija u ime Komisije
(11. studenog 2013.)

Komisija je svjesna postojanja uvjeta prema kojem trgovci za prodavanje robe na tržištu moraju imati poslovni nastan u Hrvatskoj kako bi mogli prodavati robu na tržištu. Međutim nije jasno primjenjuje li se taj uvjet na trgovce iz svih susjednih država ili samo na one iz susjednih trećih zemalja.

Ukoliko se uvjet primjenjuje na trgovce iz drugih država članica EU-a, trebao bi se primjenjivati članak 34. UFEU-a ([1]) ([2]).

Sud je odlučio da obveza uvoznika da ima mjesto poslovanja u odredišnoj državi članici izravno negira pravo na slobodno kretanje robe unutar unutarnjeg tržišta. Zaključio je da prisiljavanje poduzetnika da snose troškove uspostavljanja predstavništva u državi članici u koju se roba uvozi nekim poduzetnicima, pogotovo malim i srednjim poduzećima, otežava ulazak na tržište te države članice ([3]).

Međutim takve mjere mogu biti opravdane u slučaju uvjeta od javnog interesa utvrđenih člankom 36. UFEU-a ili jednog od nužnih uvjeta koje priznaje Sud Europske unije. U sličnim slučajevima Sud je smatrao da su, iako svaka država članica ima pravo na svom državnom području poduzimati odgovarajuće mjere kako bi osigurala zaštitu javne politike, takve mjere opravdane samo ako se ustanovi da su potrebne kako bi se postigli zakoniti ciljevi od općeg interesa i da se takva zaštita ne može postići sredstvima koja manje ograničavaju slobodno kretanje robe.

([1]) Člankom 34. UFEU-a zabranjuje se državama članicama uvođenje količinskih ograničenja na uvoze iz drugih država članica i sve mjere s istovrsnim učinkom.

([2]) „Sva trgovinska pravila koja su donijele države članice, a koja izravno ili neizravno odnosno stvarno ili potencijalno mogu ometati trgovinu unutar Zajednice smatraju se mjerama koje imaju učinak istovrstan količinskim ograničenjima." Dassonville, predmet 8 — 74, ECR 1974.

([3]) Predmet 155/82, Komisija protiv Belgije [1983] ECR 531, stavak 7.

Komisija poziva časnog zastupnika da objasni primjenjuje li se uvjet iz hrvatskog zakonodavstva na trgovce iz drugih država članica EU-a.

Ukoliko se uvjet odnosi samo na trgovce iz trećih zemalja ([4]), odredbe Ugovora se ne primjenjuju.

([4]) Srbije, Bosne i Hercegovine, Crne Gore.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010055/13
to the Commission
Nikola Vuljanić (GUE/NGL)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Taxation of cash transactions in outdoor contexts

I am consulting you on a question that may, at first, seem to be an internal matter for Croatia. However, it seems to me that its implications concern a number of the European Union's fundamental principles.

To be specific, 2013 saw the introduction of a process for taxing cash transactions in Croatia. This process involves recording all financial cash transactions using fiscal devices that are directly connected to the Croatian Ministry of Finance, or rather to its taxation office. This was a praiseworthy attempt to introduce more discipline to cash transactions, to minimise tax evasion and to reduce the grey economy to an acceptable level. Overall, these measures have met with the general approval, not only of political circles, but of the general public as well. As a result, the sales registered in some activities (for example, in the hospitality industry) have increased threefold, or even more.

However, in early summer, this means of collecting taxation began to apply to cash transactions carried out in open-air fruit and vegetable markets, i.e. at vendor stalls, where the introduction of fiscal devices met with the most opposition, both because the stall owners found it impractical to operate the devices in the open and because they were unable to change their prices during the course of the day (they found it impossible to haggle). The Croatian tax authorities are implementing the regulations strictly and have enforced tax collection in this area, too, despite all the difficulties.

I have been informed by the leaders of the Croatian Markets' Association that open-air markets play host to traditional international events, such as border fairs, religious festivals and other cross-border traditional events. For decades, or even centuries, they have been selling goods (handicrafts, clothing and other goods) from, not only Croatia, but neighbouring countries, too. Some of the countries neighbouring Croatia are members of the EU (Italy, Slovenia, Hungary), while some are not, or are yet to become members (Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro). However, craftsmen and traders from those latter countries cannot sell their goods in Croatia, because they are unable to comply with the Croatian Taxation of Cash Transactions Act (i.e. they are unable to obtain a certificate from the Croatian Finance Agency, the payment processing device or sales receipt pads certified by the Croatian tax authorities) because they are not registered as legal entities in Croatia. Those from EU Member States, on the other hand, are registered in their respective countries.

In my opinion, such rigid law enforcement is not only destroying a beautiful central European tradition, which has brought neighbouring nations together in all the turbulent times they have faced, it is also breaching fundamental EU principles of free trade. I would, therefore, like to know what your position on this matter is and whether you can help in any way in righting this wrong.

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

The Commission understands that there is a requirement that traders be established in Croatia in order to sell the goods in markets. However it is unclear if the requirement is applicable to traders from all the neighbouring countries or only from neighbouring third countries.

As far as the requirement would be applicable to the salesmen from other EU member states Article 34 TFEU ([1]) would be applicable ([2]).

The obligation for an importer to have a place of business in the Member State of destination was declared by the Court to directly negate the free movement of goods within the internal market. It found that by compelling undertakings to incur the cost of establishing a representative in the Member State of import makes it difficult, for certain undertakings, especially small or medium-sized businesses, to enter that Member State's market ([3]).

([1]) Article 34 TFEU prohibits Member States from introducing quantitative restrictions on imports from other Member States and all measures having equivalent effect thereto.
([2]) 'All trading rules enacted by Member States which are capable of hindering, directly or indirectly, actually or potentially, intra-community trade are to be considered as measures having an effect equivalent to quantitative restrictions.' Dassonville, Case 8-74, ECR 1974.
([3]) Case 155/82 Commission v Belgium [1983] ECR 531, para. 7.

However such measures can be justified by one of the public interest requirements established by Article 36 TFEU or by one of the imperative requirements recognised by the Court of Justice of the EU. In similar cases the Court held that although each Member State is entitled to take within its territory appropriate measures in order to ensure the protection of public policy, such measures are justified only if it is established that they are necessary in order to attain legitimate objectives of general interest and that such protection cannot be achieved by means which place less of a restriction on the free movement of goods.

The Commission invites the Honourable member to clarify whether the requirement under the Croatian legislation is applicable to traders from other EU Member States.

As far as the requirement concerns only traders from third countries ([4]) the Treaty provisions are not applicable.

([4]) Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010056/13
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(10 september 2013)

Betreft: Waanzinnige goudomrande regeling ambtenarenpensioenen

Vandaag werd in de publicatie „Binnenlands Bestuur" ([1]) bekend dat dit jaar 340 Europese ambtenaren met vervroegd pensioen gaan. Dat blijkt zelfs een uitermate „vervroegd" pensioen te zijn, namelijk op de leeftijd van 50 jaar, met een pensioen dat kan oplopen tot 9 000 euro per maand.

De Raad verzocht de Unie en haar instellingen op 13 oktober 2010 ([2]) om „onmiddellijk over te gaan tot aanpassing van de wijze waarop zij artikel 9, lid 2, van bijlage VIII bij het ambtenarenstatuut ten uitvoer leggen, en de bepaling enkel toe te passen in een beperkt aantal gevallen, waarin dit duidelijk en op goede gronden in het belang van de dienst is. De Raad verzoekt de Commissie voor medio 2011 een wetgevingsvoorstel in te dienen, ertoe strekkende dat artikel 9, lid 2, van bijlage VIII bij het ambtenarenstatuut ofwel wordt ingetrokken, ofwel met inachtneming van de bovenstaande bezwaren grondig wordt herzien."

In dat kader de volgende vragen:

1. Kan de Commissie aangeven of en op welke wijze concreet gevolg is gegeven aan deze oproep van de Raad?

2. Waarom bestaat deze pensioenregeling in het ambtenarenstatuut dan kennelijk nog steeds?

3. Wanneer bestaat bij uw Commissie de politieke bereidheid om deze waanzinnige goudomrande regeling, mede op aandringen van de nationale lidstaten, per direct stop te zetten?

Antwoord van de heer Šefčovič namens de Commissie
(30 oktober 2013)

De Commissie kan de verspreiding van vaak vertekende informatie over de pensioenrechten van EU-ambtenaren alleen maar betreuren, hoewel zij voortdurend tracht correcte informatie te verstrekken aan media en in antwoord op parlementaire vragen.

Op 13 december 2011 heeft de Commissie een voorstel ingediend bij het Europees Parlement en de Raad tot wijziging van het Statuut, dat overeenkomstig haar aanbevelingen aan de lidstaten in een herziening van het pensioenstelsel voorzag. Het Parlement en de Raad hebben vóór de zomer het voorstel vastgesteld. Het gewijzigde Statuut treedt in werking op 1 januari 2014 en omvat de volgende maatregelen ten aanzien van de pensioenregeling:

— de pensioenleeftijd stijgt tot 66 jaar voor vanaf 2014 aangeworven personeelsleden; het pensioenopbouwpercentage wordt tot 1,8 % per dienstjaar teruggebracht; een nieuw verband tussen levensverwachting en pensioenleeftijd wordt ingesteld;

— voor het huidige personeel stijgt de pensioenleeftijd tot 65 jaar met overgangsregels;

— de regeling voor vervroegde pensionering zonder verlies van pensioenrechten, waarnaar het geachte Parlementslid verwijst, en die in 2004 werd ingevoerd ten behoeve van de werving van personeel uit de nieuwe lidstaten, wordt afgeschaft;

— de minimumleeftijd voor vervroegde pensionering met een verlaging van de verworven rechten wordt verhoogd tot 58 jaar;

— het wordt mogelijk om door te werken tot 70 jaar.

In de periode 2010-2013 heeft de Commissie niet alle juridische mogelijkheden benut die het huidige statuut biedt om vervroegde pensionering zonder verlies van pensioenrechten te verlenen.

([1]) http://m.binnenlandsbestuur.nl/nieuws/eu-ambtenaren-pensioen-vanaf-50-jaar-en-9-000.25049.lynkx#. Ui8DesY_RMU.twitter.
([2]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/nl/10/st14/st14699.nl10.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010056/13
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: Incredibly lucrative pension scheme for EU officials

It was reported today in the publication 'Binnenlands Bestuur' ([1]) that 340 EU officials are taking early retirement this year. This actually turns out to be an extremely 'early' retirement, just at the age of 50, with a pension which may amount to as much as EUR 9 000 per month.

On 13 October 2010 the Council called on the EU and its institutions ([2]) to 'start immediately adapting their practice in the implementation of Article 9(2) of Annex VIII of the Staff Regulations and use this provision in a more restricted number of cases where the interest of the service is clearly and duly justified'. The Council also called upon 'the Commission to put forward by the middle of 2011 a legislative proposal with a view to either repealing Article 9(2) of Annex VIII of the Staff Regulations or reviewing it substantially in order to take account of the above concerns'.

I have the following questions in regard to this:

1. Can the Commission indicate whether and what specific action has been taken in response to this call from the Council?

2. Why does this pension scheme still evidently feature in the Staff Regulations?

3. When will your Commission have the political will to put an immediate stop to this incredibly lucrative scheme, something also insisted upon by Member States?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(30 October 2013)

The Commission can only regret the spread of often biased information about retirement benefits of EU staff, while it has continuously tried to provide correct information to media and in response to parliamentary questions.

On 13 December 2011 the Commission submitted a Proposal to Parliament and Council to modify the Staff Regulations, which included a revamp of the pension scheme in line with its recommendations to the Member States. Parliament and Council adopted the proposal before the summer. The modified Staff Regulations will enter into force on 1 January 2014 and provide, with regard to the pension scheme, the following measures:

the retirement age increases to 66 for staff recruited as of 2014; the accrual rate is cut to 1.8% per year of service; a new link between life expectancy and retirement age is established;

for current staff, the retirement age increases to 65 with transitional rules;

the early retirement scheme without reduction of pension rights, which the Honourable Member refers to and which was introduced in 2004 to facilitate recruitment of staff from the new Member States, is abolished;

the minimum age for early retirement with a reduction of acquired rights is raised to 58;

a possibility to work until 70 is introduced.

In the period 2010 to 2013, the Commission has not made full use of the legal possibilities under the current Staff Regulations to grant early retirement without reduction of pension rights.

([1]) http://m.binnenlandsbestuur.nl/nieuws/eu-ambtenaren-pensioen-vanaf-50-jaar-en-9-000.25049.lynkx#.Ui8DesY_RMU.twitter
([2]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/nl/10/st14/st14699.nl10.pdf

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010057/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(10 września 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – W związku z zajęciem przez islamistów chrześcijańskiego miasta Malula w Syrii

W toku bieżących walk w Syrii, rebelianci, powiązani prawdopodobnie z Al-Kaidą, zajęli starożytne, chrześcijańskie miasto Malula. Z informacji medialnych wynika, że doszło tam do aktów przemocy na mieszkańcach oraz plądrowania ich mienia. Podpalono zabytkowy kościół, a wiernym grożono śmiercią, jeśli nie przejdą na islam.

W obliczu zaistniałej sytuacji zwracam się z prośbą o informacje, czy Unia Europejska rozważa podjęcie działań (dyplomatycznych bądź humanitarnych) w zakresie udzielenia pomocy chrześcijańskim obywatelom Syrii, coraz bardziej narażonym na prześladowania?

Malula pozostaje pod ochroną UNESCO, a jej mieszkańcy reprezentują nieliczną na świecie grupę osób posługujących się starożytnym językiem aramejskim. Czy ze strony europejskiej dyplomacji możliwe jest wystosowanie do uczestników syryjskiego konfliktu publicznego apelu o powstrzymanie się przed niszczeniem zabytków kultury i zastopowanie agresji wobec mniejszości religijnych?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel i Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton
w imieniu Komisji
(25 października 2013 r.)

W szeregu konkluzji Rady do Spraw Zagranicznych UE wielokrotnie wzywała wszystkie strony do powstrzymania się od przemocy na tle religijnym. Potępiła również zniszczenie syryjskiego dziedzictwa kulturowego.

Komisja udziela pomocy tam, gdzie możliwy jest dostęp, wykorzystując wszelkie dostępne środki. Unijna pomoc humanitarna udzielana jest za pośrednictwem agencji ONZ i akredytowanych międzynarodowych organizacji pozarządowych będących na miejscu, które dokładają starań, by dotrzeć do wszystkich potrzebujących, również do chrześcijan i innych syryjskich mniejszości. Akredytacja wymaga, aby partnerzy udzielali pomocy humanitarnej w sposób neutralny i niezależny. Oznacza to, że zobowiązani są służyć wszystkim ludziom bez względu na ich religię, przekonania polityczne lub przynależność etniczną, nie dyskryminując przy tym poszczególnych społeczności czy członków danej społeczności.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010057/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Islamist capture of the Christian town of Maaloula in Syria

The ongoing fighting in Syria has now seen the ancient Christian town of Maaloula captured by rebels who are probably linked to Al-Qaeda. There have been media reports of violence against the town's inhabitants and of plundering. An historic church has been set on fire, and Christians have been threatened with death if they do not convert to Islam.

Given the current situation, I would like to ask whether the European Union is considering taking diplomatic or humanitarian action to help the Christian people of Syria, who are suffering ever greater persecution.

Maaloula has been granted Unesco status and its residents are among the few people in the world who still speak the ancient language of Aramaic. Will it be possible for European diplomats to make a public appeal to the parties in the Syrian conflict to refrain from destroying sites of cultural significance and to stop all acts of aggression against religious minorities?

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

The EU has repeatedly, in a number of conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC), called on all parties to refrain from sectarian violence. It has also condemned the destruction of Syria's cultural heritage.

The Commission channels aid using all available means where there is access on the ground. EU humanitarian funding goes through official UN and accredited international non-governmental organisation (NGO) agencies operating on the ground who do their best to access all people in need, including Christians and other minorities in Syria. Accrediation requires that partners are neutral and independent in the provision of humanitarian assistance, i.e. they must serve all people with no distinction to religion, political affiliation or ethnicity, without discrimination between or within affected populations.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010058/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(10 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Apoios da UE a associações com intervenção na área da parentalidade

A Associação Portuguesa para a Igualdade Parental e Direitos dos Filhos (Apipdf) tem desenvolvido a sua ação em torno de temáticas associadas com a família, crianças/filhos e parentalidade, tendo como objetivos, entre outros: promover a tomada de consciência social e legal quanto à igualdade de direitos e deveres dos pais e mães, nomeadamente quanto à responsabilidade parental; promover as questões da Igualdade Parental e da Parentalidade Positiva; desenvolver todas as ações junto das instituições competentes com vista ao cumprimento dos direitos dos filhos, com atenção na manutenção de ambos os pais como responsáveis e igualmente responsabilizados pelos seus filhos, após a separação do casal.

A Apipdf integra a Plataforma Europeia dos Pais, que, por sua vez, se debruça sobre os problemas da alienação parental, a morosidade dos tribunais e a questão da guarda conjunta.

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que programas e medidas podem apoiar financeiramente a atividade de associações como a Apipdf?

2. Tendo em conta a realização da Conferência «Facing the Crisis of the Family in the Name of the Children: First Comparative Survey on Children Custody in Europe», no próximo dia 23 de outubro, em Estrasburgo, que programas e medidas podem apoiar a participação de um representante da Apipdf ou de membros desta associação na referida Conferência ou noutros eventos similares que venham a ocorrer no futuro?

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

O programa Direitos Fundamentais e Cidadania ([1]) tem vindo a financiar projetos e organizações que pretendem reforçar os direitos da criança numa base regular. De acordo com o programa de trabalho anual de 2013 ([2]) o convite à apresentação de propostas para subvenções de ação para 2013, que será publicado nas próximas semanas ([3]), deve concentrar-se nos direitos da criança como uma das suas prioridades. Existe, em especial, a possibilidade de apoio financeiro para projetos transnacionais que proponham ações tais como módulos de formação sobre uma justiça adaptada às crianças (em conformidade com as orientações do Conselho da Europa sobre uma justiça adaptada às crianças de 2010), destinadas a juristas e outros profissionais que interagem com crianças no contexto de um processo judicial.

Para o período de 2014-2020, as negociações relativas aos dois novos programas ainda não estão concluídas. É do conhecimento do Senhor Deputado que o futuro programa Justiça apoiará a cooperação judiciária e o acesso à justiça, que pode incluir a realização de projetos que abranjam a cooperação judiciária em matéria de divórcio e da custódia parental e em matéria de obrigações alimentares. Além disso, os projetos relativos aos regimes matrimoniais que promovam a eliminação de obstáculos ao bom funcionamento dos processos cíveis transfronteiriços nos Estados-Membros poderiam obter apoio. Além disso, o futuro Programa «Direitos, Igualdade e Cidadania» abordará os direitos da criança.

No entanto, não é possível financiar participações individuais numa conferência ou manifestação semelhante, exceto se tiver lugar no contexto de um projeto ao qual tenha sido anteriormente concedido uma subvenção.

([1]) Decisão 2007/252/CE do Conselho, de 19 de Abril de 2007.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/files/frc_awp_2013_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/fundamental-rights/grants/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010058/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(10 September 2013)

Subject: EU support for parenting associations

The Portuguese Association for Parental Equality and Children's Rights (APIPDF) works in the area of family, childhood and parenting issues. Some of its objectives include: promoting social and legal awareness of equal rights and duties for fathers and mothers, particularly as regards parental responsibility; promoting issues of parental equality and positive parenting; undertaking any action together with the competent institutions to ensure children's rights are respected, focusing on making both parents equally responsible for their children after separation.

The APIPDF is part of the Platform for European Fathers, which focuses on the problems of parental estrangement, lengthy court proceedings and the issue of shared custody.

1. What programmes and measures could provide financial support for the work of associations such as the APIPDF?

2. In view of the conference 'Facing the Crisis of the Family in the Name of the Children. First Comparative Survey on Children Custody in Europe' to be held on 23 October 2013 in Strasbourg, what programmes and measures could help an APIPDF representative or members of that association attend that conference or similar events to be held in the future?

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

The Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Programme ([1]) has been funding projects and organisations aiming to strengthen the rights of the child on a regular basis. According to the 2013 annual work programme ([2]) the call for proposals for action grants for 2013, which will be published in the coming weeks ([3]), shall focus on rights of the child as one of its priorities. In particular, there is a possibility for financial support for transnational projects which propose actions such as training modules on child-friendly justice (in accordance with the 2010 Guidelines on child-friendly justice of the Council of Europe) for legal and other professionals and practitioners who interact with children in the context of judicial proceedings.

For the period 2014-2020, negotiations on the new two programmes are still not finalised. The Honourable Member might be aware that the future Justice Programme will support judicial cooperation and access to justice. This may include projects covering judicial cooperation in divorce and parental custody matters and in maintenance obligations matters. Moreover projects related to matrimonial regimes promoting the elimination of obstacles to the good functioning of cross-border civil proceedings in the Member States could get support. Furthermore, the future Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme will address the rights of the child.

However, the financing of individual attendances at a conference or similar event is not possible, unless it takes place in the context of a project which has previously been awarded a grant.

([1]) Council Decision 2007/252/EC of 19 April 2007.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/files/frc_awp_2013_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/fundamental-rights/grants/index_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-010069/13
à la Commission
Catherine Trautmann (S&D)
(11 septembre 2013)

Objet: Vote de certains binationaux aux élections européennes

L'article 22, paragraphe 2, du traité FUE prévoit que tout citoyen de l'Union résidant dans un État membre dont il n'est pas ressortissant a le droit de vote et d'éligibilité aux élections au Parlement européen dans l'État membre où il réside. La directive 93/109/CE du Conseil du 6 décembre 1993 fixe les modalités de l'exercice de ce vote. Ainsi, son article 4, paragraphe 1, précise que «l'électeur communautaire exerce son droit de vote soit dans l'État membre de résidence, soit dans l'État membre d'origine» et que «nul ne peut voter plus d'une fois lors d'une même élection».

Par ailleurs, certains États européens, à l'instar de la Belgique, ont un système de vote obligatoire assorti à défaut d'une peine d'amende.

En l'état, un citoyen franco-belge résidant en Belgique semble être obligé de voter en Belgique sous peine de se voir infliger une amende, et ce même s'il accomplit son devoir électoral en France.

Afin de garantir le respect de l'esprit de la législation européenne, qui consacre le libre choix de l'électeur communautaire, que préconise la Commission dans le cas de binationaux concernés par ce type d'obligation de vote dans l'un de leurs États membres d'origine mais souhaitant exprimer leur vote dans l'autre?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(24 octobre 2013)

Les principes généraux concernant les élections du Parlement européen, communs à tous les États membres, sont inscrits dans l'acte de 1976 portant élection des représentants au Parlement européen ([1]), qui prévoit entre autres que l'élection se déroule au suffrage universel direct, libre et secret.

L'article 8 de l'acte de 1976 dispose que nul ne peut voter plus d'une fois lors de l'élection des représentants au Parlement européen. Il s'ensuit que les citoyens de l'UE ayant la double nationalité ne peuvent pas voter dans les deux États membres dont ils sont ressortissants.

La directive 93/109/CE ([2]) sur la participation aux élections européennes ne s'applique pas aux citoyens de l'Union ayant la double nationalité qui ont l'intention d'exercer leur droit de vote dans l'un des deux États membres dont ils ont la nationalité. Elle ne concerne que les citoyens de l'UE qui résident dans un État membre dont ils n'ont pas la nationalité.

Toutefois, compte tenu du principe établi par la directive 93/109/CE («liberté de choix des citoyens de l'Union relative à l'État membre dans lequel ils veulent participer aux élections européennes»: soit l'État membre dont ils ont la nationalité, soit l'État membre où ils résident), la Commission estime qu'il convient d'encourager la possibilité pour les citoyens de l'UE ayant la double nationalité de choisir l'État dans lequel ils souhaitent voter.

([1]) JO L 278 du 8.10.1976, p. 5. modifié en dernier lieu par la décision 2002/772/CE, Euratom du 25 juin 2002 et du 23 septembre 2002.
([2]) Directive 93/109/CE du Conseil du 6 décembre 1993 (JO L 329 du 30.12.1993, p. 34).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010069/13
to the Commission
Catherine Trautmann (S&D)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: Voting rights of dual nationals in European elections

Article 22(2) TFEU stipulates that 'every citizen of the Union residing in a Member State of which he is not a national shall have the right to vote and to stand as a candidate in elections to the European Parliament in the Member State in which he resides'. Council Directive 93/109/EC of 6 December 1993 lays down the arrangements for exercising this right. Article 4(1) thereof stipulates that 'Community voters shall exercise their right to vote either in the Member State of residence or in their home Member State. No person may vote more than once at the same election.'

Voting is compulsory in some Member States, such as Belgium, where anyone who fails to vote runs the risk of receiving a fine.

For example, French-Belgian dual nationals living in Belgium run the risk of being fined if they do not comply with the obligation to vote in Belgium, even if they have exercised the right to vote in France.

With a view to keeping to the spirit of EC law, which allows EU voters to choose where to vote, what does the Commission think should be done in cases where dual nationals are under an obligation to vote in one of the Member States of which they are a national, but wish to vote in the other?

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

General principles concerning the European Parliament elections, common to all Member States, are laid down in the 1976 Act concerning the election of the members of the European Parliament ([1]) which provides, e.g. for elections to be held by direct universal suffrage, freely and in secret.

According to Article 8 of the 1976 Act, no one may vote more than once in any election of representatives to the European Parliament. Therefore, it is clear the EU citizens with a dual nationality cannot vote in both Member States of which they are national.

Directive 93/109/EC ([2]) on participation in the European elections does not apply to EU citizens with a dual nationality who intend to exercise this right in one of the Member States of which they are nationals. It solely concerns the cases of EU citizens who reside in another Member State without having its nationality.

However, having regard to the principle established by Directive 93/109/EC ('the freedom of citizens of the Union to choose the Member State in which to take part in European elections — either in the Member State of nationality or in the Member State of residence') the Commission considers that the possibility for EU voters with a dual nationality to choose where to vote should be encouraged.

([1]) OJ L 278, 8.10.1976, p. 5. last amended by Decision 2002/772/EC, Euratom of 25.6 and 23.9 2002.
([2]) Council Directive 93/109/EC of 6 December 1993 (OJ L 329, 30.12.1993, p. 34).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010070/13
a la Comisión
Eva Ortiz Vilella (PPE), Pilar Ayuso (PPE), María Auxiliadora Correa Zamora (PPE), Salvador Garriga Polledo (PPE), Esther Herranz García (PPE), Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE) y Pablo Zalba Bidegain (PPE)
(11 de septiembre de 2013)

Asunto: Investigación china contra los vinos europeos

La investigación antidumping y anti ayudas emprendida por China contra los vinos europeos podría desembocar en un incremento de los aranceles aplicados por ese país a las exportaciones de la Unión Europea en el caso de que el resultado de esa investigación dé la razón a los productores chinos, que se quejan de una supuesta competencia desleal por parte de los vinos comunitarios. Francia y España son los principales exportadores de vino a China, por lo que ambos se encuentran en el principal punto de mira de este país.

Los productores europeos consideran injustificada la apertura de esa investigación, pues aseguran que las exportaciones europeas de ninguna forma practican dumping en el mercado chino y que las ayudas de la UE no dan lugar a distorsiones del comercio.

¿Qué argumentos puede suministrar la Comisión en defensa de las ayudas otorgadas por la UE a los productores vitivinícolas europeos? ¿Para cuándo se espera una decisión final por parte de China? ¿Está aportando la Comisión alguna asistencia jurídica a las empresas afectadas por la investigación? ¿Qué acciones podría emprender la Comisión en el caso de que China impusiera nuevos aranceles a los envíos europeos?

Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de octubre de 2013)

Siempre que se respeten determinados requisitos, las normas de la Organización Mundial del Comercio (OMC) permiten a China abrir una investigación de defensa comercial a fin de comprobar si las importaciones de vino de la UE son objeto de dumping o reciben subvenciones y causan perjuicio al sector vitivinícola chino.

La Comisión participa activamente en las investigaciones y, en cooperación con los Estados miembros y con la asociación que agrupa a las organizaciones del sector vitivinícola de la UE, está preparando actualmente las respuestas a los cuestionarios sobre los aspectos relativos a las subvenciones y el presunto perjuicio causado por las importaciones de la UE al sector vitivinícola chino. El sector vitivinícola de la UE también ha de desempeñar un papel activo, ya que debe cooperar para que el resultado de la investigación no repercuta en detrimento suyo.

Según la legislación china, la determinación final de la investigación ha de producirse en un plazo de doce meses a partir de su inicio, período que puede ampliarse a 18 meses en circunstancias excepcionales. Por consiguiente, cabe esperar la adopción de una decisión final por parte de China a finales de diciembre de 2014 a más tardar.

Desde el comienzo de la investigación, la Comisión ha apoyado proactivamente a las partes interesadas del sector vitivinícola y a los Estados miembros, prestándoles asistencia jurídica en cada fase del caso. En este contexto, la Comisión ha estado también en contacto frecuente, a través de la Delegación de la UE en China, con las autoridades chinas para apoyar el ejercicio de los derechos de defensa de los exportadores de la UE y garantizar que se aplican estrictamente las normas pertinentes de la OMC, incluidas las relativas a la transparencia.

La Comisión seguirá analizando los argumentos subyacentes a estas investigaciones y el desarrollo de las mismas. En caso de que dicho análisis demuestre que China ha impuesto alguna medida que suponga el quebrantamiento de las normas de la OMC y vaya en detrimento de los exportadores de vino de la UE, la Comisión no dudará en adoptar las medidas necesarias.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010070/13
to the Commission
Eva Ortiz Vilella (PPE), Pilar Ayuso (PPE), María Auxiliadora Correa Zamora (PPE), Salvador Garriga Polledo (PPE), Esther Herranz García (PPE), Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE) and Pablo Zalba Bidegain (PPE)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: Chinese investigation into European wines

China's anti-dumping and anti-subsidy investigation into European wines could lead to an increase in Chinese tariffs on EU exports if it finds in favour of Chinese producers, who are complaining of alleged unfair competition from EU wines. France and Spain are the primary focus of the investigation as they are the main wine exporters to China.

European producers believe that this investigation is unjustified because they claim that European exports are in no way being dumped on to the Chinese market and that EU subsidies do not cause trade distortions.

What arguments can the Commission put forward in defence of EU subsidies for European wine producers? When can a final decision by China be expected? Is the Commission providing any legal assistance to businesses affected by the investigation? What actions could the Commission take if China were to impose new tariffs on European exports?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(24 October 2013)

Subject to specific requirements, World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules allow China to initiate a trade defence investigation in order to verify whether EU wine imports are dumped and/or subsidised and cause injury to the Chinese wine sector.

The Commission is actively involved in the investigations and, in cooperation with the Member States and the EU wine association, is currently preparing the replies to the questionnaires concerning the subsidy aspects and the alleged injury caused by EU imports to the Chinese wine industry. The EU wine industry has also an active role to play as it should cooperate in order not to undermine the outcome of the investigation to its disadvantage.

According to the Chinese law, the final determination of the investigation shall be made within 12 months from its initiation. It can be extended to 18 months in exceptional circumstances. Therefore, an adoption of a final decision by China can be expected by the end of December 2014 at the latest.

Since the beginning of the investigation the Commission has been actively providing the wine industry stakeholders and the Member States with legal assistance at each stage of the case. In this context, the Commission has been also in frequent contact, through the EU Delegation in China, with the Chinese authorities in order to support the EU exporters' rights of defence and to ensure that the relevant WTO rules, including on transparency, are strictly applied.

The Commission will continue to analyse the merits and development of these investigations. Should that analysis show that measures, if any, were imposed by China in breach of the WTO rules to the detriment of the EU wine exporters, the Commission will not hesitate to take the necessary actions.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010071/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(11 september 2013)

Betreft: Intrekking van het voorstel voor een belasting op financiële transacties

Uit berichtgeving van Reuters van 10 september 2013 ([1]) blijkt dat de Juridische Dienst van de EU op 6 september 2013 een juridisch advies heeft uitgebracht, waarin wordt gesteld dat het voorstel voor een belasting op financiële transacties (FTT)

— „de bevoegdheden van de lidstaten op het gebied van belastingheffing onder internationaal gewoonterecht overstijgt";

— in strijd is met het EU-Verdrag, „omdat het een inbreuk maakt op de belastingbevoegdheden van niet-deelnemende lidstaten";

— alsmede „discriminerend is en waarschijnlijk leidt tot concurrentieverstoring ten nadele van niet-deelnemende lidstaten", en een „belemmering" vormt voor het vrije verkeer van kapitaal en diensten binnen de eengemaakte markt.

Ik heb vier schriftelijke vragen over het voorstel voor een FTT bij de Commissie ingediend. In het antwoord op vraag E-002514/2013, dat ik ontving op 22 april 2013, stelde de Commissie dat zij voorziet in „een ontwerp voor een belastingstelsel dat […] het internationale publiekrecht, en in het bijzonder de territorialiteitsbeginselen, respecteert", en dat „in het voorstel […] het Verdrag betreffende de Europese Unie en het Verdrag betreffende de werking van de Europese Unie in acht [worden] genomen. […] Het [zou] in het bijzonder de werking van de eengemaakte markt moeten verbeteren […] [die] veeleer verbeterd [zou] worden dan dat er afbreuk aan wordt gedaan".

In het antwoord op vraag E-005510/2013, dat ik ontving op 1 juli 2013, bevestigde de Commissie dat haar „effectbeoordeling […] toont dat noch deelnemende, noch niet-deelnemende lidstaten negatieve macro-economische gevolgen zullen ondervinden van de invoering van een gemeenschappelijk FTT-stelsel".

In het antwoord op vraag E-005894/2013, dat ik ontving op 11 juli 2013, stelde de Commissie dat zij „niet voornemens [is] zich opnieuw over haar voorstel te buigen", omdat „in de desbetreffende effectbeoordelingen […] tot de algemene conclusie [werd] gekomen dat […] er geen bewijs van verstoring van de financiële markten is ten gevolge van de uitvoering van de voorgestelde FTT" en dat „de Commissie en de Raad [hebben] geoordeeld dat de nauwere samenwerking op het gebied van de FTT in overeenstemming is met artikel 326 VWEU".

In het antwoord op vraag E-006451/2013, dat ik ontving op 1 augustus 2013, verklaarde de Commissie „alle beschikbare informatie [te hebben] gebruikt en een volwaardige effectbeoordeling [te hebben] uitgevoerd […] [die] grotendeels haar geldigheid behoudt".

Kan de Commissie in het licht hiervan de volgende vragen beantwoorden:

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van het advies van de Juridische Dienst van de Raad van de Europese Unie?

2. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie dit juridische advies?

3. Is de Commissie van mening dat haar argumenten vóór de FTT nog steeds kunnen worden verdedigd?

4. Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat zij het voorstel heeft ingediend zonder het goed en op passende wijze te hebben voorbereid?

5. Welke maatregelen is de Commissie van plan te nemen? Zal zij een nauwkeuriger effectbeoordeling uitvoeren? Zal zij zich opnieuw over het voorstel buigen of het voorstel intrekken?

Antwoord van de heer Šemeta namens de Commissie
(25 oktober 2013)

1. en 2. De Commissie heeft inderdaad kennisgenomen van het advies van de juridische dienst van de Raad.

3. Ja.

([1]) http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/09/10/uk-eu-transactiontax-exclusive-idUKBRE9890JG20130910.

4. De Commissie heeft zorgvuldig alle economische en juridische aspecten van haar voorstel ([2]) geëvalueerd.

5. De Commissie zal constructief de onderhandelingen van de Raad opvolgen en ondersteunen met het oog op een tijdige vaststelling van de FTT door de deelnemende lidstaten.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/swd_2013_28_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010071/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: Bringing the curtain down on the financial transaction tax proposal

On 10 September 2013 Reuters reported ([1]) that the EU legal service submitted a legal opinion on 6 September 2013 according to which the proposal for a financial transaction tax (FTT)

— 'exceeds Member States' jurisdiction for taxation under the norms of international customary law';

— is not compatible with the EU Treaty 'as it infringes upon the taxing competences of non-participating Member States';

— would also be 'discriminatory and likely to lead to distortion of competition to the detriment of non-participating Member States', as well as an 'obstacle' to the free movement of capital and services within the Single Market.

I have tabled four written questions to the Commission on the proposal for a FTT. In its reply to Question E-002514/2013, which I received on 22 April 2013, the Commission argued that it 'provides for a tax design which […] [respects] international public law and in particular territoriality principles' and that 'the proposal respects the Treaties on European Union and on the Functioning of the European Union. In particular, it would improve the functioning of the Single Market […] [which] would be improved rather than undermined'.

In its reply to Question E-005510/2013, which I received on 1 July 2013, the Commission affirms that its 'impact assessment […] shows that neither participating nor non-participating Member States should suffer a negative macroeconomic effect from the establishing of a common system of FTT'.

In its reply to Question E-005894/2013, which I received on 11 July 2013, the Commission stated to have 'no intention to re-table its proposal' since 'in the relevant impact assessments [it] came to the general conclusion that […] there is no evidence of malfunction of the financial markets as a consequence of the implementation of the proposed FTT' and that 'both the Commission and the Council have assessed that the enhanced cooperation in the area of FTT complies with Article 326 TFEU'.

In its reply to Question E-006451/2013, which I received on 1 August 2013, the Commission declared to have 'used all information available and carried out a fully-fledged impact assessment […] which still remains largely valid'.

In the light of the above:

1. Is the Commission aware of the opinion submitted by the legal service of the Council of the European Union?

2. How does the Commission judge this legal opinion?

3. Does the Commission think its arguments in favour of the FTT can still be pursued?

4. Does the Commission agree it submitted the proposal without having it properly and accurately evaluated?

5. What action does the Commission plan to take? Will it perform a more accurate impact assessment? Will it re-table the proposal or withdraw it?

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

1 and 2. The Commission has indeed taken note of the opinion of the Legal Service of the Council.

3. Yes.

([1]) http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/09/10/uk-eu-transactiontax-exclusive-idUKBRE9890JG20130910

4. The Commission has carefully evaluated all the economic and legal aspects of its proposal ([2]).

5. The Commission will constructively follow and support Council negotiations with a view to the timely adoption of the FTT by the participating Member States.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/swd_2013_28_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010073/13
alla Commissione
Franco Bonanini (NI)
(11 settembre 2013)

Oggetto: Utilizzo improprio della denominazione «Cinque Terre»

Il giorno 22 febbraio 2013 si è formalmente costituita in Piemonte un'unione di comuni denominata «Cinque Terre del Monferrato» che riunisce i comuni di Olivola, Ozzano Monferrato, Sala Monferrato, Terruggia e Treville.

La nuova unione di comuni piemontesi ha parzialmente ripreso la denominazione storica di una tra le più conosciute zone d'Italia, le Cinque Terre, patrimonio mondiale dell'umanità, sede di un parco nazionale e di un'area marina protetta e meta di flussi intensissimi di turismo nazionale ed internazionale nonché luogo di produzione di due vini a denominazione di origine controllata: il «Cinque terre» e il «Cinque Terre Sciacchetrà».

Alla luce di quanto sopra, non ritiene la Commissione

1. che l'utilizzo del nome «Cinque Terre» da parte della citata unione di comuni sia da considerarsi fuorviante e ingannevole,

2. che l'utilizzo strumentale di tale denominazione possa generare in futuro confusione fra i consumatori,

3. che l'utilizzo di indicazioni geografiche fuorvianti e un uso improprio di denominazioni di origine rappresentino una pratica sleale e una minaccia anche per quanto concerne la difesa dei marchi, delle indicazioni geografiche e delle denominazioni di origine controllate?

4. Quali azioni intende eventualmente intraprendere a tal proposito?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloș a nome della Commissione
(23 ottobre 2013)

La Commissione non è a conoscenza della costituzione in Piemonte di un'unione di comuni denominata «Cinque Terre del Monferrato».

La denominazione di origine controllata «Cinque Terre»/«Cinque Terre Sciacchetrà» (PDO-IT-A0352) non interferisce con la costituzione di un'unità amministrativa ma rimane protetta ai sensi della normativa dell'UE.

Tale denominazione deve essere tutelata dalle competenti autorità italiane che dovranno accertare se l'utilizzo della dicitura «Cinque Terre del Monferrato» viola la tutela di cui beneficia la denominazione di origine controllata del vino «Cinque Terre»/«Cinque Terre Sciacchetrà».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010073/13
to the Commission
Franco Bonanini (NI)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: Misuse of 'Cinque Terre' designation

On 22 February 2013 a joint municipality was formally created in Piedmont called 'Cinque Terre del Monferrato', bringing together the municipalities of Olivola, Ozzano Monferrato, Sala Monferrato, Terruggia and Treville.

This new joint municipality in Piedmont has partly adopted the historical designation of one of the best known areas in Italy, Cinque Terre, a world heritage site, a national park location and a protected marine area, as well as a destination for very large numbers of tourists from home and abroad, not to mention a place of production for two wines with protected designation of origin: Cinque Terre and Cinque Terre Sciacchetrà.

In light of the above, does the Commission not believe that

1. The use of the name 'Cinque Terre' by the joint municipality mentioned above should be considered misleading and deceptive?

2. The actual use of this designation may cause confusion in the future among consumers?

3. The use of misleading geographical indications and the misuse of designations of origin are an unfair practice and also pose a threat when it comes to protecting marks, geographical indications and protected designations of origin?

4. What actions does it possibly intend to take in this regard?

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

The Commission is not aware of the creation of a joint municipality called 'Cinque Terre del Montferrato' in Piedmont.

While the protection related to the wine protected designation of origin 'Cinque Terre' or 'Cinque Terre Sciacchetrà' (PDO-IT-A0352) does not interfere with the creation of an administrative unit, this designation of origin is still protected, according to EC law.

The enforcement of that protection shall be ensured by the competent authorities of Italy which shall verify whether the use of the name 'Cinque Terre del Montferrato' infringes the protection granted to the wine protected designation of origin 'Cinque Terre' or 'Cinque Terre Sciacchetrà'.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010074/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(11 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Diminuição do financiamento destinado à Ajuda Alimentar na UE

No final de 2013 chega ao fim o período de vigência do Programa Comunitário de Ajuda Alimentar a Carenciados (PCAAC). Este Programa será substituído pelo Fundo de Auxílio Europeu às Pessoas Mais Carenciadas.

Aumentam na Europa as situações de carência alimentar e de fome, fruto das políticas que têm vindo a ser implementadas, em especial nos países que são alvo de intervenções UE-FMI. De acordo com notícias recentes, a passagem do PCAAC para o Fundo de Auxílio Europeu às Pessoas Mais Carenciadas poderá acarretar uma quebra das verbas disponíveis, que pode chegar aos 40 ou 50 por cento (no caso de Portugal, referido na imprensa portuguesa).

Solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Qual a dotação global do PCAAC para o período de vigência de sete anos (2007-2013)?

2. Qual a dotação recebida por Portugal ou por instituições portuguesas neste período?

3. Qual a dotação global prevista para o Fundo de Auxílio Europeu às Pessoas Mais Carenciadas no período de sete anos da sua vigência (2014-2020)?

4. Qual a dotação prevista para Portugal ou para instituições portuguesas neste período?

5. Qual a diferença de âmbito entre o PCAAC e o novo Fundo?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(5 de novembro de 2013)

O orçamento total do programa europeu de ajuda às pessoas mais carenciadas (PEAC) ascendeu a 3,088 mil milhões de euros entre 2007 e 2013, tendo as dotações de Portugal atingido os 134,7 milhões de euros.

O orçamento do fundo de auxílio europeu às pessoas mais carenciadas (FAEPC) situar-se-á entre 2,5 e 3,5 mil milhões de euros, estando a mobilização no montante de mil milhões suplementares prevista numa base voluntária. A determinação dessas dotações globais é o objeto do artigo 6.° do projeto de regulamento. A Comissão não pode, pois, comunicar o montante por Estado-Membro antes da adoção do regulamento pelos colegisladores.

De acordo com a proposta da Comissão, o FAEPC deverá apoiar os dispositivos nacionais que prestam uma assistência não financeira aos mais carenciados, em matéria de ajuda alimentar, como é o caso do instrumento atual, mas também de bens essenciais destinados a sem-abrigo ou a crianças em situações de extrema pobreza. Cada Estado-Membro terá, portanto, a possibilidade de adaptar a assistência prestada, privilegiando uma das formas de assistência ou combinando-as, a fim de melhor responder às situações nacionais.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010074/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: Reduced funding for food aid in the EU

The European food aid programme for the most deprived persons (PEAD) draws to a close at the end of 2013. This Programme will be replaced by the Fund for European aid to the most deprived (FEAD).

Food shortages and hunger are on the increase in Europe, as a result of the policies, particularly in countries receiving EU-IMF bailouts, that have been implemented. Recent reports suggest that the transition from the PEAD to the FEAD could lead to a drop in available funds of up to 40% or 50% (in the case of Portugal, according to the Portuguese press).

1. What was the PEAD's overall budget for the seven-year programme (2007-2013)?

2. How much did Portugal or Portuguese institutions receive during this period?

3. What is the FEAD's expected overall budget for the upcoming seven-year programme (2014-2020)?

4. How much is Portugal or are Portuguese institutions expected to receive during this period?

5. What is the difference in scope between the PEAD and the FEAD?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(5 novembre 2013)

Le budget total du Programme Européen d'Aide aux plus Démunies (PEAD) était 3,088 milliards d'euros entre 2007 et 2013, dont l'allocation du Portugal a atteint 134,7 millions d'euros.

Le budget du Fonds européen d'aide aux plus démunis (FEAD) se situera entre 2,5 et 3,5 milliards d'euros, la mobilisation du milliard supplémentaire étant prévue sur une base volontaire. La détermination de l'allocation de ces ressources globales est l'objet de l'article 6 du projet de règlement. La Commission n'est donc pas en mesure de communiquer le montant par État membre avant l'adoption du règlement par les co-législateurs.

Au terme de la proposition de la Commission, le FEAD soutiendrait les dispositifs nationaux qui fournissent une assistance non-financière aux plus pauvres, aide alimentaire, comme cela est le cas de l'instrument actuel mais aussi des biens de consommation de base pour les personnes sans-abris ou les enfants confrontés à la très grande pauvreté. Chaque État membre aurait alors le loisir d'adapter l'assistance en privilégiant une des formes d'assistance ou en les combinant, afin de répondre au mieux aux situations nationales.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010075/13
au Conseil
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 septembre 2013)

Objet: Communauté européenne de l'énergie

Le Parlement a renouvelé cette semaine son soutien à la création d'une communauté européenne de l'énergie entre les États membres de l'Union européenne.

Le Conseil va-t-il, comme le lui demande officiellement le Parlement, faire rapport sur l'état d'avancement de celle-ci?

Réponse
(18 novembre 2013)

La politique énergétique a été débattue à intervalles réguliers au sein tant du Conseil que du Conseil européen. Dans ses conclusions du 22 mai 2013, le Conseil européen a indiqué qu'il convenait d'achever de toute urgence un marché intérieur de l'énergie interconnecté et pleinement opérationnel, de faciliter les investissements nécessaires dans l'énergie, de diversifier l'approvisionnement de l'Europe et d'accroître l'efficacité énergétique. Il a en particulier demandé que l'on s'attache à mettre en œuvre de manière effective et cohérente le troisième «paquet énergie» d'ici 2014, que l'on poursuive les efforts déployés dans le domaine de la R&D énergétique et de la technologie, que des progrès soient réalisés en matière de méthodes de financement innovantes, y compris pour l'efficacité énergétique, et que l'on réduise la dépendance énergétique de l'UE vis-à-vis de l'extérieur.

Dans ses conclusions du 7 juin 2013, le Conseil a confirmé toute l'importance qu'il attache à la mise en œuvre correcte et urgente de la législation relative au marché intérieur de l'énergie et au respect des échéances de 2014 et 2015 fixées par le Conseil européen le 4 février 2011. Ces conclusions comprennent des lignes directrices sur la manière de contribuer à la transition vers le marché intérieur de l'énergie de demain. Le Conseil a en outre examiné la communication de la Commission intitulée «Technologies et innovation énergétiques». Au cours de ce débat, les ministres se sont prononcés en faveur d'une accélération de l'innovation dans les technologies de pointe à faible émission de carbone et la mise au point de solutions novatrices, ainsi que de l'introduction des nouvelles technologies sur le marché. Ils ont en outre apporté leur appui à l'élaboration d'une feuille de route intégrée et d'un plan d'action, comme les décrit la communication, en particulier via une coordination renforcée des programmes nationaux de recherche et d'innovation dans le domaine de l'énergie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010075/13
to the Council
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: European Energy Community

This week Parliament renewed its support for the creation of a European Energy Community between the Member States.

Is the Council going to report on the progress towards its creation, as officially requested by Parliament?

Reply
(18 November 2013)

Energy policy has been regularly discussed within both the Council and European Council. In its conclusions of 22 May 2013 the European Council expressed support for the urgent completion of a fully functioning and interconnected internal energy market, facilitation of the required investment in energy, diversification of Europe's energy supply and enhanced energy efficiency. In particular, it called for effective and consistent implementation of the third 'energy package' by 2014, continued efforts on energy research, development and technology, progress on innovative financing methods, including for energy efficiency and reducing EU's external energy dependency.

In its conclusions of 7 June 2013 the Council confirmed its full commitment to the correct and urgent implementation of the internal energy market legislation and to meeting the 2014 and 2015 deadlines set by the European Council on 4 February 2011. These conclusions include guidelines on how to help achieve the transition to the internal energy market of the future. The Council also debated the Commission communication on energy technologies and innovation. During that debate ministers expressed support for accelerating innovation in cutting-edge low-carbon technologies and innovative solutions, and for speeding up the introduction of new technologies to the market. They also expressed support for the development of an integrated roadmap and an action plan, as described in the communication, in particular by enhanced coordination of national energy research and innovation programmes.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010076/13
au Conseil
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 septembre 2013)

Objet: Financement «Horizon 2020»

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

Quelle est la réponse du Conseil?

Réponse
(11 novembre 2013)

La proposition de la Commission relative au programme-cadre pour la recherche et l'innovation Horizon 2020 combine les activités relevant du septième programme-cadre pour la recherche et le développement technologique avec les mesures de soutien à l'innovation incluses précédemment dans le programme pour l'innovation et la compétitivité (CIP). Horizon 2020 englobera en outre le financement de l'Institut européen d'innovation et de technologie (EIT). Le Parlement et le Conseil ont tous deux préservé l'essentiel des activités de recherche et d'innovation que prévoyait la proposition de la Commission. Ils sont parvenus à un accord en juin sur le paquet Horizon 2020 après neuf trilogues et plusieurs réunions techniques.

Le Conseil a toujours attaché une importance particulière au budget consacré à Horizon 2020. Les négociations qui ont eu lieu entre le Conseil et le Parlement sur la ventilation budgétaire d'Horizon 2020 ont été menées de manière approfondie. En attendant l'accord sur le cadre financier pluriannuel, l'accord entre les institutions sur Horizon 2020 était fondé sur des pourcentages plutôt que sur des chiffres absolus.

Le chiffre budgétaire global pour Horizon 2020 sera nettement plus élevé que celui de son prédécesseur, le septième programme-cadre. Il prévoira une augmentation d'environ un tiers du budget d'Horizon 2020 par rapport au budget du septième programme-cadre pour la période de programmation 2007-2013. Compte tenu des difficultés contextuelles que rencontrent les économies européennes, ainsi que des réductions budgétaires apportées à d'autres rubriques du cadre financier pluriannuel, une telle augmentation montre clairement que le Conseil reconnaît l'importance que revêt l'initiative Horizon 2020 et l'intérêt qu'elle présente pour assurer la croissance et l'emploi en Europe. En outre, un effet de levier considérable peut être obtenu avec certaines des mesures proposées dans le cadre du programme Horizon 2020, comme les instruments financiers dotés d'un effet multiplicateur majeur, un instrument réservé aux PME consacrant plus de 3 milliards d'euros aux petites et moyennes entreprises, ou les partenariats public-privé et public-public privilégiant des domaines et secteurs clés, qui encourageront de nouveaux investissements et feront en sorte que le budget consacré à la recherche et à l'innovation soit encore plus substantiel.

En outre, la recherche et l'innovation, ainsi que le programme Horizon 2020, ont bénéficié d'un soutien politique de haut niveau. Le Conseil européen de mars 2012 a reconnu l'importance que revêtent les politiques de recherche et d'innovation en tant que moteurs de la croissance et de l'emploi. Le Conseil européen thématique sur l'innovation qui aura lieu à la fin octobre 2013 devrait réaffirmer son soutien aux politiques de recherche et d'innovation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010076/13
to the Council
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: Horizon 2020 funding

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

What is the Council's response?

Reply
(11 November 2013)

The Commission proposal for the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme combined the activities under the current Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7) with the innovation support measures previously included in the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP). Moreover, Horizon 2020 will also include the financing for the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT). Both the Parliament and the Council have preserved the essence of research and innovation that was in the Commission proposal. They reached an agreement in June on the Horizon 2020 package after nine trilogues and several technical meetings.

The Council has always attached particular importance to the budget devoted to Horizon 2020. The negotiations between the Council and the Parliament on the Horizon 2020 budget breakdown were extensive. Pending the agreement on the Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MFF), the Horizon 2020 agreement between the institutions was based on percentage figures rather than on absolute numbers.

The overall budget figure for Horizon 2020 will be substantially higher than that of its predecessor, FP7. This will include an increase of around one third of the budget for Horizon 2020 compared to the FP7 budget for the 2007-2013 programming period. Taking into account the contextual difficulties faced by European economies, as well as the budget reductions to other MFF headings, such an increase clearly demonstrates that the Council recognises the importance of the Horizon 2020 initiative and its relevance to delivering growth and jobs in Europe. Moreover, a significant leverage effect can be achieved with some of the proposed measures under the Horizon 2020 programme, such as the financial instruments with a major multiplier effect, a dedicated SME instrument devoting more than EUR 3 billion to SMEs, or public-private and public-public partnerships prioritising key areas and sectors, which will encourage additional investment and make the budget devoted to research and innovation activities even more substantial.

Additionally, high-level political support has been received for research and innovation as well as for the Horizon 2020 programme. The European Council, in March 2012, recognised the importance of research and innovation policies as drivers for growth and jobs. Renewed support for research and innovation policies is also to be expected from the thematic European Council on innovation that will take place at the end of October 2013.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010080/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 septembre 2013)

Objet: Règles relatives aux aides d'État

La Commission compte-t-elle considérer la mobilisation des fonds structurels et d'investissement européens en faveur de l'efficacité énergétique comme une possibilité d'investissement ayant un effet de levier important, et non comme une dépense?

La Commission prévoit-elle de revoir les règles relatives aux aides d'État pour permettre d'accroître le financement national de l'efficacité énergétique, parallèlement aux investissements européens.

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

La Commission est consciente de l'importance des mesures d'efficacité énergétique qui peuvent également être soutenues par les Fonds structurels et d'investissement européens (fonds ESI).

La Commission a proposé de développer et de renforcer davantage le recours aux instruments financiers lors de la prochaine période de programmation, ceux-ci représentant une solution plus durable et rentable pour compléter le financement traditionnel basé sur les subventions.

La plupart des investissements liés au climat devraient être réalisés par le secteur privé. Les États membres et les régions devraient veiller à ce que les financements publics viennent s'ajouter aux investissements privés et les stimulent sans les évincer. De manière générale, les investissements en matière d'efficacité énergétique permettront de réaliser des économies. La possibilité de créer de la valeur pour les économies d'énergie à travers des mécanismes de marché (obligations d'économie d'énergie, entreprises de services énergétiques, etc.) devrait être examinée avant de recourir au financement public.

Dans ce contexte, la possibilité de recourir à des instruments financiers relevant de fonds ESI devrait être envisagée si l'évaluation ex ante obligatoire a établi que le marché est défaillant ou que la situation d'investissement n'est pas optimale et que les investissements sont financièrement viables mais que les sources de financement sur le marché ne sont pas suffisantes. Pour autant que ces mesures constituent des aides d'État, les lignes directrices concernant les aides à l'environnement adoptées en 2008 autorisent déjà des aides en faveur d'investissements dans des mesures visant à renforcer l'efficacité énergétique.

La révision des lignes directrices concernant les aides d'État à la protection de l'environnement actuellement en cours offre l'occasion de réexaminer ces règles et de les mettre en conformité avec la directive relative à l'efficacité énergétique 2012/27/UE, le cas échéant. Un projet de lignes directrices fera l'objet d'une consultation publique avant que la Commission n'arrête une position définitive.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010080/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: Rules on state aid

Does the Commission intend to consider the mobilisation of European Structural and Investment Funds for energy efficiency as an investment opportunity with a high leverage effect and not as expenditure?

Does the Commission plan to revise the rules on state aid further in order to allow greater national funding for energy efficiency alongside European investments?

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

The Commission is aware of the importance of energy efficiency measures which may also be supported by European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds).

The Commission has proposed to further expand and strengthen the use of financial instruments in the next programming period as a more efficient and sustainable alternative to complement traditional grant-based financing.

The bulk of climate-related investment should be made by the private sector. Member States and regions should ensure that public funding complements private investment, leveraging it, and not crowding it out. In general, energy efficiency investments will entail a cost-savings stream. The option of creating value for energy savings through market mechanisms (energy saving obligations, energy service companies, etc.) should be considered before public funding.

Against this background, the possibility to use of financial instruments with ESI Funds contribution should be considered if the mandatory *ex-ante* assessment has established an evidence of market failure or a sub-optimal investment situation and investments are expected to be financially viable and do not give rise to sufficient funding from market sources. Insofar as such measures constitute state aid, the Environmental Aid Guidelines adopted in 2008 already allow aid for investments in energy efficiency measures.

The revision of the Environmental Aid Guidelines which is currently ongoing is an opportunity to review these rules and to align with the Energy Efficiency Directive 2012/27/EU where necessary. A draft of the guidelines will be submitted to public consultation before the Commission takes a final view.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010081/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 septembre 2013)

Objet: Logements sociaux conformes aux normes énergetiques

Que compte faire la Commission pour améliorer la sécurité juridique en ce qui concerne les règles relatives aux aides d'État à finalité régionale applicables à la construction de logements sociaux conformes aux normes d'efficacité énergétique et à l'investissement dans la construction et les énergies durables?

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

Le nouveau paquet relatif aux aides d'État en faveur des SIEG de 2012, publié au Journal officiel et sur l'internet, fournit une plus grande sécurité juridique dans le domaine des services d'intérêt économique général (SIEG), notamment pour ce qui est des logements sociaux, en précisant les principes essentiels régissant les aides d'État et en instaurant des règles plus simples pour les SIEG. Ces règles respectent le principe établi par les juridictions européennes selon lequel il incombe aux États membres de définir les SIEG, la Commission se limitant à vérifier les erreurs manifestes dans leur définition. Ces règles prévoient que les aides d'État en faveur des SIEG sociaux, notamment des logements sociaux, sont généralement compatibles avec le marché intérieur et ne sont pas soumises à l'obligation de notification à la Commission, pour autant qu'elles remplissent les conditions énoncées dans la décision 2012/21/UE de la Commission. À cet égard, il est concevable que les États membres intègrent des considérations liées à l'efficacité énergétique dans les obligations relatives aux logements sociaux, à condition que cela soit justifié par des objectifs sociaux.

En outre, des aides d'État spécifiques peuvent être jugées compatibles avec le marché intérieur sur la base de lignes directrices concernant les aides d'État ou directement sur la base du traité (TFUE). Par sa décision SA.34611, la Commission a, par exemple, autorisé une aide d'État visant à améliorer l'efficacité énergétique des bâtiments. En outre, les lignes directrices concernant les aides d'État à la protection de l'environnement contiennent des conditions de compatibilité expresses pour les mesures d'économie d'énergie. Ces lignes directrices sont en cours de révision dans le cadre du processus de modernisation du contrôle des aides d'État visant, entre autres, à améliorer la sécurité juridique.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010081/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: Social housing that complies with energy standards

What does the Commission plan to do to improve legal certainty with regard to regional state aid rules for the construction of social housing that complies with energy efficiency standards and investment in sustainable buildings and energy?

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

The new 2012 State aid SGEI package, published in the Official Journal and on the Internet, provides more legal certainty with regard to services of general economic interest (SGEIs) such as social housing by clarifying key state aid principles and introducing simpler rules for SGEIs. These SGEI rules adhere to the principle developed by the European Courts that it is for the Member States to define SGEIs and that the Commission only checks for manifest errors in this definition. Under these state aid rules for SGEIs, State support to social SGEIs including social housing is normally compatible with the internal market and exempted from the obligation to notify to the Commission, provided that it meets the conditions laid down in the Commission Decision 2012/21/EU. In this respect, it is conceivable that Member States incorporate energy efficiency considerations into social housing obligations, as long as this is justified by social objectives.

In addition, specific state aid measures can be found compatible on the basis of state aid guidelines or directly on the basis of the Treaty (TFEU). For instance, the Commission approved a state aid measure to improve energy efficiency in buildings by state aid decision SA.34611. Moreover, the Environmental State Aid Guidelines (EAG) specifically include compatibility conditions for energy saving measures. The EAG are currently being reviewed as part of the state aid modernisation process aiming *inter alia* at improving legal certainty.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010082/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 septembre 2013)

Objet: Instruments financiers standardisés pour l'énergie

Le Parlement reconnaît le soutien de la Commission en faveur du rôle accru de nouveaux instruments financiers innovants au cours de la période de programmation 2014-2020. Leur mise à disposition tardive et le manque de clarté juridique constituent une difficulté majeure à la fois pour les États membres et pour les autres parties prenantes impliquées dans la gestion de tels instruments.

La Commission compte-t-elle, comme le lui demande le Parlement, présenter sans tarder des propositions pour la mise à disposition d'instruments financiers standardisés pour soutenir les mesures d'efficacité énergétique?

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

Les instruments financiers standardisés constituent les conditions standard pour les instruments financiers à développer dans un acte d'exécution, en vertu de l'article 33, paragraphe 3, point a) du projet de règlement portant sur les dispositions communes.

La Commission a élaboré un tel projet de proposition pour les instruments standardisés. Cette proposition a d'ores et déjà été communiquée lors du processus de consultation auprès du groupe d'experts examinant les actes délégués et d'exécution et aux parties prenantes impliquées dans le domaine des instruments financiers durant la période de programmation en cours.

L'actuel projet de proposition comporte quatre instruments. Trois ont pour objectif d'apporter un soutien aux PME par l'intermédiaire de prêts, de produits de garantie et de produits sur fonds propres. Le quatrième vise à soutenir l'efficacité énergétique et les énergies renouvelables dans le secteur de la construction résidentielle (prêt pour rénovation).

Le prêt pour l'efficacité énergétique des habitations cible d'abord les immeubles de plusieurs appartements pour lesquels les économies d'énergie pouvant être réalisées à la suite d'une rénovation sont importantes mais dont les propriétaires ont encore besoin de mesures incitatives appropriées, sous la forme d'une subvention complémentaire, de prêts bonifiés à long terme, ainsi que d'un financement et de conseils préalables.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010082/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: Off-the-shelf financial instruments for energy

Parliament recognises the Commission's support for the enhanced role of new and innovative financial instruments in the programming period 2014-2020. The lack of timely delivery and legal clarity presents a significant difficulty both for the Member States and for other stakeholders included in the management of such instruments

Does the Commission intend, as called upon by Parliament, to present without delay proposals for off-the-shelf financial instruments to be available in support of energy efficiency measures?

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

The off-the-shelf financial instruments are standard terms and conditions for financial instruments pursuant to Article 33(3)(a) of the draft Common Provisions Regulation, to be developed in an implementing act.

The Commission prepared such a draft proposal for the off-the-shelf instruments. This proposal has already been communicated through a consultation process with the expert group looking at delegated and implementing acts and to the stakeholders active in financial instruments during the current programming period.

The current draft proposal contains four instruments. Three aim at supporting SMEs with loans, guarantee and equity products and one aims at supporting energy efficiency and renvewable energies in the residential building sector (Renovation Loan).

The housing energy efficiency loan product primarily targets multi-apartment buildings where the energy-saving potential of renovation is significant but where apartment owners still need appropriate incentives, in the form of complementary grant assistance, long-term subsidised loans and upfront advisory support and funding.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010083/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 septembre 2013)

Objet: Stratégie maritime dans l'Adriatique

Quand la Commission compte-t-elle adopter le plan d'action pour la mise en œuvre concrète, sur une base macro-régionale, de la stratégie maritime pour la mer Adriatique et la mer Ionienne?

N'estime-telle pas que le secteur de la pêche doit constituer l'une des priorités de cette stratégie, en tenant compte des configurations géophysiques spécifiques et en reliant ce plan d'action à la politique régionale, à la politique maritime intégrée de l'Union, et au mécanisme pour l'interconnexion en Europe, afin de maximiser son effet de levier?

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010087/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 septembre 2013)

Objet: Projet IMP-MED pour l'Adriatique

La Commission compte-t-elle établir, comme le lui suggère le Parlement, un programme de travail spécifique pour la mer Adriatique et la mer Ionienne, en fixant les futurs objectifs de la région comme tel est actuellement le cas pour la mer Méditerranée (projet IMP-MED)?

Réponse commune donnée par M^me^ Damanaki au nom de la Commission
(14 novembre 2013)

Le Conseil européen a demandé à la Commission de présenter une nouvelle stratégie macro régionale pour la région adriatique et ionienne avant la fin de l'année 2014 ([1]). La stratégie maritime pour la mer Adriatique et la mer Ionienne ([2]), adoptée par la Commission le 30 novembre 2012, fera partie de cette nouvelle stratégie macro régionale de plus grande envergure pour cette région.

Cette stratégie et son plan d'action seront définis et mis en œuvre sur la base de l'approche macro régionale de l'Union européenne et porteront, entre autres, sur les problèmes maritimes et marins des régions côtières de l'Adriatique et de la mer Ionienne, dont la pêche, l'aquaculture et la protection du milieu marin, le tourisme côtier et de croisière, le transport maritime ainsi que la recherche et l'innovation en relation avec ces activités.

La Commission a l'intention d'adopter une communication sur une stratégie de l'Union pour la région adriatique et ionienne, assortie d'un plan d'action, d'ici à la fin du premier semestre 2014.

Le projet sur la politique maritime intégrée dans la région méditerranéenne (PMI-MED) est un projet financé par l' IEVP Sud (instrument européen de voisinage et de partenariat), qui fournit un soutien technique aux pays méditerranéens voisins de la région Sud dans le but de développer des approches intégrées des affaires maritimes. Pour le moment, un soutien similaire n'est pas envisagé par la Commission pour la région adriatique et ionienne. Cependant, des représentants des pays des Balkans occidentaux et de la Turquie sont systématiquement invités à participer aux événements de sensibilisation organisés par la PMI-MED.

([1]) Conclusions du Conseil européen des 12-13 décembre 2012.
([2]) COM(2012) 713.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010083/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: Maritime strategy in the Adriatic

When does the Commission intend to adopt the action plan for the practical implementation on a macro-regional basis of the maritime strategy for the Adriatic Sea and the Ionian Sea?

Does it not think that the fisheries sector should form one of the priorities of that strategy, taking account of the specific geophysical features and linking this action plan to regional policy, the Union's integrated maritime policy and the Connecting Europe Facility, so as to maximise its leverage effect?

Question for written answer E-010087/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: IMP-MED project for the Adriatic

Does the Commission intend to establish, as suggested by Parliament, a specific Work Plan for the Adriatic and Ionian seas, setting out the future objectives in that region as is currently undertaken in the Mediterranean sea (IMP-MED project)?

Joint answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(14 November 2013)

The European Council requested the Commission to submit a new macro-regional strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian region before the end of 2014 ([1]). The Maritime Strategy for the Adriatic & Ionian Seas ([2]), which was adopted by the Commission on 30 November 2012, will be an integral part of the new, wider, macro-regional strategy for the region.

This strategy and its action plan will be defined and implemented on the basis of the EU macro-regional approach and will address *inter alia* maritime and marine issues of the Adriatic and Ionian coastal regions including fisheries, aquaculture and marine environment protection, coastal and cruise tourism, maritime transport and the related research and innovation dimension.

The Commission intends to adopt a communication on an EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region, accompanied by an Action Plan, by the end of the first semester 2014.

The Project on Integrated Maritime Policy in the Mediterranean (IMP-MED) project is a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) South-funded project that provides technical assistance to the southern Neighbourhood countries in the Mediterranean for developing integrated approaches to maritime affairs. A similar support is not envisaged at this stage for the Adriatic-Ionian region by the Commission. However, representatives from Western Balkan countries and Turkey are systematically invited to participate in the awareness-raising events organised by the IMP-MED.

([1]) European Council Conclusions of 12-13 December 2012.
([2]) COM(2012) 713.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010084/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 septembre 2013)

Objet: Règlement de la pêche dans l'Adriatique

Quand et comment la Commission va-t-elle élaborer une proposition de règlement comme le lui demande le Parlement européen, définissant les mesures techniques communes applicables à la pêche dans le bassin maritime adriatico-ionien, l'effort de pêche, les durées du temps de pêche et les engins de pêche autorisés dans le bassin ainsi que d'autres mesures de gestion pertinentes?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Damanaki au nom de la Commission
(15 novembre 2013)

Comme indiqué dans la réponse à vos questions E-010083/2013 et E-010087/2013 ([1]), la Commission a l'intention d'adopter, d'ici à la fin du premier semestre 2014, une communication sur la stratégie de l'Union pour la région de l'Adriatique et de la mer Ionienne, assortie d'un plan d'action.

En ce qui concerne la pêche, la Commission considère que le règlement (CE) n° 1967/2006 du Conseil (dit «règlement Méditerranée») fixe déjà les mesures techniques et de gestion nécessaires pour l'exploitation durable des ressources marines. Malgré les progrès réalisés jusqu'à présent, la pleine application de ce règlement n'est pas encore effective. Par conséquent, la stratégie de l'Union pour les mers Adriatique et Ionienne devrait soutenir des actions en faveur du développement de la culture du respect des règles et du renforcement de la coopération dans le domaine du contrôle des activités de pêche.

La Commission est convaincue que pour assurer la durabilité des stocks partagés de poissons, tous les pays exploitant les ressources maritimes dans cette région doivent appliquer les mêmes règles. À cette fin, l'Union européenne est un membre actif de la Commission générale des pêches pour la Méditerranée (CGPM). En mai 2013, sur proposition de l'Union européenne, le premier plan de gestion des pêches pour les petits pélagiques dans l'Adriatique a été adopté par la recommandation 37/2013/1 de la CGPM. Ce plan a pour objectif de maintenir la durabilité et une relative stabilité des pêcheries tout en garantissant un risque faible d'effondrement des stocks. Il prévoit des limitations de l'effort de pêche, des mesures techniques de conservation et de gestion ainsi que des obligations en termes de contrôle.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010084/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: Regulating fishing in the Adriatic

When and how will the Commission submit, as called upon by Parliament, a proposal for a regulation laying down common technical measures for fishing in the Adriatic-Ionian sea basin and specifying the admissible fishing effort, fishing periods and fishing gears and other relevant management measures?

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

As already communicated in the answer to your questions E-010083/2013 and E-010087/2013 ([1]), the Commission intends to adopt a communication on an EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region, accompanied by an Action Plan, by the end of the first semester 2014.

As regards fisheries, the Commission considers that Council Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 (the Mediterranean Regulation) already sets the necessary technical and management measures for the sustainable exploitation of marine resources. Despite the progress made so far, full compliance with this regulation is not yet achieved. Therefore, the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian should support actions for improving the culture of compliance and enhancing cooperation for the control of fishing activities.

The Commission is convinced that to ensure the sustainability of shared fish stocks, all countries exploiting marine resources in the area have to play by the same rules. To this end, the EU is active in the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM). In May 2013, upon a proposal by the EU, the first fisheries management plan for small pelagic in the Adriatic was adopted by GFCM Recommendation 37/2013/1. The objective of the plan is to maintain sustainable and relatively stable fisheries while guaranteeing a low risk of stocks collapse. It provides for fishing effort limitations, management and technical conservation measures as well as control obligations.

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

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010085/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 septembre 2013)

Objet: Organe consultatif spécifique à l'Adriatique

La Commission compte-t-elle proposer la création d'organes consultatifs spécifiques, tant pour la mer Adriatique que pour la mer Ionienne, au sein du conseil consultatif régional déjà existant pour la Méditerranée, sur la base des expériences positives acquises avec les «districts maritimes» institués dans les eaux italiennes (par exemple, le district de pêche du nord de l'Adriatique créé en 2012 en vue d'une gestion partagée et concertée du secteur de la pêche du nord de l'Adriatique au niveau politique, économique, social et environnemental)?

Réponse donnée par Mme Damanaki au nom de la Commission
(30 octobre 2013)

La Commission renvoie l'Honorable Parlementaire aux réponses données aux questions écrites E-010087/2013 et E-010084/2013.

La Commission a l'intention d'adopter une communication sur une stratégie de l'Union pour la région adriatique et ionienne, assortie d'un plan d'action, d'ici à la fin du premier semestre 2014.

En ce qui concerne la création éventuelle d'un organe consultatif spécifique pour les mers Adriatique et Ionienne au sein du conseil consultatif régional (CCR) pour la Méditerranée, la Commission considère que cette initiative reste sous la responsabilité du conseil consultatif lui-même.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010085/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: Specific advisory body for the Adriatic

Does the Commission intend to propose that specific advisory bodies for the Adriatic Sea and the Ionian Sea should be set up within the Regional Advisory Council (RAC) already established for the Mediterranean area, drawing on the positive experience gained with the 'maritime districts' that have been set up in Italian waters (such as the Northern Adriatic fisheries district, established in 2012 for the shared and joint management of the northern Adriatic fisheries sector from a political, economic, social and environmental point of view)?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to his questions E-010087/2013 and E-010084/2013.

The Commission intends to adopt a communication on an EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region, accompanied by an Action Plan, by the end of the first semester 2014.

As regards the possible creation of a specific advisory body for the Adriatic and Ionian Sea within the Regional Advisory Council (RAC) for the Mediterranean, the Commission considers that this remains under the responsibility of the Advisory Council itself.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010086/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 septembre 2013)

Objet: Inventaire des mesures de protection de l'environnement et du tourisme

Que pense la Commission de la suggestion visant à inclure, dans la future proposition législative relative à la planification de l'espace maritime, des dispositions contraignant les États membres maritimes à faire l'inventaire des mesures de protection de l'environnement et du tourisme existant déjà sur leurs territoires respectifs et, pour les zones non soumises à des restrictions, à adopter des «plans d'aménagement maritime» couvrant toutes les diverses typologies du secteur et les plans d'aménagement indispensables à la gestion des zones maritimes et côtières, de manière à définir l'admissibilité et la compatibilité de l'occupation et de l'utilisation de ces zones, afin d'en faciliter l'accès aux entreprises travaillant dans l'aquaculture?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Damanaki au nom de la Commission
(13 novembre 2013)

La Commission a proposé une directive-cadre ([1]) visant à rendre obligatoires la planification de l'espace maritime et la gestion intégrée des zones côtières. Cette directive permettra encore aux États membres d'adapter leur mise en œuvre aux situations spécifiques, priorités politiques et systèmes juridiques locaux. Compte tenu des principes de subsidiarité et de proportionnalité, une directive prévoyant des exigences plus précises ne serait pas appropriée.

L'un des objectifs de cette directive est la promotion du développement durable de l'aquaculture. Cette proposition définit les objectifs à atteindre au niveau de l'Union européenne. Elle laisse cependant une marge d'appréciation aux États membres en ce qui concerne la manière d'y parvenir. En vertu des principes de subsidiarité et de proportionnalité, les obligations que cherche à imposer cette directive ne peuvent être que de nature procédurale. La directive ne peut définir dans le détail ou en termes concrets les mesures que doivent mettre en œuvre les États membres pour développer l'aquaculture.

Parallèlement, avec la publication des orientations stratégiques pour le développement durable de l'aquaculture dans l'Union européenne, la Commission a lancé un processus volontaire qui soutiendra les États membres et leur donnera l'occasion d'échanger au sujet des bonnes pratiques en faveur de l'accès des activités aquacoles à l'espace maritime.

([1]) COM(2013) 133 final du 12.3.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010086/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: Inventory of environmental and tourism protection measures

What does the Commission think of the suggestion to include in the future legislative proposal on maritime spatial planning, provisions obliging maritime Member States to make inventories of the environmental and tourism protection rules in force on their respective national territories and, in respect of areas not subject to restrictions, to adopt marine and coastal development plans establishing the admissibility and compatibility of the use and occupation of these areas, with a view to facilitating access to areas suitable for setting up aquaculture undertakings?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(13 November 2013)

The Commission has proposed a Framework Directive ([1]) with a view to making Maritime Spatial Planning and Integrated Coastal Management processes mandatory. This directive would still allow Member States to tailor them to their specific situations, political priorities and legal systems. Subsidiarity and proportionality considerations lead to the conclusion that a Directive with more specific requirements would not be appropriate.

Fostering the sustainable development of aquaculture is one of the objectives of the directive. The proposed text defines the objectives to be reached at Union level but, it leaves to Member States the room for discretion as to how these objectives should be reached. In line with the subsidiarity and proportionality principles, the obligations the directive seeks to impose can only be of procedural nature and not set out in detail or concretely what the Member States must do in relation to aquaculture development.

At the same time, with the publication of the Strategic Guidelines for the sustainable development of EU aquaculture, the Commission launched a voluntary process which will help the Member States and offer them an opportunity to exchange best practices on how to facilitate access to space and water for aquaculture activities.

([1]) COM(2013) 133 final of 12.3.2013.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010088/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 septembre 2013)

Objet: Reconnaissance de l'apprentissage formel, informel, des stages et du volontariat

Que compte proposer la Commission afin de concevoir des systèmes qui reconnaissent les compétences acquises par le biais de l'apprentissage informel et non formel, du volontariat, des stages et du travail social, et afin de fournir le soutien nécessaire à ces activités dans le cadre des nouveaux programmes pour l'éducation, la jeunesse et la citoyenneté?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(7 novembre 2013)

Les recommandations du Conseil du 20 décembre 2012 ([1]) invitent les États membres à définir les modalités de validation des apprentissages non formels et informels d'ici 2018. Les citoyens pourront ainsi demander la validation des savoirs, aptitudes et compétences acquis en dehors des systèmes d'éducation formelle et obtenir une qualification complète (ou partielle) sur la base d'expériences d'apprentissage non formelles et informelles validées.

En coopération avec les États membres, la Commission est en train de réviser les lignes directrices européennes pour la validation des acquis non formels et informels et de mettre à jour l'inventaire européen de la validation de l'apprentissage non formel et informel. Ces deux initiatives seront menées à terme en 2014 et fourniront aux États membres des indications sur les modalités de mise en œuvre de la validation de l'apprentissage non formel et informel.

Le futur programme Erasmus+ soutiendra des initiatives visant à promouvoir et à valider les expériences d'apprentissage non formel et informel, par le biais de projets favorisant le savoir et l'expertise dans ce domaine et de partenariats stratégiques et novateurs entre les établissements d'enseignement, les autorités publiques, les organisations de la société civile et les entreprises.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:398:0001:0005:FR:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010088/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: Recognition of formal and informal learning, internships and voluntary work

What does the Commission plan to propose in order to develop systems that recognise skills acquired through informal and non-formal learning, voluntary work, internships and social work, and to provide support for such activities in the framework of the new programmes for education, youth and citizenship?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(7 November 2013)

The Council Recommendation of 20 December 2012 ([1]) calls upon Member States to put in place arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning by 2018. This will enable individuals to ask for the validation of knowledge, skills and competences which they have acquired outside the formal education systems; and to obtain a full qualification (or parts of it) on the basis of validated non-formal and informal learning experiences.

In cooperation with the Member States, the Commission is currently reviewing the European Guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning and updating the European Inventory on the validation of non-formal and informal learning. Both initiatives will be completed in 2014 and will provide guidance to Member States on how to implement the validation of non-formal and informal learning.

The future Erasmus+ programme will support initiatives to promote and validate non-formal and informal learning experiences, through projects promoting knowledge and expertise in this area and through strategic and innovative partnerships between educational institutions, public authorities, civil society organisations and business.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:398:0001:0005:EN:PDF

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010090/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 septembre 2013)

Objet: Plan d'aide aux États où le taux de chômage des jeunes dépasse 25 %

Quelle est la réponse de la Commission à la demande qui lui a été faite par le Parlement, à propos des États membres ayant des régions où le taux de chômage des jeunes est supérieur à 25 %, en ce qui concerne la mise en place d'un plan d'aide d'une durée d'un an en vue de lutter contre le chômage des jeunes par la création d'emplois en faveur d'au moins 10 % des jeunes concernés?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(6 novembre 2013)

La Commission ne peut garantir la création d'emplois en faveur d'au moins 10 % des jeunes chômeurs dans les régions où le taux de chômage des jeunes est supérieur à 25 %, mais le budget de l'UE financera dans ces régions l'application d'un dispositif de garantie pour la jeunesse ([1]). Les actions entrant dans ce cadre peuvent comporter des incitations à la création d'emplois telles que des subventions à l'embauche ou des aides au démarrage d'entreprise — cependant, elles relèvent des États membres et des parties prenantes au niveau national.

Le soutien financier de l'UE à l'application de la Garantie pour la jeunesse sera fourni avant tout par le Fonds social européen (FSE) et l'initiative pour l'emploi des jeunes, qui sera cofinancée par le FSE (2014-2020). Cette initiative se concentrera sur le soutien aux jeunes n'occupant pas un emploi et ne suivant ni un enseignement ni une formation dans les régions de l'Union les plus touchées par le chômage des jeunes. L'objectif de la Garantie pour la jeunesse est de faire en sorte que les jeunes se voient proposer un emploi de bonne qualité, une formation continue, un apprentissage ou un stage dans les quatre mois suivant la perte de leur emploi ou leur sortie de l'enseignement formel.

Conformément à la communication de la Commission «Un appel à l'action contre le chômage des jeunes» ([2]) et aux conclusions à ce sujet du Conseil européen de juin 2013, les États membres dont certaines régions enregistrent un taux de chômage des jeunes supérieur à 25 % devraient présenter un plan de mise en œuvre de la Garantie pour la jeunesse d'ici le mois de décembre 2013 et les autres États membres sont encouragés à présenter des plans similaires en 2014. La Commission soutient les États membres qui élaborent ces plans.

([1]) JO C120/1 du 26.4.2013.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=10298&langId=fr

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010090/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: Relief plan for Member States where there is more than 25% youth unemployment

What is the Commission's response to Parliament's call for Member States with regions where there is more than 25% youth unemployment to develop a one-year relief plan to tackle youth unemployment by creating jobs for at least 10% of the young people affected?

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

While the Commission cannot guarantee job creation for 10% on unemployed youth in regions with youth unemployment rates over 25%, the EU budget will fund in these regions the implementation of Youth Guarantee scheme ([1]). Such actions may include incentives for job creation such as hiring subsidies or startup support — however this is up to Member States and stakeholders at the national level.

EU financial support towards the implementation of the Youth Guarantee will be provided primarily by the European Social Fund and the Youth Employment Initiative which will be co-funded by the ESF (2014-2020). The Initiative will focus on supporting youth not in employment, education or training, in the regions of the Union worst affected by youth unemployment. The aim of the Youth Guarantee is to ensure that young people receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a period of 4 months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

As per the Commission Communication 'Call to Action on Youth Unemployment' ([2]) and the related European Council conclusions of June 2013, Member States with regions experiencing youth unemployment rates above 25% should submit a Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan (YGIP) by December 2013 and in 2014 for the other Member States. The Commission is supporting Member States elaborating these plans.

([1]) OJ C120/1, 26.4.2013.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=10298&langId=en

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010091/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 septembre 2013)

Objet: Rapport sur les systèmes éducatifs

La Commission compte-t-elle présenter un rapport annuel sur la réforme des systèmes éducatifs des États membres?

Va-t-elle ainsi apporter une contribution structurelle et à long terme à l'amélioration de la capacité d'insertion professionnelle des jeunes?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(31 octobre 2013)

Les réformes des systèmes d'enseignement et de formation professionnels (EFP) dans les États membres font déjà l'objet d'un examen attentif à travers un certain nombre d'exercices de suivi réalisés au niveau de l'UE:

1) Dans le cadre du semestre européen, la Commission analyse la situation des systèmes d'EFP dans les États membres, établit des recommandations par pays destinées à améliorer l'EFP et évalue la mise en œuvre de ces recommandations.

2) Dans le contexte du cadre stratégique pour la coopération européenne dans le domaine de l'éducation et de la formation «Éducation et formation 2020», la Commission publie chaque année un rapport de suivi (Éducation and Training Monitor) qui contient un grand nombre d'informations quantitatives et d'analyses comparatives sur l'éducation et la formation, y compris l'EFP, dans les États membres. En outre, le Conseil européen et la Commission présentent, tous les deux ans, un rapport conjoint d'évaluation des progrès en direction des objectifs définis dans le domaine de l'éducation et de la formation, et notamment de l'EFP. Le prochain rapport est prévu pour 2015.

3) Dans le cadre du processus de Copenhague sur la coopération européenne en matière d'enseignement et de formation professionnels, la Commission suit les progrès accomplis dans la réalisation des objectifs stratégiques et des réformes dans l'EFP. Le prochain exercice de suivi aura lieu en 2014.

Dans le communiqué de Bruges ([1]), la Commission, en collaboration avec les États membres et les partenaires sociaux européens, a établi un ambitieux programme d'action en matière d'enseignement et de formation professionnels à l'horizon de l'an 2020. L'emploi des jeunes est une des priorités essentielles et la formation par le travail dans le cadre de l'EFP constitue un outil important pour lutter contre le chômage des jeunes en améliorant l'adéquation des compétences aux besoins du marché du travail.

L'Alliance européenne pour l'apprentissage, lancée récemment, fait partie des réponses de l'UE au chômage des jeunes et vise à améliorer la qualité et l'offre des contrats d'apprentissage dans l'ensemble de l'UE.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/vocational/bruges_fr.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010091/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: Report on vocational training systems

Does the Commission intend to produce an annual report on the reform of vocational training systems in the Member States?

Will it thereby make a long-term structural contribution to improving young people's employability?

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

Reforms in vocational education and training (VET) systems in Member States are already analysed in a number of monitoring exercises carried out at the EU level:

1. Within the context of the European semester, the Commission assesses the situation of VET systems in Member States, issues country-specific recommendations to improve VET and evaluates the implementation of the recommendations.

2. As part of the Strategic Framework for European cooperation in education and training 'ET 2020', the Commission publishes the annual Education and Training Monitor which contains a wealth of quantitative information and comparative analysis on education and training, including VET, in Member States. Furthermore, the European Council and the Commission publish a Joint report assessing progress towards commonly agreed objectives in education and training, including VET, every two years. The next report is due in 2015.

3. Within the Copenhagen process on European cooperation in VET, the Commission monitors progress towards strategic objectives and reforms in VET. The next monitoring exercise will be carried out in 2014.

The Commission together with Member States and the European Social Partners has set an ambitious VET agenda to be achieved by 2020 — the so called Bruges Communiqué ([1]). Youth employment is one of the key priorities and work-based learning through VET is one important tool to tackle youth unemployment by increasing the relevance of skills to labour market needs.

The recently launched European Alliance for Apprenticeships is also part of the EU response to youth unemployment and aims to improve the quality and supply of apprenticeships across the EU.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/vocational/bruges_en.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010093/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 septembre 2013)

Objet: Enseignement en alternance pour des métiers-clés

La Commission compte-t-elle entendre le Parlement quand il lui demande de définir, qualitativement, des lignes directrices pour l'élaboration d'un système moderne d'enseignement en alternance, étayées par une liste de métiers-clés, définis comme non universitaires au sens large, en Europe?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(12 novembre 2013)

La Commission promeut la formation professionnelle en tant que composante importante de la modernisation des systèmes éducatifs. Ses vues à cet égard trouvent leur expression, premièrement, dans les activités qu'elle mène actuellement avec les États membres en vue de moderniser les systèmes d'éducation et de formation dans le cadre de la méthode ouverte de coordination, deuxièmement, dans les recommandations en matière d'éducation et de formation propres à chaque pays qu'elle a formulées dans le cadre du semestre européen et, troisièmement, dans les communications qu'elle a récemment publiées, en particulier celles qui s'intitulent «Repenser l'éducation» et «Ouvrir l'éducation».

L'attention de l'Honorable Parlementaire est notamment attirée sur l'Alliance européenne pour l'apprentissage, qui constitue une action clé de la communication «Repenser l'éducation» et du paquet «Emploi des jeunes». Cette alliance est une initiative regroupant diverses parties prenantes qui vise à mettre en place des contrats d'apprentissage de qualité ainsi que des programmes d'éducation et de formation en alternance.

En juillet 2013, la Commission a publié un document d'orientation sur la formation par le travail ([1]), y compris les bonnes pratiques en la matière, qui sert de base à l'échange et l'apprentissage mutuels entre États membres. Ce processus vise, entre autres choses, à fournir des orientations-cadres répondant aux besoins de groupes spécifiques de pays qui s'intéressent à une même problématique concrète dans le champ de la formation en alternance et partagent les mêmes vues en ce qui concerne les besoins de formation.

Au lieu d'établir une liste des professions clés non basées sur des formations théoriques, la Commission poursuit le même objectif en promouvant les résultats d'apprentissage, qui sont centrés sur les connaissances et compétences requises pour répondre aux futurs besoins de compétences de l'Europe. Le panorama européen des compétences ([2]) fournit un point d'accès unique aux données et informations sur les tendances en matière de compétences au niveau national et à l'échelle de l'UE. Le portail ESCO ([3]) met à disposition un système de classification multilingue européen pour établir des concordances entre les professions, les aptitudes, les compétences et les certifications.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/work-based-learning-in-europe_en.pdf
([2]) http://euskillspanorama.ec.europa.eu/
([3]) Classification européenne des aptitudes/compétences, certifications et professions.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010093/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: Dual education for key occupations

Does the Commission intend to respond to Parliament's call to draw up qualitative guidelines for a modern dual education system, backed up by a list of broadly defined, non-academic key occupations in Europe?

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

The Commission promotes the value of vocational training as an important component of modernised education systems. Its views in this regard are reflected in its ongoing work with Member States on modernising education and training systems under the Open Method of Coordination; in the education and training-related country specific recommendations it has delivered under the European Semester; and in recent policy communications, most notably Rethinking Education and Opening Up Education.

The Honourable Member should note in particular the European Alliance for Apprenticeships, a key action of the Rethinking Education communication and the Youth Employment Package. The Alliance is a multi-stakeholder initiative and aims at developing high quality apprenticeships as well as dual education and training schemes.

In July 2013 the Commission published a policy document on work-based learning ([1]), including best practices, which serves as a basis for mutual exchange and learning between Member States. The output of this work will be, *inter alia*, guidance frameworks responding to the needs of specific groups of countries that all have a common interest in a concrete topic related to dual education and a shared understanding of learning needs.

Instead of drafting a list of non-academic key occupations, the Commission is pursuing the same objective by promoting learning outcomes which put the focus on the knowledge and competences needed to address Europe's future skill needs. The European Skills Panorama ([2]) provides a single access point to data and information on skills trends at the national and EU level. The ESCO portal ([3]) provides a European multilingual taxonomy to match occupations, skills, competences and qualifications.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/work-based-learning-in-europe_en.pdf
([2]) http://euskillspanorama.ec.europa.eu/
([3]) European Skills/Competences, qualifications and occupations.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010095/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de setembro de 2013)

Assunto: Dois milhões de refugiados na Síria

O conflito sírio já provocou mais de dois milhões de refugiados sírios, de acordo com o comunicado do Alto Comissariado das Nações Unidas para os Refugiados (ACNUR), realçando o facto de que há um ano esse número era de 230 671 pessoas.

Nos últimos 12 meses, 1,8 milhões de novos refugiados sírios deslocaram-se para outros países, cerca de metade dos refugiados sírios são menores de idade e a maioria (97 %) procura segurança em países vizinhos como a Jordânia, Líbano, Iraque e Turquia, havendo ainda 4,25 milhões de pessoas deslocadas no interior da Síria.

O signatário apresentou à Comissão a pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006229/2013.

Na resposta dada pela Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante Catherine Ashton é dito que «a Comissão e os Estados-Membros mobilizaram 944,5 milhões de euros para assistência humanitária a pessoas em situação de necessidade», e ainda que «a UE está empenhada em continuar a prestar assistência aos países de acolhimento no intuito de manter a capacidade desses países para abrigar refugiados e incentivá-los a prosseguir a sua política de fronteiras abertas».

O ACNUR alertou que a escassez de fundos é um problema que enfrenta perante esta «hemorragia de população» da Síria ao apontar que as agências humanitárias que trabalham no país receberam menos de metade das contribuições necessárias e que as nações que acolhem os refugiados necessitam tanto de ajuda como os próprios refugiados.

Que avaliação faz a Comissão da evolução da situação na Síria no que diz respeito ao crescente número de refugiados e às dificuldades financeiras apontadas pelo ACNUR?

Resposta dada por Kristalina Georgieva em nome da Comissão
(4 de novembro de 2013)

O número de refugiados continua a aumentar, atingindo agora os 2,1 milhões, e estima-se que o número de pessoas deslocadas no interior do país se eleve a 5 milhões. O afluxo contínuo de sírios está a sobrecarregar cada vez mais as comunidades de acolhimento e a provocar tensões em certas zonas. Os países vizinhos da Síria estão a atingir o ponto de saturação e necessitam de apoio urgente para continuar a manter as fronteiras abertas e a prestar assistência aos refugiados.

A UE tem vindo a aumentar constantemente os seus esforços para satisfazer as necessidades cada vez maiores tanto na Síria como nos países vizinhos. A UE e os seus Estados-Membros são o principal doador na região, tendo prestado, desde o final de 2011, um apoio total de quase 2 mil milhões de EUR em resposta direta à crise (ajuda humanitária: 515 milhões de EUR; assistência económica e ajuda ao desenvolvimento e à estabilização: 428 milhões de EUR ([1]); ajuda humanitária dos Estados-Membros: 1 023 milhões de EUR).

Devido à amplitude desta crise e a fim de conseguir dar resposta às necessidades crescentes, no último ano e meio a UE tem procurado adotar uma abordagem global. Esta medida incluiu a mobilização de todos os instrumentos pertinentes da UE para apoiar a população afetada, bem como os países e as comunidades de acolhimento mais atingidos pelas consequências da crise síria.

Além disso, a UE tem declarado sistematicamente que a eficácia em termos de custos constitui uma condição prioritária aquando do financiamento dos parceiros na região. Não obstante os enormes esforços já desenvolvidos pelos doadores, a amplitude da presente crise implica que será necessário continuar a envidar esforços para a angariação de fundos, a fim de satisfazer as necessidades mais prementes.

([1]) A UE destina 453 milhões de EUR à assistência económica e à ajuda ao desenvolvimento e estabilização. De referir que a dotação de 20 milhões de EUR destinada ao Instrumento de Estabilidade (IE) ainda não foi oficialmente aprovada, pelo que não foi incluída nesse montante.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010095/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 September 2013)

Subject: Two million Syrian refugees

The Syrian conflict has already created more than two million Syrian refugees, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which noted that one year ago this number was 230 671 people.

In the last 12 months, 1.8 million new Syrian refugees left for other countries. Around half of the Syrian refugees are minors and the majority (97%) are seeking safety in neighbouring countries, such as Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey. There are also 4.25 million people internally displaced within Syria.

I submitted Question No E-006229/2013 for written answer to the Commission.

The answer from the Vice-President/High Representative states that 'the Commission and the Member States have mobilised EUR 944.5 million for humanitarian assistance to persons in need' and that 'the EU is committed to continue providing assistance to the host countries, to maintain their capacities to shelter refugees and to encourage them to continue their open-border policy'.

UNHCR has warned that lack of funding is a problem in the face of this 'population drain' from Syria and has indicated that the humanitarian agencies working in the country have received less than half of the contributions they require and that the nations welcoming the refugees are as much in need of assistance as the refugees themselves.

What is the Commission's assessment of how the situation in Syria has developed with regard to the growing number of refugees and the financial difficulties highlighted by UNHCR?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(4 November 2013)

The number of refugees is continuing to rise and is now at 2.1 million while the number of internally displaced persons is estimated to be 5 million. The continuous influx of Syrians is increasing the burden on the host communities and is fuelling tensions in some areas. Countries bordering Syria are approaching a saturation point and they need urgent support to continue keeping borders open and assisting refugees.

The EU has persistently been increasing its efforts in relation to the constantly growing needs; both inside Syria and in the neighbouring countries. The EU and its Member States are the largest donor in the region with a current allocation of nearly EUR 2 billion in total support since the end of 2011 and in direct response to the crisis (humanitarian aid: EUR 515 million; Economic, development and stabilisation assistance: EUR 428 million [1]); Member State humanitarian aid: EUR 1.023 billion).

Due to the magnitude of this crisis and in order to be able to respond to the growing needs, the EU's response for the last one and a half years has been to take a holistic approach. This has included the mobilisation of all relevant EU instruments to support the affected population as well as the host countries and communities that are the most impacted by the consequences of the Syrian crisis.

Additionally, the EU consistently communicates cost-efficiency as a priority condition when funding partners in the region. Despite a massive effort by donors, the scale of this crisis means that continuous fundraising efforts will be needed to address the most critical needs.

[1] EUR 453 million is to be allocated for EU economic, development and stabilisation assistance. However, EUR 20 million for the Instrument for Stability (IfS) has so far not been officially adopted and thus not yet been included in this figure.