(English version)

Question for written answer E-011170/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(1 October 2013)

Subject: Review of the collective redundancy regime

A review of the legislative framework governing collective redundancies is, according to the Greek press, a key point in talks between the Greek Government and the Troika. The Greek job market is in a period of extreme crisis, with unemployment rates reaching 27%, and the recession hitting not only employment growth, but also the effort to hold on to existing jobs. Many changes have been initiated in labour relations in recent years with a view to boosting the country's competitiveness. These changes were often made at the expense of job security and with doubtful results. With regard to this, will the Commission answer the following:

1. How does it think that a review of the framework for collective redundancies — covering not only redundancy limits, but also the requirement for the signature of the incumbent Minster of Labour — contributes to strengthening employment?

2. How does it view the fact that measures of this kind undermine the element of security in the job market by creating conditions for further market dislocation?

3. Given that a series of restructurings are underway or are due to be launched in industries and enterprises in both the private and the public sectors on account of the general economic and budgetary situation, how does it think that the outlook for employees will be affected in such cases by a liberalisation of the collective redundancy regime? The aim of restructuring is not, after all, to lengthen the queues at unemployment benefit offices, but to safeguard as many as jobs as possible.

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

The Commission is of the view that the aim of collective dismissal regulations should be to protect workers and contain the social hardship linked to dismissals while allowing an orderly restructuring of firms in the event of changing economic circumstances. EC law ([1]) already provides for minimum requirements, in particular the obligation of employers to inform and consult employees' representatives before they decide to carry out collective redundancies. Such consultation covers ways of avoiding redundancies, or reducing their number, and of mitigating their consequences through accompanying social measures.

As part of the policy conditionality attached to the economic adjustment programme for Greece, the Greek Government agreed in carrying out a review of existing labour regulations. The objective is to identify measures that, building on recent reforms, can contribute to attract investment and support job creation while aligning Greece with best practices in other countries. This exercise is expected to include a comparative review of regulatory issues concerning the re-structuring of companies and collective dismissals to ensure a balance between facilitating necessary adjustment and a fair sharing of the burden of adjustment between workers, firms and the Government. ([2])

([1]) In particular, Council Directive 98/59/EC of 20 July 1998 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to collective redundancies, OJ L 225, 12.8.1998.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp159_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011171/13
to the Commission
Derek Roland Clark (EFD)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Dutch state pension

A correspondent of mine, resident in the UK, has recently become entitled to a Dutch state pension. He has been refused payment in euros to his euro bank account. The UK is the only non-euro area EU Member State which is excluded from euro payments. This has reduced my constituent's pension payment and represents discrimination, which is illegal under the Lisbon Treaty.

Why has this practice been permitted?

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

The EC law which regulates the coordination of social security systems ([1]) (including pensions) lays down the rules on pension calculation and establishes rules for currency conversion in order to avoid discrimination in payments. However, the conversion rules apply only to the establishment of an entitlement to benefit (pension) and the first calculation of the benefit (pension). According to these rules, the applicable exchange rate is a daily exchange rate.

Unfortunately the Honourable Member did not outline in detail in his written question whether the Dutch state pension fund, the Dutch state pension fund's bank or the UK bank actually refused the payment in Euros to his correspondent's Euro bank account. According to the SEPA end-date Regulation 260/2012, the payment can also not be refused by the bank of the Dutch pensioner in the UK. By allowing the opening of a Euro bank account, the payment service provider automatically accepts to receive and process credit transfers in euro. The regulation provides that in such cases the payment service provider shall also be reachable for credit transfers initiated by a payer through a payment service provider in any other Member State (in this case the Dutch pension fund).

The Honourable Member is therefore kindly suggested to inform the Commission of further details, in particular clarifying which organisation disallowed the transfer. This will allow identifying the responsible national organisation that could help in enforcing the correspondent's rights.

([1]) Regulation (EC) n. 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems and Regulation (EC) 987/2009 laying down the procedure for implementing Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011172/13
lill-Kummissjoni
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(2 ta' Ottubru 2013)

Suġġett: L-obeżità fit-tfal

Studju riċenti ppublikat f'Malta wera li t-tfal Maltin huma fost l-aktar tfal obeżi fid-dinja. Fid-dawl tal-fatt li l-Organizzazzjoni Dinjija tas-Saħħa ddeskriviet l-obeżità bħala marda li kważi laħqet status pandemiku:

1. Il-Kummissjoni temmen li l-Istati Membri għandhom jingħataw miri sabiex inaqqsu l-obeżità fost it-tfal fuq perjodu ta' żmien speċifiku?

2. Il-Kummissjoni tkun lesta li tappoġġja sforzi bħal dawn fl-Istati Membri?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Borg f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(15 ta' Novembru 2013)

Il-Kummissjoni taf bir-rata ta' obeżità fit-tfal f'Malta.

L-Istrateġija għall-Ewropa dwar kwistjonijiet ta' saħħa marbuta man-Nutriment, il-Piż Żejjed u l-Obeżità ([1]) tinkludi azzjoni li tindirizza, bħala prijorità, lit-tfal. F'dan il-kuntest, il-Grupp ta' livell għoli dwar in-nutriment u l-attività fiżika bħalissa qed iqis Pjan ta' azzjoni ġdid biex jittratta l-obeżità fit-tfal. Fejn jidħol l-iffissar ta' miri potenzjali biex titnaqqas l-obeżità fit-tfal, il-Kummissjoni temmen li l-Istati Membri għandhom jiddefinixxu huma stess kwalunkwe mira ta' dan it-tip u jsegwuha.

Barra minn hekk, il-Kummissjoni pproponiet Rakkomandazzjoni tal-Kunsill dwar il-promozzjoni transsettorjali ta' attività fiżika favur is-saħħa ([2]), immirata għal nies ta' kull età, fosthom it-tfal, li għandha l-għan li tiġġieled kontra l-piż żejjed u l-obeżità, u li tevita l-kundizzjonijiet marbutin magħhom.

Il-proposta tal-Kummissjoni għal programm fil-qasam tas-saħħa għall-perjodu mill-2014 sal-2020 ([3]) ukoll tipprevedi attivitajiet fl-oqsma tal-obeżità u tan-nutriment. X'aktarx li l-proposta tal-Kummissjoni għall-Programm Qafas għar-Riċerka u l-Innovazzjoni — Orizzont 2020 (2014-2020) ([4]) se toffri opportunitajiet għar-riċerka dwar l-obeżità, in-nutriment u l-attività fiżika.

([1]) COM(2007) 279 finali, 30.5.2007.
([2]) COM(2013) 603 finali, 28.8.2013.
([3]) COM(2011) 709 finali, 9.11.2011.
([4]) COM(2011) 809 finali, 30.11.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011172/13
to the Commission
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Child obesity

A recent study published in Malta has shown that Maltese children are among the most obese children in the world. Given that the World Health Organisation (WHO) has described obesity as a disease verging on pandemic status:

1. Does the Commission believe that Member States should be given targets for reducing obesity among children over a specific period of time?

2. Would the Commission be willing to support any such endeavours within Member States?

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

The Commission is aware of the rate of childhood obesity in Malta.

The strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related Health Issues ([1]) features action addressing children as a priority. In this context, the High Level Group on Nutrition and Physical Activity is currently considering a new Action Plan to tackle childhood obesity. As regards setting up potential targets for reducing obesity among children, the Commission believes that it is up to Member States to define and pursue any such targets.

In addition, the Commission has proposed a Council Recommendation on promoting health-enhancing physical activity across sectors ([2]) targeting all age groups, including children, which aims at combating overweight and obesity, and preventing related conditions.

The Commission's proposal for the 2014-2020 Health Programme ([3]) further foresees activities in the areas of obesity and nutrition. The Commission's proposal for Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([4]) will likely offer opportunities for research on obesity, nutrition and physical activity.

([1]) COM(2007) 279 final, 30.5.2007.
([2]) COM(2013) 603 final, 28.8.2013.
([3]) COM(2011) 709 final, 9.11.2011.
([4]) COM(2011) 809 final, 30.11.2011.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011173/13
lill-Kummissjoni
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(2 ta' Ottubru 2013)

Suġġett: Sigħat ta' edukazzjoni fiżika

L-edukazzjoni fiżika hi parti integrali mill-iżvilupp tat-tfal. Skont studju ppublikat mill-Kummissjoni f'Marzu tal-2013, in-numru minimu ta' sigħat allokat għall-edukazzjoni fiżika fl-Istati Membri jvarja bejn 31 siegħa fis-sena f'Malta u 108 siegħa fis-sena fi Franza. Fid-dawl ta' dan, u fiż-żieda inkwetanti fir-rati ta' obeżità fit-tfal fl-Ewropa:

1. Il-Kummissjoni taħseb li n-numru minimu ta' sigħat ta' edukazzjoni fiżika fl-Ewropa għandu jiżdied?

2. Tikkunsidra li tintroduċi numru komuni ta' sigħat ta' edukazzjoni fiżika fl-Istati Membri?

3. Jekk iva, x'inhu l-aħjar numru ta' sigħat li tirrakomanda?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Vassiliou f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(13 ta' Novembru 2013)

Fil-Komunikazzjoni "L-Iżvilupp tad-Dimensjoni Ewropea fl-Isport" ([1]), il-Kummissjoni esprimiet il-fehma tagħha li jista' jitqatta' iktar ħin fl-isport u l-attivitajiet fiżiċi fl-edukazzjoni mingħajr bżonn ta' ħafna spejjeż, barra l-kurrikulu tal-iskola u kif ukoll fil-kurrikulu stess.

Madankollu, skont l-Artikolu 165 tat-Trattat dwar il-Funzjonament tal-Unjoni Ewropea, ir-responsabbiltà għall-kontenut tat-tagħlim u l-organizzazzjoni tas-sistemi edukattivi, inkluż l-għadd ta' sigħat dedikati għal suġġett speċifiku bħall-edukazzjoni fiżika, hija kompletament tal-Istati Membri. Għalhekk, huwa f'idejn kull Stat Membru biex jiddetermina kif jista' jinkoraġġixxi l-attivitajiet tal-edukazzjoni fiżika fl-iskejjel.

([1]) COM(2011) 12 finali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011173/13
to the Commission
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Hours of physical education

Physical education is an integral part of a child's development. According to a study published by the Commission in March 2013, the minimum number of hours allocated to physical education in the Member States varies from 31 hours per year in Malta to 108 hours per year in France. In the light of this, and of the worrying increase in child obesity rates in Europe:

1. Does the Commission believe that the minimum number of hours of physical education in Europe should be increased?

2. Would it consider introducing a common number of hours of physical education in the Member States?

3. If so, what would be the optimum number of hours that it would recommend?

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

In the communication 'Developing the European Dimension in Sport' ([1]), the Commission expressed its view that time spent on sport and physical activity in education could be improved at low cost both outside and within the school curriculum.

However, in accordance with Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the responsibility for the content of the teaching and the organisation of education systems, including the number of hours dedicated to a specific subject such as physical education, rests entirely with Member States. It is therefore up to each Member State to determine how to encourage physical education activities at school.

([1]) COM(2011) 12 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011174/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Personal in EU-Vertretungen (2013)

Der Europäische Auswärtige Dienst (EAD) beschäftigt in seinen Delegationen AD- und AST-Beamte, Bedienstete auf Zeit, junge Sachverständige sowie lokale Ortskräfte. Ebenso sind den Delegationsleitern des EAD Beamte, Bedienstete, junge Sachverständige sowie Ortskräfte der Kommission unterstellt.

1. Kann die Hohe Vertreterin, vergleichbar zu den Angaben in der Antwort der Hohen Vertreterin auf Anfrage 9151/2012, welche die Zahlen für Ende 2012 wiedergibt, tabellarisch aufstellen, wie viel Personal des EAD in den Delegationen des EAD beschäftigt ist?

2. Kann die Hohe Vertreterin ebenso tabellarisch aufstellen, wie viel Personal der Kommission den Delegationsleitern des EAD unterstellt ist?

3. Kann die Hohe Vertreterin die Gründe erläutern, falls sich eine der Zahlen von 2012 bis 2013 um mehr als 10 % erhöht hat.

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

Derzeit gibt es weltweit 139 EU Delegationen. Die Zusammensetzung des in diesen Delegationen tätigen EAD-Personals ist in der nachstehenden Tabelle aufgeführt.

Die Daten vom 15.9.2013 haben sich gegenüber den früheren Daten, die für Ende 2012 vorgelegt wurden, in keinem Fall um mehr als 10 % erhöht.

EU-Delegationen 2013	EAD	KOM	Insgesamt
AD- und AST-Beamte sowie Bedienstete auf Zeit	554	597	1 151
Vertragsbedienstete	191	856	1 047
Örtliche Bedienstete	1 077	1 969	3 046
Junger Sachverständiger in Delegationen	29	31	60
Abgeordnete nationale Sachverständige	41	21	62
Insgesamt	1 892	3 474	5 366

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011174/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Staff in EU representations (2013)

In its delegations, the European External Action Services (EEAS) employs AD and AST grade officials, temporary agents, young experts and local agents. In addition, officials, members of staff, young experts and local agents of the Commission are also under the authority of the EEAS Heads of Delegation.

1. Can the High Representative provide a table, similar to that in her answer to question 9151/2012, which reflected the figures for the end of 2012, showing how many members of EEAS staff are employed in the EEAS delegations?

2. Can she also provide a table showing how many members of Commission staff are under the authority of the EEAS Heads of Delegation?

3. If any of the figures increased by more than 10% between 2012 and 2013, can she explain the reasons for this?

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

There are currently 139 EU Delegations around the world. The distribution of the EEAS staff employed in Sep. 2013 in these Delegations is set out in the table below.

Taking the data on the 15/09/2013, and comparing them with the previous data provided for the end of 2012, none of the figures have increased by more than 10%.

EU Delegations 2013	EEAS	COM	Total
AD and AST Officials and Temporary Agents	554	597	1151
Contractual Agents	191	856	1047
Local Agents	1077	1969	3046
Junior Professional in Delegation	29	31	60
Seconded national Experts	41	21	62
Total	1892	3474	5366

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011175/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Ergebnisse der Konsultation zur Strukturreform des Bankensektors

Vom 16. Mai 2013 bis zum 11. Juli 2013 führte die Kommission eine öffentliche Konsultation zur Strukturreform des Bankensektors durch.

Auf der entsprechenden Website ist angegeben, dass sowohl die einzelnen Beiträge als auch eine Zusammenfassung der Ergebnisse „nach Abschluss der Konsultation verfügbar gemacht werden". Bis dato (Stand 1. Oktober 2013) wurden diese Informationen allerdings nicht veröffentlicht.

1. Warum wurden die Informationen nicht bzw. so lange nicht veröffentlicht?

2. Kann die Kommission abschätzen wann die Konsultationsbeiträge zugänglich sein werden?

3. Wird durch diese Verzögerung auch die Veröffentlichung des erwarteten Gesetzesvorschlags weiter verzögert?

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

1.-2. Die einzelnen Beiträge sowie eine Zusammenfassung der Ergebnisse der Konsultation zur Strukturreform im Bankensektor können Sie einsehen unter:
http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/consultations/2013/banking-structural-reform/index_de.htm

3. Bei der Ausarbeitung des Legislativvorschlags wendet die Kommission ebenso wie bei der Konsultation aller einschlägigen Interessenträger ihre internen Verfahren an. Der Vorschlag wird zusammen mit einer ausführlichen Folgenabschätzung vorgelegt werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011175/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Results of the consultation on the structural reform of the banking sector

From 16 May 2013 to 11 July 2013, the Commission conducted a public consultation on the structural reform of the banking sector.

On the corresponding website, it states that both the individual contributions and a summary of the results 'will be available after the closing of the consultation period'. However, this information has not as yet (as of 1 October 2013) been published.

1. Why has the information not, or not yet, been published?

2. Can the Commission provide an estimate of when the consultation contributions will be available?

3. Will this delay also further delay the publication of the expected legislative proposal?

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

1-2. The contributions to the consultation on the structural reform of the banking sector, as well as a summary of responses, can be found at:
http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/consultations/2013/banking-structural-reform/

3. The Commission is following its internal procedures for the elaboration of its legislative proposal, including consultations with all relevant stakeholders. The proposal will be accompanied by a thorough impact assessment.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011176/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Detaillierte Aufschlüsselung der Übersetzungskosten in den Jahren 2009 und 2012

In ihrer Antwort auf die Anfrage 9665/2013 von Hans-Peter Martin schreibt Kommissionsmitglied Vassiliou: „Die Gesamtkosten der Übersetzung der Kommission in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 betrugen jeweils etwa 330 Mio. EUR. Darin enthalten sind die Kosten für Übersetzer, Support/Verwaltungsaufgaben (wie Koordinierung, Fortbildung, Ressourcenmanagement, Informationstechnologie und Kommunikation) sowie Infrastruktur (Gebäude, Strom, Wasser usw.). Sie umfassen außerdem die Kosten für externe Übersetzung und externe Mitarbeiter."

1. Wie genau gliederten sich die circa 330 Mio. EUR Übersetzungskosten im Jahr 2009 und im Jahr 2012 auf die von Kommissionsmitglied Vassiliou genannten Kostenpunkte auf?

2. Wie viele externe Mitarbeiter wurden im Jahr 2009 und im Jahr 2012 von der Kommission angestellt? Arbeiten diese Vollzeit und ganzjährig für die Kommission oder nur zeitlich befristet oder stundenweise? Nutzten diese Mitarbeiter Büros und Materialien der Kommission, oder arbeiteten sie von außerhalb? Handelt es sich dabei um Vertragsbedienstete, intra muros tätige Leistungserbringer oder andere Personalkategorien?

Antwort von Frau Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(20. November 2013)

1. Im Jahr 2009 betrugen die Gesamtkosten für die Übersetzung in der Kommission 323 962 821 EUR, die sich wie folgt zusammensetzten:

— Übersetzerinnen und Übersetzer: 178 333 624 EUR;

— Support/Verwaltungsaufgaben: 67 369 997 EUR;

— Infrastruktur: 58 181 760 EUR;

— externe Übersetzungsdienstleistungen: 12 865 401 EUR;

— externes Personal: 7 212 039 EUR.

Für 2012 setzt sich die Gesamtsumme von 336 699 026 EUR wie folgt zusammen:

— Übersetzerinnen und Übersetzer: 188 134 620 EUR;

— Support/Verwaltungsaufgaben: 66 772 340 EUR;

— Infrastruktur: 60 300 600 EUR;

— externe Übersetzungsdienstleistungen: 12 704 177 EUR;

— externes Personal: 8 787 289 EUR.

2. Zum externen Personal gehören Vertragsbedienstete (Übersetzer und Assistenten), abgeordnete nationale Sachverständige und Zeitarbeitskräfte. Sie arbeiten auf Vollzeitbasis für die Dauer der Laufzeit ihres Vertrags in den Büros der Kommission. Zeitarbeitskräfte werden für höchstens sechs Monate eingestellt.

In Zahlen zum 31. Dezember 2009:

— Vertragsbedienstete: 101;

— abgeordnete nationale Sachverständige: 10;

— Zeitarbeitskräfte: 26.

In Zahlen zum 31. Dezember 2012:

— Vertragsbedienstete: 173;

— abgeordnete nationale Sachverständige: 7;

— Zeitarbeitskräfte: 23.

Unter den externe Übersetzungsdienstleistungen sind Übersetzungen zu verstehen, die auf der Grundlage von Verträgen im Wege einer Ausschreibung nach außen vergeben werden. Ausschreibungen und Aufforderungen zur Interessenbekundung werden im Amtsblatt, in „Tenders Electronic Daily“ (TED) und auf der Europa-Website veröffentlicht. Auftragnehmer arbeiten mit ihrem eigenen Personal, in ihren eigenen Räumlichkeiten und mit ihrem eigenen Material ([1]).

([1]) Listen der Vertragspartner sind abrufbar unter http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation/workwithus/calls/list/index_de.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011176/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Detailed breakdown of translation costs for 2009 and 2012

In her reply to question 9665/2013 from Hans-Peter Martin, Commissioner Vassiliou states: 'The overall cost of translation in the Commission in each of the years 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 was approximately EUR 330 million. This figure includes the cost of translators, support/administrative services (such as coordination, training, resource management, information technology and communication), and infrastructure (buildings, electricity, water etc.). It also includes the cost of external translation services and external staff.'

1. How exactly is the EUR 330 million in translation costs for 2009 and 2012 divided between the items referred to by Commissioner Vassiliou?

2. How many external staff were employed by the Commission in 2009 and 2012? Do these people work full time throughout the year for the Commission or just for a limited time or hourly? Do these members of staff use offices and materials belonging to the Commission, or do they work externally? Are these people contract staff, suppliers working on site or other categories of staff?

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

1. In 2009, the overall cost of translation in the Commission was EUR 323 962 821, comprising:

— translators: EUR 178 333 624;

— support and administrative services: EUR 67 369 997;

— infrastructure: EUR 58 181 760;

— external translation services: EUR 12 865 401;

— external staff: EUR 7 212 039.

The figure for 2012 was EUR 336 699 026, comprising:

— translators: EUR 188 134 620;

— support and administrative services: EUR 66 772 340;

— infrastructure: EUR 60 300 600;

— external translation services: EUR 12 704 177;

— external staff: EUR 8 787 289.

2. The external staff includes contract agents (translators and assistants), seconded national experts and interim staff. They work full time for the duration of their contract and use Commission's offices. Interim staff is hired for maximum 6 months.

The figures on 31 December 2009 were as follows:

— contract agents: 101;

— seconded national experts: 10;

— interim staff: 26.

The figures on 31 December 2012 were as follows:

— contract agents: 173;

— seconded national experts: 7;

— interim staff: 23.

External translation services refer to translation work that is outsourced on the basis of contracts awarded through a tendering procedure. Calls for tender and for expressions of interest are published in the Official Journal, on Tenders Electronic Daily (TED) and on the Europa website. Contractors use their own staff, offices and equipment ([1]).

([1]) Lists of contractors are available at http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation/workwithus/calls/list/index_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-011177/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Kontakte der Kommission mit Interessensvertretern bezüglich der Strukturreform des Bankensektors

Bei der Anhörung im ECON-Ausschuss des Europäischen Parlaments am 16. September 2013 signalisierte EU-Kommissar Michel Barnier, dass er bereit ist, auf Anfrage seine Gespräche und Konsultationen mit Interessensvertretern im Detail zu veröffentlichen.

1. Mit welchen Interessensvertretern haben sich der Kommissar und seine Mitarbeiter im Zusammenhang mit dem Liikanen-Bericht und im Hinblick auf den Regulierungsvorschlag zur Strukturreform des Bankensektors getroffen und/oder schriftlichen Kontakt gehabt? Welche konkreten Themen wurden bei diesen Treffen und Kontakten jeweils behandelt?

2. Welche Auswirkungen haben diese Treffen und Kontakte auf den Regulierungsvorschlag zur Strukturreform des Bankensektors, den die Kommission laut Aussage des EU-Kommissars Michel Barnier im November veröffentlichen wird?

3. Wann und in welcher Weise plant der Kommissar diesen „Fußabdruck für Lobbyisten" (lobby footprint) künftig der Öffentlichkeit zugänglich zu machen?

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

1. Mit Blick auf den geplanten Legislativvorschlag zur Strukturreform großer Banken in der EU haben die Kommissionsdienststellen eine öffentliche Konsultation durchgeführt, die am 11. Juli 2013 abgeschlossen wurde ([1]). Eingegangen sind 540 schriftliche Beiträge von Banken und anderen Finanzinstituten, nichtfinanziellen Unternehmen, Anlegern, öffentlichen Stellen, Verbraucherverbänden sowie einzelnen Bürgerinnen und Bürgern.

Im Rahmen dieser öffentlichen Konsultation fand am 17. Mai 2013 ein Treffen mit den Interessenvertretern statt. Ferner kamen die zuständigen Kommissionsdienststellen und Kommissar Barnier mit verschiedenen Interessenträgern auf deren Wunsch hin zusammen, darunter Vertreter der nationalen Behörden, des privaten Sektors und der Zivilgesellschaft. Welche Organisationen in den vergangenen sechs Monaten an den von Herrn Barnier und den ihm unterstellten Diensten (Generaldirektion Binnenmarkt und Dienstleistungen) abgehaltenen Treffen teilgenommen haben, ist dem Anhang zu entnehmen.

2. Die Kommissionsdienststellen und Herr Barnier werden alle — mündlichen und schriftlichen — Stellungnahmen und Rückmeldungen von Interessenträgern bei den laufenden Überlegungen zur Reform des Bankensektors sorgfältig prüfen. Dies wird auch bei etwaigen künftigen Initiativen in diesem Bereich der Fall sein.

3. Die Kommission will einen offenen, transparenten und regelmäßigen Dialog mit den repräsentativen Verbänden und der Zivilgesellschaft pflegen. Auf der Grundlage einer mit dem Europäischen Parlament geschlossenen interinstitutionellen Vereinbarung führt sie ein gemeinsames Transparenzregister und fördert darüber hinaus die Transparenz der Tätigkeiten und Verfahren der Kommission und ihrer Mitglieder durch eine regelmäßige Aktualisierung der Informationen auf der Website Europa.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/bank/structural-reform/index_de.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011177/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Commission's dealings with lobby groups in connection with the reform of the structure of the banking sector

At the European Parliament's ECON Committee hearing on 16 September 2013, EU Commissioner Michel Barnier indicated that he is prepared to publish details of his talks and consultations with lobby groups upon request.

1. What lobby groups have the Commissioner and his colleagues met and/or been in written contact with regarding the Liikanen report and the proposal for a regulation on the reform of the structure of the banking sector? What specific issues were covered at each of these meetings or in this correspondence?

2. What impact did these meetings and dealings have on the proposal for a regulation on the reform of the structure of the banking sector which, according to Michel Barnier, the Commission will publish in November?

3. When and how does the Commissioner plan to make this lobby footprint available to the public in the future?

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

1. In the context of the future legislative proposal on reforming the structure of large EU banks, the Commission services conducted a public consultation which closed on 11 July 2013 ([1]), to which 540 written replies have been received, from banks and other financial institutions, non-financial corporations, investors, public authorities, consumer associations and individual citizens.

During this public consultation, a public stakeholder meeting was organised on 16 May 2013. Additionally, the Commission services and Commissioner Barnier met a range of stakeholders at their request, including representatives of national public authorities, private sector and civil society. The organisations that have participated in meetings held by Mr Barnier/his services (Directorate General Internal Market and Services) during the last 6 months are listed in the annex.

2. All stakeholders' opinions and feedbacks are considered with great attention by the Commission services and Commissioner Barnier in the ongoing reflexion on the reform of the banking sector, whether they were in oral or in written form. Such opinions would also be taken into account in any forthcoming initiative on the topic.

3. The Commission aims to maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue with representative associations and civil society. It keeps a common Transparency Register in accordance with the relevant Interinstitutional Agreement between the Commission and the European Parliament and fosters transparency on the work and proceedings of the Commission and of its Members through a continuous update of information on the Europa website.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/bank/structural-reform/index_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011179/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Aumento del gasto en el presupuesto

Según los presupuestos presentados hoy por el Gobierno del Estado español, en el año 2014 se gastará un 3,7 % más que en 2013 y se llegará hasta los 423 227,5 millones de euros.

Por otro lado, según la previsión de crecimiento de la deuda del mismo, para finales de 2014 el Estado español tendrá una deuda del 99,8 % del PIB.

Además, desde el mes de julio el Gobierno ha rebasado su objetivo de déficit para 2013.

Finalmente, cabe recordar que, con la aprobación del Reglamento (UE) n° 473/2013, la Comisión está facultada para emitir recomendaciones sobre los presupuestos nacionales en caso de que crea que es necesario para cumplir los objetivos del Pacto de Estabilidad y Crecimiento, así como la legislación europea sobre gobernanza económica.

¿Está preocupada la Comisión por el aumento constante de la deuda pública del Estado español?

De acuerdo con el Semestre Europeo y las recomendaciones específicas, ¿cree la Comisión que el Gobierno debería hacer reformas en profundidad que disminuyan el déficit público mediante la reducción del gasto corriente pero sin perjudicar a la inversión y al gasto en I+D?

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

El 15 de noviembre de 2013, la Comisión aprobará y hará público su dictamen sobre los proyectos de planes presupuestarios de los Estados miembros de la zona del euro que no están sujetos a un programa de ajuste macroeconómico, incluida España.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011179/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Increased budget spending

According to the budget published by the Spanish Government today, it will spend EUR 423.2275 billion in 2014, 3.7% more than in 2013.

Moreover, according to the Spanish Government's debt growth forecasts, it will owe 99.8% of GDP by the end of 2014.

Furthermore, the government reduced its deficit target for 2013 in July.

Finally, it should be remembered that, with the adoption of Regulation (EU) No 473/2013, the Commission is empowered to issue recommendations regarding national budgets if it considers them necessary for meeting the targets of the Stability and Growth Pact and of European economic governance legislation.

Is the Commission concerned by the steady increase in Spanish Government debt?

In accordance with the European semester and specific recommendations, does the Commission believe that the government should implement far-reaching reforms to reduce the public deficit by reducing current expenditure but without reducing R&D investment and spending?

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

The Commission will adopt and make public its opinion on draft budgetary plans of euro area Member States that are not subject to a macroeconomic adjustment programme on 15 November 2013, including for Spain.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011180/13
an den Rat
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Deckelung des Ruhegehalts bei Kombination von Arbeitsverhältnissen

Viele Beamte im Rat haben das Recht auf Rentenansprüche von mehreren Arbeitgebern aus verschiedenen Ländern. Unter anderem waren Bedienstete der höchsten Führungsebene des Rates schon in mehreren Berufsfeldern und Ländern angestellt.

1. Werden die Pensionsansprüche aus (1) dem vorherigen Arbeitsverhältnis und/oder (2) dem aktuellen Arbeitsverhältnis bei der EU reduziert? Wenn ja, in welcher prozentualen Höhe?

2. Wie viele Bedienstete des Rates, vor allem Bedienstete der höchsten Führungsebene, beziehen Ruhegehälter aus mehr als einem Land oder mehr als einem Arbeitsverhältnis? Wie stellt sich dieser Wert in den Jahren 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 und 2014 dar?

Antwort
(9. Dezember 2013)

Beamte und sonstige Bedienstete der Europäischen Union, für die das Personalstatut gilt, haben nach Artikel 11 Absatz 2 dieses Statuts das Recht, Rentenansprüche, die sie im Zusammenhang mit ihren vorherigen Berufstätigkeiten in nationalen oder internationalen Rentensystemen erworben haben, auf das Versorgungssystem der EU zu übertragen.

Rentenansprüche, die nicht auf das Versorgungssystem der EU übertragen wurden, verbleiben in den ursprünglichen Systemen und unterliegen den nationalen Rechtsvorschriften und den Regeln der jeweiligen Systeme.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011180/13
to the Council
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Capping of pensions when combining employment relationships

Many officials in the Council are entitled to claim pensions from several employers from different countries. Among other things, members of staff in top leadership roles in the Council have already been employed in several professional fields and countries.

1. Are their pension entitlements from (1) previous employment relationships and/or (2) their current employment with the EU being reduced? If so, by what percentage?

2. How many Council employees, particularly those in top leadership roles, receive pensions from more than one country or more than one employment relationship? What is this figure for the years 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014?

Reply
(9 December 2013)

Officials and other servants of the European Union to whom the Staff Regulations are applicable have the right according to Article 11(2) of Annex VIII to the Staff Regulations to transfer their pension rights, acquired in national or international pension schemes linked to their previous professional activities, to the EU pension scheme.

Pension rights which have not been transferred to the EU pension scheme remain in the schemes of origin and national legislation and individual scheme rules are applied to them.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011181/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Deckelung des Ruhegehalts bei Kombination von Arbeitsverhältnissen

Viele Beamte in den Institutionen der Europäischen Union haben das Recht auf Rentenansprüche von mehreren Arbeitgebern aus verschiedenen Ländern. Unter anderem waren Bedienstete der höchsten Führungsebene in der Kommission schon in mehreren Berufsfeldern und Ländern angestellt.

1. Werden die Pensionsansprüche aus (1) dem vorherigen Arbeitsverhältnis und/oder (2) dem aktuellen Arbeitsverhältnis bei der EU reduziert? Wenn ja, in welcher prozentualen Höhe?

2. Wie viele Kommissionsbedienstete, vor allem Bedienstete der höchsten Führungsebene, beziehen Ruhegehälter aus mehr als einem Land oder mehr als einem Arbeitsverhältnis? Wie stellt sich dieser Wert in den Jahren 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 und 2014 dar?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(20. November 2013)

Nach den geltenden Rechtsvorschriften über die Freizügigkeit der Arbeitnehmer können Unionsbürger von einem Mitgliedstaat in einen anderen umziehen und haben deshalb möglicherweise Teilrentenansprüche aus verschiedenen Systemen der sozialen Sicherheit. Bedienstete der EU-Organe befinden sich in einer vergleichbaren Situation; hat ein Beamter zuvor in einem Mitgliedstaat gearbeitet und Beiträge zu dessen Versorgungsordnung entrichtet, hat er auch Teilrentenansprüche aus dem betreffenden System.

Es ist darauf hinzuweisen, dass gemäß dem geänderten Statut, das am 1. Januar 2014 in Kraft tritt, ein neu eingestellter Beamter erst nach 39 Dienstjahren in den Organen der EU Anspruch auf ein EU-Ruhegehalt in voller Höhe hat. Die Beamten erwerben auf der Grundlage ihrer Beiträge zur Versorgungsordnung der EU für jedes Dienstjahr 1,8 % ihres Grundgehalts bis zu einem Höchstsatz von 70 %. Somit werden die Rentenansprüche aus der Versorgungsordnung der EU oder dem betreffenden nationalen System nicht gedeckelt, sondern bemessen sich nach geleisteten Beitragszahlungen und Dienstjahren. Dies macht es unmöglich, in zwei oder mehr Systemen ein Ruhegehalt in voller Höhe zu erhalten.

Die Kommission sammelt weder Informationen über in nationalen Versorgungsordnungen erworbene Rentenansprüche und erhaltene Leistungen pensionierter Beamter, noch ist sie hierzu befugt. Anders verhält es sich, wenn ein Beamter die Übertragung dieser Ansprüche auf die Versorgungsordnung der EU im Einklang mit dem Statut beantragt, um zu vermeiden, dass er mehrere Teilrenten erhält.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011181/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Capping of pensions when combining employment relationships

Many officials in the institutions of the European Union are entitled to claim pensions from several employers from different countries. Among other things, members of staff in top leadership roles in the Commission have already been employed in several professional fields and countries.

1. Are their pension entitlements from (1) previous employment relationships and/or (2) their current employment with the EU being reduced? If so, by what percentage?

2. How many Commission employees, particularly those in top leadership roles, receive pensions from more than one country or more than one employment relationship? What is this figure for the years 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014?

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

According to the legislation in force regarding free movement of workers, an EU citizen may move from one Member State to another and as a consequence, receive partial pension entitlements from several social security schemes. Staff of the EU institutions appears in a comparable situation and if an official has worked previously in any of the Member States and has contributed to the pension scheme, he is also entitled to partial pension benefits from that scheme.

It should be noted that, under the amended Staff Regulations that will enter into force on 1 January 2014, a newly recruited official is entitled to a full EU pension only after 39 years of service in the EU institutions. They acquire 1.8% of their basic salary for every year of service, with the maximum of 70%, based on their payment of contributions to the EU pension scheme. Hence, the pension entitlements in the EU pension scheme or in the national scheme are not reduced, but are based on contributions and on years of service. This makes it impossible to obtain a full pension in two or more schemes.

The Commission does not and would not be entitled to collect information about pension rights that retired staff members have acquired in national pension schemes and what benefits they receive, except when a staff member submits a request for transferring these rights to the EU pension scheme, in accordance with the Staff Regulations in order to avoid receiving several partial pensions.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011182/13
an den Rat
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Detaillierte Aufschlüsselung der Kosten für den Tag der Offenen Tür im Rat

In seiner Antwort auf die parlamentarische Anfrage E-005388/2013 von Hans-Peter Martin schreibt der Rat: „Die Ausgaben des Rates für den Tag der offenen Tür" belaufen sich auf:

2009: 76 348 EUR

2010: 77 686 EUR

2011: 65 915 EUR

2012: 73 528 EUR

2013: 67 992 EUR

1. Für welche einzelnen Posten wurden die Summen von 2009 bis 2013 konkret eingesetzt?

2. Sind bei den Angaben der Kosten (2009-2013) bereits die Personalkosten enthalten? Falls nein, auf welche Summe belaufen sich die Kosten für die Bediensteten während des Tages der Offenen Tür und die aufgewendeten Personalkosten für Auf- und Abbau bzw. Vorbereitung der verschiedenen Veranstaltungen?

3. Wie viele Besucher wurden in den Jahren 2009-2013 am Tag der Offenen Tür des Rates gezählt?

Antwort
(9. Dezember 2013)

Die speziellen Einzelposten, für die die Gesamtbeträge zwischen 2009 und 2013 ausgegeben wurden, sind in der Anlage aufgeführt.

Die Personalkosten wurden nicht in die beigefügte Tabelle aufgenommen, da der jährliche Tag der Offenen Tür im Ratsgebäude von den Dienststellen des Generalsekretariat des Rates ohne zusätzliche Personalkosten veranstaltet und vorbereitet wird. Am Tag der Offenen Tür selbst gilt der Grundsatz, dass Mitglieder des Personals freiwillig alle Aufgaben insbesondere im Zusammenhang mit der Begrüßung und Information der Besucher übernehmen.

Die Besucherzahlen am Tag der Offenen Tür des Rates beliefen sich 2009 auf 7 300, 2010 auf 4 770, 2011 auf 6 230, 2012 auf 5 385 und 2013 auf 6 400.

ANLAGE

Tag der Offenen Tür — Ausgaben (EUR)

Posten	Ausgaben 2009	Ausgaben 2010	Ausgaben 2011	Ausgaben 2012	Ausgaben 2013
Werbeartikel	23 000	25 000	15 500	22 632	16 751
Interinstitutionelle Zeitungsanzeigen (teilweise vom Generalsekretariat des Rates übernommen)	11 000	12 600	13 366	13 000	13 000
Vinylaufkleber mit dem Flaggenlogo	1 700	1 600	880	940	940
Repliken des Friedensnobelpreises					6 952
Europa-Karten	300	280	292	310	350
Verpflegung	30 586	28 236	25 797	16 891	10 000
Rotes Kreuz	548	556	676	701	701
Schließung von Durchgängen	4 414	4 414	4 414	4 414	4 414
An den Ständen bereitgestellte Bildschirme	4 800	5 000	4 990	14 640	14 884
Insgesamt	76 348	77 686	65 915	73 528	67 992

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011182/13
to the Council
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Detailed breakdown of the costs for the Council's Open Day

In its answer to parliamentary Question E-005388/2013 from Hans-Peter Martin, the Council states the following: 'Council expenditure for the Open Day is indicated in the following table:

"2009: EUR 76 348

2010: EUR 77 686

2011: EUR 65 915

2012: EUR 73 528

2013: EUR 67 992"'

1. On what specific individual items were the totals from 2009 to 2013 spent?

2. Do the specified costs (2009-2013) already include staff costs? If not, what are the total costs for the staff during the Open Day and the staff costs for setting up and dismantling or preparation of the various events?

3. What were the visitor numbers for the Council Open Day in the years 2009-2013?

Reply
(9 December 2013)

Specific individual items on which the totals from 2009 to 2013 were spent are set out in the annex.

Staff costs are not included in the table in the annex, since the annual Open Day at the Council premises is organised and prepared by the SGC Services with no extra staff costs. On the day of the event, the key principle is that staff members volunteer to perform all activities, notably those relating to welcoming and informing the public.

The visitor numbers for the Council Open Day were 7 300 in 2009, 4 770 in 2010, 6 230 in 2011, 5 385 in 2012 and 6 400 in 2013.

ANNEX

Open day — Expenditure *(EUR)*

Item	Expenditure 2009	Expenditure 2010	Expenditure 2011	Expenditure 2012	Expenditure 2013
Promotional products	23 000	25 000	15 500	22 632	16 751
Interinstitutional publicity in newspapers (partly dealt with by the GSC)	11 000	12 600	13 366	13 000	13 000
Adhesive vinyl banner	1 700	1 600	880	940	940
Replica of Nobel Peace Prize					6 952
Maps of Europe	300	280	292	310	350
Catering	30 586	28 236	25 797	16 891	10 000
Red Cross	548	556	676	701	701
Panels to close passageways	4 414	4 414	4 414	4 414	4 414
Screens available at stands	4 800	5 000	4 990	14 640	14 884
Total	76 348	77 686	65 915	73 528	67 992

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011183/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Kosten des Europatags beziehungsweise der Europatagswoche

Zum Europatag der Europäischen Union beziehungsweise in der „Europatagswoche" organisierten die EU-Informationsbüros der Kommission in den Mitgliedstaaten eine Reihe von Veranstaltungen. So organisierte das EU-Informationsbüro in Wien unter anderem einen Stand auf dem Wiener Straßenfest, mehrere Informationsveranstaltungen, eine Filmvorführung und ein Theaterstück.

1. Welche Kosten fielen für das EU-Informationsbüro in Wien für den Europatag beziehungsweise die Europatagswoche jeweils in den Jahren 2009 bis 2013 an?

2. Welche Kosten fielen für die einzelnen EU-Informationsbüros in den Mitgliedstaaten sowie die einzelnen EU-Informationsbüros in Drittstaaten jeweils im Jahr 2013 für die Veranstaltungen zum Europatag beziehungsweise der Europatagswoche an?

3. Welches waren, insgesamt gesehen, im Jahr 2013 die drei kostenaufwändigsten Veranstaltungen, die EU-Informationsbüros zum Europatag organisierten?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(13. November 2013)

Die Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-006075/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2013-006075 %2b0 %2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0 %2f%2fEN&language=EN

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011183/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Cost of Europe Day and Europe Week

For the European Union's Europe Day and Europe Week, the information offices of the Commission in the Member States organised a series of events. The EU information office in Vienna, for example, organised a stand at the Vienna street festival and arranged several information events, a film showing and a play, among other things.

1. What costs were incurred by the EU information office in Vienna for Europe Day and Europe Week in each of the years from 2009 to 2013?

2. What costs were incurred by each of the individual EU information offices in the Member States and in third countries in 2013 for the events relating to Europe Day or Europe Week?

3. What, overall, were the three most costly events organised by the EU information offices for Europe Day in 2013?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-006075/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2013-006075%2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fEN&language=EN

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011184/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Negative Folgen einer Finanztransaktionssteuer für die Verbraucher

Im September 2011 veröffentlichte die Kommission einen Legislativvorschlag für eine harmonisierte Finanztransaktionssteuer in der EU, mit der die Finanzbranche an den Kosten der Finanzkrise beteiligt werden soll. Aufgrund von Einsprüchen einiger Mitgliedstaaten wurde von einer Gruppe Mitgliedstaaten entschieden, die Steuer im Verfahren der „verstärkten Zusammenarbeit" zu implementieren, woraufhin die Kommission im Februar 2013 einen weiteren Vorschlag unterbreitete.

Verschiedenen Medienberichten zufolge besteht das Risiko, dass die Kosten der Finanztransaktionssteuer nicht im Finanzsystem verbleiben, sondern an die Endverbraucher weitergegeben werden. Damit würde die Steuer ihr ursprüngliches Ziel verfehlen.

1. Wie beurteilt die Kommission dieses Risiko?

2. Kann die Kommission einschätzen, wie hoch die Kosten für die Endverbraucher in jedem einzelnen teilnehmenden Mitgliedstaat ausfallen würden?

3. Was kann in Bezug auf die Ausgestaltung einer künftigen Finanztransaktionssteuer getan werden, um einen solchen Effekt zu verhindern oder möglichst weitgehend einzudämmen?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(21. November 2013)

Im Hinblick auf den Fall, dass mit „Endverbraucher" Kapitalnehmer wie etwa Regierungen oder Investoren im nichtfinanziellen Sektor gemeint sind, erläuterte die Kommission in ihrer Folgenabschätzung die Ergebnisse von Modellen, denen zufolge durch die Besteuerung von Transaktionen auf dem Sekundärmarkt die Kapitalkosten auf den betreffenden Primärmärkten um sieben Basispunkte steigen könnten. Andererseits würde auch die relative Marktmacht von Käufern und Verkäufern eine Rolle spielen, da der Kommissionsvorschlag vorsieht, dass beide Transaktionsparteien die Steuer zu entrichten hätten. Daher könnte der Nettoeffekt in der Praxis bei Null liegen. Davon abgesehen wird damit gerechnet, dass die Kapitalkosten infolge zusätzlicher Einnahmen der Regierungen oder der geringeren Inanspruchnahme kostspieliger Leistungen von Finanzintermediären gedämpft werden, was sich für die „Endverbraucher" positiv auswirkt.

Im Hinblick auf den Fall, dass mit „Endverbraucher" die „Halter von Vermögenswerten" wie etwa „Sparer" oder „Rentenempfänger" gemeint sind, erläuterte die Kommission Beispiele dafür, welche Wirkung zu erwarten ist, wenn das Finanzinstitut Wertpapiere entweder unmittelbar im Namen privater Haushalte oder mittelbar über Fonds oder Dachfonds erwirbt oder veräußert. Im ersten Fall könnte der Finanzsektor die Steuer direkt auf die Privathaushalte abwälzen, so dass etwa ein Aktienkauf über den Betrag von 10 000 EUR mit zusätzlichen Transaktionskosten von 10 EUR verbunden wäre. Im zweiten Fall wird damit gerechnet, dass nur „passive" Fonds mit niedrigen Transaktionskosten, die somit nur sehr begrenzt von der Steuer betroffen sind, die Zusatzkosten weitergeben könnten, wogegen die anderen, „aktiven" Fonds die Steuer durch die Änderung der Geschäftsmodelle (Verringerung der Handelsfrequenz) und niedrigere Verwaltungsgebühren und Leistungsvergütungen auffangen müssten, da sie andernfalls durch die von der Steuer kaum betroffenen Geschäftsmodelle aus dem Markt gedrängt würden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011184/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Negative consequences of a financial transaction tax for consumers

In September 2011, the Commission published a legislative proposal for a harmonised financial transaction tax in the EU, with the aim of making the financial sector contribute to the costs of the financial crisis. On account of objections raised by some Member States, a group of Member States decided to implement the tax under the enhanced cooperation procedure, and so the Commission submitted a further proposal in February 2013.

According to various media reports, there is a risk that the costs associated with the financial transaction tax will not remain within the financial system, but be passed on to final consumers. The tax would therefore have failed to achieve its original purpose.

1. What is the Commission's assessment of this risk?

2. Can it estimate how high the costs would be for final consumers in each of the participating Member States?

3. How can a future financial transaction tax be constructed in order to prevent this sort of effect or to reduce it as much as possible?

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

Assuming that 'final consumers' means 'borrowers', such as governments or investors in the non-financial sector, the Commission in its impact assessment presented the findings of models that concluded that taxing transactions on the secondary market might increase the cost of capital on the respective primary markets by 7 basis points. On the other hand, it would also depend on the relative market power of buyers and sellers, as the Commission proposal foresees that both parties to the transaction would have to pay the tax. So, the net effect might actually be zero. Moreover, other mitigating effects on the cost of capital, such as additional revenue for Governments or less exposure to costly financial intermediation are expected to play in favour of such 'final consumers'.

Assuming that 'final consumers' means 'asset holders', such as 'savers' or 'pensioners' the Commission presented examples of the impact in case the financial institution bought/sold securities either directly in the name of private households or indirectly via funds or funds of funds. In the first case the financial sector might directly pass the tax on to the private household, e.g. a purchase of shares for EUR 10 000 might come at additional transaction cost of EUR 10. In the second case it is expected that only those 'passive' funds that have low transaction cost and thus are only to a very limited extend exposed to the tax would be able to pass through the additional cost, while the other 'active' funds would have to absorb the tax through changing business models (trading less frequently) and lower management and performance fees as they would otherwise be crowded out of the market by those business models that were hardly affected by the tax.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011185/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(2 octobre 2013)

Objet: Boom des soucis de garantie

Les appareils électroniques incassables n'existent pas. Trop souvent nos Smartphones, ordinateurs ou tablettes connaissent des problèmes avant la fin de la garantie.

Problème: les revendeurs refusent encore souvent de la faire fonctionner. 388 litiges en Belgique depuis janvier 2013.

1. Combien ailleurs?

2. La Commission possède-t-elle des statistiques européennes par pays?

3. Est-ce un méfait en augmentation pour l'Europe comme cela l'est en Belgique?

4. Est-ce plus spécifique à des produits ou des types de produits?

5. Comment la Commission compte-t-elle lutter contre cela?

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

La Commission ne dispose pas de statistiques détaillées sur le nombre de litiges relatifs aux garanties légales prévues par la directive 1999/44/CE. De telles statistiques devraient englober des litiges résolus à différents niveaux: directement entre le consommateur et le professionnel, ou avec l'aide d'associations de consommateurs, ou encore dans le cadre des modes alternatifs de règlement des litiges, ou enfin devant les tribunaux.

La Commission sait que les réclamations relatives aux garanties peuvent représenter une part non négligeable des réclamations introduites par les citoyens. Ainsi, dans le cas des achats transfrontières, environ 10 % des 32 000 réclamations reçues par les Centres européens des consommateurs en 2012 concernaient l'application de la directive 1999/44/CE ([1]). La base de données constituée à partir des réclamations de consommateurs collectées par les organismes nationaux de traitement des réclamations intervenant en tant que tierce partie, conformément à la méthode harmonisée décrite dans la recommandation ([2]), et signalées pour la première fois dans le 8^e^ tableau de bord des marchés de consommation ([3]), intègre également les réclamations portant sur les garanties ([4]).

Lorsqu'il s'agit de produits électroniques portables (appareils photos, smartphones, tablettes), il peut en effet être difficile au consommateur de démontrer que le bien ne fonctionne plus parce qu'il n'était pas conforme au contrat au moment de la livraison et non parce qu'il a été endommagé à la suite d'un choc, d'un contact avec l'eau ou d'un autre incident qui aurait été causé par le consommateur.

La Commission vérifie systématiquement l'application de la législation protégeant les consommateurs et elle a prévu de lancer une étude du marché de la consommation en 2014, dans le domaine des garanties légales relatives aux biens de consommation. L'un des objectifs de cette étude sera d'évaluer les difficultés que rencontrent les consommateurs pour faire valoir leurs droits dans certains cas, tels que celui que vous avez évoqué. Au vu des résultats de cette étude, la Commission examinera la nécessité de prendre de nouvelles mesures.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/ecc/docs/report_ecc-net_2012_en.pdf, page 12.
([2]) Recommandation de la Commission relative à l'utilisation d'une méthode harmonisée pour classer les réclamations et demandes des consommateurs et communiquer les données y afférentes (C(2010)3021): http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/complaints/policy_framework_en.htm
([3]) 8^e^ tableau de bord des marchés de consommation, 2012, Commission européenne, DG SANCO: http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/consumer_research/editions/cms8_en.htm
([4]) Environ 3,5 % des 133 000 cas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011185/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Boom in warranty concerns

Unbreakable electronic devices do not exist. All too often, our smartphones, computers or notebooks run into problems before the warranty has expired.

The problem is that retailers often refuse to invoke the warranty. There have been 388 disputes in Belgium since January 2013.

1. How many have there been elsewhere?

2. Does the Commission have European statistics broken down by country?

3. Is this a growing problem in Europe as well as in Belgium?

4. Does it apply specifically to certain products or types of products?

5. How does the Commission intend to combat this?

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

The Commission does not have detailed statistics on the number of disputes involving legal guarantees under Directive 1999/44/EC. Such statistics would have to include disputes resolved at different levels: individually with traders, with the help of consumer associations or alternative dispute resolution schemes and finally through courts.

The Commission is informed that complaints concerning guarantees may represent a large share of complaints from individual citizens. In the case of cross border purchases about 10% of the 32 000 complaints received by European Consumer Centres in 2012 were related to the application of Directive 1999/44/EC ([1]). The database of consumer complaints collected by national third-party complaint bodies according to the harmonised methodology set out in the recommendation ([2]) and reported on for the first time in the 8th Consumer Markets Scoreboard ([3]) also includes complaints related to guarantees and warranties ([4]).

In cases of portable electronic goods (cameras, smartphones tablets), it may indeed be difficult for consumers to prove that the good is not functioning anymore because it was not in conformity with the contract at the time of delivery and not because it was damaged following a shock or a contact with water or another incident which would have been caused by the consumer.

The Commission systematically monitors the application of the consumer legislation and is planning to launch a consumer market study in 2014 in the area of consumer legal guarantees. One of the objectives of this study will be to evaluate the difficulty for consumers to claim their rights in certain instances such as the one you raised. On the basis of the possible outcomes of this study the Commission will assess the need for further action.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/ecc/docs/report_ecc-net_2012_en.pdf, page 12.
([2]) Commission Recommendation on the use of a harmonised methodology for classifying and reporting consumer. Complaints and enquiries (C(2010)3021), http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/complaints/policy_framework_en.htm
([3]) 8th Consumer Markets Scoreboard, 2012, European Commission, DG SANCO, http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/consumer_research/editions/cms8_en.htm
([4]) About 3.5% of the 133 000 cases.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011186/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(2 octobre 2013)

Objet: Danger des hypothèques de plus de 30 ans

Les banques souhaitent allonger la durée des hypothèques de 30 à 40 ans.

Pour reprendre l'exemple cité dans la presse par un député régional: imaginez que vous empruntiez 100 000 euros à un taux fixe de 4 % sur 30 ans. Celui-ci vous coûterait alors 171 869 euros. Si vous faites le même prêt sur 35 ans, vous devrez alors payer 185 965 euros pour une mensualité qui ne sera réduite que de 34,65 euros. Cela n'est donc pas du tout avantageux pour l'acheteur.

1. La Commission partage-t-elle l'avis que cela représente un danger pour l'acheteur?

2. Comment la Commission accueille-t-elle cet allongement potentiel du crédit hypothécaire?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(25 novembre 2013)

La Commission est informée de la récente tendance à allonger la durée des prêts malgré les taux d'intérêt historiquement bas qui prévalent après la crise financière.

En mars 2011, elle a proposé une directive sur le crédit hypothécaire ([1]) qui, je l'espère, sera adoptée par les colégislateurs d'ici la fin de cette année. Cette directive introduit pour la première fois des critères européens d'évaluation de la solvabilité. Les États membres doivent veiller à ce que les prestataires de crédit ne proposent un crédit au consommateur que si l'évaluation de sa solvabilité indique que les obligations résultant du contrat de crédit sont susceptibles d'être remplies conformément aux conditions stipulées dans ce contrat.

L'allongement de la durée d'un prêt peut être dans l'intérêt du consommateur, mais elle peut également être le signe, dans certains cas, d'une incapacité de rembourser dans le délai initialement prévu. En conséquence, lors de l'évaluation de la solvabilité des clients potentiels, les prestataires de crédit devront aussi être attentifs à la durée générale du crédit.

La directive rendra, en outre, les coûts du crédit plus transparents pour les consommateurs, en obligeant les prestataires de crédit à leur fournir, au stade précontractuel, des informations précises sur le crédit proposé, au moyen de la fiche européenne d'information standardisée (FEIS). Le consommateur pourra, entre autres, obtenir des informations concrètes sur la durée du prêt et sur le montant total à rembourser. La fiche d'information lui permettra ainsi de comparer plus facilement différents scénarios de prêt et offres de crédit proposés sur le marché.

([1]) COM(2011) 142.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011186/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Danger of mortgages with a term of over 30 years

Banks want to extend the term of mortgages from 30 to 40 years.

To use the example quoted in the press by a regional politician: imagine that you borrow EUR 100 000 at a fixed rate of 4% for 30 years. The loan will cost you EUR 171 869. The same loan over 35 years will cost EUR 185 965, but monthly payments will only be EUR 34.65 less. There is therefore no benefit to the borrower.

1. Does the Commission endorse the view that this represents a danger to borrowers?

2. What are the Commission's views on the potential extension of mortgage terms?

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

The Commission is aware of recent trends to extend the duration of loans despite the record-low interest rate environment after the financial crisis.

In March 2011, the Commission proposed a Mortgage Credit Directive (MCD) ([1]), which will hopefully be adopted by the co-legislators by the end of this year. The directive introduces for the first time EU-wide creditworthiness assessment criteria. Member States are required to ensure that credit providers only make credit available to consumer where the result of the creditworthiness assessment indicates that the obligations resulting from the credit agreement are likely to be met in the manner required under that agreement.

Extending the duration of a loan can be in the consumer's interest, but might also signal in certain instances an inability to repay the loan within the time span initially foreseen. Thus, when assessing the creditworthiness of potential clients, credit providers will also need to pay due attention to the general duration of the credit.

The directive will also make credit costs more transparent for the consumer by obliging credit providers to provide consumers at pre-contractual level with precise information on the proposed credit by means of the European Standardised Information Sheet (ESIS). The consumer will, *inter alia*, receive precise information on the duration of the loan and on the total amount to be reimbursed. The ESIS will therefore facilitate for the consumer the comparison of different credit offers and loan scenarios available on the market.

([1]) COM(2011) 142.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011187/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(2 octobre 2013)

Objet: Interdire les cigarettes en chocolat

Ne serait-il pas logique que la Commission pousse à l'interdiction de la vente de confiseries et de jouets destinés aux enfants, avec l'intention de donner au produit ou à son emballage l'apparence d'un produit à base de tabac?

Quel est l'avis de la Commission sur la vente de cigarettes en chocolat?

Partage-t-elle l'avis des récentes études menées dans de nombreux pays démontrant que les cigarettes en chocolat peuvent induire un comportement mimétique chez l'enfant et peuvent donc doubler la probabilité de voir l'enfant devenir fumeur à l'adolescence et à l'âge adulte, indépendamment du fait que ses parents soient ou non fumeurs?

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

La recommandation 2003/54/CE du Conseil relative à la prévention du tabagisme et à des initiatives visant à renforcer la lutte antitabac ([1]) demande déjà aux États membres d'interdire «la vente de confiseries et de jouets destinés aux enfants et fabriqués avec la nette intention de donner au produit et/ou à son emballage l'apparence d'un type de produit du tabac».

De même, la Convention-cadre de l'OMS pour la lutte antitabac, qui est un traité international obligatoire auquel sont parties tous les États membres et l'Union européenne, encourage les gouvernements à interdire «la fabrication et la vente de confiseries, en-cas, jouets ou autres objets ayant la forme de produits du tabac attrayants pour les mineurs».

Ces dernières années, la Commission n'a réalisé aucune étude permettant de déterminer si les cigarettes en chocolat augmentaient la probabilité qu'un enfant commence à fumer à l'adolescence ou à l'âge adulte.

Enfin, cette question n'a pas été incluse dans la proposition de la Commission visant à réviser la directive relative aux produits du tabac ([2]), étant donné que la directive en question ne semble pas être l'instrument adéquat pour traiter de ces produits.

([1]) JO L 22 du 25.1.2003, p 31.
([2]) COM(2012) 788 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011187/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Ban on chocolate cigarettes

Would it not make sense for the Commission to push for a ban on confectionary and toys designed for children with the intention of making products or packaging look like tobacco-based products?

What is the Commission's opinion on the sale of chocolate cigarettes?

Does it endorse the findings of recent studies carried out in numerous countries which illustrate that chocolate cigarettes may encourage children to mimic adult behaviour and may therefore double the probability of the child becoming a smoker in adolescence or as an adult, regardless of whether or not the parents smoke?

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

Council Recommendation 2003/54/EC on the prevention of smoking and on initiatives to improve tobacco control ([1]) already calls on Member States to prohibit 'the sale of sweets and toys intended for children and manufactured with the clear intention that the product and/or packaging would resemble in appearance a type of tobacco product'.

Similarly, the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, which is a mandatory international treaty to which all Member States and the EU are Parties, encourages governments to 'prohibit the manufacture and sale of sweets, snacks, toys or any other objects in the form of tobacco products which appeal to minors'.

The Commission has not carried out studies in recent years analysing whether chocolate cigarettes increase the likelihood of a child taking up smoking in adolescence or as an adult.

Finally, this issue was not included in the Commission's proposal to revise the Tobacco Products Directive ([2]) as the directive in question does not seem to be the adequate instrument to deal with these products.

([1]) OJ L 22/31, 25.1.2003.
([2]) COM(2012) 788 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011188/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(2 octobre 2013)

Objet: Téléphoner en vol

Trente pour cent des voyageurs confient avoir déjà «accidentellement» laissé un appareil allumé au décollage ou à l'atterrissage.

La demande devenait telle que la Federal Aviation Administration, autorité absolue en matière de règles d'aviation pour les États-Unis, n'était plus en mesure d'enclencher la commande de dépressurisation. Sous la pression de voyageurs plus connectés que jamais et lassés de devoir limiter leurs interactions électroniques dans la cabine, peut-être sous la pression de lobbys divers également, l'institution a mandaté un groupe de réflexion au sein duquel vingt-huit experts devaient statuer sur un assouplissement des règles concernant l'utilisation de gadgets électroniques en vol.

Et les experts sont arrivés à la conclusion suivante, que les accros du jeu *Angry Birds*, très *angry* de devoir interrompre leur partie durant la descente de l'aéronef, verront d'un bon œil: les précautions actuelles sont obsolètes et aucun danger concret d'interférer sur la stabilité électronique de l'appareil ne peut être posé par une console, un smartphone, un PC ou une tablette.

Concrètement, alors qu'aujourd'hui tout dispositif électronique doit être éteint à une altitude inférieure à 3 000 m, les recommandations du groupe d'experts (que la FAA suivra) appellent à une utilisation pendant toute la durée du vol (plus besoin d'éteindre l'appareil), mais avec quelques restrictions, comme l'interdiction d'utiliser le Wi-Fi, la 3G ou d'émettre ou de recevoir des appels pendant les phases, cruciales, de décollage et d'atterrissage.

Une fois la bénédiction de la FAA reçu, les compagnies aériennes seront libres d'assouplir leur règlement interne. Vu la demande des voyageurs qu'elles transbahutent, c'est une certitude: elles le feront. Et l'Europe, par l'entremise de l'EASA (la FAA du Vieux Continent) a de grandes chances de suivre le sillage.

1. Comment la Commission se positionne-t-elle?

2. À supposer qu'il n'y ait pas de danger, qu'en est-il des désagréments causés par la proximité imposée aux passagers dans un espace restreint lorsqu'il sera permis d'utiliser les téléphones à bord?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(10 décembre 2013)

La Commission est au courant du débat qui agite l'opinion publique mondiale sur l'utilisation des appareils électroniques portatifs, notamment des téléphones portables, à bord des aéronefs. Il est actuellement déjà permis d'utiliser les téléphones portables en cours de vol sous certaines conditions.

L'Agence européenne de la sécurité aérienne (AESA) a été associée aux travaux du groupe d'experts mentionné par l'Honorable Parlementaire. Dès que le rapport final de la FAA sera disponible, l'AESA devrait formuler des recommandations contenant de plus amples précisions et des directives en vue d'autoriser l'utilisation des appareils électroniques portatifs sans compromettre la sécurité d'exploitation continue des aéronefs.

Il n'existe aucune restriction en ce qui concerne les désagréments causés par la proximité imposée aux passagers dans un espace confiné tel qu'un avion, un train, une voiture ou une pièce, et il n'est pas prévu de réglementer le niveau sonore des conversations sur téléphones portables dans ce type d'environnement. C'est toujours aux transporteurs aériens qu'il revient de déterminer quels types d'appareils peuvent être utilisés à bord de leurs aéronefs et pendant quelles phases de vol.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011188/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: In-flight calls

Thirty per cent of passengers admit that they have 'accidentally' left a device on during take-off or landing.

Demand has become so high that the Federal Aviation Administration, the absolute authority on aviation matters in the United States, has been unable to press the depressurisation button. Under pressure from passengers used to being online and loath to limit their in-flight electronic communications and possibly under pressure from various lobbies, the Administration has instructed an advisory panel of twenty-eight experts to decide if the rules on in-flight use of electronic gadgets can be relaxed.

The experts arrived at the following conclusion, which aficionados of the computer game 'Angry Birds', who were very angry at having to interrupt their game during the descent of the aircraft, will welcome: the current precautions are obsolete and no console, smartphone, PC or notebook poses an actual risk of interference with the aircraft's electronic systems.

At present, all electronic devices must be switched off at altitudes of less than 3 000 metres; however, the group of experts (which the FAA will follow) is calling for use throughout the flight (no need to switch devices off), but with certain restrictions, such as a ban on the use of Wi-Fi, 3G or incoming or outgoing calls during the crucial phases of take-off and landing.

Once the FAA has given its blessing, airlines will be free to relax their internal regulations. Given the demand from the passengers carried, one thing is certain: they will do so and Europe, via the EASA (the Old World's FAA) is very likely to follow suit.

1. What is the Commission's opinion on this?

2. Assuming that there is no danger, what about the disturbance caused by the proximity imposed on passengers in a confined space if in-flight telephone calls are allowed?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(10 December 2013)

The Commission is aware of the worldwide debate around the use on board aircraft of portable electronic devices (PEDs) including mobile phones. Already today the use of mobile phones during cruise flights is possible under certain conditions.

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) has been involved in the activity of the advisory panel mentioned by the Honourable Member. The Agency is expected to make recommendations to further clarify and provide guidance on allowing PEDs without compromising the continued safe operation of the aircraft once the final report from the FAA is available.

There are no restrictions on disturbance caused by the proximity imposed on passengers in any confined space located in an airplane, train, car, building and there are no plans to regulate the noise levels from mobile phone chatter in such environment. The aircraft operator is still responsible for determining what types of devices may be used on board their aircraft and during which phase of flight.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011189/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(2 octobre 2013)

Objet: Red Bull te donne des problèmes cardiaques

L'absorption de boissons énergisantes provoque des troubles cardiaques, neurologiques et psychologiques.

Le débat n'est pas neuf, les boissons dites énergisantes (BDE) ne sont pas bonnes pour la santé. Leurs fortes concentrations en caféine, taurine et sucres ont des effets nocifs sur notre organisme.

L'Anses (Agence française de sécurité sanitaire) présente mardi son rapport sur les risques liés à leur consommation. Des problèmes cardiaques suspects seraient mis en lien avec l'ingurgitation de ces boissons, de type Red Bull, Monster ou Nalu, pour ne citer que les plus célèbres. Plusieurs cas de troubles ont été rapportés en France. Des problèmes cardio-vasculaires, psychologiques et neurologiques ont été constatés par des médecins de l'hexagone suite à l'ingestion de ces poisons, euh… boissons.

Les grands problèmes ciblés par les agences de protection alimentaire sont la consommation de ces produits chez les jeunes (enfants et adolescents) et leur prise sous forme de cocktails, mélangés à un alcool. En effet, les BDE masquent les effets de l'alcool à cause de leurs actifs excitants. La sensation d'ivresse est moindre et les risques pris sont donc accrus, que ce soit au volant ou même dans les interactions avec les autres. En outre, la caféine, tout comme l'alcool, a des effets notablement diurétiques et la combinaison de ces deux produits peut donc provoquer des déshydratations sévères en cas d'efforts intenses (comme une série de danses enflammées sur les pistes de nos plus célèbres boîtes de nuit).

En ce qui concerne la consommation des boissons énergétiques chez les jeunes, le constat européen est tout aussi effrayant. Ces boissons contiennent une quantité de caféine et de sucre bien trop élevée pour nos benjamins, mais ça ne freine pourtant pas près d'un enfant sur cinq.

1. Un rapport de l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (EFSA) révèle que les jeunes Européens boivent ces sodas quasi dès le berceau et que les millions de litres absorbés par les habitants du vieux continent atteignent des taux alarmants. Ce nouveau rapport ne rend-il pas le tableau encore un peu plus sombre?

2. La Commission compte-t-elle prendre des mesures contre ces boissons qui représentent un danger tant pour les adultes que pour les enfants, en imposant par exemple des limites pour certains composants de ces produits?

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

La Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à prendre connaissance de sa réponse à la question écrite E-003646/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011189/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Red Bull gives you heart problems

The consumption of energy drinks causes cardiac, neurological and psychological problems.

This debate is not new; energy drinks are not good for your health. Their high concentrations of caffeine, taurine and sugar cause physical damage.

The French food safety agency (Anses) is due to present its report on the risks associated with these drinks on Tuesday. Suspected heart problems will be linked to the consumption of drinks such as Red Bull, Monster or Nalu, to name but a few of the most common. Several cases of problems have been reported in France. Cardiovascular, psychological and neurological problems have been diagnosed by doctors in France following the consumption of these drinks.

The main problems targeted by food safety agencies are consumption of these drinks by young people (children and teenagers) and their consumption in the form of a cocktail, mixed with alcohol. The active stimulants in energy drinks actually mask the effects of the alcohol. The sense of intoxication is reduced and the risks taken, either at the wheel or in interactions with other people, are therefore higher. Furthermore, both caffeine and alcohol have a diuretic effect and the combination of these two products may cause severe dehydration in the case of intense activity (such as prolonged energetic dancing on the floors of our most famous nightclubs).

As regards the consumption of energy drinks by young people, the findings for Europe are equally alarming. These drinks contain far too much caffeine and sugar for young people, but that does not deter nearly one child in five.

1. A report by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) states that young Europeans drink these sodas almost from the cradle and that the millions of litres absorbed by people in the Old World are reaching alarming rates. Does this new report not paint an even darker picture?

2. Does the Commission intend to take measures against these drinks, which pose a risk to adults and children alike, by imposing, for example, limits on certain ingredients in such products?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to the answer given to Written Question E-003646/2013 ([1]).

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

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011190/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(2 octobre 2013)

Objet: Patch anti-ondes pour téléphone portable

Le patch anti-ondes GSM débarque en Belgique. Pas tout à fait neuf: le principe, simplissime, de ces autocollants à apposer au dos de votre mobile, a plus de 10 ans. Il s'agit d'un circuit imprimé ultrafin, de forme ronde et aux dimensions précises (qui correspondent à celles de l'antenne du mobile).

L'autocollant, vendu une bonne vingtaine d'euros, forme en réalité une antenne passive, utilisant le principe du déphasage à 180° pour annuler l'onde polluante émise par le méchant téléphone. Le tout pour une qualité de réception et d'émission du mobile intacte, c'est du moins ce que promettent les commerciaux.

La nouveauté, ici, repose dans l'homologation du patch, le premier en Belgique, qui lui donne un crédit certain et la permission d'être vendu en pharmacie.

Le principe du déphasage à 180° est scientifiquement avéré dans la réduction du DAS (débit d'absorption spécifique), limité à 2 W/kg, que notre ministre impose justement aux vendeurs de mobiles d'afficher clairement sur leurs emballages et étiquettes.

1. Quelle est la position de la Commission?

2. Y voit-elle un opportunisme malsain en laissant des entreprises tirer profit d'une inquiétude ambiante, non établie?

3. La Commission penche-t-elle vers la thèse de la dangerosité des ondes provenant des téléphones portables pour notre santé et notre cerveau?

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

La recommandation du Conseil du 12 juillet 1999 ([1]) a établi des restrictions de base et des niveaux de référence pour l'exposition du public aux champs électromagnétiques, y compris les rayonnements électromagnétiques non ionisants émis par les téléphones mobiles.

Le comité scientifique européen indépendant des risques sanitaires émergents et nouveaux (CSRSEN) dispose d'un mandat permanent pour évaluer les risques des champs électromagnétiques. La Commission demande périodiquement l'actualisation des preuves scientifiques disponibles pour évaluer les risques des champs électromagnétiques et vérifie si les dernières observations attestées justifient toujours les limites d'exposition proposées dans la recommandation du Conseil susmentionnée. Selon les dernières études dudit comité (2009) ([2]), il n'est pas probable que l'exposition à la radiofréquence des champs électromagnétiques entraîne une multiplication des cas de cancer chez l'homme ou ait des effets non-carcinogénétiques négatifs sur la santé. Un nouvel examen est en cours et il devrait être achevé avant la fin de 2013.

Cependant, conformément au traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne, la protection de la santé en tant que telle relève essentiellement de la responsabilité des États membres.

([1]) (JO L 199 du 30.7.1999, p. 59) Recommandation du Conseil du 12 juillet 1999 relative à la limitation de l'exposition du public aux champs électromagnétiques (de 0 Hz à 300 GHz).
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_risk/committees/04_scenihr/docs/scenihr_o_022.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011190/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Anti-radiation patch for mobile telephones

The GSM anti-radiation patch has landed in Belgium. It is not exactly new: the idea of these very simple stickers for the back of your mobile telephone is over 10 years old. They contain a round ultrafine printed circuit of the same size as the telephone aerial.

The sticker, which sells for around EUR 20, is actually a passive aerial which uses the principle of a 180° phase shift to cancel out the harmful radiation emitted by the nasty telephone. The quality of reception and transmission are not affected, at least not according to the suppliers.

The novelty here is that homologation has been obtained for this first patch in Belgium, which gives it a certain credibility and means that it can be sold in pharmacies.

The principle of a 180° phase shift is scientifically proven to reduce the SAR (specific absorption rate). This is limited to 2 W/kg and our minister rightly insists that it must be clearly marked on packaging and labels.

1. What is the Commission's position?

2. Does it consider that it is unhealthy opportunism to allow companies to profit from a general, but unsubstantiated concern?

3. Does the Commission subscribe to the view that the radiation emitted by mobile telephones is dangerous to our health and our brain?

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

The Council Recommendation of 12 July 1999 ([1]) has set basic restrictions and reference levels for the exposure of the general public to electromagnetic fields (EMFs) including non-ionising radiation emitted by mobile phones.

The independent European Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR) has a standing mandate to evaluate the risks from electromagnetic fields. The Commission requests periodically an update of the scientific evidence available to evaluate the risks from EMF and checks whether latest evidence still supports the exposure limits as proposed in the abovementioned Council Recommendation. According to its latest review (2009) ([2]), exposure to radiofrequency EMF is unlikely to lead to an increase in cancer incidence in humans or to non-carcinogenetic negative health outcomes. A new review is ongoing and it is expected to be finalised by the end of 2013.

However, in accordance with the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the protection of health as such is primarily a responsibility of Member States.

([1]) (OJ. L 199/59, 30.7.1999) Council Recommendation of 12 July 1999 on the limitation of exposure of the general public to electromagnetic fields (0 Hz to 300 GHz).
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_risk/committees/04_scenihr/docs/scenihr_o_022.pdf

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-011192/13
upućeno Komisiji
Andrej Plenković (PPE)
(2. listopada 2013.)

Predmet: Problem onečišćenja zraka na području Slavonskog Broda zbog emisija iz „Rafinerije nafte Brod" a.d. u susjednoj Bosni i Hercegovini

Tijekom proteklih nekoliko godina na području Brodsko-posavske županije, a osobito grada Slavonskog Broda i njegove okolice u Republici Hrvatskoj, uočeno je kontinuirano onečišćenje zraka koje je prouzročeno štetnim emisijama iz „Rafinerije nafte Brod" a.d., koja se nalazi u susjednoj Bosni i Hercegovini u neposrednoj blizini rijeke Save.

Na temelju informacija koje sam kao član Europskog parlamenta zaprimio od župana Brodsko-posavske županije razvidno je kako su stanovnici Slavonskog Broda, sukladno podacima o mjerenju kvalitete zraka, izloženi sumpornom dioksidu, sumporovodiku, dušičnim oksidima, benzenu, ozonu i lebdećim česticama. Mjerenja su pokazala da dolazi do visokih prekoračenja onečišćujućih tvari, osobito u zimskim mjesecima, a za pojedine kao što je npr. ozon koncentracije su bile povišene i u ljetnim mjesecima. Stoga je Županijska skupština Brodsko-posavske županije donijela Zaključak kojim traži pomoć od nadležnih institucija Europske unije u rješavanju ovog pitanja.

Riječ je o ozbiljnom ekološkom problemu prekograničnog karaktera koji u velikoj mjeri narušava kvalitetu života i zdravlje stanovnika Slavonskog Broda i okolice.

Zanima me koje mjere može poduzeti Europska komisija kako bi u dijalogu s vlastima Bosne i Hercegovine obvezala „Rafineriju nafte Brod" a.d. na ubrzanu modernizaciju i usvajanje europskih standarda zaštite okoliša i time spriječila daljnje onečišćenje zraka koje ugrožava zdravlje stanovništva Slavonskog Broda?

Odgovor g. Potočnika u ime Komisije
(21. studenog 2013.)

Ugovor o stabilizaciji i pridruživanju između Europskih zajednica i njihovih država članica i Bosne i Hercegovine ratificiran je, no još nije stupio na snagu. Unatoč naporima koje je Komisija poduzela kako bi aktivno pomogla u usklađivanju sa zakonodavstvom EU-a u području zaštite okoliša, u tom je području postignut samo ograničeni napredak, a izazova je još mnogo, kako je potvrđeno u nedavno donesenom izvješću Komisije o napretku za 2013. ([1]).

Bosna i Hercegovina ugovorna je stranka i Ugovora o Energetskoj zajednici ([2]), na temelju kojeg se obvezala da će poduzeti sve što je moguće kako bi provela Direktivu 2008/1/EZ ([3]) o integriranom sprečavanju i kontroli onečišćenja (Direktiva o IPPC-u) u sektoru energetskih mreža (uključujući rafinerije). Ta je obveza, međutim, neobvezujuća. Tom se Direktivom zahtijeva da se dotičnim postrojenjima upravlja uz primjenu „najboljih raspoloživih tehnologija" (NRT) kako bi se spriječilo, u što većoj mjeri smanjilo te uklonilo onečišćenje uzrokovano industrijskim djelatnostima.

U pogledu velikih uređaja za loženje, uključujući one u rafinerijama, Ugovor o Energetskoj zajednici nedavno je izmijenjen Odlukom Vijeća ministara ([4]). Ugovorne stranke morat će provoditi odredbe poglavlja III. i Priloga V. Direktive 2010/75/EU o industrijskim emisijama (IED) ([5]) za nove velike uređaje za loženje počevši od 1. siječnja 2018. Nije dogovoren rok za provedbu IED-a za postojeće velike uređaje za loženje, na koje će se i dalje primjenjivati odredbe Direktive o velikim uređajima za loženje 2001/80/EZ ([6]) u skladu s uvjetima utvrđenima u Odluci Vijeća ministara o prilagodbi te Direktive okviru Energetske zajednice ([7]).

([1]) Izvješće o napretku uz Komunikaciju Komisije Europskom parlamentu i Vijeću — Strategija proširenja i glavni izazovi 2013. — 2014. (COM(2013) 700 final), 16.10.2013.
([2]) http://www.energy-community.org.
([3]) SL L 24, 29.1.2008.
([4]) Odluka D/2013/06/MC-EnC od 24. listopada 2013.
([5]) SL L 334, 17.12.2010., str. 334.
([6]) SL L 309, 27.11.2001., str. 1.
([7]) Odluka D/2013/05/MC-EnC od 24. listopada 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011192/13
to the Commission
Andrej Plenković (PPE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Air pollution problem in the Slavonski Brod area caused by emissions from an oil refinery in neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina

Over the past few years Brod-Posavina County, and especially the city of Slavonski Brod and surrounding Croatian areas, have been subjected to unremitting air pollution caused by noxious emissions from a nearby oil refinery, Rafinerija nafte Brod a.d., situated in neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina on the other side of the Sava river.

The information which I, as a Member of the European Parliament, have obtained from the Prefect of Brod-Posavina County clearly shows that the inhabitants of Slavonski Brod are being exposed, according to the air quality measurement data, to sulphur dioxide, hydrogen sulphide, nitrogen oxides, benzene, ozone, and suspended particulate matter. Measured pollutant concentrations far exceed the limit values, especially in winter months, and some individual pollutants, for example ozone, have been detected in higher concentrations than normal in summer months as well. That is why the Brod-Posavina County Assembly has adopted a resolution calling on the appropriate EU institutions to help find a solution.

What is involved in this case is a serious environmental problem of a cross-border nature that is severely impairing the quality of life and the health of the people living in and around Slavonski Brod.

What steps can the Commission take to ensure that, through dialogue with the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities, an obligation is imposed to modernise the oil refinery without delay and bring it into line with European environmental protection standards, thereby averting further air pollution and the related public health hazards in Slavonski Brod?

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

The Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States and Bosnia and Herzegovina has been ratified, but has not yet entered into force. Despite the efforts made by the Commission to actively assist in the approximation towards the EU environmental law that, there is only limited progress in this field, and major challenges remain, as was confirmed in the Commission's recently adopted 2013 progress report ([1]).

Bosnia and Herzegovina is also a Contracting Party to the Energy Community ([2]), under which it has committed to endeavour to implement Directive 2008/1/EC ([3]) concerning Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC Directive) in the field of the network energy sector (including refineries). However, this is not a binding obligation. This directive requires the operation of concerned installations by applying the 'best available techniques (BAT)' in order to prevent, reduce and as far as possible eliminate pollution arising from industrial activities.

For large combustion plants, including those within refineries, the Energy Community Treaty has been recently amended through a Ministerial Council Decision ([4]). Contracting Parties will have to implement the provisions of Chapter III and Annex V of Directive 2010/75/EU on industrial emissions (IED) ([5]) for new large combustion plants from 1 January 2018 on. No IED implementation deadline was agreed for existing large combustion plants, which will remain subject to the provisions of the Large Combustion Plant Directive 2001/80/EC ([6]) under the conditions set out in the Ministerial Council Decision adapting that directive to the Energy Community framework ([7]).

([1]) Progress Report accompanying the document Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council — Enlargement Strategy And Main Challenges 2013-2014 (COM(2013) 700 final), 16.10.2013.
([2]) http://www.energy-community.org
([3]) OJ L 24, 29.1.2008.
([4]) Decision D/2013/06/MC-EnC of 24 October 2013.
([5]) OJ L 334, 17.12.2010, p. 334.
([6]) OJ L 309, 27.11.2001, p. 1).
([7]) Decision D/2013/05/MC-EnC of 24 October 2013.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011193/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(2 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Έρευνες της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής για Gazprom

Σύμφωνα με ανακοίνωση της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής, η εταιρεία Gazprom τίθεται υπό διεξοδική έρευνα σχετικά με δραστηριότητές της στην αγορά φυσικού αερίου στην Κεντρική και Ανατολική Ευρώπη και συγκεκριμένα, αναφορικά με την παραβίαση των ευρωπαϊκών κανόνων ανταγωνισμού.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1) Σε τι συνίσταται η έρευνα που διεξάγει για την εταιρεία Gazprom; Ποιες είναι οι πρακτικές της εταιρείας που ενδέχεται να παραβιάζουν το κοινοτικό δίκαιο περί ανταγωνισμού;

2) Μπορεί να με ενημερώσει για τη μέση χονδρική και λιανική τιμή του φυσικού αερίου σε όλες της χώρες της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και την Ελλάδα; Υπάρχουν σημαντικές διαφοροποιήσεις στις τιμές φυσικού αερίου και, αν ναι, πώς τις εξηγεί η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή;

Απάντηση του κ. Almunia εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Τον Σεπτέμβριο του 2012, η Επιτροπή ανακοίνωσε ότι είχε κινήσει επίσημη διαδικασία για να διερευνηθεί μήπως η Gazprom παρεμποδίζει τον ανταγωνισμό στις αγορές φυσικού αερίου της Κεντρικής και Ανατολικής Ευρώπης, κατά παράβαση των αντιμονοπωλιακών κανόνων της ΕΕ.

Η Επιτροπή διερευνά κατά πόσον η Gazprom επέβαλε εδαφικούς περιορισμούς στις συμφωνίες προμήθειας φυσικού αερίου για να υπονομεύσει την ολοκλήρωση των ευρωπαϊκών αγορών φυσικού αερίου. Η Επιτροπή διερευνά, επίσης, κατά πόσον η Gazprom επιβάλλει αθέμιτες τιμές στους πελάτες της. Επιπλέον, η Gazprom ενδεχομένως να παρεμπόδισε τη δημιουργία ανταγωνισμού, παρακωλύοντας τη διαφοροποίηση του εφοδιασμού με φυσικό αέριο.

Η ΓΔ Ενέργειας δημοσιεύει τριμηνιαίες εκθέσεις για τις ευρωπαϊκές αγορές αερίου και ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας ([1]), με αναλύσεις εμπειρογνωμόνων για τις ευρωπαϊκές ενεργειακές αγορές, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της χονδρικής και λιανικής για τις τιμές του φυσικού αερίου. Εξακολουθούν να υπάρχουν σημαντικές διαφορές τιμών μεταξύ της ΕΕ-28 σε επίπεδα χονδρικής και λιανικής. Σε επίπεδο χονδρικής, μεταξύ των σημαντικών παραγόντων διαφοροποίησης περιλαμβάνονται, για παράδειγμα, οι δυνατότητες επιλογής διαφορετικών οδών εφοδιασμού και προμηθευτών. Σε επίπεδο λιανικής, η φορολογία αποτελεί σημαντικό στοιχείο. Οι μέσες τιμές λιανικής πώλησης το δεύτερο εξάμηνο του 2012 για την ΕΕ-27 ανέρχονταν σε 4,04 cEUR/kWh (εύρος διακύμανσης: 2,64-7,00 cEUR/kWh) για τους βιομηχανικούς καταναλωτές (εκτός ΦΠΑ) και 7,10 cEUR/kWh (εύρος διακύμανσης: 2,74-12,68 cEUR/kWh) για τα νοικοκυριά ([2]). Αντίθετα, το δεύτερο εξάμηνο του 2012, οι τιμές για τη βιομηχανία και τα νοικοκυριά στην Ελλάδα ήταν κατά 5,79 cEUR/kWh και κατά 10,17 cEUR/kWh, αντίστοιχα, υψηλότερες από το μέσο όρο της ΕΕ.

([1]) Παρατηρητήριο Ενεργειακών Αγορών της ΓΔ Ενέργειας — http://ec.europa.eu/energy/observatory/index_en.htm

([2]) Οι τιμές της ΕΕ σημείωσαν μέση αύξηση +6,9% για τη βιομηχανία και +9,6% για τα νοικοκυριά από το δεύτερο εξάμηνο του 2011 έως το δεύτερο εξάμηνο του 2012. Ωστόσο, κατά μέσο όρο, οι τιμές μειώθηκαν στα νοικοκυριά της ΕΕ κατά -7,2% στο δεύτερο εξάμηνο του 2013. Πηγή: Eurostat — μεσαίοι καταναλωτές (επίπεδα κατανάλωσης Δ2 και Ι3, βλ. Eurostat για λεπτομέρειες σχετικά με τα επίπεδα κατανάλωσης).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011193/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: European Commission investigations into Gazprom

According to a statement from the European Commission, Gazprom is to undergo a thorough investigation in relation to its activities in the natural gas market in central and eastern Europe, and specifically in relation to violations of European competition rules.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1) What does the investigation into Gazprom involve? What practices of the company may be in violation of Community law on competition?

2) Can it provide information as to the average wholesale and retail price of natural gas in all EU countries and in Greece? Are there any important variations in natural gas prices, and if so, how does the Commission explains these?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(5 December 2013)

In September 2012, the Commission announced that it had opened formal proceedings to investigate whether Gazprom might be hindering competition in central and eastern European gas markets, in breach of EU antitrust rules.

The Commission is investigating whether Gazprom may have imposed territorial restrictions in gas supply agreements in order to undermine the integration of European gas markets. The Commission is also investigating whether Gazprom is charging unfair prices to its customers. In addition, Gazprom may have hindered the emergence of competition by preventing gas supply diversification.

DG Energy publishes quarterly reports on European gas and electricity markets ([1]), providing expert analysis on European energy markets, including wholesale and retail natural gas prices. Significant price differentials continue to exist among the EU-28 at wholesale and retail levels. At wholesale level, important differentiating factors include e.g. the diversification of supply routes and suppliers. At retail level taxation is an important component. Average retail gas prices in the second half of 2012 for the EU-27 were 4.04 cEUR/kWh (range: 2.64 — 7.00 cEUR/kWh) for industrial consumers (excluding VAT) and 7.10 cEUR/kWh (range: 2.74 — 12.68 cEUR/kWh) for households ([2]). In contrast, in the second half of 2012, prices for industry and households in Greece were 5.79 cEUR/kWh and 10.17 cEUR/kWh, respectively, higher than the EU average.

([1]) DG Energy`s Market Observatory for Energy — http://ec.europa.eu/energy/observatory/index_en.htm

([2]) EU prices experienced an average increase of +6.9% for industry and +9.6% for households from the second half of 2011 to the second half of 2012. However, on average EU household prices declined -7.2% in the first half of 2013. *Source:* Eurostat — medium-sized consumers (consumption bands D2 and I3, see Eurostat for details on consumption bands).

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011194/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(2 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Θεσμικές πτυχές του προγράμματος ιδιωτικοποιήσεων στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με δημοσίευμα των Financial Times, αξιωματούχοι της ΕΕ και της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής εκφράζουν ανησυχίες για την πορεία του προγράμματος ιδιωτικοποιήσεων στην Ελλάδα και, ταυτόχρονα, εμφανίζονται θετικοί στην ιδέα αλλαγής της έδρας του Ταμείου Αξιοποίησης Ιδιωτικής Περιουσίας του Δημοσίου (ΤΑΙΠΕΔ) και μετατροπής του σε ιδιωτική εταιρεία ειδικού σκοπού (special purpose vehicle).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1) Έχουν εκφραστεί ανησυχίες για την πορεία εκτέλεσης του προγράμματος ιδιωτικοποιήσεων στην Ελλάδα, εκ μέρους των δανειστών;

2) Εξετάζεται η ιδέα για αλλαγή του καταστατικού του ΤΑΙΠΕΔ και, αν ναι, σε ποια κατεύθυνση;

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

Η αξιολόγηση από την Επιτροπή της διαδικασίας ιδιωτικοποιήσεων στην Ελλάδα έχει δημοσιευτεί στην έκθεση συμμόρφωσης μετά την τρίτη αποστολή ελέγχου στο πλαίσιο του δεύτερου προγράμματος προσαρμογής ([1]).

Στο πλαίσιο της τρέχουσας επανεξέτασης, πραγματοποιείται αξιολόγηση της απόδοσης και των αποτελεσμάτων της διαδικασίας ιδιωτικοποίησης από τη δημιουργία του ΤΑΙΠΕΔ. Προβλέπονται μεταρρυθμίσεις της εταιρικής διακυβέρνησης, ώστε να βελτιωθεί περαιτέρω η τρέχουσα λειτουργία και το πλαίσιο της διαδικασίας ιδιωτικοποίησης.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/2013_07_26_3rd_review_2nd_programme_brussels_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011194/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Institutional aspects of the privatisation programme in Greece

According to the *Financial Times*, EU and European Commission officials have expressed concern about the progress of the privatisation programme in Greece and, at the same time, they appear to be positive about the idea of a change of head office for the Hellenic Republic Asset Development Fund (HRADF) and its conversion it to a special purpose vehicle.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Have the lenders expressed any concern over progress in the implementation of the privatisation programme in Greece?

2. Is the idea of amending HRADF's articles of association under consideration, and if so, in what way?

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

The Commission's assessment of the privatisation process in Greece has been published in the Compliance Report following the third review mission under the 2nd adjustment programme ([1]).

An assesment of the privatisation process' performance and outcomes since the creation of HRADF is taking place in the current review. Corporate governance reforms are being envisaged in order to further improve the current functioning and framework of the privatisation process.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/2013_07_26_3rd_review_2nd_programme_brussels_en.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011195/13
aan de Raad
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(2 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Gebrek aan respect vanwege de Commissie voor de Raad van de Europese Unie

Op woensdag 25 september 2013 tijdens het debat over het wetgevingspakket inzake eCall ([1]) in de Commissie interne markt en consumentenbescherming van het Europees Parlement sloot de vertegenwoordiger van de Commissie zijn uiteenzetting af met de volgende uitspraak:

„Wat de Raad betreft, voor een keer dat de Raad slaapt, denk ik dus dat het een fantastische gelegenheid is ook voor dit Huis om de richting aan te geven, hopelijk een positieve richting, over een onderwerp dat uit dit Huis afkomstig is".

Kan de Raad in het licht hiervan antwoorden op de volgende vragen:

1. Is de Raad op de hoogte van deze uitspraak?

2. Waren vertegenwoordigers van de Raad aanwezig tijdens bovenvermelde IMCO-vergadering?

3. Heeft de Raad een mening over deze uitspraak?

4. Is de Raad het ermee eens dat deze uitspraak door de Commissie ingaat tegen de interinstitutionele beleefdheid en geen respect toont voor de rol van de Raad als medewetgever?

5. Welke maatregelen is de Raad van plan te nemen?

Antwoord
(25 november 2013)

Het is niet aan de Raad commentaar te geven op verklaringen die door de vertegenwoordigers van de Commissie in commissievergaderingen van het Europees Parlement zijn afgelegd.

([1]) Voorstel voor Besluit van het Europees Parlement en de Raad inzake de uitrol van de interoperabele eCall in de hele EU [COM(2013)0315]; Voorstel voor een verordening van het Europees Parlement en de Raad inzake typegoedkeuringseisen voor de uitrol van het eCall-boordsysteem en houdende wijziging van Richtlijn 2007/46/EG [COM(2013)0316].

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011195/13
to the Council
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Disrespect of the Council of the European Union on the part of the Commission

On Wednesday 25 September 2013, during the debate on the eCall legislative package ([1]) in the Committee on the internal market and Consumer Protection of the European Parliament the Commission representative concluded his speech with the following statement:

'As to the Council, for once the Council is sleeping, so I think it is a fantastic opportunity also for this House on a subject that comes from this House to give the direction and hopefully a positive direction'.

In the light of the above:

1. Is the Council aware of this statement?

2. Did representatives of the Council attend the abovementioned IMCO meeting?

3. Does the Council have an opinion on this statement?

4. Does the Council agree that the statement by the Commission disregards interinstitutional courtesy and disrespects the Council's role as co-legislator?

5. What action does the Council plan to take?

Reply
(25 November 2013)

It is not for the Council to comment on statements made by the representatives of the Commission at Committee meetings of the European Parliament.

([1]) Proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on the deployment of the interoperable EU-wide eCall [COM(2013) 0315]; Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning type-approval requirements for the deployment of the eCall in-vehicle system and amending Directive 2007/46/EC [COM(2013) 0316].

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011196/13
aan de Commissie
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(2 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Gebrek aan interinstitutioneel respect vanwege de Commissie

Op woensdag 25 september 2013 tijdens het debat over het wetgevingspakket inzake eCall ([1]) in de Commissie interne markt en consumentenbescherming van het Europees Parlement sloot de vertegenwoordiger van de Commissie zijn uiteenzetting af met de volgende uitspraak:

„Wat de Raad betreft, voor een keer dat de Raad slaapt, denk ik dus dat het een fantastische gelegenheid is ook voor dit Huis om de richting aan te geven, hopelijk een positieve richting, over een onderwerp dat uit dit Huis afkomstig is".

1. Kan de Commissie in het licht hiervan bevestigen dat deze uitspraak overeenstemt met haar standpunt over de kwestie?

2. Zo ja, is de Commissie het er niet mee eens dat haar vertegenwoordiger volledig ingaat tegen de interinstitutionele beleefdheid door geen respect te tonen voor de rol van de Raad als medewetgever naast het Parlement?

3. Zo nee, kan de Commissie de verklaring van haar vertegenwoordiger afwijzen? Welke maatregelen is de Commissie van plan te nemen? Zal de ambtenaar worden onderworpen aan de gepaste disciplinaire maatregelen?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(21 november 2013)

De interoperabele 112 E-Call in heel Europa is een belangrijk initiatief op het gebied van de verkeersveiligheid. Dankzij de 112 E-Call zullen hulpdiensten sneller en beter slachtoffers van verkeersongevallen in de EU kunnen helpen. Dit zal leiden tot een vermindering van het aantal verkeersdoden en van de ernst van verwondingen.

Het Europees Parlement heeft de invoering van de 112 E-Call uitvoerig verdedigd in zijn op 3 juli 2012 goedgekeurde initiatiefverslag en heeft al actief gewerkt aan de door de Commissie op 13 juni 2013 gepresenteerde voorstellen over E-Call. De verklaring van de Commissie op 25 september 2013 was bedoeld om de actieve rol van het Parlement te onderstrepen en toe te juichen en om de Raad aan te moedigen zich aan te sluiten bij deze inspanningen.

([1]) Voorstel voor Besluit van het Europees Parlement en de Raad inzake de uitrol van de interoperabele eCall in de hele EU [COM(2013)0315]; Voorstel voor een verordening van het Europees Parlement en de Raad inzake typegoedkeuringseisen voor de uitrol van het eCall-boordsysteem en houdende wijziging van Richtlijn 2007/46/EG [COM(2013)0316].

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011196/13
to the Commission
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Lack of interinstitutional respect on the part of the Commission

On Wednesday 25 September 2013, during the debate on the eCall legislative package ([1]) in the Committee on the internal market and Consumer Protection of the European Parliament, the Commission representative concluded his speech with the following statement:

'As to the Council, for once the Council is sleeping, so I think it is a fantastic opportunity also for this House on a subject that comes from this House to give the direction and hopefully a positive direction'.

1. In light of the above, can the Commission confirm that this statement reflects its stance on the issue?

2. If so, does the Commission not agree that its representative fully disregarded interinstitutional courtesy, while disrespecting the role of the Council as the co-legislative authority alongside Parliament?

3. If not, can the Commission dismiss its representative's statement? What action will the Commission take in this regard? Will the official be subject to the appropriate disciplinary measures?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(21 November 2013)

The interoperable EU-wide 112 eCall is an important initiative in the field of road safety. Thanks to 112 eCall, emergency services will be able to quicker and better rescue the victims of road accidents in the EU. This will lead to less road fatalities and help reducing the severity of injuries.

The European Parliament has strongly supported the 112 eCall in its own-initiative report adopted on 3 July 2012, and has already actively worked on the eCall proposals presented by the Commission on 13 June 2013. The sense of the Commission's statement on 25 September 2013 was to underline and welcome the active role of the European Parliament and to encourage the Council to join these efforts.

([1]) Proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on the deployment of the interoperable EU-wide eCall [COM(2013) 0315]; Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning type-approval requirements for the deployment of the eCall in-vehicle system and amending Directive 2007/46/EC [COM(2013) 0316].

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011197/13
an die Kommission
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE)
(2. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Überprüfung der Nachhaltigkeitskriterien für Biokraftstoffe/Benachteiligung nationaler Prüfsysteme durch die Kommission

Die Richtlinie 2009/28/EG definiert Nachhaltigkeitskriterien für Biokraftstoffe und flüssige Biobrennstoffe und verpflichtet die Mitgliedstaaten, deren Einhaltung zu überprüfen. Die Mitgliedstaaten müssen nationale Prüfsysteme einrichten. Daneben sind auch freiwillige Systeme zur Überprüfung zulässig, sofern sie von der Europäischen Kommission anerkannt wurden. Die Europäische Kommission teilte kürzlich mit, dass von ihr anerkannte freiwillige Systeme sich untereinander gegenseitig anerkennen können, dass aber freiwillige Systeme keine nationalen Systeme anerkennen dürfen, da nationale Systeme nicht von der Europäischen Kommission genehmigt würden. Dadurch werden nationale Systeme diskriminiert, und dies führt zu Handelshemmnissen, da freiwillige Systeme keine Nachhaltigkeitsnachweise von nationalen Systemen anerkennen dürfen.

1. Auf welcher Rechtsgrundlage untersagt die Europäische Kommission freiwilligen Systemen, auf nationalen Systemen basierende Nachhaltigkeitsnachweise anzuerkennen? Müsste die Europäische Kommission bei Zweifeln an der richtigen Anwendung der Richtlinie durch die Mitgliedstaaten über ein Vertragsverletzungsverfahren tätig werden?

2. Wie argumentiert die Europäische Kommission juristisch, dass die gegenseitige Anerkennung nicht in der Richtlinie vorgesehen sei? Für solche Fälle gibt es grundsätzlich die Verordnung (EWG) Nr. 764/2008 über die gegenseitige Anerkennung technischer Vorschriften; überdies enthält Richtlinie 2009/28/EG in Artikel 15 Absatz 9 spezielle Regelungen zur gegenseitigen Anerkennung.

3. Warum stellt die Europäische Kommission nicht klar, dass die Verordnung (EWG) Nr. 764/2008 sowie Artikel 15 Absatz 9 der Richtlinie 2009/28/EG auch für die nationalen Systeme zur Überwachung der Nachhaltigkeitskriterien für Biotreibstoffe und flüssige Biobrennstoffe gelten, und dass sowohl die Mitgliedstaaten untereinander als auch die freiwilligen Systeme diese anerkennen müssen (gleichrangig zu von der Kommission genehmigten freiwilligen Systemen)?

4. Wie rechtfertigt die Europäische Kommission — im Hinblick auf Artikel 28 AEUV sowie auf die darauf gestützten EUGH-Urteile — Anerkennungsvorschriften für freiwillige Systeme („Scheme" gemäß Art. 18 Abs. 4 der Richtlinie 2009/28/EG), die zu einer Diskriminierung von nationalen Systemen und zu Handelshemmnissen führen?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(28. November 2013)

1. Freiwillige Systeme werden von der Kommission anerkannt, nachdem die Notwendigkeit harmonisierter Normen einer Kosten-Nutzen-Analyse unterzogen wurde. Daher gestattet es die Kommission freiwilligen Systemen, Nachweise anderer anerkannter freiwilliger Systeme anzuerkennen. Nationale Systeme werden nicht von der Kommission geprüft und können in ihrer Struktur variieren. Würden beide Systeme kombiniert, könnte die Kommission die Einhaltung der Nachhaltigkeitskriterien nicht wirksam überwachen. Dies bedeutet jedoch nicht, dass die Kommission die korrekte Anwendung der Richtlinie in den Mitgliedstaaten infrage stellt. Daher beabsichtigt die Kommission in diesem Zusammenhang nicht, ein Vertragsverletzungsverfahren einzuleiten.

2./3. Die Nachhaltigkeitskriterien sind auf EU-Ebene harmonisiert. Die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 764/2008 ist jedoch nicht für die Systeme zur Überprüfung der Nachhaltigkeit relevant, da sie für technische Vorschriften gilt, die nicht auf EU-Ebene harmonisiert sind. Dasselbe gilt für Artikel 15 Absatz 9 der Richtlinie 2009/28/EG, da dieser sich nur auf die gegenseitige Anerkennung von Herkunftsnachweisen für Strom aus erneuerbaren Energiequellen bezieht.

4. Die Kommission benachteiligt nationale Systeme nicht, da diese alternative Möglichkeiten zum Nachweis der Einhaltung der Nachhaltigkeitskriterien aufzeigen. Nationale Systeme könnten außerdem die unverbindliche Anerkennung als freiwillige Systeme beantragen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011197/13
to the Commission
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Review of the sustainability criteria for biofuels/national verification schemes placed at a disadvantage by the Commission

Directive 2009/28/EC defines sustainability criteria for biofuels and bioliquids and places the Member States under the obligation to verify that these criteria are complied with. The Member States must establish national verification schemes. In addition, voluntary schemes for verification are also permissible, provided they have been recognised by the Commission. The Commission recently stated that mutual recognition could be an option among voluntary schemes that it has recognised, but that voluntary schemes should not recognise national schemes, as national schemes have not been approved by the Commission. This discriminates against national schemes and will lead to barriers to trade, as voluntary schemes cannot recognise any verifications of sustainability by national schemes.

1. On what legal basis is the Commission prohibiting the recognition by voluntary schemes of verifications of sustainability based on national schemes? In the event of doubts concerning the correct application of the directive by the Member States, would the Commission have to initiate infringement proceedings?

2. On the basis of what legal arguments does the Commission claim that mutual recognition is not provided for in the directive? For such cases, there is, in principle, Regulation (EC) No 764/2008 on the mutual recognition of technical regulations; in addition, Article 15(9) of Directive 2009/28/EC contains specific rules concerning mutual recognition.

3. Why does the Commission not make it clear that regulation (EC) No 764/2008 and Article 15(9) of Directive 2009/28/EC also apply to the national schemes for verifying the sustainability criteria for biofuels and bioliquids, and that the Member States must mutually recognise these and they must also be recognised by the voluntary schemes (and have equal status with voluntary schemes recognised by the Commission)?

4. With regard to Article 28 TFEU and the judgments of the Court of Justice of the European Union pursuant thereto, how can the Commission justify recognition provisions for voluntary systems ('schemes' in accordance with Article 18(4) of Directive 2009/28/EC) that result in discrimination against national schemes and in barriers to trade?

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

1. Voluntary schemes are recognised by the Commission following a cost-benefit analysis of the need for harmonised standards. Therefore, the Commission allows voluntary schemes to acknowledge evidence provided by other recognised voluntary schemes. National schemes have not been assessed by the Commission and might vary in their structure. If both systems were combined the Commission could not effectively monitor compliance with the sustainability criteria. However, this does not imply that the Commission questions the correct application of the directive in the Member States and hence the Commission does not intend to initiate infringement proceedings in this regard.

2 and 3. The sustainability criteria are harmonised at EU level. However, Regulation (EC) No 764/2008 is not relevant for the sustainability verification schemes as it applies to technical rules that are not harmonised at EU level. Nor is Article 15(9) of Directive 2009/28/EC as it concerns only the mutual recognition of guarantees of origin of renewable electricity.

4. The Comission does not discriminate against national schemes as they demonstrate alternative ways of demonstrating compliance with the sustainability criteria. National schemes could also apply to be recognised as voluntary scheme on a non-compulsory basis.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011198/13
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(2 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Chemicaliën gebruikt bij fracking in strijd met REACH richtlijn

Uit de studie „Assessment of the use of substances in hydraulic fracturing of shale gas reservoirs under REACH" van het instituut voor Gezondheid en Consumentenbescherming van de Europese Commissie blijkt dat chemicaliën die gebruikt worden bij fracking illegaal zijn in de EU. Dit ten gevolge van de REACH wetgeving (1907/2006 en 2006/121/EG).

Dit komt omdat de door de industrie ingediende registratiedossiers niet volledig zijn aangezien een beoordeling van de risico's bij het gebruik van de chemicaliën bij fracking ontbreekt. In 2011 werd zelfs gesteld dat geen enkele substantie die voor fracking gebruikt wordt voor deze toepassing geregistreerd is. De chemicaliën zouden daarom niet gebruikt mogen worden tijdens het fracking proces in de EU. Echter, er zijn wel in verschillende Europese landen vergunningen voor proefboringen en effectieve boringen afgegeven.

1. Zijn de bedrijven verplicht om de chemische mix die zij gebruiken tijdens proefboringen of effectieve boringen bekend te maken? Aan wie moeten zij deze bekend maken? Heeft de Commissie aangaande deze dossiers inzage en controle? En kan zij bij inbreuken actie ondernemen?

2 Is deze bekendmaking steeds naar behoren gebeurd voor vroegere en huidige boringen (zowel proefboringen als effectieve boringen voor productie)? Weet de Commissie of er tijdens huidige of vroegere boringen in de EU chemicaliën gebruikt werden die niet geautoriseerd waren onder REACH? Zo ja, werd hiertegen actie ondernomen?

3. Welke stappen kan de industrie ondernemen om de dossiers te vervolledigen en bepaalde chemicaliën geautoriseerd te krijgen onder REACH?

4. Lopen er momenteel aanvraagprocedures (of zijn er in het verleden geweest) om chemicaliën geautoriseerd te krijgen? Zo ja, voor welke chemicaliën?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(4 december 2013)

Er bestaat geen specifieke EU-verplichting om de chemische mix die wordt gebruikt bij boringen bekend te maken. REACH ([1]) kent echter wel een algemene registratieplicht van stoffen en de plicht het gebruik van de stoffen bekend te maken aan het Europees Agentschap voor chemische stoffen (ECHA) voor openbare verspreiding. Daarnaast vereist de MEB-richtlijn ([2]) dat informatie wordt verstrekt over de aard en hoeveelheden van de gebruikte materialen wanneer een milieu-effectbeoordeling wordt uitgevoerd.

Krachtens REACH worden exploitanten die chemische stoffen of mengsels in hydrofracturering gebruiken, gezien als downstreamgebruikers en zijn zij verplicht om passende risicobeheersmatregelen te nemen om te garanderen dat de risico's voor de menselijke gezondheid en het milieu afdoende worden beheerst. Deze verplichting geldt ook voor niet-geregistreerde stoffen.

De lidstaten, die toegang hebben tot alle gegevens van het ECHA, zijn verantwoordelijk voor de handhaving van de bepalingen van REACH en voor de oplegging van sancties in geval van niet-naleving. Zij moeten er ook voor zorgen dat de autorisatie die wordt verleend voor de exploratie of productie van niet-conventionele koolwaterstoffen waarbij grootschalig gebruik wordt gemaakt van hydrofracturering voldoen aan de REACH-voorschriften ([3]). De Commissie heeft van de lidstaten geen informatie ontvangen met betrekking tot gevallen van niet-naleving.

De Commissie werkt aan een initiatief om te garanderen dat ontwikkelingen op het gebied van schaliegas mogelijk zijn met passende beschermende maatregelen op het gebied van klimaat en milieu, en met maximale juridische duidelijkheid en voorspelbaarheid.

([1]) 1907/2006/EG.
([2]) 2011/92/EU.
([3]) Meer informatie over de REACH-procedures voor de registratie, beoordeling, autorisatie en beperkingen ten aanzien van chemische stoffen is beschikbaar op de website van het ECHA: http://echa.europa.eu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011198/13
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Chemicals used in fracking in breach of REACH guidelines

The study entitled 'Assessment of the use of substances in hydraulic fracturing of shale gas reservoirs under REACH', conducted by the Commission's Institute for Health and Consumer Protection, indicates that chemicals being used for fracking are illegal in the EU. This is as a consequence of REACH legislation (1907/2006 and 2006/121/EC).

The reason for this is that the registration dossiers submitted by the industry are incomplete as they do not include any assessment of the risks in using the chemicals for fracking. It was even established in 2011 that not a single substance used for fracking is registered for this application. This is why the chemicals should not be used during the fracking process in the EU. However, permits are being granted in various European countries for test and actual drilling activities.

1. Are the companies obliged to disclose the mix of chemicals they use during test or actual drilling activities? To whom must they disclose this information? Does the Commission have access to inspect these dossiers? Can it take action in the event of any breach?

2 Has this disclosure always been made in the proper way for previous and current drilling activities (both test and actual drilling activities for production)? Is the Commission aware whether chemicals not authorised under REACH were used during current or previous drilling activities in the EU? If so, what action was taken against this?

3. What steps can the industry take to make the dossiers complete and get certain chemicals authorised under REACH?

4. Are there application procedures currently ongoing (or have there been any in the past) aimed at getting chemicals authorised? If so, for which chemicals?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(4 December 2013)

There is no specific EU obligation to disclose the mix of chemicals used in drilling activities. However there is an obligation under REACH ([1]) to register substances and communicate their uses to ECHA for public dissemination. In addition, the EIA Directive ([2]) requires the provision of information on the nature and quantity of materials used when an environmental impact assessment is carried out.

Pursuant to REACH, operators using chemicals substances or mixtures in hydraulic fracturing operations are considered as downstream users and have the duty to apply any apropriate risk management measure needed to ensure that the risks to human health and the environment are adeqately controlled. This obligation also applies to unregistered substances.

Enforcement of REACH provisions and penalties in case of non-compliance are the responsibility of Member States who have access to all ECHA data. They must also ensure that authorisations given for the exploration or production of unconventional hydrocarbons using high volume hydraulic fracturing take account of REACH requirements ([3]). The Commission has not been informed by Member States of non-compliance issues.

The Commission is working on an initiative ensuring that shale gas developments can be enabled with appropriate climate and environmental safeguards in place and under maximum legal clarity and predictability.

([1]) 1907/2006/EC.
([2]) 2011/92/EU.
([3]) For more information on the REACH registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction procedures, please consult ECHA's website at http://echa.europa.eu

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011199/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Almacén subterráneo de gas natural en las costas de Amposta, Catalunya

En la costa frente al delta del río Ebre se ha instalado un almacén subterráneo de gas natural para inyectar gas colchón, el cual aprovecha un antiguo yacimiento petrolífero situado a unos 21 kilómetros de la costa, frente a Vinaròs (Castellón), y a 1 700 metros de profundidad. Dicho proyecto, liderado por la empresa Escal UGS y a la vez controlada por ACS (llamado Proyecto Castro), habría causado 220 pequeños terremotos. El más grave hoy mismo, de magnitud 4,2 en la escala de Richter, y el 24 de septiembre, de magnitud 3,6, que son los más fuertes desde el año 1975. Según el director de la Red Sísmica del Instituto Geográfico Nacional (IGN), Emilio Carreño, en esta zona apenas hay actividad sísmica de origen natural.

Según la Plataforma Ciudadana en Defensa de las Tierras del Sènia, en uno de los tramos del gaseoducto no se presentó la evaluación del impacto ambiental.

A la luz de lo anterior y teniendo en cuenta la Directiva 2013/30/EU,

1. ¿Tiene la Comisión conocimiento del Plan Ambiental encargado por el Ministerio de Agricultura y Medio Ambiente?

2. ¿Tiene la Comisión conocimiento de si se presentó la evaluación de impacto ambiental para todos los tramos del gasoducto?

3. ¿Debería la declaración de impacto ambiental, según los estándares europeos, considerar los riesgos sísmicos que conllevan dichos proyectos?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011239/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Almacén subterráneo de gas natural

En la costa frente al Delta del río Ebro se ha instalado un almacén subterráneo de gas natural para inyectar gas colchón, el cual aprovecha un antiguo yacimiento petrolífero situado a unos 21 kilómetros de la costa, frente a Vinaròs (Castellón) a 1 700 metros de profundidad. Dicho proyecto (llamado Proyecto Castor), liderado por la empresa Escal UGS, a su vez controlada por ACS, habría causado 220 pequeños terremotos. El más grave, que ocurrió ayer mismo, con una magnitud 4,2 en la escala de Richter, y el ocurrido el 24 de septiembre, de magnitud 3,6, son los más graves desde el año 1975. Según el director de la Red Sísmica del Instituto Geográfico Nacional (IGN), Emilio Carreño, en esta zona apenas hay actividad sísmica de origen natural.

Teniendo en cuenta el artículo 15 de la Directiva 2013/30/UE y la Directiva 94/22/CE,

1. ¿Tiene la Comisión la certeza de que el público ha sido consultado con antelación y efectividad para participar en la decisión del establecimiento del almacén?

2. ¿Puede informar si el coste del almacén, en lo que se refiere a sus costes totales, es proporcional a sus futuros ingresos previstos y que, según sus informaciones, no generará déficit en el sistema?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011240/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Almacén subterráneo de gas natural

En la costa frente al Delta del río Ebro se ha instalado un almacén subterráneo de gas natural para inyectar gas colchón, el cual aprovecha un antiguo yacimiento petrolífero situado a unos 21 kilómetros de la costa, frente a Vinaròs (Castellón) a 1 700 metros de profundidad. Dicho proyecto (llamado Proyecto Castor), liderado por la empresa Escal UGS, a su vez controlada por ACS, habría causado 220 pequeños terremotos. El más grave, que ocurrió ayer mismo, con una magnitud 4,2 en la escala de Richter, y el ocurrido el 24 de septiembre, de magnitud 3,6, son los más graves desde el año 1975. Según el director de la Red Sísmica del Instituto Geográfico Nacional (IGN), Emilio Carreño, en esta zona apenas hay actividad sísmica de origen natural.

Dada la gravedad de los incidentes y teniendo en cuenta el artículo 19 de la Directiva 2013/30/UE y la Directiva 94/22/CE, ¿cree la Comisión que se deberían de detener todas las operaciones que hasta el día de hoy se están haciendo?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011243/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Seísmos en la costa valenciana y catalana

El proyecto Castor, con una inversión de 1 200 millones de euros, trata de aprovechar un antiguo pozo petrolífero a 1 750 metros de profundidad bajo el nivel del mar para suministrar hasta un tercio de la demanda de gas del sistema durante 50 días, pero, al parecer, la inyección de gas ha provocado desde el pasado 13 de septiembre casi 300 seísmos, la mayoría de baja intensidad. Más de 20 seísmos, uno de ellos de intensidad 4,2 en la escala de Richter, se han registrado este martes en el Golfo de Valencia, en el entorno del almacén subterráneo de gas natural Castor, frente a las costas de Vinarós (Castellón), según datos del Instituto Geográfico Nacional. El Ministerio de Industria ordenó el pasado 26 de septiembre el cese temporal de la actividad de extracción de gas en la planta para investigar las causas del aumento de la actividad sísmica en la zona ([1]). La Generalitat Valenciana ha activado el Plan de riesgo sísmico en fase de seguimiento a los municipios de Peñíscola, Vinarós y Benicarló. El vocal del Colegio de Geógrafos de España, quien también es asesor en la ONU, dice que nos encontramos ante una situación «no controlada» por lo que es necesario «mantener la alerta». Estos movimientos sísmicos podrían tener consecuencias en la zona y, según Gómez Cantero, afectar a la costa y al fondo marino, donde se pueden producir «deslizamientos submarinos». Los seísmos también han llegado a la costa catalana, especialmente a las Terres de l'Ebre, que es reserva de la biosfera por la Unesco. La zona, de 367 729 hectáreas de superficie, abarca el delta y la cuenca del Ebro y alberga «numerosos ecosistemas tanto interiores como costeros» ([2]).

La Directiva marco sobre la estrategia marina (Directiva 2008/56/CE) tiene como uno de sus objetivos proteger y restablecer los ecosistemas marinos europeos, y garantizar la viabilidad ecológica de las actividades económicas relacionadas con el medio marino de aquí al año 2021.

1. ¿Cumple el proyecto Castor con esta Directiva?

2. ¿Cumple el proyecto Castor con la Directiva del Hábitat 92/43/CEE?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de noviembre de 2013)

En lo referente a si el proyecto Castor cumple o no la Directiva de la evaluación del impacto ambiental y la Directiva de Hábitats ([3]), la Comisión remite a Su Señoría a las respuestas que diera en su día a las preguntas escritas E-3789/2010 ([4]) y E-11478/11.

([1]) http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2013/10/01/castellon/1380618919.html
([2]) http://www.elperiodico.com/es/noticias/medio-ambiente/unesco-designa-terres-ebre-nueva-reserva-biosfera-2402781
([3]) Directiva 2011/92/UE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 13 de diciembre de 2011, relativa a la evaluación de las repercusiones de determinados proyectos públicos y privados sobre el medio ambiente (codificación) (DO L 26 de 28.1.2012).
Directiva 92/43/CEE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres (DO L 206 de 22.7.1992).
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2010-3789&language=EN

En cuanto al cumplimiento de las disposiciones de la Directiva marco sobre la estrategia marina ([5]), hay que señalar que, como parte de la evaluación inicial a la que sometió sus aguas marinas en aplicación del artículo 8 de esa Directiva, España consideró el proyecto Castor como un elemento potencial de presión que podía causar daños al medio ambiente. Atendiendo a la definición de buen estado medioambiental y a los objetivos ambientales a él asociados que fueron establecidos por España y comunicados a la Comisión en 2012, es ahora responsabilidad del Estado miembro proceder al control de ese elemento específico de presión y de los efectos de él derivados. Ese control habrá de tener lugar no después del 15 de julio de 2014, una vez que su programa de seguimiento se haya establecido ya y haya comenzado a aplicarse. Asimismo, antes de que finalice 2015, España tendrá que tomar, en su caso, las medidas que sean necesarias al aplicar su programa de medidas. Procediendo de esta forma, España garantizará la consecución o el mantenimiento del buen estado medioambiental que requiere la Directiva para antes de que finalice 2020.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011199/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Undersea natural gas storage facility off the coast of Amposta, Catalonia

Just off the coast from the River Ebro delta, an undersea natural gas storage facility for injecting cushion gas has been set up, making use of an old oil reservoir located 21 km off the coast of Vinaròs (Castellón), at a depth of 1 700 m. This project, led by the company Escal UGS and monitored by Actividades de Construcción y Servicios, S.A. (known as the Castor project) may have caused 220 minor earthquakes. The most serious was today, at 4.2 on the Richter scale, and the one on 24 September, with a magnitude of 3.6, the most powerful since 1975. According to the Director of the Seismic Network of the Spanish National Geographic Institute (IGN), Emilio Carreño, there is hardly any natural seismic activity in this area.

According to the Citizen Platform for the Defence of the Sénia River Region, no environmental impact assessment was submitted for one of the stretches of pipeline.

In view of the above and having regard to Directive 2013/30/EU:

1. Does the Commission have any knowledge of the environmental plan commissioned by the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Food and the Environment?

2. Does the Commission know whether the environmental impact assessment was submitted for all stretches of the pipeline?

3. Do European standards require the environmental impact statement to take into account the earthquake risks of such projects?

Question for written answer E-011239/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Underground natural gas storage plant

Just off the coast from the River Ebro delta, an undersea natural gas storage facility for injecting cushion gas has been set up, making use of an old oil reservoir located 21 km off the coast of Vinaròs (Castellón), at a depth of 1 700 m. This project (known as the Castor Project), led by the Escal UGS company, and monitored by Actividades de Construcción y Servicios, S.A. (ACS), may have caused 220 minor earthquakes. The most serious of these, which occurred yesterday, with a magnitude of 4.2 on the Richter scale, and one that occurred on 24 September, with a magnitude of 3.6, are the worst since 1975. According to the Director of the Seismic Network of the Spanish National Geographic Institute (IGN), Emilio Carreño, there is hardly any natural seismic activity in this area.

In view of Article 15 of Directive 2013/30/EU and Directive 94/22/EC:

1. Is the Commission satisfied that the public has been consulted effectively in advance, in order to be able to participate in the decision to establish this storage facility?

2. Can the Commission report whether the cost of the storage facility — in terms of its total costs — is proportional to the future revenues expected from it and, according to its information, confirm that it will not generate a deficit in the system?

Question for written answer E-011240/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Underground natural gas storage plant II

Just off the coast from the River Ebro delta, an undersea natural gas storage facility for injecting cushion gas has been set up, making use of an old oil reservoir located 21 km off the coast of Vinaròs (Castellón), at a depth of 1 700 m. This project (known as the Castor Project), led by the Escal UGS company, and monitored by Actividades de Construcción y Servicios, S.A. (ACS), may have caused 220 minor earthquakes. The most serious of these, which occurred yesterday, with a magnitude of 4.2 on the Richter scale, and one that occurred on 24 September, with a magnitude of 3.6, are the worst since 1975. According to the Director of the Seismic Network of the Spanish National Geographic Institute (IGN), Emilio Carreño, there is hardly any natural seismic activity in this area.

Given the seriousness of the incidents, and taking into account Article 19 of Directive 2013/30/EU and Directive 94/22/EC, does the Commission believe that all operations, which are continuing today, should be stopped?

Question for written answer E-011243/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Application of Directive 2007/65/EC in Spain

The Castor project, with an investment of EUR 1.2 billion, aims to make use of an old oil well, lying 1 750 metres below sea level, to supply up to a third of the gas required to meet demand in the system for 50 days. However, it appears injecting gas into the well has caused almost 300 earthquakes — mostly of low intensity — since 13 September 2013. According to Spain's National Geographic Institute, last Tuesday more than 20 quakes were registered, one of them measuring 4.2 on the Richter scale, in the Gulf of Valencia, in the vicinity of the Castor underground natural gas storage plant, off the coast of Vinaròs (Castellón). On 26 September, the Ministry of Industry ordered the temporary cessation of gas extraction at the plant in order to investigate the causes of increased seismic activity in the area ([1]). The Government of the Autonomous Community of Valencia has put the monitoring phase of its seismic risk plan into operation in the municipalities of Peniscola, Vinaròs and Benicarló. A member of the Spanish Association of Geographers, who is also a UN consultant, says we are faced with an 'uncontrolled' situation and, therefore, it is necessary to 'stay on alert'. These seismic movements could have consequences in the area and, according to Gómez Cantero, could affect the coast and seabed, causing 'underwater landslides'. The earthquakes have also reached the coast of Catalonia, especially in Terres de l'Ebre, which is a Unesco Biosphere Reserve. This area of 367 729 hectares, takes in the Ebro delta and Ebro basin, and is home to 'numerous inland and coastal ecosystems' ([2]).

One of the objectives of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (Directive 2008/56/EC) is to protect and restore Europe's marine ecosystems and ensure the ecological viability of economic activities related to the marine environment by 2021.

1. Does the Castor project comply with this directive?

2. Does the Castor project comply with the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(25 November 2013)

Regarding compliance by the Castor project with the Environmental Impact Assessment and Habitats Directives ([3]), the Commission refers the Honourable Member to the replies given to Written Questions E-3789/2010 ([4]) and E-11478/11.

([1]) http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2013/10/01/castellon/1380618919.html
([2]) http://www.elperiodico.com/es/noticias/medio-ambiente/unesco-designa-terres-ebre-nueva-reserva-biosfera-2402781
([3]) Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (codification). OJ 28.1.2012.
Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. OJ 22.7.1992.
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2010-3789&language=EN

With regard to compliance with the provisions under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive ([5]), Spain has identified the Castor project as a potential pressure that could create physical damage to the environment as part of its initial assessment of its marine waters in accordance with Article 8. On the basis of the definition of Good Environmental Status and related Environmental Targets set by Spain and reported to the Commission in 2012, it is now Spain's responsibility to monitor this specific pressure and related impacts once their monitoring programme will have been established and implemented by 15 July 2014 and to take action, if necessary, by 2015 at the latest, when implementing their programme of measures. These actions shall ensure the achievement or maintenance of good environmental status by 2020 required by the directive.

([5]) Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy. OJ 25.6.2008.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011200/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Reciprocidad de las importaciones de productos con proteínas transformadas de monogástricos

En su respuesta a la pregunta E-008890/2013 sobre la importación de carne de aves de corral y porcino de países terceros, y, en concreto, sobre los requisitos que impone la Unión Europea para la importación de carne de estas especies alimentadas con proteínas transformadas de monogástricos, práctica que está prohibida en la Unión Europea, la Comisión responde que las normas de la OIE se refieren únicamente a la alimentación de rumiantes y que, en consonancia con estas normas, las disposiciones de la UE referidas a no rumiantes solo se aplican a los Estados miembros. Es una respuesta muy correcta en términos legales, pero pone en evidencia la indefensión del consumidor por lo que respecta a la compra de carne de ave y de porcino, dado que no puede conocer su origen y, en consecuencia, tampoco puede conocer la alimentación recibida por el animal. En otras palabras, el consumidor no está bien informado sobre la seguridad alimentaria del producto que está consumiendo.

Ante esta situación,

1. ¿Qué acciones tiene previstas la Comisión para poder informar a los consumidores del origen de la carne y, por tanto, de los distintos tipos de alimentación que ha recibido el animal?

2. ¿Puede indicar la Comisión en qué casos y situaciones prevalece la aplicación de las recomendaciones de la OIE sobre los criterios de seguridad alimentaria para los consumidores de la UE?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de noviembre de 2013)

1. El origen se refiere al origen geográfico de los productos alimenticios, y no a su producción ni a las prácticas de fabricación. Actualmente, la indicación del origen es obligatoria para la carne de vacuno y los productos a base de carne de vacuno sin procesar ([1]) y para la carne de aves de corral importada ya envasada ([2]), así como en todos los casos en que su omisión pudiera inducir a error al consumidor ([3]). Recientemente, el Parlamento y el Consejo han adoptado el Reglamento (UE) nº 1169/2011 ([4]), que introduce la indicación obligatoria del origen para la carne sin transformar de ovino, caprino, aves de corral y porcino. Además, exige a la Comisión que presente, a más tardar el 13 de diciembre de 2013, un informe al Parlamento Europeo y al Consejo sobre la necesidad de ampliar la indicación obligatoria del origen a la carne utilizada como ingrediente. La Comisión tiene intención de presentar dicho informe antes de lo previsto.

Con arreglo a las normas de la Unión vigentes en materia de etiquetado ([5]), no hay obligación de mencionar en el etiquetado de la carne qué piensos se han administrado al animal. En la reciente revisión de tales normas ([6]), esta información no se ha tenido en cuenta.

([1]) Reglamento (CE) nº 1760/2000 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 17 de julio de 2000, que establece un sistema de identificación y registro de los animales de la especie bovina y relativo al etiquetado de la carne de vacuno y de los productos a base de carne de vacuno (DO L 204 de 11.8.2000, p. 1).

([2]) Reglamento (CE) nº 543/2008 de la Comisión, de 16 de junio de 2008, por el que se establecen normas de desarrollo del Reglamento (CE) nº 1234/2007 del Consejo en lo que atañe a la comercialización de carne de aves de corral (DO L 157 de 17.6.2008, p. 46).

([3]) Directiva 2000/13/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 20 de marzo de 2000, relativa a la aproximación de las legislaciones de los Estados miembros en materia de etiquetado, presentación y publicidad de los productos alimenticios (DO L 109 de 6.5.2000, p. 29).

([4]) La Directiva 2000/13/CE será derogada y sustituida, a partir del 13 de diciembre de 2013, por el Reglamento (UE) nº 1169/2011 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 25 de octubre de 2011, sobre la información alimentaria facilitada al consumidor y por el que se modifican los Reglamentos (CE) nº 1924/2006 y (CE) nº 1925/2006 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, y por el que se derogan la Directiva 87/250/CEE de la Comisión, la Directiva 90/496/CEE del Consejo, la Directiva 1999/10/CE de la Comisión, la Directiva 2000/13/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, las Directivas 2002/67/CE, y 2008/5/CE de la Comisión, y el Reglamento (CE) nº 608/2004 de la Comisión (DO L 304 de 22.11.2011, p. 18).

([5]) Directiva 2000/13/CE.

([6]) Reglamento (UE) nº 1169/2011.

2. La ampliación de la prohibición relativa a la alimentación animal a los no rumiantes en 2001 se decidió en un contexto en el que la prohibición inicial de determinados piensos establecida en 1994 que únicamente prohibió alimentar a los rumiantes con proteínas de mamíferos había demostrado ser insuficiente en lo que respecta a situar bajo total control la epidemia de EEB en Europa. La finalidad de esta ampliación no era, pues, garantizar la seguridad alimentaria de la carne procedente de especies distintas de los rumiantes, sino evitar cualquier posibilidad de contaminación cruzada (durante el transporte, la transformación, el uso, etc.) de los piensos destinados a los rumiantes con proteínas animales destinadas a especies no rumiantes. Habida cuenta de que la epidemia de EEB es una cuestión fundamentalmente europea, habría sido desproporcionado ampliar la medida a nuestros socios comerciales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011200/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Reciprocity regarding imports of processed proteins from monogastric animals

In its answer to Question E-008890/2013 on poultry and pig meat imports from third countries and, specifically, on EU requirements regarding the import of meat from these species fed on processed proteins from monogastric animals, a practice banned in the EU, the Commission responds that the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) standards pertain only to the feeding of ruminants and that, in line with these international standards, the EU provisions regarding non-ruminant species apply only to EU Member States. In legal terms, it is a perfectly correct answer, but it lays bare the defencelessness of consumers as regards buying poultry and pig meat, since it is impossible to know where such meat came from, meaning that it is also impossible to know how the animal has been fed. In other words, consumers are not well informed about the safety of the food products that they are consuming.

1. What does the Commission plan to do to inform consumers about the origins of meat and, as such, of the various types of feed that the animal has been given?

2. Can the Commission state in which cases and situations implementing OIE recommendations takes priority over food safety for EU consumers?

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

1. Origin refers to the geographical origin of foods and not to their production or manufacturing practices. The indication of origin is currently mandatory for unprocessed beef and beef products ([1]) and for prepacked imported poultry meat ([2]) as well as in all cases where its omission could mislead the consumer. ([3]) Recently, the Parliament and the Council adopted Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011, ([4]) introducing mandatory indication of origin for unprocessed sheep, goat, poultry and pig meat. In addition, it requires the Commission to submit a report to the European Parliament and the Council on the need to extend mandatory indication of origin to meat used as an ingredient by 13 December 2013. The Commission intends to deliver this report earlier than foreseen.

Under existing Union labelling rules, ([5]) there is no obligation to mention on the labelling of meat the feeds that the animal has been given. In the recent review of those rules, ([6]) this information has not been considered.

2. The extension of the feed ban to non-ruminant animals in 2001 was decided in a context where the initial feed ban established in 1994 to prohibit the feeding of mammalian protein to ruminants only had proven insufficient to fully bring the BSE epidemic in Europe under control. The purpose of this extension was therefore not to ensure the food safety of the meat of species other than ruminants, but to avoid any possibility of cross-contamination (during transport, processing, use, etc.) of the feed intended to ruminants with animal protein intended for non-ruminant species. The BSE epidemic being essentially a European issue, it would have been disproportionate to extend the measure to our trading partners.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1760/2000 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 July 2000 establishing a system for the identification and registration of bovine animals and regarding the labelling of beef and beef products (OJ L 204, 11.8.2000, p. 1).

([2]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 543/2008 of 16 June 2008 laying down detailed rules for the application of Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 as regards the marketing standards for poultry meat (OJ L 157, 17.6.2008, p. 46).

([3]) 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).

([4]) Directive 2000/13/EC will be repealed and replaced as of 13 December 2013 by 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).

([5]) Directive 2000/13/EC.

([6]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011201/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Equiparación de privilegios

En su respuesta a la pregunta E-008891/2013 sobre la equiparación de privilegios en la lista de material especificado de riesgo, la Comisión argumenta que solamente 8 Estados miembros están clasificados oficialmente como países con riesgo insignificante de EEB, de conformidad con la Decisión 2007/453/CE de la Comisión, modificada por la Decisión de Ejecución 2013/429/CE de la Comisión. Dichos países, aunque sean «solo 8», suponen aproximadamente un 30 % de los Estados miembros de la Unión Europea, una proporción nada menospreciable.

Por otro lado, la Comisión argumenta que la actual legislación, que obliga a todos los Estados miembros a extraer y eliminar el material especificado de riesgo (MER) tiene por objeto «racionalizar la aplicación de los controles oficiales por los Estados miembros en este contexto heterogéneo». Dicho argumento es cuestionable, teniendo en cuenta que existen otras zoonosis en Europa con situaciones muy diversas entre los Estados miembros que aplican medidas diversas según la situación sanitaria de cada país, siempre en el contexto de un plan de lucha coordinado de toda la Unión Europea.

La Comisión también comenta que dicha obligación podría revisarse y que los Estados miembros y la Comisión están debatiendo esta cuestión, de acuerdo con la segunda hoja de ruta contra las ETT.

Teniendo en cuenta lo expuesto anteriormente,

1. ¿Cuál es la posición de la Comisión en el debate sobre esta cuestión?

2. ¿Está dispuesta a aceptar un cambio en la gestión de los MER en los países con riesgo insignificante de EEB?

3. ¿Cuántos países deberían, según la Comisión, estar clasificados como países de riesgo insignificante de EEB para que la Comisión se planteara un cambio en la gestión de los MER?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de noviembre de 2013)

1. La Comisión ha iniciado una reflexión sobre los argumentos a favor y en contra de la obligación de eliminar y destruir el material especificado de riesgo (MER) en Estados miembros con riesgo insignificante de EEB. Esta reflexión está aún en curso y la Comisión no ha adoptado todavía un posición definitiva.

2. La Comisión ha compartido con los Estados miembros su análisis de la situación y las posibles opciones, y tomará también en consideración su opinión.

3. Teniendo en cuenta que el pasado septiembre otros once Estados miembros enviaron solicitudes a la OIE para ser reconocidos como países con riesgo insignificante de EEB, es posible que a partir de mayo de 2014 diecinueve Estados miembros, que tienen el 43 % del vacuno adulto de la UE, se beneficien de este trato favorable. Esta nueva situación será por supuesto incluida en la reflexión en curso.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011201/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Creating a level playing field

In its answer to Question E-008891/2013 on creating a level playing field for specified risk material (SRM), the Commission argues that only eight Member States are officially classified as negligible bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) risk countries according to Commission Decision 2007/453/EC, as amended by Commission Implementing Decision 2013/429/EC. Although 'only eight', these countries account for some 30% of Member States, a proportion that can in no way be discounted.

The Commission also argues that current legislation, which obliges Member States to remove and destroy SRM, aims at 'streamlining the implementation of official controls by Member States in this heterogeneous context'. This argument is questionable, since there are other zoonoses in Europe with huge variation in the situations relating to them between the Member States, which apply a variety of measures, depending on the health situation in each Member State, always as part of a coordinated plan for the entire EU.

The Commission also argues that this situation could be reviewed if an increasing number of Member States achieve a negligible risk status, as stated in TSE Roadmap 2.

1. What is the Commission's position regarding the debate on this issue?

2. Is it prepared to accept a change in SRM management in negligible BSE risk countries?

3. How many countries does the Commission believe should be classified as negligible BSE risk countries so that the Commission could set out changes to SRM management?

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

1. The Commission has initiated a reflection on the pros and cons of lifting the current compulsory removal and destruction of specified risk material (SRM) in Member States with a negligible risk of BSE. This reflection is still ongoing and the Commission has not adopted a final position yet.

2. The Commission has shared with the Member States its analysis of the situation and possible options, and will also take their feedback into consideration.

3. Considering that an additional 11 Member States have sent applications to the OIE last September to be recognised with a negligible risk of BSE, chances are that 19 Member states representing about 43% of the adult cattle in the EU will benefit from this favourable status as of May 2014. This new situation will of course be included in the ongoing reflection.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011202/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Calificación sanitaria

En su respuesta a la pregunta E-008892/2013 sobre calificación sanitaria, y en concreto sobre la regionalización de la encefalopatía espongiforme bovina (EEB) en determinados Estados miembros, la Comisión responde que no es posible la regionalización ya que, siempre según la Comisión, los estudios epidemiológicos indican que la EEB se distribuye homogéneamente en toda la población bovina de un Estado miembro.

Según nuestras informaciones, la distribución de la EEB depende fundamentalmente de la alimentación de los animales, que nada tiene que ver con las barreras administrativas entre países. Así, en los países en los que existen sistemas de producción diferentes (y por lo tanto sistemas de alimentación diferentes) según las regiones, la distribución de la EEB no es homogénea. Así lo demuestran varios estudios científicos. A título de ejemplo, podemos citar las conclusiones de un estudio realizado por universidades de Francia, Inglaterra, Holanda y Suiza y publicado en el año 2008 (Ducrot, C.; Arnold, M.; de Koeijer, A.; Heim, D.; Calavas, D.; 2008. «Review on the epidemiology and dynamics of BSE epidemics», Vet. Res 39:15). Es más, dentro de una región, pueden observarse diferencias importantes en la distribución de la EEB, tal como revela, a título de ejemplo, otro estudio del año 2007 por parte de investigadores de Cataluña (Allepuz, A.; López-Quílez, A.; Forte, A.; Fernández, G.; Casal, J.; 2007. «Spatial analysis of bovine spongiform encephalopathy in Galicia, Spain» 2000-2005, Preventive Veterinary Medicine 79:147-185).

Ante estas evidencias científicas,

1. ¿Qué argumentos tiene la Comisión para no definir diferentes subpoblaciones bovinas con estatus diferentes con respecto a la EEB en un Estado miembro?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de noviembre de 2013)

Cualquier propuesta en el sentido de que la Comisión tome en consideración la situación de un Estado miembro o una región con respecto a la encefalopatía espongiforme bovina (EEB) debe derivarse de la conclusión de que el territorio solicitante cumple los criterios establecidos en el anexo II del Reglamento (CE) n° 999/2001 ([1]).

Muchos de estos criterios se refieren a los riesgos de introducción del agente de la EEB al importar piensos o ingredientes de piensos contaminados, de reciclado del prion en los piensos y, por último, de exposición del ganado a piensos contaminados. Estos riesgos se ven mitigados por las medidas de prohibición relativas a la alimentación del ganado (reglamentación e instrucciones detalladas aplicables a la industria de los piensos, las importaciones, las prácticas de alimentación animal, etc.) y a la manera en que se hacen cumplir (organización, presión de los controles, sanciones, etc.). Dado que las medidas detalladas de prohibición y las políticas de cumplimiento se establecen a nivel nacional, el riesgo de EEB, en principio, no puede ser significativamente diferente en distintas regiones del mismo Estado miembro.

Además, hasta ahora nunca ha recibido la Comisión, ni ha aprobado la Organización Mundial de Sanidad Animal, solicitud alguna de reconocimiento del riesgo de EEB a nivel regional.

([1]) DO L 147 de 31.5.2001, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011202/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: BSE status of Member States and third countries

In its answer to Question E-008892/2013 on the bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) status of Member States and third countries and, specifically, on BSE regionalisation in some Member States, the Commission responds that regionalisation is impossible because, according to the Commission at least, epidemiological studies have shown that the BSE is homogenously distributed through the cattle population of a Member State.

Our information is that BSE distribution is fundamentally dependant on how animals are fed, which has nothing to do with the administrative barriers between countries. This means that, in countries where different regions have different rearing systems (and therefore different feeding systems), BSE distribution is not homogenous. A number of scientific studies demonstrate this. One example that we could cite is the conclusions of a 2008 study conducted by universities in France, the UK, the Netherlands and Switzerland (Ducrot, C.; Arnold, M.; de Koeijer, A.; Heim, D.; Calavas, D.; 2008. 'Review on the epidemiology and dynamics of BSE epidemics', Vet. Res 39:15). Furthermore, within a region, significant differences in BSE distribution can be observed, as shown, for example, by a 2007 study by Catalonian researchers (Allepuz, A.; López-Quílez, A.; Forte, A.; Fernández, G.; Casal, J.; 2007. 'Spatial analysis of bovine spongiform encephalopathy in Galicia, Spain' 2000-2005, Preventive Veterinary Medicine 79:147-185).

1. What are the Commission's arguments for not defining different bovine subpopulations of distinct BSE status within a Member State?

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

Any proposition by the Commission to consider the BSE status of a Member State or region thereof must result from the conclusion that the applicant meets the criteria laid down in Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 ([1]).

A large number of these criteria relate to the risks of introducing the BSE agent by importing contaminated feed or feed ingredients, recycling the prion into feed, and eventually the possible exposure of the cattle population to contaminated feed. These risks are mitigated by the feed-ban rules (regulation and detailed instructions applicable to the feed industry, imports, feeding practises, etc.) and the way they are being enforced (organisation, pressure of control, penalties, etc.). The detailed feed-ban rules and enforcement policies being established at the national level, the risk of BSE in principle could not be significantly different in different regions of the same Member State.

Furthermore, no application for the recognition of the BSE risk at a regional level has ever been received by the Commission or approved by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).

([1]) OJ L 147, 31.5.2001.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011203/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Reforma del sistema nacional ferroviario francés y repercusiones en el ente regulador nacional en el contexto del cuarto paquete ferroviario

Las autoridades francesas están trabajando en una amplia reforma del sistema nacional ferroviario, en virtud de la cual la SNCF y el administrador de la infraestructura (RFF) se integrarían como dos filiales de un único grupo denominado «SNCF». El Estado francés tiene previsto asumir el papel de «estratega» en la nueva organización.

La reforma propuesta afecta también al ente regulador nacional (ARAF). El número de representantes de su junta se reducirá de siete a cinco. Tendrán que tener en cuenta las opiniones expresadas por un funcionario enviado por la administración pública. Además, aún no está claro si las decisiones adoptadas por el ente regulador serán vinculantes y, en caso afirmativo, cuáles de ellas lo serán.

1. ¿Considera la Comisión que la reforma propuesta ofrece todas las garantías necesarias para un acceso no discriminatorio a la infraestructura ferroviaria y, en particular, a los servicios ferroviarios conexos?

2. ¿Está satisfecha la Comisión con la separación de los flujos financieros entre SNCF Mobilités (operador titular) y SNCF Réseau (administrador de la infraestructura ferroviaria)?

3. En caso negativo, ¿cómo piensa evitar la Comisión que se adopte legislación contraria al Derecho de la UE en vigor y al espíritu del cuarto paquete ferroviario, que tiene por objeto reforzar el papel de los administradores de infraestructuras?

4. ¿No considera la Comisión que la creación de un ente regulador europeo evitaría el debilitamiento de los entes reguladores nacionales a través de nueva legislación nacional?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de noviembre de 2013)

1.-3. A través del proyecto de ley sobre la reforma ferroviaria, Francia se propone ajustar su sector ferroviario al Derecho de la Unión, preparar la apertura a la competencia para el año 2019 y fomentar una mayor eficacia.

La estructura integrada «SNCF» que propone dicho proyecto deberá respetar en particular la Directiva 2012/34/UE. Asimismo, Francia deberá cumplir con los actos que figuran en el cuarto paquete ferroviario, actualmente objeto de examen por parte de los colegisladores europeos, una vez que este sea adoptado.

La Comisión no se pronuncia en lo relativo a proyectos de ley nacionales en fase de elaboración que pueden, por su naturaleza de proyectos, experimentar modificaciones antes de ser adoptados por el legislador.

La Comisión espera que la nueva legislación francesa respete los principios de independencia efectiva del administrador de la infraestructura y de transparencia de la contabilidad de las empresas ferroviarias y tiene la convicción de que Francia cumplirá sus obligaciones derivadas del Derecho de la Unión. A tal fin, los servicios de la Comisión estudiarán la nueva legislación francesa una vez haya sido notificada.

4. La Directiva 2012/34/UE ([1]) ha intensificado la cooperación entre los organismos de control de los Estados miembros al contemplar la creación de una red en la que dichos organismos pueden participar y colaborar. La Comisión efectuará un seguimiento del funcionamiento de dicha red y de las experiencias que puede aportar.

([1]) Directiva 2012/34/UE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 21 de noviembre de 2012, por la que se establece un espacio ferroviario europeo único (versión refundida), DO L 343 de 14.12.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011203/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: French reform of the national railway system — effects on the national regulatory body in the context of the Fourth Railway Package

The French authorities are working on an extensive reform of the national railway system, whereby the SNCF and the railway infrastructure manager (RFF) would be integrated as two subsidiaries of a single group called 'SNCF'. The French state intends to assume the role of a 'strategist' in the new organisation.

The national regulatory body (ARAF) is also affected by the proposed reform. The number of its college representatives will decrease from seven to five. They will have to take into account the views expressed by a seconded agent of the government. What is more, it is not yet clear whether and which decisions taken by the regulatory body will be binding.

1. Does the Commission consider that the proposed reform provides for all the necessary guarantees for non-discriminatory access to rail infrastructure and, in particular, to rail-related services?

2. Is the Commission satisfied with the separation of financial flows between 'SNCF Mobilités' (the incumbent operator) and 'SNCF Réseau' (the railway infrastructure manager)?

3. If not, how does the Commission intend to prevent the adoption of legislation which would go against existing EC law and against the spirit of the Fourth Railway Package which aims at empowering infrastructure managers?

4. Does the Commission not consider that the setting-up of a European regulatory body would prevent the weakening of national regulatory bodies via new national legislation?

(Version française)

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

1-3. Par le projet de loi portant réforme ferroviaire, la France entend mettre son secteur ferroviaire en conformité avec le droit de l'Union, préparer l'ouverture à la concurrence pour 2019 et dégager des gains d'efficacité.

La structure intégrée SNCF mise en place par ce projet devra notamment respecter la Directive 2012/34/UE. De même, la France devra se conformer aux actes contenus dans le 4e paquet ferroviaire, actuellement examiné par les co-legislateurs européens, une fois celui-ci adopté.

La Commission ne s'exprime pas sur des projets de loi nationaux en cours d'élaboration qui peuvent, de part leur nature de projet, subir des modifications avant leur adoption par le législateur.

La Commission s'attend à ce que la nouvelle législation française respecte les principes d'indépendance réelle du gestionnaire d'infrastrucure et de transparence comptable des entreprises ferroviaires et reste convaincue que la France respectera ses obligations découlant du droit de l'Union. La nouvelle législation française sera examinée à cette fin par les services de la Commission après sa notification.

4. La directive 2012/34/EU ([1]) a renforcé la coopération entre les organismes de contrôle des États membres en prévoyant la création d'un réseau où ces organismes participent et collaborent. La Commission observera comment fonctionnera ce réseau et quelles expériences il peut apportera.

([1]) Directive 2012/34/EU du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 21 novembre 2012 établissant un espace ferroviaire unique européen (refonte), JO L 343 du 14.12.2012.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-011204/13
alla Commissione
Francesca Barracciu (S&D)
(2 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Codice doganale dell'Unione — Zona franca, proposte di modifica ed entrata in vigore

Considerato che:

— l'articolo 17, comma 2, del Trattato sull'Unione europea stabilisce che «un atto legislativo dell'Unione può essere adottato solo su proposta della Commissione»;

— il Codice doganale dell'Unione, approvato in seduta plenaria dal Parlamento europeo l'11 settembre 2013, dovrebbe, una volta approvato dal Consiglio europeo, entrare in vigore entro l'1 novembre 2013;

— da notizie apparse sulla stampa italiana e riferite a un incontro tra il Commissario Antonio Tajani e il Presidente della Regione Sardegna Ugo Cappellacci, emerge che il Commissario Tajani avrebbe dichiarato che l'entrata in vigore del Codice sarà sicuramente posticipata in funzione di una modifica necessaria a inserire la Sardegna tra i territori extradoganali dell'UE;

può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se corrisponde al vero che la Commissione intende proporre un rinvio della data di entrata in vigore, stabilita per l'1 novembre 2013, del Codice doganale dell'Unione;

2. se corrisponde al vero che la Commissione intende proporre la modifica del Codice recentemente approvato inserendo la Sardegna tra i territori extradoganali dell'UE;

3. se la Commissione ha ricevuto dagli Stati membri, e nello specifico dal Governo italiano, richieste o comunicazioni o sollecitazioni in tal senso;

4. se a prescindere dalla data di entrata in vigore del Codice, corrisponda comunque al vero l'intenzione di modificare il Codice doganale in funzione delle esigenze della Regione Sardegna?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(6 novembre 2013)

La Commissione non intende proporre un rinvio della data di entrata in vigore del codice doganale dell'Unione ([1]).

La Commissione non ha ricevuto richieste di modifica del codice doganale dell'Unione e non prevede modifiche del regolamento.

Per quanto riguarda le zone franche, la Commissione rinvia alle proprie risposte alle interrogazioni E-002397/2013 ed E-007818/2013.

Inoltre, il Vicepresidente della Commissione responsabile per l'industria e l'imprenditoria non ha fatto alcun riferimento diretto al codice doganale dell'Unione in quanto tale, né alla sua entrata in vigore o a una modifica riguardante le zone franche. Il Vicepresidente ha affrontato la questione delle zone franche nell'UE, in particolare riferendosi alla Sardegna e spiegando la procedura per l'istituzione delle zone franche.

([1]) Regolamento (UE) n. 952/2013 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 9 ottobre 2013, che istituisce il codice doganale dell'Unione (rifusione) (GU L 269 del 10.10.2013, pag. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011204/13
to the Commission
Francesca Barracciu (S&D)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Union Customs Code: free zone, proposed amendment and entry into force

Since:

— Article 17(2) of the Treaty on European Union states that 'Union legislative acts may only be adopted on the basis of a Commission proposal';

— the Union Customs Code, adopted at the plenary sitting of the European Parliament on 11 September 2013 should, following adoption by the EU Council, enter into force on 1 November 2013;

— according to reports in the Italian press, Commissioner Antonio Tajani stated at a meeting with Ugo Cappellacci, President of the Regional Government of Sardinia, that the entry into force of the Customs Code is bound to be delayed as it needs to be amended to extend EU free zone status to Sardinia;

can the Commission state:

1. whether it is true that the Commission plans to postpone the date of entry into force of the Union Customs Code, which was set for 1 November 2013;

2. whether it is true that it plans to bring forward an amendment to the recently-adopted Code that extends EU free zone status to Sardinia;

3. whether it has received any requests, communications or applications from Member States, and more specifically the Italian Government, to that effect;

4. whether, regardless of which date the Customs Code is to enter into effect, it is true that the intention is to amend the Customs Code to meet the requirements of the Regional Government of Sardinia?

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

The Commission does not plan postponing the date of entry into force of the Union Customs Code ([1]).

The Commission did not receive any request for amending the Union Customs Code and does not plan any amendment to the regulation.

As far as free zones are concerned, the Commission refers to its replies to questions E-002397/2013 and E-007818/2013.

Furthermore, the Vice-President of the Commission responsible for Industry and Entrepreneurship did not refer to the Union Customs Code directly as such, its entry into force or its amendment in relation to free zones. He addressed the question of free zones in the EU, more specifically with view to Sardinia, and explained the procedure for establishing free zones.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 952/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 October 2013 laying down the Union Customs Code (recast) (OJ L 269, 10.10.2013), p. 1).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-011205/13
aan de Commissie
Kartika Tamara Liotard (GUE/NGL)
(2 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Acties omtrent overschrijding veiliheidslimiet 3-MCPD

Uit een onderzoek, gepubliceerd door EFSA, blijkt dat peuters, kinderen en senioren kans lopen om een hoeveelheid van de giftige stof 3-MCPD binnen te krijgen, die de veiligheidslimiet van 2 microgram/per kg/per dag overschrijdt.

1. Voor sojasaus geldt een grenswaarde voor de concentratie 3-MCPD die dit product mag bevatten. Uit het onderzoek van EFSA blijkt dat margarine en soortgelijke producten het meeste bijdragen aan de inname van 3-MCPD. Gaat de Europese Commissie grenswaardes voor de concentratie 3-MCPD in margarine en soortgelijke producten laten bepalen? Zoja, op welke termijn? Zoniet, wat was de overweging om wel grenswaardes in te stellen voor sojasaus en niet voor margarine en soortgelijke producten?

2. Zal de Commissie bij het instellen van grenswaardes specifiek rekening houden met het consumptiepatroon van senioren, zeker nu het EFSA-onderzoek stelt dat juist zij te grote hoeveelheden 3-MCPD binnenkrijgen?

3. Volgens het onderzoek zijn in enkele gevallen hoge concentraties 3-MCPD teruggevonden in babymelkpoeder en opvolgmelk. Het EFSA-onderzoek bevat echter maar van 2 groepen baby's gegevens over de dagelijkse 3-MCPD-inname. Is dit volgens de Commissie voldoende om te concluderen dat baby's geen dosis binnen krijgen die de veiligheidslimiet overschrijdt?

4. Vormen de door EFSA gevonden hoge concentraties 3-MCPD in babymelk en opvolgmelk aanleiding voor de Commissie om maximumconcentraties 3-MCPD vast te stellen voor deze producten?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(28 oktober 2013)

1. De EU-maximumgehalten voor 3-monochloorpropaan-1,2-diol (3-MCPD) in sojasaus en gehydrolyseerd plantaardig eiwit die in 2001 zijn vastgesteld ([1]), hebben betrekking op de vrije vorm van 3-MCPD. 3-MCPD is in gebonden vorm aanwezig in eetbare geraffineerde plantaardige oliën en vetten en margarine, als 3-MCPD-esters. Voor de analyse van 3-MCPD-esters is pas enkele jaren geleden een betrouwbare analysemethode ontwikkeld. Volgens de huidige kennis is de mondelinge biologische beschikbaarheid van 3-MCPD in de estervorm equivalent aan de vrije vorm. In het rapport van de EFSA ([2]) worden de estervorm en de vrije vorm daarom vermeld als totaalgehalte aan 3-MCPD.

2. De Commissie streeft een hoog niveau van bescherming van de menselijke gezondheid na voor alle bevolkingsgroepen, en houdt rekening met de specifieke consumptiepatronen bij het vaststellen van maximumgehalten aan bepaalde verontreinigingen in eten.

3./4. Er zijn dermate weinig gegevens beschikbaar over zuigelingenvoeding en opvolgzuigelingenvoeding (respectievelijk 1 en 2 analytische resultaten) dat de Commissie het voorbarig acht om nu harde conclusies te trekken voor wat betreft potentiële risico's van deze voedingsmiddelen voor de volksgezondheid.

Tegen eind 2013 zal een controleprogramma worden ingesteld voor controle op de aanwezigheid van de verschillende vormen van MCPD en de gerelateerde glycidylesters in voedingsmiddelen, en in het bijzonder die voedingsmiddelen die volgens het EFSA-rapport het meest bijdragen tot de blootstelling van de verschillende bevolkingsgroepen aan die stoffen. Verder zal de EFSA tegen eind oktober 2013 worden verzocht om een volledige risicobeoordeling uit te voeren betreffende de aanwezigheid van de verschillende vormen van MCPD en glycidylesters in voedingsmiddelen. Wanneer de resultaten van het controleprogramma en de risicobeoordeling beschikbaar zijn, zal de Commissie overwegen of het vaststellen van maximumgehalten voor deze stoffen in bepaalde voedingsmiddelen wenselijk is.

([1]) Verordening (EG) nr. 466/2001 van de Commissie, vervangen door Verordening (EG) nr. 1881/2006 van de Commissie van 19 december 2006 tot vaststelling van de maximumgehalten aan bepaalde verontreinigingen in levensmiddelen (PB L 364 van 20.12.2006, blz. 5).

([2]) Europese Autoriteit voor voedselveiligheid.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011205/13
to the Commission
Kartika Tamara Liotard (GUE/NGL)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Measures in response to excessive 3-MCPD intake

A recent EFSA survey has revealed that infants, children and the elderly are at risk of exceeding the maximum admissible daily intake limit of 2µg/kg in respect of 3-MCPD, a toxic substance.

1. While maximum 3-MCPD content has been stipulated for soy sauce, the survey has revealed that it is in fact margarine and similar products that account for the most significant intake of this substance. Will the Commission accordingly lay down 3-MCPD content limits for margarine and similar products? If so, when? If not, what was the reasoning behind establishing limit values for soy sauce and not for margarine and similar products?

2. In setting limit values, will the Commission take special account of the eating habits of senior consumers, whose excessive 3-MCPD intake, according to EFSA findings, gives particular cause for concern?

3. The survey also shows that certain types of baby milk powder and follow-on formula contain high 3-MCPD concentrations. However, it gives daily intake figures for only two groups of babies. Does the Commission consider this sufficient to conclude that their intake does not exceed the safety limit?

4. In view of the high 3-MCPD content in baby milk powder and follow-on formula revealed by the survey, will the Commission seek to impose maximum limits in respect of these products?

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

1. The EU maximum levels for 3-monochloropropane-1,2-diol (3-MCPD) established in 2001 ([1]) in soy sauce and hydrolysed vegetable protein relate to the free form of 3-MCPD. In edible refined plant oils and fats and margarine, the 3-MCPD is present in its bound form as 3-MCPD-esters. For the analysis of 3-MCPD-esters, a reliable analytical method was elaborated only a few years ago. Based on the current knowledge the oral bioavailability of 3-MCPD in the ester form is equivalent to the free form. In the EFSA ([2]) report, the ester and free form are therefore reported as total 3-MCPD.

2. A high level of human health protection is pursued for all groups of the population and specific consumption patterns are taken into account in the setting of maximum levels for a certain contaminant in food.

3 and 4. The data on powdered infant formula and follow-on formulae are so limited (respectively 1 and 2 analytical results) that the Commission considers it premature to draw firm conclusions as regards the potential risk for public health from these foodstuffs.

A monitoring programme will be established by the end of 2013 for the monitoring of the presence of the different forms of MCPD and the related glycidyl esters in foodstuffs, in particular in the foodstuffs identified in the EFSA report as a major contributor to the exposure to the different groups of the population. Furthermore, EFSA will be requested by the end of October 2013 to perform a comprehensive risk assessment on the presence of the different forms of MCPD and glycidyl esters in food. When the outcome of the monitoring programme and the risk assessment will be available, the Commission shall consider the appropriateness of setting maximum levels for these substances in certain foodstuffs.

([1]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 466/2001 replaced by Commission Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 of 19 December 2006 setting maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuffs (OJ L 364, 20.12.2006, p. 5).
([2]) European Food Safety Authority.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011208/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(2 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ακριβό κόστος υπηρεσιών υγείας για τους Έλληνες πολίτες

Σύμφωνα με πρόσφατη έρευνα του ΟΟΣΑ, η Ελλάδα συγκαταλέγεται στις πρώτες θέσεις μεταξύ των χωρών με τις υψηλότερες κατά κεφαλήν ιδιωτικές δαπάνες υγείας σε σχέση με το εισόδημα των πολιτών. Χαρακτηριστικά, οι Έλληνες πολίτες δαπανούν το 4,76% του εισοδήματός τους για ιδιωτικές δαπάνες υγείας (ανεξάρτητα από τα ποσά που πληρώνουν μέσω φορολογίας και ασφαλιστικών εισφορών για την υγεία), ποσοστό που αντιστοιχεί, κατά μέσο όρο, σε 1 051 δολάρια.

Τα στοιχεία επίσης καταδεικνύουν ότι εκτός από τους Έλληνες πολίτες, δυσβάσταχτο είναι το κόστος της υγείας, εν μέσω κρίσης, και για τους Πορτογάλους, όπου κάθε πολίτης κατά μέσο όρο δαπανά από την τσέπη του το 3,13% του εισοδήματός του για την υγεία (631 δολάρια), τη στιγμή που στην Ολλανδία δαπανάται από τους πολίτες το 0,66%, στο Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο το 0,86% και στη Γαλλία το 0,93%.

Δεδομένου ότι στην Ελλάδα ο δημόσιος τομέας υγείας βρίσκεται σε συνεχή υποχώρηση (συγχωνεύσεις και κλείσιμο μεγάλων νοσοκομειακών μονάδων, εισιτήριο 25 ευρώ για εισαγωγή στα νοσοκομεία κ.ά.) και ο πολίτης επιβαρύνεται ολοένα και περισσότερο με πρόσθετες πληρωμές σε μια προσπάθεια εξασφάλισης ικανοποιητικών υπηρεσιών υγείας, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πού οφείλονται οι τόσο μεγάλες αποκλίσεις στις κατά κεφαλήν ιδιωτικές δαπάνες υγείας μεταξύ των κρατών μελών;

2. Διαθέτει στοιχεία για τη σύνθεση της χρηματοδότησης του υγειονομικού τομέα στην Ελλάδα αλλά και στα υπόλοιπα κράτη μέλη (ποσοστό από δημόσια χρηματοδότηση, φορολογικά έσοδα, δαπάνες υγείας δημόσιων ασφαλιστικών ταμείων κ.ά.);

3. Σύμφωνα με στοιχεία που διαθέτει η Επιτροπή, ποιο το ποσοστό ικανοποίησης των χρηστών από τις δημόσιες υπηρεσίες υγείας σε κάθε κράτος μέλος ξεχωριστά; Ποια θέση κατέχει η Ελλάδα στην ΕΕ των 28; Υπάρχει συσχετισμός μεταξύ του χαμηλού βαθμού ικανοποίησης από τις δημόσιες υγειονομικές παροχές και της αύξησης των ιδιωτικών δαπανών υγείας στα κράτη μέλη;

4. Ισχύει σε άλλα κράτη μέλη οικονομική επιβάρυνση για την εισαγωγή των ασθενών σε νοσοκομειακές μονάδες, δεδομένου ότι, από 1ης Ιανουαρίου, οι Έλληνες πολίτες καλούνται να καταβάλλουν εισιτήριο ύψους 25 ευρώ για την εισαγωγή τους στα δημόσια νοσοκομεία;

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

Οι αποκλίσεις ανάμεσα στα κράτη μέλη στις κατά κεφαλή ιδιωτικές δαπάνες υγείας μπορούν να οφείλονται σε πολλούς παράγοντες, από τους οποίους αναφέρονται ενδεικτικά: το ποσοστό του πληθυσμού που καλύπτεται από την παροχή δημόσιας ιατροφαρμακευτικής περίθαλψης, ο κατάλογος θεραπευτικών αγωγών που προσφέρονται από τη δημόσια ιατροφαρμακευτική περίθαλψη, ο όγκος της περίθαλψης που προσφέρεται και τα επίπεδα τιμών που εφαρμόζονται, τα οποία εξαρτώνται από το τοπικό κόστος εργασίας και το κόστος των ιατρικών βοηθημάτων και φαρμάκων.

Οι στατιστικές για τις δαπάνες των επιλεγμένων λειτουργιών ιατροφαρμακευτικής περίθαλψης με τη χρηματοδότηση φορέων στον τομέα της ιατροφαρμακευτικής περίθαλψης είναι διαθέσιμες από την Eurostat ως μέρος του συστήματος λογαριασμών για την υγεία (SHA) ([1]). Δυστυχώς, μέχρι σήμερα, τα δεδομένα του SHA για την Ελλάδα δεν έχουν δημοσιευθεί στον δικτυακό τόπο της Eurostat.

Μια έρευνα του Ευρωβαρομέτρου, μεταξύ άλλων, σχετικά με την ικανοποίηση των ασθενών από τις υπηρεσίες ιατροφαρμακευτικής περίθαλψης δημοσιεύθηκε το 2007 ([2]). Τα δεδομένα που συλλέχθηκαν είναι, συνεπώς, πολύ παλαιά για να αντικατοπτρίσουν τη σημερινή κατάσταση. Ωστόσο, αξίζει να σημειωθούν τα αποτελέσματά του. Οι ερωτήσεις σχετίζονταν με την εκλαμβανόμενη ποιότητα των υπηρεσιών ιατροφαρμακευτικής περίθαλψης και συμπεριελάμβαναν την ποιότητα των νοσοκομειακών υπηρεσιών, των οδοντιατρικών υπηρεσιών, των εξειδικευμένων και γενικών («οικογενειακών») ιατρών. Σε σύγκριση με τα σημερινά 28 κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ, η Ελλάδα κατατασσόταν σταθερά μεταξύ των τριών πρώτων χωρών με το υψηλότερο ποσοστό των ερωτηθέντων να διαπιστώνει ότι η ποιότητα των προαναφερομένων υπηρεσιών ήταν κακή.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/health/public_health/data_public_health/database
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_283_en.pdf

Η Επιτροπή, επειδή δεν συγκέντρωσε δεδομένα σε διαχρονικό πλαίσιο, δεν είναι σε θέση να αξιολογήσει, με βάση αξιόπιστα στοιχεία, τον αντίκτυπο της «αύξησης των ιδιωτικών δαπανών για την υγεία» σε ικανοποιητικό επίπεδο.

Πολλά κράτη μέλη εφαρμόζουν μορφές επιμερισμού των δαπανών με τους ασθενείς σε νοσοκομεία συγκρίσιμες με αυτές που ανέφερε το αξιότιμο μέλος. Αυτό τεκμηριώνεται, για παράδειγμα, στο ευρωπαϊκό σύστημα αμοιβαίας πληροφόρησης για την κοινωνική προστασία (MISSOC) ([3]).

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=815&langId=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011208/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: The high cost of health services for Greek citizens

According to recent OECD research, Greece is among the countries with the highest per capita spending on private health compared to people's incomes. Typically, Greek citizens spend 4.76% of their income on private health (not including the amount they pay through taxation and health insurance contributions), which equates to USD 1 051 on average.

The data show that, in addition to the Greeks, the Portuguese are also finding health costs hard to bear in the midst of the crisis, as they are spending an average of 3.13% of their income on health (USD 631), while for the Netherlands the figure is 0.66%, for the United Kingdom 0.86% and for France 0.93%.

Given that the state health sector in Greece is in continuing decline (with mergers and closures of large hospitals, EUR 25 entry tickets for hospital admission, etc.), and people are increasingly burdened with additional payments to ensure adequate health services, will the Commission say:

1. What are the reasons for the large variations between Member States in per capita spending on private healthcare?

2. Does it have any data on the breakdown of health sector funding in Greece and the other Member States (the percentage from public funding, tax revenues, health expenditure by public insurance funds etc.)?

3. According to the Commission's data, what is the level of satisfaction of public health service users in each individual Member State? What is Greece's ranking in the EU-28? Is there a correlation between low levels of satisfaction with state health provision and increasing private health expenditure in the Member States?

4. Is a charge made for admission to hospital in other Member States, given that Greek citizens will be required from 1 January to pay EUR 25 for admission to state hospitals?

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

Variations between Member States in per capita spending on private healthcare can be attributed to many factors, to name but a few: rate of population covered by public healthcare, the list of treatments offered under public healthcare, the volume of care provided and applicable price levels, themselves depending upon local cost of labour and costs for medical devices and medicinal products.

Statistics on expenditure of selected healthcare functions by financing agents in healthcare are available from Eurostat as part of the System of Health Accounts (SHA) ([1]). Unfortunately, to date, no SHA data for Greece have been published on the Eurostat website.

A Eurobarometer enquiry, *inter alia*, about patient satisfaction with healthcare services was published in 2007 ([2]). Data collected are therefore too old to reflect the current situation. It is however worth noting its results. The questions related to the perceived quality of healthcare services and included the quality of hospital services, dental services, specialist and generalist ('family') physicians. Compared to the current 28 EU Member States, Greece ranked consistently among the top three countries with the highest rates of respondents finding the quality of aforementioned services to be bad.

As the Commission has not collected data in a longitudinal framework, it is not in a position to assess, based upon reliable evidence, the impact of 'increasing private health expenditure' on the level of satisfaction.

Several Member States apply forms of cost sharing for patients in hospital comparable to that mentioned by the Honourable Member. This is, for instance, documented in the EU's Mutual Information System on Social Protection (MISSOC) ([3]).

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/health/public_health/data_public_health/database
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_283_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=815&langId=en

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011209/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE) και Marietta Giannakou (PPE)
(2 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Προθέσεις βορείων χωρών για πρόταση θέσπισης καθεστώτος διακρίσεων κατά των εργαζομένων του ευρωπαϊκού νότου στο πλαίσιο της κινητικότητας

Δημοσιεύματα τόσο στον ευρωπαϊκό όσο και στον ελληνικό τύπο αναφέρουν ότι το Σώμα των Επιτρόπων ενημερώθηκε για τις προθέσεις κάποιων βόρειων χωρών της ΕΕ να προχωρήσουν στην κατάθεση πρότασης προς την Επιτροπή ώστε να υιοθετηθούν περιορισμοί (π.χ. αριθμητικοί) αναφορικά με τη δυνατότητα μετακίνησης και πρόσβασης σε αγορές εργασίας της ενωσιακής επικράτειας των ευρωπαίων πολιτών που προέρχονται από τα κράτη μέλη του Νότου. Σε αυτήν την περίπτωση, είναι σαφές πως στο στόχαστρο των περιορισμών αυτών τίθενται οι χειμαζόμενοι από την κρίση λαοί του ευρωπαϊκού Νότου, στις χώρες των οποίων παρουσιάζονται τα υψηλότερα ποσοστά ανεργίας, ύφεσης και συρρίκνωσης της απασχόλησης, ενώ ταυτόχρονα ενδεχόμενη εφαρμογή τους θα ισοδυναμούσε με έντονη όξυνση των ήδη υφισταμένων γεωγραφικών ανισοτήτων. Δεδομένου ότι η ίδια η Επιτροπή έθεσε την κινητικότητα των εργαζομένων, μεταξύ άλλων, στο επίκεντρο των πολιτικών της, με σκοπό την καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας, την ενίσχυση της ανταγωνιστικότητας και την αύξηση της οικονομικής ανάπτυξης της ΕΕ υπό το πρίσμα και της ενιαίας αγοράς, ερωτάται:

1. Πώς ξεκίνησε η εν λόγω συζήτηση; Συνάδουν τέτοιες απόψεις με τις αρχές και τις αξίες, τους κανόνες λειτουργίας αλλά και τους μελλοντικούς στόχους της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης;

2. Πώς τοποθετείται η Επιτροπή επ' αυτού; Ποιες πρωτοβουλίες πρόκειται να αναλάβει προκειμένου να διαφυλαχθούν τα δικαιώματα των ευρωπαίων εργαζομένων εντός της ΕΕ, όπως αυτό της ελεύθερης κυκλοφορίας;

3. Προτίθεται να προβεί σε σχετικές συστάσεις με σκοπό να αποσοβηθούν τυχόν προσκόμματα στην ελεύθερη κυκλοφορία των εργαζομένων, γεγονός που μπορεί να πλήξει σημαντικά, αφενός, την οικονομική δραστηριότητα σε επίπεδο ΕΕ και, αφετέρου, την κοινωνική συνοχή;

4. Επεξεργάζεται κάποιο δυναμικό και ηχηρό τρόπο προκειμένου να αποσαφηνιστεί — προς πάσα κατεύθυνση — ο αδιαπραγμάτευτος χαρακτήρας της ελεύθερης και ανεμπόδιστης μετακίνησης των πολιτών της ΕΕ εντός των συνόρων της;

5. Πώς σχολιάζει το γεγονός ότι, ιδιαίτερα μέσα σε αυτή τη δυσμενή κοινωνικοοικονομική συγκυρία, προτάσεις με αυτό το περιεχόμενο τροφοδοτούν τον ευρωσκεπτικισμό στα κράτη μέλη και στρέφονται ενάντια σε κάθε εγχείρημα οικοδόμησης μιας στέρεης και αλληλέγγυας Πολιτικής και Κοινωνικής Ένωσης;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(22 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει τον κ. βουλευτή στις απαντήσεις που έδωσε στις ερωτήσεις E-9726/2013 και E-9848/2013 σχετικά με παρόμοια υπόθεση.

Σε ό,τι αφορά τη λήψη περαιτέρω μέτρων προκειμένου να εξαλειφθούν τα εμπόδια στην ελεύθερη κυκλοφορία των εργαζομένων και να ενθαρρυνθεί η κινητικότητα εντός της ΕΕ, η Επιτροπή, σύμφωνα με το πρόγραμμα εργασίας του 2013, θα υποβάλει πρόταση για την αναβάθμιση του δικτύου EURES με στόχο την ενίσχυση της διακρατικής αντιστοίχισης προσφοράς και ζήτησης εργασίας και των υπηρεσιών τοποθέτησης και πρόσληψης. Επιπλέον, το 2014 η Επιτροπή θα υποβάλει δέσμη μέτρων για την κινητικότητα στην εργασία, με μια σειρά στοιχείων που αποσκοπούν στην ενθάρρυνση της κινητικότητας του εργατικού δυναμικού μεταξύ των κρατών μελών.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011209/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE) and Marietta Giannakou (PPE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Intention of the northern countries to propose establishing a discriminatory regime against workers from the European South within the mobility framework

European and Greek press articles report that the College of Commissioners has been informed about the intentions of some northern countries of the EU to submit a proposal to the Commission for the adoption of restrictions (e.g. of a numerical nature) on mobility and access to EU job markets for European citizens originating from the Member States of the South. It is clear that these restrictions target people from the European South who are affected by the crisis, and whose countries are seeing the highest unemployment rates, along with recession and shrinking employment, and that any implementation of these restrictions would only intensify the geographical inequalities that already exist. Given that the Commission has placed worker mobility, among other things, at the centre of its policies, with a view to combating unemployment, strengthening competitiveness and boosting the economic development of the EU through the single market, will it say:

1. How did the above discussion start? Do these viewpoints comply with the principles, values, operational rules and future objectives of the European Union?

2. What is the Commission's position on this matter? What steps does it intend to take to safeguard European workers' rights within the EU, such as the right to freedom of movement?

3. Does it intend to proceed with recommendations aiming to remove any barriers to the free movement of workers, which could have a considerable effect on economic activity at EU level, and also on social cohesion?

4. Is it looking for a dynamic and resounding way of making clear — to all parties — the non-negotiable nature of the free and unhindered movement of EU citizens within the borders of the EU?

5. What does it have to say about the fact that proposals of this kind encourage euroscepticism in the Member States — particularly in these difficult social and economic circumstances — and work against any attempt to build a firm Political and Social Union based on solidarity?

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

The Honourable Member is referred to the replies the Commission gave to Questions E-9726/2013 and E-9848/2013 on a similar matter.

In terms of taking further steps to remove barriers to the free movement of workers and to encourage intra-EU mobility, the Commission will, in accordance with its 2013 Work Programme, present a proposal to upgrade the EURES network with a view to strengthening its transnational matching, placement and recruitment services. In addition, in 2014 the Commission will present a labour mobility package, with a range of elements designed to encourage labour mobility between Member States.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011210/13
προς το Συμβούλιο
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(2 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ολοκληρωμένη ευρωπαϊκή χρηματοπιστωτική αγορά και ανισορροπίες

Σε πρόσφατες δηλώσεις ([1]) του μέλους του Διοικητικού Συμβουλίου της ΕΚΤ, κ. Yves Mersch, κατά το διάστημα 2005-2012 ο μέσος ετήσιος αριθμός τραπεζικών συγχωνεύσεων και εξαγορών στις ΗΠΑ ήταν 343, όταν στην ΕΕ ο αντίστοιχος αριθμός ήταν 58, ενώ ο δείκτης τιμής προς την εσωτερική λογιστική αξία μετοχής (price-to-book ratio) στις τράπεζες εκτός ευρωζώνης είναι 1, όταν στις τράπεζες της ευρωζώνης είναι 0,7, καταδεικνύοντας με αυτά τα στοιχεία πόσο μακριά παραμένει η Ευρώπη από μία πλήρως ολοκληρωμένη χρηματοπιστωτική αγορά, αλλά και ένα ταχύτερο ρυθμό αναδιάρθρωσης των τραπεζών εκτός ευρωζώνης. Ο κ. Mersch επίσης εξέφρασε την άποψη πως, παρά την πρόοδο που εισάγει η οδηγία ([2]) για την ανάκαμψη και την εξυγίανση πιστωτικών ιδρυμάτων και επιχειρήσεων επενδύσεων, η ευχέρεια που παρέχεται στις εθνικές αρχές για την απαλλαγή ορισμένων κατηγοριών υποχρεώσεων στο πλαίσιο διάσωσης με ίδια μέσα, δεν συμβάλλει στη δημιουργία ενός ενιαίου συστήματος. Για το λόγο αυτό, ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο της ΕΕ:

1. Πώς αντιμετωπίζει τις παραπάνω εκτιμήσεις για τις αδυναμίες που εντοπίζονται σχετικά με τη δημιουργία ενός ενιαίου συστήματος;

2. Διαθέτει εκτιμήσεις για πιθανές ανισορροπίες που μπορούν να δημιουργηθούν σε επίπεδο εθνικών χρηματοπιστωτικών συστημάτων και σε ποιες χώρες;

3. Θεωρεί πως θα πρέπει να υπάρξουν κίνητρα και δικλίδες ασφαλείας προκειμένου να προστατευθούν τα πιο ευάλωτα εθνικά χρηματοπιστωτικά συστήματα;

Απάντηση
(16 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Το Συμβούλιο έχει επανειλημμένα τονίσει τη σημασία της μεταρρύθμισης του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα και της εφαρμογής της Τραπεζικής Ένωσης για την αποφυγή του κατακερματισμού της αγοράς και τη διασφάλιση μιας πλήρως ενοποιημένης χρηματοπιστωτικής αγοράς στην ΕΕ.

Τον Μάρτιο του 2013 (EUCO 23/13), το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο τόνισε ότι η πορεία προς ένα περισσότερο ενοποιημένο χρηματοπιστωτικό πλαίσιο ήταν επιτακτική. Τον Ιούνιο του 2013 (EUCO 104/2/13 REV2), υπογράμμισε ότι, βραχυπρόθεσμα, βασική προτεραιότητα είναι η ολοκλήρωση της Τραπεζικής Ένωσης σύμφωνα με τα συμπεράσματα του Δεκεμβρίου 2012 (EUCO 205/12) και του Μαρτίου 2013, καθώς και ότι οι νέοι κανόνες περί κεφαλαιακών απαιτήσεων για τις τράπεζες (CRR/CRD) και ο νέος Ενιαίος Εποπτικός Μηχανισμός (ΕΕΜ) έχουν κεντρικό ρόλο στη διασφάλιση της σταθερότητας του τραπεζικού τομέα. Ανέφερε επίσης ότι κατά τη μετάβαση προς τον ΕΕΜ θα διενεργηθεί αξιολόγηση των ισολογισμών, που θα περιλαμβάνει επισκόπηση της ποιότητας των στοιχείων ενεργητικού και, εν συνεχεία, προσομοίωση ακραίων καταστάσεων. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, τον Οκτώβριο του 2013 (EUCO 169/13), υπενθύμισε ότι, για τα κράτη μέλη που συμμετέχουν στον ΕΕΜ, επείγει να διαμορφωθεί συντονισμένη ευρωπαϊκή προσέγγιση ενόψει της συνολικής αξιολόγησης των πιστωτικών ιδρυμάτων από την Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα. Επίσης, απηύθυνε έκκληση στην Ευρωομάδα να διατυπώσει οριστικά τις κατευθυντήριες γραμμές για την άμεση ανακεφαλαιοποίηση στο πλαίσιο του Ευρωπαϊκού Μηχανισμού Σταθερότητας (ΕΜΣ), προκειμένου να καταστεί δυνατή η άμεση ανακεφαλαιοποίηση των τραπεζών, κατόπιν της θέσπισης του ΕΕΜ. Επιπλέον, σημείωσε ότι για την ολοκλήρωση της Τραπεζικής Ένωσης απαιτείται όχι μόνο ένας ΕΕΜ, αλλά και ένας Ενιαίος Μηχανισμός Εξυγίανσης (ΕΜΕ). Απηύθυνε έκκληση στους νομοθέτες να ενστερνιστούν την οδηγία για την ανάκαμψη και την εξυγίανση των τραπεζών (BRRD) και την οδηγία για την εγγύηση των καταθέσεων έως το τέλος του έτους, ενώ επίσης υπογράμμισε την ανάγκη ευθυγράμμισης του ΕΜΕ και της οδηγίας για την ανάκαμψη και την εξυγίανση των τραπεζών κατά την τελική τους διατύπωση, παράλληλα με τη δέσμευση του Συμβουλίου να συμφωνήσει επί γενικής προσέγγισης σχετικά με την πρόταση της Επιτροπής για έναν ΕΜΕ έως το τέλος του έτους, προκειμένου να καταστεί δυνατή η θέσπισή του πριν από το τέλος της τρέχουσας νομοθετικής περιόδου.

([1]) http://www.ecb.europa.eu/press/key/date/2013/html/sp130926.en.html#
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/137627.pdf

Τα ερωτήματα που ήγειρε το αξιότιμο μέλος αφορούν κυρίως θέματα που άπτονται της οδηγίας για την ανάκαμψη και την εξυγίανση των τραπεζών και του ΕΜΕ. Η οδηγία για την ανάκαμψη και την εξυγίανση των τραπεζών παρουσιάστηκε από την Επιτροπή στις 6 Ιουνίου 2012 και ο ΕΜΕ στις 10 Ιουλίου 2013. Η οδηγία για την ανάκαμψη και την εξυγίανση των τραπεζών εναρμονίζει τα απαραίτητα βήματα και τις αρμοδιότητες ώστε να διασφαλίζεται ότι η διαχείριση των πτωχεύσεων των τραπεζών ανά την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση γίνεται κατά τρόπο που αποκλείει τη χρηματοπιστωτική αστάθεια και ελαχιστοποιεί τις δαπάνες για τους φορολογούμενους. Σκοπός του ΕΜΕ είναι να συγκεντρώσει βασικές αρμοδιότητες και πόρους για τη διαχείριση της πτώχευσης οιασδήποτε τράπεζας στην ευρωζώνη και σε άλλα κράτη μέλη που συμμετέχουν στην Τραπεζική Ένωση. Αμφότεροι οι φάκελοι έχουν ύψιστη προτεραιότητα για το Συμβούλιο.

Η οδηγία για την ανάκαμψη και την εξυγίανση των τραπεζών εξετάζεται επί του παρόντος στο πλαίσιο του τριμερούς διαλόγου μεταξύ των συννομοθετών, με σκοπό την επίτευξη συμφωνίας σε πρώτη ανάγνωση. Το Συμβούλιο εξετάζει επί του παρόντος την πρόταση για τον ΕΜΕ, με σκοπό την ανάθεση εντολής προς την Προεδρία προκειμένου να διαπραγματευτεί με το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο επιδιώκοντας την επίτευξη συμφωνίας σε πρώτη ανάγνωση.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011210/13
to the Council
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Imbalances in the integrated European financial market

According to recent statements [1]from Yves Mersch, a member of the European Central Bank's Governing Council, the average number of bank mergers and acquisitions per year in the US between 2005 and 2012 was 343, whilst the yearly average in the EU was 58. At the same time, the price-to-book ratio for banks outside the eurozone is 1, whilst for banks in the eurozone it is 0.7. This data show how far Europe still is from a totally integrated financial market, and how much faster the rate of bank restructuring is outside the eurozone. Mr Mersch also expressed the view that, despite progress over the directive [2]on the recovery and resolution of credit institutions and investment firms, the discretion provided to national authorities to exempt certain classes of liabilities within the framework of a bail-in does not contribute to the creation of a single system. Therefore, will the Council answer the following:

1. How does it view these weaknesses that have been identified in relation to the establishment of a single system?

2. Does it have any estimates as to the potential imbalances that may arise at the level of national credit systems, and if so, for which countries?

3. Does it believe that incentives and safety valves are required in order to protect the most vulnerable national credit systems?

Reply
(16 December 2013)

The Council has repeatedly stressed the importance of the reform of the financial sector and the implementation of the Banking Union to prevent market fragmentation and to ensure a fully integrated financial market in the EU.

In March 2013, (EUCO 23/13), the European Council stressed that progress towards a more integrated financial framework was urgently needed. In June 2013 (EUCO 104/2/13 REV2), it noted that, in the short term, the key priority was to complete the Banking Union in line with its conclusions of December 2012 (EUCO 205/12) and March 2013 and that the new rules on capital requirements for banks (CRR/CRD) and the new Single Supervisory Mechanism (SSM) would have a key role in ensuring the stability of the banking sector. It also announced that during the transition towards the SSM, a balance sheet assessment would be conducted comprising an asset quality review and subsequently a stress test. In that context, in October 2013 (EUCO 169/13), it recalled the urgent need for the Member States taking part in the SSM to establish a coordinated European approach in preparation for the comprehensive assessment of credit institutions by the European Central Bank. It also called on the Eurogroup to finalise guidelines for European Stability Mechanism (ESM) direct recapitalisation so as to enable it to recapitalise banks directly, following the establishment of the SSM. Furthermore, it noted that the completion of the Banking Union required not only a SSM but also a Single Resolution Mechanism (SRM). It called on the legislators to adopt the Bank Recovery and Resolution Directive (BRRD) and the Deposit Guarantee Directive by the end of the year, and underlined the need to align the SRM and the BRRD as finally adopted, as well as the Council's undertaking to agree on a general approach on the Commission's proposal for a SRM by the end of the year in order to enable it to be adopted before the end of the current legislative period.

The questions raised by the Honourable Member concern in particular issues relating to the BRRD and the SRM. The BRRD was presented by the Commission on 6 June 2012 and the SRM on 10 July 2103. The BRRD harmonises the necessary steps and powers to ensure that bank failures across the European Union are managed in a way which avoids financial instability and minimises costs for taxpayers. The SRM aims to centralise key competences and resources for managing the failure of any bank in the Euro Area and in other Member States participating in the Banking Union. The Council attaches top priority to both those dossiers.

The BRRD is currently being examined as part of the trilogue process between the co-legislators with a view to reaching an agreement at first reading. The Council is currently examining the SRM proposal with a view to establishing a mandate for the Presidency to negotiate with the European Parliament with a view to reaching an agreement at first reading.

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[1] http://www.ecb.europa.eu/press/key/date/2013/html/sp130926.en.html#
[2] http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/137627.pdf

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-011211/13
Komisi
Jan Březina (PPE)
(2. října 2013)

Předmět: Návrh Komise týkající se rostlinných odrůd

Podle návrhu, který před nedávnem předložila Komise, budou muset být rostlinné odrůdy zapsány v novém oficiálním rejstříku rostlin a každá bude mít svůj vlastní oficiální popis.

1. Jaká motivace a důvody stojí za tímto návrhem? Jaký cíl svým návrhem Komise sleduje?

2. Provedla Komise posouzení dopadu zahrnující kalkulaci průměrných nákladů na popsání a registraci každé rostliny?

Odpověď pana Borga jménem Komise
(21. listopadu 2013)

Návrh Komise ohledně produkce rozmnožovacího materiálu rostlin a jeho dodávání na trh obsahuje ustanovení o zřízení národních registrů odrůd rostlin a registru odrůd rostlin Unie (články 51 a 52). Odrůdy přibližně 150 druhů uvedených na seznamu musí být registrovány a uvedeny na seznamu.

1. Ustanovení týkající se vnitrostátních a unijních registrů aktualizují zavedený systém, který je v platnosti v Evropské unii od roku 1970 a v mnoha evropských zemích od počátku 20. století. Například Německo přijalo první zákon o osivu, který zahrnoval registraci odrůd, v roce 1929. Seznamy odrůd mají umožnit uživatelům odrůd informované rozhodování a dále zajistit pro zemědělce a zahrádkáře vysoce kvalitní osivo a sadbu odolných a výnosných odrůd.

2. Posouzení dopadů připojené k návrhu obsahuje odhad celkových nákladů na registraci odrůd v Evropské unii (přibližně 55–60 milionů EUR za rok) a poskytuje v příloze XIV podrobnější informace o struktuře nákladů na registraci. Náklady na registraci se liší podle typu druhu (obiloviny, zelenina, traviny atd.) a mezi členskými státy. Tyto náklady jsou součástí referenční úrovně, s níž se srovnávají možnosti politiky analyzované v posouzení dopadů.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011211/13
to the Commission
Jan Březina (PPE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Commission proposal on plant varieties

According to a recent Commission proposal, plant varieties will have to be listed in a new official plant register and each will be given its own official description.

1. What is the motivation and reasoning behind this proposal? What aim does the Commission seek to pursue with this proposal?

2. Has the Commission provided an impact assessment including calculations of the average cost of describing and registering each plant?

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

The Commission proposal on the production and making available on the market of plant reproductive material includes provisions for the establishment of national and Union registers of plant varieties (Articles 51 and 52). The varieties of approximately 150 listed species need to be registered and listed.

1. The provisions concerning national and Union registers are an update of an established system that has been in force in the European Union since 1970 and in many European countries since the early 20th century. For example, Germany passed the first seed law that included variety registration in 1929. Variety lists serve to offer informed choices to the users of the varieties, and further ensure the provision of high quality seed and planting material of resistant and high performance varieties for farmers and horticulturists.

2. The Impact Assessment accompanying the proposal includes an estimate of the total cost of variety registration in the European Union (approximately EUR 55-60 million per year) and provides in Annex XIV more detailed information on the cost structure of registration. The costs of registration differ between type of species (cereal, vegetable, grass etc.) and between Member States. These costs are parts of the baseline against which the policy options analysed in the impact assessment are compared to.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011212/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: VAT on domestic fuel

Could the Commission confirm that a Member State must seek permission to reduce the level of VAT on domestic fuel? What is the minimum VAT level for the UK?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(12 November 2013)

Under the current EU VAT legislation adopted unanimously by Member States ([1]), Member States must apply a standard VAT rate, which may not be less than 15% and may also apply one or two reduced VAT rates of no less than 5% to supplies of goods and services referred to in Annex III to the VAT Directive. Heating fuel is not covered by this Annex and therefore, the standard rate should apply. There is no procedure authorising Member States to depart from these rules.

However, these simple rules are complicated by a multitude of derogations granted to certain Member States until the adoption of EU definitive VAT arrangements. These derogations were granted during the negotiations preceding the adoption of the rules on VAT rates or in the Acts of Accession to the European Union. Some Member States, like the UK, have been granted specific temporary derogations which enable them to apply a reduced VAT rate to heating oil, coal, and similar products.

Based on the information available to the Commission, the UK currently applies a reduced VAT rate of 5% to heating oil for domestic and residential use or for non-business use by a charity whereas the standard rate of 20% applies to fuel for business use.

([1]) Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006 — OJ L 347, 11.12.2006, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011213/13
to the Commission
David Martin (S&D)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Role of environmental assessment concerning Rosyth international container terminal

Is the Commission aware of an application being made for a new container terminal at Rosyth, Scotland? Some doubts have been raised over the decision-making process for this terminal, most specifically as regards the role and timing of an environmental impact assessment in the process.

Could the Commission clarify at what stage potential environmental impacts should be considered in this type of planning application? Is considering environmental impacts after the principle of the project has been approved compliant with European law?

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

The Commission is aware of the application submitted for the new container terminal in Rosyth, Scotland. It has registered a complaint on the same matter and it intends to ask the UK national authorities as to how compliance with the EIA Directive ([1]) and the Habitats Directive ([2]) will be ensured in relation to this container project.

In accordance with the EIA Directive, before consent is given, projects likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue, *inter alia*, of their nature, size or location should be made subject to a requirement for development consent and an assessment with regard to their effects.

The EIA Directive foresees in Article 1(4) the possibility that the directive does not apply to projects adopted by a specific act of national legislation. As the national authorities decided to apply this provision for the container terminal in Rosyth, a draft of a special order (The Rosyth International Container Terminal Order 2013) has been tabled to the Scottish Parliament. In this case and according to the relevant case law, the Member State must ensure the achievement of the objectives pursued by the EIA Directive. This includes the provision that the information available to the parliament at the time, when the details of the projects were approved, was equivalent to that which would have been submitted to the competent authorities in an ordinary procedure.

([1]) Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.
([2]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011214/13
alla Commissione
Lara Comi (PPE)
(2 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Limiti per le aflatossine nel mais

Anche nel 2013, il mais coltivato in Italia risulta attaccato dalle aflatossine e pertanto inadatto alla commercializzazione. I parametri stabiliti dalla direttiva 2003/100/CE, pedissequamente trasposti nel decreto legge 149/2004, risultano essere piuttosto restrittivi, alla luce della presenza registrata nel mais coltivato nella pianura padana.

Si aggiunga che per le autorità statunitensi il limite, in alcuni casi, può superare di 15 volte quello europeo (vedasi il *Food Safety Modernization Act*).

In virtù del danno economico subito dagli agricoltori, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. quali rischi si correrebbero per la salute degli animali e, in ultima analisi, dell'uomo se il limite fosse più elevato?

2. È prevista una forma di indennizzo per gli agricoltori il cui raccolto è colpito da questo microfungo?

3. Cosa intende fare la Commissione, considerando che tale misura avvantaggia il commercio delle carni dei paesi in cui tali limiti sono maggiori?

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

1. Le aflatossine sono agenti cancerogeni genotossici. Numerose relazioni sulla valutazione dei rischi permettono di concludere che anche livelli molto bassi di esposizione alle aflatossine contribuiscono al rischio di tumore del fegato. Qualsiasi possibile aumento del livello massimo di aflatossine nel mais, anche su base temporanea, può essere preso in considerazione unicamente dopo che una valutazione globale del rischio, effettuata dall'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare (EFSA), abbia dimostrato che tale aumento del livello massimo di aflatossine nel mais non comporta un incremento inaccettabile del rischio per la sanità pubblica e animale.

2. Non è previsto alcun indennizzo a livello UE per gli agricoltori il cui mais sia contaminato da aflatossine.

3. La Commissione non dispone di informazioni che indichino che le norme rigorose in materia di aflatossine negli alimenti e nei mangimi nell'UE si traducono in uno svantaggio competitivo per il settore della produzione di carni nell'UE rispetto a quanto accade per i paesi al di fuori dell'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011214/13
to the Commission
Lara Comi (PPE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Aflatoxin levels in maize

This year, maize grown in Italy has once again been contaminated with aflatoxins, which make it unfit for sale. The limits set in Commission Directive 2003/100/CE and faithfully transposed by means of Decree-law 149/2004 are too restrictive, as is clear from the levels of aflatoxins recorded in maize grown in the Po valley.

Furthermore, in some cases, US limits are 15 times higher than those in Europe (see the *Food Safety Modernization Act*).

In light of the losses farmers have suffered, can the Commission say:

1. what health risks would there be for animals and, ultimately, for humans if the limit were to be raised?

2. whether farmers whose maize is affected by this microfungus will receive any form of compensation?

3. what action it intends to take in this matter, not least in view of the fact that the current rules give an advantage to the meat industries of countries which have higher limits?

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

1. Aflatoxins are genotoxic carcinogens. From many reports on risk assessment, it can be concluded that even very low levels of exposure to aflatoxins still contribute to the risk of liver cancer. Any possible increase of the maximum level for aflatoxins in maize, even on a temporary basis, can only be considered after a comprehensive risk assessment, performed by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), has demonstrated that such an increase of the maximum level in maize would not result in an unacceptable increase of animal and public health risk.

2. No compensation is foreseen at EU level for farmers whose maize is contaminated with aflatoxins.

3. The Commission has no information that the strict rules on aflatoxins in feed and food in the EU result in a competitive disadvantage of the EU meat production compared to the meat production in countries outside the EU.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011215/13
alla Commissione
Lara Comi (PPE)
(2 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Coordinamento della vigilanza bancaria

Secondo quanto votato durante la scorsa plenaria, la Banca centrale europea assumerà presto il compito di effettuare la vigilanza prudenziale.

In vista dell'elaborazione definitiva delle norme, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. quali norme regolano, oggi, la cooperazione fra le autorità nazionali di vigilanza bancaria nel caso di gruppi presenti in più Stati membri?

2. In particolare, quali misure sono previste, nel caso in cui un istituto di credito abbia problemi di liquidità o di solvibilità in uno Stato membro, a tutela dei clienti degli altri istituti facenti capo allo stesso gruppo in altri paesi dell'UE?

3. Quale orientamento ha la Commissione per quanto riguarda la nuova normativa in materia di problemi gestionali di enti creditizi presenti in un solo Stato?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(5 dicembre 2013)

Il regolamento (UE) n. 1024/2013 del Consiglio, del 15 ottobre 2013, che attribuisce alla Banca centrale europea compiti specifici in merito alle politiche in materia di vigilanza prudenziale degli enti creditizi ([1]) conferisce e affida alla BCE poteri e compiti fondamentali di vigilanza sugli enti creditizi negli Stati membri partecipanti. La BCE eserciterà i poteri conferitile dalle norme applicabili del diritto dell'Unione, vale a dire, in particolare, le norme del pacchetto CRD4 composto dal regolamento ([2]) e dalla direttiva ([3]) sui requisiti patrimoniali.

Il diritto dell'Unione impone all'autorità di vigilanza dello Stato membro d'origine e alle autorità di vigilanza degli Stati membri ospitanti in cui l'ente creditizio stabilisce filiazioni o succursali, oppure presta servizi transfrontalieri, di coordinarsi nelle rispettive azioni. Tutte le autorità di vigilanza competenti delle filiazioni di un gruppo bancario si riuniscono in collegi delle autorità di vigilanza.

Al coordinamento fra la BCE e le autorità di vigilanza degli Stati membri non partecipanti continueranno ad applicarsi le vigenti procedure sugli Stati d'origine e ospitanti e i collegi. Nella misura in cui le sono trasferiti compiti di vigilanza, la BCE eserciterà negli Stati membri partecipanti le funzioni di autorità dello Stato d'origine o dello Stato ospitante e le nuove modalità andranno a sostituire sia le vigenti procedure sugli Stati d'origine e ospitanti sia i collegi delle autorità di vigilanza.

La vigilanza rigorosa e imparziale della BCE dovrebbe rafforzare la stabilità degli enti creditizi e del sistema finanziario e tutelare quindi depositanti e clienti. Il quadro normativo comune a tutela dei depositi nel mercato unico risulterà ulteriormente potenziato con la direttiva sui sistemi di garanzia dei depositi, la cui proposta è attualmente in discussione.

Il pacchetto CRD4 rafforzerà la capitalizzazione e la governance interna degli enti creditizi ([4]).

([1]) GU L 287 del 29.10.2013, pag. 63.
([2]) Regolamento (UE) n. 575/2013 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 26 giugno 2013, relativo ai requisiti prudenziali per gli enti creditizi e le imprese di investimento e che modifica il regolamento (UE) n. 648/2012.
([3]) Direttiva 2013/36/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 26 giugno 2013, sull'accesso all'attività degli enti creditizi e sulla vigilanza prudenziale sugli enti creditizi e sulle imprese di investimento, che modifica la direttiva 2002/87/CE e abroga le direttive 2006/48/CE e 2006/49/CE.
([4]) Ad es., obblighi in materia di remunerazione, gestione dei rischi, organo di amministrazione, trasparenza.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011215/13
to the Commission
Lara Comi (PPE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Coordination of banking supervision

On the basis of a vote held during the last part-session, the European Central Bank will soon be taking on the task of prudential supervision.

In order to finalise the rules, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. what rules currently govern cooperation between national banking supervision authorities in the event of groups operating in more than one Member State;

2. in particular, in the event that a credit institution has liquidity or solvency problems in one Member State, what measures are envisaged to protect customers of the other institutions of the same group in other EU countries;

3. what is the Commission's position on the new legislation on the managerial issues of credit institutions operating in a single State?

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

Council Regulation (EU) No 1024/2013 of 15 October 2013 conferring specific tasks on the European Central Bank concerning policies relating to the prudential supervision of credit institutions ([1]) entrusts the ECB with key tasks and powers for the supervision of credit institutions in participating Member States (MS). The ECB will apply the powers granted under applicable Union law, i.e. in particular those foreseen in the CRD IV package consisting of the Capital Requirement Regulation ([2]) and the Capital Requirement Directive ([3]).

Under EC law the home supervisor and the host supervisors of other MS where a credit institutions establishes branches, subsidiaries or provides cross-border services have to coordinate their action. Colleges of supervisors bring together all supervisors responsible for subsidiaries in a banking group.

As regards the coordination between the ECB and supervisors in non-participating MS, existing home/host procedures and colleges will continue to exist. To the extent that the ECB has taken over supervisory tasks, it will carry out the functions of the home/host supervisor in participating MS. Within participating MS, the new arrangements will substitute the existing home/host procedures and the colleges.

Strict and impartial supervision by the ECB should strengthen the stability of credit institutions and the financial system, thereby ensuring the protection of depositors and customers. In addition, the currently negotiated proposal for the Deposit Guarantee Schemes Directive will further strengthen the common framework for rules protecting deposits across the single market.

The CRD IV package will strengthen the capitalisation and the internal governance of credit institutions ([4]).

([1]) OJ L287 p. 63.
([2]) Regulation No 575/2013 of the European Parliament and the Council of 26 June 2013 on prudential requirements for credit institutions and investment firms and amending Regulation (EU) No 648/2012.
([3]) Directive 2013/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 on access to the activity of credit institutions and the prudential supervision of credit institutions and investment firms, amending Directive 2002/87/EC and repealing Directives 2006/48/EC and 2006/49/EC.
([4]) E.g. remuneration requirements, risk management, management body, transparency.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011217/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: EU position on exploiting Arctic resources

The Russian Government was expected to discuss the exploitation of Arctic resources when it meets with its Finnish and Icelandic counterparts on Wednesday 25 September 2013.

Has the Commission been monitoring the outcome of these talks? What is the Commission's position on the exploitation of resources from the Arctic?

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

The meeting referred to is the Third International Arctic Forum that was organised by the Russian Geographical Society and that took place in Salekhard on September 24 and 25. The main subject of the forum was 'ecological security in the exploration and use of the Arctic's natural resources'. The Commission was not invited to this forum, although the European Environment Agency was present at this meeting.

The Commission's position on the exploitation of resources from the Arctic is laid out in the joint Communication on 'Developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region'. ([1]) First of all, it is important that the views of Arctic inhabitants are taken into account on issues of economic development. Given the Arctic's fragile environment, any exploitation of both natural and mineral resources should be managed with utmost care. The Arctic states and the EU have a shared interest in ensuring that the Arctic's natural resources both on land, at sea and at or below the sea-bed are utilised in a sustainable manner that does not compromise the Arctic environment and benefits local communities.

([1]) JOIN(2012) 19 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011220/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: EU-US travel arrangements

Currently US citizens are afforded the right to travel anywhere in the EU for tourism or business for up to 90 days without a visa. Citizens from 23 of the 28 EU Member States do not require a visa for the USA; however, they must pay USD 14 for an Electronic System for Travel Authorisation (ESTA) application, whilst citizens from Bulgaria, Cyprus, Poland and Croatia must pay USD 160 for a business or tourism visa.

Why is there no reciprocal arrangement between the EU Member States and the US on this matter? Will it be addressed during the ongoing talks between the US and the EU?

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

The European Union's ultimate goal and one of the main priorities in its relations with the United States is to achieve full visa reciprocity by ensuring that the remaining EU Member States join the US Visa Waiver Program as soon as possible.

The Commission uses every opportunity to reiterate its concerns about the remaining cases of non-reciprocity with the US authorities. In particular, visa reciprocity is a standing agenda item of every EU-US JHA Ministerial meeting and of every EU-US JHA Senior Officials' Meeting. The next Ministerial meeting will take place on 18 November 2013 in Washington.

In this context the Commission follows with great interest the progress made by the US in adopting the new immigration legislation, and especially the provisions permitting expansion of the US VWP by introducing a new way of calculating the visa refusal rate and the possibility for the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, under certain conditions, to waive the visa refusal criteria.

US Immigration reform has been on the agenda of several recent meetings with US authorities, and the Commission used this opportunity to enquire about the state of play and perspectives of the adoption of the new migration legislation.

Without prejudice to its statement made in the Plenary on 11 September 2013, the Commission will examine any new and the existing cases of non-reciprocity, including with the US, under the revised reciprocity mechanism provided in the amendment of Regulation 539/2001, which will be adopted by co-legislators in the coming weeks. This revised mechanism aims at enhancing the credibility of the common visa policy and ensuring more solidarity amongst Member States.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011221/13
adresată Comisiei
Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu (S&D)
(2 octombrie 2013)

Subiect: Numărul 112 pentru apelurile de urgență

Conform articolului 26 din Directiva 2009/136/CE, cetățenii cu deficiențe de vorbire, de auz sau de vedere trebuie să beneficieze de un acces egal la serviciile „112”. Tehnologiile recente (precum „Next generation 112”) vizează punerea la dispoziție a serviciilor „112” și prin alte metode decât apelurile vocale, de exemplu prin apeluri realizate prin limbajul semnelor sau prin redare de text. Parlamentul a subliniat în trecut faptul că este necesar să se dezvolte aceste capacități ([1]). Cu toate acestea, conform celui mai recent raport al Comitetului pentru comunicații (COCOM), numai în 12 din cele 28 de state membre este posibil să se apeleze numărul 112 și prin alte metode decât comunicarea vocală. Introducerea numărului 112 pentru apelurile de urgență ține de responsabilitatea statelor membre, dar și Comisia poartă o parte din răspundere în calitate de gardian al tratatelor.

Când va pune Comisia la dispoziția Parlamentului un plan detaliat de dezvoltare și de diseminare a unor metode alternative de a apela la serviciile de urgență prin 112?

Răspuns dat de dna Kroes în numele Comisiei
(15 noiembrie 2013)

Directiva privind serviciul universal prevede obligația statelor membre de a se asigura că accesul utilizatorilor cu handicap la serviciile de urgență este echivalent cu cel de care beneficiază ceilalți utilizatori. Considerentul 41 din directivă oferă indicații suplimentare privind obligațiile statelor membre în privința utilizatorilor finali cu handicap.

Comisia și-a asumat un rol activ, sprijinind proiecte relevante menite să faciliteze incluziunea digitală în domeniul serviciilor de urgență. Prin proiectul REACH 112 finanțat în cadrul Programului de sprijinire a politicii în domeniul TIC (tehnologiile informației și comunicațiilor) și intitulat pe larg „Răspundem tuturor cetățenilor care au nevoie de ajutor” (REsponding to All Citizens needing Help) s-a reușit confirmarea introducerii și a interoperabilității alternativelor disponibile la telefonia tradițională prin voce, adaptate pentru toate persoanele care folosesc conceptul de „conversație totală”. Introducerea serviciilor de conversație totală ar putea rezolva problema localizării apelantului. În acest context, trebuie reamintit că serviciul de urgență 112 este un parteneriat cu statele membre. Mai precis, în conformitate cu principiul subsidiarității, statele membre sunt responsabile pentru introducerea tehnologiei și a structurilor necesare pentru asigurarea eficienței serviciilor de urgență 112. În plus, potrivit raportului pe care îl elaborăm anual în privința punerii în aplicare a numărului 112, unele state membre au indicat că localizarea apelantului ar fi posibilă și în cazul trimiterii de SMS-uri.

([1]) A se vedea Rezoluția Parlamentului European din 5 iulie 2011 referitoare la serviciul universal de urgență și la numărul 112 pentru apeluri de urgență ; Declarația scrisă 0035/2011 din 12 septembrie 2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011221/13
to the Commission
Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu (S&D)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: 112 emergency number

According to Article 26 of Directive 2009/136/EC, speech-, hearing- or visually-impaired citizens must enjoy equivalent access to 112 services. Recent technologies (like Next Generation 112) aim to make 112 services accessible by means other than voice calls, e.g. by allowing calls using sign language or text relay. Parliament has stressed the need to develop these capacities in the past ([1]). However, according to the latest report from the communications Committee (COCOM), calling 112 by means other than voice communication is possible in only 12 out of 28 Member States. Implementation of the 112 emergency number is the responsibility of the Member States, but the Commission is also partly responsible in this field as guardian of the Treaties.

When will the Commission provide Parliament with a detailed plan for developing and spreading alternative means of reaching the emergency services through 112?

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

The Universal Service Directive requires Member States to ensure that access to emergency services for disabled users is equivalent to that enjoyed by other users. Recital 41 of the directive gives further indications as to the Member States obligations relating to disabled end-users.

The Commission took an active role supporting relevant projects to enable e-inclusion in area of emergency services. The ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) funded REACH 112 project 'REsponding to All Citizens needing Help' was successful in validating implementation and interoperability of accessible alternatives to traditional voice telephony suitable for all using the concept of 'Total conversation'. The implementation of Total Conversation could solve the issue of caller location. In this context, it should be borne in mind that 112 is a partnership with the Member States. In particular, it is the Member States that are responsible, under the principle of subsidiarity, for putting in place the technology and organisation to ensure the efficiency of 112 emergency services. Furthermore, according to our yearly 112 implementation report some Member States indicated that caller location could be established also for SMS.

([1]) cf. European Parliament resolution of 5 July 2011 on universal service and the 112 emergency number; Written Declaration 0035/2011 of 12 September 2011.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-011222/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Andreas Pitsillides (PPE)
(2 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ανεργία

Στην Κύπρο σημειώθηκε η μεγαλύτερη ετήσια ποσοστιαία αύξηση της ανεργίας μεταξύ των χωρών της Ευρωζώνης σύμφωνα με τα στοιχεία που δημοσιοποίησε η Eurostat.

Συγκεκριμένα, η ανεργία στην Κύπρο τον Αύγουστο έφθασε στο 16,9% του ενεργού πληθυσμού και, σε απόλυτους αριθμούς, τα 76 000 άτομα, έναντι 16,4% ή 73 000 άνεργους που ήταν τον Ιούλιο.

Όπως προκύπτει από τα εποχικά προσαρμοσμένα στοιχεία της Eurostat, η μέση ανεργία στην Ευρωζώνη κυμάνθηκε τον Αύγουστο στο 12,0% του ενεργού πληθυσμού και, στο σύνολο της ΕΕ, στο 10,9%, ενώ παρέμεινε αμετάβλητη, και στις δύο περιπτώσεις, σε σχέση με τον Ιούλιο.

Ποια πολιτική προτίθεται να ακολουθήσει η Επιτροπή ώστε να αντιμετωπιστεί το εν λόγω φαινόμενο στην Κύπρο, το οποίο δεν είναι μόνο οικονομικό αλλά και κοινωνικό;

Πώς θα βοηθήσει η Επιτροπή ώστε να δημιουργηθούν περισσότερες νέες θέσεις εργασίας για τους άνεργους νέους στην Κύπρο;

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

Η Επιτροπή είναι πλήρως ενήμερη για τις προκλήσεις της ανεργίας, της φτώχειας και της κοινωνικής συνοχής που αντιμετωπίζει η Κύπρος ως αποτέλεσμα της τρέχουσας χρηματοπιστωτικής και οικονομικής κρίσης. Η Επιτροπή έχει δεσμευτεί να βοηθά την Κύπρο στις προσπάθειές της να αναπτύξει ένα βιώσιμο και πιο διαφοροποιημένο οικονομικό μοντέλο, να αμβλύνει τις κοινωνικές συνέπειες της οικονομικής κρίσης και να μετριάσει τον αντίκτυπο στους νέους και τα μειονεκτούντα άτομα.

Το πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής της Κύπρου αποσκοπεί στην αποκατάσταση της εμπιστοσύνης των χρηματαγορών και την αποκατάσταση της υγιούς μακροοικονομικής ισορροπίας ώστε να μπορέσει η οικονομία να επανέλθει σε βιώσιμη ανάπτυξη και να ανανεωθεί η δημιουργία θέσεων εργασίας. Εκτός από το ενδιαφέρον του για τις δημοσιονομικές, τραπεζικές και διαρθρωτικές ανισορροπίες της Κύπρου, το πρόγραμμα δίνει έμφαση στην ανάγκη για ένα αποτελεσματικό και αποδοτικό σύστημα κοινωνικής πρόνοιας.

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο (ΕΚΤ) παρέχει στην Κύπρο βοήθεια για την αντιμετώπιση των αναγκών των άνεργων νέων μέσω στοχευμένων μέτρων στο πλαίσιο του σημερινού επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος του ΕΚΤ για την περίοδο 2007-2013. Η δημιουργία θέσεων απασχόλησης αποτελεί επίσης προτεραιότητα βάσει του σημερινού επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης. Κατά την προσεχή περίοδο προγραμματισμού (2014-20), το ΕΚΤ, καθώς και η πρωτοβουλία για την απασχόληση των νέων ([1]) θα συμβάλουν στην εφαρμογή της «εγγύησης για τους νέους» στην Κύπρο.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1829&furtherNews=yes

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011222/13
to the Commission
Andreas Pitsillides (PPE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Unemployment

According to Eurostat, the annually adjusted rise in unemployment has been steeper in Cyprus than any other country in the euro area, rising to 76 000 or 16.9% of the working population in August from 73 000 or 16.4% in July.

By contrast, Eurostat's seasonally adjusted figures show average unemployment figures for August in both the eurozone and the EU as a whole remaining unaltered from July, hovering at around 12% and 10.9% of the working population respectively.

What action is being envisaged by the Commission in response to these developments in Cyprus, which are of a not only economic but also social nature?

How will it help ensure the creation of more new jobs for young unemployed persons in Cyprus?

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

The Commission is fully aware of the challenges of unemployment, poverty and social cohesion facing Cyprus as a result of the current financial and economic crisis. It is committed to assisting Cyprus in its efforts to develop a sustainable and more diversified economic model, alleviate the social consequences of the economic crisis and mitigate the impact on young people and the disadvantaged.

Cyprus's economic adjustment programme aims to restore financial market confidence and re-establish a sound macroeconomic balance to enable the economy to return to sustainable growth and renewed job creation. In addition to addressing the country's fiscal, banking and structural imbalances, the programme lays emphasis on the need for an efficient and effective welfare system.

The European Social Fund (ESF) provides Cyprus with support to address the needs of young unemployed people through targeted measures under the current ESF operational programme for 2007-13. Job creation is also a priority under the current European Regional Development Fund operational programme. In the forthcoming programming period (2014-20), the ESF as well as the Youth Employment Initiative ([1]) will contribute to the implementation of the Youth Guarantee in Cyprus.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1829&furtherNews=yes

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011223/13
to the Commission
Catherine Bearder (ALDE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Social media bullying

It has come to my attention that social media sites, specifically ask.fm, are being used to direct abuse at individuals, including young children.

There has been a high profile example of this in the UK recently, when a 14-year-old girl tragically resorted to taking her own life due to the level of abuse she was receiving on ask.fm.

In the light of this:

1. Does the commission agree that social media sites have a duty to ensure that all of their users are protected from all forms of abuse when using these websites?

2. Does the Commission have any plans to work with these websites to ensure that they take this matter seriously and reduce levels of abuse on their network to a minimum?

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

Cyberbullying qualifies as harassment and/or defamation in many EU countries and complaints can be filed to the national police and justice authorities.

'Delete Cyberbullying' ([1]) is an example of a European awareness raising campaign on cyberbullying. It takes into account that the protection of personal data of children and minors should receive particular attention in the context of SNS ([2]).

Self-regulation is also an instrument of the European Strategy to create a better Internet for Children ([3]).

A pan-European network of Safer Internet Centres ([4]), provides support and promotes awareness of how to manage risks on the Internet. The network produces tip sheets on how to use SNS ([5]) safely and is in contact with some of the main Social Networks to exchange best practices for reporting ([6]).

([1]) http://deletecyberbullying.eu It is financed under the Daphne III Programme.
([2]) Social networking services.
([3]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/european-strategy-deliver-better-Internet-our-children.
([4]) www.saferInternet.org Set up and supported by the Commission.
([5]) Eg. Tip sheet about Ask.fm
http://www.saferInternet.org/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=32d5bf23-59b7-4a1b-88c3-4690c646cc7e&groupId=10137
([6]) Social Networks like Facebook and ASK are attending and supporting INSAFE training meetings for helplines and awareness centres.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011224/13
to the Commission
Catherine Bearder (ALDE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Shark-derived squalene

It has come to my attention that millions of sharks are being killed each year for the extraction of squalene, a product used in cosmetics.

There are plant-derived squalene sources available, and the problem is worsened by the lack of clear labelling for consumers as to whether the squalene in the products they are buying is derived from sharks or plant material.

In light of this, does the Commission have any plans to legislate in this area in order to make the labelling of squalene sources on cosmetic products compulsory? Big retailers in the UK, such as Selfridges, are already on-board with this requirement and label or do not use shark-derived squalene. Does the Commission not think that companies throughout Europe should be required to follow suit?

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(20 November 2013)

Cosmetic products placed on the EU market are governed by Regulation (EC) 1223/2009 ([1]) ('Cosmetics Regulation'), which entered into force on 11 July 2013. According to the Cosmetics Regulation product ingredients must be printed on the product packaging. However it is not required to indicate the origin of an ingredient (e.g. animal or plant). As a consequence, the Commission does not have comprehensive information to which extent shark squalene is used in cosmetic products.

Cosmetic product containing ingredients of animal origin must comply with safety requirements laid down in the Cosmetics Regulation. Some ingredients of animal origin are not allowed for use in cosmetic products in the EU. According to Annex II of the Cosmetics Regulation Category c material and Category c material as defined by Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 ([2]) are banned for use in cosmetics. Under certain conditions set out in Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 shark squalene may qualify as Category c material.

The Commission pays close attention to the issue of shark fishing. Several restrictions in relation to shark fishing have been put in place, and an Action Plan for the Conservation and Management of Sharks has been adopted.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on cosmetic products , OJ L 342, 22.12.2009, p. 59.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 laying down health rules as regards animal by-products and derived products not intended for human consumption and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002 (Animal by-products Regulation), OJ L 300, 14.11.2009, p. 1.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011225/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Andreas Pitsillides (PPE)
(2 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Μαθητές της Αγγλικής Σχολής Λευκωσίας

Το English School είναι μία ιδιωτική Σχολή Μέσης Εκπαίδευσης στην Λευκωσία. Ιδρύθηκε εν καιρώ Αγγλοκρατίας. Με την ανεξαρτησία της Κύπρου, το 1960, ο έλεγχος της Σχολής πέρασε στο Υπουργικό Συμβούλιο της Κυπριακής δημοκρατίας, μέσω νομοθετικής ρύθμισης.

Από την ίδρυση της, η Σχολή εξυπηρετούσε όλους τους κατοίκους της Κύπρου, με εξαίρεση την περίοδο 1974-2003, κατά την οποία οι Τουρκοκύπριοι μαθητές αποχώρησαν λόγω του στρατιωτικού διαμελισμού του νησιού από την Τουρκία. Οι Τουρκοκύπριοι μαθητές επέστρεψαν πίσω στο σχολείο το 2003, μετά την μερική άρση των περιορισμών διακίνησης.

Ενώ σύμφωνα με τον σχετικό νόμο περί λειτουργίας της Σχολής, όλοι οι μαθητές θα πρέπει να διευκολύνονται ώστε να ασκούν ελεύθερα τα θρησκευτικά τους καθήκοντα, έχει εγερθεί θέμα. Για παράδειγμα, ενώ η ονομαστική εορτή του Αρχιεπισκόπου Κύπρου γιορτάζεται σαν αργία από το Σχολείο (όπως και η γιορτή των Χριστουγέννων κ.λπ.), η γιορτή του Ραμαζάν δεν γιορτάζεται επίσημα. Εκείνες τις μέρες οι Τουρκοκύπριοι μαθητές έχουν την δυνατότητα να μην παρουσιαστούν στην Σχολή αν το επιθυμούν αλλά το σχολείο λειτουργεί κανονικά με τους υπόλοιπους μαθητές.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή κατά πόσο έχει την δυνατότητα παρέμβασης προς το κράτος, ώστε να διασφαλιστεί το συνταγματικά κατοχυρωμένο και αναφαίρετο δικαίωμα των μαθητών στην ισονομία και την ισοπολιτεία και, αν έχει αυτή την δυνατότητα, πώς προτίθεται να το πράξει;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(2 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Η οδηγία του Συμβουλίου θεσπίζει ένα νομοθετικό πλαίσιο για την καταπολέμηση των διακρίσεων λόγω θρησκείας ή πεποιθήσεων, αναπηρίας, ηλικίας ή γενετήσιου προσανατολισμού, όσον αφορά την απασχόληση ή την παραμονή σε αυτήν. Σήμερα ωστόσο, δεν υπάρχει νομοθεσία της ΕΕ που καλύπτει τις διακρίσεις λόγω θρησκείας ή πεποιθήσεων στον τομέα της εκπαίδευσης.

Το 2008, η Επιτροπή υπέβαλε πρόταση για οδηγία του Συμβουλίου ([1]) η οποία θα επέκτεινε το πεδίο εφαρμογής της προστασίας από τις διακρίσεις στους τομείς της κοινωνικής προστασίας, της κατάρτισης και της πρόσβασης σε αγαθά και υπηρεσίες. Ωστόσο, η πρόταση αναφέρει στο άρθρο 3, παράγραφος 3 ότι «η παρούσα οδηγία εφαρμόζεται με την επιφύλαξη των υποχρεώσεων των κρατών μελών όσον αφορά το περιεχόμενο της διδασκαλίας, των δραστηριοτήτων και την οργάνωση των εκπαιδευτικών συστημάτων τους […]. Τα κράτη μέλη δύνανται να προβλέπουν διαφορές μεταχείρισης όσον αφορά την πρόσβαση σε εκπαιδευτικά ιδρύματα βάσει θρησκείας ή πεποιθήσεων».

Επομένως, αν εγκριθεί η οδηγία, δεν εμποδίζονται τα κράτη μέλη να επιτρέπουν στα θρησκευτικά σχολεία να λειτουργούν και σε εκπαιδευτικά ιδρύματα να εορτάζουν θρησκευτικές εορτές.

([1]) COM(2008)426 τελικό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011225/13
to the Commission
Andreas Pitsillides (PPE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Pupils of the English School, Nicosia

The English School is a private secondary school in Nicosia. It was founded under British rule. With the independence of Cyprus in 1960, control over the school was transferred by law to the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Cyprus.

Since its establishment, the school has served all of the inhabitants of Cyprus, except for the period between 1974 and 2003, during which the Turkish Cypriot pupils left as a result of the military partitioning of the island by Turkey. Turkish Cypriot pupils returned to the school in 2003, following the partial lifting of restrictions on freedom of movement.

Whilst the relevant law on the functioning of the school requires that all pupils be able to exercise their religious obligations freely, an issue has risen. For example, although the school celebrates the name day of the Archbishop of Cyprus as a holiday (as it does Christmas, etc.), the festival of Ramadan is not formally celebrated. On those days, Turkish Cypriot pupils have the option not to go to school if they wish, although the school operates normally for the other pupils.

Will the Commission state the extent to which it has competence to intervene with the Government so that the constitutionally-protected and inalienable right of the pupils to equal treatment can be safeguarded, and if it does have this competence, how it intends to act?

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

Council Directive 2000/78/EC lays down a legal framework for combating discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation, as regards employment and occupation. There is, however, currently no EU legislation covering discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in the field of education.

The Commission submitted in 2008 a proposal for a Council Directive ([1]) that would extend the scope of protection against discrimination to social protection, education and access to goods and services. The proposal, however, states in its Article 3(3) that 'this directive is without prejudice to the responsibilities of Member States for the content of teaching, activities and the organisation of their educational systems […]. Member States may provide for differences in treatment in access to educational institutions based on religion or belief'.

If adopted, the directive would thus not preclude Member States from allowing religious schools to operate and from allowing educational institutions to celebrate specific religious holidays.

([1]) COM(2008) 426 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011226/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Andreas Pitsillides (PPE)
(2 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αγροτική Πολιτική

Λόγω της δεινής οικονομικής κατάστασης στην οποία περιήλθε η Κύπρος τον τελευταίο χρόνο, αρκετοί πολίτες άρχισαν να στρέφονται σε αναζήτηση εργασίας στην πρωτογενή παραγωγή και, ειδικότερα, στην γεωργία και την κτηνοτροφία.

1. Προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να απελευθερώσει περισσότερα κονδύλια και να επιχορηγήσει περισσότερα προγράμματα ώστε να διευκολύνει αυτές τις ομάδες πληθυσμού να προβούν σε μία νέα αρχή και να δημιουργήσουν νέες μονάδες γεωργικής και κτηνοτροφικής παραγωγής ή/και να ενισχύσουν τις υφιστάμενες, ώστε να αποκτήσουν την δυνατότητα να απορροφήσουν περισσότερους άνεργους;

2. Προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να δώσει οικονομικά κίνητρα σε νέους επιστήμονες, των οποίων η κατάρτιση είναι σχετική με τον συγκεκριμένο τομέα, για να στραφούν στον τομέα της γεωργικής-κτηνοτροφικής παραγωγής και δη σε βιολογική βάση;

Απάντηση του κ. Ciolos εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(20 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Βάσει της πολιτικής συμφωνίας σχετικά με την μεταρρύθμιση της Κοινής Γεωργικής Πολιτικής (ΚΓΠ) μεταξύ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου, του Συμβουλίου και της Επιτροπής, η Κύπρος θα έχει τη δυνατότητα να συμπεριλάβει στο Πρόγραμμα Αγροτικής Ανάπτυξης (ΠΑΑ) 2014-2020 τα μέτρα που ανταποκρίνονται στις ανάγκες της όσον αφορά τους νέους γεωργούς, την κτηνοτροφία και τη βιολογική γεωργία. Θα αυξηθούν οι ενισχύσεις στους νέους γεωργούς για την ίδρυση νέων επιχειρήσεων (70 000 ευρώ το πολύ), για γενικές επενδύσεις σε πάγια περιουσιακά στοιχεία και για υπηρεσίες κατάρτισης και παροχής συμβουλών. Οι ενισχύσεις για τη βιολογική γεωργία και για την αναδιάρθρωση των καλλιεργειών/επενδύσεις/εκσυγχρονισμό θα συνεχίσουν να χορηγούνται (όπως και στο τρέχον ΠΑΑ 2007-2013) και μάλιστα σε ακόμη μεγαλύτερα ποσοστά στήριξης εάν συνδέονται με την Ευρωπαϊκή Σύμπραξη για την Καινοτομία (ΕΣΚ) στον τομέα της γεωργίας. Καταυτόν τον τρόπο θα δίνεται η δυνατότητα στους νέους επιστήμονες να συμμετέχουν σε καινοτόμα έργα.

Όσον αφορά τις άμεσες ενισχύσεις για την περίοδο 2014-2020, η πολιτική συμφωνία για την ΚΓΠ προβλέπει ένα υποχρεωτικό καθεστώς για ετήσια ενίσχυση στους νέους γεωργούς (μέχρι 40 ετών που αρχίζουν τη γεωργική τους δραστηριότητα). Η ενίσχυση αυτή θα χορηγείται σε νέους γεωργούς ως πρόσθετο ποσό στη βασική τους ενίσχυση επί πέντε έτη για τη στήριξη της αρχικής τους εγκατάστασης. Επιπλέον, από το εθνικό απόθεμα θα χορηγούνται υποχρεωτικά δικαιώματα ενίσχυσης στους νέους γεωργούς και στους γεωργούς που αρχίζουν τη γεωργική τους δραστηριότητα (χωρίς όριο ηλικίας).

Τα ποσά που πρόκειται να χορηγηθούν στην Κύπρο για την εφαρμογή της ΚΓΠ 2014-2020 καθορίστηκαν εντός των ορίων του πολυετούς δημοσιονομικού πλαισίου 2014-2020.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011226/13
to the Commission
Andreas Pitsillides (PPE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Agricultural policy

As a result of the difficult economic situation that Cyprus has faced over the past year, a number of citizens have begun looking for work in primary production, and more specifically in agriculture and livestock rearing.

1. Does the Commission intend to release more funds and subsidise more programmes in order to help these groups of people to make a new start and to establish new agricultural and livestock production units, and/or to strengthen existing units so that they can take on more unemployed people?

2. Does the Commission intend to give financial incentives to young scientists with skills related to this sector, so that they can get involved in agricultural and livestock production, including on an organic basis?

Answer given by Mr Cioloș on behalf of the Commission
(20 November 2013)

Further to the political agreement on the reform of the common agricultural policy (CAP) between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission, Cyprus will have the possibility to include in its Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014-2020 the measures that respond to its needs related to young farmers and livestock/organic farming. Increased aid for business start-ups (max EUR 70 000), general investments in physical assets and training/advisory services will be available for young farmers. Aid for organic farming and farm restructuring/investments/modernisation will continue to be available (as in the current RDP 2007-2013), at even higher support rates when linked to the European Innovation Partnership (EIP) for agriculture. This will also offer the possibility for young scientists to be involved in innovative projects.

Regarding direct payments, for the 2014-2020 period, the political agreement on the CAP provides a compulsory scheme for an annual payment to young farmers (up to 40 years old who commence their agricultural activity). That payment would be granted to young farmers as an additional amount to their basic payment and for a period of maximum five years to support their initial setting up. In addition, a compulsory allocation of payment entitlements from the national reserve is provided to young farmers and to farmers who commence their agricultural activity (no age limit).

Funds to be allocated to Cyprus for the implementation of the CAP 2014-2020 were decided within the context of the multi-annual financial framework 2014-2020.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011227/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Systemrelevante Versicherungen

Am 19. Juli 2013 hat der Finanzstabilitätsrat der G20-Staaten neun internationale Versicherungskonzerne als systemrelevant eingestuft. Der Konkurs eines dieser Konzerne könnte zu einem erheblichen Risiko für das Finanzsystem werden ([1]).

1. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die Systemrelevanz von Versicherungsunternehmen im Allgemeinen und der neun vom Finanzstabilitätsrat aufgeführten Konzerne im Besonderen?

2. Was kann getan werden, um trotz der großen Bedeutung einzelner Versicherungen für das Finanzsystem zu verhindern, dass diese die Stabilität des gesamten Systems negativ beeinflussen?

3. Sind nach Meinung der Kommission durch die Systemrelevanz und das damit verbundene Risiko Versicherungen auch vom Übertragungseffekt bei Zahlungsschwierigkeiten betroffen? Wenn ja, sieht die Kommission vor, Regularien für Abwicklungsmaßnahmen für Versicherungen zu erstellen?

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

Die Kommission befürwortet den vom Finanzstabilitätsrat der G20-Staaten gewählten Ansatz. Das traditionelle Geschäftsmodell der Versicherungen schließt weder ein Zahlungssystem noch eine Kreditvermittlung oder Investmentbanking-Dienstleistungen ein und ist folglich in geringerem Maße den Risiken des Finanzmarkts ausgesetzt. Hingegen können Versicherungsgruppen mit einer Geschäftstätigkeit außerhalb des klassischen Bereichs und im Nichtversicherungsbereich den Entwicklungen auf dem Finanzmarkt in stärkerem Maße ausgesetzt sein und deshalb systembedingte Risiken wahrscheinlich auch in stärkerem Maße verschärfen oder zu diesen beitragen als traditionelle Versicherungen. Die vom Finanzstabilitätsrat vorgenommene Einstufung der besagten neun internationalen Versicherungsgruppen gründete sich auf eine Bewertungsmethode, bei der der Vernetzung und dem Umfang der Geschäftstätigkeit außerhalb des klassischen Bereichs und außerhalb des Versicherungsbereichs großes Gewicht beigemessen wurde.

Die Kommission ist ferner der Auffassung, dass die politischen Maßnahmen, die der Finanzstabilitätsrat für globale systemrelevante Versicherer vorgeschlagen hat, zur Minderung der systembedingten Risiken für globale systemrelevante Versicherer oder zur Verringerung ihrer Kosten beitragen werden. Diese spezifischen Maßnahmen ([2]) richten sich gegen systembedingte Risiken, stehen im Einklang mit dem „Solvabilität II"-Ansatz und sind dem Umfang und der Komplexität eines globalen systemrelevanten Versicherers angemessen ([3]).

Im Jahr 2012 hat die Kommission eine öffentliche Anhörung zu einem legislativen Rahmen für die Abwicklung von Finanzinstituten, die keine Banken sind, durchgeführt. Aufgrund der dabei gewonnenen Erkenntnisse gelangte sie zu dem Schluss, dass weitere Arbeiten auf diesem Gebiet erforderlich sind. In diesem Zusammenhang wird zudem den anstehenden legislativen Änderungen durch „Solvabilität II" (insbesondere den Befugnissen der Aufsichtsbehörden zu einem frühzeitigen Eingreifen und den Wiedereinziehungsanforderungen) und den aktuellen Entwicklungen auf internationaler Ebene (laufende öffentliche Anhörung des Finanzstabilitätsrats zum Thema Abwicklung von Versicherungsunternehmen) Rechnung zu tragen sein.

([1]) http://www.zeit.de/news/2013-07/19/d-finanzstabilitaetsrat-haelt-neun-versicherer-fuer-systemrelevant-19162603
([2]) Verstärkte Aufsicht, effektive Abwicklung und bessere Fähigkeit zur Übernahme von Verlusten.
([3]) Beispielsweise sollte der Plan für die Bewältigung der systembedingten Risiken Teil eines wirksamen Systems für die Leitung eines globalen systemrelevanten Versicherers sein.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011227/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Systemically important insurance services

On 19 July 2013, the G-20 Financial Stability Board classified nine international insurers as systemically important. The bankruptcy of one of these groups of undertakings could pose a substantial risk to the financial system ([1]).

1. What is the Commission's view of the systemic importance of insurers in general and of the nine groups listed by the Financial Stability Board in particular?

2. Despite the enormous importance of individual insurance services for the financial system, what can be done to prevent these having a negative impact on the stability of the system as a whole?

3. In the Commission's opinion, are insurance services also affected by the spillover effect in the event of payment difficulties as a result of their systemic importance and the risk associated with it? If so, does the Commission intend to establish rules for resolution measures for insurance services?

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

The Commission agrees with the approach which has been endorsed by the Financial Stability Board (FSB). The traditional insurance business model does not involve payment system, credit intermediation or investment banking services, and is therefore less exposed to financial market risks. However, insurance groups that engage in non-traditional or non-insurance (NTNI) activities can be more vulnerable to financial market developments and may therefore be more likely to amplify or contribute to systemic risks, than tradional insurers. The designation of the nine groups listed by the FSB was based on an assessment methodology that rightly gave significant weights to the interconnectedness and to the NTNI scores of insurance groups.

The Commission also considers that the Global Systemically Important Insurers (G-SIIs) policy measures proposed by the FSB will help addressing systemic risks for G-SIIs by reducing them or internalising their costs. These specific measures ([2]) focus on systemic risk whilst being consistent with the approach in Solvency 2 and proportionate with the scale and complexity of a G-SII ([3]).

In 2012, the Commission launched a public consultation on a resolution framework for financial institutions other than banks. On that basis, it has been concluded that further work appears necessary. In that context, the forthcoming legislative changes that will be brought by Solvency 2 (in particular, supervisors' powers of early intervention and recovery requirements), as well as current international developments (ongoing public consultation of the FSB annex on resolution of insurance companies) need to be taken into account.

([1]) http://www.zeit.de/news/2013-07/19/d-finanzstabilitaetsrat-haelt-neun-versicherer-fuer-systemrelevant-19162603
([2]) ie. enhanced supervision, effective resolution and higher loss absorption capacity.
([3]) For instance, the Systemic Risk Management Plan should be part of an effective system of governance of a G-SII.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011228/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Ausschluss bestimmter Unternehmen von IKT-Ausschreibungen

In ihrer Antwort auf die Anfrage 6780/2013 von Hans-Peter Martin schreibt die Kommission: „Nach dem im Rahmen der Welthandelsorganisation geschlossenen multilateralen Übereinkommen über das öffentliche Beschaffungswesen (GPA), dem auch die EU angehört, müssen Aufträge der Kommission für bestimmte Lieferungen und Dienstleistungen (darunter auch Computerdienstleistungen und verwandte Dienste) mit einem Wert von über 130 000 EUR auch Anbietern aus Drittländern, die Vertragsparteien des Übereinkommens sind und es ratifiziert haben, offen stehen. Gemäß dem GPA und weiteren anwendbaren Bestimmungen, die insbesondere in Freihandelsabkommen zwischen der EU und anderen Drittstaaten festgelegt wurden, ist es daher nicht möglich, bestimmte Produkte oder Anbieter allein aufgrund ihrer Herkunft auszuschließen. Vielmehr müssen dafür andere in den Abkommen vorgesehene Gründe vorliegen. In diesem Zusammenhang sieht Artikel XXIII des GPA Ausnahmen insbesondere in Bezug auf Aufträge vor, die für die nationale Sicherheit von wesentlicher Bedeutung sind. Diese Ausnahmeregelungen sind restriktiv auszulegen".

Die Enthüllungen der letzten Monate haben dabei deutlich gezeigt, dass US-Geheimdienste nicht nur direkt in die Infrastruktur der EU-Organisationen einbrachen, sondern auch amerikanische Software- und Internetdienstleister dazu gebracht oder gezwungen haben, Hintertüren in ihre System einzubauen. Dadurch könnte EU-Bürgern, EU-Staaten, EU-Unternehmen sowie den EU-Institutionen direkt geschadet werden.

1. Hat die Kommission je die GPA-Ausnahmeregelungen angewandt, um Informations- und Telekommunikationsdienstleister von Auswahlverfahren über 130 000 EUR auszuschließen? Wenn ja, wann und welche Unternehmen waren betroffen, und aus welchen Staaten stammten diese jeweils?

2. Wird die Kommission die Regelungen zukünftig anwenden, um den jüngsten Enthüllungen zufolge der Spionage Vorschub leistende Unternehmen wie Microsoft, Skype, Google, Apple, Yahoo, etc. und deren Produkte (insbesondere Windows- und iOS-Geräte) von Ausschreibungsverfahren auszuschließen?

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

In ihren Antworten auf aktuelle parlamentarische Anfragen hat die Kommission bereits ihren Standpunkt zu den jüngsten Medienberichten dargelegt, nach denen die US-amerikanischen Behörden mithilfe großer amerikanischer Online-Dienstleister in großem Umfang auf die Daten europäischer Bürgerinnen und Bürger zugreifen, diese verarbeiten und die Tätigkeiten der EU-Organe in rechtswidriger Weise überwachen. Sie möchte den Herrn Abgeordneten daher auf diese Antworten verweisen ([1]).

Zu den konkreten Fragen des Herrn Abgeordneten:

1) Bisher hat die Kommission die im Übereinkommen über das öffentliche Beschaffungswesen (GPA) vorgesehene, auf Gründen der nationalen Sicherheit basierende Ausnahmeregelung gegen Unternehmen aus Drittländern, die Dienstleistungen oder Produkte im Zusammenhang mit der von ihr verwendeten IT- und Telekommunikationsinfrastruktur anbieten, nicht angewandt.

2) Bei künftigen Vergabeverfahren wird die Kommission weiterhin prüfen, ob

a) Bewerber oder Bieter — die nicht unbedingt die Hersteller der angebotenen Produkte sind — unter die Ausschlusskriterien der Artikel 106 und 107 der Haushaltsordnung (gegebenenfalls vorbehaltlich der allgemeinen Bestimmungen über Nichtdiskriminierung gemäß dem GPA) fallen;

b) die von den Bewerbern oder Bietern angebotenen Produkte alle Anforderungen der Vergabestelle an die Spezifikationen, einschließlich etwaiger verbindlicher Sicherheitsanforderungen, erfüllen.

Bezüglich des letzten Punktes der Anfrage des Herrn Abgeordneten zu den Software- und Hardware-Produkten der in der Anfrage genannten Hersteller, insbesondere denjenigen, die die Kommission verwendet, verfügt die Kommission gegenwärtig nicht über stichhaltige Beweise dafür, dass diese vorsätzlich integrierte Backdoor-Programme enthalten.

([1]) Siehe insbesondere die Antworten auf die schriftlichen Anfragen E-006768/2013, E-006932/2013, E-007932/2013, E-007934/2013, E-008666/2013, E-009773/2013 und E-010163/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011228/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Exclusion of certain companies from ICT calls for tender

In its reply to question 6780/2013 from Hans-Peter Martin, the Commission states the following: 'The Plurilateral Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA) concluded within the World Trade Organisation, to which the EU is a Party, provides that contracts for certain supplies and services, including computer and related services, awarded by the Commission for a value above EUR 130 000 must be open to providers from third countries which are Parties to the Agreement and have ratified it. Therefore, according to the GPA and other applicable rules, in particular laid down in Free Trade Agreements between the EU and other third countries, exclusion of specific solutions or providers is not possible on grounds of origin alone but must be substantiated on other grounds foreseen in the Agreements. In this context, Article XXIII of the GPA provides for exemptions, in particular related to procurement indispensible for national security. Exceptions are to be interpreted restrictively'.

The revelations of recent months have clearly shown that US intelligence services have not only hacked directly into the infrastructure of the EU institutions, but have also encouraged or forced US software and Internet service providers to build back doors into their systems. This could harm EU citizens, EU Member States, EU undertakings and the EU institutions directly.

1. Has the Commission ever applied the GPA exemption rules to exclude information and telecommunications service providers from selection procedures above EUR 130 000? If so, when, which undertakings were affected, and from which States did each of these originate?

2. Will the Commission apply the rules in future in order to exclude undertakings which, according to the latest revelations, are facilitating surveillance, such as Microsoft, Skype, Google, Apple and Yahoo, etc., and their products (in particular Windows and iOS devices) from tendering procedures?

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

In its replies to recent Parliamentary Questions, the Commission had already the opportunity to outline its position concerning recent media reports that US authorities are accessing and processing, on a large scale, the data of Europeans using major US online service providers and are carrying out unlawful surveillance activities of the EU institutions The Commission would therefore refer the Honourable Member to those replies ([1]).

Concerning the specific questions raised by the Honourable Member:

1) The Commission has not applied so far the exemption rules foreseen in the GPA on grounds of national security against undertakings from third countries providing services or supplies related to its corporate IT and telecommunications infrastructure.

2) For future procurement procedures, the Commission will continue to check:

(a) that candidates or tenderers-which may not be the manufacturers of the products offered- do not find themselves in one of the exclusion situations laid down in Articles 106 and 107 of the Financial Regulation (subject to the general provisions on non-discrimination laid down in the GPA, when applicable);

(b) that any products offered by those candidates or tenderers fully meet the awarding authority's specifications, including any mandatory security requirements.

Concerning the last point, as regards the software and hardware products of the manufacturers to which the Honourable Member refers, and in particular those used by the Commission, at this point in time the Commission does not have conclusive evidence that they contain any deliberately implanted back doors.

([1]) See, in particular, replies to Written Questions E-006768/2013, E-006932/2013, E-007932/2013, E-007934/2013, E-008666/2013, E-009773/2013 and E-010163/2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011229/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Verletzung der Fluggastdaten- und SWIFT-Abkommen durch NSA-Personenprofile

Neuen Dokumenten zufolge, die der Whistleblower Edward Snowden der New York Times übergab, verknüpft der US-Geheimdienst „National Security Agency" (NSA) persönliche Informationen aus verschiedenen Quellen, so unter anderem Fluggastdaten, Bankdaten und Informationen aus der Internetüberwachung, um Personen- und Aufenthaltsprofile zu erstellen.

Die EU-USA-Abkommen über Fluggastdaten (PNR-Abkommen) und Bankdaten (SWIFT-Abkommen) sehen Datenschutzrichtlinien vor, nach denen die übermittelten Informationen nur in begrenztem Maße und im Rahmen die Privatsphäre schützender und rechtsstaatliche Prinzipien einhaltender Kriterien genutzt werden können. Eine Verknüpfung der Daten durch die NSA mit dem Ziel, Personen- und Aufenthaltsprofile zu erstellen, ist ohne Zweifel außerhalb der vereinbarten Kriterienkataloge und nicht akzeptabel.

1. Wann wird die Kommission das Fluggastdaten-Abkommen aussetzen?

2. Wann wird die Kommission das SWIFT-Abkommen aussetzen?

3. Welche weiteren Abkommen über Datenschutz, Rechtsstaatlichkeit und Privatsphäre zwischen den USA und der EU werden möglicherweise durch diesen massiven Rechtsbruch der NSA verletzt? Wann werden diese ausgesetzt?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(29. November 2013)

Die Kommission ist besorgt über die Behauptungen der Medien in Bezug auf die Aktivitäten der NSA. Sie hat die US-Behörden um Aufklärung bezüglich der Programme gebeten, über die in den Medien berichtet wird, und ihrer potenziellen Auswirkungen auf die Grundrechte in der EU.

Im Fluggastdaten-Abkommen mit den USA sind regelmäßige Überprüfungen der Umsetzung des Abkommens vorgesehen. Kürzlich wurde eine Überprüfung vorgenommen. Der entsprechende Bericht wird in Kürze veröffentlicht und dem Europäischen Parlament zugeleitet.

Was das TFTP-Abkommen zwischen der EU und den USA betrifft, hat die Kommission angesichts der Behauptungen der Medien in Bezug auf die Aktivitäten der NSA im Rahmen von Artikel 19 des Abkommens Konsultationen eingeleitet. Die Kommission ist im Rahmen dieser Konsultationen mit der US-amerikanischen Seite zusammengetroffen und hat dabei die schriftliche Versicherung der USA erhalten, dass das Abkommen nicht verletzt worden sei. Die Kommission wird dem Europäischen Parlament die Ergebnisse der Konsultationen unverzüglich mitteilen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011229/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Contravention of the passenger name records and SWIFT agreements as a result of NSA personal profiles

According to new documents submitted by the whistle-blower Edward Snowden to the *New York Times*, the US intelligence service, the National Security Agency (NSA), is creating links between personal data from various sources, including passenger name records, bank data and information obtained from Internet surveillance, in order to build personal and residence profiles.

The EU-US agreements on passenger name records (the PNR Agreement) and bank data (the SWIFT Agreement) provide for data protection directives, according to which the information transferred can be used to only a limited extent and only within the framework of criteria that protect privacy and comply with the principles of the rule of law. The creation of links between data by the NSA with the aim of building personal and residence profiles definitely falls outside the agreed set of criteria and is unacceptable.

1. When will the Commission suspend the PNR agreement?

2. When will the Commission suspend the SWIFT agreement?

3. What other agreements between the US and the EU concerning data protection, the rule of law and privacy are potentially being violated as a result of this substantial contravention of the law by the NSA? When will these be suspended?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(29 November 2013)

The Commission is concerned by the media allegations concerning the activities of the NSA. It has asked the US authorities for clarifications regarding the programmes reported in the media and their potential impact on EU fundamental rights.

The terms of the PNR agreement with the US allow for regular reviews of the implementation of the Agreement. A review was undertaken recently and the report will be published and communicated to the European Parliament shortly.

With regard to the EU-US TFTP Agreement the Commission opened consultations under its Article 19 in light of media allegations concerning the activities of the NSA. The Commission has met with US counterparts as part of these consultations, and has received written reassurances from the US that the Agreement has not been violated. The Commission will communicate the outcome of the consultations to the European Parliament without delay.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011230/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Spionagefall Belgacom

Belgischen Medien zufolge soll der amerikanische Geheimdienst „National Security Agency" (NSA) in die Computersysteme des belgischen Telekommunikationsunternehmen Belgacom eingedrungen sein. Belgacom und Tochterunternehmen wie Belgacom's Mobilfunktochter Proxmius stellen den EU-Institutionen Internet-, Telefonie- und Mobilfunkdienste zur Verfügung.

1. Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass durch die Spionage bei Belgacom Telefongespräche und/oder der Internetverkehr der EU-Institutionen abgefangen wurde oder zumindest abgefangen werden konnte?

2. Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass das eigentliche Ziel der Spionage bei Belgacom das Ausspionieren der EU-Institutionen war oder gewesen sein könnte?

3. Verlangt die Kommission besondere Sicherheitsvorkehrungen von Belgacom, zum Beispiel eine Verarbeitung des Telefon- und Datenverkehrs der Institutionen über gesondert gesicherte Systeme?

4. Welchen Betrag bezahlen die Institutionen Belgacom und Belgacom's Tochterunternehmen jährlich für die Bereitstellung von Telefon-, Internet- und Mobilfunkleistungen?

5. Für welchen Zeitraum gilt der Vertrag mit Belgacom, und gibt es Ausstiegsklauseln, zum Beispiel für den Fall, dass die Systeme Belgacoms kompromittiert sind?

6. Plant die Kommission, die Verträge für Telefon-, Internet-, Mobilfunk- und sonstige Dienstleistungen, die Belgacom derzeit erbringt, zu kündigen?

7. Welche Schlüsse zieht die Kommission aus dem Belgacom-Spionagefall für zukünftige Dienstleistungs-Ausschreibungsverfahren?

8. Welche Schlüsse zieht die Kommission aus dem Belgacom-Spionagefall für interne Sicherheitsregeln?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(2. Dezember 2013)

1.-2. Auch wenn nicht ausgeschlossen werden kann, dass die Überwachungsmaßnahmen, über die berichtet wurde, darauf abzielten, den Gesprächs- oder Datenverkehr der EU-Organe abzuhören, liegen der Kommission keine konkreten Beweise dafür vor, dass dies auch tatsächlich der Fall war.

3.-6. Die Kommission zahlt Belgacom (bzw. Konsortien, an denen Belgacom beteiligt ist) die Standardpreise, für die dieses Unternehmen seinen größten Kunden Festnetz- und Mobiltelefonie sowie spezielle Telekommunikationsdienste bereitstellt.

Alle diese Verträge enthalten angemessene Sicherheitsanforderungen in Bezug auf die Vertraulichkeit, Integrität und Verfügbarkeit von Daten.

Außerdem enthalten sie verschiedene Arten von Kündigungsklauseln, u. a. für Fälle schwerer Vertragsverletzungen durch den Auftragnehmer, die nach einer förmlichen Berichtigungsfrist nicht eingestellt wurden.

Zum jetzigen Zeitpunkt hat die Kommission nicht die Absicht, auf diese Klauseln zurückzugreifen; sie wird die Situation jedoch weiterhin aufmerksam verfolgen.

7.-8. In den Ausschreibungsverfahren der Kommission wie auch in ihren internen Vorschriften sind Sicherheitsanforderungen, die sich auf Risikomanagementverfahren stützen, bereits hinreichend berücksichtigt.

Es werden strenge Sicherheitsmaßnahmen angewandt, auch wenn dies in der Regel nicht öffentlich bekanntgemacht wird. Sofern erforderlich, werden diese Maßnahmen entsprechend den technischen Entwicklungen angepasst. Deshalb erfordern Berichte wie diejenigen über die Überwachung von Belgacom nicht unbedingt neue Herangehensweisen.

Angesichts der zunehmenden Bedrohungen der IT-Sicherheit könnte bei künftigen Ausschreibungen jedoch erwogen werden, die Gewichtung dieses Aspekts zu überprüfen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011230/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Belgacom surveillance case

According to the Belgian media, the US intelligence service, the National Security Agency (NSA), has hacked into the computer systems of the Belgian telecommunications company Belgacom. Belgacom and its subsidiaries, such as Belgacom's mobile radiocommunications subsidiary Proximus, provide Internet, telephony and mobile radiocommunications services to the EU institutions.

1. Does the Commission believe that, through the surveillance of Belgacom, telephone conversations and/or the Internet traffic of the EU institutions were intercepted, or at least could have been intercepted?

2. Does it believe that the actual object of the surveillance of Belgacom was, or could have been, surveillance of the EU institutions?

3. Does it demand special security measures from Belgacom, for example for the telephone and data traffic of the institutions to be processed via separate security systems?

4. How much do the institutions pay Belgacom and Belgacom's subsidiaries per year for the provision of the telephony, Internet and mobile telecommunications services?

5. For what period does the contract with Belgacom run and are there any walkaway clauses, for example in the event that Belgacom's systems were compromised?

6. Is the Commission planning to cancel the contracts for telephony, Internet, mobile telecommunications and other services currently provided by Belgacom?

7. What conclusions does the Commission draw from the Belgacom surveillance case for future tendering procedures for services?

8. What conclusions does it draw from the Belgacom surveillance case for internal security rules?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(2 December 2013)

1-2. While it cannot be excluded that the reported surveillance activities were aimed at intercepting voice or data traffic of the EU institutions, the Commission does not have concrete evidence that this was indeed the case.

3-6. The Commission pays to Belgacom (or to consortia including Belgacom) the standard prices for which this company provides its major clients with fixed telephony, mobile telephony and special telecommunication services.

All these contracts lay down appropriate security requirements about confidentiality, integrity and availability of information.

They also lay down several types of termination clauses, including in the event of a serious breach of contract by the contractor which has not ceased after a formal rectification period.

At this stage, the Commission is not planning to resort to these clauses, but it will continue to monitor the situation closely.

7-8. The Commission's tendering procedures and internal rules already take due account of security requirements, based on a risk management process.

Although they are generally not disclosed publicly, strict security measures are in place. When necessary, these measures are adapted to technological change. Hence reports like those on the Belgacom surveillance do not necessarily call for a change in the process.

However, the increasing threats to IT security may lead to reconsider the weight of this aspect in future tendering procedures.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011231/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Verhinderung von Spionage

In ihrer Antwort auf die Anfrage 7197/2013 von Hans-Peter Martin schreibt Kommissionsmitglied Viviane Reding, dass Spionageaktivitäten der kanadischen Regierung, welche Medienberichten zufolge gegen EU-Staaten, -Organisationen und -Bürger gerichtet sind, „nicht Gegenstand der aktuellen Verhandlungen über ein Freihandelsabkommen (‚Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement', CETA) sind und somit nicht im Rahmen der Gespräche erörtert werden dürften".

In ihrer Antwort auf die Anfrage 7196/2013 von Hans-Peter Martin zu Möglichkeiten, gegen Spionage des Communications Security Establishment Canada (CSE) vorzugehen, nennt Kommissionsmitglied Viviane Reding weder CETA noch Handelsbeschränkungen als mögliche Druckmittel.

1. Warum ist Spionage im Allgemeinen oder Wirtschaftsspionage im Besonderen in den Verhandlungen über CETA kein Thema?

2. Sieht die Kommission Handelsbeschränkungen als mögliches Druckmittel, um Kanada und andere Staaten zur Unterlassung ihrer Spionagetätigkeiten zu zwingen? Wenn nicht, warum nicht?

Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission
(5. Dezember 2013)

Die Kommission verfolgt die Berichte über Überwachungsaktivitäten seitens ausländischer Regierungen und deren Auswirkungen auf die Grundrechte der europäischen Bürgerinnen und Bürger mit großer Aufmerksamkeit und wird unabhängig davon, welche Regierung an derartigen Praktiken beteiligt ist, darin nicht nachlassen.

Jedoch sollte man das am besten geeignete Instrument für die Behandlung dieser Thematik mit Bedacht wählen. Die Kommission glaubt nicht, dass die Verknüpfung vermeintlicher Spionageaktivitäten mit Handelsverhandlungen oder der Einsatz von Handelssanktionen als mögliches Druckmittel am effizientesten wäre, um die betroffenen Staaten zu zwingen, ihre Praktiken offenzulegen.

Insbesondere das CETA-Abkommen mit Kanada dürfte für die EU von bedeutendem wirtschaftlichem Nutzen sein und zur Förderung von Wachstum und Beschäftigung beitragen. Würden diese Verhandlungen, bei denen am 18. Oktober 2013 ein politischer Durchbruch erzielt wurde, als Mittel eingesetzt, um nicht handelsbezogene Ziele zu verfolgen, hätte dies unmittelbare Auswirkungen auf die wirtschaftlichen Interessen der EU. Denn eine Unterbrechung der Handelsverhandlungen würde bedeuten, dass die Europäische Union sich selbst neuer potenzieller Quellen wirtschaftlichen Wachstums beraubt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011231/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Prevention of espionage

In her answer to question 7197/2013 from Hans-Peter Martin, Commissioner Reding states that the espionage activities of the Canadian Government, which, according to media reports, have targeted EU Member States, EU organisations and EU citizens, are 'not part of the ongoing negotiations for a Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), and therefore [are] not deemed to be discussed within the framework of those talks'.

In her answer to question 7196/2013 from Hans-Peter Martin concerning ways to deal with espionage by the communications Security Establishment Canada (CSE), Commissioner Reding does not mention CETA or trade restrictions as possible bargaining tools.

1. Why is espionage in general or industrial espionage in particular not a topic for discussion in the negotiations on CETA?

2. Does the Commission see trade restrictions as a possible bargaining tool to force Canada and other states to cease their espionage activities? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(5 December 2013)

The Commission exercises the utmost vigilance with regard to reports of monitoring activities by foreign governments and their impact on the fundamental rights of Europeans, and will continue to do so, whichever government is involved in such practices.

However, one should be careful in choosing the most appropriate means to raise these issues. The Commission does not believe that the most effective way of doing this would be to link the issue of alleged espionage activities with trade negotiations, or use trade sanctions as a possible bargaining tool to force the countries concerned to clarify their practices.

The CETA agreement with Canada in particular is expected to be of significant economic benefit to the EU, fostering growth and employment. Using this negotiation, which came to a political breakthrough on 18 October 2013, as a means to achieve non-trade objectives, would have an immediate and direct impact on the EU's own economic interests, as suspending trade negotiations would mean that the European Union would deprive itself of new potential sources of economic growth.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011232/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Commission action on the safe transportation of workers in the oil industry

On 24 September 2013 a tragic incident occurred when a Super Puma L2 helicopter carrying workers from an oil rig crashed two miles west of Sumburgh airport. Fourteen of the 18 people on board the helicopter at the time survived, but four died. Since 2009 there have been four other incidents in the North Sea involving Super Puma helicopters which have resulted in fatalities. Is the Commission aware of similar incidents occurring in other countries? What is the Commission currently doing to encourage the safe transportation of people working in the oil industry who require the use of a helicopter to go to and from their place of work?

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

In accordance with the European aviation safety policy, transportation of people from and to oil rigs must comply with the requirements applicable to Commercial Air Transport (CAT) which is the most strictly regulated part of aviation safety legislation.

For the purpose of ensuring the proper functioning and development of civil aviation safety, the Commission is assited by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA). In the specific context of offshore helicopter operations EASA has several ongoing rulemaking activities which in the future might lead to an amendment of the existing requirements. In addition EASA, in charge of the helicopter type continuing airworthiness, also addresses any potential unsafe condition by issuing Airworthiness Directives when this is deemed necessary. With reference to the tragic accidend reported by the Honourable Member there is no such unsafe condition identified in the first report issued by the UK Air Accident Investigation Branch ([1]).

The number of fatal accidents in off-shore helicopter operations involving EU operators amounts to about 10% of the total number of fatal accidents in CAT helicopter operations.

([1]) Special AAIB Bulletin S7/2012 of 18 October 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011233/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: EU trademarks in the US

Scottish products have benefited from approved applications to the EU Protected Geographical Indication schemes. However, the US does not recognise the EU's system of geographical indications. Will EU representatives encourage the US to support existing EU trademarks during the current talks?

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

The protection of Geographical Indications is a matter of high importance for the EU.

This is reflected in recent bilateral trade agreements that have been recently concluded (such as EU — Canada and EU — Singapore free trade agreements), as well as in ongoing negotiations with EU partner countries.

The Commission can assure the Honourable Member that the concerns of right-holders on this issue, and intellectual property rights more broadly, will be given particular attention in the negotiations of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) with the United States.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011235/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Decrease in grassland butterfly population in the EU

The population of grassland butterflies declined by almost 50% in the EU between 1990 and 2011, according to recently announced statistics. Is the Commission aware of this situation and the reasons for the decline? What action is being taken to address the problem?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-009689/2013 on the same subject.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011236/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: EU twinning arrangements

The Inchture area in Perthshire, Scotland recently commemorated 20 years of a twinning agreement with Fléac in the Charente département of France. The Twinning Charter sets out an agreement to host exchanges, develop educational, sporting, cultural and business links between the two communities, and foster friendships. The 20th anniversary celebration coincided with the European Year of Citizens, and seeks to strengthen some of the underlying principles of the European Union by sharing experiences between people. What support does the EU give to towns and cities within the EU with twinning arrangements, and what does it do to encourage the creation of new twinning agreements?

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

More than 7 million citizens have taken part in thousands of projects funded by the Europe for Citizens Programme since its inception in 2007 to date. Town-twinning projects and networks of towns have proved to be highly effective means of bringing together European citizens from different countries taking advantage of the partnership between municipalities for strengthening mutual understanding between citizens and cultures. The Inchture area of Scotland participated in the programme through two town-twinning projects. The Perth and Kinross Sport Council was granted EUR 20.644 in 2010 and the Inchture Area Twinning Association EUR 11.000 in 2012.

The future programme 'Europe for Citizens' scheduled for the period 2014-2020 will build on the results produced so far. It will continue to provide financial support to projects bringing together a wide range of citizens from twinned towns around topics in line with the objectives of the programme.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011237/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Tackling the issue of food banks

There has been a rise in the number of food banks in Scotland and across the EU in general in recent years. What action is the Commission taking to provide food security for people in need of support across the EU? What is the EU doing to try and prevent the need for food banks to be created in the first place?

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

As part of the Europe 2020 strategy for a smart, sustainable and inclusive Union, the Member States have committed to reducing by at least 20 million the number of persons at risk of poverty and social exclusion by 2020 (currently around 120 million). Monitoring of the national reforms implementing this strategy takes place via the European Semester and through the adoption by the Council of country specific recommendations.

As regards financial instruments, the European Social Fund (ESF), in collaboration with the European Regional Development Fund, is and will remain the principal tool for combating poverty and social exclusion. It supports actions in the Member States aimed at integrating or improving the prospects of the most vulnerable persons in the workplace. For the future programming period 2014-2020, each Member State should devote at least 20% of its ESF allocation to such support.

There are a growing number of Europeans who are too far removed from the labour market to benefit from ESF activation measures. The Commission therefore proposed in October 2012 the creation of the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived. Under this proposal, the European Union would co-finance the distribution of food and essential goods to those who need them most.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011238/13
to the Commission
Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)
(2 October 2013)

Subject: Agricultural shows in the EU

Every year in Scotland in the summer months, a series of agricultural shows take place to promote local agricultural businesses and the local food industry. Do similar events take place around the EU, and what is the level of EU participation in such events?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(14 November 2013)

The Commission confirms that similar events (city farms, open days, fairs, exhibitions) are organised all around the EU at different periods of the year.

The Commission co-finances every year through Regulation (EC) No 814/2000 ([1]) information measures relating to the common agricultural policy which aim, in particular, at explaining, and promoting the European model of agriculture. This contributes to the information of farmers and of those active in rural areas and raises public awareness on the issues and objectives of that policy. Some of the information actions awarded a grant include the organisation of such type of events-city farms, open days, etc. — or the participation of stakeholders in some events such as agricultural shows. For the forthcoming year, more details about communication actions taken at the initiative of third party organisations can be found in the Call for Proposals ([2]) published in September 2013 and available through the following link:
http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/grants-for-information-measures/index_en.htm

Besides, the Commission's emphasis on 'going local' and improving the awareness of citizens about the CAP is carried out through direct actions at its own initiative which includes the participation to events such as Grüne Woche Berlin, SIA-Paris or Bruxelles-Champêtre with its own stand or through speakers and experts participating to round tables. The objective of the Commission's participation in those events is to target the general public and stakeholders and to communicate that the CAP and rural development are of relevance to the whole of society.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 814/2000 of 17 April 2000 on Information Measures Relating to the common agricultural policy, OJ L 100, 20.4.2000, p. 7.
([2]) Call for Proposals 'Support for Information Measures relating to the common agricultural policy (CAP' for 2014, OJEU, C 264, 13.9.2013, p. 11.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-011244/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(3 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Derechos humanos en Rusia y relaciones exteriores de la UE

El pasado mes de junio, el Parlamento de Rusia aprobó una modificación que introduce enmiendas al artículo 5 de la Ley Federal «Sobre la protección de los niños de la información perjudicial para su salud y desarrollo», que prohíbe la difusión de informaciones o contenidos sobre la homosexualidad a menores y que sancionará a quienes difundan información que pudiese incitar en los mismos «orientaciones sexuales no tradicionales». La nueva legislación recoge estas nuevas infracciones administrativas, que podrán ser sancionadas con multas y con la suspensión de actividades para las personas con cargos en entidades jurídicas. Otra norma prohíbe asimismo la adopción por parejas del mismo sexo y exige tratados bilaterales específicos para la adopción por parte de parejas heterosexuales en los países donde esté vigente el matrimonio igualitario. En España ya hay 180 adopciones con niño asignado paralizadas.

Numerosas organizaciones han informado que desde la aprobación de dicha ley se han multiplicado los actos violentos contra personas del colectivo LGTBI y ello ante la pasividad de las fuerzas de seguridad y de las autoridades rusas. Se trata de una clara discriminación por razón de la orientación sexual o identidad de género y una inaceptable violación de los derechos fundamentales en un país que ha suscrito los compromisos internacionales de derechos humanos. Rusia es, además, miembro del Consejo de Europa y debe cumplir las convenciones regionales que ha firmado, así como acatar la jurisprudencia del Tribunal Europeo de Derechos Humanos.

El Consejo de Asuntos Exteriores del Consejo de la UE aprobó el pasado 24 junio unas recomendaciones para promover y proteger los derechos fundamentales de las personas LGTBI en el contexto internacional. Denunciar las leyes discriminatorias contra este colectivo y combatir los actos de violencia homofóbica son dos áreas de acción prioritaria expresamente enunciadas en el documento del Consejo.

Por ello, pregunto a la Comisión:

¿Qué seguimiento piensa dar la Comisión a las orientaciones dictaminadas por el Consejo de la UE en política exterior y defensa de los derechos humanos del colectivo LGTBI? ¿Qué tratamiento da la Comisión Europea a esta cuestión en las relaciones bilaterales que mantiene con las autoridades rusas?

Respuesta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de octubre de 2013)

La alta representante y vicepresidenta está la corriente de los hechos a los que se refiere Su Señoría y ha seguido con mucha atención la evolución de la situación. También ha declarado públicamente su decepción por las leyes regionales y nacionales que prohíben la «propaganda homosexual». La alta representante y vicepresidenta considera que esta legislación propicia la estigmatización de determinados grupos y personas, así como las prácticas y discursos discriminatorios contra ellos. Esta legislación perece oponerse al Convenio Europeo de Derechos Humanos (CEDH).

De conformidad con las directrices de la UE sobre la promoción y la protección de los derechos fundamentales de las personas lesbianas, gays, bisexuales, transexuales e intersexuales (LGBTI), la UE está muy atenta a este tema en Rusia y ha aprovechado las dos últimas rondas de sus consultas periódicas de derechos humanos con la Federación de Rusia (diciembre de 2012 y mayo de 2013) para interesarse por la conformidad de la legislación sobre la «propaganda homosexual» con los compromisos internacionales de Rusia y, en particular, con el Convenio Europeo de Derechos Humanos, así como para instar a dicho país a atenerse a sus compromisos. La próxima ronda de consultas sobre derechos humanos tendrá lugar antes de finales de año y brindará la oportunidad para que la UE reitere su opinión sobre este asunto, que se continuará planteando también en las reuniones bilaterales con las autoridades rusas que se van a celebrar mientras tanto. La UE ha apoyado y seguirá apoyando a las organizaciones de la sociedad civil en Rusia, incluidas las organizaciones LGBTI, sobre todo al amparo del Instrumento Europeo para la Democracia y los Derechos Humanos (IEDDH), y seguirá planteando sus inquietudes de todas las maneras adecuadas y en todos los foros internacionales pertinentes en materia de derechos humanos, tal como hizo el 17 de septiembre de 2013 en el Consejo de Derechos Humanos de las Naciones Unidas.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011244/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Human rights in Russia and the EU's external relations

In June, the Russian Parliament adopted changes amending Article 5 of the Federal Law on the Protection of Children from Information Harmful to their Health and Development so as to prohibit the dissemination of information or content on homosexuality to minors and punish any person who disseminates information that could lead minors into 'non-traditional sexual orientations'. These new administrative offences are now included in the revised law and may be punished with fines and suspension from their posts for people working for legal entities. Another law similarly prohibits couples of the same sex from adopting children and requires specific bilateral treaties for adoption by heterosexual couples in countries where same-sex marriage is permitted. In Spain, 180 adoption procedures where couples have been matched with a child are at a standstill.

Many organisations have reported that the incidence of violence against members of the LGBTI community has increased significantly since this law was passed, while the security forces and the Russian authorities fail to take action. This is clearly discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity and an unacceptable infringement of fundamental rights in a country which has signed international agreements on human rights. Russia is, moreover, a member of the Council of Europe and must abide by the regional conventions it has signed, and comply with the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights.

On 24 June 2013, the Foreign Affairs Council of the Council of the European Union adopted guidelines on promoting and protecting the fundamental rights of LGBTI people in an international context. Denouncing laws that discriminate against this community and combating homophobic violence are two areas for priority action specifically mentioned in the Council document.

How, therefore, does the Commission plan to follow up the Council's guidelines in its foreign policy and in defending the LGBTI community's human rights? What approach does the Commission take to this issue in its bilateral relations with the Russian authorities?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the developments referred to by the Honourable Member and has been following these developments closely, expressing publically her disappointment of adoption of bills prohibiting 'homosexual propaganda', at regional and at national level. The HR/VP believes that this law leads to the stigmatisation of particular groups and individuals and to discriminatory practices and discourse against them. This law therefore appears to be in contradiction with the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

In accordance with the EU guidelines on promoting and protecting the fundamental rights of LGBTI people, the EU is closely monitoring this issue in Russia and used the last two recent rounds of its regular Human Rights Consultations with the Russian Federation (December 2012 and May 2013) to enquire about the conformity of the 'homosexual propaganda' law with Russia's international commitments, in particular with the ECHR, and to call upon Russia to amend it so as to put it in conformity with its committments. The next round of Human Rights Consultations should take place before the end of the year and should allow the EU to state again its views on the matter. The issue will also continue to be raised during bilateral meetings with the Russian authorities to be held in the meantime. The EU has been supporting and will continue to support civil society organisations in Russia, including LGBTI organisations, notably through the EIDHR and will continue to raise its concerns in all appropriate formats as well as in all relevant Human Rights international fora, as it most recently did on 17 September in the context of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011246/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(3. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Probleme des digitalen Binnenmarktes

In ihrer Antwort auf die Anfrage E-006771/2013 von Hans-Peter Martin schreibt Kommissarin Reding im Namen der Kommission, dass US-Internetunternehmen vor allem deshalb den Internetdienstmarkt dominieren, weil sie in den USA „Zugang zu einem ausgereiften und integrierten Markt von mehr als 300 Millionen Verbrauchern haben" und daher „der Ausbau des digitalen Binnenmarktes in Europa weiterhin ein entscheidendes politisches Ziel" ist.

1. Welche konkreten Hauptursachen sieht die Kommission für die anhaltende Zersplitterung des europäischen digitalen Binnenmarktes?

2. Welche Lösungsansätze sind derzeit in Arbeit und welche weiteren Lösungsmöglichkeiten gibt es, um den europäischen digitalen Binnenmarkt besser zu integrieren?

3. In welcher Form ist der europäische digitale Binnenmarkt noch nicht „ausgereift"? Sind die Probleme dabei vor allem struktureller und/oder historischer Natur oder sind vor allem die legislativen Rahmen mangelhaft?

Antwort von Frau Kroes im Namen der Kommission
(25. November 2013)

Die Verwirklichung eines vollständig integrierten digitalen Binnenmarkts könnte der Wirtschaft in der EU durch ein höheres Wirtschaftswachstum von bis zu 4 % des BIP und die Schaffung von Millionen neuer Arbeitsplätze erhebliche Vorteile bringen.

Der Aufbau eines ausgereiften und integrierten digitalen Binnenmarkts in Europa wird durch die anhaltende Zersplitterung infolge abweichender Vorschriften, Normen und Verfahren in unterschiedlichen Bereichen, vom Datenschutz und den elektronischen Signaturen über die Besteuerung bis zum Verbraucherschutz und dem Urheberrecht, erschwert. Die Einhaltung von häufig voneinander abweichenden Vorschriften erhöht insbesondere für KMU die Kosten der Wirtschaftstätigkeit. Gleichzeitig beeinträchtigen diese Unterschiede das Vertrauen der Nutzer, die befürchten könnten, dass sie beim Erwerb bei einem Anbieter in einem anderen Mitgliedstaat weniger gut geschützt sind als bei einheimischen Unternehmen.

Außerdem gefährdet das Fehlen eines voll funktionsfähigen digitalen Binnenmarkts die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit von Unternehmen in der EU, wenn diese mit führenden Internetunternehmen konkurrieren, die durch ihre großen Heimatmärkte (wie die USA oder China) gestärkt werden.

Die Kommission hat im Rahmen der Digitalen Agenda für Europa bereits eine Reihe von Legislativvorschlägen vorgelegt, um diese Zersplitterung zu überwinden und bis 2015 einen echten digitalen Binnenmarkt zu verwirklichen. Hierzu zählen Vorschläge zur gegenseitigen Anerkennung von elektronischen Identitätsdiensten und Signaturen, zur kollektiven Rechtewahrnehmung, zum Datenschutz und zur Computer- und Netzsicherheit sowie das unlängst vorgelegte Paket „vernetzter Kontinent", die alle in Kürze angenommen werden dürften. Außerdem sind Arbeiten zur Besteuerung und zur Aktualisierung des Urheberrechts in Gang.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011246/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Problems associated with the digital single market

In her answer to Question E-006771/2013 from Hans-Peter Martin, Commissioner Reding states on behalf of the Commission that US Internet providers dominate the Internet service market primarily because in the US they have 'access to a sophisticated and integrated market of more than 300 million consumers', and that is why 'completing the digital single market in Europe remains a crucial policy objective'.

1. What specific key reasons does the Commission see for the continued fragmentation of the European digital single market?

2. What solutions are currently in preparation, and what other possible solutions are there for improving the integration of the European digital single market?

3. In what way is the European digital single market not yet 'sophisticated'? Are the problems involved primarily structural and/or historical in nature, or is it principally the legislative framework that is inadequate?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(25 November 2013)

Achieving a truly integrated Digital Single Market could bring major benefits to the EU economy in terms of higher economic growth, possibly up to 4% of GDP, and the creation of millions of new jobs.

The development of a sophisticated and integrated Digital Single Market in Europe is inhibited by continuing fragmentation, which arises from diverging rules, standards and practices in different areas ranging from data protection, e-signatures and taxation to consumer protection and copy rights. Compliance with often divergent rules increases the costs of doing business, particularly for SMEs. At the same time, these differences affect user trust, who may be concerned that if they purchase from providers established in other Member States they are less protected than when buying from domestic firms.

Moreover, the lack of a fully functioning Digital Single Market also jeopardises the competitiveness of EU where they compete with major Internet companies who are able to draw strength from their large home markets (e.g. US, China).

As part of the Digital Agenda for Europe, the Commission has already made a number of legislative proposals to overcome fragmentation and achieve a genuine Digital Single Market by 2015. These include proposals on the mutual recognition of e-identity services and e-signatures, collective rights management, data protection, cyber security, and the recent Connected Continent Package, which all should be adopted as soon as possible. Work is also underway on taxation and modernising copyrights.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011247/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(3. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Investitionen in den Ausbau von Mobilfunknetzen

Kommissarin Neelie Kroes will bis 2014 die Roaminggebühren für eingehende Anrufe und bis 2016 die Roaminggebühren für alle Telekommunikationsdienste innerhalb der EU unterbinden.

Mobilfunkanbieter protestieren gegen dieses Vorhaben und geben an, die Gewinne aus Roaminggebühren seien nötig, um den Netzausbau zu finanzieren. Die Kommissarin hat dem entgegnet, dass hohe Roaminggebühren in der Vergangenheit nicht mit hohen Investitionen korrelierten. Ein weiterer Netzausbau wird von vielen Experten als notwendig angesehen.

1. Welche Gewinnminderungen erwartet die Kommission für die europäische Telekommunikationsindustrie, wenn innereuropäische Roaminggebühren wegfallen?

2. Erwartet die Kommission Auswirkungen auf den Netzausbau?

3. Wie wird die Kommission die Mobilfunkanbieter dazu bewegen, ihre Investitionen zu erhöhen und welche Kosten des Netzausbaus werden dabei von der Union oder den Mitgliedstaaten getragen?

Antwort von Frau Kroes im Namen der Kommission
(15. November 2013)

Das Roaming macht etwa 5 % der Betreibereinnahmen aus. Die Folgenabschätzung der Kommission ergab, dass die Abschaffung der Roamingaufschläge bei den derzeitigen regulierten Preisobergrenzen vom 1. Juli 2014 für die Betreiber EU-weit insgesamt 1,6 Mrd. EUR Einnahmeneinbußen bedeuten würde. Allerdings dürften diese Einbußen wegen der potenziell hohen Nachfrageelastizität von Datendiensten, die voraussichtlich zu einem viel höheren Nutzungsvolumen führen wird (was bei einigen nordeuropäischen Betreibern bereits der Fall ist), letztlich erheblich niedriger ausfallen. Außerdem ermöglicht die vorgeschlagene fakultative Lösung erstens die Anwendung des Kriteriums der üblichen Nutzung und sieht zweitens eine Übergangszeit für die Abschaffung der Roamingaufschläge vor, damit die Betreiber Einnahmenausfälle vorab einkalkulieren und ihr Angebot und ihr Geschäft entsprechend anpassen können.

Der Roamingmarkt ist seit 2007 reguliert, was eine Senkung der Roamingentgelte von völlig überhöhten Preisen auf das heutigen Niveau bewirkt hat. In dieser Zeit sind die Preise inländischer Mobilfunkdienste durch den Wettbewerb auf den inländischen Märkten ebenfalls gesunken. Für Betreiber wird es auch künftig Anreize für intensiven Wettbewerb geben. Maßnahmen wie die Beseitigung administrativer Hindernisse für kleine Funkzellen oder die verstärkte Koordinierung der Frequenznutzung dienen der weiteren Förderung des Ausbaus von Mobilfunknetzen.

Die Kommission hat ferner einen Vorschlag zur Verringerung der Kosten des Ausbaus von hochleistungsfähigen elektronischen Kommunikationsnetzen, einschließlich Mobilfunknetzen, vorgelegt, in dem auch eine Förderung durch die europäischen Strukturfonds und den Europäischen Investmentfonds (unter Einhaltung der Beihilferechts) vorgesehen ist.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011247/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Investments in the development of mobile telecommunications networks

Commissioner Kroes wants to eliminate roaming charges for incoming calls by 2014 and roaming charges for all telecommunications services within the EU by 2016.

Mobile service providers are protesting against this proposal and state that the profit from roaming charges is needed to finance the development of the network. The Commissioner's response to this was that high roaming charges have not correlated with large investments in the past. Further development of the network is considered by many experts to be necessary.

1. What reductions in profit does the Commission expect for the European telecommunications industry if roaming charges within the EU are abolished?

2. Does it expect there to be any impact on the development of the network?

3. How will it encourage mobile service providers to increase their investments, and in this regard what network development costs will be borne by the Union or the Member States?

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

Roaming represents about 5% of revenues for operators. The impact assessment undertaken by the Commission suggests that the abolishment of roaming surcharges would have EUR 1.6 billion impact on operator's revenue at the EU level with respect to current regulated price caps of 1 July 2014. However, the loss in revenue is likely to be much less than those, due to the potentially high demand elasticity of data services which will result in much higher volumes of consumption, also as observed by some Nordic operators. In addition, the proposed optional solution allows for the application of a reasonable use criterion and foresees a transitional period for abolishing roaming surcharges so that operators are able to anticipate revenue losses and adapt their offers and business.

The roaming market has been regulated since 2007 lowering roaming prices from exorbitant level to the current level. During this period, the prices of domestic mobile services have also decreased because of competition on domestic markets. Operators will maintain their incentives to compete strongly also in the future. Measures such as the removal of administrative burdens for small cells and enhanced coordination of spectrum will further encourage mobile network roll-out.

The Commission also made a proposal for reducing the cost of deployment of high speed electronic communications networks, including mobile, and network roll-out can also be supported by European Structural and Investment Funds (subject to compliance with state aid rules).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011248/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(3. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: NSA-Attacken gegen europäische Unternehmen

Belgischen Medien zufolge soll der amerikanische Geheimdienst „National Security Agency" (NSA) in die Computersysteme des belgischen Telekommunikationsunternehmens Belgacom eingedrungen sein.

1. Sind der Kommission Fälle bekannt, in denen der NSA Einbrüche in die Computersysteme europäischer Unternehmen nachgewiesen wurden?

2. Sind der Kommission Fälle bekannt, in denen der NSA ein Einbruch in die Computersysteme österreichischer Unternehmen nachgewiesen wurde?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(26. November 2013)

Die Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-009773/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011248/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: NSA attacks on European undertakings

According to the Belgian media, the US intelligence service, the National Security Agency (NSA), has hacked into the computer systems of the Belgian telecommunications company Belgacom.

1. Does the Commission know of any cases where it has been proven that the NSA has hacked into the computer systems of European undertakings?

2. Does it know of any cases where it has been proven that the NSA has hacked into the computer systems of Austrian undertakings?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-009773/13.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011249/13
an den Rat
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(3. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Maßnahmen gegen Spionage

Nach den Enthüllungen über US-amerikanische und kanadische Spionageprogramme haben mehrere europäische Staatsoberhäupter diese Programme scharf verurteilt. Auch China und Russland stehen immer wieder im Verdacht, dass Wirtschaftsspionage von ihrem Territorium ausgeht. Während der Schaden durch politische oder sicherheitsrelevante Spionage wohl kaum zu beziffern ist, schätzte das deutsche Innenministerium im August 2013 den jährlichen Schaden durch Wirtschaftsspionage alleine für Deutschland auf etwa 50 Milliarden EUR und damit mehr als ein Prozent des deutschen Bruttoinlandsprodukts.

1. Hat der Rat Möglichkeiten geprüft, mit denen Spionage und Wirtschaftsspionage, die von Drittstaaten ausgehen, sanktioniert beziehungsweise durch angedrohte Sanktionen verhindert werden können?

2. Hat der Rat Möglichkeiten geprüft, mit denen Spionage und Wirtschaftsspionage gegen EU-Staaten, -Organisationen und -Bürger, die von in Drittstaaten ansässigen Individuen und Organisationen ausgehen und von dem betreffenden Drittstaat geduldet, gefördert oder direkt betrieben werden, sanktioniert beziehungsweise durch angedrohte Sanktionen verhindert werden können?

3. Hat der Rat insbesondere für die Punkte 1. und 2. wirtschaftliche Maßnahmen wie Handelsbeschränkungen in Betracht gezogen?

4. Sollte der Rat noch nicht zu diesem Thema getagt haben, wann werden entsprechende Gespräche erfolgen?

Antwort
(9. Dezember 2013)

Der Rat hat die einzelnen Fragen angeblicher Wirtschaftsspionage, die der Herr Abgeordnete zur Sprache bringt, nicht erörtert.

Allgemeiner wurden die jüngsten Entwicklungen in Bezug auf mögliche Fragen im Zusammenhang mit der Nachrichtengewinnung und die große Besorgnis, die diese Ereignisse unter den euro-päischen Bürgern ausgelöst haben, von den Staats- und Regierungschefs am Rande des Euro-päischen Rates vom 24./25. Oktober erörtert. Sie haben sich auf eine Erklärung verständigt, die den Schlussfolgerungen des Europäischen Rates beigefügt ist (Dokument EUCO 169/13).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011249/13
to the Council
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Measures to prevent espionage

Following the revelations concerning US and Canadian surveillance programmes, several European Heads of State have strongly condemned these programmes. China and Russia are also constantly coming under the suspicion that industrial espionage is being conducted from their territories. While it is not really possible to quantify the losses caused by political or security-related espionage, in August 2013 the German Federal Ministry of the Interior estimated the annual loss caused by industrial espionage to be around EUR 50 billion for Germany alone, and thus more than 1% of German GDP.

1. Has the Council examined possible means by which espionage and industrial espionage carried out by third countries can be penalised or prevented by the threat of penalties?

2. Has it examined possible means by which espionage and industrial espionage against EU Member States, institutions and citizens carried out by individuals and organisations established in third countries and tolerated, supported or directly instigated by the third country in question can be penalised or prevented by the threat of penalties?

3. In particular, has the Council considered economic measures, such as trade restrictions, for points 1 and 2?

4. If the Council has not yet met to discuss this matter, when will the corresponding talks take place?

Reply
(9 December 2013)

The Council has not discussed the specific issues of alleged industrial espionage to which the Honourable Member refers.

More generally, recent developments concerning possible intelligence issues and the deep concerns that these events have raised among European citizens were discussed by the Heads of States or Government in the margins of the European Council on 24/25 October. They agreed on a statement annexed to the Conclusions of the European Council (document EUCO 169/13).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011250/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(3. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Schaden durch Spionage und Wirtschaftsspionage

Nach den Enthüllungen über US-amerikanische und kanadische Spionageprogramme haben mehrere europäische Staatsoberhäupter diese Programme scharf verurteilt. Auch China und Russland stehen immer wieder im Verdacht, dass Wirtschaftsspionage von ihrem Territorium ausgeht. Während der Schaden durch politische oder sicherheitsrelevante Spionage wohl kaum zu beziffern ist, schätzte das deutsche Innenministerium im August 2013 den jährlichen Schaden durch Wirtschaftsspionage alleine für Deutschland auf etwa 50 Milliarden EUR und damit mehr als ein Prozent des deutschen Bruttoinlandsprodukts.

1. Wie hoch schätzt die Kommission den Schaden durch Spionage und Wirtschaftsspionage jeweils für (a) die EU und (b) die einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten der EU?

2. Welche Akteure und Organisationen werden besonders geschädigt?

3. Welche Wirtschaftssektoren werden besonders geschädigt?

Antwort von Herrn Tajani im Namen der Kommission
(4. Dezember 2013)

Die Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-009773/2013 von Frau Dubravka Šuica ([1]).

Am 8. September 2013 versicherte der nationale Geheimdienstdirektor der Vereinigten Staaten in einer Erklärung, die USA nutzten ihren Auslandsgeheimdienst nicht dazu, Betriebs- und Geschäftsgeheimnisse ausländischer Firmen für US-amerikanische Unternehmen zu stehlen, damit diese ihre internationale Wettbewerbsfähigkeit oder ihren Gewinn erhöhen könnten. Genauso wenig würden die gesammelten Daten US-amerikanischen Unternehmen zur Verfügung gestellt.

Die Themen Spionage und Wirtschaftsspionage bleiben für die EU und die Mitgliedstaaten jedoch eine große Herausforderung.

Die Kommission hat Rechtsinstrumente für den Schutz der Rechte des geistigen Eigentums in der EU sowie für den Handel mit Drittländern verabschiedet. Ergänzend prüft die Kommission derzeit den Rechtsrahmen für den Schutz von Betriebs- und Geschäftsgeheimnissen.

Allerdings liegt es gegenwärtig im Zuständigkeitsbereich der Mitgliedstaaten, zur Bekämpfung von Spionage und Wirtschaftsspionage sowie als Reaktion auf die damit verbundenen Bedrohungen und Verluste, die Maßnahmen zu treffen, die sie für angebracht halten. Somit verfügen die Mitgliedstaaten möglicherweise über entsprechende Schätzungen. Sie erstatten der Kommission über solche Angelegenheiten normalerweise nicht Bericht und bislang bestand auch nicht die Notwendigkeit, diese Frage auf europäischer Ebene zu regeln.

Die Kommission ist daher nicht in der Lage, Schätzungen über Verluste durch politische oder wirtschaftliche Spionage vorzulegen.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011250/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Loss caused by espionage and industrial espionage

Following the revelations concerning US and Canadian surveillance programmes, several European Heads of State have strongly condemned these programmes. China and Russia are also constantly coming under the suspicion that industrial espionage is being conducted from their territories. While it is not really possible to quantify the losses caused by political or security-related espionage, in August 2013 the German Federal Ministry of the Interior estimated the annual loss caused by industrial espionage to be around EUR 50 billion for Germany alone, and thus more than 1% of German GDP.

1. How high does the Commission estimate the loss through espionage and industrial espionage, respectively, to be in (a) the EU and (b) the individual EU Member States?

2. Which stakeholders and organisations are particularly affected?

3. Which economic sectors are particularly affected?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(4 December 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-009773/2013 by Mrs Dubravka Šuica ([1]).

On 8 September 2013, the US Director of National Intelligence issued a statement, in which he asserted that the US does not 'use [our] foreign intelligence capabilities to steal the trade secrets of foreign companies on behalf of — or give intelligence we collect to — US companies to enhance their international competitiveness or increase their bottom line'.

However, the issue of espionage and industrial espionage remains an important challenge for the EU and the Member States.

The Commission has adopted legal instruments for the protection of intellectual property rights in the EU and for trade with third countries. As a complement, the Commission is also examining the legal framework for trade secrets protection.

However, it is today within the responsibility of the Member States to take measures they consider adequate to combat espionage and industrial espionage, and to respond to related threats and losses. Accordingly, Member States may have corresponding estimates at their disposal. They are usually not reporting to the Commission on such issues, and there has so far not been a necessity to regulate this issue at European level.

The Commission is therefore not in a position to provide estimates on losses caused by political and industrial espionage.

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

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011251/13
an die Kommission
Herbert Reul (PPE)
(3. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Entsorgungsgesetz — Artikel 17 KrWG

In Deutschland besteht in der Entsorgungsbranche ein reger Wettbewerb von neun Anbieten, der nach Aussage des Bundeskartellamtes auch zu erheblichen Kosteneinsparungen und Verbesserungen beim Recycling geführt hat. Trotz der Öffnung verbleiben einige Wettbewerbseinschränkungen. Das im Juni 2012 in Kraft getretene Kreislaufwirtschaftsgesetz (KrWG), insbesondere die Zulassung von Wettbewerb im Bereich Hausmüllentsorgung, war großer Streitpunkt. Der Entwurf der Bundesregierung sah eine gewisse Wettbewerbsöffnung für die Nicht-Rest-Müll-Fraktionen vor, dies wurde jedoch vom Bundestag und Bundesrat zugunsten kommunaler Interessen wieder eingeschränkt. Artikel 17 KrWG schafft ein ausdrückliches Monopolrecht der öffentlich-rechtlichen Entsorgungsträger für gemischte Abfälle aus privaten Haushalten (Restmüll).

Das KrWG lässt somit weiterhin zu, dass Kommunen über die Untersagung von Wettbewerb zum eigenen Entsorgungsbetrieb entscheiden und dass Abfallwirtschaftspläne wettbewerbsbeschränkende Anlagenzuweisungen enthalten.

Wie bewertet die Kommission diesen Teil der KrWG im Hinblick auf das Wettbewerbsrecht nach Artikel 106, 102 AEUV? Wie wird die Kommission darauf reagieren?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(5. Dezember 2013)

Das im Juni 2012 in Kraft getretene Kreislaufwirtschaftsgesetz ist der Kommission bekannt. Das Gesetz verpflichtet Haushaltungen, recyclebare Abfälle den öffentlichen Sammlungsunternehmen zu überlassen, wenn keine gewerbliche Sammlung angeboten wird. Darüber hinaus berechtigt das Gesetz die zuständigen Behörden, die gewerbliche Sammlung aufgrund überwiegender öffentlicher Interessen zu verbieten.

Aus wettbewerbsrechtlicher Sicht ist es wünschenswert, dass gewerbliche Sammlungsunternehmen auch auf den Müllsammlungsmärkten tätig sind. Das europäische Wettbewerbsrecht bezieht sich in der Regel auf das Verhalten von Unternehmen und kann auf rechtliche Maßnahmen (des Staates) wie das Kreislaufwirtschaftsgesetz nur in sehr begrenztem Rahmen Anwendung finden.

Staatliche Maßnahmen können unter Artikel 106 in Verbindung mit Artikel 102 des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union (im Folgenden „AEUV“) fallen. Die Gewährung eines Monopols an sich stellt keinen Verstoß gegen Artikel 106 in Verbindung mit Artikel 102 AEUV dar. Die Kommission wird die Entwicklungen auf den betroffenen Märkten jedoch weiterhin überwachen und dabei auch aktuelle Informationen von Marktteilnehmern berücksichtigen.

Die Kommission untersucht zurzeit, ob Zuwiderhandlungen gegen den freien Warenverkehr nach Artikel 35 AEUV vorliegen. Im Rahmen des zu diesem Zweck eröffneten Prüfverfahrens wurde Deutschland aufgefordert, Erläuterungen in Bezug auf das Kreislaufwirtschaftsgesetz zu übermitteln. Das Verfahren ist noch nicht abgeschlossen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011251/13
to the Commission
Herbert Reul (PPE)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Disposal law — Article 17 KrWG

In the disposal sector in Germany there is keen competition between nine service providers, which, according to a statement by the Federal Cartel Office, has also led to considerable cost savings and improvements in recycling. Despite the sector having opened up, a few restrictions on competition remain. The Act on recycling management (German designation: KrWG), which entered into force in June 2012, in particular the authorisation of competition in the household waste disposal sector, was very controversial. The draft produced by the Federal Government provided for a certain opening up of competition for the non-residual waste fraction, but this was restricted once again by the *Bundestag* and *Bundesrat* in favour of municipal interests. Article 17 KrWG establishes an explicit monopoly right for public waste management agencies for mixed waste from private households (residual waste).

Thus, the KrWG continues to allow municipalities to decide to prohibit competition with their own waste disposal service and waste management plans to contain competition-restricting contributions to facilities.

What is the Commission's view of this part of the KrWG in relation to competition law in accordance with Articles 106 and 102 TFEU? How will it respond to this?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(5 December 2013)

The Commission is informed about the German waste law which entered into force in June 2012. It obliges households to give recyclable waste to the public collection companies, if no commercial collection is available. It moreover gives the authorities in charge the right to prohibit commercial collections if they go against overriding public interests.

From a competition perspective it is desirable that commercial collectors also be active on the waste collection markets. European competition law, which normally relates to company behaviour, can only be applied within very tight limits in the case of legal (state) measures, such as the German waste law.

State measures may fall under Article 106 in connection with Article 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). The mere granting of a monopoly does not constitute an infringement of Article 106 in connection with Article 102 TFEU. The Commission will, however, continue monitoring further developments on the affected markets also on the basis of up-to-date information provided by market participants.

The Commission is currently analysing the situation in view of potential infringements against the principle of free movement of goods pursuant to Article 35 TFEU. For this purpose, an investigation was opened in which the Federal Republic of Germany has been requested to provide explanations regarding the German waste law. This procedure is still ongoing.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011252/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(3 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εισφορές στα επιμελητήρια στην Ελλάδα και στην Ευρώπη

Σύμφωνα με το «Μνημόνιο Συνεννόησης στις Συγκεκριμένες Προϋποθέσεις Οικονομικής Πολιτικής — Δεκέμβριος 2012» ([1]) η εγγραφή των επιχειρήσεων στα εμπορικά επιμελητήρια της Ελλάδας γίνεται εθελοντική από τον Ιανουάριο του 2015. Ωστόσο, βάσει πρόσφατων νομοθετημάτων ([2]), τα εμπορικά επιμελητήρια επωμίστηκαν επιπρόσθετες και σημαντικές λειτουργίες, αφού η προσπάθεια για ανταγωνιστικότητα των ελληνικών επιχειρήσεων και απορρόφηση των ευρωπαϊκών πόρων πρέπει να ενδυναμωθεί. Αυτά συνεπάγονται την ανάγκη σταθερών πόρων. Στην Ελλάδα, βάσει νόμου ([3]), οι επιμελητηριακές συνδρομές ποικίλλουν, καθώς αποτελεί αρμοδιότητα του Διοικητικού Συμβουλίου του κάθε επιμελητηρίου ο καθορισμός των συνδρομών των μελών του. Εμπειρικά, ο μέσος ετήσιος όρος των επιμελητηριακών συνδρομών ανέρχεται σε 40-50 ευρώ για τις ατομικές επιχειρήσεις, σε 75-100 ευρώ για τις προσωπικές εταιρείες, σε 250-450 ευρώ για κεφαλαιουχικές εταιρείες και σε 750-950 για τις τράπεζες. Δεδομένου ότι υφίστανται ευρωπαϊκές αποφάσεις ([4]) που καθιστούν την υποχρεωτική συνδρομή των επιχειρήσεων στα επιμελητήρια συμβατή με την ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία και δεν την χαρακτηρίζουν ως φόρο υπέρ τρίτων, γνωμοδοτήσεις που δεν την καθιστούν εμπόδιο στην ίδρυση επιχειρήσεων ([5]) αλλά, αντιθέτως, ανταποδοτική εισφορά, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

α) Ποια η άποψή της για την εν λόγω μνημονιακή υποχρέωση; Θεωρεί απαραίτητη και αιτιολογημένη την αλλαγή στο καθεστώς των πόρων των ελληνικών επιμελητηρίων και για ποιους λόγους;

β) Θεωρεί πως η αναμενόμενη μείωση πόρων για τα επιμελητήρια, με παράλληλη ανάθεση επιπρόσθετων αρμοδιοτήτων σε αυτά, δεν θα δημιουργήσει δυσχέρειες στη λειτουργία τους αλλά και στους στόχους της ανάπτυξης της αγοράς; Διαθέτει σχετική μελέτη για τον εν λόγω τομέα;

γ) Ποιο είναι το σχετικό καθεστώς στα υπόλοιπα κράτη μέλη; Υπάρχει ανάλογη περίπτωση στην ΕΕ όπως αυτή που επιλέγεται για τα ελληνικά επιμελητήρια και, αν ναι, ποια τα συμπεράσματα;

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

1. Οι ελληνικές αρχές έχουν πράγματι θεσπίσει νομοθεσία η οποία καθιστά εθελοντική την εγγραφή των εταιρειών στα εμπορικά επιμελητήρια από την 1η Ιανουαρίου 2015. Ενώ η νομοθεσία δεν είναι ασύμβατη με το δίκαιο της ΕΕ, η Επιτροπή πιστεύει ότι η υποχρεωτική καταχώριση των ελληνικών επιχειρήσεων στα εμπορικά επιμελητήρια επαυξάνει το κόστος της επιχειρηματικής δραστηριότητας και αποτελεί εμπόδιο για τη δημιουργία επιχειρήσεων. Η νομοθεσία σύμφωνα με την οποία καθίσταται η καταχώριση εθελοντική συμπεριλήφθηκε στο μνημόνιο συμφωνίας που συμφωνήθηκε με τις ελληνικές αρχές, ως μέρος μιας σειράς μέτρων για την προώθηση ενός αποτελεσματικού και ανταγωνιστικού επιχειρηματικού περιβάλλοντος, συμβάλλοντας με τον τρόπο αυτό στην αειφόρο ανάπτυξη και τη δημιουργία θέσεων απασχόλησης στην Ελλάδα.

2. Η Επιτροπή συμφωνεί με το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου ότι τα εμπορικά επιμελητήρια διαδραματίζουν σημαντικό ρόλο στην Ελλάδα, όπως και σε άλλα κράτη μέλη, αλλά πιστεύει ότι η εθελοντική εγγραφή προωθεί μια υπηρεσία που προσαρμόζεται στις ανάγκες των μελών τους.

3. Το ρυθμιστικό πλαίσιο για τα εμπορικά επιμελητήρια υπάγεται στην αρμοδιότητα των κρατών μελών. Η εθελοντική εγγραφή εφαρμόζεται πράγματι σε άλλα κράτη μέλη όπως η Ισπανία, όπου, στις αρχές του 2010, θεσπίστηκε μια νομική διάταξη παρόμοια με αυτή που έχει θεσπιστεί στην Ελλάδα. Τα ισπανικά εμπορικά επιμελητήρια δέχονται χρηματοδοτικούς πόρους από άλλες πηγές και εξακολουθούν να διαδραματίζουν σημαντικό ρόλο στην ισπανική οικονομία.

([1]) http://goo.gl/QaIDri
([2]) Νόμοι υπ' αριθμόν 3898/2010, 3982/2011, 4155/2013.
([3]) http://goo.gl/TE8yMs
([4]) 19.4.2012 απόφαση του ευρωπαϊκού Δικαστηρίου.
([5]) Γνωμοδότηση με αριθμό αναφοράς 0169/2012 της Επιτροπής Αναφορών του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011252/13
to the Commission
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Contributions to chambers of commerce in Greece and Europe

Under the December 2012 'Memorandum of Understanding on Specific Economic Policy Conditionality' ([1]), the registration of enterprises with chambers of commerce will become voluntary in Greece from January 2015. However, under recent legislation ([2]), chambers of commerce have been burdened with additional and important roles, as there is a need to intensify efforts focusing on the competitiveness of Greek enterprises and absorption of European funds. This requires permanent resources. Under Greek law ([3]), subscriptions to chambers vary, as it falls within the competence of the governing body of each chamber to determine the level of members' subscriptions. In practice, annual subscriptions to chambers average EUR 40-50 for sole traders, EUR 75-100 for private companies, EUR 250-450 for limited companies and EUR 750-950 for banks. Given the existence of European decisions ([4]) ([5]) according to which the mandatory subscription of enterprises to chambers is compatible with European legislation and not regarded as a type of tax in favour of third parties, and given that, from this perspective, subscription is not a barrier to the establishment of a business, but, on the contrary, a compensatory levy, will the Commission say:

1. What is its view on the aforementioned Memorandum obligation? Does it consider that the change to the funding regime of the Greek chambers is necessary and justified, and if so, for what reasons?

2. Does it not consider that the expected funding cuts for the chambers, along with the simultaneous assignment of additional roles, will result difficulties in terms of their operations, and also in terms of the objectives of market development? Does it have a relevant study on this sector?

3. What is the corresponding regime in the other Member States? Are there any similar systems in the EU to the one selected for the Greek chambers, and if so, what can we learn from them?

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

1. The Greek authorities have indeed passed legislation making voluntary the registration of companies with the chambers of commerce as of January 2015. While not incompatible with EC law, the Commission believes that mandatory registration of Greek companies with chambers of commerce increases the cost of doing business and is a hurdle for company creation. Legislation to make registration voluntary was included in the MoU agreed with the Greek authorities as part of a set of measures to promote an efficient and competitive business environment, thereby contributing to sustainable growth and employment creation in Greece.

2. The Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that chambers of commerce play an important role in Greece, as well as in other Member States, but believes that voluntary subscription promotes a service that is tailored to its members' needs.

3. The regulatory framework for chambers of commerce is a matter for Member States. Voluntary registration is indeed applicable in other Member States such as Spain, where a legal provision similar to the one approved in Greece was adopted by the authorities in 2010. Spanish chambers of commerce obtain financial resources from other sources and continue to play an important role in the Spanish economy.

([1]) http://goo.gl/QaIDri
([2]) Laws 3898/2010, 3982/2011, 4155/2013
([3]) http://goo.gl/TE8yMs
([4]) Decision of the European Court of 19.4.2012.
([5]) Opinion No 0169/2012 of the Committee on Petitions of the European Parliament.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011253/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(3 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αποτελεί «ευθύνη» της Ελλάδας η διαχείριση των υδάτινων πόρων της

Στην απάντησή της P-007557/2013, η Επιτροπή αναφέρει πως «αναγνωρίζει ότι το νερό είναι δημόσιο αγαθό που έχει ζωτική σημασία για τους πολίτες και ότι η διαχείριση των υδάτινων πόρων αποτελεί ευθύνη των κρατών μελών».

Σε πρόσφατη έκθεση της Ελληνικής Οικονομικής και Κοινωνικής Επιτροπής αλλά και της Διεθνούς Ερευνητικής Ομάδας Δημοσίων Υπηρεσιών (PSIRU), αναφέρεται ότι, όσον αφορά στη μέχρι τώρα εμπειρία από τις ιδιωτικοποιήσεις των εταιρειών ύδρευσης, παρατηρούνται κατ' επανάληψη φαινόμενα όπως ιλιγγιώδεις αυξήσεις της τιμής του νερού, παντελής έλλειψη νέων επενδύσεων, δημιουργία καρτέλ, διαφθορά και απάτη, έλλειψη λογοδοσίας, επίπλαστα οικονομικά οφέλη, χαμηλή αποδοτικότητα. Ειδικότερα για τις εταιρείες που εμφανίζονται ως υποψήφιες για την αγορά των ελληνικών επιχειρήσεων ύδρευσης, εταιρείες Suez και Veolia, αναφέρεται ότι «Δικαστήρια στη Γαλλία, στην Ιταλία και στις ΗΠΑ έχουν καταδικάσει στελέχη και αξιωματούχους του Δημοσίου για δωροδοκίες που έλαβαν από θυγατρικές των Suez και Veolia. Αμφότεροι οι όμιλοι έχουν τεθεί υπό έλεγχο σε ουκ ολίγες ποινικές και αστικές υποθέσεις, για κατηγορίες όπως δωροδοκία αξιωματούχων του Δημοσίου, παράνομες πολιτικές δωρεές, μίζες, μη ανταγωνιστικό καθορισμό τιμών, σύναψη καρτέλ και λογιστικούς χειρισμούς που ισοδυναμούν με απάτη».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Επιβεβαιώνει τις πληροφορίες για καταδίκη εταιρειών που συνδέονται με τις Suez και Veolia από δικαστήρια χωρών της ΕΕ ή και χωρών εκτός ΕΕ, για «δωροδοκίες αξιωματούχων του Δημοσίου, παράνομες πολιτικές δωρεές, μίζες, μη ανταγωνιστικό καθορισμό τιμών, σύναψη καρτέλ και λογιστικούς χειρισμούς που ισοδυναμούν με απάτη»;

2. Αφού η ίδια η Επιτροπή, στην απάντησή της P-007557/2013, «αναγνωρίζει ότι το νερό είναι δημόσιο αγαθό που έχει ζωτική σημασία για τους πολίτες και ότι η διαχείριση των υδάτινων πόρων αποτελεί ευθύνη των κρατών μελών», δεν αποτελεί δικαίωμα της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης να αποσύρει από τη διαδικασία ιδιωτικοποίησης τις 2 εταιρίες ύδρευσης, ΕΥΑΘ και ΕΥΔΑΠ; Ή μήπως η Επιτροπή, υπό την ιδιότητα του μέλους της τρόικας και εκπροσώπου των δανειστών της Ελλάδας, επιμένει στην απαράδεκτη πολιτική εκποίησης αυτού του δημόσιου αγαθού στην Ελλάδα; Θα δεχόταν λοιπόν η Επιτροπή την απόσυρση των δύο αυτών εταιρειών από τη λίστα των «προς εκποίηση» εταιριών του ΤΑΙΠΕΔ;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(2 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει πολιτική επιβολής στα ΚΜ την ιδιωτικοποίηση των υπηρεσιών υδροδότησης. Η Επιτροπή αναγνωρίζει ότι το νερό συνιστά δημόσιο αγαθό θεμελιώδους σημασίας για τους πολίτες και ότι η διαχείριση των υδάτινων πόρων αποτελεί αρμοδιότητα των ΚΜ. Η Επιτροπή τοποθετείται ουδέτερα όσον αφορά τη δημόσια ή ιδιωτική κυριότητα των υδάτινων πόρων, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 345 της ΣΛΕΕ. Η παροχή πόσιμου νερού έχει αφαιρεθεί από το πεδίο εφαρμογής της οδηγίας σχετικά με την ανάθεση συμβάσεων παραχώρησης. Η Επιτροπή θα συνεχίσει να παρακολουθεί εκ του σύνεγγυς την κατάσταση στον τομέα αυτό.

Η απόφαση όσον αφορά τα περιουσιακά στοιχεία του Δημοσίου ή τις δημόσιες επιχειρήσεις που θα ιδιωτικοποιηθούν, τον βαθμό και τη σειρά με την οποία θα διεξαχθούν οι εν λόγω ιδιωτικοποιήσεις, θα ληφθεί αποκλειστικά και μόνον από τα κράτη μέλη, αφού ληφθούν υπόψη οι ανάγκες που αντιμετωπίζουν και οι στόχοι που τα ίδια έχουν θέσει. Η κτηθείσα σε επίπεδο ΕΕ πείρα προσφέρει μια ποικιλία διαφορετικών δημόσιας ή ιδιωτικής ιδιοκτησίας μοντέλων για τη λειτουργία των υδρικών εγκαταστάσεων. Τόσο σε δημόσια, όσο και σε ιδιωτικά πρότυπα, υπάρχουν περιπτώσεις προβληματικών αποτελεσμάτων, αλλά και επιτυχίες. Η Επιτροπή θεωρεί ότι η δημιουργία ρυθμιστικής αρχής και κατάλληλου περιβάλλοντος αγοράς είναι απαραίτητες προϋποθέσεις για τη διασφάλιση της επιτυχίας του καθενός από αυτά τα συστήματα, ώστε να προστατευθούν τα συμφέροντα των καταναλωτών και να διαφυλαχθούν οι περιβαλλοντικές αξίες.

Για τα περιουσιακά στοιχεία που περιλαμβάνονται στο πρόγραμμα ιδιωτικοποιήσεων για τις χώρες του προγράμματος αποφασίζουν αποκλειστικά οι εθνικές αρχές. Οι συζητήσεις στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος επικεντρώνονται στην συνολικές ανάγκες χρηματοδότησης, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των εσόδων από ιδιωτικοποιήσεις, αλλά ο σχεδιασμός του προγράμματος ιδιωτικοποιήσεων και η επιλογή των στοιχείων ενεργητικού παραμένουν αποκλειστικά στις αρμοδιότητες του ενδιαφερόμενου ΚΜ.

Οι απόψεις των υπηρεσιών της Επιτροπής σχετικά με τη διαδικασία ιδιωτικοποιήσεων στην Ελλάδα είναι διαθέσιμες στις σχετικές ενότητες των εκθέσεων συμμόρφωσης που δημοσιεύονται μετά από κάθε αξιολόγηση ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011253/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Greece's 'competence' to manage its own water resources

In its answer P-007557/2013, the Commission 'recognises that water is a public good which is vital to citizens and that the management of water resources is a matter for Member States'.

A recent report from the Economic and Social Council of Greece and the Public Services International Research Unit (PSIRU) notes, with regard to the experience to date of water company privatisations, that phenomena such as vertiginous increases in water prices, a total absence of new investment, the establishment of cartels, corruption and fraud, lack of accountability, artificial economic advantages and low efficiency are regularly reported. More specifically, in relation to companies such as Suez and Veolia that are bidding to buy Greek water companies, the report states that 'courts in France, Italy and the US have convicted executives and public officials over bribes received from subsidiaries of Suez and Veolia. Both groups have come under scrutiny in a host of criminal and civil cases, with accusations that include bribery of public officials, illegal political donations, kick-backs, price fixing, creating cartels, and fraudulent accounting'.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Can it confirm the information concerning the convictions of companies linked to Suez and Veolia by courts in EU countries and/or non-EU countries for 'bribery of public officials, illegal political donations, kick-backs, price fixing, creating cartels, and fraudulent accounting'.

2. Since the Commission itself, in written answer P-007557/2013, 'recognises that water is a public good that is vital to citizens and that the management of water resources is a matter for Member States', is the Greek Government not entitled to withdraw the Thessalonica and Athens water and sewerage utilities from the privatisation process? Is it rather the case that the Commission, in its capacity as a member of the Troika and as the representative of Greece's lenders, insists on the unacceptable policy of selling off this public good in Greece? Would the Commission accept the withdrawal of these two companies from the 'for sale' list of the Hellenic Republic Asset Development Fund?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(2 December 2013)

The European Commission does not have a policy of forcing MS to privatise water services. The Commission recognises that water is a public good which is vital to citizens and that the management of water resources is a matter for MS. The Commission has a neutral position on the public or private ownership of water resources, in accordance with Article 345 of the TFEU. Provision of drinking water has been removed from the scope of the directive on the award of concessions contracts. The Commission will continue to monitor the situation in this sector closely.

The choice of what, how far and in which sequence public assets or companies should be privatised remains entirely with the MS, taking into account the various constraints they face and objectives they set for themselves. EU-wide experience offers a variety of different public or private property models for water utilities. In both public and private models, there are cases of problematic outcomes, but also success stories. The Commission considers that the creation of a regulatory authority and an appropriate market environment are crucial prerequisites for guaranteeing the success of any of these models to protect consumers' interests and maintain environmental values.

The assets included in the privatisation programme for programme countries are the exclusive result of the national authorities' decision. Discussions under the programme are focusing on the overall financing needs, including privatisation receipts, but the design of the privatisation programme and the choice of assets remain entirely with the MS concerned.

The views of the Commission services on the privatisation process in Greece are available in dedicated sections of the compliance reports published after each review ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011254/13
to the Commission
Struan Stevenson (ECR)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Early retirement schemes

Under the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) and the socioeconomic compensation element, provision was made for Member States to 'benefit from EFF financing to implement socioeconomic measures designed to help fishermen who are victims of resource depletion or of the sector's poor economic situation. Such measures may include training or conversion programmes, the financing of early retirement, etc.'

Is the Commission aware of whether any Member States sought and obtained approval for early retirement schemes for their fishermen?

If so, which Member States? How much was paid from the EFF to each of the Member States? What did each individual fisherman receive in each of the participating Member States?

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

According to data submitted by Member States on the expenditure of the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) for the period 2007 to 31 May 2013, five Member States financed early retirement schemes for their fishermen. The total EFF contribution to this measure was EUR 16.9 million, which averages around EUR 20 000 per beneficiary.

The five Member States are Poland (EUR 8.2 million, EUR 22 116 per fisher), Spain (EUR 8.1 million, EUR 20 971 per fisher), Cyprus (EUR 0.5 million, EUR 31 356 per fisher), the Netherlands (EUR 80 000, EUR 13 458 per fisher) and France (the only information available is the number of beneficiaries, 80).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011255/13
to the Commission
Fiona Hall (ALDE)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: EED online platform

Article 25 of Directive 2012/27/EU stipulates that the Commission shall establish an online platform in order to foster the implementation of the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED) at national, regional and local levels.

1. Has the Commission established such a platform? If not, when does it envisage launching this?

2. What steps will the Commission undertake to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the existence of such a platform and the assistance it offers?

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

The Commission will launch the online platform pursuant to Article 25 of the Energy Efficiency Directive in spring 2014. The online platform will allow for interactive exchanges of best practices and experiences amongst Member States and it will be constructed in such a way as to include implementation at local and regional level as well as national.

It will be promoted in various ways, including via the Energy Efficiency Directive Committee and the Concerted Action ([1]) that brings together representatives of the Member States to discuss practical implementation of the Energy Efficiency Directive.

([1]) http://www.esd-ca.eu

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011258/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(3 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αναπροσαρμογή τιμών αργού πετρελαίου και απόφαση στην υπόθεση RWE κατά Gazprom

Σύμφωνα με απόφαση διαιτητικού δικαστηρίου στη Βιέννη, η Gazprom υποχρεούται να προβεί σε αναπροσαρμογές τιμών στη σύμβασή της με τη γερμανική επιχείρηση ηλεκτροδότησης RWE. Η απόφαση αυτή του δικαστηρίου ανοίγει το δρόμο για τον τερματισμό της πρακτικής να συνδέονται οι τιμές του φυσικού αερίου με αυτές του πετρελαίου σε μακροπρόθεσμες συμφωνίες, η οποία ίσχυε για δεκαετίες, και για την εφαρμογή τιμαριθμικής αναπροσαρμογής στην αγορά του φυσικού αερίου.

Προτίθεται η Επιτροπή, δεδομένου ότι έχει δρομολογήσει αντιμονοπωλιακή έρευνα κατά της Gazprom όσον αφορά τις συναλλαγές της με τη Λιθουανία, να χρησιμοποιήσει τη δικαστική απόφαση στην υπόθεση RWE, προκειμένου να ασκήσει περαιτέρω πίεση στην Gazprom όσον αφορά το εν λόγω ζήτημα;

Προτίθεται, εκτός αυτού, η Επιτροπή να χρησιμοποιήσει την υπόθεση RWE ως δικαστικό προηγούμενο, με σκοπό να εμποδίσει την Gazprom να ενισχύσει την κυρίαρχη θέση της ως προμηθευτή και σε άλλες χώρες, όπως η Ελλάδα, η Βουλγαρία και η Ρουμανία;

Εκτιμά η Επιτροπή ότι η απόφαση για την RWE συνιστά πραγματική ευκαιρία για την απομάκρυνση από την παραδοσιακή αναπροσαρμογή των τιμών του φυσικού αερίου με βάση το αργό πετρέλαιο, προκειμένου να εφαρμοστεί η τιμαριθμική αναπροσαρμογή στην αγορά του φυσικού αερίου, παράλληλα με τη δημιουργία τιμών άμεσης παράδοσης και νέων κόμβων διαπραγμάτευσης στην Ευρώπη;

Απάντηση του κ. Almunia εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(25 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Τον Σεπτέμβριο του 2012 η Επιτροπή κίνησε επίσημη διαδικασία προκειμένου να διερευνήσει εάν η Gazprom παρακώλυε τον ανταγωνισμό στις αγορές φυσικού αερίου της Κεντρικής και Ανατολικής Ευρώπης, κατά παράβαση των αντιμονοπωλιακών κανόνων της ΕΕ. Μία από τις εξεταζόμενες πρακτικές είναι η εικαζόμενη αθέμιτη τιμολογιακή πολιτική της Gazprom.

Τα πορίσματα των διαιτητικών αποφάσεων μεταξύ εμπορικών μερών δεν είναι δεσμευτικά για την Επιτροπή και δεν συνιστούν προηγούμενο για τις έρευνες της Επιτροπής για παραβίαση της αντιμονοπωλιακής νομοθεσίας. Ωστόσο, η ύπαρξη διαιτητικής απόφασης αποτελεί πραγματολογικό στοιχείο το οποίο μπορεί να ληφθεί υπόψη στο πλαίσιο της έρευνας της Επιτροπής.

Η αντιμονοπωλιακή έρευνα κατά της Gazprom βρίσκεται σε εξέλιξη. Ως εκ τούτου, είναι πολύ νωρίς να συναχθούν τελικά συμπεράσματα ως προς τη συμβατότητα της τιμολογιακής πολιτικής της Gazprom με την αντιμονοπωλιακή νομοθεσία της ΕΕ.

Σε γενικές γραμμές, η Επιτροπή εκφράζει την ικανοποίησή της για την ανάπτυξη κόμβων διαπραγμάτευσης υγροποιημένου φυσικού αερίου κατά τα τελευταία έτη και σημειώνει την προκύπτουσα τάση προς την κατεύθυνση της αυξημένης εφαρμογής τιμαριθμικής αναπροσαρμογής στην αγορά φυσικού αερίου στις συμφωνίες προμήθειας φυσικού αερίου της ΕΕ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011258/13
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Crude oil indexation and the decision in RWE v Gazprom case

Following a ruling by an arbitration tribunal in Vienna, Gazprom will have to make price adjustments to its contract with German utility RWE. This court ruling could pave the way for ending the decades-long practice of linking gas prices in long-term deals to oil prices and moving towards gas market indexation.

Given that it has launched an anti-trust investigation against Gazprom concerning its dealings with Lithuania, does the Commission intend to make use of the court ruling in the RWE case to exert further pressure on Gazprom in this case?

Furthermore, does the Commission intend to use the RWE case as a precedent with a view to preventing Gazprom from overplaying its dominant position in other countries which it supplies, such as Greece, Bulgaria and Romania?

Does the Commission see the RWE ruling as a real opportunity to move away from the traditional crude oil indexation of gas prices, and, instead, move towards gas market indexation, in addition to the development of spot prices and new trading hubs in Europe?

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

In September 2012, the Commission opened formal proceedings to investigate whether Gazprom might be hindering competition in central and eastern European gas markets, in breach of EU antitrust rules. One of the practices under investigation is Gazprom's allegedly unfair pricing policy.

The findings in arbitration awards between commercial parties are not binding on the Commission and do not constitute precedents for the Commisison's antitrust investigations. However, the existence of an arbitral award is a factual element which can be considered within the Commission's investigation.

The antitrust investigation against Gazprom is ongoing. It is, therefore, too early to draw any final conclusions as to the compatibility of Gazprom's pricing policy with EU antitrust rules.

In general, the Commission welcomes the development of liquid gas trading hubs in recent years and notes the resulting trend towards increased gas market indexation in EU gas supply agreements.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011259/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(3 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αποτελέσματα της αναβολής δημοπράτησης των δικαιωμάτων εκπομπής διοξειδίου του άνθρακα («backloading») και διαρθρωτική μεταρρύθμιση του συστήματος εμπορίας εκπομπών της ΕΕ (ETS)

Η πρόταση για την αναβολή της δημοπράτησης των δικαιωμάτων εκπομπής διοξειδίου του άνθρακα («backloading») είχε ως σκοπό την απόσυρση των πλεοναζόντων δικαιωμάτων από την αγορά, ώστε να αυξηθεί η τιμή του άνθρακα και να παρασχεθούν κίνητρα για επενδύσεις σε πιο αποδοτικές πηγές και τεχνολογίες χαμηλών επιπέδων ανθρακούχων εκπομπών.

Μετά την έγκριση από το Κοινοβούλιο της πρότασης για το «backloading» σχετικά με το σύστημα εμπορίας εκπομπών της ΕΕ (ETS), η τιμή του άνθρακα εξακολουθεί να διαμορφώνεται σε πολύ χαμηλά επίπεδα, ανερχόμενη σε λιγότερο από 3 Ευρώ. Η επίπτωση στις τιμές υπήρξε, στην καλύτερη περίπτωση, τεχνητή και η πρόταση για το «backloading» από μόνη της δεν μπορεί να επιλύσει τα διαρθρωτικά προβλήματα του ETS.

Πότε σκοπεύει η Επιτροπή να προτείνει τις νέες και πολυαναμενόμενες διαρθρωτικές μεταρρυθμίσεις στο ETS;

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τη μέχρι τούδε κτηθείσα εμπειρία από την αποτυχία του ETS, ποιές μεταρρυθμίσεις σχεδιάζει η Επιτροπή από άποψη περιεχομένου και ουσίας;

Απάντηση της κ. Hedegaard εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(14 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Η προσωρινή επανεξισορρόπηση της προσφοράς και της ζήτησης μέσω αναβολής της δημοπράτησης των δικαιωμάτων εκπομπής έχει κύριο στόχο να αντισταθμίσει τις επιπτώσεις των αυξανόμενων ανισορροπιών που εμφανίζονται κατά τη μετάβαση στην 3η φάση του συστήματος εμπορίας εκπομπών της ΕΕ, αρχίζοντας από το 2013. Αυτό θα αυξήσει την εμπιστοσύνη της αγοράς στο ΣΕΕ με την πρόληψη της περαιτέρω πτώσης της τιμής του άνθρακα, η οποία σε διαφορετική περίπτωση θα προέκυπτε από τις εν λόγω ανισορροπίες και θα είχε αρνητικές επιπτώσεις στις επενδύσεις σε τεχνολογίες χαμηλών ανθρακούχων εκπομπών στην Ευρώπη.

Εκτός από την αναβολή της δημοπράτησης των δικαιωμάτων εκπομπής χρειάζονται πράγματι μέτρα διαρθρωτικής μεταρρύθμισης που θα παρέχουν μόνιμη λύση. Ως εκ τούτου, η Επιτροπή έχει ολοκληρώσει τη διαβούλευση σχετικά με τις δυνατότητες για διαρθρωτικά μέτρα με σκοπό την ενίσχυση του ΣΕΕ της ΕΕ, όπως ορίζεται στην έκθεση σχετικά με την κατάσταση της ευρωπαϊκής αγοράς άνθρακα τον Νοέμβριο του 2012.

Στη βάση αυτή, η Επιτροπή αναλύει επί του παρόντος τις δυνατότητες για διαρθρωτικά μέτρα για την ενίσχυση του συστήματος εμπορίας εκπομπών της ΕΕ, τα οποία μπορούν να τεθούν σε εφαρμογή κατά τη διάρκεια της φάσης 3 και/ή ως μέρος του πλαισίου για το κλίμα και την ενέργεια έως το 2030. Συγκεκριμένες προτάσεις αναμένεται να υποβληθούν κατά τους επόμενους μήνες.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011259/13
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Effects of backloading and structural reform of the ETS

The 'backloading' proposal was intended to remove surplus allowances from the market in order to raise the price of carbon and stimulate investment in more efficient low-carbon sources and technologies.

Following Parliament's approval of the backloading proposal for the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS), the price of carbon remains very low, standing at less than EUR 3. The effect on prices has been artificial at best, and the backloading proposal alone cannot solve the structural problems of the ETS.

When does the Commission intend to propose the new and highly anticipated structural reforms to the ETS? Bearing in mind the lessons learned from the failure of the ETS thus far, what sort of reforms does the Commission have in mind in terms of content and substance?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(14 November 2013)

The temporary rebalancing of supply and demand through back-loading is primarily intended to counteract the effects of growing imbalances occurring in the transition to Phase 3 of the EU ETS starting in 2013. This would increase market confidence in the ETS by preventing a further fall in the carbon price that would otherwise result from such imbalances and which would have adverse effects on low-carbon investment in Europe.

In addition to back-loading, structural reform measures that can provide a lasting solution are indeed necessary. The Commission has therefore completed a consultation on the options for structural measures to strengthen the EU ETS as set out in the report on the state of the European carbon market of November 2012.

On this basis, the Commission is currently analysing options for structural measures to strengthen the EU Emissions Trading System that can be implemented during Phase 3 and/or as part of the 2030 climate and energy framework. Concrete proposals are expected to be made in the coming months.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011260/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(3 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per la realizzazione della «Casa della Cultura e delle Arti Applicate» nell'area denominata Marcigliana-Cinquina a Roma

Nell'area denominata Marcigliana-Cinquina, a Roma, è presente una struttura, ormai in disuso, che rappresenta un patrimonio artistico dal valore inestimabile. Affascinante e suggestiva, anche sotto il profilo architettonico, è stata il luogo in cui sono stati ambientati vari film che hanno fatto la storia del cinema italiano.

La bonifica e il recupero dell'intera area, pertanto, sarebbe un'opportunità per trasformare l'intero immobile nella «Casa della Cultura e delle Arti Applicate», dove poter organizzare eventi culturali e iniziative didattiche, laboratori, oltre a diventare sede di concerti, spettacoli, mostre e seminari.

Di conseguenza, la nascita di questo centro polifunzionale servirà anche ad aggregare tutta la popolazione dell'intero quartiere e diventare un luogo di ritrovo e svago per bambini e anziani.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere se vi sono programmi o finanziamenti per il progetto suesposto nella nuova programmazione 2014-2020?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(28 novembre 2013)

Al momento attuale la Commissione può soltanto indicare gli obiettivi generali d'intervento nel settore culturale poiché le priorità di finanziamento per le regioni italiane nel periodo 2014-2020 non sono state ancora determinate. Inoltre, in linea con il principio di gestione concorrente, la responsabilità della selezione e dell'implementazione dei singoli progetti continuerà a competere alle autorità di gestione negli Stati membri.

Nel periodo 2014-2020 saranno possibili interventi a favore della cultura a determinate condizioni. In particolare, le risorse della politica di coesione potrebbero essere utilizzate per massimizzare il contributo della cultura quale strumento per lo sviluppo locale e regionale, il risanamento urbano, lo sviluppo rurale e l'occupabilità. Esempi di investimenti potenziali nel campo della cultura potrebbero essere gli investimenti nella ricerca, l'innovazione, la competitività delle PMI e l'imprenditorialità nelle industrie culturali e creative. Inoltre, le attività a sostegno del turismo sostenibile, della cultura e del patrimonio naturale dovrebbero rientrare in una strategia territoriale definita per aree specifiche, tra cui anche la conversione delle regioni industriali in declino. Il sostegno a tali attività dovrebbe anche contribuire a rafforzare l'innovazione e l'uso delle TIC, le PMI, l'ambiente e l'efficienza nell'uso delle risorse ovvero la promozione dell'inclusione sociale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011260/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Possible funding for the creation of the Home of Culture and Applied Arts in the Marcigliana-Cinquina area of Rome

A now disused building in the Marcigliana-Cinquina area of Rome represents an artistic heritage of inestimable value. Fascinating and charming, including in terms of its architecture, it was the setting for several key films in the history of Italian cinema.

The reclamation and restoration of the entire area would therefore be an opportunity to turn the whole building into the 'Home of Culture and Applied Arts', which could host cultural events, educational initiatives and workshops, as well as concerts, performances, exhibitions and seminars.

Consequently, the creation of this multifunctional centre will also serve to bring together all the residents of the area, and become a place for children and the elderly to meet and enjoy themselves.

Can the Commission state whether there are any programmes or funding for the above project under the 2014-2020 programming period?

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

At this time, the Commission can only indicate the general objectives of interventions in the cultural sector, as the funding priorities for the Italian regions for the 2014-2020 period are not yet determined. Moreover, in line with the shared management principle, the responsibility for the selection and implementation of individual projects will continue to lie with managing authorities in the Member States.

In the 2014-2020 period, interventions in favour of culture will be possible under specific conditions. In particular, cohesion policy resources could be used to maximise the contribution of culture as a tool for local and regional development, urban regeneration, rural development and employability. Examples of potential investments in culture could include investments in research, innovation, SME competitiveness and entrepreneurship in cultural and creative industries. Moreover, activities supporting sustainable tourism, culture and natural heritage should be part of a territorial strategy for specific areas, including the conversion of declining industrial regions. Support for such activities should also contribute to strengthening innovation and the use of ICTs, SMEs, environment and resource efficiency or the promotion of social inclusion.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011263/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(3 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Gezi Park-protesten: mensenrechtenschendingen door Turkse autoriteiten

In het rapport „Gezi Park Protests — Brutal Denial of the Right to Peaceful Assembly in Turkey" concludeert Amnesty International „dat de Turkse autoriteiten zich rond de protesten van deze zomer op grote schaal schuldig hebben gemaakt aan mensenrechtenschendingen". Amnesty zegt dat er zeker drie doden vielen door excessief geweld van de politie; meer dan 8 000 demonstranten raakten gewond door politiekogels, traangas, waterkanonnen, rubberkogels en stokslagen. Zeker één demonstrant zou zijn doodgeslagen door agenten. Ook werden chemische stoffen toegevoegd aan het water van waterkanonnen en werden vrouwelijke betogers aangerand en misbruikt.

1. Hoe reageert de Commissie op het rapport „Gezi Park Protests — Brutal Denial of the Right to Peaceful Assembly in Turkey" ([1]) van Amnesty International?

2. Heeft het rapport gevolgen voor de toetredingsonderhandelingen tussen de EU en Turkije? Zo ja, is de Commissie ertoe bereid deze — nu eindelijk! — definitief te beëindigen? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(25 november 2013)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op vorige schriftelijke vragen E-006193/2013, E-006403/2013, E-006871/2013, P-006302/2013, E-006922/2013, E-007265/2013, E-007260/2013, E-007036/2013, E-007238/2013, E-006378/2013, E-006390/2013, E-006507/2013, E-006891/2013, E-006721/2013, E-007023/2013, E-007093/2013, E-007264/2013, E-007259/2013, E-010832/2013 ([2]).

([1]) http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/EUR44/022/2013/en/0ba8c4cc-b059-4b88-9c52-8fbd652c6766/eur440222013en.pdf
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/nl/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011263/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Gezi Park protests: human rights violations by the Turkish authorities

In the report 'Gezi Park Protests — Brutal Denial of the Right to Peaceful Assembly in Turkey' Amnesty International concludes that the Turkish authorities have committed human rights violations on a massive scale this summer against the protests. Amnesty states that three deaths were definitely caused by excessive police violence. More than 8 000 demonstrators were wounded by police bullets, tear gas, water cannon, rubber bullets and beatings. One demonstrator was definitely reported to have been killed by officers. Chemicals were also added to the water from the water cannon and female demonstrators were sexually assaulted and abused.

1. What is the Commission's response to the report 'Gezi Park Protests — Brutal Denial of the Right to Peaceful Assembly in Turkey' ([1]) compiled by Amnesty International?

2. Does the report have any ramifications for the accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey? If so, is the Commission prepared — at long last — to end them once and for all? If not, why not?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to previous written questions E-006193/2013, E-006403/2013, E-006871/2013, P-006302/2013, E-006922/2013, E-007265/2013, E-007260/2013, E-007036/2013, E-007238/2013, E-006378/2013, E-006390/2013, E-006507/2013, E-006891/2013, E-006721/2013, E-007023/2013, E-007093/2013, E-007264/2013, E-007259/2013, E-010832/2013 ([2]).

([1]) http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/EUR44/022/2013/en/0ba8c4cc-b059-4b88-9c52-8fbd652c6766/eur440222013en.pdf
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011264/13
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(3 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Richiesta di misure di sostegno nei confronti di 204 lavoratori dell'azienda «Plasmon» a rischio di licenziamento

L'azienda italiana «Plasmon Dietetici Alimentari S.r.l.», uno dei marchi italiani più popolari, impegnata dal 1902 nell'importazione e nel commercio dell'ingrediente plasmon, riveste una posizione leader nel settore dell'alimentazione.

Negli scorsi giorni, l'azienda Plasmon, su decisione dei nuovi proprietari Berkshire Hathaway e 3G Capital, ha comunicato di voler tagliare il 25 % dei dipendenti distribuiti nelle varie sedi italiane. Ciò comporterebbe il licenziamento di 204 lavoratori su 946. Solo nella sede di Milano, sono 112 su 261 gli addetti che rischiano di perdere il posto di lavoro. Oltre alla sede centrale di Milano, l'azienda conta due stabilimenti produttivi a Ozzano Taro (PR) e a Latina.

I nuovi proprietari hanno annunciato un processo di ristrutturazione e di riorganizzazione con conseguente riduzione degli organici e apertura immediata della procedura di mobilità. Tuttavia tale processo dovrebbe essere completato attraverso idonee strategie di mercato e non tramite l'espulsione di lavoratori e lavoratrici.

Un marchio simbolo della qualità del made in Italy come quello Plasmon, rischia di essere messo in discussione o addirittura di scomparire.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere se è a conoscenza di finanziamenti comunitari, diretti o indiretti, erogati a favore di questa multinazionale?

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

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

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

1. Sulla base delle informazioni in nostro possesso e del sito web «Open Cohesion» ([1]), Plasmon Dietetici Alimentari S.r.l. non ha ricevuto nessun finanziamento dai Fondi strutturali europei in Italia.

2. La Commissione non è in condizione di verificare i fatti menzionati dall'onorevole deputato né di stabilire se una società privata abbia ottemperato alle disposizioni nazionali che attuano direttive unionali le quali fanno obbligo al datore di lavoro di informare e consultare i lavoratori prima di procedere a licenziamenti collettivi ([2]). Spetta alle autorità nazionali competenti, compresi i tribunali, assicurare che la legislazione nazionale a recepimento delle direttive dell'UE sia applicata in modo corretto ed efficace dal datore di lavoro interessato considerate le circostanze specifiche del caso.

3. L'obiettivo del FSE è migliorare le opportunità occupazionali, promuovere l'istruzione e l'apprendimento permanente nonché sviluppare politiche attive di inclusione conformemente all'articolo 162 del trattato. In quanto tale, l'FSE non fornisce un aiuto di emergenza ai lavoratori come quelli impiegati da Plasmon Dietetici Alimentari S.r.l. Tuttavia, i lavoratori interessati possono beneficiare delle attività cofinanziate dal FSE e, se sono soddisfatte determinate condizioni, del Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione.

L'onorevole deputato può rivolgersi alla persona di contatto del FEG in Italia per sapere se è prevista una domanda di sostegno ai lavoratori licenziati da Plasmon Dietetici Alimentari S.r.l. Gli estremi della persona di contatto sono reperibili sul sito web del FEG ([3]).

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

([2]) In particolare, la direttiva 98/59/CE del Consiglio, del 20 luglio 1998, concernente il ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri in materia di licenziamenti collettivi,(GU L 225 del 12.8.1998) e la direttiva 2002/14/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, dell'11 marzo 2002, che istituisce un quadro generale relativo all'informazione e alla consultazione dei lavoratori (GU L 80 del 23.3.2002).

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=it

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011264/13
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Request for measures to support 204 workers facing dismissal at Plasmon

The Italian company Plasmon Dietetici Alimentari S.r.l., which has been importing and selling the 'plasmon' ingredient since 1902, is one of the most popular Italian brands and a leader in the food sector.

In recent days, the Plasmon company has announced its intention to cut staff numbers by 25% across its various Italian sites following a decision by its new owners, Berkshire Hathaway and 3G Capital. This would lead to the dismissal of 204 workers out of a total of 946. At the Milan site alone, 112 of the 261 employees risk losing their job. Apart from its headquarters in Milan, the company also has two production facilities in Ozzano Taro (province of Parma) and Latina.

The new owners have announced a restructuring and reorganisation process, with the consequent reduction of personnel and immediate launch of a redundancy procedure. This process, however, should be carried out using appropriate market strategies and not by removing workers.

The Plasmon brand, a symbol of Italian quality, is at risk or may even disappear.

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

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

Does the Commission envisage introducing, during the next programming period and ESF review, an emergency fund to support workers such as those employed by Plasmon?

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

1. According to the information in our possession and to the 'Open Cohesion' website ([1]), Plasmon Dietetici Alimentari S.r.l. has not received any funding from the European structural funds in Italy.

2. The Commission is not in a position to assess the facts referred to by the Honourable Member or state whether a private company has complied with national provisions implementing EU directives which impose on the employer to inform and consult workers before effecting collective redundancies ([2]). It is for the competent national authorities, including the courts, to ensure that the national legislation transposing EU Directives is correctly and effectively applied by the employer concerned, having regard to the specific circumstances of the case.

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

The Honourable Member may wish to communicate with the EGF Contact Person in Italy, should she wish to know whether an application is being planned in support of workers made redundant by Plasmon Dietetici Alimentari S.r.l., the relevant contact details can be found on the EGF website ([3]).

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

([2]) In particular, 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 and 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.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=it

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011265/13
an die Kommission
Jörg Leichtfried (S&D)
(3. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Flyer der Kommission zu Tierschutz und darin verwendete Begriffe

In einem Flyer der Kommission zu anstehenden Tierschutzthemen ([1]) heißt es: „(…) Im Vertrag von Lissabon werden Tiere als fühlende Wesen anerkannt, und als Ergebnis erlangte der Schutz von Nutztieren in der EU einen höheren Stellenwert (…)".

Allerdings umschließt Artikel 13 des Vertrages (AEUV) definitionsgemäß alle Tiere als fühlende Wesen, nicht nur Nutztiere, da es sich nicht um einen Rechtsbegriff, sondern um einen ethischen Begriff handelt.

In der Richtlinie zum Schutz der für wissenschaftliche Zwecke verwendeten Tiere 2010/63/EU ([2]) steht sogar in der Präambel, dass das Wohlergehen von Tieren ein Wert der Union ist, welcher in Artikel 13 AEUV verankert ist. Auch dies zeigt, dass sich Artikel 13 nicht nur auf Nutztiere beschränkt, sondern alle Tiere umschließt.

Kann die Kommission ihre Gründe darlegen und die rechtliche Grundlage dafür liefern, warum sie den Geltungsbereich von Artikel 13 auf Nutztiere beschränken möchte, wie in genanntem Flyer geschehen?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(21. November 2013)

Es stimmt, dass Artikel 13 des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union ([3]) alle Tiere und nicht nur Nutztiere umfasst. In der EU-Tierschutzstrategie 2012-2015 ([4]) werden mögliche Maßnahmen für Wild- oder Heimtiere erwogen. Die Kommission hat nicht die Absicht, den Geltungsbereich von Artikel 13 zu beschränken, sondern möchte im Gegenteil die Bemühungen unterstreichen, die zum Schutz von Nutz- und Labortieren ([5]) unternommen wurden, und dazu einige der wichtigsten Errungenschaften der letzten Zeit in diesem Bereich anführen.

([1]) Milestones in improving Animal Welfare, EU Commission:
http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/information_sources/docs/ahw/milestones_aw_en.pdf

([2]) Richtlinie 2010/63/EU des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 22. September 2010 zum Schutz der für wissenschaftliche Zwecke verwendeten Tiere, Erwägungsgrund 2.
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:276:0033:0079:de:PDF

([3]) ABl. C 326 vom 26.10.2012.

([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/index_de.htm

([5]) Siehe Absatz zum Verbot von Tierversuchen bei Kosmetika im selben Dokument.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011265/13
to the Commission
Jörg Leichtfried (S&D)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Commission flyer on animal welfare and the terms it uses

A Commission flyer on topical issues relating to animal welfare ([1]) states: '(…) The EU Lisbon Treaty recognised animals as "sentient beings" and as a result the welfare of farm animals became valued in the European Union. (…)'

However, Article 13 of the Treaty (TFEU) defines all animals as sentient beings, not just farm animals, as this is not a legal concept, but an ethical one.

Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes ([2]) even states in the preamble that animal welfare is a value of the Union that is enshrined in Article 13 TFEU. This also indicates that Article 13 is not just limited to farm animals, but includes all animals.

Can the Commission explain its reasons and the legal basis for restricting the scope of Article 13 to farm animals, as it has done in the aforementioned flyer?

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

It is correct that Article 13 of the Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union ([3]) concerns all animals and not only those that are farmed. In the EU Animal Welfare Strategy 2012-2015 ([4]), possible measures in relation to wild animals and pets will be considered. It is not the Commission's intention to restrict the scope of Article 13 but rather to highlight the efforts that have been made to improve the welfare of both farmed animals and those used for scientific purposes ([5]) while listing some of the most recent achievements in this area.

([1]) Milestones in improving Animal Welfare, EU Commission http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/information_sources/docs/ahw/milestones_aw_en.pdf
([2]) Directive 2010/63/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2010 on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes, Recital 2. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:276:0033:0079:en:PDF
([3]) OJ C 326, 26.10.2012.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/index_en.htm
([5]) See paragraph on the ban on animal testing for cosmetics in the same document.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011267/13
προς το Συμβούλιο
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(3 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Πρόληψη εγκεφαλικού και αντιμετώπιση κολπικής μαρμαρυγής

Σύμφωνα με την χρηματοδοτούμενη από την ΕΕ έκθεση του Παγκόσμιου Οργανισμού Υγείας (ΠΟΕ) «Φάρμακα προτεραιότητας για την Ευρώπη και τον κόσμο — Επικαιροποίηση 2013», τα εγκεφαλικά αποτελούν την δεύτερη κύρια αιτία αναπηρίας στην Ευρώπη, μετά την ισχαιμική καρδιοπάθεια και την έκτη κύρια αιτία παγκοσμίως. Ο αριθμός των εγκεφαλικών επεισοδίων στην Ευρώπη αναμένεται να ανέλθει στο 1,5 εκατομμύριο ετησίως έως το 2025, εξαιτίας του γηράσκοντος πληθυσμού. Η έκθεση αναφέρει ότι «στα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ 27, το ετήσιο οικονομικό κόστος για τα εγκεφαλικά εκτιμάται σε 27 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ:18,5 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ (68,5%) για άμεσα έξοδα και 8,5 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ (31,5%) για έμμεσα έξοδα. Επιπλέον, 11,1 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ υπολογίζονται για την αξία των ανεπίσημων υπηρεσιών φροντίδας». Η συντριπτική πλειοψηφία των εγκεφαλικών επεισοδίων (87%) προκαλούνται από έναν θρόμβο ή έμβολο που παρεμποδίζει την ροή του αίματος στον εγκέφαλο. Οι πήξεις του αίματος εμβολικού τύπου προκαλούνται συχνά από κολπική μαρμαρυγή (ΚΜ). Η ΚΜ προσβάλλει 6 εκατομμύρια Ευρωπαίους και πενταπλασιάζει τον κίνδυνο για εγκεφαλικό. Η έκθεση του ΠΟΥ αναφέρει ότι πρέπει να καταβληθούν μεγαλύτερες προσπάθειες, ώστε να βελτιστοποιηθεί η δευτερογενής πρόληψη του εγκεφαλικού, δεδομένου ότι υφίσταται αποτελεσματική φαρμακευτική αγωγή. Η τρέχουσα συνήθης θεραπεία είναι μη ικανοποιητική και στοιχειώδης και οι επενδύσεις στη βασική και κλινική έρευνα, καθώς και στην καλύτερη διαχείριση, π.χ. διάγνωση και φροντίδα, κρίνονται αναγκαίες. Ενόψει των ανωτέρω και των επικείμενων συμπερασμάτων του Συμβουλίου σχετικά με τα βιώσιμα συστήματα υγείας και τις χρόνιες παθήσεις, προτίθεται το Συμβούλιο να δηλώσει:

1. Πώς σκοπεύει να διασφαλίσει την τήρηση και εφαρμογή των πορισμάτων της χρηματοδοτούμενης από την ΕΕ έκθεσης του ΠΟΕ σχετικά με την πρόληψη των εγκεφαλικών, καθώς και τον προσδιορισμό και τη διάδοση των ορθών πρακτικών;

2. Θα συμφωνούσε το Συμβούλιο ότι μία εντολή προς την Επιτροπή για διευκόλυνση του διαλόγου με εξειδικευμένα ενδιαφερόμενα μέρη σε επίπεδο ΕΕ και σε εθνικό επίπεδο θα αποτελούσε βήμα προόδου;

Απάντηση
(9 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Το Συμβούλιο δεν έχει συζητήσει την έκθεση στην οποία αναφέρεται το αξιότιμο μέλος, ούτε καμία εντολή προς την Επιτροπή σχετικά με την παρακολούθηση της εφαρμογής της.

Η έκθεση αυτή [1] δημοσιεύθηκε αρχικά το 2004 και η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή ζήτησε να γίνει ενημέρωσή της το 2013, προκειμένου να χρησιμοποιηθεί για το σχεδιασμό του συνδυασμένου προγράμματος ερευνών της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης στο πλαίσιο του «Ορίζοντα 2020».

Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 168 της Συνθήκης για τη Λειτουργία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, τα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ είναι υπεύθυνα για την οργάνωση των συστημάτων τους υγειονομικής περίθαλψης και την παροχή υγειονομικής περίθαλψης, οι δε δράσεις της Ένωσης στον τομέα αυτό αποσκοπούν στο να συμπληρώνουν τις εθνικές πολιτικές.

[1] Έκθεση της ΠΟΥ σχετικά με τα Φάρμακα προτεραιότητας για την Ευρώπη και τον κόσμο.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011267/13
to the Council
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Stroke prevention and atrial fibrillation management

According to the EU-funded WHO report 'Priority Medicines for Europe and the World 2013 Update', strokes are the second leading cause of disability in Europe after ischaemic heart disease, and the sixth leading cause worldwide. The number of stroke events in Europe is expected to rise to 1.5 million per year by 2025 due to the ageing population. The report states: 'In the EU-27 countries, the annual economic cost of stroke is an estimated EUR 27 billion: EUR 18.5 billion (68.5%) for direct costs and EUR 8.5 billion (31.5%) for indirect costs. An additional EUR 11.1 billion is calculated for the value of informal care'. The overwhelming majority of stroke events (87%) are caused by a thrombus or embolus that blocks blood flow to the brain. Embolus-type blood clots are often caused by atrial fibrillation (AF), which affects 6 million Europeans and causes a fivefold increase in risk of stroke. The WHO report states that greater efforts have to be made to optimise the secondary prevention of stroke in view of the fact that effective medication exists. The current prevalent treatment is unsatisfactory and basic, and investment in basic and clinical research, as well as in better management, i.e. diagnosis and care, is needed.

In view of the above and of the upcoming Council conclusions on sustainable health systems and chronic diseases:

1. Can the Council state how it plans to ensure that the findings of the EU-funded WHO report with regard to stroke prevention will be respected and implemented, and that good practice will be identified and disseminated?

2. Would the Council agree that a mandate to the Commission to facilitate a dialogue with expert stakeholders at EU and national level is a good way forward?

Reply
(9 December 2013)

The Council has not discussed the report the Honourable Member refers to, nor any mandate to the Commission related to its follow-up.

This report ([1]) was originally published in 2004 and the European Commission requested an update in 2013 with a view to using it as a resource in planning the 'Horizon 2020' combined research programme for the European Union.

According to Article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the EU Member States are responsible for the organisation of their healthcare systems and the delivery of healthcare and Union action in this area is intended to complement national policies.

([1]) WHO Report on Priority Medicines for Europe and the World.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011268/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(3 ta' Ottubru 2013)

Suġġett: L-appoġġ tal-BEI lill-Bulgarija

Il-Bank Ewropew għall-Investiment (BEI) iddeċieda li jżid l-appoġġ tiegħu għall-SMEs industrijali u agrikoli fil-Bulgarija (BEI/13/149). Il-BEI ser jipprova jappoġġa l-impjieg billi jsellef EUR 50 miljun lill-bank Bulgaru CIBANK biex jiffinanzja l-proġetti "mhejġa minn intrapriżi żgħar u medji u kumpaniji b'kapitalizzazzjoni medja fil-Bulgarija".

Ladarba din il-linja ta' kreditu hija tkomplija taż-żewġ selfiet intermedjati l-oħra maħsuba għall-SMEs Bulgari, x'inhi l-evalwazzjoni tal-Kummissjoni dwar l-impatt tas-self tal-BEI fuq l-SMEs Bulgari? Instabet xi rabta bejn is-self u l-effetti fuq l-impjieg?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Rehn f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(11 ta' Novembru 2013)

Il-Kummissjoni identifikat l-aċċess li għandhom l-SMEs għall-finanzi bħala qasam problematiku fejn il-Bulgarija għandha tieħu azzjoni ta' politika, kif imfisser fir-Rakkomandazzjonijiet Speċifiċi għall-Pajjiżi (CSR) f'Ewropa 2020 ([1]). (Kwotazzjoni mis-CSR 5: "Jitjieb l-aċċess tal-SMEs u ta' impriżi ġodda għall-finanzi.") Għaldaqstant, nilqgħu b'mod pożittiv l-appoġġ tal-Bank Ewropew għall-Investiment (il-BEI) biex din il-kwistjoni tiġi indirizzata.

Il-Kummissjoni ma tevalwax l-impatti preċiżi ta' proġetti individwali tal-BEI. Iżda b'mod aktar ġenerali nemmnu li l-proġetti li jkollhom l-għan li jtaffu l-kundizzjonijiet biex l-SMEs jiksbu l-finanzjament fil-fatt huma ta' kontribut għat-tkabbir ekonomiku u għall-impjiegi.

([1]) Ir-Rakkomandazzjonijiet Speċifiċi għall-Pajjiżi u d-dokumenti ta' prova jistgħu jinkisbu minn dan l-indirizz elettroniku li ġej: http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-your-country/bulgaria/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011268/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: EIB support for Bulgaria

The European Investment Bank (EIB) has decided to increase its support for industrial and agricultural SMEs in Bulgaria (BEI/13/149). It will attempt to support employment by lending EUR 50 million to the Bulgarian bank CIBANK to finance projects 'promoted by small and medium-sized enterprises and mid-cap companies in Bulgaria'.

Considering that this credit line is a continuation of the other two intermediated loans targeted on Bulgarian SMEs, what is the Commission's evaluation of the impact of EIB loans on Bulgarian SMEs? Has any link been made between the loans and effects on employment?

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

The Commission has identified access to finance of SMEs as one problem area where Bulgaria should take policy action, as detailed in the Europe 2020 Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs) ([1]). (A quote from CSR 5: 'Improve the access to finance for SMEs and start-ups.') Therefore, we welcome the support of European Investment Bank (EIB) to address the issue.

The Commission does not evaluate the precise impacts of individual EIB projects. But more generally we believe that projects aimed at easing SME financing conditions do contribute to economic growth and employment.

([1]) The Country Specific Recommendations and supporting documents can be accessed at the following address: http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-your-country/bulgaria/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011269/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(3 ta' Ottubru 2013)

Suġġett: L-UE għandha tistabbilixxi fl-Unjoni kollha aktar kompetizzjonijiet f'aktar oqsma

Għal dwan l-aħħar 25 sena, il-Kummissjoni organizzat b'suċċess il-Kompetizzjoni tal-Unjoni Ewropea għal Xjenzati Żgħażagħ (EUCYS) (MEMO/13/812). Kompetizzjonijiet bħal dawn qegħdin kull ma jmur isiru dejjem iktar pjattaforma għal żgħażagħ ta' talent sabiex juru l-kapaċitajiet tagħhom, u hekk ikunu preparati għal opportunitajiet akbar.

Il-Kummissjoni tista' tindika kompetizzjonijiet simili li kellhom l-istess suċċess li kellha l-EUCYS, jew saħansitra aktar minnha? Il-Kummissjoni qiegħda tippjana li tespandi kompetizzjonijiet bħal dawn għal numru ikbar ta' oqsma, u jekk iva, x'inhuma wħud minn dawn l-oqsma?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sna Geoghegan-Quinn f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(20 ta' Novembru 2013)

Il-biċċa l-kbira tal-Istati Membri tal-UE jospitaw kompetizzjonijiet nazzjonali annwali tax-xjenza għal tfal ta' età ta' bejn l-14 u l-20 sena. Ir-rebbieħa ta' dawn il-kompetizzjonijiet nazzjonali tax-xjenza jikkompetu fl-EUCYS, il-Konkors tal-Unjoni Ewropea għal Xjenzjati Żgħażagħ.

Fost il-kompetizzjonijiet nazzjonali tax-xjenza tal-UE l-aktar magħrufa u stabbiliti hemm:

L-Irlanda: BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition
Il-Ġermanja: Stiftung Jugend forscht e. V.
Il-Polonja: Krajowy Fundusz na Rzecz Dzieci — Il-Fond Pollakk għat-Tfal
Il-Portugall: Fundação da Juventude

L-ikbar fiera tax-xjenza fid-dinja hija l-Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (Intel ISEF), li ssir kull sena l-Istati Uniti. L-EUCYS ġie mistieden jibgħat sa disa' studenti biex jieħdu sehem f'din il-fiera.

Il-EUCYS jaċċetta proġetti fid-dixxiplini kollha tax-xjenza u tal-inġinerija; ma hemm ebda pjanijiet biex l-għadd ta' dixxiplini jiżdied aktar.

Il-Kummissjoni qed tippjana li tintroduċi premjijiet ġodda bħala parti mill-EUCYS mill-2014, fl-ambitu tal-aġendi ta'"Riċerka u Innovazzjoni Responsabbli" sabiex l-istudenti jitħeġġu jitgħallmu kif tista' titnaqqas id-differenza bejn il-komunità xjentifika u s-soċjetà inġenerali. Proġetti interdixxiplinari u transdixxiplinari se jiġu ppremjati għall-interazzjoni tagħhom mas-soċjetà, għall-qsim b'mod liberu tar-riżultati tagħhom u talli juru li kwistjonijiet etiċi u kwistjonijiet relatati mal-ugwaljanza tas-sessi jkunu ġew indirizzati b'mod xieraq.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011269/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: EU to establish more Union-wide level competitions in more fields

The Commission has successfully organised the European Union Contest for Young Scientists (EUCYS) for the past 25 years (MEMO/13/812). Competitions of this nature have increasingly become a platform for young talents to showcase their ability, preparing them for greater opportunities.

Can the Commission list similar competitions that share the same success as or are more successful than the EUCYS? Does the Commission plan to expand such competitions to a larger number of fields, and if so, what are some of those fields?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(20 November 2013)

Most EU Member States host annual national science competitions for 14 to 20 year olds. The winners of these national science competitions compete at EUCYS.

Among the best known and most well established EU national science competitions are:

Ireland: BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition
Germany: Stiftung Jugend forscht e. V.
Poland: Krajowy Fundusz na Rzecz Dzieci — Polish Children's Fund
Portugal: Fundação da Juventude

The biggest science fair in the world is the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (Intel ISEF), held annually in the US. EUCYS are invited to send up to nine students to this fair.

Projects are accepted to EUCYS in all scientific and engineering disciplines; there are no plans to expand the number of disciplines further.

The Commission plans to introduce new prizes as part of EUCYS from 2014 under the umbrella of 'Responsible Research and Innovation' to encourage students to learn to bridge the gap between the scientific community and society at large. Inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary projects will be rewarded for engaging with society, for sharing their results freely and for demonstrating that gender and ethical issues have been addressed appropriately.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011270/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(3 ta' Ottubru 2013)

Suġġett: Ftehim dwar il-Kummerċ Ħieles bejn l-UE u l-Indja

Il-Kummissjoni rrikonoxxiet l-importanza ta' ftehimiet kummerċjali bilaterali (MEMO/13/734) biex jinħolqu impjiegi ġodda għall-forza tax-xogħol u biex jiżdied il-PDG totali. Per eżempju, in-negozjati għal Ftehim ta' Kummerċ Ħieles (FTA) bejn l-UE u l-Korea t'Isfel bdew fl-2007, bl-FTA li ġie ffirmat fl-2009 u l-applikazzjoni proviżorja tiegħu li daħlet fis-seħħ f'Lulju tal-2011.

Fl-2007 ukoll, l-UE bdiet negozjati għal FTA mal-Indja, wara li ġiet identifikata bħala "sieħba strateġika". Madankollu, wara sitt snin ta' negozjati, l-FTA bejn l-UE u l-Indja għadu ma jeżistix. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tindika id-disputi ewlenin kollha li hemm fis-seħħ, u l-istatus attwali għal kull disputa? Il-Kummissjoni tista' tindika wkoll fejn kienet ta' suċċess fl-indirizzar ta' xi wħud minn dawk id-disputi?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur De Gucht f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(8 ta' Novembru 2013)

Sar progress sostanzjali mill-bidu tan-negozjati bejn l-UE u l-Indja għal Ftehim ta' Kummerċ Ħieles. L-oqsma relatati mal-kummerċ tal-oġġetti, il-miżuri sanitarji u fitosanitarji, l-ostakli tekniċi għall-kummerċ, il-konkorrenza u r-regoli tal-oriġini huma lesti jew kważi lesti.. Madankollu għad hemm lakuni f'uħud mill-interessi ċentrali tal-UE fl-aċċess għas-suq u mingħajr soluzzjoni għal dawn in-nuqqasijiet, il-Kummissjoni mhix ser tkun tista' tikkonkludi n-negozjati ta' dan il-Ftehim ta' Kummerċ Ħieles. Xi wħud minn dawn il-lakuni huma fis-settur tas-servizzi, b'mod partikolari fis-servizzi bankarji u tal-assigurazzjoni, u fl-akkwist pubbliku, marbuta ma' dewmien fl-adozzjoni tal-liġijiet meħtieġa fl-Indja. Il-Kummissjoni Ewropea tistenna wkoll li l-Indja toffri ftuħ tas-suq aħjar għal prodotti ta' interess għall-esportazzjoni lejn l-UE bħal karozzi, partijiet tal-karozzi u x-xorb alkoħoliku.

Wara ħafna reżistenza inizjali mill-Indja, in-negozjati dwar il-kapitolu fuq l-Iżvilupp Sostenibbli tal-Ftehim ta' Kummerċ Ħieles li se jsir fil-ġejjieni għamlu progress tajjeb iżda hemm bżonn ta' aktar diskussjonijiet sabiex elementi importanti bħar-referenzi għal Konvenzjonijiet tal-Organizzazzjoni Internazzjonali tax-Xogħol rilevanti u l-Ftehimiet Ambjentali Multilaterali u l-Konsultazzjonijiet tal-Partijiet Interessati jiġu nklużi b'mod aċċettabbli għaż-żewġ naħat.

Il-Kummissjoni tibqa' lesta li tipparteċipa sabiex issib soluzzjonijiet għall-kwistjonijiet pendenti kollha iżda minħabba l-elezzjonijiet Parlamentari li ġejjin fl-Indja hemm livell għoli ta' inċertezza dwar jekk il-leġiżlazzjoni neċessarja ser tiġi adottata mill-Indja f'din il-leġiżlatura u jekk l-Indja se tkunx f'pożizzjoni fix-xhur li ġejjin biex turi l-flessibilità neċessarja biex jittejjeb l-aċċess għas-suq f'ċerti setturi sensittivi ta' interess għall-esportaturi tal-UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011270/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: India-EU Free Trade Agreement

The Commission has recognised the importance of bilateral trade agreements (MEMO/13/734) in generating new jobs for the workforce and increasing our total GDP. For example, Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations between the EU and South Korea began in 2007, with the FTA being signed in 2009 and its provisional application taking effect in July 2011.

Also in 2007, the EU started FTA negotiations with India, identifying it as a 'strategic partner'. However, six years of negotiations have yet to produce an EU-India FTA. Would the Commission list all the main contentions in place, and the current status for each of those contentions? Would the Commission also list the successful steps we have taken in addressing some of those main contentions?

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

Substantial progress has been made since the start of the negotiations between the EU and India for a Free Trade Agreement. Areas related to trade in goods, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, technical barriers to trade, competition and rules of origin are either finalised or nearly finalised. However there still remain gaps in some of the EU's core market access interests and without resolving these, the Commission will not be able to conclude negotiations of this Free Trade Agreement. Some of these gaps are in the services sector, in particular on banking and insurance, and in public procurement, linked to a delay in the adoption of necessary legislation in India. The European Commission also expects India to offer improved market opening for products of important export interest to the EU such as cars, car parts and alcoholic beverages.

After much initial resistance from India, negotiations of the Sustainable Development chapter of the future Free Trade Agreement have advanced well but further discussions are required to ensure that important elements such as references to relevant International Labour Organisation Conventions and Multilateral Environment Agreements and Stakeholder Consultations are included in a mutually acceptable manner.

The Commission remains ready to engage so as to find solutions to all outstanding issues but the upcoming Parliamentary elections in India mean that there is a high level of uncertainty on whether the necessary legislation will be adopted by India in this Parliamentary term and whether India will be in position in the next months to show the necessary flexibility in improving market access in certain sensitive sectors of interest for EU exporters.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011272/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(3 ta' Ottubru 2013)

Suġġett: Il-multilingwiżmu fl-Ewropa

F'dak li għandu x'jaqsam mal-multilingwiżmu fl-Ewropa għad hemm ħafna kwistjonijiet mhux ċari. Wieħed mill-għanijiet tal-Unjoni Ewropea huwa li jkollna Ewropa fejn kull ċittadin jitgħallem minn tal-inqas żewġ lingwi oħra barra lsien art twelidu, u dan minn età żgħira (MEMO/13/825). Għal dan il-għan, programmi bħalma huwa "l-ilsien omm +2" ġew stabbiliti waqt is-Summit ta' Barċellona f'Marzu 2002.

Il-Kummissjoni tista' tagħmel lista tal-inizjattivi tal-multilingwiżmu li ġew implimentati b'suċċess mill-2002 'l hawn? Ladarba l-multilingwiżmu għadu meqjus bħala prijorità, il-Kummissjoni qed tippjana li tadotta approċċ aktar b'saħħtu sabiex tħeġġeġ il-multilingwiżmu fl-Ewropa?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Vassiliou f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(15 ta' Novembru 2013)

L-inizjattivi tal-Kummissjoni mill-2002 iffukaw fuq l-appoġġ tal-għan tas-Samit ta' Barċellona, dak li l-Ewropej jitgħallmu żewġ lingwi barranin minn età bikrija. Dan l-aħħar ħafna inizjattivi edukattivi ta' suċċess kienu kkofinanzjati minn programmi edukattivi, bħall-Programm ta' Tagħlim Tul il-Ħajja, li permezz tiegħu kull sena ntefqu madwar EUR 50 miljun fuq il-multilingwiżmu u l-proġetti dwar it-tagħlim tal-lingwi ([1]). Il-Kummissjoni tat l-appoġġ tagħha wkoll lil ħafna partijiet interessati, bħal pereżempju l-Pjattaforma tal-Intrapriżi għall-Multilingwiżmu u l-Pjattaforma tas-Soċjetà Ċivili għall-iskambju tal-opinjonijiet u l-esperjenzi dwar il-multilingwiżmu u t-tagħlim tal-lingwi.

F'Novembru 2012, l-istrateġija "Reviżjoni tal-Edukazzjoni" adottata mill-Kummissjoni enfasizzat l-importanza kruċjali tal-ħiliet fil-lingwi barranin għall-impjegabbiltà u kien fiha gwida speċifika għall-Istati Membri dwar l-fatturi li jikkontribwixxu għat-tagħlim effettiv tal-ilsna ([2]). L-istrateġija kienet tinkludi l-proposta tal-Kummissjoni għal parametru referenzjarju tal-UE dwar il-proficjenza fil-lingwi barranin sabiex sal-2020 mill-inqas 50% taż-żgħażagħ ta' 15-il sena jilħqu l-livell ta' utent indipendenti f'lingwa barranija waħda, u mill-inqas 75% tal-istudenti fl-edukazzjoni sekondarja inferjuri jistudjaw żewġ lingwi barranin. Il-proposta għall-parametru referenzjarju tissejjes fuq l-għan tas-Samit ta' Barċellona tal-2002.

Il-Kummissjoni se tkompli tappoġġja bil-qawwa l-multilingwiżmu u t-tagħlim tal-lingwi barranin fil-ġejjieni. It-tagħlim tal-lingwi u d-diversità lingwistika huma fost il-prijoritajiet ġenerali tal-programm Erasmus+, il-programm ġdid tal-UE għall-edukazzjoni, it-taħriġ, iż-żgħażagħ u l-isport. Se jkun hemm kofinanzjament għal proġetti kreattivi għat-tagħlim tal-lingwi u appoġġ lingwistiku għall-mobilità tal-istudenti.

([1]) Għal aktar tagħrif dwar dan: http://ec.europa.eu/education/transversal-programme/langprojects_en.htm. Deskrizzjoni ta' dawn il-proġetti tista' tinsab fl-ħekk imsejħa "compendiums" tal-websajt tal-EACEA fuq http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/results_projects/project_compendia_en.php. Ara l-linja KA3.

([2]) Aktar tagħrif dwar din l-istrateġija jinsab fuq http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/rethinking/sw372_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011272/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Multilingualism in Europe

There are still many grey areas when it comes to multilingualism in Europe. One of the European Union's goals is to achieve a Europe in which every citizen is taught at least two languages in addition to their own mother tongue from an early age (MEMO/13/825). To this end, programmes such as 'mother-tongue +2' were established at the Barcelona Summit in March 2002.

Can the Commission list all of the successful multilingualism initiatives put in place since 2002? Given that multilingualism is still considered a priority, does the Commission plan to take a stronger approach in encouraging multilingualism in Europe?

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

Commission initiatives since 2002 have focused on supporting the Barcelona Summit's objective of teaching Europeans two foreign languages from an early age. Many successful educational project initiatives were co-financed in recent years by educational programmes like the Life Long Learning Programme, under which about EUR 50 million has been spent annually on multilingualism and language teaching projects ([1]). The Commission has also supported various stakeholder forums, such as the Business Platform for Multilingualism and the Civil Society Platform for the exchange of views and experiences about multilingualism and language teaching.

In November 2012, the 'Rethinking Education' strategy adopted by the Commission highlighted the critical importance of foreign language skills for employability and contained specific guidance to Member States about the factors contributing to effective language teaching ([2]). The strategy included the Commission's proposal for an EU benchmark on foreign languages proficiency so that by 2020 at least 50% of 15-year-olds attain the level of independent user in one foreign language, and at least 75% of pupils in lower secondary education study two foreign languages. The proposal for the benchmark is based on the 2002 Barcelona Summit objective.

The Commission will continue to strongly promote multilingualism and the teaching of foreign languages in the future. Language learning and linguistic diversity are among the over-arching priorities of the new programme for education, training, youth and sport, Erasmus+. There will be co-financing for creative language teaching projects and linguistic support for mobility of students.

([1]) For more information on this: http://ec.europa.eu/education/transversal-programme/langprojects_en.htm. A description of these projects can be found in the so-called 'compendiums' on the webpage of EACEA at http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/results_projects/project_compendia_en.php. See line KA3

([2]) Further information about this strategy can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/rethinking/sw372_en.pdf

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011273/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(3 ta' Ottubru 2013)

Suġġett: Servizzi tal-broadband b'veloċità baxxa

Skont il-MEMO/13/756, l-Ewropa qed taqa' lura fit-tellieqa gobali biex tibni konnessjonijiet fissi tal-broadband b'veloċità għolja. Il-korporazzjonijiet tat-telekomunikazzjoni mhux qegħdin jagħtu l-prestazzjoni mistennija minħabba s-sistema regolatorja ineffiċjenti li qed tintuża bħalissa. Hu rikonoxxut li hemm bżonn iktar inċentivi sabiex l-UE tilħaq il-mira tagħha li tipprovdi broadband b'veloċità għolja liċ-ċittadini kollha tagħha sal-2020.

Il-Kummissjoni tista' tindika l-ostakli ewlenin li qed iżommuha milli tilħaq din il-mira? Tista' wkoll tindika kemm huma kbar id-differenzi fil-prestazzjonijiet bejn l-Istati Membri? Liema huma l-Istati Membri bl-aħar prestazzjoni?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Kroes f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(18 ta' Novembru 2013)

Il-Komunikazzjoni tal-Kummissjoni "Il-Broadband Ewropew: investiment fi tkabbir ekonomiku mmexxi diġitalment" ([1]) iddeskriviet l-ostakli ewlenin li hemm għall-ilħiq tal-miri tal-broadband u l-istrateġija sabiex jingħelbu. L-ewwel ostaklu huwa l-ispiża għolja ta' investiment meħtieġa għal netwerk li jkun jaħdem b'rata mgħaġġla ħafna. Il-Kummissjoni wieġbet għal dan billi pproponiet proposti dwar it-tnaqqis tal-ispejjeż tal-investiment u billi żiedet ir-riżorsi għall-investiment fil-broadband permezz tal-faċilità Nikkollegaw l-Ewropa. It-tieni ostaklu huwa l-fatt li ħafna mill-Istati Membri ma kellhomx strateġija operattiva biex jilħqu l-miri għall-broadband. It-tielet ostaklu huwa l-fatt li ċerti partijiet tal-Ewropa ma kinux attraenti għall-investiment mil-lat kummerċjali u għalhekk il-Fondi Strutturali jeħtieġ li jissaħħu u jiġu ssimplifikati.

Fl-2012, studju tal-Kummissjoni dwar l-ispiża f'każ li l-Ewropa ma tkunx inkluża fil-komunikazzjonijiet elettroniċi ([2]) wera li suq intern stabbilit sew iżid il-PDG tal-UE b'ammont li jkun sa EUR 110 biljun. Dan l-istudju wera li l-UE hija maqsuma fi swieq nazzjonali separati u li, minħabba f'hekk, l-Ewropa qed titlef sors ewlieni ta' tkabbir potenzjali. Fil-11 ta' Settembru 2013, il-Kummissjoni adottat proposta għal Regolament biex jinbena kontinent konness u kompetittiv ([3]) u Rakkomandazzjoni dwar obbligi konsistenti mhux diskriminatorji u metodoloġiji tal-kalkolu tal-ispejjeż sabiex tiġi promossa l-kompetizzjoni u jitjieb l-ambjent tal-investiment fil-broadband.

It-tabella ta' valutazzjoni tal-Aġenda Diġitali ([4]) tkopri fid-dettall il-kejl tal-adozzjoni tal-broadband fl-Istati Membri differenti. Il-kopertura tal-broadband għal linji fissi tvarja minn 100 % għal 69.1 % iżda, kif intqal dan l-aħħar mill-Viċi President tal-Kummissjoni responsabbli għall-Aġenda Diġitali, din hija ta' 100 % fl-UE kollha jekk jiġu inklużi l-kopertura tat-teknoloġija mingħajr wajers u bis-satellita. F'dak li għandu x'jaqsam mal-użu, l-għadd ta' familji li għandhom aċċess għall-broadband id-dar ivarja minn 87 % għal 50.4 %.

([1]) COM(2010)472.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/steps-towards-truly-internal-market.
([3]) Kontinent konness li jibni suq uniku tat-telekomunikazzjoni — https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/communication-commission-european-parliament-council-european-economic-and-social-committee-a-0.
([4]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/scoreboard.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011273/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Slow broadband services

According to MEMO/13/756, Europe is falling behind in the global race to build fast fixed broadband connections. Telecommunications corporations are underperforming as a result of the inefficient regulatory system currently in place. It is acknowledged that more incentives are necessary if the EU is to reach its target of providing fast broadband for all its citizens by 2020.

Can the Commission list the main hurdles in the way of achieving this objective? Can it also say how great the differences in performance are between Member States? Which are the worst-performing Member States?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(18 November 2013)

The main hurdles to achieving the broadband targets and the strategy to overcome them were set out in the Commission Communication European Broadband: investing in Digitally Driven Growth ([1]). The first is the high cost of investment needed for a superfast network. The Commission responded to this by proposals on cutting the cost of investment and added more resources to broadband investment through the Connecting Europe Facility. Secondly, that many Member States did not have an operational broadband strategy to achieve the targets. Thirdly that some parts of Europe were not commercially attractive to investment and the Structural Funds therefore need to be reinforced and rationalised.

In 2012, a Commission study on the cost of non-Europe in electronic communications ([2]) showed that a fully-fledged internal market would increase EU GDP by up to EUR 110 billion. It highlighted how the EU is fragmented into distinct national markets and as a result Europe is losing out on a major source of potential growth. On 11 September 2013, the Commission adopted a proposal of Regulation to build a connected, competitive continent ([3]) and a recommendation on consistent non-discrimination obligations and costing methodologies to promote competition and enhance the broadband investment environment.

Measurement of broadband deployment by Member State is covered in detail by the Digital Agenda Scoreboard ([4]). Fixed line broadband coverage ranges from 100% to 69.1% but, as recently announced by the Vice-President of the Commission responsible for Digital Agenda, coverage is 100% throughout the EU if wireless and satellite coverage is included. In terms of take-up, proportion of households with broadband access at home ranges from 87% to 50.4%

([1]) COM(2010) 472.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/steps-towards-truly-internal-market
([3]) Connected Continent Building a Telecoms Single Market, — https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/communication-commission-european-parliament-council-european-economic-and-social-committee-a-0
([4]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/scoreboard

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011274/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(3 ta' Ottubru 2013)

Suġġett: Inbejjed mill-Moldova

Fil-25 ta' Settembru 2013 il-Kummissjoni ħarġet stqarrija għall-istampa (IP/13/872) fejn ħabbret id-deċiżjoni tagħha li tiftaħ is-suq tal-Unjoni Ewropea għall-importazzjoni tal-inbid mir-Repubblika tal-Moldova. Din il-miżura waslet qabel iż-żona ta' kummerċ ħieles, bl-għan li "ttaffi xi diffikultajiet li r-Repubblika tal-Moldova qed tesperjenza fl-esportazzjoni tal-inbid lejn parti mis-suq tradizzjonali tagħha" ([1]).

Liema swieq tal-UE huma attwalment fil-mira ta' produtturi tal-inbid mill-Moldova? Liema kwantità tal-inbid prodott fil-Moldova qed jiġi attwalment importat lejn l-UE? Kif mistennija tiżdied?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Cioloş f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(25 ta' Novembru 2013)

Fl-2012, ir-Repubblika tal-Moldova esportat 156 741 ettolitru (hl) lejn l-UE, jiġifieri 8% aktar mis-snin ta' qabel. L-inbejjed bl-ingrossa laħqu s-60 339 ettolitru (39% tal-inbejjed importati mill-Moldova). Fl-UE, id-destinazzjonijiet ewlenin tal-esportazzjoni huma r-Rumanija, il-Polonja u r-Repubblika Ċeka.

Għall-UE dawn l-importazzjonijiet jgħaqqdu 1.1% biss tal-importazzjonijiet tal-inbid kollha minn pajjiżi terzi u 0.1% biss tal-konsum tal-inbid kollu fl-UE.

Fl-2012, il-Moldova produċiet b'kollox 1.6 miljun ettolitru u 300 000 minnhom ġew esportati lejn ir-Russja, is-suq ewlieni tal-Moldova. Barra minn hekk, il-Moldova ma mlietx il-Kwota tar-Rata Tariffarja (TRQ) Nru 09-0514 ta' 180 000 ettolitru fl-2012. Għalkemm għal dik is-sena t-TRQ ġiet stabbilita għal 240 000 ettolitru, l-esportazzjonijiet skont din it-TRQ laħqu biss il-160 529 ettolitru sat-13 ta' Novembru 2013.

Il-Kummissjoni ma tistax tbassar kif se jevolvu l-importazzjonijiet futuri mill-Moldova.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-872_mt.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011274/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Moldovan wines

On 25 September 2013 the Commission issued a press release (IP/13/872) announcing its decision to open the European Union's market to wine imports from the Republic of Moldova. This measure comes ahead of the free trade area, aiming to ease 'some of the difficulties the Republic of Moldova is experiencing with its wine exports to some of its traditional market' ([1]).

What EU markets are currently targeted by Moldovan wine producers? What quantity of the wine produced in Moldova is currently imported to the EU? How is this expected to increase?

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

In 2012, the Republic of Moldova exported 156 741 hectolitres (hl) to the EU, an increase of 8% compared to previous years. Bulk wines amounted to 60 339 hl (39% of the imported wines from Moldova). The main export destinations in the EU are Romania, Poland and Czech Republic.

For the EU these imports represent only 1.1% of all imports of wine from third countries and only 0.1% of the entire wine consumption in the EU.

Moldova's total production in 2012 amounted to 1.6 million hl of which 300 00 hl were exported to Russia, Moldova's main market. In addition, Moldova did not fill the Tariff Rate Quota No 09-0514 of 180 000 hl in 2012. For this year, although the TRQ was set at 240 000 hl, exports under this TRQ have amounted to only 160 529 hl by 13 November 2013.

The Commission cannot predict the evolution of future imports from Moldova.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-872_en.htm

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011275/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(3 ta' Ottubru 2013)

Suġġett: Ftehim bejn l-UE u l-Indoneżja sabiex jitrażżan il-kummerċ illegali fl-injam

Il-Kummissjoni, fi stqarrija għall-istampa (IP/13/887), irrapurtat li l-UE u l-Indoneżja ffirmaw ftehim storiku sabiex irażżnu attivitajiet illegali ta' qtugħ ta' siġar fl-Indoneżja, b'konformità ma' ftehimiet eżistenti bejn l-UE u pajjiżi oħra. Minħabba li l-UE hi l-akbar suq tal-esportazzjoni għal prodotti tal-injam Indoneżjani, dan il-ftehim jikkontribwixxi għall-indirizzar tat-theddida li l-qtugħ illegali ta' siġar jirrappreżenta għall-foresti.

Kemm ġie ttrasportat injam illegali mill-Indoneżja lejn l-UE kull sena? Din iċ-ċifra kemm mistennija tonqos bis-saħħa ta' dan il-ftehim?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Potočnik f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(18 ta' Novembru 2013)

Huwa diffiċli li wieħed jivvaluta l-volum ta' kummerċ ta' xi prodott bażiku illegali minħabba li dawn il-prodotti jinħbew jew ma jistgħux jiġu identifikati faċilment. Studju li sar mill-grupp ta' riflessjoni mir-Renju Unit imsejjaħ "Chatham House" ([1]) issuġġerixxa li fl-2006, kien stmat li sa 40 % mill-qtugħ tas-siġar fl-Indoneżja sar illegalment. Madankollu, minn dakinhar "l hawn il-Gvern Indoneżjan ħa għadd ta" miżuri kontra l-qtugħ illegali tas-siġar u biex itejjeb il-verifika tal-legalità tal-injam, b'mod partikulari fejn jidħlu l-esportazzjonijiet.

Mindu daħal fis-seħħ ir-Regolament tal-UE dwar l-injam ([2]) fit-3 ta' Marzu 2013, sar reat li wieħed iqiegħed fis-suq tal-UE l-injam maqtugħ b'mod illegali u l-operaturi tal-UE li jqiegħdu l-injam u l-prodotti tal-injam fis-suq sar għandhom obbligu li jeżerċitaw id-diliġenza dovuta biex inaqqsu kemm jista' jkun ir-riskju ta' injam illegali fil-katina tal-provvista tagħhom.

L-impatt ewlieni tal-Ftehim ta' Sħubija Volontarju dwar l-Infurzar tal-Liġi tal-Foresta, il-Governanza u l-Kummerċ (FLEGT) mal-Indonezja għandu jkun li jagħti iktar ċertezza lill operaturi tal-UE li jimpurtaw l-injam mill-Indoneżja, minħabba li l-liċenzja tal-FLEGT maħruġa skont il-Ftehim hija rrikonoxxuta, fil-kuntest tar-Regolament imsemmi hawn fuq, bħala liċenzja li turi l-konformità mad-dispożizzjonijiet tiegħu. Il-Parlament Ewropew bħalissa qed iqis il-Ftehim ta' Sħubija Volontarju fil-kuntest tal-proċedura ta' approvazzjoni.

([1]) Studju tal-2010 ta' S. Lawson u L. MacFaul imsejjaħ "Illegal Logging and Related Trade — Indicators of the Global Response" ("Il-qtugħ illegali tas-siġar u l-kummerċ marbut mieġħu — indikaturi tat-tweġiba globali").
([2]) Ir-Regolament (UE) Nru 995/2010 tal-20 ta' Ottubru 2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011275/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Agreement between the EU and Indonesia to curb illegal timber

The Commission has reported in a press release (IP/13/887) that the EU and Indonesia have signed a historic agreement to curb illegal logging activities in Indonesia, in line with similar agreements already in existence between the EU and other countries. Since the EU is the biggest export market for Indonesian timber products, this agreement would contribute to addressing the threat to forests posed by illegal logging.

How much illegal timber from Indonesia has been transported to the EU annually? How far is this figure projected to fall thanks to the agreement?

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

Assessing the volume of trade of any illegal commodity is difficult as such products are hidden or not easily identifiable. A study by the UK think-tank Chatham House ([1]) suggested that in 2006 up to 40% of logging in Indonesia was estimated to be illegal. However since then the Indonesian Government has taken a number of measures against illegal logging and to improve verification of the legality of timber, in particular with regard to exports.

Since the entry into application of the EU Timber Regulation ([2])on 3 March 2013 it has been an offence to place illegally harvested timber on the EU market and EU operators placing timber and timber products on the market have had an obligation to exercise due diligence to minimise the risk of illegal timber in their supply chain.

The main impact of the FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement with Indonesia will be to provide greater certainty to EU operators importing timber from Indonesia, as the FLEGT licence issued under the Agreement is recognised under the abovementioned Regulation as demonstrating compliance with its provisions. The Voluntary Partnership Agreement is currently being considered by the European Parliament under the consent procedure.

([1]) Illegal Logging and Related Trade — Indicators of the Global Response (2010); S. Lawson, L. MacFaul.
([2]) Regulation (EU) 995/2010 of 20 October 2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011276/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR) and James Nicholson (ECR)
(3 October 2013)

Subject: Civets and coffee beans

Leading figures in the British coffee industry have recently called for an import ban on Indonesian kopi luwak coffee. Evidence indicates that kopi luwak now predominantly comes from caged civets which have been caught by poachers, caged and force-fed coffee cherries. The coffee beans, which are excreted by these wild animals, are then sold on to the British market under false claims that the coffee beans have come from wild civets in their natural habitat.

Earlier this year, the British public made it clear that they want to know where their food comes from and were keen to see tighter controls introduced within the food chain. In light of this, can the Commission comment on the misleading trade which promotes the abovementioned luxury coffee beans as coming from free wild animals? Is the Commission aware of such ill-treatment of the civet?

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

Responsibility for enforcing EC law applicable to the provision of correct information to consumers (including through food labels and advertising) lies with the Member States. The Commission is not aware of any case where a Member State would be failing its duties with respect to the case referred to by the Honourable Member.

As a consequence, the Commission is not in a position to take specific actions regarding alleged ill-treatment of civets in Indonesia.

Although animal welfare is not explicitly mentioned in the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade (GATT) 1994 or in other World Trade Organisation agreements, the Commission takes every opportunity to raise and to promote improved animal welfare standards at European and at international level.

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