(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011388/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(4 octobre 2013)

Objet: Surcharge de travail dans le secteur hospitalier

Temps de travail supérieur à 48 heures par semaine et périodes de repos insuffisantes font que certains médecins hospitaliers européens se plaignent de la surcharge de travail.

1. La directive limitant le travail après la prestation d'heures supplémentaires de nuit est-elle bien respectée partout en Europe?

2. Quels sont les pays transgressant la directive?

3. La Commission possède-t-elle des statistiques sur le nombre moyen d'heures prestées par pays?

4. Quelles sont les sanctions applicables?

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

La Commission ne collecte pas de statistiques sur le temps de travail moyen dans une activité spécifique où, en tout état de cause, la moyenne peut varier grandement.

Le rapport de la Commission ([1]) sur la mise en œuvre de la directive 2003/88/CE ([2]) énumère les États membres dans lesquels, selon les informations dont dispose la Commission, le droit interne ou les pratiques nationales concernant le temps de travail des médecins hospitaliers ne sont pas conformes à la directive. (Un certain nombre d'États membres autorisent des médecins hospitaliers à travailler au-delà de la moyenne limite de 48 heures, au titre de la dérogation prévue à l'article 22, paragraphe 1, de la directive).

La Commission a privilégié la procédure d'infraction lorsque le rapport relevait de graves non-conformités pour ce groupe et, en particulier, lorsque des éléments de preuve dûment étayés confirmaient que, dans la pratique, ils étaient obligés de travailler pendant un nombre excessif d'heures sans temps de repos approprié. À l'heure actuelle, un seul cas de ce genre a été clôturé après amendement de la législation nationale, deux cas pourraient être soumis à la Cour de justice, des avis motivés ont été envoyés à deux autres États membres et des lettres de mise en demeure ont été envoyées dans deux autres cas, tandis qu'une enquête préliminaire est en train de s'achever pour un cas supplémentaire. Tous ces cas sont publiés au stade approprié, conformément aux dispositions de la Commission en matière de procédures d'infraction.

Dans plusieurs de ces cas, l'État membre a présenté des propositions de modification de sa législation ou de ses pratiques pour se mettre en conformité ou améliorer celle-ci. Dans tous les cas similaires, les services de la Commission ont renforcé le dialogue afin d'aider l'État membre dans son action. La Commission se réserve néanmoins le droit de prendre toutes les mesures qui pourraient s'avérer nécessaires pour assurer la conformité, y compris (le cas échéant) de prendre des sanctions conformément à l'article 260, paragraphe 2, du TFUE.

([1]) COM(2010) 802 et document de travail des services de la Commission SEC(2010) 1611.
([2]) Directive 2003/88/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 4 novembre 2003 concernant certains aspects de l'aménagement du temps de travail (JO L 299 du 18.11.2003).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011388/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Excessive workloads for hospital doctors

With weekly working times in excess of 48 hours and insufficient rest periods, some hospital doctors in Europe are complaining of being seriously overworked.

1. Is the directive which limits the number of hours which may be worked immediately after nighttime overtime observed everywhere in Europe?

2. Which countries are failing to comply with this directive?

3. Does the Commission have at its disposal statistics on the average number of hours worked by hospital doctors in each Member State?

4. What penalties can be applied in the event of infringement of the directive?

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

The Commission does not collect statistics on average working time in a specific activity, where, in any event, large variations from the average are possible.

The Commission's Report ([1]) on implementation of Directive 2003/88/EC ([2]) sets out in detail the Member States where, on the information available to the Commission, national law or practice regarding the working time of hospital doctors did not comply with the directive. (A number of Member States allow hospital doctors to work hours exceeding the 48-hour average limit, under the derogation at Article 22.1 of the directive).

The Commission has prioritised infringement action where the report identified serious nonconformity for this group, and particularly, where substantiated evidence confirmed that they were in practice obliged to work excessive hours without adequate rest. Currently, one such case has been closed after national law was amended, two may be referred to the Court of Justice, reasoned opinions have been sent to two further Member States, and letters of formal notice have been sent in two other cases, while an additional case is completing preliminary investigation. All such cases are published at the appropriate point, in accordance with the Commission's infringement procedures.

In several of these cases, the Member State has put forward proposals to change its law or practice in order to achieve or improve conformity. The Commission services have intensified dialogue in all such cases in order to assist the Member State to do so. The Commission nevertheless reserves the right to take all measures which may be necessary to ensure compliance, including (where judged appropriate) seeking penalties in accordance with Article 260.2 TFEU.

([1]) COM(2010) 802 and accompanying Staff Working Paper SEC(2010) 1611.
([2]) Directive 2003/88/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 November 2003 concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time, OJ L 299, 18.11.2003.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011389/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(4 octobre 2013)

Objet: Retirer les boissons énergisantes

La consommation de boissons «énergisantes» comme Red Bull, *Monster* ou *Burn*, est à éviter chez les enfants et les adolescents, mais aussi associée à de l'alcool, recommande l'agence sanitaire Anses.

Elle recommande également de ne pas y associer un exercice physique au cours duquel il est nécessaire de préserver un équilibre hydroélectrique, perturbé par les effets diurétiques de ces boissons.

1. La Commission partage-t-elle ces conclusions?

2. Si non, compte-t-elle mener une étude à ce sujet?

3. Compte-t-elle laisser sur le marché des produits considérés comme toxiques ou dangereux, même à petites doses?

4. Partage-t-elle l'avis selon lequel s'il s'agissait de médicaments, ils auraient déjà été retirés du marché?

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

La Commission examine actuellement les conclusions de l'agence sanitaire Anses et renvoie l'Honorable Parlementaire à la réponse donnée à la question écrite précédente E-003646/2013 ([1]).

En ce qui concerne la troisième question, la Commission voudrait souligner que tout produit correspondant à la définition d'un «aliment» est couvert par les exigences du règlement général relatif aux denrées alimentaires (CE) n° 178/2002 ([2]). L'article 14 de ce règlement affirme comme principe fondamental qu'aucune denrée alimentaire ne doit être mise sur le marché si elle est dangereuse; une denrée alimentaire est définie comme dangereuse si elle est considérée comme préjudiciable à la santé ou impropre à la consommation humaine.

En ce qui concerne la dernière question, la Commission voudrait affirmer qu'il relève de la responsabilité des autorités nationales compétentes de décider, au cas par cas, de la classification des produits en tant que denrées alimentaires ou médicaments sur la base de la législation pertinente de l'UE, sur leur territoire ([3]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Règlement (CE) nº 178/2002 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 28 janvier 2002 établissant les principes généraux et les prescriptions générales de la législation alimentaire, instituant l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments et fixant des procédures relatives à la sécurité des denrées alimentaires (JO L 31 du 1.2.2002).
([3]) Voir les arrêts de la CJE dans les affaires jointes C-211/03, C-299/03 et C-316/03 à C-318/03 et dans l'affaire C-319/05, paragraphe 55.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011389/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Taking energy drinks off the market

According to the recommendations of the Anses health agency, children and adolescents should not drink 'energy' drinks such as Red Bull, Monster or Burn, and such drinks should not be consumed with alcohol.

It also recommends not drinking them when undertaking physical exercise, during which a water-electrolyte balance needs to be maintained; the diuretic effects of these drinks upset that balance.

1. Does the Commission agree with these findings?

2. If not, is it planning to conduct a study on this issue?

3. Does it plan to leave products on the market that are considered toxic or dangerous, even in small amounts?

4. Does it agree that were these medicinal products, they would have already been taken off the market?

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

The Commission is currently studying the findings of the Anses health agency and it concurrently refers the Honourable Member to the answer given to the previous Written Question E-003646/2013 ([1]).

With regard to the third question, the Commission would like to point out that any product falling under the definition of 'food' is covered by the requirements of the General Food Law Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 ([2]). Article 14 of that regulation states as a core principle, that food shall not be placed on the market if it is unsafe; unsafe food is defined as either injurious to health or unfit for human consumption.

With regard to the last question, the Commission would like to state that it is the responsibility of the national competent authorities to decide, on a case by case basis, on the classification of products as foodstuffs or medicines, on the basis of the relevant EU legislation, within their territory ([3]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety, OJ L 31, 1.2.2002.
([3]) Cf. rulings of the ECJ in joint Cases C-211/03, C-299/03 and C-316/03 to C-318/03 and in Case C-319/05, paragraph 55.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011390/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(4 octobre 2013)

Objet: Discrimination commerciale par Apple

Apple aurait-il dépassé le seuil du tolérable en matière de discrimination commerciale?

Si Base et Proximus tentent toujours de jouer la carte de la négociation avec la firme californienne pour qu'elle débloque l'utilisation de la 4G, Apple est fortement soupçonné de vouloir discriminer certaines entreprises.

1. N'est-il pas étonnant que l'accès de l'iPhone à certains réseaux, par exemple celui de Belgacom, soit toujours bloqué, alors qu'il est ouvert pour l'iPad?

2. En poussant l'analyse plus loin, nous constatons que la liste des réseaux débloqués par Apple et publiée sur son site internet ne reprend que les opérateurs avec lesquels Apple a conclu un accord de distribution. Il est difficile, dans ces conditions, de ne pas en conclure qu'Apple lie le déblocage de la 4G à un accord de distribution. La Commission trouve-t-elle cela normal? Compte-t-elle mener une enquête? L'exemple des tablettes iPad, pour lesquelles le déverrouillage du réseau de Proximus a été quasi immédiat, donne du crédit à cette thèse, attendu qu'il s'agit du même réseau pour l'iPhone ou l'iPad.

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

La Commission n'a reçu aucune plainte officielle concernant d'éventuelles restrictions d'utilisation des iPhones sur les réseaux 4G de certains opérateurs de réseaux mobiles et les pratiques d'Apple en matière de distribution.

Toutefois, dans le cadre de sa surveillance active de l'évolution du marché des téléphones intelligents et au vu de certaines informations qu'elle a reçues sur ce marché, la Commission procède actuellement à une enquête en ce qui concerne les restrictions et les pratiques susmentionnées.

La Commission interviendra si certains indices révèlent des comportements anticoncurrentiels contraires à l'article 101 ou à l'article 102 du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011390/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Apple's commercial discrimination tactics

Has Apple gone too far with its commercial discrimination tactics?

At a time when Base and Proximus are still trying to hammer out a deal with Apple on opening up its 4G service to their users, there is strong evidence to suggest that the Californian company discriminates against certain businesses.

1. Does the Commission not find it astonishing that Belgacom users, for example, should be blocked from accessing the 4G service from an iPhone but not from an iPad?

2. Taking this a step further, the list of unblocked networks published on Apple's website consists solely of operators with whom Apple has a distribution agreement. The obvious conclusion, therefore, is that Apple links 4G access to its distribution agreements. Does the Commission find this acceptable? Does it intend to carry out an inquiry? The fact that the 4G service was almost immediately opened up to Proximus users accessing it through their iPad lends further credibility to the claims being made about Apple, since the network is the same, whether the connection is via iPhone or iPad.

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

The Commission has not received any formal complaints regarding possible limitations on the use of iPhones on the 4G networks of certain mobile network operators and on Apple's distribution practices.

However, in the context of the Commission's active monitoring of market developments regarding smartphones, and in view of certain market information it has received, the Commission is currently conducting a fact-finding exercise regarding the above limitations and practices.

The Commission will intervene if there are indications of anti-competitive behaviour contrary to either Article 101 or 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-011392/13
upućeno Komisiji
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(4. listopada 2013.)

Predmet: Ugrožena politička prava Hrvata u Bosni i Hercegovini — političkim inženjeringom od konstitutivnog naroda do nacionalne manjine

Poštovani,

trenutno se u Bosni i Hercegovini provodi prvi popis stanovništva nakon rata. Nažalost, ne radi se o pukoj statistici, već o prvoklasnom političkom pitanju na kojem se temelji budućnost BiH.

Rat je nakon Daytona nastavljen drugim sredstvima, a međunarodna zajednica je preko institucije visokog predstavnika često prednjačila u jednostranom miniranju potpisanih sporazuma.

Takva su rješenja dodatno doprinosila asimetričnosti državnog uređenja, čija su glavna žrtva Hrvati kao najmalobrojniji konstitutivni narod.

I ovaj će popis pokazati kako su Hrvati nestali ili nestaju iz većinski srpskih i bošnjačkih sredina, što nije slučajnost, već direktna posljedica odnosa međunarodne zajednice prema „hrvatskom pitanju u BiH" u ratu i nakon njega.

Stoga je moje pitanje Komisiji sljedeće — hoćete li stati u zaštitu političkih prava Hrvata u BiH? Jer riječ je o hrvatskim državljanima, a time i građanima EU-a.

Ovo je jedan od najvećih ispita za Europsku uniju, jer će vaša efikasnost u ovom slučaju pokazati koliko doista vrijedi biti građaninom EU-a i koliko je Unija spremna učiniti za zaštitu svojih građana u trećim zemljama.

Odgovor gospodina Fülea u ime Komisije
(27. studenog 2013.)

Komisija je svjesna ustavnih odredbi Bosne i Hercegovine u pogledu državljanstva i političkih prava njezinih konstitutivnih naroda. Nadležna tijela Bosne i Hercegovine odgovorna su za zaštitu tih prava. Nudeći perspektivu europske integracije, Komisija je potaknula tijela vlasti u Bosni i Hercegovini da iskoriste različite pristupe koji postoje unutar EU-a kako bi se osigurao jednak tretman svih etničkih skupina. Komisija ne mora nametati bilo kakvo posebno rješenje, nego bi nadležna tijela Bosne i Hercegovine trebala osigurati pravedan tretman svih konstitutivnih naroda i manjina u državi. U okviru bilo kojeg rješenja potrebno je provesti odluku Europskog suda za ljudska prava u predmetu Sejdić-Finci.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011392/13
to the Commission
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Political rights of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina threatened by political engineering from constitutive nationality vis-à-vis national minority

The first population census since the war is currently being carried out in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Sadly, this is not a matter of mere statistics, but a political issue of the first order that will determine the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

War has been continued by other means since the signing of the Dayton Agreement, and the international community, by way of the institution of the High Representative, has often excelled at unilaterally undermining the agreements that were signed.

What is more, these agreements have helped to create an asymmetrical system of government whose main victims are the Croats, as the least numerous of the constitutive nationalities.

This census will show that Croats have disappeared or are disappearing from majority Serb and Bosniak areas. This is no coincidence, but rather the direct result of the manner in which the international community treated the 'Croatian question' in Bosnia and Herzegovina during and after the war.

I would therefore like to put the following question: does the Commission intend to stand up in defence of the political rights of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina? This is an issue that affects Croatian citizens who are also, therefore, citizens of the EU.

This is one of the greatest challenges facing the EU, since the effectiveness of your actions in this instance will show the true value of being an EU citizen and the degree to which the EU is willing to act in defence of its citizens in third countries.

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

The Commission is aware of Bosnia and Herzegovina's constitutional provisions related to the citizenship and political rights of its constitutive people. The responsibility to protect those rights lies with the competent authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina. While offering a European integration perspective, the Commission has encouraged the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to draw on various approaches existing within the EU to ensure equal treatment of all ethnic groups. It is not for the Commission to impose any specific solution, but for the competent authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to ensure a fair treatment of all constituent peoples and minorities in the country. Any solution needs to implement the Sejdić-Finci ruling of the European Court of Human Rights.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-012703/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(11 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Azioni UE per il rilascio degli attivisti di Greenpeace detenuti in Russia

Il 18 settembre scorso, 30 attivisti hanno inscenato un'azione di protesta non violenta contro i piani di sfruttamento delle risorse petrolifere artiche della *Gazprom*, la più grande compagnia russa ed il maggiore estrattore al mondo di gas naturale. Il gruppo di attivisti, composto da 28 militanti di *Greenpeace*, un fotografo e un operatore video freelance che erano a bordo della nave rompighiaccio *Arctic Sunrise*, è stato arrestato dalle autorità russe sotto accusa di pirateria, un reato per cui sono previste pene detentive fino a 15 anni. Anche se è stato comunicato che tale accusa sarebbe stata sostituita con quella di vandalismo — accusa che prevede un massimo di pena fino a 7 anni — l'equipaggio della nave *Arctic Sunrise*, che batte bandiera olandese, rimane accusato di entrambi i reati. Il 6 novembre, la polizia fluviale russa ha fermato altri quattro attivisti che, a bordo di gommoni, lungo il fiume Moscova, hanno manifestato per la liberazione dell'equipaggio dell'*Arctic Sunrise*. Il Tribunale internazionale del diritto del mare di Amburgo si dovrebbe pronunciare il prossimo 22 novembre sulla domanda presentata dall'Olanda, che chiede un arbitrato internazionale per la liberazione dei 30 attivisti detenuti nel carcere russo di Murmansk.

Può l'Alto Rappresentante per gli affari esteri e la politica di sicurezza dell'Unione europea, Catherine Ashton, precisare:

— Quali azioni diplomatiche sono state finora intraprese e quali intende intraprendere per garantire la rapida liberazione degli attivisti incarcerati? Può riferire chiaramente sulle azioni legali che verranno intraprese dall'UE?

— L'UE ha proposto di assistere le autorità degli Stati membri i cui cittadini sono stati incarcerati?

— Intende creare una posizione coordinata dell'UE durante il prossimo Consiglio «Affari esteri» il 21 novembre?

Risposta congiunta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(6 gennaio 2014)

Le accuse, di pirateria o di teppismo, mosse dalla Russia all'equipaggio e ai giornalisti della nave di Greenpeace sono manifestamente sproporzionate e, nel caso dei giornalisti, sollevano altresì la questione della libertà di stampa. Sebbene il rilascio su cauzione dei membri dell'equipaggio rappresenti uno sviluppo positivo, desta preoccupazione il fatto che nessuno di loro possa ancora lasciare la Russia.

Poiché, fin dall'inizio, tutti gli Stati membri che annoverano cittadini tra i membri dell'equipaggio hanno trattato la vicenda come una questione di competenza consolare, la Commissione si è astenuta dal rilasciare dichiarazioni pubbliche, a parte quelle rese durante la sessione plenaria del Parlamento del 23 ottobre 2013, nel corso della quale è stata discussa la questione. Tuttavia, le preoccupazioni destate da questa deplorevole situazione vengono chiaramente espresse alle autorità russe nel corso dei frequenti contatti tra le parti.

La delegazione dell'UE a Mosca ospita spesso riunioni di coordinamento con i rappresentanti dei paesi che annoverano cittadini tra i membri dell'equipaggio. Durante la reclusione, sono state sorvegliate le condizioni di detenzione degli attivisti e sollevate questioni al riguardo con le autorità russe. Inoltre, sin dall'inizio l'UE si è tenuta in contatto con rappresentanti di Greenpeace.

Su richiesta dei Paesi Bassi, il 22 novembre 2013 il Tribunale marittimo Internazionale ha ordinato il rilascio dell'equipaggio e il dissequestro della nave previo pagamento di un deposito cauzionale di 3,6 milioni di euro. Sebbene la Russia abbia contestato la competenza del Tribunale nel caso della «Arctic Sunrise», c'è da sperare che la situazione si sblocchi consentendo a tutti i membri dell'equipaggio di far presto ritorno alle proprie case e alle proprie famiglie.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011393/13
do Komisji
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(4 października 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Obywatele państw członkowskich UE aresztowani w Rosji

18 września aktywiści Greenpeace International płynący na statku „Arctic Sunrise" pod banderą holenderską zostali zatrzymani na Morzu Barentsa przez rosyjską straż graniczną w trakcie protestu przeciwko wydobyciu ropy naftowej na Arktyce. Próbując powstrzymać akcję ekologów rosyjscy strażnicy oddali w kierunku statku „Arctic Sunrise" kilkanaście strzałów ostrzegawczych.

Rosyjskie władze zatrzymały 30 osób, w tym również obywateli państw członkowskich Unii Europejskiej: Polski, Wielkiej Brytanii, Francji, Holandii, Szwecji, Finlandii oraz Danii. Wszyscy aresztowani są podejrzewani o „napad i próbę zajęcia platformy wiertniczej Prirazłomnaja", za co grozi im do 15 lat więzienia. Niepokojący jest fakt, iż sąd w Murmańsku przedłużył o dwa miesiące areszt 21 z 30 zatrzymanych osób.

W tej sprawie już wypowiadały się międzynarodowe organizacje zajmujące się prawami człowieka, m.in. Amnesty International, Dziennikarze bez Granic, OBWE oraz Moskiewska Grupa Helsińska. Organizacja Dziennikarze bez Granic nazwała uwięzienie rosyjskiego fotografa relacjonującego akcję protestu i współpracującego z Greenpeace, „pogwałceniem wolności informacji, która jest nie do przyjęcia".

W związku z tym pragnę zapytać czy Komisja Europejska posiada informacje w sprawie postępowania przeciwko obywatelom Unii Europejskiej zatrzymanym w Rosji? Czy Komisji wiadomo o warunkach w jakich są oni przetrzymywani? Czy Komisja obserwuje sytuację celem niedopuszczenia do łamania praw człowieka w trakcie procesu? Czy środki stosowane przez rosyjskie władze są adekwatne do popełnionych czynów?

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-012615/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(7 listopada 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Zatrzymanie statku Greenpeacu na Morzu Barentsa

19 września na Morzu Barentsa straż przybrzeżna Rosji zatrzymała statek „Arctic Sunrise" należący do „Greenpeace". Statek z załogą odholowano następnie do portu w Murmańsku. Załoga znalazła się w areszcie. Jej członkom najpierw przedstawiono zarzuty terroryzmu, a następnie złagodzono je i obecnie załoga ma zarzut chuligaństwa. Przedstawiciele „Greenpeace" nie zgadzają się z tymi zarzutami. Robert Cyglicki, dyrektor programowy polskiego Greenpeace, stwierdził: „Greenpeace ma za sobą 42 lata w pełni pokojowego aktywizmu i takie oskarżenia są niczym więcej jak próbą pomówienia aktywistów. Należy też pamiętać, że to nasz statek został przejęty przez ludzi uzbrojonych w noże i broń palną. Nasi aktywiści, załoga statku i dziennikarze, to nie chuliganie, tak samo jak nie są piratami. Nowa kwalifikacja nadal jest nieproporcjonalnie ostra i wiąże się z potencjalną karą do 7 lat więzienia. To obraza dla idei pokojowego protestu. Ci dzielni ludzie zdecydowali się popłynąć do Arktyki uzbrojeni w nic więcej ponad pragnienie, by pokazać światu prawdę o bezwzględnym biznesie paliwowym. Powinni być teraz ze swoimi rodzinami, a nie w areszcie w Murmańsku" Statek „Arctic Sunrise" pływa pod banderą holenderską. W sumie zatrzymano 27 ekologów, w tym obywateli Unii Europejskiej (wśród nich jest obywatel Polski Tomasz Dziemianczuk, pracownik Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego).

Czy Komisja i Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych monitoruje sprawę zatrzymanych aktywistów „Greenpeace"?

Jakie kroki podjęła Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych, by udzielić pomocy zatrzymanym?

Jakie kroki podjęła Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych, by uwolnić zatrzymanych?

Czy Wysoki Przedstawiciel Unii do Spraw Zagranicznych i Polityki Bezpieczeństwa poruszył lub poruszy tę kwestię w trakcie spotkań z przedstawicielami Federacji Rosyjskiej?

Wspólna odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji

(6 stycznia 2014 r.)

Rosyjskie zarzuty postawione członkom załogi Greenpeace i dziennikarzom, czy to za piractwo, czy „chuligaństwo", są rażąco nieadekwatne, a w przypadku dziennikarzy podnoszą również kwestie związane z wolnością prasy. Choć z zadowoleniem przyjęto możliwość zwolnienia załogi za kaucją, niepokój budzi fakt, że żaden z jej członków nie może w dalszym ciągu opuścić Rosji.

Wszystkie państwa członkowskie, których obywatele należą do załogi, od początku potraktowały tę sprawę jako kwestię konsularną. W związku z powyższym Komisja wstrzymała się od publicznych oświadczeń idących dalej niż te złożone w dniu 23 października 2013 r. podczas sesji plenarnej Parlamentu, na której omawiano tę kwestię. Obawy wynikające z tej trudnej sytuacji są jednak wyraźnie komunikowane władzom rosyjskim podczas wielokrotnie nawiązywanych kontaktów.

Delegatura UE w Moskwie często organizuje spotkania koordynacyjne z przedstawicielami krajów, których obywatele należą do załogi. Przez cały okres pozbawienia wolności członków załogi warunki ich przetrzymywania były monitorowane, a związane z nimi kwestie omawiane z władzami rosyjskimi. Ponadto od początku UE pozostawała w kontakcie z przedstawicielami Greenpeace.

Dnia 22 listopada 2013 r., na prośbę Niderlandów, Międzynarodowy Trybunał Prawa Morza nakazał zwolnienie załogi i statku za kaucją w wysokości 3 600 000 EUR. Chociaż Rosja zakwestionowała kompetencje Trybunału w sprawie „Arctic Sunrise", należy mieć nadzieję, że wszyscy członkowie załogi będą mogli niebawem wrócić do swoich domów i rodzin.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011393/13
to the Commission
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: EU citizens arrested in Russia

On 18 September Greenpeace International activists on board the Dutch-registered *Arctic Sunrise* were arrested in the Barents Sea by Russian border guards during a protest against oil drilling in the Arctic. As part of their attempt to stop the environmentalists' protest, the Russian border guards fired several warning shots in the direction of the *Artic Sunrise*.

The Russian authorities detained 30 people, including EU nationals from Poland, the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, Finland and Denmark. All of those arrested have been accused of 'assault and attempting to take over the Prirazlomnaya oil platform', and face a maximum of 15 years in prison. The court in Murmansk has extended by two months the detention of 21 of the 30 individuals, which is a cause for great concern.

International human rights organisations, including Amnesty International, Reporters Without Borders, the OSCE and the Moscow Helsinki Group, have already spoken out on this matter. Reporters Without Borders has called the detention of a Russian photographer reporting on the protest and cooperating with Greenpeace 'an unacceptable violation of freedom of information'.

With regard to this matter, does the Commission have any information concerning proceedings against EU citizens detained in Russia? Is the Commission aware of the conditions in which these people are being held? Is the Commission monitoring the situation to prevent any violation of human rights during the trial? Does the Commission consider the measures taken by the Russian authorities to be appropriate to the activities in question?

Question for written answer E-012615/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — seizure of Greenpeace vessel on the Barents Sea

On 19 September Russian coastal guards on the Barents Sea seized the 'Arctic Sunrise', a vessel belonging to Greenpeace. The vessel and its crew were towed to a port in Murmansk and the crew was arrested. Its members were initially charged with terrorism, although the charges were later commuted to hooliganism. Greenpeace representatives are opposed to these charges. According to Robert Cyglicki, Programme Director at Greenpeace Poland, 'Greenpeace has a 42-year history of entirely peaceful activism and these charges are nothing less than attempted libel against the activists. It should not be forgotten that our boat was seized by people armed with knives and firearms. Our activists, the ship's crew and the journalists are no more hooligans than they are pirates. The commuted charges are still disproportionately harsh and carry a prison sentence of up to seven years, which is an insult to the idea of a peaceful protest. These courageous people decided to sail to the Arctic armed with nothing more than a desire to show the world the truth about the ruthless oil business. They should now be with their families, not under arrest in Murmansk.' The 'Arctic Sunrise' sails under a Dutch flag. A total of 27 environmentalists are being held, including EU citizens such as the Polish citizen Tomasz Dziemianczuk who is employed by the University of Gdansk.

Are the Commission and the European External Action Service monitoring the situation of the detained Greenpeace activists?

What steps have been taken by the European External Action Service to help the detainees?

What steps have been taken by the European External Action Service to bring about the release of the detainees?

Has the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy raised this issue during meetings with representatives of the Russian Federation, and if not are there plans to do so?

Question for written answer P-012703/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU efforts to secure the release of Greenpeace activists held in Russia

On 18 September 2013, thirty activists staged a non-violent protest against the projected exploitation of Arctic oil resources by Gazprom, the largest Russian company and the world leader in natural gas extraction. The 28 Greenpeace activists aboard the *Arctic Sunrise* icebreaker, together with a photographer and freelance cameraman, were arrested by the Russian authorities and charged with piracy, which carries a 15-year maximum sentence. Despite an announcement that the charges would be altered to vandalism, which carries a seven-year maximum sentence, the crew of the Dutch-flagged Arctic Sunrise is now being charged with both. On 6 November, four other activists, who had taken to the Moskva River in inflatable dinghies calling for the *Arctic Sunrise* crew to be set free, were arrested by the river police. In the meantime, the Dutch Government is seeking international arbitration to secure the release of the 30 activists being held in the Russian Murmansk prison. The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea in Hamburg is due to deliver a ruling on 22 November.

In view of this:

— Can the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy indicate what diplomatic action has been taken and what action is being envisaged to secure the rapid release of the activists? Can she indicate clearly the legal procedures to be followed by the EU?

— Has the EU offered its assistance to the authorities of the Member States whose citizens are being held?

— Does the High Representative intend to establish a coordinated EU position at the next Foreign Affairs Council on 21 November?

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(6 January 2014)

The Russian charges against Greenpeace crew members and journalists, be they for piracy or 'hooliganism', are manifestly disproportionate and, as far as the journalists are concerned, also raise questions relating to freedom of the press. The release on bail of the crew was a welcome development, but the fact that none of them may yet leave Russia is a source of concern.

All Member States with citizens among the crew have from the outset dealt with this situation as a consular matter. Accordingly, the Commission has refrained from public statements going beyond those made during the 23 October 2013 Parliament plenary session which discussed the issue. However, the concerns that this unfortunate situation gives rise to are made clearly known to Russian authorities during the frequent contacts that take place.

The EU Delegation in Moscow hosts frequent coordination meetings with representatives of the countries having citizens among the crew. During the detention of the crew, detention conditions were monitored and issues in that respect raised with Russian authorities. Furthermore, the EU has from the outset been in contact with Greenpeace representatives.

At the request of the Netherlands, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea has on 22 November 2013 ordered the release of crew and ship against bail set at EUR 3 600 000. Although Russia has challenged the competence of the Tribunal in the 'Arctic Sunrise' case it is to be hoped that developments will soon allow all crew members to return to their homes and families.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011394/13
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(4 października 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Sprawa Parku Narodowego Wirunga w Demokratycznej Republice Konga

Park Wirunga to najstarszy park narodowy w Afryce, położony w Demokratycznej Republice Konga. Ponadto jest on wpisany na Listę Światowego Dziedzictwa Przyrodniczego UNESCO. Żyją tam setki gatunków zwierząt, w tym zagrożone wyginięciem goryle górskie.

Jeden z koncernów paliwowych planuje rozpocząć poszukiwania ropy naftowej. Taka działalność zawsze wiąże się z bardzo dużym zagrożeniem dla życia ludzi i zwierząt, ponieważ możliwe są nie tylko wycieki ropy, ale także zniszczenia związane z dostosowaniem parku do potrzeb koncernu – wybudowanie dróg i rurociągów. Zagrożone skażeniem będzie również Jezioro Edwarda, które jest kluczowym źródłem wody dla społeczności lokalnej.

W związku z tak dużym niebezpieczeństwem organizacje pozarządowe apelują o rezygnację z tych planów koncernu.

Czy Komisja jest świadoma zagrożenia istniejącego w Parku Narodowym Wirunga?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Andrisa Piebalgsa w imieniu Komisji
(13 listopada 2013 r.)

Od końca 2010 r Unia Europejska oraz główni darczyńcy działający w dziedzinie ochrony środowiska w Republice Demokratycznej Konga wielokrotnie interweniowali w celu zapobieżenia wydobywaniu ropy naftowej w Parku Wirunga, które jest sprzeczne z kongijskim prawodawstwem i podjętymi przez Republikę Demokratyczną Konga międzynarodowymi zobowiązaniami.

Przedstawiciele delegatury UE w Kinszasie spotkali się z ministrem środowiska celem przedyskutowania problemu nacisków ze strony przemysłu naftowego na Park Wirunga. Temat ten jest często podnoszony w ramach unijnego dialogu politycznego z tamtejszym rządem.

Na początku 2011 r., na propozycję partnerów Republiki Demokratycznej Konga i za zgodą kongijskich władz, Unia Europejska wydała zgodę na sfinansowanie strategicznej oceny oddziaływania na środowisko w zakresie działań dotyczących poszukiwania i eksploatowania złóż ropy naftowej na całym obszarze doliny Rift Albertin obejmującym Park Wirunga.

Aktualnie wspomniana ocena jest w trakcie realizacji, a Unia Europejska wraz z innymi darczyńcami śledzi jej przebieg, przy czym ze szczególną uwagą traktowana jest kwestia Parku Wirunga. Decyzja o niepodejmowaniu eksploatacji ma zostać podjęta przez władze i ludność Konga na zasadzie dobrowolnej, wcześniejszej i świadomej zgody. Kwestia środowiskowego i prawnego statusu Parku Wirunga jest oczywiście jednym z podstawowych elementów, jakie są analizowane w ramach strategicznej oceny oddziaływania na środowisko. Ze względu na skrupulatny sposób jej prowadzenia ocena ta jest dla rządu instrumentem bardzo pomocnym w procesie podejmowania decyzji. Wraz z europejskimi programami pomocy dla Parku Wirunga stanowi ona najlepszą gwarancję na zapewnienie ochrony, poprzez analizę obiektywnych elementów należących do oceny oddziaływania na środowisko.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011394/13
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: The Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo

The Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo is the largest national park in Africa. It is also on Unesco's list of natural world heritage sites. The park is home to hundreds of species of animals, including critically endangered mountain gorillas.

An energy company is planning to begin prospecting for oil. Drilling for oil always poses a major threat to the lives of people and animals, not only from oil spills but also as a result of the scope for serious damage caused by making changes in the park to suit the needs of the oil company — for example by building roads and pipelines. Lake Edward, a vital source of water for the local population, will also be at risk from pollution.

In the face of this grave danger, NGOs are calling for the oil company's plans to be withdrawn.

Is the Commission aware of this threat to the Virunga National Park?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Piebalgs au nom de la Commission
(13 novembre 2013)

Dès fin 2010, l'Union européenne et les principaux bailleurs de fonds œuvrant dans le domaine de la conservation en RDC sont intervenus à maintes reprises pour éviter une exploitation pétrolière dans le Parc des Virunga qui soit contraire à la législation congolaise et aux engagements internationaux pris par la RDC.

La Délégation de l'UE à Kinshasa a échangé sur le problème des pressions pétrolières sur le Parc de Virunga avec les autorités congolaises et notamment le ministre de l'environnement. Le sujet est souvent discuté dans le cadre de notre dialogue politique avec le gouvernement.

Début 2011, l'Union européenne, sur proposition des partenaires de la RDC et avec l'approbation des autorités congolaises, a donné son accord pour financer une évaluation environnementale stratégique (EES) de l'exploration-exploitation du pétrole dans l'ensemble du Rift Albertin incluant le Parc des Virunga.

Aujourd'hui, l'EES est en cours et l'Union européenne, conjointement avec les autres donateurs, suit le processus et une attention particulière est portée aux Virunga. La décision de non-exploitation doit être prise par les autorités et la population congolaises, sur base d'un consentement libre, informé et préalable. Naturellement, le statut environnemental et juridique du Parc des Virunga fait partie des éléments essentiels à analyser dans l'évaluation environnementale stratégique. Menée rigoureusement, cette EES, est un outil des plus élaborés d'aide à la décision pour le Gouvernement. Elle représente, avec les programmes européens d'appui au Parc des Virunga, la meilleure garantie d'en assurer la sauvegarde, par l'analyse d'éléments objectifs qui ressortiront de l'évaluation environnementale stratégique.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011395/13
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(4 października 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Ataki Al-Szabab w Westgate w Kenii

W sobotę, 21 września członkowie somalijskiej radykalnej islamistycznej organizacji militarnej Al-Szabab wtargnęli do centrum handlowego Westgate w Nairobi. W wyniku tego ataku do tej pory zginęło ok. 70 osób, 175 jest rannych, 63 zaginionych. Wśród poszkodowanych znajdują się obywatele między innymi Wielkiej Brytanii, Francji, Kanady, Chin, Indii, RPA i Ghany. Ten brutalny atak jest częścią somalijskiej wojny domowej i próby odzyskania północnych terenów Kenii.

Od dłuższego czasu Westgate było wymieniane, jako potencjalne miejsce ataku terrorystycznego. Oznacza to, że ochrona nie była wystarczająca oraz, że członkowie somalijskiej organizacji są dobrze przygotowani do podobnych zamachów.

Eksperci przewidują, że nie jest to ostatni taki zamach przeprowadzony przez Al-Szabab.

Jakie środki zamierza podjąć Komisja w tej sprawie?

Czy Komisja zamierza wywrzeć presję na rząd kenijski, by zintensyfikował swoje wysiłki w celu przeciwdziałania kolejnym próbom zamachów?

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

Natychmiast po ataku, Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca zwróciła się do urzędnika wysokiej rangi, aby pojechał do Kenii w celu zbadania możliwości przyszłego wsparcia wraz z władzami lokalnymi. UE rozważa obecnie różne warianty. Ponieważ bezpieczeństwo Kenii jest nierozerwalnie związane z bezpieczeństwem jej sąsiadów, ważne są nieustające wysiłki w celu ustabilizowania sytuacji w regionie, a w szczególności w Somalii. Obejmuje to wsparcie UE na rzecz AMISOM ([1]), misji Unii Europejskiej mającej na celu przyczynienie się do szkolenia somalijskich sił bezpieczeństwa, jak również prace polityczne i rozwojowe. Konferencja pod hasłem „Nowy ład dla Somalii", która odbyła się w Brukseli dnia 16 września 2013 r., stanowi kamień milowy w realizacji priorytetów w zakresie polityki, bezpieczeństwa oraz kwestii społeczno-gospodarczych w Somalii. Ponadto w dalszym ciągu stosowany będzie unijny plan działań przeciwko terroryzmowi w Rogu Afryki/Jemenie.

Równie ważne są projekty mające na celu przeciwdziałanie finansowaniu terroryzmu i brutalnego ekstremizmu oraz zwiększające zdolność władz kenijskich do zapobiegania takim sytuacjom kryzysowym i odpowiedniego na nie reagowania.

Aby te konkretne propozycje miały trwały charakter, niezbędne będzie określenie efektów synergii wynikających z połączenia tych projektów z ogólnym wsparciem unijnym dla obszaru zarządzania, a w szczególności wsparciem na rzecz promowania przejrzystości i przeciwdziałania bezkarności. Powinny one być także postrzegane w kontekście ogólnego wsparcia UE na rzecz promowania zrównoważonego rozwoju w Kenii i regionie, które umożliwia likwidowanie pierwotnych przyczyn terroryzmu, co jest najskuteczniejszym sposobem jego zwalczania.

W szerszej perspektywie, w następstwie ataku w Westgate, globalne forum zwalczania terroryzmu (GCTF) stworzy odpowiednią platformę do koordynowania środków zwalczania terroryzmu. UE jest zdeterminowana, by wraz z Turcją w dalszym ciągu współprzewodniczyć grupie roboczej GCTF ds. Rogu Afryki.

([1]) Misja Unii Afrykańskiej w Somalii (AMISOM).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011395/13
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Attacks by Al-Shabaab at the Westgate shopping mall in Kenya

On Saturday, 21 September, members of Al-Shabaab, a radical Islamist militant group from Somalia, stormed the Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi. To date, around 70 people are known to have died in the attack, with 174 injured and 63 missing. The injured include citizens from the United Kingdom, France, Canada, China, India, South Africa and Ghana, among others. The brutal attack is part of Somalia's civil war and efforts to reclaim areas in the north of Kenya.

The mall had long been talked about as a possible terrorist target; it was inadequately defended, and Al-Shabaab's members are well drilled in such attacks.

Experts predict that this will not be the last attack of this kind to be carried out by the organisation.

What action does the Commission intend to take in response to this attack?

Does the Commission plan to put pressure on the Kenyan government to step up its efforts to prevent further terrorist attacks?

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

Immediately after the attack, the HR/VP asked a high level official to visit Kenya to explore future support together with the local authorities. The EU is now considering different options. As Kenya's security is intrinsically linked to that of its neighbours, continued efforts to stabilise the region and in particular Somalia are important. This includes EU support to Amisom ([1]), the EU training mission for the Somalian security forces, and political and development work. The Brussels Conference on a New Deal for Somalia of 16 September 2013 was a milestone for addressing the most critical political, security, and socioeconomic priorities in Somalia. In addition, the EU Counter Terrorism Action Plan on Horn of Africa/Yemen will continue to be implemented.

Equally important are projects to counter the financing of terrorism and violent extremism, and to strengthen the capacity of Kenyan authorities to prevent and to respond to such crises.

For these specific proposals to be sustainable, synergies will have to be found with the EU's overall support to the governance area, and in particular to promote transparency and counter impunity. They should also be seen in the context of general EU support to promote sustainable development in Kenya and the region, which allows addressing of the root causes of terrorism, the most effective way to counter terrorism.

At a wider level, the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF) will provide a good forum to coordinate counterterrorism measures in the aftermath of the Westgate attack. The EU is fully committed to continue the co-chairmanship of the GCTF Horn of Africa working group together with Turkey.

([1]) African Union Mission in Somalia.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011396/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 de outubro de 2013)

Assunto: Luta dos trabalhadores dos Estaleiros Navais de Viana do Castelo em defesa da empresa

Esta semana, os trabalhadores dos Estaleiros Navais de Viana do Castelo (ENVC) realizam mais uma importante ação de luta em defesa da empresa e dos seus postos de trabalho.

Na resposta à pergunta E-005205/2013, de junho de 2013, sobre a situação dos estaleiros, a Comissão reconhece que, ao contrário do que chegou a ser veiculado nalgumas notícias, não existia à data nenhuma decisão sobre a alegada obrigatoriedade de devolução de uma verba de 181 milhões de euros, recebidos como ajudas de Estado.

Solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Qual o ponto de situação deste processo? Já concluiu a avaliação que estava em curso?

2. Está disponível para apoiar um plano de viabilização dos ENVC, que permita a manutenção de todos os postos de trabalho e a concretização da atual carteira de encomendas, no quadro da manutenção do caráter público da empresa?

Resposta dada por Joaquín Almunia em nome da Comissão
(22 de novembro de 2013)

Tal como indicado na sua resposta à pergunta E-005205/2013, a Comissão decidiu, em 23 de janeiro de 2013, dar início ao procedimento formal de investigação em relação a um certo número de medidas, alegadamente concedidas por Portugal aos Estaleiros Navais de Viana do Castelo, S.A. («ENVC») no passado. Desde então, a Comissão teve diversas trocas de correspondência com as autoridades portuguesas e está presentemente a avaliar as informações apresentadas por essas autoridades. Além disso, a Comissão está a acompanhar de perto a mais recente evolução da situação dos ENVC.

Ao avaliar a compatibilidade das medidas, a Comissão terá em conta todos as disposições da UE aplicáveis em matéria de auxílios estatais. No entanto, como já foi mencionado na sua resposta à pergunta E-005205/2013, a Comissão não pode ainda tomar uma posição sobre se as medidas são compatíveis ou incompatíveis com o mercado interno.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011396/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Fight of the workers of Viana do Castelo Shipyard to save the company

This week, the workers at Viana do Castelo Shipyard (ENVC) took an important step to save the company and their jobs.

In its answer Question E-005205/2013 of June 2013 on the situation of the shipyard, the Commission acknowledged that, contrary to some reports, no decision had yet been taken as to whether the EUR 181 million received as state aid would have to be returned.

1. What is the state of play? Has the assessment that was under way been completed?

2. Is the Commission prepared to support a plan to make ENVC viable, making it possible to save all the jobs and to strengthen the current order book, as part of keeping the company publicly owned?

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

As indicated in its reply to Question E-005205/2013, the Commission decided on 23 January 2013 to initiate the formal investigation procedure in relation to a number of measures allegedly granted by Portugal to Estaleiros Navais de Viana do Castelo (ENVC) in the past. Since then, the Commission has had several exchanges of correspondence with the Portuguese authorities and is currently assessing the information submitted. In addition, the Commission is closely following the latest developments in relation to ENVC.

In assessing the compatibility of the measures, the Commission will have regard to all applicable EU State aid rules. However, as already indicated in its reply to Question E-005205/2013, the Commission cannot yet take a view on whether the measures are compatible or incompatible with the internal market.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011397/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 de outubro de 2013)

Assunto: Pressões da administração da empresa Delphi em Braga sobre os trabalhadores

Através da estrutura representativa dos trabalhadores, tivemos conhecimento de que a administração da empresa Delphi, em Braga, está a pressionar e a coagir os trabalhadores a aceitarem a redução de direitos consagrados no contrato coletivo, a deterioração das condições de trabalho e o aumento da exploração.

Em face do exposto, solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Tomou alguma medida ou efetuou alguma diligência após anteriores denúncias de desrespeito dos direitos dos trabalhadores por parte desta multinacional, por exemplo no que se refere à limitação de acesso a fundos comunitários?

2. Que outras queixas recebeu, até à data, relativas ao Grupo Delphi e, em particular, a esta empresa de Braga?

3. Que medidas podem ser tomadas para garantir todos os direitos dos trabalhadores, designadamente salariais, conhecendo-se a situação de profunda crise social na região, o aumento do desemprego e da precariedade laboral?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(26 de novembro de 2013)

1. Na sua resposta à pergunta E-6962/2012 ([1]), a Comissão comunicou que a Delphi tinha recebido financiamentos no montante de 2 907 769,53 euros do Fundo Social Europeu (FES) durante o atual e os anteriores períodos de programação. A referida empresa não beneficiou de qualquer outra subvenção desde essa altura. Tanto a Comissão como a Autoridade de Gestão nacional do FSE estão atentas à situação.

2. A Comissão não recebeu nenhuma outra queixa relativa ao Grupo Delphi.

3. O controlo e a execução das condições de trabalho e de emprego e a remuneração efetiva dos trabalhadores são questões da competência dos Estados-Membros, que possuem entidades de execução especializadas para levar a cabo essas verificações e definir as medidas corretivas adequadas. Incumbe às autoridades nacionais competentes, incluindo os tribunais, garantir que a legislação nacional de transposição das diretivas da UE é aplicada correta e eficazmente.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-006962&language=EN

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011397/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Management pressure by the Delphi company in Braga on its workers

We have been made aware by workers' representatives that the management of the Delphi company, in Braga, is putting pressure on the workers and coercing them to accept fewer rights under the collective agreement, poorer working conditions and increased exploitation.

1. Has the Commission taken any steps or any action in response to previous complaints involving violation of workers' right by this multinational, for example by limiting access to EU funds?

2. What other complaints has it received to date concerning the Delphi Group and, in particular, this company in Braga?

3. What steps can be taken to safeguard all the rights of the workers, particularly relating to pay, in view of the deep social crisis in the region, increased unemployment and job insecurity?

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

1. In its answer to Question E-6962/2012 ([1]), the Commission reported that Delphi received funding amounting to EUR 2.907.769,53 from the European Social Fund (ESF) during the current and previous programming periods. No other funding has been granted to this company since then. Both the Commission and the National ESF Managing Authority are attentive to the situation.

2. No other complaint has been received by the Commission concerning the Delphi Group.

3. The monitoring and enforcement of working and employment conditions and the actual remuneration of workers fall within the competence of the Member States, which have specialised enforcement bodies to conduct such verifications and determine the appropriate corrective measures. It is for the competent national authorities, including the courts, to ensure that the national legislation transposing the EU Directives are correctly and effectively applied.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-006962&language=EN

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011398/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 de outubro de 2013)

Assunto: Medidas de apoio ao setor do pequeno comércio e comércio tradicional

A Direção da Federação Europeia do Comércio Urbano («Vitrines d'Europe») produziu recentemente um documento sobre a péssima situação em que se encontra o comércio urbano, situação que afeta muitos milhares de micro, pequenos e médios empresários. No documento são também avançadas medida específicas que, a par da imprescindível alteração profunda das políticas macroeconómicas vigentes na generalidade dos países da UE, com especial destaque para aqueles, como Portugal, que se encontram sob um programa UE-FMI, poderiam dar um novo fôlego ao setor e ajudar a manter postos de trabalho, numa altura em que o desemprego atinge níveis nunca vistos. Uma das medidas propostas é a criação dum plano europeu de apoio ao setor do comércio.

Em face do exposto, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Tem conhecimento deste documento?

2. Considera a possibilidade de propor um plano com as características referidas, de apoio ao setor do comércio, que permita a manutenção de postos de trabalho no setor? Em caso afirmativo, quais as características desse plano?

3. Que fundos europeus poderão apoiar, a partir de 2014, a implementação de Programas de Regeneração/Requalificação Urbana que contribuam para a captação de mais habitantes, a melhoria da qualidade de vida e da qualidade das zonas comerciais e sua integração dinâmica nas cidades?

Resposta dada por Michel Barnier em nome da Comissão
(29 de novembro de 2013)

1. Não, a Comissão não tem conhecimento do documento mencionado pelos Senhores Deputados, mas gostaria de receber uma cópia do mesmo.

2. A Comissão não dispõe de dados suficientes sobre o assunto para poder investigar o problema levantado, pelo que não está em condições de responder à pergunta neste momento, mas solicita aos Senhores Deputados que lhe enviem mais pormenores.

3. De uma forma geral, a União Europeia não tem competência em matéria de planeamento urbano. Em conformidade com o princípio da subsidiariedade, os Estados-Membros são as entidades responsáveis pelo desenvolvimento urbano. No entanto, os Fundos Estruturais e de Investimento Europeus apoiarão medidas destinadas a responder aos desafios económicos, ambientais, climáticos, demográficos e sociais das cidades. No período 2014-2020, pelo menos 5 % dos recursos do Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional (FEDER) serão afetados em cada Estado-Membro a ações integradas para o desenvolvimento urbano sustentável nas cidades.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011398/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Support measures in the small and traditional retail sector

The European Federation for Urban Retail (Vitrines d'Europe) recently produced a document on the dire situation faced by retailers in towns and cities, a situation that affects many thousands of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. The document also suggests specific measures that, like the vital profound change of macroeconomic policies in force in most EU countries, with particular emphasis on those that, like Portugal, have received an EU-IMF bailout, could give a new boost to the sector and help preserve jobs, at a time when unemployment is reaching unprecedented levels. One of the proposed measures is the creation of a European plan to support the retail sector.

1. Is the Commission aware of this document?

2. Does it think it is possible to propose a plan as described above, to support the retail sector, which makes it possible to preserve jobs in the sector? If so, what are the features of this plan?

3. What EU funds could support, from 2014, the implementation of urban regeneration/rehabilitation programmes to help attract more residents, improving the quality of life and the quality of shopping areas and their dynamic integration into cities?

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

1. No, the Commission is not aware of the document mentioned by the Honourable Member, but would welcome receiving a copy thereof.

2. The Commission does not have sufficient details on the matter to be able to investigate the problem raised and is not therefore in a position to answer the question at this point. The Commission would ask the Honourable Member to provide more details.

3. In general there is no competence for urban planning on European level. According to the principle of subsidiarity Member States are the responsible bodies for urban development. Nevertheless the Structural and Investment Funds will support measurers in cities addressing economic, environmental, climate, demographic and social challenges. In the period 2014-2020 at least 5% of the European Regional Development Fund resources (ERDF) shall be allocated in each Member Stated to integrated actions for sustainable urban development in cities.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011399/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 de outubro de 2013)

Assunto: Defesa da gestão pública da água, gás e eletricidade — Reversão de concessões a privados

A população de Hamburgo, a segunda cidade da Alemanha, votou favoravelmente, em referendo, a municipalização das redes de gás e de eletricidade, atualmente geridas pelas empresas EON (alemã) e Vattenfall (sueca), respetivamente.

O referendo teve lugar após um conjunto de organizações ecologistas, de defesa do consumidor, sindicatos e igrejas locais terem lançado em 2010 uma iniciativa popular visando o regresso ao universo municipal destes serviços essenciais, no final do prazo da concessão.

No próximo dia 3 de novembro será a vez da população de Berlim se pronunciar sobre a aquisição pelo município da rede elétrica, também aqui nas mãos da Vattenfall.

A iniciativa partiu de um movimento de cidadãos, encorajados pelo êxito recente do referendo que determinou a remunicipalização da rede de água e saneamento.

De resto, o movimento em prol da remunicipalização das redes de eletricidade, gás e água tem vindo a ganhar expressão em toda a Alemanha, demonstrando os prejuízos sentidos pelas populações com a passagem destes importantes setores para privados. Populações que agora exigem que os poderes públicos assumam diretamente a gestão do gás e da eletricidade.

Segundo a Federação de Serviços Municipais (VKU), citada pela AFP, desde 2007 já se efetuaram duzentas operações de aquisição deste tipo de infraestruturas pelos órgãos municipais.

Em face do exposto, e tendo em conta as pressões da UE para a privatização de empresas do setor da água e da energia, em países sujeitos a programas UE-FMI, como é o caso de Portugal, perguntamos à Comissão Europeia:

1. Que avaliação faz destes processos de luta das populações em defesa da gestão pública da água, gás e eletricidade e da reversão de concessões a privados, que têm tido lugar em diversos países? Que medidas pensa tomar?

2. Pretende continuar a exercer as pressões supramencionadas, no sentido da privatização destes setores nos países sujeitos a programas UE-FMI?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(6 de dezembro de 2013)

Em conformidade com o princípio de neutralidade do Tratado no que se refere ao regime da propriedade nos Estados-membros (artigo 345.° do TFUE), a UE não tem uma política geral a favor das privatizações. Assim, a privatização de uma empresa é uma opção política económica que, em si, é, em princípio, da competência dos Estados-Membros.

Os países podem considerar a privatização das empresas públicas, no setor dos serviços públicos, como uma opção política para promover a eficiência dos serviços em causa e a sustentabilidade dos níveis de défice e de dívida públicos.

No caso de estas empresas públicas terem problemas significativos em matéria de governação, de dívidas e de financiamento o processo de privatização pode aumentar a sua eficiência e atrair novos investidores nomeadamente através de investimento direto estrangeiro, o que contribui para a competitividade de todo o país. Estes efeitos favoráveis são reforçados sempre que a escolha de privatização for cuidadosamente efetuada no âmbito de reformas estruturais abrangentes, incluindo a criação de um quadro regulamentar adequado para preservar, entre outros, o interesse público e o pleno acesso para todos os cidadãos.

Os países teriam de fazer as suas escolhas tendo em conta as circunstâncias específicas da empresa pública, o setor de serviços públicos e a situação económica do país. Na perspetiva da UE, as regras em matéria de auxílios estatais devem ser respeitadas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011399/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Protecting public control of water, gas and electricity — reversing privatisation

The people of Hamburg, Germany's second city, have voted in favour of making the gas and electricity networks, which are currently run by EON (German) and Vattenfall (Swedish) respectively, publicly-owned utilities.

The referendum was held after a group of environmental and consumer protection organisations, unions and local churches launched a popular initiative in 2010 to return these essential services to municipal control, at the end of the concession period.

The next day, on 3 November, the people of Berlin voted in favour of the municipal authorities taking over the electricity network, also run by Vattenfall.

The initiative started from a movement of citizens, encouraged by the recent outcome of the referendum that led to the water and sanitation network returning to municipal control.

Moreover, the movement in favour of returning the electricity, gas and water networks to municipal control has been gaining momentum throughout Germany, showing that people felt aggrieved when these important sectors were privatised; people who are now calling for public authorities to take direct control of gas and electricity.

According to the Federation of Municipal Services (VKU), as quoted by AFP, there have been 200 such acquisitions of infrastructure by municipal authorities since 2007.

In view of the EU's push to privatise water and energy companies in countries receiving EU-IMF bailouts, such as Portugal:

1. What is the Commission's assessment of these popular struggles to protect the public ownership of water, gas and electricity and to reverse privatisation, as has happened in several countries? What action will it take?

2. Will it continue to push for privatisation of these sectors, as mentioned above, in countries receiving EU-IMF bailouts?

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

In line with the Treaty principle of neutrality with regard to the system of property ownership (TFEU Art. 345), the EU does not have a general policy favouring privatisation. Hence the privatisation of a firm is an economic policy choice which, in itself, falls in principle within the competence of Member States.

Countries may consider privatisation of state-owned-enterprises (SOEs) in the public utility sector as a policy option to promote the efficiency of the services in question and the sustainability of public deficit and debt levels.

In case these SOEs have significant governance, debt and funding issues, privatisation has the potential of increasing their efficiency and attracting new investors including through foreign direct investment, contributing to the competitiveness of the country as a whole. These benign effects are supported when the choice for privatisation is carefully made within the context of comprehensive structural reforms, including putting in place an appropriate regulatory framework to preserve, *inter alia*, the public interest and full access for all citizens.

The country would make its choice taking into account the specific circumstances of the SOE, the public utility sector and the wider economic situation of the country. From the EU perspective, State aid rules need to be respected.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011400/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 de outubro de 2013)

Assunto: Não utilização e reafetação de verbas do Eixo 7 do POPH relativo à Igualdade de Género

São conhecidos os efeitos da crise sobre a situação das mulheres. Vítimas preferenciais do desemprego, dos baixos salários e da precariedade, as mulheres confrontam-se ainda com um aumento do trabalho «extra» em casa, realidade documenta por um estudo do Eurofund ([1]).

Em Portugal, numa altura em que esta situação se agrava assiste-se simultaneamente à não utilização das verbas do Eixo 7 do POPH, relativo à igualdade de género.

Solicitamos à Comissão Europeia que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Tem conhecimento do grau de execução, por Portugal, das verbas relativas ao Eixo 7 do POPH, relativo à igualdade de género?

2. Tem conhecimento do desvio de montantes deste Eixo para outras finalidades? Participou nalguma reafetação destes recursos ou recebeu alguma solicitação por parte do Governo Português nesse sentido? Em caso afirmativo, quais os montantes envolvidos e qual o seu destino?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(22 de novembro de 2013)

De acordo com as informações recebidas da autoridade de gestão do Programa Operacional Potencial Humano (POPH), as autorizações financeiras relacionadas com a igualdade entre homens e mulheres (eixo 7 e medidas correspondentes nos eixos 8 e 9) ascendem a 67 242 297,68 euros, o que representa 87 % da contribuição total do Fundo Social Europeu (FSE) para esta prioridade.

Os recursos financeiros afetados ao eixo 7 não foram reatribuídos. Além disso, a Comissão não recebeu qualquer proposta de alteração ao POPH do Estado-Membro.

A Comissão gostaria de sugerir ao Senhor Deputado que contacte a autoridade de gestão portuguesa do POPH para obter mais informações sobre esta questão:

POPH — Programa Operacional Potencial Humano
Av. Infante Santo, n.° 2 - 2.°
PT-1350-346 Lisboa
Tel: (+ 351-21) 394 48 00
Fax: (+ 351-21) 394 46 36
Endereço eletrónico: geral@poph;qren.pt
Sítio Web: http://www.poph.qren.pt/

([1]) http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/ewco/2013/02/PT1302039I.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011400/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Non-use and reallocation of funds under Axis 7 of the Human Potential Operational Programme relating to gender equality

The effects of the crisis on the situation of women are well known. Women are bearing the brunt in terms of unemployment, low pay and job insecurity, and they are facing more 'extra' work at home, a situation documented by a Eurofound study (http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/ewco/2013/02/PT1302039I.htm).

At a time when this situation is getting worse in Portugal, funds under Axis 7 of the Human Potential Operational Programme, relating to gender equality, are simultaneously going unused.

1. Is the Commission aware of the extent to which Portugal uses funds under Axis 7 of the Human Potential Operational Programme, relating to gender equality?

2. Is it aware of money under this Axis being diverted for other purposes. Has it participated in any reallocation of these resources or has it received any request from the Portuguese Government in this regard? If so, what were the sums involved and what were they earmarked for?

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

1. According to information received from the HPOP (Human Potential Operation Programme) Managing Authority, the financial commitments related to Gender Equality (Axis 7 and corresponding measures in Axis 8 and 9) amount to EUR 67 242 297.68, representing 87% of the total ESF contribution to this priority.

2. Resources assigned to axis 7 have not been reallocated. Furthermore, the Commission has not received any amending proposal to the HPOP from the Member State.

The Commission would suggest to the Honourable Members to contact the HPOP Managing Authority Portuguese for further information:

POPH — Programa Operacional Potencial Humano
Av. Infante Santo, nº 2 — 2º
1350-346 Lisboa
Tel: +351.21 394 48 00
Fax: 21 394 46 36
E-mail: geral@poph;qren.pt
Website: http://www.poph.qren.pt/

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011401/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 de outubro de 2013)

Assunto: Apoios da UE a fundações e partidos políticos europeus e em países terceiros

A Comissão Europeia cofinancia um projeto da Rede Europeia de Fundações Políticas (ENoP), que recentemente publicou um estudo sobre «apoio a partidos políticos para a democracia».

Perguntamos à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento de que montantes (oriundos do Orçamento da UE) foram, até à data, canalizados para financiar fundações políticas europeias ou partidos europeus?

2. Tem conhecimento de situações de financiamento de partidos políticos em países terceiros por parte de fundações políticas europeias ou partidos políticos europeus? Em caso afirmativo, quais os montantes em causa, quais os seus destinatários e qual a sua origem?

Resposta dada por Andris Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(22 de novembro de 2013)

O projeto de Rede Europeia das Fundações Políticas (ENoP) é cofinanciado pelo objetivo n.° 3 do programa temático «Intervenientes não estatais e autoridades locais» (Instrumento de Cooperação para o Desenvolvimento — ICD), que visa reforçar a cooperação e a coordenação de redes da sociedade civil europeia no domínio do desenvolvimento. A ENoP é uma plataforma de 70 fundações políticas emanentes de 25 partidos criada em 2006.

1. O Regulamento (CE) n.° 2004/2003 ([1]) relativo ao estatuto e ao financiamento dos partidos políticos a nível europeu, com a redação que lhe foi dada em 2007, permite o financiamento de fundações e partidos políticos europeus a partir do orçamento da UE. O regulamento é administrado pelo Parlamento Europeu. Além disso, a Comissão não concede apoio financeiro a partidos políticos europeus. A Comissão apenas financia fundações através de convites à apresentação de propostas para atividades de projetos específicos principalmente em países terceiros.

2. O Instrumento Europeu para a Democracia e os Direitos Humanos (IEDDH) prevê apoio local à democracia em 107 países ([2]). Não é permitido financiamento direto aos partidos políticos no âmbito do IEDDH e outros fundos da UE, a fim de garantir uma abordagem imparcial. A UE financia atividades implementadas por fundações, nomeadamente através do IEDDH, que proporcionam formação, intercâmbio e plataformas de diálogo entre os partidos políticos. Os programas de assistência eleitoral da UE centram-se igualmente no apoio ao desenvolvimento de quadros legislativos relacionadas com partidos políticos.

([1]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 2004/2003 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 4 de novembro de 2003, relativo ao estatuto e ao financiamento dos partidos políticos a nível europeu (JO L 297 de 15.11.2003).

([2]) Para mais informações sobre os projetos IEDDH geridos a nível de cada país, consultar o relatório IEDDH *ad hoc* «Realizar a democracia», janeiro a junho de 2011, disponível em:
www.eidhr.eu

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011401/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: EU support of European and third-country political foundations and parties

The Commission co-finances a project of the European Network of Political Foundations, which recently published a study on support for political parties for democracy.

1. Is the Commission aware of how much money (from the EU budget) has been channelled into funding European political foundations or European parties to date?

2. Is it aware of situations where political parties in third countries are funded by European political foundations or European political parties? If so, what are the sums involved, where does the money go and where does it come from?

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

The European Network of Political Foundations (ENoP) project is co-financed under objective 3 of the non-state actors and local authorities Thematic Programme under the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) instrument which aims to strengthen coordination and cooperation of European civil society networks in the area of development. ENoP is a platform of 70 political foundations from 25 parties established in 2006.

1. Regulation (EC) 2004/2003 ([1]) on political parties at European Union level as amended in 2007 allows funding from the EU budget for European political parties and foundations. The regulation is administered by Parliament. Beyond this, the Commission does not provide financial support to European political parties. The Commission only funds foundations through calls for proposals for specific project-activities primarily in third countries.

2. The European Instrument for Democracy & Human Rights (EIDHR) provides local support to democracy in 107 countries ([2]). Direct funding to political parties is not allowed under the EIDHR and other EU funds in order to guarantee a non-partisan approach. The EU funds activities implemented by foundations, notably through the EIDHR, that provide training, exchanges and platforms for dialogue between political parties. The EU electoral assistance programmes also focus on support to the development of legislative frameworks related to political parties.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 2004/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 November 2003 on the regulations governing political parties at European level and the rules regarding their funding, OJ L 297, 15.11.2003.

([2]) For more information on EIDHR projects managed at country-level, please refer to the ad hoc EIDHR Report 'Delivering on democracy', January-June 2011, available at www.eidhr.eu

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011402/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(4 de outubro de 2013)

Assunto: Inclusão das águas do Sara Ocidental no âmbito do Acordo de Pescas UE-Marrocos

O protocolo negociado pela Comissão com as autoridades do Reino de Marrocos, tendo em vista a celebração de um novo Acordo de Pescas UE-Marrocos, prevê, à semelhança do protocolo anteriormente existente, a possibilidade de pesca nas águas do Sara Ocidental. Todavia, à luz do direito internacional, Marrocos não tem soberania sobre o território do Sara Ocidental e sobre os seus recursos pesqueiros, conforme decisão do Tribunal Internacional de Justiça de Haia, de outubro de 1975.

Em face do exposto, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Por que razão não foram excluídas destes Acordo as águas situadas a sul do paralelo 27°40'?

2. Tendo em conta que outros países, como por exemplo os EUA, nos acordos que têm com Marrocos excluem explicitamente do seu âmbito o território do Sara Ocidental e os produtos oriundos desse território, por que razão não faz a UE o mesmo? Por que razão reconhece implicitamente a soberania de Marrocos sobre um território ilegalmente ocupado?

3. Considera a possibilidade de corrigir esta posição?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011405/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(4 de outubro de 2013)

Assunto: Participação dos representantes legítimos do povo sarauí na negociação de um novo Acordo de Pescas

Tendo em conta que:

— O protocolo negociado pela Comissão com as autoridades do Reino de Marrocos, tendo em vista a celebração de um novo Acordo de Pescas UE-Marrocos, prevê a possibilidade de pesca nas águas do Sara Ocidental;

— O Sara Ocidental é um território não autónomo, ilegalmente ocupado por Marrocos desde 1975 (de acordo com a decisão do Tribunal Internacional de Justiça de Haia, de Outubro de 1975);

— O povo sarauí tem representantes legítimos, que participam nas negociações em curso no quadro da ONU;

— Sucessivas resoluções da Assembleia-Geral das Nações Unidas sobre a soberania dos povos de territórios não autónomos sobre os seus recursos naturais exigiriam, no mínimo, um envolvimento dos representantes legítimos do povo sarauí na negociação de um Acordo que inclui as águas territoriais do Sara Ocidental.

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

Foram os representantes legítimos do povo sarauí (Frente Polisário) ouvidos nas negociações supramencionadas? Em caso negativo, porquê? Em caso afirmativo, em que momentos decorreu essa auscultação e quem foram os interlocutores da Comissão?

Resposta conjunta dada por Maria Dimanai em nome da Comissão
(3 de dezembro de 2013)

A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para as suas respostas à pergunta escrita E-007185/2013 e às perguntas escritas dos Senhores Deputados Raül Romeva i Rueda — P-011571/2012, Willy Meier — E-003516/2013 e Michał Tomasz Kamiński — E-010678/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011402/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Inclusion of Western Saharan waters in the EU-Morocco fisheries agreement

The protocol negotiated by the Commission with the Moroccan authorities, with a view to concluding a new EU-Morocco fisheries agreement, like the previous protocol, provides for the possibility of fishing in Western Saharan waters. However, under international law, Morocco does not have sovereignty over the territory of Western Sahara or its fisheries resources, in accordance with the decision of the International Court of Justice of October 1975.

1. Why have the waters south of 27° 40', not been excluded from these agreements?

2. Considering that other countries, such as the US, explicitly exclude the territory of Western Sahara and products from that territory from agreements they have with Morocco, why does the EU not do likewise? Why does it implicitly recognise Morocco's sovereignty over an illegally occupied territory?

3. Is it considering changing is stance?

Question for written answer E-011405/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Participation of the legitimate representatives of the Sahrawi people in negotiations for a new fisheries agreement

The protocol negotiated by the Commission with the Moroccan authorities, with a view to concluding a new EU-Morocco fisheries agreement, provides for the possibility of fishing in Western Saharan waters.

The Western Sahara is a non-self-governing territory, which has been illegally occupied by Morocco since 1975 (according to the decision of the International Court of Justice of October 1975).

The Sahrawi people have legitimate representatives who are participating in the current UN negotiations.

Successive resolutions of the General Assembly of the United Nations on the sovereignty of the people of non-self-governing territories over their natural resources require, as a minimum, the legitimate representatives of the Sahrawi people to be involved in the negotiation of any agreement that includes the territorial waters of Western Sahara.

Were the legitimate representatives of the Sahrawi people (Polisario Front) heard at the above negotiations? If not, why not? If so, when was this hearing and who spoke on behalf of the Commission?

Joint answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(3 December 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-007185/2013 and to its answers to written questions P-011571/2012 by Mr Raül Romeva i Rueda, E-003516/2013 by Mr Willy Meier, and E-010678/2013 by Mr Michał Tomasz Kamiński.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011403/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(4 de outubro de 2013)

Assunto: Promoção do uso da bicicleta como meio de transporte utilitário e recreativo nas cidades

Numa reunião recente com a MUBi — Associação pela Mobilidade Urbana em Bicicleta, fui alertado para muitos dos problemas e dificuldades que obstaculizam o uso da bicicleta como meio de transporte utilitário e recreativo nas cidades.

Entre as várias propostas avançadas pela MUBi para promover o uso da bicicleta para deslocações em meio urbano estão os sistemas de partilha de bicicletas («bikesharing») em meio urbano, de cariz essencialmente utilitário, pensados como alternativa ou complemento a outros meios de transporte.

Algumas tentativas de implementação destes sistemas (ditos de terceira geração) têm sido frustradas em face dos custos extremamente elevados envolvidos.

Assim, em face do exposto, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que programas e medidas poderão apoiar a implementação de sistemas de partilha de bicicletas («bikesharing») em meio urbano, de terceira geração?

2. Que programas e medidas poderão apoiar a realização de estudos sobre a viabilidade de implementação destes sistemas?

3. Quais as taxas de cofinanciamento previstas em cada caso?

4. Que outras medidas da UE podem apoiar o uso da bicicleta como meio de transporte utilitário e recreativo nas cidades?

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(18 de novembro de 2013)

A iniciativa Civitas ([1]) promove o desenvolvimento e a avaliação de novas abordagens para a segurança dos ciclistas nas cidades (orçamento: 200 milhões de euros desde 2002). Foram aplicadas mais de 120 medidas relativas ao uso da bicicleta nas 62 cidades Civitas, incluindo 16 medidas públicas no domínio do uso da bicicleta e da partilha de bicicletas («bikesharing») em 14 cidades. O nível habitual de cofinanciamento para a iniciativa Civitas é de cerca de 50 %.

O programa STEER ([2]), o pilar dos transportes do Programa Energia Inteligente — Europa, também concedeu 14 milhões de euros a 12 projetos-piloto europeus relacionados com o uso da bicicleta.

No atual período de programação, foram afetados 7,82 mil milhões de euros (9,63 % do total do FEDER e do Fundo de Coesão no domínio dos transportes) aos transportes urbanos e à promoção de transportes urbanos limpos. Para o próximo período de programação a promoção da mobilidade urbana multimodal sustentável pode ser apoiada pelos Fundos Estruturais e de Investimento Europeus (EIE) no caso de as medidas contribuírem para objetivos com baixas emissões de carbono ou de medidas ligados a ações integradas de desenvolvimento urbano sustentável. A elegibilidade dos projetos concretos depende do objetivo da medida e da sua integração num conceito mais lato. As taxas de cofinanciamento dependem do tipo de região (regiões mais desenvolvidas, regiões em transição, região menos desenvolvidas).

([1]) http://www.civitas-initiative.org/thematic-categories/public-bicycles-bicycle-sharing
([2]) http://www.managenergy.net/

Por último, na competência da UE no domínio do turismo ([3]), vários projetos de ações de sensibilização e de criação de redes em favor do desenvolvimento de itinerários de circuitos ciclistas de longa distância, foram cofinanciados pela a ação preparatória «turismo sustentável», bem como pelo programa «Competitividade e Inovação» ([4]).

A Comissão gostaria de remeter o Senhor Deputado para a resposta que deu à Pergunta E-009884/2013 ([5]).

([3]) O Tratado de Lisboa confere à União competência para desenvolver ações destinadas a apoiar, coordenar ou completar a ação dos Estados-Membros na área do turismo. No entanto, a competência no domínio das infraestruturas de turismo corresponde às autoridades regionais/nacionais.

([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/iron-curtain-trail/year-2/index_en.htm e http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/sustainable-tourism/index_en.htm
Além disso, a Comissão apoiou com subvenções projetos relacionados com a coordenação central da rede Eurovelo e a promoção de itinerários verdes.

([5]) Disponível em: http://www.cc.cec/basil/business/viewQuestions.do?listType=nolist&questionId=105049&projectNumber=1&showTab=project

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011403/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Promoting cycling as a practical and recreational means of urban transport

At a recent meeting with the Urban Bicycle Mobility Association (MUBi), I was made aware of the many problems and difficulties facing cycling as a practical and recreational means of urban transport.

The various proposals made by MUBi to promote cycling for urban travel include urban bike-sharing schemes, which are essentially practical in nature, to replace or complement other modes of transport.

Attempts to implement such 'third-generation' schemes have been thwarted by the extremely high costs involved.

1.What programmes and measures could support the implementation of third-generation urban bike-sharing schemes?

2.What programmes and measures could support feasibility studies for the implementation of such schemes?

3.What levels of co-financing are envisaged in each case?

4.What other EU measures can support cycling as a practical and recreational means of urban transport?

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

The CIVITAS Initiative ([1]) promotes the development and evaluation of new approaches to safe cycling in cities (budget: EUR 200 million since 2002). Over 120 cycling-related measures have been implemented in the 62 CIVITAS cities, including 16 public bicycle and bicycle-sharing measures in 14 cities. The usual level of co-funding for CIVITAS is around 50%.

The STEER Programme ([2]), which is the transport pillar of the Intelligent Energy-Europe programme, has also provided EUR 14 million to 12 European pilot projects related to cycling.

In the current programming period, EUR 7.82 billion (9.63% of the total ERDF and Cohesion Funds for transport) are allocated to urban transport and the promotion of clean urban transport. For the next programming period the promotion of sustainable multi-modal urban mobility can be supported by the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI) in case measures contribute to a low-carbon objective or measures that are linked to integrated actions for sustainable urban development. The eligibility of concrete projects depends on the objective of the measure and the integration in a wider concept. Co-funding rates depend on the type of region (more developed region, transition region, less developed region).

Finally, within the competence of the EU in the field of tourism ([3]), several awareness-raising and networking-building projects for the development of long-distance cycling routes have been co-financed by the Preparatory Action 'Sustainable Tourism' as well as by the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme ([4]).

The Commission would also like to refer the Honourable Member to its reply to the Question E-009884/2013 ([5]).

([1]) http://www.civitas-initiative.org/thematic-categories/public-bicycles-bicycle-sharing
([2]) http://www.managenergy.net/
([3]) The Lisbon Treaty grants the Union the competence to carry out actions to support coordinate or supplement the actions of the Member States in the tourism field. However, the competence for tourism infrastructure lies within regional/national authorities.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/iron-curtain-trail/year-2/index_en.htm and http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/sustainable-tourism/index_en.htm The Commission supported with grants projects related to the EuroVelo Network central coordination as well as to greenways' promotion.
([5]) Available at http://www.cc.cec/basil/business/viewQuestions.do?listType=nolist&questionId=105049&projectNumber=1&showTab=project

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011404/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(4 de outubro de 2013)

Assunto: Incumprimento da legislação sobre disposições especiais aplicáveis aos veículos destinados ao transporte de passageiros

Numa reunião recente com a Associação Portuguesa de Deficientes (APD) fui alertado para o incumprimento generalizado da Diretiva 2001/85/CE, de 20 de novembro de 2001, relativa a disposições especiais aplicáveis aos veículos destinados ao transporte de passageiros com mais de oito lugares sentados além do lugar do condutor. De acordo com esta associação, são muitos os veículos que não estão dotados dos equipamentos auxiliares de embarque, como rampas, elevadores ou sistemas de rebaixamento, impedindo assim, ou limitando fortemente, o acesso aos cidadãos com mobilidade reduzida.

Em face do exposto, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que avaliação faz da aplicação da referida Diretiva e dos seus impactos na melhoria da independência e da qualidade de vida dos cidadãos com mobilidade reduzida? Que medidas pensa tomar neste domínio?

2. Recebeu, até ao momento, alguma queixa motivada pelas razões supramencionadas? Em caso afirmativo, que diligências foram efetuadas até ao momento?

Resposta dada por Antonio Tajani em nome da Comissão
(25 de novembro de 2013)

A Diretiva 2001/85/CE estabelece prescrições técnicas harmonizadas para a homologação de novos autocarros e camionetas de passageiros. Esta diretiva substituiu os requisitos nacionais a partir de 29 de outubro de 2011 no que respeita à venda na UE de todos os novos autocarros e camionetas de passageiros.

De acordo com o artigo 3.°, n.° 1, todos os autocarros urbanos de piso rebaixado devem ser acessíveis a passageiros com mobilidade reduzida. Os requisitos de conceção aplicáveis a esses veículos estão previstos no anexo VII da diretiva ([1]). Em especial, os requisitos em matéria de acessibilidade só são obrigatórios para os autocarros urbanos de piso rebaixado e não para outras categorias de veículos ([2]). Além disso, antes de 29 de outubro de 2011 era possível vender autocarros urbanos que não respeitassem os requisitos harmonizados da Diretiva 2001/85/CE. Por conseguinte, a situação quanto à acessibilidade nos autocarros urbanos tende a melhorar à medida que a frota vai sendo renovada.

A Comissão analisa regularmente a legislação da UE, de forma a satisfazer melhor as necessidades das pessoas com deficiência e com mobilidade reduzida. Por exemplo, em dezembro de 2011, a Comissão apresentou uma proposta de enquadramento jurídico para incluir sistemas de alerta sonoro em veículos elétricos, de forma a alertar os peões com deficiências visuais para a aproximação de um veículo. Em 2012, propôs clarificar que os utilizadores de cadeiras de rodas têm acesso prioritário em relação aos carrinhos de bébé nos autocarros urbanos. Por último, em 2012, a Comissão apresentou uma proposta para harmonizar os requisitos de aprovação de veículos privados adaptados para passageiros utilizadores de cadeiras de rodas. As propostas referidas estão atualmente na fase final de adoção, devendo entrar em vigor em 2014.

Os serviços da Comissão consideram que a Diretiva 2001/85/CE prevê um enquadramento eficaz no que respeita à melhoria no que respeita à acessibilidade dos autocarros urbanos. A Comissão não tem conhecimento de qualquer aplicação incorreta desta diretiva.

([1]) Incluindo sistemas de rebaixamento, altura dos degraus, corrimãos, rampas, etc.
([2]) Por exemplo, autocarros.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011404/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Non-compliance with legislation on special provisions for vehicles used for the carriage of passengers

At a recent meeting with the Portuguese Association of Disabled Persons (APD), I was made aware of widespread non-compliance with Directive 2001/85/EC of 20 November 2001 relating to special provisions for vehicles used for the carriage of passengers comprising more than eight seats in addition to the driver's seat. According to the association, many vehicles are not fitted with boarding aids, such as ramps, lifts or kneeling systems, thus preventing, or severely limiting, access for people with reduced mobility.

1. What is the Commission's assessment of the above Directive and its impact on improving the independence and quality of life of people with reduced mobility? What steps will it take in this area?

2. To date, has it received any complaints on the above grounds? If so, what action has been taken up to now?

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

Directive 2001/85/EC sets out harmonised technical prescriptions for the type-approval of new buses and coaches. This directive replaced national requirements from 29 October 2011 for the sale in the EU of all new buses and coaches.

According to Article 3(1), all urban low-floor buses shall be accessible for passengers with reduced mobility. The design requirements applying to these vehicles are laid down in Annex VII of the directive ([1]). Accessibility requirements in particular are only mandatory for low floor urban buses and not for other categories of vehicles ([2]). Furthermore, before 29 October 2011, it was possible to sell urban buses not meeting the harmonised requirements of Directive 2001/85/EC. Therefore the situation on the accessibility of urban buses improves as the vehicle fleet is renewed.

The Commission reviews EU legislation on a regular basis to better meet the needs of people with disabilities and with reduced mobility. For instance in December 2011, the Commission proposed a legal framework to include sound alert systems in electric vehicles in order to warn visually impaired pedestrians that a vehicle is approaching them. In 2012, it proposed to clarify that wheelchairs users always have priority access over prams in urban buses. Finally, in 2012 the Commission proposed to harmonise the approval requirements of private cars adapted for passengers using wheelchairs . These proposals are currently in their final phase of adoption and should enter into force in 2014.

The assessment of the Commission's services is that Directive 2001/85/EC provides a satisfactory framework for the improvement of urban buses' accessibility. The Commission is not aware of any incorrect implementation of this directive.

([1]) Including kneeling system, height of steps, handrail, ramp, etc.
([2]) e.g. coaches.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011406/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(4 de outubro de 2013)

Assunto: Precariedade laboral no setor dos espetáculos e do audiovisual

Numa reunião recente com sindicatos representativos do setor dos espetáculos e do audiovisual, fui alertado para a existência e progressiva generalização de situações de grande precariedade laboral entre estes trabalhadores, situação que no caso português se agravou sobremaneira deste a aplicação do programa UE-FMI.

Tendo em conta os financiamentos da UE atribuídos a projetos na área da cultura e do audiovisual, solicito à Comissão Europeia que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Está a atribuição de financiamentos da UE nestes domínios condicionada ao respeito pelos direitos dos trabalhadores e, designadamente, à existência de vínculos laborais estáveis e seguros?

2. Que garantias tem a Comissão de que não é atribuído financiamento da UE a projetos ou agentes que promovem o recurso a trabalhadores precários e o aumento da precariedade laboral?

3. Pensa tomar alguma medida a este respeito, para evitar este tipo de situações?

Resposta dada por László Andorem em nome da Comissão
(26 de novembro de 2013)

A Comissão Europeia apresentou no ano passado a Comunicação «Promover os Setores Culturais e Criativos ao Serviço do Crescimento e do Emprego na UE». Estes setores representam cerca de 4,5 % do total da economia empresarial na Europa. Contando com mais de três milhões de pessoas (artistas, profissionais da cultura e outros) a trabalhar em quase um milhão de empresas, o potencial dos setores culturais e criativos, incluindo as indústrias do entretenimento e do audiovisual, está ainda por explorar plenamente. Por esta razão, a Comissão Europeia acredita que investir na cultura, sem reduzir o seu financiamento, é um investimento inteligente no crescimento e em empregos com futuro, especialmente na difícil conjuntura atual de restrições orçamentais que afeta muitos países europeus.

Através dos seus diferentes fundos e programas, todos dotados dos seus próprios objetivos e especificidades, a União Europeia tem a possibilidade de apoiar projetos dos setores audiovisual e do espetáculo, desde que para tal preencham os critérios de elegibilidade estabelecidos nas respetivas bases jurídicas e subsequentes convites à apresentação de candidaturas ([1]). A forma como esses projetos se traduzem concretamente nos contratos ou acordos de subvenção celebrados com os candidatos selecionados é da responsabilidade dos Estados-Membros, no caso de programas de gestão partilhada, como o Fundo Social Europeu, ou da Comissão, tratando-se de programas que são da sua responsabilidade direta, como o programa MEDIA ([2]).

No que diz respeito aos programas operacionais que competem diretamente à Comissão, é exigido aos candidatos e concorrentes selecionados o cumprimento de todas as obrigações legais que lhes sejam aplicáveis, nomeadamente as decorrentes da legislação vigente em matéria laboral, fiscal e social.

([1]) http://europa.eu/about-eu/funding-grants/index_pt.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/culture/media/about/who-can-i-contact_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011406/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Job insecurity in the entertainment and audiovisual sector

At a recent meeting with unions in the entertainment and audiovisual sector, I was made aware that serious job insecurity was becoming increasingly common among these workers, a situation that, in the case of Portugal, has got significantly worse since the implementation of the EU-IMF programme.

In view of EU funding allocated to projects in the cultural and audiovisual field:

1. Is the allocation of EU funding in these areas conditional upon the respect of workers' rights and, in particular, the existence of stable and secure employment conditions?

2. What guarantees does the Commission have that EU funding has not been allocated to projects or agents that promote the use of casual workers and increased job insecurity?

3. Is it planning to take any action in this regard, to avoid this kind of situation?

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

The European Commission presented last year a communication on 'Promoting the cultural and creative sectors for growth and jobs in the EU'. These sectors represent nearly 4.5% of the total business economy in Europe. With over three million people (artists, culture and other professionals) working in almost one million enterprises, the potential of the cultural and creative sectors, including entertainment and audiovisual, has yet to be unleashed in full. This is why the European Commission believes that investing in culture, not curtailing its funding, is a smart investment in growth and jobs with a future, especially in the present difficult times of budget constraints that many countries across Europe experience.

Through its various funds and programs, which all have their own specificities and aims, the European Union can support projects in the entertainment and audiovisual sectors, provided that they meet the eligibility criteria established in the legal bases and the subsequent calls for proposals ([1]). How the latter are concretely translated in the contracts or grant agreements with the successful applicants is the responsibility of either the Member States for shared managed programs such as the European Social Fund or the Commission for the programs which fall under its direct responsibility, such as the Media program ([2]).

As regards programs falling under the direct responsibility of the Commission, successful applicants and tenderers are asked to comply with any legal obligations incumbent on them, notably those resulting from employment law, tax and social legislation.

([1]) See http://europa.eu/about-eu/funding-grants/
([2]) See http://ec.europa.eu/culture/media/about/who-can-i-contact_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011407/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(4 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Paralización del proyecto Castor por riesgo de accidente nuclear

Considerando las preguntas sobre el proyecto Castor: E-007642/2013, E-007566/2013, E-004004/2013, E-004005/2013, E-005051/2012, E-005052/2012, E-4299/09 y la presentada el 2 de octubre 2013;

Considerando que la zona norte de la costa de Castellón registró un total de 12 seísmos entre las 22.00 horas del martes 1 de octubre y la mañana del 3 de octubre, el mayor de una magnitud de 4,2 y el menor de 1,4 grados en la escala de Richter, según ha informado el Instituto Geográfico Nacional; considerando que los seísmos afectaron a la costa valenciana y catalana;

Considerando que los responsables del proyecto Castor y el Ministro de Industria, Energía y Turismo han admitido que los temblores tienen una relación directa con la inyección de gas en el almacén subterráneo Castor;

Considerando la proximidad de las centrales nucleares de Ascò y Vandellòs al epicentro de los seísmos y el antecedente del accidente nuclear de Fukushima en marzo de 2011;

Considerando la Directiva 2009/71/Euratom sobre seguridad nuclear y las recomendaciones del European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group (ENSREG) para España, en las que se contempla el riesgo de accidente nuclear debido a seísmos, así como la propuesta de modificación de la Directiva de junio 2013 para aumentar la seguridad nuclear, la cual aclara que «también compete a los Estados miembros aplicar las recomendaciones. En caso de retraso o no aplicación de las recomendaciones, la Comisión Europea puede organizar una misión de verificación en el Estado miembro.»;

¿Exigirá la Comisión la paralización del proyecto Castor y el cierre de las centrales nucleares anteriormente citadas por los riesgos sísmicos registrados en la zona, especialmente después de la tragedia de Fukushima? ¿Abrirá un proceso de infracción a España por permitir la presencia del proyecto Castor a pesar de su impacto medioambiental y los riesgos indirectos derivados? ¿Pedirá la Comisión al Banco Europeo de Inversiones que empiece una investigación independiente sobre los seísmos y considere la posibilidad de desinvertir el capital por ser un proyecto insostenible bajo el marco comunitario? ¿Cree que las recomendaciones europeas «post-fukushima» deberían ser vinculantes para los Estados miembros?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(29 de noviembre de 2013)

1. El control de la seguridad de las centrales nucleares es responsabilidad de las autoridades reguladoras nacionales, quienes, de conformidad con la Directiva sobre seguridad nuclear ([1]), deben tener competencias para suspender la actividad de la central en caso necesario. En el marco de las pruebas de resistencia, las centrales nucleares de Ascó y Vandellós fueron sometidas a una evaluación de riesgos sísmicos. La autoridad de seguridad nuclear española (el CSN) llegó a la conclusión de que el cierre de estas centrales no estaba justificado ([2]).

2. En cuanto a la conformidad del proyecto Castor con la Directiva sobre la evaluación del impacto ambiental ([3]), la Comisión se remite a sus respuestas a las preguntas escritas E-3789/2010 ([4]) y E-1478/2011 ([5]). Tras llevar a cabo una investigación, la Comisión no pudo determinar la existencia de una infracción de la normativa ambiental pertinente.

([1]) Directiva 2009/71/Euratom del Consejo, de 25 de junio de 2009, por la que se establece un marco comunitario para la seguridad nuclear de las instalaciones nucleares, DO L 172 de 2.7.2009, pp. 18-22.
([2]) No obstante, se indicaron algunas acciones de mejora. Para más información sobre los resultados de las pruebas de resistencia en España y el seguimiento que se ha realizado de las mismas, se remite a Su Señoría a la siguiente página web del sitio del Grupo Europeo de Reguladores de la Seguridad Nuclear (Ensreg): http://www.ensreg.eu/EU-Stress-Tests/Country-Specific-Reports/EU-Member-States/Spain, en particular al Informe final nacional y al Plan de acción nacional.
([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, DO L 26 de 28.1.2012, p. 1.
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2010-3789&language=ES
([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=WQ&reference=E-2011-011478&language=ES

3. El Banco Europeo de Inversiones (BEI) es consciente de la suspensión de la inyección de gas en la zona del proyecto tras el registro de actividad sísmica y de las medidas tomadas por las autoridades españolas. El BEI entiende que se están llevando a cabo estudios técnicos suplementarios y que estos serán revisados por las autoridades españolas. Una vez se conozcan sus conclusiones, el BEI las examinará y reaccionará en consecuencia. Por tanto, el BEI no puede pronunciarse sobre las posibles consecuencias financieras en este punto.

4. La Comisión tiene previsto presentar un informe, en 2014, sobre la aplicación de las recomendaciones de las pruebas de resistencia, en asociación con las autoridades reguladoras nacionales que se han encargado de la elaboración de los planes de acción nacionales. Las enseñanzas extraídas de las pruebas de resistencia también se incorporaron a la propuesta de la Comisión de revisión de la Directiva sobre seguridad nuclear ([6]), según la cual se establecería un sistema obligatorio europeo de evaluaciones por pares periódicas y se garantizaría la aplicación de cualquier recomendación técnica que fuera surgiendo. Dicha propuesta está siendo debatida en el Consejo.

([6]) Propuesta de Directiva del Consejo por la que se modifica la Directiva 2009/71/Euratom, por la que se establece un marco comunitario para la seguridad nuclear de las instalaciones nucleares, COM(2013) 715.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011407/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Suspension of the Castor project because of the risk of a nuclear incident

Previous questions E-007642/2013, E-007566/2013, E-004004/2013, E-004005/2013, E-005051/2012, E-005052/2012, E-4299/09 concerned the Castor project, as well as the question submitted on 2 October 2013.

Twelve earthquakes were recorded in the area of the northern coast of Castellón between the hours of 10 p.m. on Tuesday 1 October 2013 and the morning of 3 October, the strongest of them measuring 4.2 and the weakest 1.4 on the Richter scale, as reported by the Spanish National Geographic Institute. The earthquakes struck the coasts of Valencia and Catalonia.

Those in charge of the Castor project and the Minister for Industry, Energy and Tourism have admitted that the tremors are directly related to the injection of gas into the Castor underground storage facility.

The Ascó and Vandellòs nuclear power plants are close to the epicentre of the earthquakes, bringing to mind the precedent of the Fukushima nuclear incident in March 2011.

Directive 2009/71/Euratom on nuclear safety and the recommendations of the European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group (ENSREG) for Spain consider the risk of nuclear incidents due to earthquakes, and the proposal of June 2013 to amend the directive in order to increase nuclear safety clarifies that 'Member States are also responsible for implementing the recommendations. In case there is a delay or recommendations are not implemented, the European Commission can organise a verification mission to the Member State.'

Will the Commission demand the suspension of the Castor project and the closure of the aforementioned nuclear power plants, due to the risk of earthquakes in the area, especially after the Fukushima tragedy? Will it open an infringement proceeding against Spain for permitting the Castor project to go ahead despite its environmental impact and the indirect risks associated with it? Will the Commission ask the European Investment Bank to launch an independent investigation into the earthquakes and to consider divesting its capital, as this is an unsustainable project within the Community framework? Does it believe that 'post-Fukushima' European recommendations should be binding on Member States?

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

1. The supervision of the safety of nuclear power plants (NPPs) is the responsibility of national regulators, who, in accordance with the Nuclear Safety Directive (NSD) ([1]), should have powers to suspend the operation of the plant if necessary. As part of the stress tests, the Ascó and Vandellòs NPPs were subject to an evaluation against earthquake risks. The Spanish nuclear safety authority (CSN) concluded that it was not warranted to close either plant ([2]).

2. Regarding the compliance of the Castor project with the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive ([3]), the Commission refers to the replies given to Written Questions E-3789/2010 ([4]) and E-1478/2011 ([5]). Following an investigation, the Commission could not find a breach of the relevant environmental legislation.

3. The European Investment Bank (EIB) is aware of the suspension of gas injection at the project site following seismic activity and of the actions taken by the Spanish authorities. The EIB understands that additional technical studies are being performed and will be reviewed by the Spanish authorities. Once their conclusions are known, the EIB will examine and react to them accordingly. Therefore it is not possible for the EIB to comment on possible financial consequences at this point.

([1]) Council Directive 2009/71/Euratom of 25 June 2009 establishing a Community framework for the nuclear safety of nuclear installations, OJ L 172, 2.7.2009, p. 18-22.

([2]) Certain improvement actions were however identified. For more information on the results of and the follow up given to the stress tests in Spain, the Honourable Member is referred to the following webpage on the website of the European Nuclear Safety Regulators' Group (ENSREG): http://www.ensreg.eu/EU-Stress-Tests/Country-Specific-Reports/EU-Member-States/Spain, in particular to the final National Report and to the National Action Plan.

([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, OJ L 26, 28.1.2012, p. 1.

([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2010-3789&language=EN

([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=WQ&reference=E-2011-011478&language=EN

4. The Commission intends to report on the implementation of the stress test recommendations in 2014, in partnership with national regulators who have developed national action plans. The lessons learnt from the stress tests were also incorporated into the Commission's proposal for a revision of the NSD ([6]), which would set up a mandatory EU system of periodic peer reviews and ensure the implementation of any technical recommendations that arise. The proposal is being discussed in the Council.

([6]) Proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive 2009/71/Euratom establishing a Community framework for the nuclear safety of nuclear installations, COM(2013)715.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011408/13
a la Comisión
Iratxe García Pérez (S&D), Josefa Andrés Barea (S&D) y Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(4 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Defensa de la sanidad vegetal de la UE

En noviembre de 2012, la UE anunció medidas contra el riesgo de infección de las plantaciones europeas, debido a la importación de cítricos con Guignardia citricarpa (Black Spot) procedentes de Sudáfrica. La Comisión reaccionaba así al incremento registrado del número de intercepciones desde 2011 y a la falta de colaboración por parte de la administración sudafricana. En consecuencia, la Comisión anunció medidas drásticas, como la paralización de las importaciones de cítricos de la mencionada procedencia, en caso de que se llegara a una quinta interceptación y en tanto en cuanto la administración sudafricana no aportara suficientes garantías de seguridad.

Sin embargo, habiéndose producido esa quinta interceptación a finales de agosto, la Comisión sigue sin reaccionar alegando que nos encontramos al final de la campaña, «analizando la situación» o evaluando posibles medidas.

¿Por qué razón no procede la Comisión al cierre cautelar inmediato de la frontera a estas importaciones, cuando los riesgos para la sanidad vegetal de la UE están ya más que probados?

¿Existen nuevos elementos para que la Comisión no actúe según sus propias directrices, anunciadas en el mes de marzo?

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

En la presente temporada de exportación, la Comisión ha estado siguiendo con suma atención las interceptaciones de cítricos procedentes de Sudáfrica debido a la presencia de *Guignardia citricarpa*, causante de la mancha negra de los cítricos. Asimismo, ha estado regularmente en contacto y se ha reunido con las autoridades sudafricanas y con las partes interesadas, tanto de ese país como de la UE.

La Comisión y las autoridades sudafricanas se han reunido después de la quinta interceptación de cítricos afectados, a principios de septiembre, a fin de aclarar posibles factores atenuantes y medidas alternativas. Al mismo tiempo, Sudáfrica se comprometió a poner en vigor un protocolo mucho más estricto para la certificación de los cítricos. Ante este compromiso se decidió que la UE no tomaría nuevas medidas inmediatamente. No obstante, hasta entonces, varias partidas que ya habían salido del territorio sudafricano resultaron estar infestadas a su llegada a la Unión Europea. Por esta razón, la Comisión está estudiando los próximos pasos. Cualquier posible medida debe ser debatida y aprobada por los Estados miembros en el Comité Permanente.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011408/13
to the Commission
Iratxe García Pérez (S&D), Josefa Andrés Barea (S&D) and Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Protecting EU plant health

In November 2012, the EU announced measures to combat the risk of infection to European plantations, due to imports of citrus fruit with *Guignardia citricarpa* (black spot) from South Africa. This was the Commission's response to the increase recorded in the number of cases detected since 2011 and the lack of cooperation from the South African authorities. Consequently, the Commission announced drastic measures, such as the suspension of imports of citrus fruit from South Africa were a fifth case to be detected and were the South African authorities to continue not to provide sufficient safety guarantees.

However, despite this fifth case having been detected at the end of August, the Commission has still not reacted, claiming that the season is ending and it is 'analysing the situation' or evaluating possible measures.

Why does the Commission not immediately close the border to these imports as a precaution, when the risks to EU plant health have already been very clearly demonstrated?

Is there any new information to explain why the Commission does not act according to its own guidelines, announced in March?

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

For the current export season, the Commission has been monitoring very closely the interceptions of citrus fruit from South Africa due to the presence of 'Guignardia citricarpa' or citrus black spot. In addition, the Commission has been in regular contact and met the South African authorities and South African and EU stakeholders.

The Commission met South African authorities after the fifth interception of citrus black spot at the beginning of September to clarify mitigating factors and alternative measures. At that time South Africa committed to put in place a much stricter protocol for the certification of citrus fruit. Given this commitment, it was decided that the EU should not immediately take further measures. However, by that time, several consignments that had already left the South African territory were found infested at their arrival into the European Union. For that reason, the Commission is considering the next steps. Any potential measures need to be discussed and approved by Member States in the Standing Committee.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011410/13
à la Commission
Agnès Le Brun (PPE) et Françoise Grossetête (PPE)
(4 octobre 2013)

Objet: Oignon et échalote

En réponse à la question écrite E-005028/2013 concernant l'inscription de certaines variétés d'allium au catalogue officiel de l'échalote, la Commission a indiqué que l'Office communautaire des variétés végétales (OCVV) n'exerçait aucun contrôle sur l'inscription de nouvelles variétés au catalogue commun des espèces agricoles, conformément aux dispositions de la directive 2002/55/CE.

Par ailleurs, la Commission a déclaré qu'elle prendrait contact avec les autorités compétentes en France et aux Pays-Bas afin d'évaluer la nécessité de se pencher sur le protocole technique s'appliquant aux variétés d'échalote.

1. Si l'OCVV n'exerce aucun contrôle sur l'inscription de nouvelles variétés au catalogue commun des espèces agricoles, quelle institution ou quel organe de l'Union européenne est compétent pour effectuer ce contrôle et faire respecter la directive 2002/55/CE ainsi que le protocole de reconnaissance des échalotes établi en 2005? La Commission estime-t-elle que ce contrôle est suffisant?

2. Dispose-t-elle aujourd'hui de plus amples informations concernant les défaillances qui ont conduit à l'inscription de variétés d'oignons au catalogue officiel de l'échalote? S'il est avéré que certaines variétés inscrites au catalogue officiel de l'échalote sont en réalité des variétés d'oignons, comment envisage-t-elle de faire respecter la directive 2002/55/CE et le protocole de reconnaissance des échalotes?

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

Les États membres sont responsables de la mise en œuvre des dispositions de la directive 2002/55/CE ([1]), et en particulier de l'admission de variétés aux catalogues nationaux. La Commission adopte les règles régissant l'admission de ces variétés et applique pour ce faire les divers protocoles adoptés par l'Office communautaire des variétés végétales (OCVV). Le protocole de l'OCVV s'appliquant aux échalotes est le TP 46/2 du 1er avril 2009.

Les services de la Commission sont conscients des questions soulevées en ce qui concerne les caractéristiques des variétés d'oignons et d'échalotes. C'est pourquoi ils ont demandé à l'OCVV d'examiner ce point de manière approfondie. Sur la base des observations formulées par l'OCVV, la Commission déterminera les suites à donner.

([1]) Directive 2002/55/CE du Conseil du 13 juin 2002 concernant la commercialisation des semences de légumes (JO L 193 du 20.7.2002, p. 33).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011410/13
to the Commission
Agnès Le Brun (PPE) and Françoise Grossetête (PPE)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Onions and shallots

In answer to Question E-005028/2013 on the inclusion of certain allium varieties in the official shallot catalogue, the Commission stated that the Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO) had no control whatsoever over the inclusion of new varieties in the Common Catalogue of Agricultural Plant Species pursuant to the provisions of Directive 2002/55/EC.

Moreover, the Commission stated that it would contact the competent authorities in France and the Netherlands to assess the necessity of working on the technical protocol for shallot types.

1. If the CPVO has no control over the inclusion of new varieties in the Common Catalogue of Agricultural Plant Species, what institution or what body is responsible for this control and for enforcing Directive 2002/55/EC as well as the protocol recognising shallots established in 2005? Does the Commission think that this control is sufficient?

2. Does the Commission now have more information on the failings that led to the inclusion of onion varieties in the official shallot catalogue? Were it to be shown that some varieties included in the official shallot catalogue were actually onion varieties, how does the Commission plan to enforce Directive 2002/55/EC and the protocol recognising shallots?

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

Member States are responsible for the implementation of the provisions of Directive 2002/55/EC ([1]), and in particular, the acceptance of varieties in their national catalogues. The Commission adopts rules for the acceptance of those varieties, following the respective protocols adopted by the Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO). The CPVO protocol for shallots is TP 46/2 of 1 April 2009.

The Commission is aware of the issues raised concerning the characteristics of onion and shallot varieties. Therefore, they have asked the CPVO to examine the matter further. On the basis of input from the CPVO, the Commission will determine its further actions.

([1]) Council Directive 2002/55/EC of 13 June 2002 on the marketing of vegetable seed, OJ L 193, 20.7.2002, p. 33.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011411/13
à la Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(4 octobre 2013)

Objet: Situation des sans-abri en Hongrie et en Europe

La Hongrie vient d'adopter une loi qui pénalise les sans-abri avec des sanctions drastiques (amendes, travaux pour la communauté et peine de prison). Les personnes sans domicile seront bannies des zones d'intérêt touristique en vertu d'une loi destinée à «protéger l'ordre public, la sécurité, la santé et les valeurs culturelles». Ce qui est sous-jacent avec cette nouvelle loi, qui est entrée en vigueur le 1er octobre, c'est la criminalisation de la pauvreté sous toutes ses facettes.

En Europe, au cours des dernières années, le nombre de sans-abri est en augmentation, renforcé par la crise. De plus en plus de gens sont touchés par la précarité. Il est alors difficile de trouver un toit. Un nombre grandissant d'Européens passent la nuit dans leur voiture, dans de petits hôtels ou toutes sortes de logements provisoires. Les jeunes, les immigrants, les femmes et les travailleurs pauvres sont les catégories les plus touchées, mais aussi les enfants en sont victimes.

Le Parlement s'est prononcé afin que des mesures soient prises au niveau européen contre l'exclusion sociale qu'engendre le sans-abrisme et avait fixé l'objectif de régler définitivement ces problèmes d'ici à 2015.

1. Quelles mesures la Commission compte-t-elle prendre afin de protéger les droits fondamentaux des personnes sans domicile touchées par une loi qui va à l'encontre de la liberté de circulation et des Droits de l'homme?

2. Quelles mesures la Commission a-t-elle prises afin de lutter contre l'exclusion sociale sous toutes ses formes afin de préserver les droits des personnes touchées par ce phénomène?

3. Où en est la Commission quant à l'objectif fixé de régler définitivement le problème des sans-abri d'ici 2015? Où en sont les États membres dans ce domaine?

4. Quels seront les fonds prévus pour atteindre l'objectif de «personne sans abri en 2015»?

Réponse donnée par Mme Reding au nom de la Commission
(6 décembre 2013)

La Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à se reporter à sa réponse à la question écrite E-007293/2013 ([1]).

Il existe des fonds de l'UE destinés à financer des actions visant à renforcer l'intégration sociale des personnes sans abri, et notamment à améliorer l'accès à des services de qualité et au logement social. Au titre du prochain cadre financier pluriannuel, la Commission a proposé d'augmenter encore le budget alloué à la promotion de l'inclusion sociale et à la lutte contre la pauvreté.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011411/13
to the Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Homelessness in Hungary and Europe

Hungary recently passed a law which discriminates against the homeless by imposing drastic penalties on them (fines, community service and prison sentences). Homeless people will be banned from tourist areas under the terms of a law which aims to 'protect public order, safety, health and cultural values'. Implicit in this new law, which entered into force on 1 October, is the criminalisation of poverty in all its forms.

The number of homeless people in Europe has been on the rise in recent years, a trend exacerbated by the crisis. More and more people have no secure job, making it difficult for them to find housing. More and more people are being forced to spend the night in their cars, in small hotels and in all kinds of temporary accommodation. Young people, immigrants, women and low-paid workers are the hardest hit, but children are also being affected.

Parliament has called for measures to combat social exclusion resulting from homelessness to be taken at European level and has set a target of resolving these problems once and for all by 2015.

1. What measures does the Commission intend to take to protect the fundamental rights of homeless people, who are being targeted by a law which is at odds with freedom of movement and human rights?

2. What measures has the Commission taken to combat social exclusion in all its forms and to protect the rights of those affected by this phenomenon?

3. What is the Commission doing to achieve the target of resolving the plight of the homeless by 2015? What progress have Member States made in this area?

4. What funds will be allocated in an effort to achieve the target 'no more homelessness by 2015'?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 December 2013)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-007293/2013 ([1]).

EU Funds are available to finance actions for better social integration of homeless people, including improved access to quality services and social housing. The Commission has proposed, under the next multiannual financial framework, to further increase funds to promote social inclusion and combat poverty.

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011412/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(4 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Cattura di uccelli in Veneto con mezzi vietati dalla direttiva Uccelli

Dal 1994 la Regione Veneto autorizza, richiamando il regime di deroga previsto dall'articolo 9 della direttiva Uccelli 2009/147/CE, la cattura con reti di uccelli da utilizzarsi come richiami vivi nella caccia delle specie Allodola, Cesena, Merlo, Tordo bottaccio e Tordo sassello.

In contrasto con la norma comunitaria detta attività viene attuata in assenza di «condizioni rigidamente controllate» e senza selettività del prelievo. Viene ancora consentita la cattura dell'Allodola (Alauda arvensis) classificata «vulnerabile» nella lista rossa degli uccelli nidificanti in Italia e in declino da 30 anni in tutta Europa. La guida interpretativa sulla direttiva Uccelli ([1]) al punto 3.5.40 specifica che le deroghe non devono essere concesse per specie o popolazioni il cui stato di conservazione è insufficiente e la cui consistenza numerica è in diminuzione.

Con delibera n.1099 del 28 giugno 2013 ([2]) la Regione Veneto ha autorizzato ben 37 impianti per la cattura di 14.000 uccelli senza specificare: 1) luoghi di cattura, 2) numero di uccelli da catturare per ciascuna specie, 3) i tempi di cattura, 4) il numero di controlli per ciascun impianto di cattura.

L'ISPRA ([3]) con lettera del 24 maggio 2013 ha dato parere sfavorevole alla Regione Veneto alla cattura in deroga per la stagione 2013/2014, sottolineando la necessità di metodi alternativi quali l'allevamento degli uccelli in cattività e l'assenza di dati certi sul fabbisogno di richiami vivi per i cacciatori.

In data 11 ottobre 2012 la Commissione, rispondendo ad una interrogazione dello scrivente, comunicava che:

1. avrebbe valutato la questione nell'ambito di un'indagine in corso avviata nel dicembre 2010 concernente la cattura di uccelli da utilizzarsi come richiami in alcune regioni italiane compreso il Veneto,

2. stava esaminando tutte le informazioni disponibili nell'ambito di questa indagine per decidere successivamente i provvedimenti da adottare.

Poiché nulla è cambiato e l'ISPRA (che è autorità abilitata a dichiarare se le condizioni stabilite sono soddisfatte e a decidere quali mezzi, impianti o metodi possano essere utilizzati, entro quali limiti e da quali persone ([4])), continua a dare parere sfavorevole, può la Commissione riferire quali provvedimenti intende adottare per far applicare la direttiva 2009/147/CE e quando?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(15 novembre 2013)

La Commissione ha avviato un'indagine sulla cattura di uccelli da utilizzare come richiami vivi in alcune regioni italiane, tra cui il Veneto, e intende esaminare in questo ambito la delibera adottata dalla citata regione nel giugno 2013 nonché altre questioni critiche menzionate dall'onorevole deputato. Una volta terminata la valutazione, la Commissione deciderà in merito alle misure idonee per garantire che siano pienamente rispettate le disposizioni pertinenti della direttiva 2009/147/CE (direttiva Uccelli) ([5]).

([1]) Guida alla disciplina della caccia nell'ambito della direttiva 79/409/CEE sulla conversazione degli uccelli selvatici — 2008.
([2]) Pubblicata sul Bollettino Ufficiale della Regione Veneto n. 58 del 12 luglio 2013.
([3]) Istituto Superiore per la Protezione e la Ricerca Ambientale.
([4]) Art. 9 comma 2 lettera d) direttiva 2009/147/CE.
([5]) GU L 20 del 26.1.2010, pag. 7.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011412/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Capture of birds in the Veneto Region using methods prohibited under the Birds Directive

Since 1994, the Veneto regional government has authorised the use of nets to catch birds for use as live decoys for skylark, fieldfare, blackbird, song thrush and redwing hunting, citing the derogations provided for under Article 9 of the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC).

However, the activity is not carried out in compliance with EU legislation, as it is not done 'under strictly supervised conditions' and is not selective as to the birds caught. It is still permitted to catch skylarks (Alauda arvensis), even though they are classed as 'vulnerable' on Italy's red list of breeding birds and have been in decline throughout Europe for the last 30 years. Point 3.5.40 of the guidance document on the Birds Directive ([1]) specifies that derogations should not be granted for species or populations with an unfavourable conservation status or whose numbers are declining.

By Decision No 1099 of 28 June 2013 ([2]), the Veneto Region authorised the capture of 14 000 birds by 37 installations, without specifying: (1) where they could be caught; (2) how many birds could be caught per species; (3) when they could be caught; (4) how many inspections would be carried out on each trapping installation.

In a letter of 24 May 2013, ISPRA ([3]) gave the Veneto Region a negative opinion regarding captures by way of derogation from the Birds Directive for the 2013/2014 season, stressing the need for alternative methods, such as the breeding of birds in captivity, and pointing out that there were no reliable data regarding hunters' requirements for live decoys.

On 11 October 2012, the Commission replied to a question of mine, stating that:

1. it would assess the measure in the framework of the ongoing investigation launched in December 2010 concerning the capture of live birds to be used as decoys in some Italian regions, including Veneto;

2. it was assessing all the information available in the framework of this ongoing investigation, and would decide on the next step to be taken.

The situation has not changed and ISPRA (the authority empowered to declare that the required conditions obtain and to decide what means, arrangements or methods may be used, within what limits and by whom ([4])) continues to issue negative opinions.

What provisions does the Commission therefore intend to adopt to ensure that directive 2009/147/EC is implemented and when will it do so?

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

The Commission has launched an investigation on the capture of birds to be used as live decoys in some Italian regions, including Veneto. The resolution adopted by Veneto in June 2013 concerning the capture of birds to be used as live decoys, as well as the critical points raised by the Honourable Member will be assessed in this context. Once this assessment is finalised, the Commission will decide on the appropriate steps to ensure that the relevant provisions of the Birds Directive 2009/147/EC ([5]) are fully complied with.

([1]) Guidance document on hunting under Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds, 2008.
([2]) Published in the Official Gazette of the Veneto Region, No 58 of 12 July 2013.
([3]) Institute for Environmental Protection and Research.
([4]) Article 9(2)(d) of Directive 2009/147/EC.
([5]) OJ L 020, 26.1.2010.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011413/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(4 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Effetti del consumo di bibite energizzanti e di alcolici

Il consumo di bibite energizzanti è in continua crescita. Si tratta di stimolanti del sistema nervoso che occorrerebbe consumare con cautela. Ciò che desta più preoccupazione è però l'utilizzo combinato di tali bibite con l'alcol. Studi recenti dimostrano che in Europa il 56 % degli adulti e il 53 % dei ragazzi tra i 10 e i 18 anni consumano tale miscelazione di bibite energizzanti e alcol.

I potenziali rischi rappresentano, secondo gli esperti, un rilevante problema di salute pubblica.

Il mix risulta pericoloso in quanto si altera la capacità di percepire il proprio stato di ebbrezza, mentre la riduzione dei sintomi sgradevoli dell'alcol porta ad aumentarne l'assunzione, innestando un pericoloso circolo vizioso. Un numero crescente di indagini epidemiologiche mostra inoltre che l'associazione fra i due tipi di bevande può spingere a compiere gesti pericolosi (guida in stato di ebbrezza, comportamenti violenti, ecc.) con una frequenza maggiore rispetto a quanto farebbe l'alcol da solo.

Considerato che:

— il ruolo che le bibite energizzanti hanno nell'accrescere l'effetto dell'alcol è stato oggetto di pochi studi;

— le ricerche che sono state effettuate sono state finanziate prevalentemente dalle stesse aziende produttrici;

— gli studi sono stati effettuati considerando bassi dose di alcol e bibite energizzanti senza analizzare le conseguenze di quantità maggiori,

può la Commissione far sapere:

— se è a conoscenza dei rischi legati al consumo diffuso di questa combinazione di bibite;

— se ritiene che debbano essere elaborate indagine approfondite da parte di organismi indipendenti non finanziati dalle aziende produttrici?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(21 novembre 2013)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputato alla risposta alla precedente interrogazione scritta E-002322/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011413/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Effects of the consumption of energy drinks and alcohol

Consumption of energy drinks is on the rise. These drinks are central nervous stimulants and should be consumed with caution. However, the most worrying aspect is the use of these drinks together with alcohol. Recent studies have shown that in Europe, 56% of adults and 53% of children aged between 10 and 18 consume this kind of energy drink and alcohol mix.

According to health experts, the potential risks constitute a significant public health problem.

This mix is dangerous because it reduces a person's ability to perceive how drunk they are. At the same time, it dampens the unpleasant effects of alcohol, thus leading to increased consumption and therefore to a dangerous vicious circle. A growing number of epidemiological studies are also demonstrating that it is more common for people to act dangerously (drink driving, violent behaviour, etc.) after drinking a mix of these two drinks than after drinking alcohol alone.

— Little research has been done into the role of energy drinks in heightening the effects of alcohol.

— The research that has been done has been funded predominantly by the drinks companies themselves.

— The research carried out has looked at low doses of alcohol and energy drinks and has not studied the effects of higher quantities.

— Is the Commission aware of the risks associated with the widespread consumption of this drink combination?

— Does the Commission believe that in-depth studies should be conducted by independent bodies not funded by the drinks companies?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to the answer given to the previous Written Question E-002322/2013 ([1]).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011414/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(4 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Violenze e condizione delle donne in Pakistan

La Repubblica Islamica del Pakistan con una popolazione di circa 180 milioni di abitanti è il sesto paese più popoloso al mondo e il secondo maggiore Stato musulmano. Il livello di povertà in cui versa il paese è elevato, pur possedendo un potenziale di sviluppo. In particolare, la provincia del Belucistan è ricchissima di risorse minerarie ed è il principale fornitore di gas naturale del Paese, dopo il Sindh. Tuttavia si tratta di una delle ragioni più scosse dai conflitti di tutto l'Est asiatico.

Il Pakistan è afflitto da innumerevoli problematiche, tra cui il basso livello di alfabetizzazione e l'instabilità politica. In un tale contesto la condizione delle donne è estremamente drammatica. La maggior parte di esse versa in condizione di povertà, considerato che il 75 % della popolazione vive sotto la soglia di povertà e la maggior parte sono donne soggette ad abusi e violenze di ogni tipo: delitti d'onore, lapidazioni, utilizzo dell'acido (8000 casi nel 2010), violenze domestiche (che spesso non sono ritenute un crimine), uccisioni tramite roghi.

Il Pakistan è inoltre uno dei paesi più pericolosi al mondo per le donne le quali spesso non hanno voce.

Le elezioni nazionali dello scorso maggio sono state funestate da molteplici attentati, nel corso delle quali gli estremisti hanno impedito in particolar modo alle donne di esprimere il proprio voto.

Esiste infine un programma bilaterale EU-Pakistan che prevede l'utilizzo di 200 milioni di euro per il periodo 2007-2010 e di 213 milioni di euro per il periodo 2011-2013 con l'obiettivo tra gli altri, di tutelare i diritti umani garantendo la giustizia ai gruppi vulnerabili, tra cui le donne.

Può la Commissione riferire:

— quali passi sono stati effettuati in collaborazione con il governo pakistano per assicurare la stabilità politica e la tutela delle donne;

— quali azioni sono state intraprese per monitorare l'utilizzo di questi fondi europei;

— se si prevede di stanziare ulteriori fondi per i prossimi anni?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(27 novembre 2013)

1. I diritti delle donne sono un tema prioritario del dialogo sui diritti umani tra l'UE e il Pakistan L'UE si è impegnata fermamente a promuovere i diritti delle donne nelle sue relazioni esterne ed esorta il governo del Pakistan a prendere urgentemente provvedimenti per garantire la loro sicurezza fisica e tutelare i loro diritti.

Attraverso i suoi strumenti di cooperazione allo sviluppo l'UE finanzia una serie di progetti e attività di sensibilizzazione per aumentare la capacità degli organi di contrasto di individuare, prevenire e rispondere agli atti criminali contro le donne. L'UE collabora inoltre con le autorità e la società civile per garantire la riabilitazione delle donne sopravvissute alla violenza e promuovere l'empowerment e i diritti sociali ed economici delle donne, nonché il loro ruolo nella costruzione della pace.

L'UE collabora con il Parlamento federale del Pakistan e estenderà il suo sostegno ai parlamenti provinciali al fine di migliorare il funzionamento delle istituzioni democratiche del paese. L'assistenza fornita in tale ambito riguarderà anche la legislazione in materia di genere e il relativo controllo.

2. Tutte le azioni di aiuto esterno sono soggette ad audit e monitoraggio. I partner esecutivi devono inviare regolarmente relazioni finanziarie e operative a cui è subordinato l'esborso di ciascuna tranche. Gli audit finanziari esterni finali eseguiti da revisori accreditati rientrano nella procedura standard.

3. L'UE sta riflettendo sulla possibilità di includere la democrazia, i diritti umani e l'attività di contrasto fra i settori prioritari. La promozione dei diritti delle donne, la riduzione delle disuguaglianze di genere e l'accesso alla giustizia sarebbero componenti importanti in tale ambito. Altri settori prioritari potrebbero essere l'istruzione, con particolare attenzione alle iscrizioni scolastiche delle bambine e delle ragazze, e lo sviluppo rurale, nel quale una migliore erogazione dei servizi a livello comunitario e lo sviluppo delle competenze contribuiranno a migliorare la situazione delle donne.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011414/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Violence against women and the situation of women in Pakistan

With a population of approximately 180 million, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan has the sixth highest population in the world and is the second largest Islamic state. Levels of poverty in the country are high; however it does have potential for development. Balochistan province in particular is extremely rich in mineral resources and is the country's main supplier of natural gas after Sindh province. However, Pakistan is one of the regions worst affected by conflict in East Asia.

The country suffers from a huge number of problems, such as low literacy levels and political instability. Against such a backdrop, the situation of women is dire. Most women are living in poverty, given that 75% of the population lives below the poverty line. Most women are subjected to all kinds of abuse and violence: crimes of honour, stoning, acid attacks (8 000 cases in 2010), domestic violence (often not considered a crime), women burnt to death.

Pakistan is also one of the most dangerous countries for women in the world and they often do not have a voice.

Last May's national elections were marred by a large number of attacks, in which women in particular were prevented from casting their vote by extremists.

The EU-Pakistan bilateral programme currently in place provides for EUR 200 million for the period 2007-2010 and EUR 213 million for the period 2011-2013, one of its aims being to protect human rights by ensuring justice for vulnerable groups, including women.

1. Can the Commission state what steps have been taken in collaboration with the Pakistani Government to bring about political stability and to protect women?

2. What action has been taken to monitor the use of these European funds?

3. Does the Commission plan to set aside further funds for the next few years?

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

1. Women's rights are a priority in the EU's human rights dialogue with Pakistan. The EU is fully committed to promoting women's rights in its external relations and encourages the Government of Pakistan to take urgent measures to ensure their physical security and protect their rights.

Through its development cooperation instruments the EU funds a range of projects and awareness raising activities to increase the capacity of law enforcement agencies to detect, prevent and respond to crimes against women. The EU also works with the authorities and civil society to rehabilitate women survivors of violence and to promote women's social and economic empowerment and rights, as well as women's role in peace building.

The EU works with the Pakistan Federal Parliament and will extend its assistance to the Provincial Parliaments with the aim of enhancing the functioning of Pakistan's democratic institutions. This includes assistance in the area of gender related legislation and oversight.

2. All external aid interventions are subject to auditing and monitoring. Regular financial and operational reporting is required from the implementing partners and conditions the release of each subsequent instalment. Final external financial audits by accredited auditors are standard procedure.

3. The EU is considering having Democracy, Human Rights and Law Enforcement as a focal sector. Promotion of women's rights, reducing gender inequality and access to justice would be important components. Other focal sectors could be education, with an emphasis on girls' enrolment, and rural development, where better service delivery at community level and skills development will contribute to improving the situation of women.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011415/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(4 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Obesità infantile e strategie pubblicitarie rivolte ai bambini

L'obesità infantile è un problema sempre più diffuso in Europa: un quarto dei bambini in età scolare è in sovrappeso oppure obeso. Recentemente l'OMS Europa ha realizzato una ricerca in cui si evidenzia come i bambini siano sempre più spesso soggetti a pratiche di marketing finalizzate alla vendita di cibi non salutari (ossia con elevati contenuti di grasso, zuccheri, sale). La televisione risulta essere il media più utilizzato a questo scopo e si evidenzia come i bambini effettivamente modifichino il loro comportamento in base alla pubblicità scegliendo i prodotti pubblicizzati.

L'avvento di Internet ha però portato all'utilizzo di nuove forme di marketing: oltre all'utilizzo di banner nei siti più frequentati dai minorenni, si segnalano l'*advergaming* (ossia l'utilizzo di videogiochi all'interno dei quali vi è il prodotto da reclamare), il *viral marketing* (un passaparola apparentemente spontaneo ma in realtà innescato dall'azienda) e lo *user-generated marketing* (attraverso il quale si invita il cliente a interagire con l'impresa, ad esempio indicando le proprie preferenze sul prodotto).

A livello di *mobile marketing*, si evidenzia l'utilizzo di *app* per *smartphone* pensate per un pubblico giovane in cui sono presenti pubblicità di prodotti alimentari. Secondo il rapporto dell'OMS, infine, attività di marketing di cibi non salutari sono anche condotte nelle scuole e in ambito sportivo.

Si prevede che in Europa il numero di bambini in sovrappeso o obesi aumenterà ogni anno di oltre un milione. L'obesità infantile comporta un rischio molto elevato di diventare obesi anche in età matura con un forte aumento della predisposizione a contrarre malattie cardiovascolari, diabete, pressione alta, ipercolesterolemia.

Nell'UE, soltanto 6 paesi (Danimarca, Francia, Norvegia, Slovenia, Spagna e Svezia) hanno implementato leggi specifiche, che si affiancano a strategie concordate fra istituzioni, aziende e codici di autoregolamentazione, mentre negli altri paesi la regolamentazione è del tutto inadeguata.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

è a conoscenza delle conseguenze che tali strategie pubblicitarie provocano sulla salute dei bambini?

Prevede di elaborare una normativa europea che ponga un freno a queste pratiche di marketing?

Intende promuovere una campagna di educazione alimentare destinata a un pubblico giovane?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(21 novembre 2013)

La strategia europea sugli aspetti sanitari connessi all'alimentazione, al sovrappeso e all'obesità ([1]) prevede, tra le priorità, un'azione mirata rivolta ai bambini.

La direttiva sui servizi di media audiovisivi ([2]) esorta ad adottare un approccio di autoregolamentazione nel settore della pubblicità di alimenti rivolta ai bambini. La Commissione si è impegnata a sostenere iniziative relative alla pubblicità e al marketing responsabili di alimenti ricchi di grassi, sale e/o zuccheri per i bambini. In questo settore le strategie di regolamentazione e di autoregolamentazione sono complementari e, tenendo conto dei rapidi sviluppi tecnologici e delle nuove forme di marketing, si individua la necessità di regolari revisioni e aggiornamenti. Il Libro verde «Prepararsi a un mondo audiovisivo della piena convergenza: crescita, creazione e valori» ([3]) e la successiva consultazione pubblica (terminata il 30 settembre 2013) hanno riunito opinioni sulle sfide da affrontare nell'ambito della regolamentazione della pubblicità e hanno individuato l'eventuale necessità di aggiornare il quadro normativo in vigore. L'analisi delle risposte aiuterà a valutare la situazione.

([1]) COM(2007)279 def.
([2]) Direttiva 2010/13/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 10 marzo 2010, relativa al coordinamento di determinate disposizioni legislative, regolamentari e amministrative degli Stati membri concernenti la fornitura di servizi di media audiovisivi (direttiva sui servizi di media audiovisivi) (Testo rilevante ai fini del SEE). GU L 95 del 15.4.2010, pag. 1-24.
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0231:FIN:IT:PDF.

L'«EU Pledge» ([4]) è un esempio di un impegno della piattaforma d'azione europea per l'alimentazione, l'attività fisica e la salute ([5]), in cui le aziende del settore alimentare hanno convenuto di non fare pubblicità rivolta a bambini di età inferiore ai 12 anni.

Recentemente, il gruppo ad alto livello sulla nutrizione e l'attività fisica ([6]) ha avviato lo sviluppo di un piano d'azione comune per lottare contro l'obesità infantile, in cui particolare attenzione sarà dedicata alla pubblicità e al marketing.

Infine, tramite il programma dell'UE «Frutta nelle scuole» ([7]) e una serie di progetti pilota ([8]), sostenuti dal Parlamento europeo, la Commissione contribuisce a campagne educative mirate, volte a promuovere abitudini alimentari più sane tra i bambini.

([4]) http://www.eu-pledge.eu/
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_it.htm
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_it.htm
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/sfs/index_it.htm
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/key_documents/tender_pilot_project_fresh_fruits_vegetables_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011415/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Childhood obesity and advertising strategies aimed at children

Childhood obesity is an increasingly widespread problem in Europe: a quarter of all school-age children are either overweight or obese. WHO/Europe recently conducted a study highlighting the fact that children are being increasingly subjected to marketing promoting unhealthy foods (in other words those containing high levels of fat, sugar or salt). Television is shown to be the media format most widely used for this purpose and the report highlights that children do change their behaviour on the basis of marketing, choosing products that they see advertised.

However, the Internet has brought with it new forms of marketing: in addition to banner adverts on popular sites visited by children, the report points to advergaming (the use of videogames which contain a product to claim), viral marketing (seemingly spontaneous word-of-mouth recommendations which in reality are initiated by the company) and user-generated marketing (where customers are invited to interact with the company, for example by stating their preferences about a product).

In terms of mobile marketing, the report highlights the use of smartphone apps designed for a young audience which contain food advertisements. Lastly, according to the WHO report, unhealthy foods are also marketed in schools and sports environments.

The number of overweight or obese children in Europe is forecast to rise by over one million every year. Childhood obesity carries a very high risk of obesity in adulthood, with a high increase in risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

Only six countries in the EU (Denmark, France, Norway, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden) have introduced special legislation, alongside coordinated strategies between the public and private sector and industry self-regulation. Regulation is completely inadequate in all the other countries.

1. Is the Commission aware of the impact that advertising strategies of this nature can have on children's health?

2. Does the Commission plan to introduce European legislation to keep these marketing practices in check?

3. Does it intend to promote a food education campaign aimed at a young audience?

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

The EU Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related Health Issues ([1]), foresees action targeting children as a priority.

The Audiovisual Media Services Directive ([2]) calls for a self-regulatory approach in the field of food advertising to children. The Commission is committed to supporting initiatives related to responsible advertising and marketing of foods high in fat, salt and/or sugar to children. Regulatory and self-regulatory approaches are complimentary in this area and, taking into account the rapid technological developments and new forms of marketing, there is a need of regular reviews and updates. The Green Paper 'Preparing for a fully converged audiovisual world: growth, creation and values' ([3]) and the subsequent public consultation (which ended on 30 September 2013) sought views on challenges for advertising regulation and possible need for an update of the current regulatory framework. The analysis of the replies will help assess the situation.

The EU Pledge ([4]) is an example of a commitment of the Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health ([5]), whereby food companies have agreed not to advertise to children under the age of 12.

([1]) COM(2007) 279.
([2]) Directive 2010/13/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 March 2010 on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audiovisual media services (Audiovisual Media Services Directive) (Text with EEA relevance). OJ L 95, 15.4.2010, p. 1-24.
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0231:FIN:EN:PDF
([4]) http://www.eu-pledge.eu/
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_en.htm

Recently, the High Level Group on Nutrition and Physical Activity ([6]) started the development of a common Action Plan to tackle childhood obesity, in which advertising and marketing will be a key focus area.

Finally, through the EU School Fruit Scheme ([7]) and a number of pilot projects ([8]), supported by the European Parliament, the Commission contributes to targetted educational campaigns establishing healthier eating habits among children.

([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_en.htm
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/sfs/index_en.htm
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/key_documents/tender_pilot_project_fresh_fruits_vegetables_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011416/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(4 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Possibile cartello nel mercato del trasporto di container via mare

Recentemente le tre maggiori compagnie mondiali per il trasporto di container via mare (*Maersk*, *Msc* e *Cma-Cgm*) hanno deciso di stringere un accordo per porre a fattore comune 256 navi giganti impegnate su 29 servizi su tre rotte principali del traffico marittimo mondiale.

L'interscambio mondiale di container rappresenta oggi, per valore delle merci nei container, più del 60 % della ricchezza in movimento merci sul pianeta e vanta un giro di affari pari a circa 57,7 miliardi di euro. Oltre il 90 % di questi scambi avviene via mare sulle grandi rotte di traffico marittimo su cui operano le navi giganti delle compagnie in oggetto. Dette compagnie, combinando le proprie forze, creeranno un cartello con capacità di trasporto eguagliabile alla capacità che si ottiene sommando le 18 flotte successive nel ranking mondiale.

Un cartello di queste dimensioni sarebbe potenzialmente in grado di incidere sui flussi di trasporto e sui costi che gravano sulle produzioni di merci oggetto di interscambio mondiale.

Non solo la concorrenza interna al settore sarà sempre più problematica, ma la creazione di un soggetto dominante del mercato renderà difficile anche le trattative con i produttori di merci che saranno costretti a subire variazioni di prezzi ingiustificate.

Due delle tre compagnie in parola dispongono di quote di capitale di provenienza statale di un membro dell'Unione (rispettivamente *Maersk* — Danimarca e *Cma-Cgm* — Francia).

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

intende approfondire la questione e fornire informazioni in merito a possibili infrazioni quali l'abuso di posizione dominante?

Intende approfondire la questione e fornire ragguagli in merito a possibili infrazioni come la concessione di aiuti di Stato diretti alle compagnie sopracitate?

Risposta di Joaquín Almunia a nome della Commissione
(5 dicembre 2013)

La Commissione è al corrente del consorzio proposto tra le compagnie di trasporto marittimo di linea Maersk, MSC e CMA CGM.

Un consorzio marittimo è una forma abbastanza usuale di cooperazione commerciale tra le compagnie di trasporto marittimo di linea. In generale, i consorzi possono risultare efficaci, in termini di servizi forniti, e apportare benefici agli utenti (maggiori frequenze, più ampia copertura dei porti). Questo è il motivo per il quale il regolamento n. 906/2009 relativo a talune categorie di accordi, di decisioni e di pratiche concordate tra compagnie di trasporto marittimo di linea (consorzi) autorizza la maggior parte dei consorzi quando la quota di mercato globale delle compagnie partecipanti non supera il 30 %.

Nei casi in cui tale soglia venga oltrepassata — come apparentemente accade nel caso del consorzio cui si riferisce l'onorevole parlamentare — spetta alle parti del consorzio effettuare un'autovalutazione per verificare se siano soddisfatte le condizioni di cui all'articolo 101, paragrafo 3, del TFUE e quindi anche per accertare che l'accordo contribuisca a migliorare l'efficienza garantendo al contempo ai consumatori una quota consistente dei benefici che ne risultano. Nel caso in esame, la Commissione è in contatto con le tre società, ma non ha avviato alcun procedimento formale. La Commissione esaminerà con la massima attenzione tutti gli elementi concernenti tale cooperazione che le verranno eventualmente segnalati.

Quanto al fatto che Stati membri dell'UE detengano quote di capitale in due delle tre compagnie, le norme in materia di aiuti di Stato non lo proibiscono. Inoltre, conformemente alle disposizioni degli orientamenti comunitari in materia di aiuti di Stato ai trasporti marittimi (GU C 13 del 17.1.2004), le compagnie di navigazione possono usufruire di incentivi fiscali, segnatamente mediante la sostituzione dell'imposta ordinaria sulle società con una più favorevole imposta sul tonnellaggio. La Commissione ha autorizzato regimi di aiuti di Stato di questo tipo in Francia e in Danimarca. La Commissione non ha ricevuto informazioni in merito a eventuali aiuti incompatibili concessi alle società in questione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011416/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Potential cartel in the maritime container shipping sector

The three largest container ship operators (Maersk, Msc and Cma-Cgm) recently decided to sign an agreement to pool 256 giant ships used on 29 service loops on three of the world's main maritime trade routes.

Global container trade calculated by the value of the goods carried currently accounts for more than 60% of the world's wealth in movement of goods and boasts a turnover of around EUR 57.7 billion. Over 90% of this trade takes place by sea over the major maritime routes, which the giant vessels of the shipping lines in question use. By joining forces, these operators will create a cartel with transportation capacity equivalent to that of the next 18 largest fleets in the world ranking put together.

A cartel of this size could have an impact on shipping trade and on the cost burden for producers of these globally traded goods.

Not only will internal competition within the sector become increasingly difficult, but the creation of a dominant player in the market will also put goods producers in a difficult negotiating position and they will be forced to accept unjustified price variations

EU Member States hold equity in two of the three operators' companies (Denmark in Maersk and France in Cma-Cgm).

1. Does the Commission intend to look into and provide information on the issue of possible illegal practices such as abuse of market position?

2. Does it intend to look into and provide information on the issue of possible illegal practices such as direct state subsidies to the abovementioned operators?

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

The Commission is aware of the proposed consortium between liner shipping companies Maersk, MSC and CMA CGM.

A maritime consortium is a rather standard form of commercial cooperation between liner shipping companies. In general, consortia may generate efficiencies to the benefit of users, in terms of services provided (higher frequencies, wider coverage of ports). That is why the Consortia Block Exemption Regulation No 906/2009 authorises most consortia when the joint market share of the participating companies does not exceed 30%.

Beyond that threshold — which appears to be the case for the consortium referred to by the Honourable Member — it is for the parties to the consortium to self-assess whether the conditions set out in Article 101(3) TFEU are met, including that the agreement contributes to improve efficiency while allowing consumers a fair share of the resulting benefits. In this particular case, the Commission is in contact with the three carriers but no formal procedure has been launched. All relevant issues concerning this cooperation brought to the attention of the Commission will receive its full attention.

As regards the fact that EU Member States hold equity in two of the P3 parties, State aid rules do not prohibit this per se. Moreover, in accordance with the provisions of the Community Guidelines on state aid to maritime transport (OJ C 13 of 17.01.2004), shipping companies might benefit from fiscal advantages, notably the replacement of the normal corporate tax by a more favourable tonnage tax. The Commission authorised such state aid schemes notably for France and Denmark. The Commission does not have information on possible incompatible aid which might be given to the companies concerned.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011417/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(4 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Richiesta di interruzione del programma EC SQUARE

Nelle regioni Liguria, Lombardia, Piemonte e Umbria è in corso il progetto EC-SQUARE per l'eradicazione dello scoiattolo grigio.

Secondo EC-SQUARE, gli scoiattoli grigi, di origine americana, minaccerebbero gli scoiattoli rossi, autoctoni, in quanto più robusti e quindi in competizione vittoriosa per il cibo, e in quanto portatori sani di un virus letale per gli scoiattoli rossi. Inoltre danneggerebbero i boschi e le coltivazioni. Lo sterminio sarebbe infine necessario per rispettare le indicazioni della Convenzione di Berna e quindi evitare pesanti sanzioni da parte dell'Unione europea.

Il 22 maggio 2013, il ministero dell'Ambiente ha presentato ufficialmente la «lista rossa» degli animali considerati a rischio di estinzione in Italia e lo scoiattolo rosso non vi figura. Lo scoiattolo rosso non è a rischio di estinzione ma semplicemente in calo, sia in Europa che in Asia, dove però lo scoiattolo americano è assente (la causa principale della diminuzione degli scoiattoli rossi è infatti la distruzione del loro habitat da parte dell'uomo). Oltretutto, da una recente ricerca effettuata da zoologi londinesi è emerso che gli scoiattoli rossi stanno cominciando a mostrare segni di immunità esattamente come gli scoiattoli grigi.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

intende approfondire la questione e fornire informazioni in merito all'effettiva pericolosità dello scoiattolo grigio e alla relativa necessità di controllarne la popolazione?

Alla luce di quanto emerso, intende rivedere il progetto EC-SQUARE per l'eradicazione dello scoiattolo grigio?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(14 novembre 2013)

L'importazione nell'UE dello scoiattolo grigio, considerato una specie esotica invasiva che minaccia le popolazioni autoctone di scoiattoli rossi, è attualmente vietata a norma dei regolamenti sul commercio delle specie di flora e fauna selvatiche ([1]). La Commissione europea ha recentemente proposto alcune misure per contrastare il problema delle specie esotiche invasive nell'UE ([2]), misure intese a garantire l'istituzione di un meccanismo unionale per individuare le specie che richiedono interventi. Una valutazione dei rischi su base scientifica consentirà di individuare tali specie determinando l'impatto che potrebbero avere su quelle autoctone. In tale contesto saranno esaminate anche le specie esotiche invasive di cui è vietata l'importazione nell'UE a norma dei regolamenti sul commercio delle specie di flora e fauna selvatiche.

Il progetto di conservazione della biodiversità EC-SQUARE (LIFE09NAT/IT/000095) intende salvaguardare lo scoiattolo rosso e limitare la diffusione dello scoiattolo grigio in Italia e nell'Europa continentale. Nel 2012 il Ministero italiano dell'Ambiente ha vietato il commercio dello scoiattolo grigio sul territorio nazionale con un apposito divieto che interessa tre specie di scoiattoli esotici (*Sciurus carolinensis*, *Sciurus niger*, *Callosciurus erythraeus*). Questo progetto, oltre a contribuire al controllo della diffusione dello scoiattolo grigio e alla sua eventuale eradicazione in diversi contesti socioecologici di tre regioni italiane (Lombardia, Piemonte e Liguria), attuerà specifiche misure di conservazione intese a migliorare la qualità degli habitat e/o ad aumentare la connettività per lo scoiattolo rosso. Il progetto dovrebbe concludersi entro marzo 2015 e la Commissione non ha motivi al momento per riesaminarlo.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:1997:061:0001:0069:IT:PDF
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:212:0001:0092:IT:PDF
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:169:0001:0021:IT:PDF

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/invasivealien/docs/proposal/it.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011417/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Request to halt the EC-SQUARE programme

The EC-SQUARE programme to eradicate and control the grey squirrel is under way in Liguria, Lombardy and Piedmont.

The premise behind the EC-SQUARE programme is that grey squirrels, originally from America, threaten native red squirrels because they are stronger and therefore compete more successfully for food and because they are healthy carriers of a virus that kills red squirrels. Supposedly they also damage woodland and crops. The cull is also said to be necessary in order to abide by the guidelines of the Berne Convention and therefore avoid heavy sanctions by the European Union.

On 22 May 2013, the Ministry of the Environment presented the official 'red list' of animals considered to be under threat of extinction in Italy. The red squirrel is not on that list. The red squirrel is not threatened with extinction but is simply declining in numbers, both in Europe and in Asia, even though there are no American squirrels in Asia (the main cause of the decline in red squirrels is actually the destruction of their habitat by human beings). Furthermore, a recent study by London zoologists has shown that red squirrels are beginning to show signs of immunity, just like grey squirrels.

Does the Commission intend to look into the issue and provide information on whether grey squirrels are genuinely dangerous and whether their population therefore needs to be controlled or not?

In the light of the information that has come out, does it intend to review the EC-SQUARE programme to eradicate the grey squirrel?

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

The grey squirrel is currently listed as a species whose import into the EU is banned through the Wildlife Trade Regulations ([1]) as they are considered to be an invasive alien species, with an impact on the native populations of red squirrels. The European Commission has recently proposed measures to address the issue of invasive alien species in the EU ([2]). The legislation is designed to ensure that there will be an EU mechanism in place to assess which species will require action to be taken. This will be determined on the basis of science based risk assessments of the impact such species have on native species. In this framework, the invasive alien species banned for import under the Wildlife Trade Regulations will also be examined.

The EC-SQUARE biodiversity project (LIFE09NAT/IT/000095) aims to protect the red squirrel and limit the spread of the grey squirrel in Italy and continental Europe. The Italian Ministry of Environment included the grey squirrel in a national trade ban of three alien squirrel species (*Sciurus carolinensis*, *Sciurus niger*, *Callosciurus erythraeus*) in 2012. Beyond the control and possible eradication of grey squirrels in different socio-ecological contexts in 3 Italian regions (Lombardy, Piedmont and Liguria), this project will also implement specific conservation measures in order to improve habitat quality and/or connectivity for red squirrel. This project is scheduled to end in March 2015 and the Commission has no grounds at the present time to review it.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:1997:061:0001:0069:EN:PDF
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:212:0001:0092:EN:PDF
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:169:0001:0021:EN:PDF

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/invasivealien/docs/proposal/en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011418/13
alla Commissione
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(4 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Azioni in favore della natalità in Europa

In Europa si registra il continuo aumento della fascia della popolazione anziana, mentre il tasso di natalità si attesta a livelli sempre più bassi. Il rapporto demografico giovani vecchi sta diventando sempre più preoccupante. Analizzando le statistiche relative all'indice di vecchiaia si evince che l'Italia è seconda solo alla Germania per la percentuale di persone in età superiore ai 65 anni ogni 100 giovani di età inferiore ai 15 anni. Questi dati presentano seri interrogativi sulla tenuta del sistema sociale europeo vigente, destando particolare preoccupazione per la sostenibilità del sistema pensionistico e i costi legati alla sanità pubblica.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

— se intende presentare un piano d'azione continentale per il rilancio del tasso di natalità in Europa;

— quali misure ha intrapreso o è interessata a intraprendere al fine di favorire il tasso di natalità in Europa;

— se, visti i tassi di natalità e mortalità, è in grado di stimare la reale sostenibilità futura del welfare state europeo, indicando i settori nei quali intravede le maggiori difficoltà?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(25 novembre 2013)

La Commissione attribuisce grande importanza alle sfide demografiche, come già indicato nella comunicazione del 2006 ([1]) che mette in luce cinque settori politici al fine di arginare il declino demografico e sviluppare le nostre risorse umane.

La Commissione ha osservato che in generale i giovani adulti dell'UE vorrebbero avere più figli di quelli che hanno ([2]). Nei limiti delle sue competenze, la Commissione promuove la comprensione delle difficoltà (come, ad esempio, attraverso il progetto REPRO ([3])), le opportunità per i giovani adulti (come nel pacchetto per l'occupazione giovanile ([4])), alla conciliazione tra lavoro, famiglia e vita privata (in particolare controllando la conformità alla direttiva sul congedo parentale ([5])), nonché l'innovazione sociale e le buone pratiche ([6]) in questo campo. Il pacchetto di investimenti sociali ([7]) ha riconosciuto l'importanza di affrontare le sfide demografiche e ha sollecitato investimenti nel capitale umano nell'intero arco della vita, a partire dalla prima infanzia. Infine, la strategia per la parità tra donne e uomini 2010-2015 ha sottolineato che le misure destinate a conciliare la vita professionale e la vita privata possono avere un effetto positivo sulla fertilità.

Nel 2009 la Commissione ha trattato il tema della sostenibilità dello stato sociale nella sua comunicazione «Gestire l'impatto dell'invecchiamento della popolazione nell'Unione europea» ([8]). Essa ha inoltre approfondito la sua analisi nella relazione 2012 sull'invecchiamento demografico ([9]) e nella relazione 2012 sulla sostenibilità di bilancio ([10]). Da tali relazioni emergono problematiche particolari nei settori delle pensioni e della sanità e la Commissione controlla regolarmente la situazione degli Stati membri nell'ambito della sorveglianza multilaterale dell'UE ([11]). La Commissione ha inoltre pubblicato il Libro bianco sulle pensioni ([12]) che ne affronta l'adeguatezza e la sostenibilità.

([1]) Cfr. «The demographic future of Europe — from challenge to opportunity» http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=502&langId=en
([2]) Cfr. http://www.oeaw.ac.at/vid/download/edrp_2_2012.pdf (da un'indagine Eurobarometro del 2011).
([3]) Cfr. http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/projects/429_en.html
([4]) Cfr. http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1731
([5]) Cfr. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:068:0013:0020:EN:PDF
([6]) Cfr. http://europa.eu/epic/index_en.htm
([7]) Cfr. COM(2013)83.
([8]) Cfr. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52009DC0180:EN:NOT
([9]) Cfr. http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2012/2012-ageing-report_en.htm
([10]) Cfr. http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2012/fiscal-sustainability-report_en.htm
([11]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm
([12]) Cfr. http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=752&langId=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011418/13
to the Commission
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Initiatives to boost the birth rate in Europe

Records show that the elderly age group is continuing to grow in Europe, whilst the birth rate continues to decline. The demographic ratio of young to old is becoming an increasing concern. The old-age index statistics show Italy to be second only to Germany in terms of the number of people aged over 65 for every 100 young people aged under 15. These data raise serious questions about the sustainability of the current European social system, especially in terms of pressure on the pension system and costs associated with public health.

1. Does the Commission intend to propose an EU-wide action plan to boost the birth rate in Europe?

2. What measures has it taken or is it considering to promote a higher birth rate in Europe?

3. In the light of the birth and death rates, is the Commission in a position to assess the sustainability of Europe's welfare state, and to state which sectors will pose the greatest problems?

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

The Commission attaches great importance to demographic challenges, as already outlined in its 2006 Communication ([1]), highlighting five policy areas to stem demographic decline and develop our human resources.

The Commission observed that young adults in the EU would generally like to have more children than they actually have ([2]). Within its competence, the Commission fosters understanding of the difficulties (as, for instance, via the REPRO project ([3])), opportunities for young adults (as in the Youth Employment Package ([4])), reconciliation between work, family and private life (in particular by monitoring compliance with the Parental Leave directive ([5])), and social innovation and good practices ([6]) in this area. The Social Investment Package (SIP) ([7]) recognised the importance of addressing demographic challenges and called for human capital investment over the life cycle, starting from early childhood. Finally, the 'Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015' stressed that 'measures to facilitate work-life balance can have a positive impact on fertility'.

In 2009, the Commission addressed welfare state sustainability in its communication 'Dealing with the impact of an ageing population in the EU ([8])'. It further deepeneed its analysis in the 2012 Ageing Report ([9]) and the Fiscal Sustainability Report 2012 ([10]). These reports reveal a particular challenge in the fields of pension and healthcare and the Commission monitors regularly the Member State situation within the EU multilateral surveillance. ([11]) Moreover, addressing pension adequacy and sustainability, the Commission has published its White Paper on pensions ([12]).

([1]) See 'The demographic future of Europe — from challenge to opportunity' http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=502&langId=en
([2]) See http://www.oeaw.ac.at/vid/download/edrp_2_2012.pdf based on a 2011 Eurobarometer.
([3]) See http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/projects/429_en.html
([4]) See http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1731
([5]) See http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:068:0013:0020:EN:PDF
([6]) See http://europa.eu/epic/index_en.htm
([7]) See COM(2013) 83.
([8]) See http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52009DC0180:EN:NOT
([9]) See http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2012/2012-ageing-report_en.htm
([10]) See http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2012/fiscal-sustainability-report_en.htm
([11]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm
([12]) See http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=752&langId=en

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011419/13
alla Commissione
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(4 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Celebrazioni del centenario della Prima guerra mondiale

Nel 2014 si celebrerà il centenario dell'inizio della Prima guerra mondiale, scoppiata nel 1914. Il conflitto, noto come la Grande guerra, è stato un momento di drammatica lacerazione del continente europeo ed è costato la vita a milioni di giovani europei provocando incalcolabili danni alle popolazioni e alle città.

Il Nord-est dell'Italia, e in particolar modo il Veneto, è stato uno dei teatri principali della Prima guerra mondiale e oggi ospita importanti siti storici come il Sacrario dell'Armata del Grappa a cima Grappa, l'Ossario del Pasubio e il Sacrario militare di Redipuglia in Friuli Venezia Giulia. Questi importanti luoghi della memoria rappresentano il simbolo delle sofferenze patite dagli europei nei momenti più bui della storia del nostro continente e dovrebbero essere attentamente valorizzati in previsione del centenario del 2014.

Ciò premesso, si chiede alla Commissione europea:

quali azioni ha intenzione di intraprendere al fine di celebrare il centenario della Prima guerra mondiale?

È in grado di sostenere la pubblicazione di studi storici rivolti alle scuole medie e superiori al fine di promuovere una visione comune della Prima guerra mondiale come «Guerra civile europea»?

Ha programmato lo stanziamento di risorse economiche al fine di restaurare e promuovere i siti storici dedicati alla Grande Guerra in previsione del centenario del 2014?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(20 novembre 2013)

Per quanto concerne la commemorazione del centenario della Prima guerra mondiale, la proposta di regolamento che istituisce il programma «Europa per i cittadini» per il periodo 2014-2020 intende estendere la portata delle iniziative sulla memoria ai momenti decisivi della storia europea moderna, compresa la Prima guerra mondiale.

Tale proposta consentirà il sostegno di progetti tra cui la promozione di siti storici e la pubblicazione di studi destinati alle scuole medie e superiori, intesi a promuovere una visione comune della Prima guerra mondiale.

Ad oggi non è stato stanziato alcun finanziamento per il recupero dei siti storici della Prima guerra mondiale in vista delle celebrazioni del centenario. Il programma Cultura sostiene tuttavia un progetto ([1]) che cercherà di far rivivere attraverso la musica corale moderna le poesie legate a uno dei più turbolenti periodi della storia europea. Una rete di cori da camera professionali collaborerà con i partner che coordinano le attività dedicate alla commemorazione della Prima guerra mondiale e i partner responsabili della conservazione del patrimonio letterario di quel periodo. La durata prevista del progetto, che coinvolge 13 partner provenienti da 10 diversi paesi, è di 5 anni.

([1]) www.tenso-vocal.eu

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011419/13
to the Commission
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Celebrating the centenary of the First World War

2014 will mark the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War. Known as the Great War, the conflict tore Europe apart and cost millions of young lives. Untold damage was done to the peoples and cities of Europe.

North-west Italy, and the Veneto region in particular, was one of the main theatres of the First World War, and today it is home to some of the most important historical sites from that period. These include the Mount Grappa Military Shrine, the Ossario del Pasubio war memorial and the Redipuglia Military Shrine in Friuli Venezia Giulia. These sites are central to our collective memory, symbolising the suffering endured by Europeans during some of the darkest moments in our continent's history. We should therefore pay special attention to them in the lead-up to the centenary.

In the light of this:

How does the Commission plan to celebrate the centenary of the First World War?

Will the Commission support the publication of historical studies, aimed at secondary-school pupils, which are intended to promote a shared vision of the First World War as a 'European Civil War'?

Has any funding been allocated for the restoration and promotion of historical sites from the First World War in preparation for the centenary celebrations?

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

As concerns commemoration of the centenary of the First World War the proposal for a regulation establishing the Europe for Citizens programme for the period 2014-2020, aims to broaden the focus of remembrance to defining moments in modern European history, including World War One.

This will allow supporting projects including the promotion of historical sites, the publication of historical studies, aimed at secondary-school pupils, which are intended to promote a shared understanding of the First World War.

So far, no funding has been allocated for the restoration of historical sites from the First World War in preparation for the centenary celebrations. However, the Culture Programme has supported a project ([1]) that will seek to bring alive poems from one of the most turbulent periods in European history in new choral music. A network for professional chamber choirs will work with partners who coordinate the activities around the commemoration of World War I and partners who preserve the heritage of literature from that period. The project, involving 13 partners from 10 different countries, is expected to last 5 years.

([1]) www.tenso-vocal.eu

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011420/13
aan de Commissie
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(4 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Aanbevelingen nationale hervormingsprogramma 2013 België — energie

Eerder dit jaar formuleerde de Commissie aanbevelingen over het nationale hervormingsprogramma 2013 van België. De vierde aanbeveling vermeldt dat de werking van de energiesector verbeterd moest worden door de distributiekosten terug te schroeven en de retailkosten te monitoren.

Volgens een studie in België van Test-Aankoop is de distributiekostprijs verantwoordelijk voor een „disproportioneel" deel van de finale energiefactuur, namelijk gemiddeld 41 procent. Voor een gemiddeld verbruik van 3 500 kWh/jaar kunnen de distributienettarieven variëren van 228 euro tot 535 euro.

Test-Aankoop vraagt het aantal distributienetbeheerders in België (een 30-tal) te beperken om ook zo de kostprijs voor de consument te laten dalen.

1. Welke beste praktijken kan de Commissie naar voor schuiven als voorbeeld voor België?

2. Is de Commissie van mening dat er inderdaad te veel distributienetbeheerders in België zijn om kostenefficiënt te werken?

3. Welke andere maatregelen zou de Commissie voorstellen om deze situatie te verbeteren?

4. Wat is het oordeel van de Commissie over semi-publieke distributie zoals momenteel voorzien in België?

5. Welke maatregelen raadt de Commissie België aan om meer concurrentie te creëren in de distributie?

Antwoord van de heer Oettinger namens de Commissie
(28 november 2013)

1, 3 en 5) Voor het beheer van distributienetten gelden regels. Volgens het derde energiepakket ([1]) zijn het de onafhankelijke regelgevende autoriteiten van de lidstaten die volgens transparante criteria de distributietarieven of de methodes daarvoor vastleggen of goedkeuren. De Commissie benadrukt hoe belangrijk het is dat de lidstaten het derde pakket volledig omzetten. De omzetting van de communautaire regelgeving houdt in dat de bevoegde regelgevende autoriteiten van de lidstaten de nodige middelen en instrumenten moeten ontvangen om hun tarieven volledig onafhankelijk vast te leggen..

De Commissie verzamelt en beoordeelt samen met belanghebbenden de informatie over de rol van de distributienetbeheerders. Uit informatie, die verder wordt onderzocht, blijkt dat de lidstaten aanzienlijk verschillen wat betreft de distributienetwerkkosten.

2) Op basis van de beschikbare informatie is er geen bewijs gevonden waaruit blijkt dat het aantal distributienetbeheerders gerelateerd is aan de distributiekosten.

4) De Commissie heeft geen mening over de eigendomsstructuur van de distributienetbeheerders, zolang deze (ten minste) functioneel en wettelijk onafhankelijk zijn van elk elektriciteitsbedrijf (met uitzondering van de distributienetbeheerders met minder dan 100 000 aangesloten afnemers die van deze voorschriften kunnen worden vrijgesteld).

([1]) Richtlijn 2009/72/EG en 2009/73/EG van 26/2/2009 (PB L 211 van 14.8.2009).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011420/13
to the Commission
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Recommendations — Belgian 2013 National Reform Programme — Energy

Earlier this year the Commission made recommendations on Belgium's 2013 National Reform Programme. The fourth recommendation indicates that the functioning of the energy sector must be improved by reducing distribution costs and monitoring retail costs.

According to a study conducted in Belgium by consumer watchdog Test-Aankoop/Test-Achats, distribution costs account for a 'disproportionate' share of the final energy bill — 41% on average. With an average household consumption of 3 500 kWh/year, distribution rates may vary from EUR 228 to EUR 535.

Test-Aankoop/Test-Achats is calling for limits on the number of distribution operators in Belgium (of which there are some 30), to bring down costs for the consumer.

1. What best practices can the Commission propose as a model for Belgium?

2. Does the Commission feel that there really are too many distribution operators in Belgium for the system to function cost-efficiently?

3. What other measures would the Commission suggest for improving this situation?

4. What is the Commission's view on semi-public distribution, as currently envisaged in Belgium?

5. What measures does the Commission recommend that Belgium should take to stimulate more competition in distribution?

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

1, 3 and 5. The operation of distribution systems is a regulated business and, according to the Third Energy Package ([1]), the independent regulatory authorities of the Member States are responsible to fix or approve, in accordance with transparent criteria, distribution tariffs or their methodologies. The Commission stresses the importance of full transposition, by Member States, of the Third Package. The transposition of the relevant provisions implies that the competent regulatory authorities of the Member States must be granted the necessary resources and tools to execute their tariff setting tasks in full independence.

The Commission is collecting and assessing with stakeholders information on the role of DSOs. Our information, that is being analysed further, shows large variations in distribution network costs across Member States..

2. Based on the information available, no evidence has been found that shows that the number of DSOs is related to the costs of distribution.

4. The Commission has no view on the ownership structure of DSOs, as long as they are (at least) functionally and legally independent from any supply undertaking (with the exception of DSOs serving less than 100.000 connected customers that may be exempted from these requirements).

([1]) Directive 2009/72/EC and 2009/73/EC, OJ L 211, 14.8.2009.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011421/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(4 octombrie 2013)

Subiect: Accesul persoanelor cu dizabilități la patrimoniul cultural și turistic

Accesul la patrimoniul cultural, turistic, artistic sau tradițional al regiunilor europene, indiferent unde este situat, trebuie să fie posibil pentru orice cetățean, chiar și în cazul persoanelor care suferă de mobilitate redusă sau de deficiențe de vedere sau auditive.

Accesul acestor persoane la patrimoniul cultural sau la diferite evenimente și manifestări culturale și artistice vizează atât evenimentul ca atare, cât și deplasarea și accesul la locul unde are loc evenimentul și serviciile adiacente destinate persoanelor cu deficiențe vizuale și auditive.

În ultimii ani s-au înregistrat progrese în statele membre în ceea ce privește accesul persoanelor cu dizabilități motorii, dar există încă restanțe la capitolul mijloace de informare și semnalizare vizibilă, tactilă și sonoră pentru persoanele cu deficiențe vizuale sau auditive.

Ce măsuri are în vedere Comisia pentru a sprijini eforturile autorităților locale și regionale pentru realizarea de progrese în ceea ce privește informarea persoanelor cu deficiențe auditive și vizuale în muzee, case memoriale, expoziții temporare, oficii de turism, precum și în instituțiile publice de orice fel?

Răspuns dat de dl Tajani în numele Comisiei
(4 decembrie 2013)

Comisia implementează, în prezent, acțiunea pregătitoare „Turismul pentru toți", finanțată de Parlamentul European până în 2014. Acțiunea are ca scop sensibilizarea publicului și creșterea ofertei de servicii turistice accesibile pentru toate persoanele cu nevoi speciale, inclusiv pentru cele care suferă de deficiențe senzoriale. Comisia recomandă distinsei membre a Parlamentului European să consulte răspunsul său la întrebările E-010568/2013, E-010569/2013 și E-010570/2013 formulate de dna Rosa Estaras Ferragut.

În plus, în 2013, Comisia a lansat un apel privind cofinanțarea de propuneri care să includă experiențe turistice accesibile tuturor călătorilor. Pe lângă serviciile de bază, cum ar fi cazarea și alimentația, itinerariile ar trebui, de asemenea, să includă activități și servicii care să permită călătorului potențial să beneficieze pe deplin de oferta culturală a unei destinații și de bogăția sa naturală. Propunerile se află, în prezent, în curs de evaluare și vor fi implementate pe o perioadă de 18 luni. Comisia se așteaptă ca, prin această acțiune, să contribuie la crearea unei „mase critice" de servicii accesibile de-a lungul lanțului de aprovizionare din sectorul turismului, oferind astfel tuturor călătorilor, indiferent de capacitățile lor fizice, o gamă mai variată de opțiuni și un nivel mai ridicat de calitate.

Comisia este implicată în punerea în aplicare a Convenției Organizației Națiunilor Unite privind drepturile persoanelor cu handicap ([1]) (la care UE este parte din ianuarie 2011) prin intermediul acțiunilor din cadrul Strategiei europene 2010-2020 pentru persoanele cu handicap ([2]). Aceste acțiuni includ atât inițiative la nivelul UE, cât să sprijin pentru inițiativele luate la nivel național, regional și local.

Între timp, în zilele de 3 și 4 decembrie 2013, cu ocazia Zilei europene a persoanelor cu handicap, Comisia va organiza o conferință pe tema turismului accesibil în Europa.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/disabilities/convention/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/news/justice/101115_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011421/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Access for people with disabilities to cultural heritage and tourist sites

Any citizen must be able to have access to cultural heritage, tourist, artistic or traditional sites in Europe's regions, regardless of their location, even including people with reduced mobility or visual or hearing impairments.

Providing these people with access to cultural heritage sites or to different cultural and artistic events and performances means not only access to the event itself, but also travel and access to the location where the event is taking place, as well as support services for people with visual and hearing impairments.

Progress has been made in recent years in Member States in terms of access for people with motor disabilities, but the situation is still lagging behind in terms of resources for providing people with visual or hearing impairments with information and messages in visible, tactile and audible form.

What measures does the Commission envisage for supporting the efforts of local and regional authorities in making progress on providing information to people with hearing and visual impairments in general museums, house museums, temporary exhibitions, tourist offices, as well as in any kind of public institution?

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

The Commission is implementing the Preparatory Action 'Tourism for All', financed by the European Parliament until 2014. The action aims at raising awareness and enhancing the supply of accessible tourism services for all people with special needs, including those suffering from sensory disabilities. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to questions E-010568/2013, E-010569/2013 and E-010570/2013 by Sra. Rosa Estaras Ferragut.

Furthermore, in 2013, the Commission launched a call to co-finance proposals encompassing tourism experiences, accessible to all travellers. In addition to basic services such as accommodation and catering, the itineraries should also market activities and services that will allow the potential traveller to fully enjoy the cultural offer of a destination and its natural richness. The proposals are currently being evaluated and will be implemented over a period of 18 months. With this action, the Commission expects to contribute to the creation of a 'critical mass' of accessible services along the tourism supply chain, thus providing wider choices and better quality for all travellers, regardless of their physical abilities.

The Commission is engaged in the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ([1]) (to which the EU is a party since January 2011) through the actions of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 ([2]). These actions include both initiatives at EU level and support for initiatives at national, regional and local levels.

In the meantime, on the occasion of the European Day of Persons with Disabilities, the Commission is organising a Conference on Accessible Tourism in Europe on 3 and 4 December 2013.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/disabilities/convention/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/news/justice/101115_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011422/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
David Martin (S&D)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Anas Barghouti detained and charged by Israeli Government

Is the High Representative aware of the case of the Palestinian human rights lawyer and activist, Anas Barghouti?

Mr Barghouti supports the human rights of Palestinian prisoners and has regularly called for the peaceful expression of political views. He was first arrested on 15 September 2013 when travelling through a military checkpoint north of Bethlehem. After being held without charge for over one week, Mr Barghouti was then charged with two offences. The first was 'membership in the Palestinian Front for the Liberation of Palestine', and the second 'leadership of a committee to organise demonstrations'. Mr Barghouti denies both of these charges and is considered by Amnesty International to be a prisoner of conscience.

Could the High Representative please comment on this situation? Israel has been accused of systematically harassing Palestinian human rights organisations, including arbitrary detentions, restrictions of movement and raiding homes or offices. Could the High Representative also comment on these accusations?

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

The EU is aware and is following closely the case of Mr Anas Barghouti. In the latest developments, on 22 October 2013, the Ofer Military Court decided to release Mr Barghouti on bail. The initial extension of Mr Barghouti's detention without charges was a cause for concern and the EU is closely monitoring further developments in the case, which has not been dropped, on the ground through the Office of the EU Representative in East Jerusalem.

The EU maintains a regular dialogue with Israel on human rights issues particularly in the framework of the EU-Israel political dialogue (latest meeting in December 2012) and the informal working group on human rights (latest meeting in January 2013). Through its annual European Neighbourhood Policy progress report on Israel, the EU also reports on the situation on the ground.

The EU also consistently discusses issues with Israel relating to Palestinian detainees in Israeli jails, calling in particular for the respect of the international human rights obligations towards all Palestinian prisoners. The EU will continue to engage with Israel in order to promote the humanitarian protection of detainees.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés P-011423/13
a Bizottság számára
Gáll-Pelcz Ildikó (PPE)
(2013. október 4.)

Tárgy: Tagállamok intézményi és eljárási autonómiája a 93/13/EGK irányelv alkalmazásában

Magyarországon a 2008-as válságot megelőzően felvett devizaalapú hitelek – főként a megnövekedett törlesztő részletek miatt – jelentős terheket rónak a lakosságra, és ez a helyzet veszélyezteti az Unió e területen (is) érvényesített, az általános életszínvonal növelésére vonatkozó célkitűzését is.

Tekintettel, hogy az uniós fogyasztóvédelemi rendelkezések oly módon kívánnak harmonizációt bevezetni, hogy az ne szüntesse meg e területen az egyes tagállamok jogi kultúrája között fennálló különbségeket, számos kérdés merülhet fel az uniós jog helyes alkalmazása tekintetében.

Tovább növeli az uniós fogyasztóvédelem komplexitását, hogy az uniós jog által támasztott kritériumokat – mint a fogyasztókkal szemben alkalmazott nyilvánvaló egyenlőtlenség ([1]), vagy a jóhiszeműség – területenként és tagállamonként eltérően kell alkalmazni.

1. Egyetért-e a Bizottság azzal, hogy a nemzeti rendelkezések nem tehetik lehetetlenné vagy túlságosan nehézzé az uniós jog által a fogyasztókra ruházott jogok gyakorlását ([2])?

2. Egyetért-e a Bizottság azzal, hogy amennyiben a nemzeti bíróság tisztességtelennek minősít egy szerződési feltételt, az Európai Unió Bírósága gyakorlata alapján a felek között létrejött szerződés – alapelv szerint – érvényben marad ([3]), de a nemzeti bíróság a tisztességtelennek minősített szerződési feltétel alkalmazásától eltekint, viszont azt az alapelv értelmében nem módosíthatja ([4])?

3. Egyetért-e a Bizottság azzal, hogy a nemzeti bíróságnak annak eldöntéséhez, hogy a szolgáltató és a fogyasztó között a szerződés megkötésekor valóban egyenlőtlenség jött-e létre, fő szabályként azt kell vizsgálni, hogy a szolgáltató a fogyasztóval szembeni tisztességes eljárás esetén ésszerűen elvárhatta-e, hogy a fogyasztó a vizsgált feltételt egyedi tárgyalást követően is elfogadja?

Viviane Reding válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. november 13.)

A tisztelt képviselő asszony számára bizonyára jól ismert tény, hogy a 93/13/EGK irányelv ([5]) nem harmonizálja a nemzeti eljárási szabályokat. Ezek a szabályok – amint azt az EUB is megerősítette – az egyes tagállamok nemzeti jogrendjébe tartoznak, és „a tagállamok eljárási autonómiájaként ([6])" is szokás rájuk utalni. Mindazonáltal az EUB ítélkezési gyakorlata ([7]) szerint ennek az autonómiának határt szab az egyenértékűség és a tényleges érvényesülés elve, amely elvek általánosságban véve az uniós jog által biztosított jogokra vonatkoznak.

1. A fentiek alapján a Bizottság egyetért azzal, hogy az EUB ítélkezési gyakorlatának megfelelően – például a C-415/11. sz. Aziz-ügyben és a C-32/12. sz. Soledad Duarte Hueros-ügyben – a nemzeti eljárási szabályok nem tehetik lehetetlenné vagy túlságosan nehézzé az uniós jog által a fogyasztókra ruházott jogok gyakorlását.

2. A 93/13/EGK irányelv 6. cikkének (1) bekezdése szerint, amint azt a Bíróság – különösen a C-618/10. sz. Banco Español de Crédito-ügyben ([8]) – értelmezte, a nemzeti bíróságoknak ki kell zárniuk a tisztességtelen szerződési feltétel alkalmazását, hogy az ne legyen kötelező erejű a fogyasztóra nézve, ugyanakkor nem jogosultak a szerződés tartalmának felülvizsgálatára. Az ilyen esetekben a szerződésnek elvileg továbbra is érvényben kell maradnia, mindaddig, amíg a nemzeti jog értelmében a folytonosság jogilag lehetséges.

3. A „jóhiszeműség" követelményével kapcsolatban, amelyről a 93/13/EGK irányelv 3. cikkének (1) bekezdése rendelkezik, az EUB a C-415/11. sz. Aziz-ügyben ([9]) megállapította, hogy a nemzeti bíróságoknak meg kell vizsgálniuk, hogy az eladó vagy szolgáltató a fogyasztóval szembeni tisztességes és méltányos eljárása esetén ésszerűen elvárhatta-e, hogy utóbbi az egyedi tárgyalást követően elfogadja az érintett feltételt.

([1]) A felek szerződésből eredő jogai és kötelezettségei tekintetében.
([2]) Európai Unió Bírósága, C-168/05.
([3]) Európai Unió Bírósága, C-240/98.
([4]) Fő szabályként.
([5]) HL L 95., 1993.4.21., 29. o.
([6]) Lásd például a C-618/10. sz. Banco Español de Crédito-ügy 46. bekezdését és a C-415/11. sz. Aziz-ügy 50. bekezdését.
([7]) Lásd például a korábban említett két esetet, valamint a C-32/12. sz. Soledad Duarte Hueros-ügy 31. bekezdését.
([8]) Lásd különösen a 65. bekezdést.
([9]) Lásd különösen a 69. bekezdést.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011423/13
to the Commission
Ildikó Gáll-Pelcz (PPE)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Institutional and procedural autonomy of the Member States when applying Directive 93/13/EC

Foreign-currency loans taken out in Hungary before the 2008 crisis are placing a heavy burden on the Hungarian people, primarily as a result of the increases in instalments, and this situation is jeopardising the EU's objective of achieving an overall improvement in living standards.

In view of the fact that the EU's consumer protection provisions aim to introduce harmonisation in such a way that the differences in the legal cultures between the Member States in this area remain, a number of questions arise with regard to the correct application of EC law.

Consumer protection in the EU is increasing in complexity as a result of the need to apply the criteria upheld by EC law — such as the clear inequality applied to consumers ([1]), and the principle of good faith — differently in different areas and Member States.

1. Does the Commission agree that national provisions should not make the exercise of consumer rights as conferred by EC law impossible or excessively difficult ([2])?

2. Does the Commission agree that, if a national court finds a contractual provision to be unfair, the contract should, on the basis of the case-law of the European Court of Justice, remain in force in accordance with the fundamental principle([3]) but that the national court should disregard the provision in question without, however, being able, under the fundamental principle, to make changes to it([4])?

3. Does the Commission agree that, in order for a national court to decide whether a disparity has arisen in the conclusion of a contract between a supplier and a consumer, as a general rule there should be an assessment of whether the supplier, dealing fairly and equitably with the consumer, could reasonably assume that the consumer would have agreed to the term concerned in individual contract negotiations?

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

The Honourable Member will be well aware that directive 93/13EEC ([5]) does not harmonise the national rules of procedure. Such rules, as confirmed by the CJEU, are a matter for the national legal order of each Member State, also referred to as the 'procedural autonomy of the Member States ([6])'. However, according to the case law of the CJEU ([7]), this autonomy is, in turn, limited by the principles of equivalence and effectiveness, which apply to rights conferred by EC law in general.

1. On this basis, the Commission agrees that, in accordance with the case law of the CJEU, for instance in Cases C-415/11 Aziz and C-32/12 Soledad Duarte Hueros, national rules of procedure should not make the exercise of consumer rights conferred by EC law impossible or excessively difficult.

2. According to Article 6 (1) of Directive 93/13/EEC, as interpreted by the CJEU, in particular in Case C-618/10 Banco Español de Crédito ([8]), the national courts are required to exclude the application of an unfair contractual term, so that it does not produce binding effects with regard to the consumer, whilst not being authorised to revise its content. In such cases the contract must continue to exist, in principle, insofar as, in accordance with the rules of domestic law, such continuity is legally possible.

([1]) In terms of the contractual rights and obligations of the parties.
([2]) Case C-168/05 of the Court of Justice of the European Union.
([3]) Case C-240/98 of the Court of Justice of the European Union.
([4]) As a general rule.
([5]) OJ No L 95, 21.4.1993, p.29.
([6]) See, for instance, Case C-618/10 Banco Español de Crédito, paragraph 46 and Case C-415/11 Aziz, paragraph 50.
([7]) See, for instance, the two cases mentioned before and Case C-32/12, Soledad Duarte Hueros, paragraph 31.
([8]) See, in particular, paragraph 65.

3. In relation to the 'good faith' criterion contained in Article 3 (1) of Directive 93/13/EEC, the CJEU established in Case C-415/11 Aziz ([9]) that national courts must assess whether the seller or supplier, dealing fairly and equitably with the consumer, could reasonably assume that the consumer would have agreed to such a term in individual contract negotiations.

([9]) See in particular, paragraph 69.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-011424/13
adresată Comisiei (Vicepreședintelui/Înaltului Reprezentant)
Adrian Severin (NI)
(4 octombrie 2013)

Subiect: VP/HR — Semnificația deosebită a semnării Acordului de asociere UE-Ucraina la Vilnius

La apropiatul summit de la Vilnius va fi în joc întregul echilibrul geostrategic între zona euro-atlantică și zona euro-asiatică. În acest context, este crucială asocierea strategică a UE cu Ucraina.

Rusia înțelege acest joc geostrategic și, prin urmare, exercită presiuni asupra Ucrainei pentru a respinge Acordul de Asociere cu UE. Opoziția Rusiei pune summit-ul de la Vilnius într-o nouă perspectivă geo-strategică.

La summit-ul din Vilnius va avea loc prima ciocnire dintre doctrina orientată spre valori a UE și acțiunile geostrategice ale Rusiei. Viitorul credibilității UE ca actor global depinde de victoria sa în Vilnius, dovada victoriei fiind semnarea Acordului de asociere cu Ucraina.

1. Este VP/ÎR de acord că UE nu va fi în măsură să promoveze cu succes valorile sale până când nu va fi câștigat cursa geostrategică?

2. Este VP/ÎR de acord că, în noul context geostrategic, obiectivele de referință ale UE privind Ucraina trebuie revizuite și contextualizate, în conformitate cu principiul *rebus sic stantibus*?

3. Este UE pregătită să ajungă la un compromis între diseminarea valorilor sale și o geostrategie eficientă, acceptând că asocierile strategice între țări cu culturi politice diferite sunt uneori posibile și necesare, considerând totodată Acordul de asociere cu Ucraina mai degrabă un instrument pentru convergența valorilor, decât rezultatul unei astfel de convergențe?

Răspuns dat de Înaltul Reprezentant /doamna *vicepreședinte Ashton în numele Comisiei*
(29 noiembrie 2013)

1. Strategia UE în zona de vecinătate nu este concepută ca o cursă sau ca un joc cu sumă nulă.

2. Obiectivele de referință pentru semnarea Acordului de asociere cu Ucraina nu s-au schimbat.

3. Dezideratul aplicării unor valori comune nu se poate atinge decât în urma unui proces. Obiectivele de referință pentru semnarea acordului nu reprezintă sfârșitul, ci începutul acestui drum.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011424/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Adrian Severin (NI)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — The high significance of signing the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement in Vilnius

At the forthcoming Vilnius Summit the entire geo-strategic equilibrium between the Euro-Atlantic and Euro-Asiatic areas will be at stake. In this context the EU's strategic association with Ukraine is crucial.

Russia understands this geo-strategic game and is therefore exerting pressure on Ukraine to reject the Association Agreement with the EU. Russia's opposition puts the Vilnius Summit in a new geo-strategic perspective.

The first-ever clash between the EU's values-oriented doctrine and Russian geo-strategic action will take place at the Vilnius Summit. The future of the EU's credibility as global player depends on its victory in Vilnius, with the proof of that victory being the signing of the Association Agreement with Ukraine.

1. Does the VP/HR agree that the EU will not be able to successfully promote its values until such a time as it has won the geo-strategic race?

2. Does the VP/HR agree that, in the new geo-strategic context, the EU benchmarks on Ukraine must be revised and contextualised in line with the principle of rebus sic stantibus?

3. Is the EU ready to strike a compromise between the dissemination of its values and an effective geo-strategy by accepting that strategic associations between countries with different political cultures are sometimes possible and necessary, while looking at the Association Agreement with Ukraine as an instrument for achieving the convergence of values rather than the product of such convergence?

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

1. The EU's strategy in the neighbourhood is not conceived as a race or a zero-sum game.

2. The benchmarks for the signature of the Association Agreement with Ukraine have not changed.

3. Achieving implementation of shared values is of course a process. The benchmarks for signature are not the end of this road, they are the beginning.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-011425/13
do Komisji
Andrzej Grzyb (PPE)
(4 października 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Ograniczenia w umowie licencyjnej użytkownika końcowego (EULA) dla Apple OS X

W umowie licencyjnej użytkownika końcowego (EULA) dotyczącej systemu operacyjnego OS X Apple Inc. zabrania instalowania tego systemu w sprzęcie komputerowym firmy innej niż Apple. W związku z tym nie jest legalnie możliwe zainstalowanie tego systemu w niechronionym patentem sprzęcie komputerowym, który skądinąd fizycznie nadaje się do takiej instalacji. Ponadto dzięki takiemu przepisowi EULA zasadniczo powstrzymuje tworzenie kompatybilnego z OS X sprzętu komputerowego przez innych producentów, ponieważ potencjalni użytkownicy końcowi nie mają możliwości legalnego zainstalowania systemu OS X w takim sprzęcie.

Czy tego rodzaju praktyki są zgodne z dorobkiem UE, zwłaszcza biorąc pod uwagę przepisy rządzące rynkiem wewnętrznym oraz przepisy dotyczące konkurencji?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Joaquína Almunię w imieniu Komisji
(11 listopada 2013 r.)

Unijne prawo konkurencji w zasadzie nie zabrania przedsiębiorstwom ograniczania stosowania licencjonowanego oprogramowania do konkretnego sprzętu komputerowego na podstawie umów. Niezależnie od tego, nadużywanie przez przedsiębiorstwa pozycji dominującej na rynku może prowadzić do naruszenia unijnego prawa konkurencji (art. 102 TFUE). Z posiadanych przez Komisję informacji wynika, że spółka Apple nie posiada pozycji dominującej na rynku systemów operacyjnych dla komputerów osobistych. Wydaje się więc mało prawdopodobne, aby działania spółki Apple w odniesieniu do jej OS X naruszały unijne prawo konkurencji.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011425/13
to the Commission
Andrzej Grzyb (PPE)
(4 October 2013)

Subject: Restrictions in the end-user licence agreement (EULA) for Apple OS X

In the end-user licence agreement (EULA) for its OS X operating system, Apple Inc. prohibits the installation of the system on non-Apple hardware. Therefore, it is not legally possible to install the system in non-proprietary hardware which could, nevertheless, physically support the OS X system. Furthermore, by dint of such a provision the EULA essentially prevents the creation of OS X-compatible hardware by third-party hardware producers, given that potential end users have no way of legally installing of the OS X system on such hardware.

Are such practices compatible with the EU acquis, especially taking into consideration internal market rules and rules governing competition?

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

In general EU competition law does not prevent companies from contractually limiting the use of licensed software to specific hardware. EU competition law could however be infringed if companies abuse a dominant position in the market (Article 102 TFEU). On the basis of the information available to the Commission, it appears that Apple does not hold a dominant position on the PC operating system market. It therefore seems unlikely that Apple's behaviour with regard to its OS X infringes EU competition law.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse P-012007/13
til Kommissionen
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(21. oktober 2013)

Om: Behov for kraftig reaktion til støtte for de fængslede Greenpeace-aktivister i Rusland

Som Kommissionen givetvis ved, er ikke mindre end 30 Greenpeace-aktivister fængslede i Rusland som følge af en ikke-voldelig demonstration ved olieplatformen Prirazlomnaya.

Greenpeace-demonstranternes hensigt var tydeligt og påviseligt ikke-voldelig. De havde intet ønske om at opnå andet end mediedækning af en sag, der skaber stor bekymring for miljøet på et internationalt plan. Situationen opsummeres bedst af en udtalelse, der blev afgivet af en de fængslede aktivister, danskeren Anne Mie Roer Jensen, under et indledende retsmøde i Murmansk:

»Dette var ikke et voldeligt angreb, men en ikke-voldelig demonstration. Vi brugte ikke våben, vi er fredelige. Vi ønsker at redde Arktis, og vi er her for at gøre opmærksom på problemet. I nærheden af platformen sikrede vi os, at vores udstyr var ufarligt. I modsætning til os brugte de vagter, der arresterede os, skydevåben«.

Greenpeace-aktivisternes aktion kan derfor på ingen tænkelig måde udlægges som piratvirksomhed.

Idet jeg anerkender og påskønner de bestræbelser, der gøres af de kompetente myndigheder i de medlemsstater, hvis borgere er blevet fængslet af de russiske myndigheder, vil jeg gerne bede Kommissionen besvare følgende spørgsmål:

1. Hvilke foranstaltninger har Kommissionen truffet for at hjælpe de fængslede aktivister og sikre en hurtig løsladelse?

2. Hvordan agter Kommissionen at involvere sig for at kunne opnå en hurtig løsning på denne beklagelige situation?

3. Har Kommissionen tilbudt at hjælpe myndighederne i de medlemsstater, hvis borgere er blevet fængslet?

Samlet svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af den højtstående repræsentant/næstformand Catherine Ashton
(25. november 2013)

Anklagerne mod Greenpeace-besætningen og journalisterne, som er varetægtsfængslet af de russiske myndigheder efter en protestaktion ved en af Gazproms' olieplatforme, er åbenlyst uforholdsmæssige. Hvad angår de to varetægtsfængslede journalister, giver anklagerne derudover anledning til spørgsmål om pressefrihed.

Medlemsstaterne, hvis borgere er blandt de varetægtsfængslede, behandler indtil videre sagen som et konsulært anliggende. Den højtstående repræsentant/næstformanden respekterer dette, og EU har undladt at afgive offentlig udtalelse foruden udtalelserne ved plenarforsamlingen den 23. oktober. Det er dog naturligvis gjort klart for de russiske myndigheder, at den ulykkelige situation giver anledning til alvorlige bekymringer.

EU-delegationen i Moskva holder hyppigt samordningsmøder med repræsentanter fra de lande, som de varetægtsfængslede kommer fra, uanset om det er EU-medlemsstater eller tredjelande. På møderne aftales en fælles fremgangsmåde over for de russiske myndigheder vedrørende vilkårene for varetægtsfængslingen samt de retlige og proceduremæssige aspekter. EU holder samtidig tæt kontakt med repræsentanter fra Greenpeace.

Nederlandene, som er flagstat for skibet »Arctic Sunrise«, har indbragt sagen for Den Internationale Havretsdomstol for øjeblikkeligt at få frigivet besætningen og skibet. Desværre har Rusland afvist at deltage i voldgiftssagen ved Den Internationale Havretsdomstol og vil ikke møde op til retshøringerne. Domstolen bliver nødt til at træffe sin afgørelse uden Ruslands deltagelse.

Det bør dog bemærkes, at Rusland har fremhævet sin villighed til fortsat at søge efter en gensidigt acceptabel løsning.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011587/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(10 octobre 2013)

Objet: Rapatriement des militants de Greenpeace

Fin septembre, les garde-côtes russes ont arraisonné le navire de Greenpeace *Arctic Sunrise* en mer de Barents, dans l'Arctique russe, une immense zone regorgeant de ressources en hydrocarbures dont le pays a fait une priorité stratégique. Les militants ont été placés en détention pour deux mois à Mourmansk, à environ 2 000 kilomètres au nord de Moscou. La semaine dernière, les 30 membres de l'équipage, dont 26 ne sont pas russes, ont été inculpés de «piraterie en groupe organisé». Ce chef d'accusation leur fait encourir jusqu'à 15 ans de détention.

Surveillance permanente, insalubrité… les 30 militants de Greenpeace arrêtés pour avoir tenté d'aborder une plateforme pétrolière russe seraient détenus dans des conditions «inhumaines», selon un avocat de l'organisation, Sergueï Goloubok.

Plusieurs militants détenus «n'ont pas d'accès à l'eau potable», et tous font l'objet «d'une vidéosurveillance permanente» jusque dans les toilettes, a-t-il souligné.

«Personne ne reçoit de soins médicaux appropriés», a-t-il ajouté. La situation des militants détenus est d'autant plus compliquée que la plupart d'entre eux sont des ressortissants étrangers et ne parlent pas russe, a souligné l'avocat, avant de préciser: «Ils ne peuvent pas parler à leurs proches par téléphone, car ils doivent parler une langue que les employés des centres de détention sont capables de comprendre.»

Ces derniers ne peuvent donc pas remplir un formulaire en russe pour pouvoir retirer de l'argent de leur compte bancaire, ou tout simplement demander la permission aux gardiens d'ouvrir la fenêtre.

1. Comment réagit la Commission?

2. Que compte-t-elle faire pour assurer des conditions de détention humaines?

3. Vu les conditions d'incarcération d'une part, le décalage entre les faits et les peines encourues d'autre part, ne devrait-on pas rapatrier les militants de Greenpeace?

4. Comment la Commission défend-elle ce dossier auprès des autorités russes?

Réponse commune donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(25 novembre 2013)

Les charges retenues contre les membres de l'équipage du navire de Greenpeace et les journalistes détenus par les autorités russes à la suite d'une action menée sur une plateforme pétrolière de Gazprom sont manifestement disproportionnées et, dans le cas des deux journalistes arrêtés, soulèvent aussi des questions quant au respect de la liberté de la presse.

Tous les États membres qui comptent des ressortissants parmi les personnes détenues gèrent pour l'instant l'incident comme une affaire consulaire. La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante respecte ce choix et l'UE s'est abstenue de toute déclaration publique après celles de la plénière du 23 octobre. Toutefois, les graves préoccupations que suscite cette situation regrettable ont, bien évidemment, été exposées de manière claire aux autorités russes.

La délégation de l'UE à Moscou organise des réunions de coordination fréquentes avec les représentants des pays comptant des ressortissants parmi les détenus, qu'il s'agisse d'États membres ou non. Lors de ces réunions, il est convenu de démarches conjointes auprès des autorités russes sur la question des conditions de détention, ainsi que sur des aspects juridiques et procéduraux. Parallèlement à cela, l'UE reste en contact étroit avec les représentants de Greenpeace.

Les Pays-Bas, État dont l'Arctic Sunrise battait pavillon, ont saisi le Tribunal international du droit de la mer pour obtenir la mainlevée immédiate de l'immobilisation du navire et la libération de ses membres. Malheureusement, la Russie a refusé un arbitrage dans le cadre de la Convention sur le droit de la mer et ne participera pas à la procédure. Le Tribunal devra donc statuer en son absence.

Il convient toutefois de noter que la Russie a insisté sur sa volonté de continuer à rechercher une solution mutuellement acceptable à cette situation.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-011426/13
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Thijs Berman (S&D)
(7 oktober 2013)

Betreft: VP/HR — Inbeslagname van het Greenpeace-schip Arctic Sunrise en arrestatie van de bemanning ervan

Op 19 september 2013 zijn de autoriteiten van de Russische Federatie op illegale wijze aan boord van het Greenpeace-schip Arctic Sunrise gegaan en hebben zij dit op illegale wijze in beslag genomen, op het moment dat de bemanning ervan een vreedzame protestactie hield nabij het boorplatform Prirazlomnaya, om zowel de publieke opinie als de Russische autoriteiten te wijzen op de risico's in verband met mijnbouw in de zeeën van het Noordpoolgebied. Het schip is naar Moermansk gebracht, terwijl de bemanningsleden gevangen worden gehouden en zijn beschuldigd van „piraterij", met mogelijk een gevangenisstraf die kan oplopen tot 15 jaar.

In artikel 101 van het internationaal overeengekomen Verdrag van de Verenigde Naties inzake het recht van de zee (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, UNCLOS) wordt piraterij gedefinieerd als „iedere onwettige daad van geweld of aanhouding, alsmede iedere daad van plundering die door de bemanning of de passagiers van een particulier schip of een particulier luchtvaartuig voor persoonlijke doeleinden wordt gepleegd".

De bemanningsleden van het Greenpeace-schip handelden duidelijk niet voor persoonlijke doeleinden, maar ter verdediging van wat zij beschouwen als een publiek en mondiaal belang, en zij deden dit op vreedzame wijze.

Is de hoge vertegenwoordiger het ermee eens dat de reactie van de Russische autoriteiten op het Greenpeace-protest buiten alle verhouding is en onaanvaardbaar in democratische landen?

Is de hoge vertegenwoordiger het ermee eens dat, als de bemanning wordt beschuldigd van „piraterij", moedwillig over het hoofd wordt gezien dat het ging om een vreedzame actie van een ngo, waarbij de deelnemers niet handelden als „piraten", maar als bezorgde burgers?

Kan en zal de hoge vertegenwoordiger snel diplomatieke druk op de Russische autoriteiten uitoefenen om ervoor te zorgen dat het Greenpeace-schip onmiddellijk en onvoorwaardelijk wordt vrijgegeven en de bemanning ervan vrijgelaten?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(25 november 2013)

De beschuldigingen tegen de door de Russische autoriteiten aangehouden Greenpeace-bemanningsleden en de journalisten naar aanleiding van een actie op een olieplatform van Gazprom zijn kennelijk onevenredig en, wat de twee aangehouden journalisten betreft, doen zij ook vragen rijzen inzake de persvrijheid.

Alle lidstaten waarvan onderdanen tot de arrestanten behoren, willen het incident op dit moment afhandelen als een consulaire zaak. De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter eerbiedigt dit en de EU heeft zich onthouden van openbare verklaringen die verder gaan dan die welke zij op de plenaire zitting van 23 oktober heeft afgelegd. Deze ongelukkige situatie geeft aanleiding tot ernstige bezorgdheden die natuurlijk duidelijk aan de Russische autoriteiten zijn kenbaar gemaakt.

De EU-delegatie in Moskou organiseert regelmatig coördinatievergaderingen met de vertegenwoordigers van de EU-staten of derde landen waarvan onderdanen werden gearresteerd. Op deze bijeenkomsten wordt een gemeenschappelijke benadering ten aanzien van de Russische autoriteiten afgesproken wat betreft de gevangenisomstandigheden en de juridische en procedurele aspecten. Tegelijkertijd onderhoudt de EU nauwe contacten met de Greenpeace-vertegenwoordigers.

Nederland, vlaggenstaat van het schip „Arctic Sunrise", heeft een verzoek ingediend bij het Internationaal Hof in het kader van het Zeerechtverdrag met het oog op de onmiddellijke vrijlating van de bemanning en vrijgeving van het schip. Helaas heeft Rusland geweigerd deel te nemen aan de bemiddelingsprocedure overeenkomstig het Zeerechtverdrag en zal het niet deelnemen aan de procedure. Het Hof zal zijn oordeel zonder deelname van Rusland moeten uitspreken.

Het is echter vermeldenswaard dat Rusland heeft beklemtoond bereid te zijn te blijven zoeken naar een wederzijds aanvaardbare oplossing voor deze situatie.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011426/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Thijs Berman (S&D)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Seizure of the Greenpeace vessel Arctic Sunrise and its crew

On 19 September 2013 the Greenpeace vessel Arctic Sunrise was illegally boarded and seized by the Russian Federation authorities, when its crew members were staging a peaceful protest near the Prirazlomnaya oil platform in an attempt to alert both the public and the Russian authorities to the risks involved in mining in the Arctic seas. The vessel has been brought to Murmansk, while crew members are being detained and have been charged with 'piracy', facing a potential sentence of up to 15 years imprisonment.

According to Article 101 of the internationally agreed United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos), piracy is defined as 'any illegal acts of violence or detention, or any act of depredation, committed for private ends by the crew or the passengers of a private ship or a private aircraft'.

Obviously, the Greenpeace crew members were not acting for 'private ends' but rather for what they see as a public and global interest, and they acted in a peaceful manner.

Does the High Representative agree that the Russian authorities' reaction to the Greenpeace protest is completely disproportionate and unacceptable in democratic states?

Does the High Representative agree that charging the crew with 'piracy' wilfully overlooks the fact that this was a peaceful action by an NGO in which the members acted not as 'pirates' but as concerned citizens?

Can, and will, the High Representative put urgent diplomatic pressure on the Russian authorities for the immediate and unconditional release of the Greenpeace vessel and its crew?

Question for written answer E-011587/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(10 October 2013)

Subject: Repatriation of Greenpeace activists

At the end of September, Russian coast guards boarded the Greenpeace ship *Arctic Sunrise* in the Barents Sea in the Russian Arctic, a huge area rich in hydrocarbon resources which the country has made a strategic priority. The activists are to be detained for two months in Murmansk around 2 000 kilometres north of Moscow. Last week, all 30 members of the crew, 26 of which are not Russian were charged with 'piracy as part of an organised group'. With this charge, they risk up to 15 years of detention.

Constant surveillance, unhealthy conditions … the 30 Greenpeace activists arrested for trying to approach a Russian oil platform are being held in 'inhumane' conditions according to a lawyer of the organisation, Sergei Golubok.

He pointed out that several activists held 'do not have access to drinking water' and all are subject to 'constant video surveillance', even in the toilet

'Nobody is receiving the appropriate medical care', he added. The situation of the detainees is even more complicated as most of them are foreign nationals and do not speak Russian, the lawyer highlighted before stating that: 'They cannot speak to their families on the phone as they have to speak a language which the prison employees can understand'.

The activists are unable to fill in forms in Russian to take money out of their bank accounts or simply ask the guards' permission to open a window.

1. What is the Commission's reaction?

2. What does it intend to do to ensure humane detention conditions?

3. Given the conditions of their imprisonment and the discrepancies between the facts and the penalties incurred, should the Greenpeace activists not be repatriated?

4. How is the Commission defending this case to the Russian authorities?

Question for written answer E-011787/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mary Honeyball (S&D)
(16 October 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Illegal arrest of Kieron Bryan in Russia

I am writing to impress upon the Commission my deep concern over the situation surrounding the illegal boarding and seizure of the Greenpeace vessel *Arctic Sunrise* at the orders of the Russian Government.

The situation itself is bad enough, but in addition my constituent Kieron Bryan, a journalist and film-maker, was detained and charged along with the rest of the crew.

I believe that charging any member of Greenpeace on board the vessel is completely unjustifiable, but it is particularly troubling that the legal system in Russia cannot distinguish between activists and journalists. Mr Bryan was on board for journalistic reasons, not to protest, and as such there is no reason for him to be detained or charged with any crime. In fact, this goes against press freedom, which is one of the core principles that are so important to modern democracies.

Does the Vice-President/High Representative agree that the detention of Kieron Bryan and the criminal charges against him are completely unjustifiable?

Can the Vice-President/High Representative put diplomatic pressure on the Russian authorities for the immediate and unconditional release of Kieron Bryan?

Question for written answer P-012007/13
to the Commission
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(21 October 2013)

Subject: Strong reaction needed in support of the jailed Greenpeace activists in Russia

As the Commission will know, no less than 30 Greenpeace activists are currently imprisoned in Russia following a non-violent demonstration at the Prirazlomnaya oil platform.

The intentions of the Greenpeace protesters were clearly and demonstrably non-violent. They had no desire to achieve anything other than gain media coverage for an issue of grave international environmental concern. The situation is best summed up by the statement made by one of the jailed activists, the Danish national Anne Mie Roer Jensen, during a preliminary hearing in Murmansk:

'This was not a violent attack but a non-violent demonstration. We did not use weapons, we are peaceful. We want to save the Arctic, and we are here to spread the word. Near the platform, we ensured that our equipment was safe. In contrast, the officers who detained us were using firearms'.

The actions of the Greenpeace activists can therefore in no way, shape, or form be construed as an act of piracy.

Recognising and applauding the efforts of the competent authorities in the Member States whose citizens have been jailed by the Russian authorities, I pose the following questions to the Commission:

1. What action has the Commission taken to assist the jailed activists and to secure their speedy release?

2. How does the Commission intend to become involved in order to achieve an expeditious resolution to this deplorable situation?

3. Has the Commission offered to assist the authorities of the Member States whose citizens have been jailed?

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

The charges against detained Greenpeace crew members and journalists detained by Russian authorities following an action at a Gazprom oil platform are manifestly disproportionate and, as far as the two detained journalists are concerned, also raise questions relating to freedom of the press.

All Member States with nationals among the detainees wish are dealing with the incident for the time being as a consular matter. The HR/VP respects this and the EU has abstained from public statements going beyond those made during the 23 October Plenary. However, the serious concerns that this unfortunate situation gives rise to have, of course, been made clearly known to the Russian authorities.

The EU Delegation in Moscow hosts frequent coordination meetings with representatives of the countries having nationals among the detainees, be it EU member and non-member states. In these meetings, joint approaches to the Russian authorities are agreed on the issue of detention conditions as well as on legal and procedural aspects. At the same time, the EU stays in close contact with Greenpeace representatives.

The Netherlands, flag state for the ship 'Arctic Sunrise', have submitted a request to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea Convention for immediate release of crew and ship. Unfortunately Russia has rejected participation in arbitration under the Law of the Sea Convention and will not participate in the proceedings. The Tribunal will have to pronounce its verdict in the absence of such participation.

It is, however, worth noting that Russia has stressed its readiness to continue to seek a mutually acceptable solution to this situation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-011427/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(7 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: AST Terni, procedure in corso e ripercussioni occupazionali

Con riferimento alle recenti interrogazioni presentate alla Commissione e concernenti una probabile ulteriore proroga, da parte della Commissione stessa, dell'attività delle Acciaierie di Terni (AST), suscitano ulteriore preoccupazione nel settore della siderurgia europea le notizie riportate dalla stampa della volontà di Outokumpu di effettuare un ulteriore taglio dei posti di lavoro di altre mille unità in Finlandia e in Germania, oltre ai 2500 già previsti.

Per quanto riguarda le AST Terni, durante l'incontro con le parti sociali e le istituzioni umbre avvenuto a Strasburgo lo scorso giugno 2013, il Commissario Almunia aveva escluso la possibilità di concedere ulteriori proroghe precisando che, trascorso il termine assegnato, la Commissione avrebbe nominato un garante al fine di sovraintendere in maniera imparziale alla vendita.

Il Parlamento europeo già nella sua risoluzione del 13 dicembre 2012 «sull'industria siderurgica dell'UE» aveva chiesto alla Commissione di monitorare da vicino gli sviluppi negli stabilimenti di Terni, proprio per tutelare la loro integrità e la loro competitività nel panorama europeo e internazionale.

Premesso che la Commissione ha sempre affermato che il suo operato era volto ad assicurare la sostenibilità economica e la competitività delle AST Terni, può la stessa Commissione far sapere:

— una valutazione delle ultime notizie dei tagli al personale previsti da Outokumpu e le possibili ripercussioni sulla cessione delle AST Terni;

— un quadro dettagliato circa le procedure e le tempistiche utilizzate riguardanti la cessione;

— i principali parametri utilizzati per valutare i possibili acquirenti (europei ed extraeuropei) e i relativi progetti industriali;

— quali azioni ha messo in campo per dare seguito alle richieste contenute nella risoluzione del Parlamento europeo?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(19 novembre 2013)

Nel giugno 2013 è stato presentato un piano d'azione ([1]) per l'industria siderurgica europea, inteso ad aiutare questo settore ad affrontare le sfide odierne e porre le basi per la competitività futura promuovendo l'innovazione e creando crescita e occupazione.

La Commissione è a conoscenza del fatto che Outokumpu sottolinea la necessità di adottare ulteriori misure sul fronte dell'occupazione per conseguire il risanamento finanziario. La Commissione non può intervenire nelle attività economiche di investitori privati. Inoltre, la Commissione non può commentare i dettagli della procedura di cessione o la tempistica specifica. Una panoramica delle procedure e delle principali fasi del processo di cessione sono disponibili negli impegni nella causa M.6471 Outokumpu/Inoxum ([2]) e nella comunicazione della Commissione sulle misure correttive ([3]).

L'idoneità dei potenziali acquirenti si basa sui seguenti punti ([4]):

— l'acquirente deve essere indipendente e non essere collegato alle parti,

([1]) COM(2013)407.
([2]) Disponibile sul sito web della DG COMP: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/elojade/isef/index.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_result&policy_area_id=2&case_number=6471.
([3]) Comunicazione della Commissione concernente le misure correttive considerate accettabili a norma del regolamento (CE) n. 139/2004 e in virtù del regolamento (CE) n. 802/2004, GU C 267 del 22.10.2008, pag. 1-27, disponibile su: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/lexuriserv/lexuriserv.do?uri=celex:52008xc1022(01):en:not.
([4]) Cfr. comunicazione della Commissione concernente le misure correttive, punti 48 e 49. Cfr. anche i punti 15 e 16 degli impegni nella causa M.6471 Outokumpu/Inoxum.

— l'acquirente deve possedere i mezzi finanziari, la comprovata competenza pertinente nonché l'incentivo e la capacità di mantenere e sviluppare l'attività ceduta come forza competitiva redditizia ed attiva, e

— l'acquisizione dell'attività ceduta da parte di un acquirente non deve creare nuovi problemi sul piano della concorrenza.

La Commissione sta monitorando attentamente il processo di cessione, tramite riunioni regolari con le diverse parti interessate, e continuerà a prendere tutte le misure necessarie per tutelare la redditività e la competitività di Acciai Speciali Terni.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011427/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: AST Terni: divestment procedure and implications for jobs

Following on from the questions submitted recently to the Commission concerning a probable further extension of the deadline for selling the Terni steelworks (AST) in Italy, press reports that Outokumpu intends to cut a further 1 000 jobs in Finland and Germany, on top of the 2 500 already announced, have given rise to fresh concerns in the EU steel sector.

At a meeting with the social partners and Umbrian institutions in Strasbourg in June 2013, Commissioner Almunia ruled out the possibility of further extensions. He said that the Commission would appoint an impartial guarantor to oversee the sale, once the deadline has passed.

In its resolution of 13 December 2012 on the EU steel industry, Parliament called on the Commission to monitor closely future developments at the Terni plant in an effort to maintain its integrity and its competitiveness on European and international markets.

The Commission has repeatedly stated its intention to safeguard the economic sustainability and competitiveness of AST Terni. With that in mind:

— What does the Commission have to say about the latest reports of staff cuts at Outokumpu and the implications they might have for the sale of AST Terni?

— Can it give a detailed overview of the procedures and time frame for the sale?

— What are the main criteria for assessing potential buyers (from inside and outside the EU) and their plans for the plant?

— What steps has it taken in response to the aforementioned Parliament resolution?

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

In June 2013 an action plan ([1]) for the European Steel Industry was presented to help this sector confront today's challenges and lay the foundations for future competitiveness by fostering innovation, creating growth and jobs in the sector.

The Commission is aware that Outokumpu reports additional employment measures to be taken to achieve a financial turnaround. The Commission cannot interfere in the business done by private investors. Furthermore, the Commission cannot comment on the details of the divestment procedure or its specific timeline. An overview of the procedures and main steps of the divestiture process can be found in the commitments in case M.6471 Outokumpu/Inoxum ([2]) and in the Commission notice on remedies ([3]).

Suitability of potential purchasers is based on the following ([4]):

— the purchaser is required to be independent of and unconnected to the merging parties,

— the purchaser must possess the resources, relevant expertise and have the incentive and ability to maintain and develop the divested business as a viable and active competitive force, and

— the acquisition of the business by the purchaser must not prima facie create new competition concerns.

([1]) COM(2013) 407.
([2]) Available on DG COMP's website: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/elojade/isef/index.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_result&policy_area_id=2&case_number=6471
([3]) Commission notice on remedies acceptable under Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 and under Commission Regulation (EC) No 802/2004, OJ C 267, 22.10.2008, p. 1-27, available on http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52008XC1022(01):EN:NOT
([4]) See Commission notice on remedies, paragraphs 48 and 49. See also clauses 15 and 16 of the commitments in case M.6471 Outokumpu/Inoxum.

The Commission is closely monitoring the divestment process, through regular meetings with the different stakeholders, and will continue to take all necessary measures to safeguard Acciai Speciali Terni's viability and competitiveness.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011428/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(7. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Kursstürze und -manipulation durch Massenorder

Wegen eines Software-Fehlers tätigte die Investmentbank Goldmann Sachs Ende August eine große Zahl von Optionsgeschäften, welche die Aktienkurse massiv drückten. Insgesamt 816 000 Optionsaufträge sollen zu einem fehlerhaften Preis — in den meisten Fällen einen Preis erheblich unter dem Marktpreis — getätigt worden sein. Änderungen an der Software für den Hochfrequenzhandel dürften der Grund gewesen sein. Die Software verwechselte anscheinend bloße Interessenskundgebungen von Kunden mit tatsächlichen Aufträgen und handelte mit einem völlig falschen Preis. Die vom Kursrutsch alarmierten Börsebetreiber griffen umgehend ein.

Dennoch ließ dieser Vorfall das Misstrauen vieler Anleger gegenüber dem Turbo-Trading — bei dem binnen Sekunden Computer völlig selbstständig Wertpapiere kaufen und verkaufen — wachsen. Auch werden dadurch Manipulationsmöglichkeiten eröffnet.

Gibt es auf EU-Ebene Pläne für den Fall von plötzlichen Kursstürzen mit gravierenden Auswirkungen?

Welche Regeln gibt es in der EU bezüglich Turbo-Trading?

Was wird in diesem Zusammenhang auf EU-Ebene unternommen, um Möglichkeiten einer Manipulation einzuschränken?

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

Der von dem Herrn Abgeordneten erwähnte Vorfall wird derzeit auf Ebene der EU-Gesetzgebung behandelt.

Die Kommission hat diesbezüglich ein Paket legislativer Maßnahmen vorgeschlagen. Dieses umfasst die Vorschläge für eine Richtlinie und eine Verordnung über Märkte für Finanzinstrumente (MiFID/R), die an die Stelle der Richtlinie 2004/39/EG und der Vorschläge für eine Verordnung über Marktmissbrauch treten sollen, und eine Richtlinie über strafrechtliche Sanktionen für Marktmissbrauch, die an die Stelle der Richtlinie 2003/6/EG treten soll. Zweck der Vorschläge ist es, die Integration, Effizienz, Transparenz und Integrität der Finanzmärkte weiter zu verbessern.

Die technologische Entwicklung, auf der der Hochfrequenzhandel beruht, erfordert angesichts der Handelsvolumina und der potenziellen Folgen etwaigen Fehlverhaltens für die Integrität und Stabilität des Gesamtmarkts eine angemessene Regulierung. Die Vorschläge der Kommission umfassen folglich eine geeignete Absicherung im algorithmischen Handel und im Hochfrequenzhandel und zielen auf eine bessere Aufdeckung von Manipulation mittels Hochfrequenzhandels und auf gezieltere Sanktionen ab. Neben diesen Vorschlägen ist in der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 236/2012 über Leerverkäufe und bestimmte Aspekte von Credit Default Swaps bereits die Möglichkeit vorgesehen, bei signifikantem Kursverfall den Leerverkauf von Finanzinstrumenten befristet zu beschränken oder zu verbieten.

Die Vorschläge der Kommission werden derzeit vom Europäischen Parlament und vom Rat geprüft.

Bei der Arbeit wird eine politische Einigung über das Gesamtpaket bis Ende 2013 angestrebt. Sollte dieses Paket verabschiedet werden, so würden die Rechtsvorschriften Anfang 2016 in Kraft treten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011428/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: Share price collapses and manipulation through the use of mass orders

A software error at the investment bank Goldman Sachs caused a large number of option transactions to be effected at the end of August, pushing share prices sharply downwards. In total, 816 000 options are said to have been exercised at the wrong price, in most cases one considerably lower than the market price. Modifications to the high-frequency trading software may have been the cause. The software confused what were apparently mere expressions of interest from customers with actual option orders and effected transactions at completely wrong prices. Traders alarmed by the collapse in share prices intervened immediately.

Nevertheless, this incident has increased the misgivings many investors have about turbo trading, which involves computers buying and selling securities within seconds completely autonomously, an arrangement which also presents opportunities for manipulation.

Have plans been drawn up at EU level to deal with sudden share price collapses and their serious repercussions?

What are the rules on turbo trading in the EU?

What is being done at EU level to limit opportunities for manipulation?

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

The incident mentioned by the Honourable Member is being addressed by EU legislation.

The Commission has proposed a package of legislative measures in this area: the proposals for a directive and a regulation on markets in financial instruments (MIFID/R), to replace Directive 2004/39/EC and the proposals for a regulation on market abuse (MAR), and a directive on criminal sanctions for market abuse (CSMAD) to replace Directive 2003/6/EC. The aim of the proposals is to further enhance the integration, efficiency, transparency and integrity of financial markets.

With respect to High Frequency Trading (HFT) this technological development requires properly regulation in light of the size of trading and the potential spill-over effect of any misconduct on the integrity and stability of the market as a whole. The Commission proposals therefore provide for proper safeguards around the activity of algorithmic and high-frequency trading and aim at improving the detection and sanctioning of manipulative practices through high frequency trading. In addition to these proposals, Regulation (EU) 236/2012 on short selling and certain aspects of credit default swaps already provides for the possibility to temporarily restrict or prohibit the short selling of financial instruments in the case of a significant price drop.

The Commission proposals are currently being considered by the European Parliament and the Council.

The work is progressing with the objective of reaching a political agreement on the whole package by the end of 2013. If achieved, this would mean that the legislation would enter into force at the beginning of 2016.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011429/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(7. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Export von Imitaten in Bulgarien und in der Türkei

Zwei Drittel aller Produktfälschungen, die in der EU entdeckt werden — von Zigaretten bis hin zu Medizin — stammen aus China. Dennoch liegen auch Bulgarien und die Türkei beim Export von Imitaten weit vorne.

1. In wie weit wird dieser Umstand bei den Beitrittsgesprächen mit der Türkei mitberücksichtigt?

2. Welche Maßnahmen werden hinsichtlich der über Bulgarien verlaufenden Schmuggelrouten ergriffen?

3. Gibt es Schätzungen über die Schadenshöhe aufgrund der über Bulgarien und Türkei laufenden Fälschungen?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(17. Dezember 2013)

1. Die Rechte des geistigen Eigentums in der Türkei sind sowohl im Rahmen der Beitrittsverhandlungen (siehe Kapitel 7: Vorschriften über geistiges Eigentum und Kapitel 29: Zollunion) als auch im Rahmen des Zollunionabkommens EU-Türkei regelmäßig Gegenstand der Gespräche mit der Türkei. Über den Stand dieser Gespräche und die aktuelle Situation in der Türkei in Bezug auf die Rechte des geistigen Eigentums gibt der am 16. Oktober von der Kommission veröffentlichte Fortschrittsbericht ([1]) Aufschluss. Darüber hinaus hat die Kommission mit der Türkei eine Arbeitsgruppe zu den Rechten des geistigen Eigentums eingerichtet, die einmal jährlich zusammentritt.

2. Im Bereich der illegalen Herstellung und des Schmuggels von Zigaretten ist die Zusammenarbeit mit den bulgarischen Strafverfolgungsbehörden ausgezeichnet. Das Europäische Amt für Betrugsbekämpfung (OLAF) und der bulgarische Dienst zur Koordinierung der Betrugsbekämpfung (AFCOS) tauschen fast täglich einschlägige Informationen aus.

Derzeit untersucht das OLAF in Bulgarien fünf Fälle von Zigarettenschmuggel. Auch mit den türkischen Zollbehörden arbeitet das OLAF im Bereich des Handels mit gefälschten Zigaretten, Parfums und alkoholischen Getränken aktiv zusammen.

3. Zu dieser Frage des Herrn Abgeordneten liegen der Kommission keine Informationen vor.

([1]) KOM(2013)700 vom 16.10.2013 und SWD(2013)417 vom 16.10.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011429/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: Export of imitation goods from Bulgaria and Turkey

Two-thirds of all counterfeit products discovered in the EU — from cigarettes to medicines — come from China. However, Bulgaria and Turkey are very much at the forefront when it comes to the export of imitation goods

1. To what extent is this situation being taken into account in the accession negotiations with Turkey?

2. What steps are being taken with regard to the smuggling routes running through Bulgaria?

3. Are there any estimates of the scale of the loss due to the counterfeit products passing through Bulgaria and Turkey?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(17 December 2013)

1. The issues related to intellectual property rights (IPR) in Turkey are discussed on a permanent basis with Turkey both in the framework of accession negotiations (ex. Chapter 7 Intellectual Property Law and Chapter 29 Customs Union), as well as under the EU — Turkey Customs Union agreement. A reflection of these discussions, as well as of the situation prevailing in Turkey in the area of IPR can be found in the latest Progress Report published on 16 October by the European Commission ([1]). In addition, the Commission has established with Turkey an IPR working group which meets once a year.

2. In the field of the illegal production and smuggling of cigarettes, the cooperation with the Bulgarian law enforcement agencies is excellent. The European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and Bulgarian Anti-Fraud Cooperation Service (AFCOS) exchange relevant information almost on daily basis.

OLAF has five ongoing cases involving Bulgaria in the field of cigarette smuggling. There is also active cooperation between OLAF and Turkish Customs on the traffic of counterfeit cigarettes and counterfeit perfumes and alcohol.

3. The Commission does not possess the information the Honourable Member requests.

([1]) COM(2013) 700 of 16/10/2013 and SWD(2013) 417 of 16/10/2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011430/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(7. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Bekämpfung von Umgebungslärm

Aufgrund der Richtlinie 2002/49/EG werden Aktionspläne zur Bekämpfung von Umgebungslärm aufgestellt. Damit soll schädlichen Auswirkungen von Umgebungslärm auf die menschliche Gesundheit sowie unzumutbaren Belästigungen durch Umgebungslärm entgegengewirkt werden.

1. Welche Fortschritte wurden bei der Bekämpfung von Umgebungslärm erzielt?

2. In welchem Ausmaß werden Maßnahmen zur Bekämpfung von Umgebungslärm in sensiblen Regionen bzw. Lebensräumen wie etwa dem Brenner seitens der EU gefördert?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(4. Dezember 2013)

Die Kommission überprüft derzeit die von den Mitgliedstaaten übermittelten Lärmkarten und Aktionspläne, um den Durchführungsstand der Richtlinie über Umgebungslärm ([1]) bewerten zu können.

Aus den vorliegenden Daten wird ersichtlich, dass sich die Exposition gegenüber übermäßigem Umgebungslärm in den vergangenen fünf Jahren kaum verändert hat (die Lärmexposition hat in fast allen Fällen um weniger als 1 % zu- oder abgenommen).

In der Richtlinie sind „ruhige Gebiete“ definiert, und die Mitgliedstaaten müssen im Rahmen ihrer Aktionspläne besondere Maßnahmen zum Schutz dieser Gebiete festlegen.

Im Falle des Brennerpasses stellt die Kommission fest, dass weder Österreich noch Italien in ihren Aktionsplänen besondere Maßnahmen für ruhige Gebiete getroffen haben.

([1]) Richtlinie 2002/49/EG, ABl. L 189 vom 18.7.2002.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011430/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: Management of environmental noise

On the basis of Directive 2002/49/EC, action plans for the management of environmental noise are drawn up. These action plans are intended to counter the harmful effects of environmental noise on human health and the unreasonable annoyance it causes.

1. What progress has been made in the management of environmental noise?

2. To what extent are measures for the management of environmental noise in sensitive regions or habitats, such as the Brenner Pass, supported by the EU?

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

The Commission is reviewing the noise maps and action plans recently submitted by the Member States, so as to be able to assess the state of implementation of the Environmental Noise Directive ([1]).

It appears from the data available that exposure to excessive environmental noise has hardly changed over the last 5 years (noise exposure has increased or decreased in almost all cases by less than 1%).

The directive defines quiet areas and provides for Member States to adopt specific measures to preserve them as part of their action plans.

In the specific case of the Brenner Pass, the Commission notes no specific measures have been taken by either Austria or Italy in their respective action plans for quiet areas.

([1]) Directive 2002/49/EC, OJ L 189, 18.7.2002.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011431/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(7. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Handel mit Gesundheitsdaten

Der US-Pharma-Marktforscher IMS-Health hat allein in Österreich mit gut 350 Ärzten und fast 300 Apotheken Verträge über die Lieferung von (angeblich) anonymisierten Patienten,- Rezept- und Arztdaten abgeschlossen. Medienberichten zufolge ist die Zahl noch höher, und auch Krankenhäuser sollen in großem Stil Informationen an IMS-Health — und damit in weiterer Folge an die pharmazeutische Industrie — verkauft haben. Einige Krankenhäuser bestätigen die Zusammenarbeit mit IMS-Health, erklären jedoch, dass lediglich der Verbrauch aller Medikamente bekannt gegeben werde, was wertvolle Informationen zur Optimierung des Medikamenteneinsatzes liefern soll. Vor allem bei teuren und selten eingesetzten Medikamenten sind derartige Informationen wertvoll, weil sie Rückschlüsse auf zugrunde liegende Erkrankungen zulassen.

1. Gibt es mit den USA Abkommen, in denen es um medizinische Daten geht?

2. Werden auf EU-Ebene Daten zum Medikamenteneinsatz gesammelt bzw. erfolgt hier in irgendeiner Form eine Koordinierung?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(3. Dezember 2013)

1. Zwischen der EU und den USA besteht kein Abkommen über die Übermittlung medizinischer Daten. Die Vorschriften, die derzeit für eine solche Datenübermittlung gelten, sind in Artikel 25 der Richtlinie 95/46/EG festgelegt.

2. Gemäß dem EU-Vertrag fällt die Verschreibung von Arzneimitteln und ihre Aufnahme in die einzelstaatlichen Gesundheitssysteme bzw. in die Systeme der sozialen Sicherheit in den Zuständigkeitsbereich der EU-Mitgliedstaaten. Diese Art der Datenerhebung wird von der EU in keiner Weise koordiniert. Das Marktforschungsunternehmen IMS Health erhebt in Europa wie auch in den USA Daten zum Medikamentenverbrauch, darunter auch Rezeptdaten. Gemäß dem jeweiligen nationalen Rechtsrahmen und dem entsprechenden Geschäftsgebaren des Unternehmens erfolgt die Datenerhebung durch IMS Health in den einzelnen Ländern auf unterschiedliche Art und Weise.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011431/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: Trade in health data

The US pharmaceuticals market research company IMS Health has concluded contracts with more than 350 doctors and almost 300 dispensing chemists in Austria alone for the supply of (supposedly) anonymous data on patients, prescriptions and doctors. According to media reports, the number is even higher, and hospitals are also reported to have sold large amounts of information to IMS Health — and consequently to the pharmaceuticals industry. Some hospitals confirm their cooperation with IMS Health, but state that only the consumption of all medicines is disclosed, which apparently provides valuable information for optimising the use of medicines. This kind of information is particularly valuable in the case of expensive and seldom used medicines, because it allows conclusions to be drawn concerning underlying diseases.

1. Are there any agreements with the US concerning medical data?

2. Are data relating to the use of medicines collected at EU level, or is any form of coordination carried out at this level?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 December 2013)

1. There is no general agreement between EU and US on transfer of medical data. The rules that currently apply are provided by Article 25 of the directive 95/46/EC.

2. Prescription of medicines and their inclusion into the national health system or social security schemes is, according to the EU Treaty, the competence of the EU Member States. The EU does not undertake any coordination activities in this type of data collection. In Europe, as in the US, the market research company IMS Health collects data on consumption of medicines, including prescription data. Data collection by IMS Health is done in different ways in different countries, according to the national legal frameworks and the corresponding business practices of the company.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011432/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(7 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Διάθεση προϊόντων με συστατικό την ουσία GBL

Η χημική ουσία GBL (gamma-butyrolactone) είναι άχρωμο και άοσμο υγρό, το οποίο δεν γίνεται αντιληπτό ούτε σε ένα ποτήρι με καθαρό νερό. Η κατανάλωσή του προκαλεί ζάλη, αναστολή των αντιστάσεων και προσωρινή απώλεια μνήμης, καθιστώντας το εξαιρετικά επικίνδυνο για τη δημόσια υγεία. Πρόσφατα, σύμφωνα με τις ελληνικές αρχές, έχει χρησιμοποιηθεί ως αναισθητικό σε επίθεση βιασμού. Η ουσία αυτή αποτελεί βασικό συστατικό προϊόντων καθαρισμού εξαρτημάτων αυτοκινήτου και, ως εκ τούτου, διατίθεται στο εμπόριο χωρίς περιορισμό και χωρίς καμία ενημέρωση για τους κινδύνους που επιφυλάσσει για τη δημόσια υγεία.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Γνωρίζει η Επιτροπή τους κινδύνους που εγκυμονεί η χρήση της συγκεκριμένης χημικής ουσίας για τη δημόσια υγεία; Έχει αναλάβει πρωτοβουλίες για το πλαίσιο και τους περιορισμούς που θα διέπουν τη διακίνηση της;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει τους κινδύνους για τη δημόσια υγεία που σχετίζονται με την κακή χρήση GBL (γ-βουτυρολακτόνη), μίας χημικής ουσίας η οποία χρησιμοποιείται ευρέως ως διαλύτης, ζυμωτής αρωμάτων, προϊόν αφαίρεσης λεκέδων, για την παραγωγή των προμηθειών των νοσοκομείων, ως μέσο επεξεργασίας στην παραγωγή βιταμινών και φαρμάκων, καθώς και για άλλους βιομηχανικούς σκοπούς.

Η GBL αποτελεί πρόδρομο ουσία του GHB (γ-υδροξυβουτυρικό οξύ), φαρμάκου χρησιμοποιούμενου βάσει της Σύμβασης για τις ψυχοτρόπους ουσίες· όταν η GBL καταναλίσκεται από τον άνθρωπο, μετατρέπεται σε GHB. Η GBL δεν υπάγεται σε έλεγχο βάσει της Σύμβασης των ΗΕ του 1971, πλην όμως πολλά κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ έχουν θεσπίσει εθνικά μέτρα ελέγχου. Η GBL δεν υπάγεται στα ενωσιακά μέτρα τα εφαρμοστέα στις προδρόμους των ναρκωτικών ουσίες ([1])· ωστόσο, προκειμένου να αντιμετωπιστεί η μη ενδεδειγμένη χρήση της, η ευρωπαϊκή χημική βιομηχανία υιοθέτησε το 1999 εθελοντικά μέτρα ελέγχου. Όπως για όλα τα χημικά προϊόντα που διατίθενται στην αγορά στην ΕΕ και τα οποία υπερβαίνουν ορισμένο βάρος, η GBL υπάγεται επίσης στις διατάξεις του κανονισμού REACH ([2]).

Πρόσφατα η Επιτροπή υιοθέτησε δέσμη νομοθετικών μέτρων για τις νέες ψυχοτρόπους ουσίες ([3]), η οποία προτείνει μια πιο γρήγορη και πιο αναλογική προσέγγιση για την υγεία, την ασφάλεια και τους κοινωνικές κινδύνους που ενέχουν οι εν λόγω ουσίες, και η οποία λαμβάνει επίσης υπόψη τις θεμιτές χρήσεις. Μόλις θεσπιστεί από τους συννομοθέτες, το μέσο αυτό θα συνιστά ένα πρόσθετο χρήσιμο εργαλείο για να αντιμετωπισθούν οι προκλήσεις που θέτει η ταχεία εμφάνιση νέων ψυχοτρόπων ουσιών, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της GBL.

([1]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 273/2004 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου της 11ης Φεβρουαρίου 2004 περί των προδρόμων ουσιών των ναρκωτικών (όπως τροποποιήθηκε προσφάτως — πλην όμως δεν έχει ακόμη δημοσιευθεί στην ΕΕ) και κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 111/2005 του Συμβουλίου, της 22ας Δεκεμβρίου 2004, σχετικά με τη θέσπιση κανόνων για την παρακολούθηση του εμπορίου πρόδρομων ουσιών ναρκωτικών μεταξύ της Κοινότητας και τρίτων χωρών (όπως τροποποιήθηκε προσφάτως — πλην όμως δεν έχει ακόμη δημοσιευθεί στην ΕΕ).

([2]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1907/2006 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 18ης Δεκεμβρίου 2006, για την καταχώριση, την αξιολόγηση, την αδειοδότηση και τους περιορισμούς των χημικών προϊόντων (REACH) και για την ίδρυση του Ευρωπαϊκού Οργανισμού Χημικών Προϊόντων καθώς και για την τροποποίηση της οδηγίας 1999/45/ΕΚ και για την κατάργηση του κανονισμού (ΕΟΚ) αριθ. 793/93 του Συμβουλίου και κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1488/94 της Επιτροπής καθώς και οδηγία 76/769/ΕΟΚ του Συμβουλίου και οδηγίες της Επιτροπής 91/155/ΕΟΚ, 93/67/ΕΟΚ, 93/105/ΕΚ και 2000/21/ΕΚ, όπως τροποποιήθηκαν επανειλημμένως.

([3]) COM(2013)618 τελικό και COM(2013)619 τελικό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011432/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: The marketing of products containing GBL

The chemical substance GBL (gamma-butyrolactone) is a colourless and odourless liquid which cannot be detected, even in a glass of clear water. Consumption causes dizziness, immune system suppression and temporary memory loss, rendering it extremely dangerous to public health. According to the Greek authorities, it has been used as a sedative in rape attacks. This substance is one of the basic ingredients of cleaning products for car parts, and, as a result, it is available on the market without restriction and without any public health warnings.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Is the Commission aware of the public health risks building up through the use of this chemical substance? Has it taken any steps towards a framework of restrictions to regulate its circulation?

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

The Commission is aware of the public health risks related with the misuse of GBL (gamma-butyrolactone), a chemical widely used as a solvent, aroma compounder, stain remover, in the manufacture of hospital supplies, as a processing aid in the production of vitamins and pharmaceuticals, and for other industrial purposes.

GBL is a precursor to GHB (gamma-hydroxybutyric acid), a drug controlled under the 1971 UN Convention on Psychotropic Substances; when GBL is consumed by humans, it converts into GHB. GBL is not controlled under the 1971 UN Convention, but several EU Member States have introduced national control measures. GBL is not subjected to the EU measures applicable to drug precursors ([1]); nonetheless, in response to concerns about its misuse, the European chemical industry adopted voluntary control measures in 1999. As for all chemicals placed on the market on the EU above a certain tonnage, GBL is also subjected to the provisions of the REACH Regulation ([2]).

The Commission has recently adopted a legislative package on new psychoactive substances ([3]), which put forward a quicker and more proportional approach to the health, social and safety risks posed by these substances, and which also takes into account their legitimate uses. Once adopted by the co-legislator, this instrument will provide an additional useful tool to respond to the challenges posed by the rapid emergence of new psychoactive substances, including GBL.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 273/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 February 2004 on drug precursors (recently amended — not yet published in the OJ) and Council Regulation (EC) No 111/2005 of 22 December 2004 laying down rules for the monitoring of trade between the Community and third countries in drug precursors (recently amended — not yet published in the OJ).

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), establishing a European Chemicals Agency, amending Directive 1999/45/EC and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 793/93 and Commission Regulation (EC) No 1488/94 as well as Council Directive 76/769/EEC and Commission Directives 91/155/EEC, 93/67/EEC, 93/105/EC and 2000/21/EC, amended several times.

([3]) COM(2013) 618 final and COM(2013) 619 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011433/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(7 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Συμψηφισμός αγροτικών επιδοτήσεων της ΕΕ με χρέη προς ασφαλιστικά ταμεία

Πρόσφατες πληροφορίες του Τύπου στην Ελλάδα αναφέρουν ότι: «Από τον συμψηφισμό κοινοτικών αγροτικών επιδοτήσεων και ληξιπρόθεσμων ασφαλιστικών οφειλών των αγροτών θα αναζητήσει η κυβέρνηση μέρος των κεφαλαίων για να καλύψει τα ελλείμματα των ασφαλιστικών ταμείων το 2014. Η σχετική πρόταση έχει διατυπωθεί από το Διεθνές Νομισματικό Ταμείο προκειμένου να γίνει αποπληρωμή έστω κι ενός μέρους από τα 510 εκατομμύρια ευρώ τα οποία οφείλουν οι αγρότες στον Οργανισμό Γεωργικών Ασφαλίσεων».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Ως μέλος της τρόικα, είναι ενήμερη για την πρόταση αυτή του ΔΝΤ; Είναι σύμφωνη με την κοινοτική νομοθεσία η παρακράτηση κοινοτικών επιδοτήσεων από τα ασφαλιστικά ταμεία, δίχως τη συγκατάθεση του δικαιούχου;

— Τη στιγμή που η συντριπτική πλειονότητα των ελλήνων αγροτών, ως αποτέλεσμα των εφαρμοζόμενων μνημονιακών πολιτικών, είναι υπερχρεωμένη, δεν αποτελεί τουλάχιστον δικαίωμά τους να επιλέξουν πώς θα καταναλώσουν τα χρήματα που προέρχονται από τις κοινοτικές επιδοτήσεις, π.χ. να τα διαθέσουν για να εξασφαλίσουν ηλεκτρικό ρεύμα, θέρμανση, τροφή για την οικογένειά τους ή για την εξόφληση χρεών προς τα ασφαλιστικά ταμεία;

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

Τα δημοσιεύματα του τύπου που αναφέρει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου είναι ανακριβή. Το μόνο μέτρο που εν προκειμένω αφορά την κοινή γεωργική πολιτική έχει προταθεί από τις ελληνικές αρχές, αφού διαπίστωσε ότι ορισμένοι υποκείμενοι στο φόρο που εισέπραξαν πόρους από κονδύλια της ΕΕ δεν καταβάλλουν το σύνολο των οφειλόμενων κοινωνικών εισφορών.

Αυτό συνεπάγεται ότι, στην περίπτωση δικαιούχων με εκκρεμείς οφειλές κοινωνικών εισφορών, η οφειλή στον Οργανισμό Γεωργικής Ασφάλισης θα ρυθμιστεί μέσω συμψηφισμού ισοδύναμου ποσού της ΚΓΠ με εκκρεμείς πληρωμές για τον ίδιο δικαιούχο. Όσον αφορά τις άμεσες ενισχύσεις, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 11 του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1290/2005 ([1]) του Συμβουλίου, για τη χρηματοδότηση της κοινής γεωργικής πολιτικής και το άρθρο 29 του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 73/2009 ([2]) του Συμβουλίου για τη θέσπιση κοινών κανόνων για τα καθεστώτα άμεσης στήριξης για τους γεωργούς, οι πληρωμές που σχετίζονται με τα ενωσιακά καθεστώτα άμεσης στήριξης πρέπει να καταβάλλονται στο ακέραιο στους δικαιούχους. Βάσει των ειδικών όρων που καθόρισε το Ευρωπαϊκό Δικαστήριο στην υπόθεση C-132/95 Jensen ([3]) τα κράτη μέλη έχουν τη δυνατότητα συμψηφισμού γεωργικών πληρωμών με εκκρεμείς οφειλές προς το κράτος μέλος.

Η Επιτροπή αδυνατεί να δει τη σχέση μεταξύ της πρότασης, η οποία εξετάζεται εις βάθος, με την διασφάλιση του εφοδιασμού σε ηλεκτρική ενέργεια, θέρμανσης και τροφίμων για τους γεωργούς.

([1]) ΕΕ L 209 της 11.8.2005, σ. 1-25.
([2]) ΕΕ L 30 της 31.1.2009, σ. 16-99.
([3]) Υπόθεση C-132/95 Bent Jensen and Korn- og Foderstofkompagniet A/S.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011433/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: Using EU farm subsidies to offset debts to insurance funds

The Greek press has revealed that: 'The Government will seek some of the capital to cover insurance fund debts in 2014 by using Community farming subsidies to offset farmers' insurance debts. The proposal was made by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) with a view to paying off at least part of the EUR 510 million which farmers owe to the Agricultural Insurance Organisation'.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Has it, as a member of the Troika, been informed of the IMF's proposal? Is the withholding of Community subsidies by insurance funds, without the consent of the beneficiary, in accordance with Community law?

— At a moment when the overwhelming majority of Greek farmers are sinking into debt through the implementation of Memorandum policies, is it not their right at least to choose how to use the money originating from Community subsidies, whether on securing supplies of electricity, heating and food for their families, for example, as well as paying off debts to insurance funds?

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

The press reports mentioned by the Honourable Member are inaccurate. The only measure related to Common Agricultural Policy funds in this respect has been proposed by the Greek authorities after having detected that some taxpayers who received Funds from the EU are not paying all the social security contributions due.

It would involve that, in the case of beneficiaries with outstanding social contribution arrears, the debt to the Agricultural Insurance Organisation would be settled through offsetting an equivalent amount of CAP pending payments for the same beneficiary. Concerning direct payments, according to Article 11 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1290/2005 ([1]) on the financing of the common agricultural policy and Article 29 of Council Regulation (EC) No 73/2009 ([2]) establishing common rules for direct support schemes for farmers, payments relating to the financing of EU direct support schemes have to be disbursed in full to the beneficiaries. Member States have the possibility under the specific conditions set out in the European Court of Justice Case C-132/95 Jensen ([3]) to set-off agricultural payments against outstanding debts to the Member State.

The Commission does not see the link between the proposal, which is being analysed, and securing supplies of electricity, heating and food for farmers.

([1]) OJ L 209, 11.8.2005, p. 1-25.
([2]) OJ L 30, 31.1.2009, p. 16-99.
([3]) Case C-132/95 Bent Jensen and Korn- og Foderstofkompagniet A/S.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011434/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(7 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Masacre en la comunidad de San José de Nacahuil: 11 personas asesinadas y 17 gravemente heridas

El pasado 7 de septiembre, varios hombres armados se introdujeron en la comunidad maya kakchikel de San José Nacahuil (Guatemala), asesinaron a 11 personas e hirieron gravemente a otras 17 tras, tal y como ha denunciado la comunidad, una campaña de amedrentamiento en la que participó activamente la Policía Nacional Civil (PNC) dirigida contra los ciudadanos que han participado activamente en las movilizaciones contra las explotaciones mineras en el territorio, concretamente, en el campamento de resistencia pacífica de «La Puya» contra la mina «El Tambor».

El proyecto minero Progreso Siete Derivada, gestionado por la empresa norteamericana Kappes Kassiday & Asocciates KCA y la guatemalteca Exploraciones Mineras de Guatemala S.A. (Exmingua), se vio paralizado en marzo de 2012 por un «plantón» pacífico por parte de ciudadanos de San José del Golfo y San Pedro Ayampuc que, contrarios al proyecto y en defensa de derechos reconocidos en Guatemala, están instalados pacíficamente en el territorio. A la resistencia de los habitantes de estas dos comunidades se sumó desde el principio la participación de la comunidad de San José de Nacahuil.

Los casos de violaciones de los derechos humanos, persecución, amenazas e incluso asesinatos de defensores de los derechos humanos, líderes sociales y activistas de comunidades que rechazan y protestan pacífica y activamente contra la explotación insostenible de los recursos guatemaltecos por parte de transnacionales son, desgraciadamente, cada vez más frecuentes.

Asimismo, recientemente se han publicado estudios que señalan la relación directa entre la existencia de multinacionales dedicadas a la explotación de recursos minerales con el incremento de las violaciones de los derechos humanos en estas regiones de países empobrecidos.

Teniendo en cuenta la cláusula segunda del Acuerdo de Asociación de la UE con los países centroamericanos que exige el respeto de los derechos humanos, ¿piensa la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante expresar al Gobierno guatemalteco su condena por la masacre en la comunidad de San José y exigir que los responsables materiales e intelectuales sean llevados ante la justicia? ¿No considera la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante necesario que la UE establezca mecanismos efectivos de seguimiento y supervisión del cumplimiento de los derechos humanos con un control estricto de las actuaciones de las empresas europeas en terceros países?

Respuesta de la Alta representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de noviembre de 2013)

Inmediatamente después de que se produjeran los trágicos acontecimientos, la Delegación de la UE se puso en contacto con las autoridades competentes para preguntarles por el asunto y subrayar la necesidad de poner a los responsable ante la justicia. Una vez concluidas las investigaciones necesarias, la Fiscal General declaró que el ataque se había perpetrado como represalia por miembros de una banda que extorsionaban a comerciantes locales de San José de Nacahuil. Los principales sospechosos han sido detenidos. No hay indicios de que exista una vinculación con las actividades mineras de la zona. La UE seguirá prestando su apoyo al sistema judicial guatemalteco en sus esfuerzos para mejorar las capacidades forenses, reduciendo así considerablemente la impunidad.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011434/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Massacre in the village of San José de Nacahuil: 11 people killed and 17 seriously wounded

On 7 September 2013, a number of armed men entered the Mayan Kaqchikel village of San José Nacahuil (Guatemala). There they killed 11 people and seriously wounded 17 others. As members of the community reported, this came after a campaign of intimidation, actively participated in by the National Civil Police (PNC), against citizens who have been active in protests against mining in the area, specifically in 'La Puya', a peaceful camp of resistance against the 'El Tambor' mine.

The Progreso Siete Derivada mining project, managed by the US company Kappes Cassiday & Associates (KCA) and the Guatemalan company Exploraciones Mineras de Guatemala S.A. (EXMINGUA), was halted in March 2012 by a peaceful 'sit-in' by inhabitants of the villages of San José del Golfo and San Pedro Ayampuc who, in opposition to the project and in defence of recognised rights in Guatemala, are camped peacefully on the land. From the outset, the villagers of San José de Nacahuil had participated in the resistance mounted by the people from these two villages.

Cases of human rights violations, persecution, threats and even the murder of human rights defenders, social leaders and community activists who reject and protest peacefully against the unsustainable exploitation of Guatemalan resources by international companies are, unfortunately, increasingly frequent.

Studies have also been published recently that suggest a direct relationship between the presence of multinational companies engaged in mining mineral resources and the increase in human rights violations in these regions of poor countries.

Considering that the second clause of the EU's Association Agreement with Central American countries requires respect for human rights, will the Vice-President/High Representative express to the Guatemalan Government her condemnation of the massacre in the village of San José and call for those responsible for perpetrating and instigating the massacre to be brought to justice? Does the Vice-President/High Representative not believe that the EU should establish effective mechanisms to monitor and supervise compliance with human rights, with strict control of the activities of European companies in third countries?

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

Right after the tragic events took place, the EU Delegation has contacted the competent authorities to enquire about the case and highlight the need to bring those responsible before justice. After having concluded the required investigations, the Attorney General's office declared that the attack was perpetrated as retaliation by gang members who were extorting local businesses in the village of San José de Nacahuil. The main suspects have been arrested. There are no indications of a link with mining acitivities in the area. The EU will cotinue to support the Guatemalan justice system in its efforts to improve forensic skills, thus lowering significantly impunity.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011435/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(7 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Movimientos sísmicos debido al almacenamiento subterráneo de gas en España

Los pasados días 1 y 2 de octubre se produjo una serie de terremotos cerca del límite entre la Comunidad valenciana y Cataluña. Estos terremotos, que fueron precedidos de otros tres durante los días anteriores, alcanzaron la magnitud de 4,2 grados en la escala de Richter.

Dichos terremotos están asociados al proyecto Castor desarrollado por la empresa Escal UGS. Se trata de un proyecto de almacenamiento de gas en un depósito subterráneo. Este tipo de proyectos de almacenamiento ha sido denunciado por numerosas asociaciones ecologistas y grupos políticos por suponer un riesgo potencial de dimensiones desconocidas para los ecosistemas y poblaciones situados en las cercanías de los depósitos de gas.

Los movimientos sísmicos ocurridos en España confirman los riesgos a los que se está sometiendo a la población europea. Pese a la abundante evidencia científica que existe sobre el riesgo sísmico de este tipo de prácticas de almacenaje, así como otras técnicas como la fractura hidráulica, las instituciones europeas han aprobado la introducción de las mismas. Esta actitud inconsciente está poniendo en peligro miles de vidas, puesto que se trata de riesgos complejos que son difícilmente predecibles y que los sistemas de seguridad y control que se aplican en la actualidad escasamente pueden contener.

¿Conoce la Comisión los citados terremotos y su relación con el proyecto Castor? ¿Tiene información la Comisión sobre los estudios de impacto ambiental del mismo?

¿Considera la Comisión que ante los impredecibles riesgos sísmicos se deben detener este y todos los proyectos que en la actualidad estén desarrollando prácticas similares?

¿Piensa la Comisión instar a España a que detenga el desarrollo de todos los proyectos similares debido al claro riesgo que supone?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(2 de diciembre de 2013)

Con relación a los estudios de impacto ambiental realizados para el proyecto Castor, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría a las respuestas que diera a las preguntas escritas E-3789/2010 y E11478/11, en las que recordaba que, tras haberse realizado una investigación, no había podido encontrarse ninguna infracción de la normativa medioambiental aplicable en la EU.

La Comisión tiene conocimiento de que las autoridades competentes españolas están llevando a cabo nuevas pruebas para confirmar la relación entre el citado proyecto y los terremotos a los que se refieren esas preguntas escritas y poder decidir así el seguimiento que haya de darse a este problema. Entretanto, las autoridades han decidido detener la ejecución del proyecto.

Los Estados miembros son los responsables principales de la exacta y puntual transposición de las directivas, así como de la correcta aplicación y ejecución de la totalidad del acervo. Es, por lo tanto, responsabilidad suya decidir la continuación o la suspensión de la actividad de los proyectos que utilicen técnicas similares.

En cuanto a los presuntos riesgos de este tipo de proyectos, la Comisión se remite a su respuesta conjunta a las preguntas escritas E-011199/2013, E-011239/2013, E-011240/2013 y E-011243/2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011632/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Impatto ambientale delle piattaforme di stoccaggio gas

Il Progetto Castor, cofinanziato anche dalla Banca europea per gli investimenti, è un deposito artificiale atto a fungere da riserva strategica di gas naturale per il mercato spagnolo, e consiste in una piattaforma marittima al largo del Golfo di Valencia collegata ad un antico giacimento esaurito negli anni '70, quello di Amposta, per iniettarvi il gas naturale dalla rete ad una profondità di 1750 m al di sotto del mare.

Il funzionamento del deposito del progetto Castor avviene tramite iniezioni di gas naturale nel serbatoio che va a rimpiazzare l'acqua grazie agli strati di calcare di natura porosa. Il gas è intrappolato nel serbatoio a causa dell'esistenza di roccia impermeabile che sigilla gli strati superiori. Per recuperare il gas immagazzinato viene iniettata nel serbatoio dell'acqua e il gas da trattare viene estratto e restituito alla rete.

Il progetto Castor ha iniziato ad operare nel maggio 2012, nell'aprile 2012 si è effettuata la prima iniezione di gas nel serbatoio.

Fin dal mese di aprile del 2012, con un terremoto di 3,1 gradi della scala Richter in prossimità della piattaforma di iniezione, è stata osservata un'attività sismica insolita per la zona.

Considerato che:

— da metà settembre del 2013 ci sono state diverse centinaia di terremoti nella zona, e solo nell'ultimo mese di attività si sono registrati circa 300 sismi, per terminare col terremoto dello scorso 1° ottobre di 4,2 gradi;

— questo sciame sismico ha convinto il ministro dell'Industria iberico, José Manuel Soria, a chiudere l'impianto lo scorso 26 settembre, in attesa di conoscere i risultati di studi geologici che dovranno accertare se Castor ne sia la causa;

si domanda alla Commissione:

1. di quali informazioni dispone riguardo agli eventuali rischi derivanti da questo tipo di attività di stoccaggio di gas;

2. se intende approfondire la questione e fornire al Parlamento informazioni in merito.

Risposta congiunta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(2 dicembre 2013)

In relazione agli studi sull'impatto ambientale effettuati per il progetto Castor, la Commissione rimanda l'onorevole parlamentare alle risposte alle interrogazioni scritte E-3789/2010 e E11478/11 nelle quali si evidenzia che l'inchiesta realizzata non ha riscontrato alcuna potenziale violazione della pertinente normativa UE in materia ambientale.

La Commissione al corrente del fatto che le autorità spagnole competenti stanno attualmente realizzando ulteriori prove per verificare il rapporto tra il progetto suddetto e gli eventi sismici cui fanno riferimento le interrogazioni scritte di cui sopra al fine di mettere in atto un follow-up adeguato. Le autorità hanno nel frattempo deciso di interrompere la gestione del progetto.

Gli Stati membri hanno la responsabilità primaria del recepimento tempestivo ed accurato delle direttive, nonché della corretta applicazione e attuazione dell'intero *acquis*. Pertanto è loro responsabilità decidere se continuare o sospendere l'attività dei progetti che prevedono l'impiego di pratiche analoghe.

Per quanto riguarda i presunti rischi legati a questo tipo di progetti la Commissione rimanda alla risposta congiunta alle interrogazioni scritte E-011199/2013, E-011239/2013, E-011240/2013 e E-011243/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011435/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: Earthquakes due to underground gas storage in Spain

On 1 and 2 October 2013, a series of earthquakes occurred close to the border between the regions of Valencia and Catalonia. These earthquakes, which were preceded by others in the days before, reached a magnitude of 4.2 on the Richter scale.

The earthquakes are linked to the Castor project being undertaken by the company, Escal UGS. This is a project to store gas in an underground storage facility. Storage projects of this kind have drawn criticism from many environmental associations and political groups for posing a potential risk of unknown dimensions to ecosystems and towns located near to the gas storage facilities.

The earthquakes that have occurred in Spain confirm the risks to which the European population is being exposed. Despite abundant scientific evidence of the seismic risk in this type of storage practice, and in other techniques like hydraulic fracturing, the European institutions have approved their introduction. This irresponsible attitude is endangering thousands of lives, as complex risks are involved that are difficult to predict, and which the applicable safety and control systems can scarcely contain.

Is the Commission aware of the earthquakes mentioned and their relationship with the Castor project? Does the Commission have any information on any environmental impact studies carried out on this project?

Does the Commission believe that, given the unpredictable seismic risk, this, and all other projects currently using similar practices, should be stopped?

Will the Commission urge Spain to halt development on all similar projects due to the clear risk involved?

Question for written answer E-011632/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 October 2013)

Subject: Environmental impact of gas storage platforms

The Castor Project, co-financed by the European Investment Bank, is an artificial storage facility intended to serve as a strategic natural gas reserve for the Spanish market. It consists of an offshore platform in the Gulf of Valencia, connected to the former Amposta oilfield, which was exhausted in the 1970s, where natural gas is injected from the grid at a depth of 1 750 m.

The Castor Project's storage facility functions by injecting natural gas into a reservoir, which replaces water through layers of naturally porous limestone. The gas is trapped in the reservoir by impermeable rock that seals the upper strata. Water is injected into the reservoir to recover the stored gas, which is extracted for treatment and returned to the grid.

The Castor Project began operations in May 2012, and the first gas injection into the reservoir was made in April 2012.

Unusual seismic activity for the area has been observed since April 2012, after an earthquake near the injection platform that measured 3.1 on the Richter scale.

There have been many hundreds of earthquakes in the area since mid-September 2013 — around 300 earthquakes were recorded last month — culminating in the earthquake of 1 October, which measured 4.2 on the Richter scale. This series of tremors led the Spanish Minister for Industry, José Manuel Soria, to close the plant on 26 September while awaiting the results of geological studies to ascertain whether Castor was the cause.

What information does the Commission have on the possible risks of this type of gas storage activity?

Does it intend to study the question and provide Parliament with information on this subject?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(2 December 2013)

In relation to the environmental impact studies carried out for the Castor project, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to the answers to Written Questions E-3789/2010 and E11478/11, where it recalled that, after having carried out an investigation, it could not find a potential breach of the applicable EU environmental law.

The Commission is aware that the Spanish competent authorities are now carrying out further tests to ascertain the relationship between this project and the earthquakes referred to in these Written Questions in order to decide accordingly the appropriate follow-up. In the meantime, the authorities have decided to halt the project's operation.

Member States are primary responsible for the timely and accurate transposition of directives as well as the correct application and implementation of the entire *acquis*. It is therefore their responsibility to decide on the continuation or suspension of the activity of projects using similar practices.

With regard to the alleged risks of this type of project, Commission refers to the joint answer given to Written Questions E-011199/2013; E-011239/2013; E-011240/2013 and E-011243/2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011437/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(7 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Caracol manzana

El caracol manzana se encuentra en el catálogo de especies invasoras del Ministerio de Agricultura del Reino de España. El Estado español tienen la obligación, sobretodo desde una perspectiva medioambiental, de establecer y ejecutar técnica y económicamente con las administraciones respectivas un plan de lucha contra dicha especie invasora.

A la luz de lo anterior y teniendo en cuenta el Reglamento n° 473/2013:

¿tiene la Comisión conocimiento de que el Gobierno del Reino de España esté poniendo los recursos necesarios, esto es, económicos y técnicos, para hacer el plan de choque necesario para la erradicación del caracol manzana?

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

La Comisión Europea ha reconocido el impacto negativo del caracol manzana (*Pomacea insularum*), especie esta que está sujeta a medidas de emergencia para impedir su introducción y propagación en la Unión, tal y como dispone la Decisión 2012/697/UE ([1]), relativa a las medidas aplicables contra los caracoles del género *Pomacea*. En virtud de la Directiva 2000/29/CE ([2]), las autoridades españolas se han beneficiado desde 2010 de la cofinanciación fitosanitaria de la UE para ayudarlas a realizar inspecciones ad hoc y a aplicar medidas de erradicación contra ese caracol.

La dotación presupuestaria disponible para apoyar las medidas de erradicación en España es una cuestión de competencia nacional.

([1]) DO L 311 de 10.11.2012.
([2]) DO L 169 de 10.7.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011437/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: The apple snail

The apple snail is in the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture's catalogue of invasive species. The Spanish State is obliged, above all from an environmental point of view, to establish and implement — technically and economically — a plan to combat this invasive species, in conjunction with the respective authorities.

In view of the above and having regard to Regulation No 473/2013:

Does the Commission know whether the Government of the Kingdom of Spain is providing the necessary economic and technical resources to draw up an emergency plan needed to eradicate the apple snail?

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

The negative impact of the apple snail (*Pomacea insularum)* has been recognised by the European Commission and this species is subject to emergency measures to prevent its introduction into and the spread within the Union in accordance with Decision 2012/697/EU ([1]) on measures against snails of the genus *Pomacea*. EU plant health co-financing has been granted to Spain since 2010 under Directive 2000/29/EC ([2]) to help the authorities in implementing ad hoc inspection and eradication measures against the apple snail.

The budget allocation made available to support eradication measures in Spain is a matter that falls under national competence.

([1]) OJ L 311, 10.11.2012.
([2]) OJ L 169, 10.7.2000.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011438/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(7 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Programa Life+ en el Estado español

El Programa Life+ tiene como principal objetivo, entre otros, controlar y facilitar el buen funcionamiento de los sistemas naturales en la EU con el objetivo de favorecer la biodiversidad.

El caracol manzana es considerada una de las 100 especies invasoras más perjudiciales del mundo. Es una especie voraz muy resistente al tratamiento con productos sanitarios, ya que dispone de unos opérculos que cierran la coquilla. Tiene además una extrema capacidad de resistencia a las condiciones ambientales extremas.

A la luz de lo anterior, ¿no cree la Comisión que resulta prioritario aprobar el Proyecto Life+ «Threatened Wetlands biodiversity & Agriculture in Europe: Battling the invasive Apple Snail in the Ebro delta (Spain)», defendido por el Departament d'Agricultura, Ramaderia, Pesca, Alimentació i Medi Natural (DAAM) (Consejería de Agricultura de la Generalitat de Catalunya)?

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

El proyecto LIFE+ propuesto a que se refiere Su Señoría se centraba, principalmente, en el cultivo de arroz, no en los sistemas naturales. Por ello, la propuesta de financiarlo a través del programa Naturaleza y Biodiversidad de LIFE+ no cumple los criterios de este, que son «proteger, conservar, restaurar, supervisar y desarrollar el funcionamiento de los sistemas naturales, los hábitats naturales, y la flora y la fauna silvestres, con el fin de detener la pérdida de biodiversidad».

Con todo, desde 201, la UE concede cofinanciación fitosanitaria a España al amparo de la Directiva 2000/29/CE ([1]) para ayudar a las autoridades españolas a efectuar inspecciones y aplicar medidas *ad hoc* de erradicación del caracol manzana, contribuyendo así al mantenimiento del cultivo de arroz en el delta del Ebro.

([1]) DO L 169 de 10.7.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011438/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: The Life+ Programme in Spain

The Life+ Programme's main objectives include monitoring and facilitating the functioning of natural systems in the EU to promote biodiversity.

The apple snail is considered one of the world's 100 most damaging invasive species. It is a voracious species that is very resistant to treatment with plant health products, as it has opercula that seal its shell. It also has a tremendous capacity to withstand extreme environmental conditions.

In view of the above, does the Commission not think it a priority to approve the Life+ Project, 'Threatened Wetlands Biodiversity & Agriculture in Europe: Battling the invasive Apple Snail in the Ebro delta (Spain)', supported by the Department of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, Food and the Environment of the Regional Government of Catalonia?

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

The main focus of the proposed LIFE+ project in question was on rice cultivation, and not on natural systems. Therefore this proposal for funding under LIFE+ Nature and Biodiversity does not satisfy the criteria which are 'to protect, conserve, restore, monitor and facilitate the functioning of natural systems, natural habitats, and wild flora and fauna, with the aim of halting the loss of biodiversity'.

However, EU plant health co-financing has been granted to Spain since 2010 under Directive 2000/29/EC ([1]) to help the authorities in implementing *ad hoc* inspection and eradication measures against the apple snail, thus contributing to maintain rice cultivation in the Ebro Delta.

([1]) OJ L 169, 10.7.2000.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011439/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(7 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Nuevo drama evitable en el Mediterráneo: centenares de personas muertas en las costas de Lampedusa al intentar llegar a Europa

Ayer volvieron a hacerse patentes las consecuencias dramáticas y vergonzosas de la política migratoria europea —conocida como «Europa fortaleza»— y la ineficacia de Frontex para evitar dramas humanos, al llegar a la costa de la isla italiana de Lampedusa más de cien cuerpos sin vida y al tener conocimiento de que más de doscientos cincuenta seres humanos que viajaban junto a estos están aún desaparecidos.

Más allá de la evidente necesidad de que la UE lleve a cabo un cambio radical en sus fallidas políticas migratorias, de asilo y de control de fronteras —centrándose en los derechos humanos y en la necesidad de responder a las emergencias humanitarias en países empobrecidos—, para evitar dramas humanos como el que se destapó ayer es igualmente necesaria la implementación inmediata de medidas efectivas de auxilio en el mar Mediterráneo, donde se estima que, desde 1990, han perdido la vida más de veinte mil personas, en su intento por llegar hacia Europa.

Además de las declaraciones inocuas de diferentes miembros de Gobiernos de Estados miembros —que lamentan dramas y hechos como el de ayer mientras, a la vez, recortan políticas mitigadoras basadas en la cooperación al desarrollo—, es inaceptable que la UE siga defendiendo políticas que, inevitablemente, condenan a la migración obligada a miles de personas de los países empobrecidos que huyen así de tragedias como el hambre, la guerra o la pobreza provocadas directa o indirectamente por acciones u omisiones de Gobiernos de Estados miembros y/o empresas transnacionales de capital europeo. Así, en muchos de los casos, estas personas se ven obligadas a emigrar para sobrevivir. Como ejemplo —que recogía ya en mi pregunta escrita E-006760/2011—, miles de ciudadanos se han visto obligados a emigrar en los últimos años de Somalia, al haber disminuido brutalmente los recursos pesqueros con los que sobrevivían miles de familias por la presencia y captura de estos recursos por parte de flotas pesqueras europeas.

¿Piensa implementar la Comisión nuevas medidas actualmente a su alcance para poner fin a la muerte evitable de miles de personas cada año cerca de sus fronteras?

Al no disponer la Comisión —según afirma en su respuesta E-006760/2011— de datos ni estudios específicos sobre el fenómeno que podemos denominar «migración forzada», es decir, migración provocada directa o indirectamente por las actividades en países empobrecidos de empresas europeas, respaldadas por Gobiernos y la propia UE, ¿considera necesario la Comisión Europea realizar estos estudios, así como abordar el fenómeno y replantear sus acuerdos y políticas hacia los países empobrecidos?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(18 de diciembre de 2013)

La Comisión Europea manifiesta su profunda preocupación por los acontecimientos que tuvieron lugar en alta mar frente a la costa de Lampedusa, tal y como lo demuestra la visita a la isla del Presidente Barroso y de la Comisaria Malmström el 9 de octubre tras las trágicas muertes de más de 300 personas. En esa ocasión, la Comisión reiteró su pleno apoyo a los Estados miembros que hubieron de llevar a cabo complejas operaciones de búsqueda y rescate, y que recibieron un gran número de inmigrantes; así, se asumió el compromiso de aportar un total de 30 millones de euros para el refuerzo de las tareas de patrulla y del sistema de asilo en Italia. Una parte de estos fondos se empleará para mejorar la presencia de Frontex en la zona. De este modo, esta iniciativa se añade a las actividades de apoyo ya existentes dirigidas a Italia, tales como el plan de apoyo que actualmente lleva a cabo la Oficina Europea de Apoyo al Asilo. La próxima activación de EUROSUR supondrá una importante contribución a esta iniciativa. Además, la Comisión está dispuesta a apoyar a los países que actualmente son objeto de presiones debido a la afluencia de solicitantes de asilo que reciben, en particular debido a la crisis en Siria.

En línea con los debates mantenidos en el último Consejo de Justicia y Asuntos de Interior, la Comisión ha creado y preside un Grupo Especial para el Mediterráneo. Así pues, este grupo reúne a todos los Estados miembros y a las agencias competentes, y en diciembre presentó los resultados de su labor al Consejo JAI, incluidas varias propuestas para desarrollar acciones destinadas a reducir el riesgo de que se produzcan tragedias similares en el futuro.

En relación con su propuesta de realizar un estudio al respecto, la Comisión conoce la existencia de una serie de estudios sobre la emigración forzada y, por tanto, no considera que resulte pertinente llevar a cabo tal acción de entre las posibles iniciativas que se puedan emprender en respuesta a la tragedia de Lampedusa, puesto que estas están destinadas a alcanzar un impacto operativo inmediato.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011439/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: New avoidable tragedy in the Mediterranean: hundreds of people killed off the coast of Lampedusa while trying to reach Europe

Yesterday, the tragic and shameful consequences of European migration policy — known as 'fortress Europe' — and Frontex's inability to prevent human tragedies, once again become apparent, when over 100 dead bodies washed up on the shores of the Italian island of Lampedusa, and it emerged that more than 250 human beings that had travelled with them were still missing.

Beyond the obvious need for the EU to make radical changes to its failed policies on immigration, asylum and border control — focusing on human rights and the need to respond to humanitarian emergencies in poor countries –, if human tragedies such as the one that came to light yesterday are to be prevented, it is also necessary to implement immediate and effective rescue measures in the Mediterranean Sea, where it is estimated that more than 20 000 people have perished attempting to reach Europe since 1990.

As well as the anodyne statements made by various members of Member State governments — lamenting tragedies and events like yesterday's while, at the same time, cutting back on mitigation policies based on development cooperation –, it is equally unacceptable for the EU to continue advocating policies that inevitably doom thousands of people who flee from impoverished countries and the tragedies of famine, war and poverty, caused, directly or indirectly, by the actions and inaction of Member State governments and/or European-owned international corporations, to a situation of forced migration. In many cases, these people are thus forced to migrate to survive. As an example — already given in my written Question E-006760/2011 –, thousands of Somalis have been forced to emigrate from their country in recent years as the fishery resources on which thousands of families survived have been brutally depleted by the presence of European fishing fleets and their catches.

Does the Commission intend to implement new measures, currently within its power, to put an end to the preventable deaths, near its borders, of thousands of people each year?

As the Commission, according to its reply E-006760/2011, does not have specific data or studies on the phenomenon of 'forced migration', i.e. migration caused directly or indirectly by the activities of European companies in poor countries, backed by governments and the EU itself, does the Commission think that such studies should be carried out, and that the phenomenon should be addressed and its agreements and policies towards poor countries reconsidered?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(18 December 2013)

The European Commission is deeply concerned by the events off the coast of Lampedusa, as demonstrated by the visit President Barroso and Commissioner Malmström paid to the island on the 9 October in the aftermath of the tragic death of over 300 migrants. On that occasion the Commission reiterated its full support to Member States having to undertake complex Search and Rescue operations and receiving a large number of migrants, including by pledging a total of EUR 30 million for the reinforcement of patrolling and the strengthening of the asylum system in Italy. A part of these funds will be used in order to upgrade the Frontex presence in the area. This will come on top of already existing support activities targeted at Italy such as the Support Plan being implemented by the EASO. The upcoming activation of Eurosur will make an important contribution to this effort. In addition, the Commission is seeking to support countries which are currently under pressure due to the inflow of asylum-seekers they are receiving, in particular due to the Syrian crisis.

In line with the discussions in the last Justice and Home Affairs Council the Commission has set up a dedicated Task Force for the Mediterranean under its presidency. This Task Force brings together all Member States and relevant agencies. It presented the results of its work in December to the JHA Council, including proposals for actions aimed at reducing the risk of similar tragedies occurring in the future.

Concerning your proposal for a study the Commission is aware that a number of studies on forced migration are available and would not consider it among the actions to be taken in response to the Lampedusa tragedy, as these are aimed at achieving an immediate operational impact.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011440/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(7 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Comercio y trazabilidad de los productos importados de Guatemala

El último estudio de la Fundación Codeca titulado «Situación Laboral de Trabajadores/as Agrícolas en Guatemala», publicado el pasado mes de abril, presenta información sobre la gravísima situación que están soportando los trabajadores de dicho sector en el país centroamericano.

Los trabajadores agrícolas suelen ofrecer sus servicios en grandes fincas dedicadas a cultivos de exportación, muy relacionados con la demanda internacional de la que la Unión Europea es en buena parte responsable. Cultivos como la caña de azúcar, el café, la palma africana, etc. están casi íntegramente destinados a la exportación y son los que registran peores condiciones. En concreto, la caña de azúcar, debido a su difícil mecanización, absorbe el 26 % de la mano de obra agrícola del país, siendo estos los trabajadores que deben soportar las peores condiciones higiénico-sanitarias.

Tanto los trabajadores de la caña como el resto de jornaleros del sector agrario son víctimas de unas condiciones laborales absolutamente injustas e indignas, y se hallan ante una completa indefensión dentro de las fincas agrícolas donde trabajan. En dichas fincas no existe el Estado ni se realizan controles para garantizar que se cumple la legislación laboral, solo existen cuerpos de seguridad privados que defienden los intereses de los propietarios.

Según el citado estudio y denuncias de ONG y diferentes actores sociales y políticos del país, las violaciones de los convenios internacionales sobre el trabajo son numerosísimas: el trabajo infantil, la prohibición de la sindicación, el trabajo de menores, la ausencia de permiso alguno por maternidad, la concatenación de contratos temporales a trabajadores permanentes, etc.

¿Conoce la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante los escandalosos datos sobre las terribles condiciones que los trabajadores agrarios afrontan diariamente en Guatemala?

Teniendo en cuenta el marco de aplicación del Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Centroamérica, ¿piensa instar a Guatemala a que realice un control efectivo de las condiciones laborales de los trabajadores agrarios y aplique de manera efectiva los convenios de la OIT que ha ratificado, así como sus propias leyes en el ámbito laboral?

Respuesta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de diciembre de 2013)

Los derechos laborales siguen siendo una de las prioridades en el diálogo en curso con Guatemala. La UE hace hincapié en la necesidad de respetar la legislación laboral vigente y de consolidar las instituciones responsables. Están en curso varias medias legislativas destinadas a mejorar los sistemas de inspección del trabajo. El seguimiento de las condiciones laborales se realiza en gran medida en el marco de la Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT). Dos misiones tripartitas de alto nivel visitaron Guatemala en 2013 y se ha creado un Programa de Trabajo Decente para los próximos años que se ejecutará con la cooperación técnica de la OIT. Además, la firma de un Memorándum de Entendimiento entre el Gobierno de Guatemala y la Confederación Sindical Internacional (CSI) en marzo de 2013 muestra el compromiso de las autoridades con el refuerzo de la aplicación de los convenios fundamentales de la OIT. En octubre de 2013, el Consejo de Administración de la OIT tomó nota de estas conclusiones, así como de un plan de trabajo en el que se esbozan las medidas que deben adoptarse para abordar las recomendaciones de los órganos de control de la OIT. Está previsto un nuevo debate del Consejo de Administración de la OIT en marzo de 2014.

La UE colabora estrechamente con la OIT para promover la ratificación y la aplicación efectiva de las normas laborales internacionales. El Acuerdo de Asociación entre la UE y América Central consta de un capítulo sobre comercio y desarrollo sostenible que hace claramente obligatorio para los países signatarios aplicar de forma efectiva los convenios fundamentales de la OIT. El Acuerdo de Asociación proporcionará un nuevo marco para el diálogo con Guatemala en materia de normas laborales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011440/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Trade in, and traceability of, products imported from Guatemala

The latest study by the CODECA Foundation, entitled 'Employment Status of Agricultural Workers in Guatemala', published in April 2013, provides details of the desperate situation of workers in this sector in the Central American country.

Agricultural workers usually offer their services on large farms dedicated to export crops, which are very closely tied to international demand, for which the European Union is largely responsible. Crops such as sugar cane, coffee and African oil palm, grown almost entirely for export, are associated with the worst conditions. Specifically, sugar cane, due to the difficulty in mechanising its cultivation, accounts for 26% of the country's agricultural labour force, and these are the workers who must endure the worst health and hygiene conditions.

Both sugar cane workers and other day labourers in the agricultural sector are the victims of absolutely unjust and undignified working conditions, finding themselves in a position of complete helplessness on the farms where they work. On these farms, the State does not exist nor does it carry out any checks to ensure compliance with labour legislation. There are only private security forces to defend the owners' interests.

According to the study mentioned above, and to reports by non-governmental organisations and various social and political actors in the country, there are countless violations of international labour conventions: child labour, prohibition of trade union membership, under-age workers, no maternity leave, concatenation of temporary contracts for permanent workers, etc.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the scandalous details of the terrible conditions faced daily by agricultural workers in Guatemala?

In view of the framework for applying the EU-Central America Association Agreement, will she urge Guatemala to conduct effective monitoring of the working conditions of agricultural workers and to implement effectively the International Labour Organisation conventions that it has ratified, as well as its own labour laws?

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

Labour rights continue to be one of the priorities in the ongoing dialogue with Guatemala. The EU emphasises the need to respect current labour laws and strengthen the institutions in charge. Several legislative actions aimed at improving labour inspection systems are underway. Monitoring of the labour conditions takes place largely within the framework of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). Two ILO high-level tripartite missions visited Guatemala during 2013 and a Decent Work Programme has been set up for the coming years to be implemented with ILO technical cooperation. Furthermore, the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the Government of Guatemala and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) in March 2013 shows the commitment of the authorities to further strengthen the implementation of the fundamental ILO conventions. In October 2013, the ILO Governing Body took note of these findings and also of a roadmap outlining steps to be taken to address recommendations of the ILO supervisory bodies. A new discussion of the ILO Governing body is forseen for March 2014.

The EU works closely with the ILO in promoting the ratification and effective implementation of international labour standards. The Association Agreement between the EU and Central America has a chapter on trade and sustainable development which clearly makes it an obligation for the signatory countries to effectively implement the ILO's Fundamental Conventions. The Association Agreement will provide an additional framework for the dialogue with Guatemala on labour standards.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011441/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(7 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Comercio y trazabilidad de productos importados de Guatemala

En el último estudio de la Fundación Codeca, titulado «*Situación laboral de trabajadores/as agrícolas en Guatemala*» y publicado el pasado mes de abril, se da a conocer información sobre las durísimas condiciones a las que están sometidos los trabajadores de dicho sector en este país centroamericano.

Los trabajadores del sector agrario suelen vender su fuerza de trabajo en grandes fincas dedicadas a cultivos de exportación, muy ligados a la demanda internacional, en gran medida procedente de la Unión Europea. Ciertos cultivos, como la caña de azúcar, el café y la palma africana, se destinan casi íntegramente a la exportación y son los que registran las peores condiciones. En concreto, la caña de azúcar, debido a su difícil mecanización, absorbe el 26 % de la mano de obra agrícola del país y los trabajadores que la cultivan deben soportar las peores condiciones higiénico-sanitarias.

Tanto los trabajadores de la caña como el resto de jornaleros del sector agrario son víctimas de unas condiciones laborales absolutamente injustas e indignas y se encuentran en la más completa indefensión en las fincas agrícolas donde trabajan. En dichas fincas no interviene el Estado ni se efectúan controles para garantizar que se cumple la legislación laboral; solo existen cuerpos de seguridad privados que garantizan los intereses de los propietarios.

Según el citado estudio y diversas denuncias de ONG y diferentes actores sociales y políticos del país, las violaciones de los convenios internacionales sobre el trabajo son numerosísimas: trabajo infantil, prohibición de la sindicación, trabajo de menores, ausencia de permiso alguno por maternidad, concatenación de contratos temporales a trabajadores permanentes, etc.

¿Conoce la Comisión los escandalosos datos sobre las terribles condiciones que los trabajadores agrarios afrontan diariamente en Guatemala?

¿Qué instrumentos se prevén en el Acuerdo de Asociación UE-América Central para comprobar que el cultivo de este tipo de productos importados por la Unión Europea respeta los convenios de la OIT así como la propia legislación guatemalteca? ¿Se planteará la introducción de sistemas de trazabilidad para los productos agrícolas importados desde Guatemala que garanticen la visibilidad de las condiciones laborales en origen? ¿Se planteará exigir a Guatemala un sistema de inspecciones viable que garantice que se cumplen los derechos laborales y los convenios de la OIT?

Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión
(29 de noviembre de 2013)

Los derechos laborales siguen siendo una prioridad en el diálogo con Guatemala. La UE hace hincapié en la necesidad de respectar la legislación laboral actual, mejorar el marco legislativo y reforzar las instituciones responsables. Están en curso varias medias legislativas destinadas a mejorar los sistemas de inspección del trabajo. La Organización Internacional del Trabajo llevó a cabo dos misiones tripartitas de alto nivel en Guatemala durante 2013, y se estableció un Programa de Trabajo Decente que se aplicará con la cooperación técnica de la OIT. En marzo de 2013, el Gobierno de Guatemala firmó también un Memorándum de Entendimiento con la Confederación Sindical Internacional (CSI) a fin de reforzar en mayor medida la aplicación de los convenios fundamentales de la OIT.

Además, el pilar comercial del Acuerdo de Asociación UE-América Central contiene un capítulo sobre «comercio y desarrollo sostenible» que garantiza un equilibrio adecuado entre los logros económicos, sociales y medioambientales. Este capítulo prevé disciplinas fuertes en cuestiones laborales y medioambientales específicas del comercio, en particular en la aplicación eficaz, tanto en la legislación como en la práctica, de los Convenios fundamentales de la OIT que cubren todas las normas laborales básicas. Este diálogo cada vez más intenso con América Central dará a la UE la oportunidad de aumentar el seguimiento de las condiciones laborales en la región, incluida Guatemala.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011441/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: Trade in, and traceability of, products imported from Guatemala

The latest study by the CODECA Foundation, entitled 'Employment Status of Agricultural Workers in Guatemala', published in April 2013, provides details of the extremely harsh conditions workers are subjected to in this sector in this Central American country.

Workers in the agricultural sector usually sell their labour services on large farms dedicated to export crops, which are very closely tied to international demand, for which the European Union is largely responsible. Some crops, such as sugar cane, coffee and African oil palm, are grown almost entirely for export and are associated with the worst conditions. Specifically, sugar cane, due to the difficulty in mechanising its cultivation, accounts for 26% of the country's agricultural labour force, and the workers who cultivate it must endure the worst health and hygiene conditions.

Both sugar cane workers and other day labourers in the agricultural sector are the victims of absolutely unjust and undignified working conditions, finding themselves in a position of complete helplessness on the farms where they work. The State does not intervene on these farms, nor does it carry out any checks to ensure compliance with labour legislation; there are only private security forces to defend the owners' interests.

According to the study mentioned above and various reports by non-governmental organisations and various social and political actors in the country, there are countless violations of international labour conventions: child labour, prohibition of trade union membership, under-age workers, no maternity leave, concatenation of temporary contracts for permanent workers, etc.

Is the Commission aware of the scandalous details of the terrible conditions faced daily by agricultural workers in Guatemala?

What instruments does the EU-Central America Association Agreement provide for to verify that cultivation of such crops imported by the European Union respects International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions and Guatemala's own legislation? Will the Commission consider introducing traceability systems for agricultural products imported from Guatemala to ensure the visibility of working conditions at source? Will it consider calling on Guatemala to introduce a workable system of inspections to ensure compliance with labour rights and ILO conventions?

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

Labour rights continue to be a priority in the dialogue with Guatemala. The EU emphasises the need to respect current labour laws, improve the framework and strengthen the institutions in charge. Several legislative actions aimed at improving labour inspection systems are underway. The International Labour Organisation carried out two high-level tripartite missions to Guatemala during 2013 and a Decent Work Programme has been set up for the coming years to be implemented with ILO technical cooperation. The Government of Guatemala has also signed a memorandum of understanding with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) in March 2013 in a bid to further strengthen the implementation of the fundamental ILO conventions.

In addition, the Trade pillar of the EU-Central America Association Agreement contains a 'trade and sustainable development' chapter, ensuring that an appropriate balance is struck between economic, social and environmental achievements. This chapter provides for robust disciplines on trade-specific labour and environmental issues, in particular on effective implementation both in law and in practice of the ILO Fundamental Conventions, covering all the core labour standards. This ever-stronger dialogue with Central America will give the EU the opportunity to enhance the monitoring of labour conditions in the region, including in Guatemala.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011442/13
alla Commissione
Lara Comi (PPE)
(7 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Riconoscimento del permesso provvisorio di guida

La normativa europea in materia di patenti stabilisce il reciproco riconoscimento delle stesse tra gli Stati membri (art. 2 direttiva 2006/126/CE), ma lo stesso non accade per quanto riguarda il permesso provvisorio di guida rilasciato nell'ipotesi di smarrimento o di furto della patente. In Italia, nel caso in cui si verifichi tale eventualità, viene rilasciato dalle autorità competenti un permesso provvisorio di guida valido soltanto nel territorio nazionale. La patente duplicata viene spedita dal ministero alla residenza dell'utente: se il duplicato non perviene entro 90 giorni, la validità del permesso provvisorio si intende prorogata fino al momento della consegna del duplicato. Nel caso in cui, invece, lo smarrimento o il furto avvengano durante un viaggio in uno Stato membro diverso da quello che ha rilasciato la patente, è necessario rivolgersi alla polizia del luogo e al consolato o all'ambasciata del proprio paese per informarsi su cosa fare.

Questi potrebbero rilasciare un documento provvisorio col quale poter guidare nel paese ospitante per un periodo limitato. Resta il fatto che tali certificati provvisori non sono riconosciuti automaticamente negli altri paesi dell'UE. Ne consegue che, malgrado i progressi compiuti in materia di armonizzazione delle norme relative alle patenti di guida, sussistono divergenze significative tra gli Stati membri, i quali hanno piena discrezionalità nel riconoscere o meno un titolo provvisorio. Ciò comporta significativi disagi al cittadino che si trovi o che abbia necessità di recarsi in un Stato membro con la propria autovettura, anche in considerazione delle tempistiche necessarie per ottenere il duplicato.

Alla luce di quanto sopra e tenuto conto che la direttiva 2006/126/CE ha evidenziato che le norme relative alle patenti di guida sono elementi indispensabili della politica comune dei trasporti e che il possesso di una patente debitamente riconosciuta dallo Stato membro ospitante è in grado di favorire la libera circolazione e la libertà di stabilimento delle persone, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

— il vuoto normativo in materia e l'impedimento alla guida con il solo certificato provvisorio in uno Stato membro diverso da quello che ha rilasciato il titolo costituiscono un impedimento alla libera circolazione nel territorio dell'Unione europea?

— è opportuno un intervento del legislatore europeo in materia?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(25 novembre 2013)

In caso di smarrimento o furto della patente di guida, è lo Stato membro di abituale residenza di un soggetto a dovergli fornire i documenti sostitutivi, compresi gli eventuali permessi provvisori di guida ([1]). Se il furto e lo smarrimento si verificano all'estero, l'interessato deve richiedere l'assistenza delle autorità consolari.

La persona che ha subito il furto o lo smarrimento della patente non perde il diritto di guidare. Pertanto, gli Stati membri che devono far fronte a una situazione di questo tipo devono agire secondo modalità appropriate al loro obbligo di riconoscere tale diritto.

([1]) Articolo 11, paragrafo 5, della direttiva 2006/126/CE, concernente la patente di guida, GU L 403 del 30.12.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011442/13
to the Commission
Lara Comi (PPE)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: Recognition of temporary driving licences

Under European legislation, driving licences must be mutually recognised by Member States (Article 2 of Directive 2006/126/EC); however this does not happen when it comes to temporary licences issued when a driving licence has been lost or stolen. If a licence is lost or stolen in Italy, the authorities issue a temporary licence valid only in Italy. The ministry sends a replacement licence to the driver's home address and if it has not arrived within 90 days, the validity of the temporary licence is automatically extended until the replacement is delivered. However, if the loss or theft takes place during a visit to a Member State other than the one which issued the licence, the driver must contact the local police and their own country's local consulate or embassy to find out what to do.

The latter might issue a temporary document allowing the person to drive in the host country for a limited time. The fact remains that these temporary licences are not automatically recognised in other EU Member States. This means that, in spite of the progress that has been made on harmonising legislation on driving licences, there are still significant discrepancies between Member States, which may or may not recognise a temporary licence, entirely at their own discretion. This causes considerable inconvenience for anyone who is in or needs to travel to a Member State in their own vehicle, not least because of the time it takes to obtain a replacement licence.

In the light of the above and given that Directive 2006/126/EC emphasises that driving licence legislation is an essential element of the common transport policy and that holding a driving licence duly recognised by the host Member State facilitates the free movement of persons and freedom of establishment:

— Are the legislative vacuum on this subject and the fact that people are prevented from driving with only a temporary licence in a Member State other than that which issued their driving licence an impediment to freedom of movement within the European Union?

— Should the European legislator take action on this subject?

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

When a person's driving licence is lost or stolen, it is the Member State of normal residence which has to provide the person with the necessary replacement, including as the case may be a temporary driving licence ([1]). If this happened while travelling abroad, the person concerned should seek the assistance of the consular authorities.

The person who has lost or whose driving licence has been stolen does not lose his entitlement to drive. Therefore, Member States who are faced with such a situation have to act in a manner which is commensurate with their obligation to recognise that entitlement.

([1]) Article 11(5) of Directive 2006/126/EC on driving licences,OJ L 403, 30.12.2006.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011443/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(7 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Nuova economia sociale di mercato

Il commissario per gli Affari economici e monetari, parlando il 1° ottobre scorso all'European Press Club americano di Parigi, ha dichiarato che è prematuro affermare che la crisi è finita, riconoscendo che in alcuni paesi «la disoccupazione rimane a livelli drammatici». Non ha affermato però che una delle cause dell'aumento spropositato della disoccupazione è stata l'applicazione delle misure d'austerità imposte dall'UE. È opinione comune che questa rigida politica di bilancio abbia contribuito alla disoccupazione e non alla crescita. Il caso del mio paese è paradigmatico. Nell'autunno del 2011 il livello di disoccupazione raggiungeva l'8,5 %. Con il cambio di governo e l'introduzione delle misure imposte da Bruxelles tale livello ha raggiunto ora più del 12 %, con indici mai raggiunti prima per la disoccupazione giovanile. Il commissario ha dichiarato inoltre che le due più grandi economie della zona euro, Germania e Francia, insieme, sono in grado di contribuire alla fine della crisi e che occorre una nuova economia sociale di mercato che implichi la cultura della stabilità, lo spirito imprenditoriale e la giustizia sociale.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, la Commissione

1. ritiene che la situazione attuale sia il frutto di un'economia sociale di mercato insufficiente e inadeguata rispetto alla realtà che stiamo vivendo?

2. Considera quindi che sia necessaria una nuova economia che punti alla crescita e allo sviluppo, o che sia sufficiente puntare sulle proposte suggerite alla Francia e alla Germania che, insieme, come afferma il commissario, sarebbero in grado di contribuire alla fine della crisi?

3. Quali iniziative intende proporre per rinnovare l'economia sociale in vigore e combattere di conseguenza la disoccupazione?

4. Può far sapere quali elementi occorre introdurre nella nuova auspicata economia per raggiungere la giustizia sociale?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(10 dicembre 2013)

L'attuale situazione economica e sociale è una conseguenza dell'impatto della crisi economica e finanziaria, aggravato dalla necessità di correggere gli squilibri macroeconomici accumulati nel corso degli anni. Questa situazione mette a dura prova il modello economico e sociale europeo, che può tuttavia emergere dalla crisi rinvigorito.

Le politiche per il rafforzamento del modello economico e sociale europeo, raccomandate dalla Commissione nelle diverse analisi annuali della crescita ([1]), comprendono una strategia di risanamento di bilancio differenziata e orientata alla crescita, la promozione della crescita e della competitività, il miglioramento dell'efficienza e dell'efficacia della protezione sociale nonché misure per far fronte alla disoccupazione e alle conseguenze sociali della crisi. Poiché questo approccio è stato approvato dal Consiglio dell'UE, non è corretto presentarlo come «misure imposte da Bruxelles».

La Commissione ha proposto una serie di iniziative per migliorare la situazione sociale e affrontare in modo efficace il problema della disoccupazione. Tra queste: il pacchetto sull'occupazione ([2]), il pacchetto sull'occupazione giovanile ([3]), il pacchetto sugli investimenti sociali ([4]), la comunicazione sulla dimensione sociale dell'Unione economica e monetaria ([5]) nonché l'invito a destinare al Fondo sociale europeo una quota minima del 25 % del bilancio assegnato alla politica di coesione.

([1]) Analisi annuali della crescita.
([2]) Comunicazione della Commissione COM(2012)173 def. del 18 aprile 2012.
([3]) Comunicazione della Commissione COM(2012)727 def. del 5 dicembre 2012.
([4]) Comunicazione della Commissione COM(2013)083 def. del 20 febbraio 2013.
([5]) COM(2013)690 def.

Il programma di lavoro della Commissione per il 2014 ([6]) continuerà ad incentrarsi sulla promozione della crescita sostenibile e sul miglioramento dell'occupazione. La Commissione intende portare avanti questo sforzo nell'ambito del semestre europeo, in particolare tramite le raccomandazioni specifiche per paese ([7]). Ad esempio, l'Italia è stata esortata a spostare il carico fiscale dal lavoro alla tassazione sull'ambiente ([8]). La Commissione proporrà nuove iniziative volte a promuovere la mobilità del lavoro e la creazione di posti di lavoro nell'economia verde, insieme a sforzi più ampi per rafforzare l'unione economica e monetaria.

([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/key-documents/index_it.htm

([7]) Raccomandazioni specifiche per paese.

([8]) Raccomandazioni specifiche per paese del 2013. Inoltre, nella relazione 2013 sulle riforme fiscali negli Stati membri dell'UE, l'Italia viene citata, a pagina 47, tra gli Stati membri in cui questo spostamento del carico fiscale offre grandi possibilità. L'Italia presenta infatti una tassazione del lavoro relativamente elevata e dispone di un certo margine per aumentare altre imposte, tra cui quelle ambientali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011443/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: New social market economy

Speaking on 1 October 2013 at the European American Press Club in Paris, the Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs stated that it would be premature to claim that the economic crisis is over, acknowledging that in some countries, 'unemployment remains at dramatic levels'. He did not however say that one of the reasons for this huge rise in unemployment has been the implementation of austerity measures imposed by the EU. It is a widely held opinion that this rigid budget policy has contributed to unemployment, but not to growth. My country is a case in point. In autumn 2011, the unemployment level was 8.5%. With the change of government and the measures imposed by Brussels, the level is now higher than 12% and the youth unemployment rate has reached levels never seen before. The Commissioner also declared that between them Germany and France, the two largest economies of the euro area, are in a position to help end the crisis and that a new social market economy is needed, involving a culture of stability, entrepreneurial drive and social justice.

1. Does the Commission believe that the current situation is a product of a social market economy that is inadequate and inappropriate for the present circumstances?

2. Does it therefore believe that a new kind of economy based on growth and development is needed, or should we rely on the proposals put forward by France and Germany, which the Commissioner claims can together help end the economic crisis?

3. What initiatives does the Commission intend to put forward to renew the current social economy and therefore combat unemployment?

4. Can the Commission state what components should be included in this hoped-for new economy to achieve social justice?

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

The current economic and social situation reflects the impact of the economic and financial crisis, exacerbated by the need to connect and readjust the macroeconomic imbalances built up along many years. This puts strain on the European economic and social model, which can nevertheless emerge from the crisis stronger and reinvigorated.

Policies that contribute to the reinforcement of the European economic and social model include a differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation; promoting growth and competitiveness; improving the efficiency and effectiveness of social protection and tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis — as have been recommended by the Commission in successive AGS ([1]). This approach has been endorsed by the EU Council. It is therefore not accurate to present it as 'measures imposed by Brussels'.

The Commission has proposed a number of initiatives to improve the social situation and effectively tackle unemployment. These include the Employment Package ([2]), the Youth Employment Package ([3]), the Social Investment Package ([4]), the communication on the Social Dimension of the Economic and Monetary Union ([5]), and a call that a minimum share of 25% of the budget should be allocated to the Cohesion policy was dedicated to the ESF.

([1]) Annual Growth Surveys.
([2]) Chapeau Communication — COM(2012) 173 of 18 April 2012.
([3]) Chapeau Communication — COM(2012) 727 final of 5 December.
([4]) Chapeau Communication — COM(2013) 083 final of 20 February 2013.
([5]) COM(2013) 690 final.

Promoting sustainable growth and better jobs remains at the centre of the Commission's 2014 Work Programme ([6]), and the Commission will pursue this in the EU Semester, and in particular through the CSRs. ([7]) For example, Italy was advised to shift tax burden from labour to the environment. ([8]) The Commission will come forward with new initiatives on promoting labour mobility and job creation in the green economy, along with wider efforts reinforcing the economic and monetary union.

([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/key-documents/index_en.htm
([7]) Country Specific Recommendations.
([8]) 2013 CSRs. Moreover, the report Tax Reforms in the EU Member States 2013 (p.47) mentions Italy as one of the MSs where such tax shift would have potential, because Italy has a relatively high tax on labour and room to increase e.g. environmental taxes.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011445/13
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(7 octombrie 2013)

Subiect: Autoritatea Bancară Europeană

În baza Regulamentului nr.1093/2010, orice demers de aducere la îndeplinire a obiectivelor sau prerogativelor Autorității Bancare Europene (ABE) oferă spațiu de obiecții și limitări din partea Consiliului, Comisiei sau a Parlamentului European. Mai mult, în contextul modificărilor introduse de propunerea de regulament de modificare a Regulamentului 1093/2010, Autorității Bancare Europene îi vor fi impuse noi limitări în raport cu Banca Centrală Europeană.

În forma actuală a Regulamentului, procedura de adoptare a standardelor tehnice necesită aprobare din partea Comisiei și, acolo unde este cazul, modificări compatibile cu recomandările primite de la Comisie. Chiar și în acest caz, Comisia poate aduce propriile amendamente și le poate adopta. Așadar, deși împuternicită să elaboreze standarde tehnice, acestea au un efect obligatoriu doar după aprobarea Comisiei.

Luând în considerare necesitatea eficientizării, consecvenței de reglementare și supraveghere prudențială în întreaga Uniune, dar mai ales în contextul realizării unei veritabile Uniuni Bancare, are în vedere Comisia anumite demersuri juridice de întărire a autonomiei în practică a ABE?

Astfel de demersuri ar presupune necesitatea unei modificări a Tratatului de la Lisabona?

Răspuns dat de dl Barnier în numele Comisiei
(2 decembrie 2013)

Astfel cum se prevede în Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1093/2010 de instituire a Autorității Bancare Europene (ABE), acest organism poate elabora, în domeniile specificate în legislația sectorială relevantă, proiecte de standarde tehnice care fac parte dintr-o reglementare unică. Pentru ca proiectele de standarde tehnice să intre în vigoare, Comisia trebuie să le aprobe ulterior prin intermediul unor acte delegate în temeiul articolului 290 din TFUE (standarde tehnice de reglementare) sau prin intermediul unor acte de punere în aplicare în temeiul articolului 291 din TFUE (standarde tehnice de punere în aplicare). În conformitate cu tratatele, o agenție nu poate adopta aceste acte și Comisia este cea care răspunde din punct de vedere politic pentru acestea. Există, de asemenea, norme clare privind implicarea corespunzătoare a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului, precum și a statelor membre.

Regulamentul modificat privind ABE, adoptat împreună cu Regulamentul privind mecanismul unic de supraveghere (MUS) ([1]), are ca obiectiv să mențină rolul ABE și să garanteze faptul că BCE și ABE vor coopera în cadrul Sistemului european de supraveghere financiară. Acest regulament include modificarea modalităților de vot pentru a se asigura că interesele tuturor statelor membre, indiferent dacă sunt participante la mecanismul unic de supraveghere sau nu, sunt luate în considerare în mod adecvat și pentru a permite buna funcționare a ABE în vederea menținerii și aprofundării pieței interne a serviciilor financiare. Funcționarea și performanța ABE, inclusiv problema independenței acesteia, vor fi evaluate în cadrul reexaminării în derulare a Sistemului european de supraveghere financiară, care va duce la elaborarea unui raport care urmează să fie publicat de Comisie în lunile următoare.

([1]) Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1024/2013 al Consiliului din 15 octombrie 2013 de conferire a unor atribuții specifice Băncii Centrale Europene în ceea ce privește politicile legate de supravegherea prudențială a instituțiilor de credit; JO L 287, 29.10.2013, p. 63-89.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011445/13
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: European Banking Authority

Based on Regulation no 1093/2010, any step aimed at implementing the objectives or powers of the European Banking Authority (EBA) provides scope for objections and restrictions from the Council, Commission or Parliament. Moreover, in light of the amendments introduced by the proposal for a regulation amending Regulation no 1093/2010, new restrictions will be imposed on the EBA in relation to the European Central Bank.

In the regulation's current form, the procedure for adopting technical standards requires the Commission's approval and, if appropriate, amendments compliant with the recommendations received from the Commission. Even in this case, the Commission may submit its own amendments and adopt them. Therefore, although the EBA is empowered to draft technical standards, they are only binding after being approved by the Commission.

In view of the need for a more effective and consistent level of regulation and prudential supervision throughout the EU, but especially with establishing a proper Banking Union in mind, does the Commission envisage particular legal measures for increasing the EBA's autonomy in practice?

Would such measures include the need to amend the Lisbon Treaty?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(2 December 2013)

As set out in the regulation (EU) No 1093/2010 establishing the EBA the latter may in areas specified in the relevant sectoral legislation, develop draft technical standards which form part of the single rulebook. In order to give the draft technical standards legal effect the Commission needs to subsequently endorse them by means of delegated acts pursuant to Article 290 TFEU (Regulatory Technical Standards) or by means of implementing acts pursuant to Article 291 TFEU (Implementing Technical Standards). In accordance with the Treaties, an agency cannot adopt these acts and it is the Commission that is politically accountable for them. There are also clear rules on the respective involvement of the European Parliament and the Council and of Member States.

The amended EBA Regulation, adopted in conjunction with the SSM Regulation ([1]), aims at preserving the role of the EBA and at ensuring that the ECB and the EBA will cooperate within the framework of the European System of Financial Supervision. It includes amendments to the voting arrangements in order to ensure that the interests of all Member States, irrespective of whether they are participating in the Single Supervisory Mechanism or not, are adequately taken into account and to allow for the proper functioning of EBA with a view to maintaining and deepening the internal market for financial services. The functioning and performance of the EBA, including the issue of independence, will be assessed in the framework of the ongoing review of the European System of Financial Supervision, which will result in a report to be published by the Commission in the coming months.

([1]) 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; OJ L 287, 29.10.2013, p. 63-89

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011446/13
do Komisji
Paweł Robert Kowal (ECR)
(7 października 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Rozwój przemysłu turystycznego w Polsce

Według polskiego Ministerstwa Sportu i Turystyki wielkość przemysłu turystycznego w Polsce wzrosła o 11 % w 2012 r., z 14.8 milionów do 15 milionów odwiedzin. Ponieważ turystyka stanowi około 6 % polskiej gospodarki, stały wzrost przemysłu turystycznego może wygenerować nowe miejsca pracy, tak bardzo potrzebne Polsce. W związku z tym:

— Jakie środki podejmuje UE w celu rozwoju turystyki, szczególnie w Europie Środkowej i Wschodniej?

— Jaką pomoc UE może zapewnić Polsce w zakresie marketingu turystycznego?

— Sprawne i skuteczne zarządzanie minimalizuje biurokrację wpływającą na turystykę. Jakie „dobre praktyki" może UE zalecić polskiemu rządowi?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Antonia Tajaniego w imieniu Komisji
(6 grudnia 2013 r.)

Przeprowadzanie inwestycji na rzecz konkurencyjnego i trwałego wzrostu turystyki może w znacznej mierze przyczynić się do utrzymania istniejących i tworzenia nowych miejsc pracy w sektorze turystyki. Stanowi to główny cel działań Komisji w tym sektorze.

Turystyka należy do priorytetowych obszarów strategii UE dla regionu Morza Bałtyckiego ([1]), w której wraz z innymi państwami uczestniczy również Polska, a także strategii UE na rzecz regionu Dunaju ([2]). Ponadto Europejski Bank Inwestycyjny wspiera współpracę transgraniczną w regionie Morza Bałtyckiego, finansując długoterminowe projekty dotyczące takich dziedzin jak: transport, energia, środowisko, badania, rozwój i innowacje, działania w dziedzinie klimatu oraz MŚP, w tym w sektorze turystyki ([3]).

Komisja wspiera rozwój turystyki, podejmując szereg działań, takich jak prowadzenie międzynarodowej kampanii promocyjnej „Europe, whenever you're ready" ([4]), a także współpracując z Europejską Komisją Turystyki ([5]) (której Polska jest aktywnym członkiem) i udzielając jej wsparcia.

Ograniczenie biurokracji stanowi priorytet dla Komisji, która – poprzez ambitne działania zainicjowane w 2011 r. – podjęła już odpowiednie kroki służące zminimalizowaniu obciążenia regulacyjnego wynikającego z przepisów UE dla MŚP ([6]). W odniesieniu do sektora turystyki w najbliższych miesiącach Komisja zamierza rozpocząć konsultacje społeczne w celu zidentyfikowania wszystkich unijnych, krajowych, regionalnych i lokalnych inicjatyw (legislacyjnych lub nie) oraz praktyk administracyjnych, w przypadku których nadal można zmniejszyć obciążenia, którymi obarczane są MŚP, a zwłaszcza mikroprzedsiębiorstwa, a także obciążenia nakładane na miejsca będące celem podróży turystycznych w UE, administrację publiczną i turystów z Europy i spoza Europy zwiedzających państwa członkowskie UE.

([1]) Strategia dla regionu Morza Bałtyckiego dotyczy najważniejszych wyzwań w zakresie zrównoważonego środowiska, dobrobytu, dostępności, bezpieczeństwa i ochrony, a także wykorzystania możliwości doprowadzenia to tego, by region ten stał się zintegrowanym, skupionym na przyszłości regionem światowej klasy, o wiodącej roli w Europie. Strategia ma na celu koordynację działań zmierzających do bardziej efektywnego rozwoju regionu, prowadzonych przez państwa członkowskie, regiony i gminy, Unię Europejską, organizacje działające w skali całego regionu, instytucje finansowe i organizacje pozarządowe. Stanowi również element regionalnej realizacji zintegrowanej polityki morskiej. Więcej informacji dostępnych jest na następujących stronach internetowych: http://www.balticsea-region-strategy.eu/

([2]) http://www.danube-region.eu/

([3]) http://www.eib.org/attachments/country/the_eib_in_the_baltic_sea_region_en.pdf

([4]) Międzynarodowa kampania promocyjna ma służyć zwiększeniu postrzegania Europy jako atrakcyjnego celu podróży turystycznych poprzez zaprezentowanie jej różnorodności i bogactwa, a także ma zachęcić turystów do zwiedzania Europy. Więcej informacji dostępnych jest na następującej stronie internetowej: http://europa.eu/readyforeurope/

([5]) Europejska Komisja Turystyki jest europejską siecią reprezentującą krajowe organizacje turystyki z 33 państw. Głównym celem Komisji jest wspieranie strategii „Kierunek: Europa!", która ma promować Europę jako kierunku podróży turystycznych w perspektywie średnio- i długookresowej. Więcej informacji dostępnych jest na następującej stronie internetowej: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/international/index_en.htm

([6]) COM(2011) 0803 wersja ostateczna z 23.11.2011 r.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011446/13
to the Commission
Paweł Robert Kowal (ECR)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: Development of the tourist industry in Poland

According to the Polish Ministry of Sport and Tourism, Poland's tourist industry grew by 11% in 2012, with the number of visits rising from 14.8 million to 15 million. Given that tourism accounts for around 6% of the Polish economy, steady growth in the tourist industry could create new jobs, which Poland badly needs. With this in mind:

— What steps is the EU taking with the aim of developing tourism, especially in central and eastern Europe?

— What help can the EU give Poland in the area of tourism marketing?

— Efficient, effective management keeps red tape in tourism to a minimum. What 'good practices' can the EU recommend to the Polish Government?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(6 December 2013)

Investing in the competitive and sustainable growth of tourism can highly contribute to job maintenance and creation in the sector. This is the Commission's main objective for the tourism sector.

Tourism is one of the priority areas of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBR) ([1]) which regroups Poland, amongst other countries, as well as of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region ([2]). Moreover, the European Investment Bank supports the Baltic Sea Region cross-border cooperation by financing long-term projects involving transport, energy, the environment, research, development and innovation (RDI), climate action and SMEs, including in the tourism sector ([3]).

The Commission is supporting tourism promotion via several actions, such as the international communication campaign, 'Europe, whenever you're ready' ([4]), as well as through its cooperation with and support to the European Travel Commission ([5]) (ETC) of which Poland is an active member.

Cutting red-tape is a priority for the Commission and it has already taken steps to minimise the regulatory burden of EU legislation for SMEs through ambitious policy actions launched in 2011 ([6]). With regard to the tourism sector, the Commission intends to launch, in the coming months, a public consultation to identify all the EU, national, regional and local policy initiatives (legislative or not) and administrative practices, where there may still be scope for further reducing the burden for SMEs, and in particular for micro businesses, as well as for EU tourism destinations, public administrations and tourists visiting EU Member States from within or outside Europe.

([1]) The strategy addresses the key challenges of sustainable environment, prosperity, accessibility, and safety and security, but also the opportunities to make this an integrated, forward-looking world-class region, the 'top of Europe'. It aims at coordinating action by Member States, regions and municipalities, the EU, pan-Baltic organisations, financing institutions and non-governmental bodies for a more effective development of the Region. The strategy also provides the regional implementation of the Integrated Maritime Policy. For more information: http://www.balticsea-region-strategy.eu/

([2]) http://www.danube-region.eu/

([3]) http://www.eib.org/attachments/country/the_eib_in_the_baltic_sea_region_en.pdf

([4]) The international communication campaign aims to raise the visibility of Europe as a top tourism destination by showcasing its diversity and richness and encourage tourists to travel to Europe. For further information: http://europa.eu/readyforeurope/

([5]) ETC is the European network representing the National Tourism Organisations from 33 countries. The main aim of the Commission is to foster a real 'Destination Europe 2020' strategy for the promotion of Europe as a destination in the medium and long-term. For further information: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/international/index_en.htm

([6]) COM(2011) 803 final of 23.11.2011.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-011447/13
a Bizottság számára
Bánki Erik (PPE)
(2013. október 7.)

Tárgy: A nagybányai (Baia Mare) cianidos technológiát alkalmazó aranybánya újranyitása

Napjainkban számos aranybányászati célú projekt vár engedélyezésre a Kárpát-medencében, jellemzően külföldi – ausztrál, kanadai, ciprusi, orosz és brit – vállalatok számára.

A heves tiltakozásokat kiváltó romániai verespataki bánya mellett nem lehet figyelmen kívül hagyni a már 2000-ben hatalmas ciánkatasztrófát okozó nagybányai (Baia Mare) – cianidos technológiát alkalmazó – aranybánya újranyitásáról szóló tervezeteket. Magyar szempontból további aggodalomra ad okot, hogy egy esetleges újabb nagybányai katasztrófa hosszabb szakaszon érintené a Tisza folyót, mint egy Verespatakról kiinduló.

Nem szabad továbbá elfelejteni, hogy az Európai Parlament 2010-ben a cianidos bányászat betiltásáról határozott, mely politikai akaratnak az Európai Bizottság azóta sem szerzett érvényt.

1. Ismerve az érintett lakosság véleményét és aggodalmát, tudomással van-e, illetve figyelemmel kíséri-e az Európai Bizottság a nagybányai projekt alakulását, különös tekintettel a vonatkozó uniós környezetvédelmi normák maradéktalan betartására?

2. A fent említett határozat fényében és tudva azt, hogy környezetbarátabb aranybányászati technológiák kerülhetnek alkalmazásra, mikorra készíti el végre a cianidos bányászat betiltását célzó jogszabálytervezetet a Bizottság?

Janez Potočnik válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. november 27.)

A Bizottság tisztában van azzal, hogy folytatódnak a nagybányai (Baia Mare) aranybánya újranyitásával kapcsolatos megbeszélések.

A nagybányai katasztrófa óta az Európai Unióban a nyersanyagok biztonságos kitermelését átfogó szabályrendszer biztosítja, amely magában foglalja a környezeti hatásvizsgálatról szóló irányelvet ([1]), a stratégiai környezeti vizsgálatról szóló irányelvet ([2]) és az ásványinyersanyag-kitermelő iparban keletkező hulladék kezeléséről szóló 2006/21/EK irányelvet ([3]).

Az átfogó szabályrendszert azzal a céllal hozták létre, hogy megfelelő végrehajtásával megelőzhető legyen a balesetek bekövetkezése, továbbá azok környezeti hatásai minimálisra csökkenjenek.

A tagállamok illetékes hatóságainak gondoskodniuk kell a helyes végrehajtásról, a jogérvényesítésről és az uniós szabályozásnak való megfelelésről.

A Bizottságnak ebben a szakaszban nincs tudomása az uniós jogszabályok esetleges megsértéséről.

A cianidot alkalmazó bányászati technológiák EU-ban történő alkalmazásának esetleges betiltásával kapcsolatban a Bizottság a tisztelt képviselő figyelmébe ajánlja a Tabadji képviselő úr által beterjesztett P-3589/2010. számú írásbeli kérdésre ([4]) adott válaszát.

([1]) Az egyes köz- és magánprojektek környezetre gyakorolt hatásainak vizsgálatáról szóló 2011/92/EU irányelv, HL L 26., 2012.1.28.
([2]) Az Európai Parlament és a Tanács 2001. június 27-i 2001/42/EK irányelve bizonyos tervek és programok környezetre gyakorolt hatásainak vizsgálatáról, HL L 197., 2001.7.21.
([3]) HL L 102., 2006.04.11.
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/hu/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011447/13
to the Commission
Erik Bánki (PPE)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: Reopening of the Nagybánya (Baia Mare) gold mine, which uses cyanide technology

There are currently numerous gold-mining projects in the Carpathian Basin awaiting authorisation, most of which are in the hands of foreign (Australian, Canadian, Cypriot, Russian and British) concerns.

In addition to the mine in Verespatak in Romania, which is the subject of large-scale protests, attention must also be paid to the planned reopening of the gold mine at Nagybánya (Baia Mare), which uses cyanide technology and which caused a major cyanide disaster in 2000. From the Hungarian point of view, the fact that a fresh disaster at Nagybánya would affect a longer section of the River Tisza than one at Verespatak is further cause for concern.

It should also not be forgotten that in 2010 the European Parliament adopted a resolution on a ban on the use of cyanide mining technologies, reflecting a political will which the Commission has since then failed to implement.

1. Knowing the views and concerns of the residents affected, is the Commission aware of — and is it monitoring — the progress of the Nagybánya project, with particular regard to ensuring complete compliance with the EU's environmental standards?

2. In the light of the abovementioned resolution, and given that gold mining techniques which are more environmentally-friendly might be introduced, when will the Commission finally draw up draft legislation banning cyanide mining technologies?

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

The Commission is aware that discussions are ongoing as to the reopening of the Nagybánya (Baia Mare) gold mine.

Since the Baia Mare accident, a comprehensive set of rules has been put in place in the European Union to ensure safe mining, including the directive on Environmental Impact Assessment ([1]), the directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment ([2]) and Directive 2006/21/EC on the management of waste from extractive industries ([3]).

Properly implemented, this set of rules is designed to prevent the occurrence of accidents and minimise their environmental impacts.

The competent authorities of the Member States have to ensure correct implementation, enforcement and compliance with EU legislation.

The Commission has, at this stage, no information relating to potential breaches of EU legislation.

As regards the potential introduction of a ban of the use of cyanide mining technologies in the EU, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question P-3589/2010 by Mr Tabadji ([4]).

([1]) Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.
([2]) Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment. OJ L 197, 21.7.2001.
([3]) OJ L 102 of 11/4/2006.
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-011448/13
a Bizottság számára
Bagó Zoltán (PPE) és Gáll-Pelcz Ildikó (PPE)
(2013. október 7.)

Tárgy: A 93/13/EGK irányelv alkalmazásában figyelembe veendő tények

A Bíróság gyakorlata – a 93/13/EGK irányelv alkalmazási körében – értelmében ([1]) „célszerűnek tűnik a fogyasztó jogi helyzetének vizsgálata abból a szempontból, hogy milyen eszközök állnak a rendelkezésére a nemzeti szabályozás alapján ahhoz, hogy megszüntesse a tisztességtelen feltételek alkalmazását".

Magyarországon a hosszú távú devizaalapú, jelzáloggal biztosított hitelek esetében a forint leértékelődött és a hitelek költségei növekedtek, ezzel együtt a biztosítékul szolgáló ingatlanok értéke jelentősen csökkent ([2]). A Bizottság szerint lehet-e ezt a helyzetet olyan körülményként értelmezni, hogy így jelentősen megnehezül a fogyasztók számára a tisztességtelen szerződési feltételek – mint a fogyasztók irányában egyoldalúan foganatosított hátrányos kikötések – alkalmazása megszüntetésének lehetősége ([3])?

A hosszú távú devizaalapú jelzáloghitelek esetében is figyelemmel kell-e lenni a Bizottság szerint az Európai Unió Bírósága által (is) elismert célkitűzésre, miszerint a fogyasztóvédelmi irányelv ([4]) a maga egészében hozzájárul az Unióra bízott feladatok megoldásához, különösen az Unió egész területén az életminőség és az életszínvonal javításához is?

A Bíróság gyakorlata alapján egy szerződési kikötés tisztességtelen jellegének megállapításakor az összes lényeges körülményre figyelemmel kell lenni ([5]). A Magyar Nemzeti Bank kutatása rámutat ([6]), hogy a hosszú távú devizaalapú jelzáloghitelek felvételekor a lakosság döntő többsége még az alapvető pénzügyi fogalmakkal sem volt tisztában. Figyelembe vehető-e ez a helyzet a Bizottság szerint a fogyasztók (hitelfelvevők) javára?

Szintén az MNB tanulmánya mutat rá, hogy ([7]) azok a bankok, amelyek a megfelelő prudenciával helyezték ki a hosszú távú devizaalapú hiteleket, a bankokat terhelő fiskális terhek, valamint a devizaalapú hitelekkel kapcsolatos fizetési problémák ellenére is stabilan nyereségek tudtak maradni. Kérdezzük a Bizottságot, figyelembe vehető-e ez a tény a hitelfelvevők javára?

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés P-011737/13
a Bizottság számára
Bagó Zoltán (PPE)
(2013. október 15.)

Tárgy: A 93/13/EGK irányelv alkalmazása során figyelembe vehető kritériumok

Kérdezzük a Bizottságot, hogy az ítélkezési gyakorlatra tekintettel ([8]) – alapelv szerint – tisztességtelennek kell-e minősíteniük a nemzeti bíróságoknak egy olyan szerződési kikötést, amelynek értelmében egy hosszú távú tartalékvaluta ([9]) vagy euró alapú hitel esetén az árfolyamkockázatot teljes mértékben a hitelfelvevőknek (fogyasztóknak) kell viselniük, míg a tartalékvalutában természetesen bekövetkező – esetleges – alapkamat-csökkentésnek ([10]) vagy az Európai Központi Bank kamatcsökkentéseinek érvényesítésére a szerződés a szolgáltatót (bankot) egyáltalán nem kötelezi, különösen, hogy az utóbbi években jelentősen csökkent Magyarország CDS felára?

([1]) Európai Unió Bírósága, C-415/11.
([2]) Sok esetben az ingatlanok jelenlegi piaci értéke kisebb, mint a hitelfelvevők tartozása.
([3]) Azt is számításba kell venni, hogy a hitelfelvevők számára – főként anyagi nehézségek miatt – megnehezül a megfelelő felkészültségű védőügyvédhez való hozzájutás is.
([4]) Európai Unió Bírósága, C-92/11.
([5]) Európai Unió Bírósága, C-415/11.
([6]) Forrás: MNB, Pénziránytű, GFK, 2011.
([7]) Forrás: MNB, Pénziránytű, GFK, 2011.
([8]) Európai Unió Bírósága, C-415/11, főleg a tekintetben, hogy egy szerződés tisztességtelen kikötésének fő vizsgálati szempontja a Bíróság gyakorlata alapján az, hogy a fogyasztó egyedi tárgyalás során is elfogadta volna az adott kikötést.
([9]) CHF.
([10]) Álláspontunk szerint természetes folyamat, hogy – amennyiben válság esetén – egy tartalékvaluta befektetők menekülése során megerősödik, akkor az adott központi bank az erősödés csökkentése érdekében általában csökkenti az alapkamatot.

Kérdezzük továbbá a Bizottságot, hogy amennyiben a nemzeti bíróság azt a kritériumot vizsgálja, hogy a fogyasztó az adott hatályos jogban szabályozottnál rosszabb helyzetbe kerül-e, akkor számításba kell-e venni azt, hogy ha a magyarországi forintalapú hitelek kamatait vagy az MNB kamataihoz, vagy a magyarországi forinthitelek piaci kamatszintjéhez kötik, akkor a devizaalapú hitelek esetében is vagy az adott deviza központi bankjának alapkamatához vagy az adott valutaövezet irányadó piaci kamatszintjéhez képest kellene meghatározni a kamatokat, azaz érvényesíteni kell-e az utóbbi években bekövetkezett csökkenést? Megkövetelik-e az uniós rendelkezések a transzparenciát a kamatok és forrásköltségek tekintetében?

Összeegyeztethetőnek tekinti-e a Bizottság az uniós rendelkezésekkel, vagy ezek meghatároznak-e korlátokat a szolgáltatók (bankok) irányában a tekintetben, hogy ez utóbbiak olyan szerződések esetén, amelyek értelmében az árfolyamkockázatot kizárólag a fogyasztók viselik, egyoldalúan kamatot emelnek ([11]), vagy a deviza eladási és vételi árfolyama közötti különbséget egyoldalúan növelik ([12])? Összeegyeztethetőnek tűnik-e a fogyasztók és szolgáltatók közötti valódi egyensúly megteremtésének uniós célkitűzéseivel, hogy az árfolyamkockázatot a bankok nemcsak a tőketartozás esetében, hanem a kezelési költségekre is alkalmazzák (a fogyasztók kárára)?

Michel Barnier egyesített válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. november 25.)

A nemzeti bíróságok számára egy szerződés tisztességtelen jellegének a fogyasztókkal kötött szerződésekben alkalmazott tisztességtelen feltételekről szóló 93/13/EGK irányelv alapján történő megállapításakor a melléklet nyújt segítséget, amely nem kimerítő jelleggel sorolja fel a potenciálisan tisztességtelen feltételeket. Azonban mindaddig nem tekinthető tisztességtelennek, ha a pénzügyi eszközök terén az eladó vagy szolgáltató egyoldalúan megváltoztatja a szerződési kikötéseket, amíg a pénzpiaci árfolyam-ingadozások alakulására az eladó vagy szolgáltató nem képes befolyást gyakorolni. Az irányelv betartatása tekintetében a Bizottság a nemzeti fogyasztóvédelmi hatóságokra hagyatkozik. A magyar polgárok az alábbiakhoz fordulhatnak:

Magyar Nemzeti Bank Pénzügyi Fogyasztóvédelmi Központ
Cím: 1013 Budapest, Krisztina krt. 39.
Postai cím: 1535 Budapest, 114 Pf. 777
Tel.: +36-40-203-776
E-mail: ugyfelszolgalat@mnb.hu
Honlap: http://felugyelet.mnb.hu/fogyasztoknak

A hitelezők és fogyasztók közötti szerződéseket a magánjog alapján kötik meg. A bankokra vonatkozó uniós jogszabályok nem bocsátkoznak ilyen részletekbe.

A fogyasztók jövőbeni védelme érdekében a Bizottság javaslatot terjesztett elő a lakóingatlanokhoz kapcsolódó hitelmegállapodásokról szóló irányelvre (COM(2011) 142), amelyet a társjogalkotók várhatóan 2013 végéig fogadnak el. A tagállamoknak 24 hónap áll rendelkezésére az irányelv átültetéséhez, amely nem rendelkezik visszamenőleges hatállyal. Az irányelv felhívja a fogyasztók figyelmét a devizaalapú, jelzáloggal biztosított hitelekkel járó kockázatokra. Az egységes európai adatlap tartalmazza az összes hitellel kapcsolatos releváns információt még a szerződés aláírása előtt, ideértve a beszedendő kamatot, annak értékét százalékban, vagy adott esetben a referencia-kamatlábat és a hitelezői felár százalékos értékét. Ennek segítségével a fogyasztók meg tudják állapítani az alkalmazandó alapkamatlábat.

([11]) Arra hivatkozással, hogy sok fogyasztó (hitelfelvevő) fizetési nehézségekkel küszködik.

([12]) Az MNB tanulmányából egyértelműen kitűnik, hogy a fogyasztók (hitelfelvevők) terheinek növekedéséhez az árfolyamok számukra kedvezőtlen változásán túl a szolgáltatók (bankok) olyan gyakorlata is hozzájárult, hogy a deviza vételi és eladási árfolyamát a fogyasztók kárára módosították (Balog Ádám, Nagy Márton, MNB).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011448/13
to the Commission
Zoltán Bagó (PPE) and Ildikó Gáll-Pelcz (PPE)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: Factors to be considered in implementing Directive 93/13/EEC

Pursuant to the case-law of the Court of Justice of the European Union — regarding implementation of Directive 93/13/EEC ([1]) — 'an assessment of the legal situation of the consumer having regard to the means at his disposal, under national law, to prevent [continued] use of unfair terms, should [also] be carried out'.

In Hungary, in the case of long-term foreign currency loans secured by mortgages, the forint has depreciated and the cost of credit has risen, and this has led to a significant decrease in the value of property used as security ([2]). In the Commission's opinion, could this situation be construed as a factor making it significantly more difficult for consumers to be able to prevent the use of unfair contract terms such as unfavourable conditions imposed unilaterally on consumers ([3])?

In the case of long-term foreign-currency mortgage loans, does the Commission consider it necessary to bear in mind the objective (also) recognised by the Court of Justice of the European Union, according to which the Consumer Rights Directive ([4]) as a whole should contribute to carrying out the tasks conferred on the EU, in particular that of improving the quality of life and standard of living throughout the EU?

On the basis of the case-law of the Court, it is necessary when establishing the unfair nature of a contract term to take all relevant circumstances into account ([5]). Research conducted by the Hungarian National Bank (MNB) ([6]) indicates that the vast majority of people were not aware of basic financial terminology when taking out long-term foreign-currency mortgage loans. In the Commission's view, should this be taken into account for the benefit of consumers (borrowers)?

The MNB study also indicates ([7]) that banks which exercised caution when issuing long-term foreign-currency loans managed to maintain steady profitability in spite of the fiscal burdens on banks and the payment difficulties associated with foreign-currency-based loans. In the Commission's view, should this fact be taken into account for the benefit of borrowers?

Question for written answer P-011737/13
to the Commission
Zoltán Bagó (PPE)
(15 October 2013)

Subject: Criteria to be taken into account in applying Directive 93/13/EEC

In the light of case-law ([8]), should national courts in principle define a contract obligation as unfair which, in the case of a long-term loan taken out in a reserve currency ([9]) or euros, stipulates that the exchange rate risk should be borne entirely by the borrower (consumer) while the contract does not in the slightest require the service-provider (bank) to pass on any naturally occurring base rate reduction ([10]) in the reserve currency or reduction in the European Central Bank's interest rate, particularly bearing in mind that in recent years Hungary's CDS premium has declined significantly?

([1]) Court of Justice of the European Union, C-415/11.
([2]) In many cases the current market price of property is lower than the borrowers' debts.
([3]) It must also be borne in mind that access for borrowers to properly-trained defence lawyers is hampered primarily by financial difficulties.
([4]) Court of Justice of the European Union, C-92/11.
([5]) Court of Justice of the European Union, C-415/11.
([6]) Source: Hungarian National Bank, GFK, 2011.
([7]) Source: Hungarian National Bank, Pénziránytű ('money compass'), GFK, 2011.
([8]) Court of Justice of the European Union, C-415/11, particularly with reference to the fact that, for the purpose of ascertaining whether a contract obligation is unfair, the main criterion to be applied, according to European case-law, is whether the consumer has accepted the obligation during an individual negotiation.
([9]) The Swiss franc.
([10]) I take it to be a natural process if, in the event of a crisis, a reserve currency appreciates because of the flight of investors and the central bank concerned seeks — as it generally will — to dampen the appreciation of the currency by reducing the base rate.

If the national court reviews the criterion of whether the consumer finds himself in a worse position than provided for by the relevant law in force, should it take account of the fact that, if interest rates on loans in Hungarian forint are linked either to the interest rates of the Hungarian Central Bank or to the market interest rate for loans in Hungarian forint, then, in the case of foreign-currency loans, interest rates ought to be determined by comparison either with the base rate of the central bank responsible for the foreign currency concerned or with the market interest rate for the currency zone concerned, i.e. ought the reduction which has occurred in recent years to be passed on? Does European law require transparency with regard to interest rates and the cost of funds?

Does the Commission consider it to be compatible with European law for service-providers (banks) to unilaterally raise interest rates ([11]) or unilaterally increase the disparity between the foreign currency buying and selling rates ([12]) where contracts exist under which the exchange rate risk is borne solely by the consumer, or does European law limit the power of service-providers (banks) to do this? Does it seem compatible with EU objectives regarding the striking of a genuine balance between consumers and service-providers for banks to apply the exchange rate risk not only in the case of a capital debt but also to charges for managing that debt (to the detriment of consumers)?

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

National courts that assess on the basis of the Unfair Commercial Terms Directive (93/13/EEC) whether a contract has to be considered unfair are helped by an annex which outlines non-exhaustive examples of terms which might potentially be unfair. Yet, the unilateral alteration of contract terms by the seller or supplier in the area of financial instruments might not be considered unfair, as long as the price fluctuation of the market rate is beyond the trader's control. For the directive's enforcement, the Commission relies on the national consumer protection authorities. Hungarians can turn to:

National Bank of Hungary: Financial Consumer Protection Centre
Address: 1013 Budapest, Krisztina krt. 39
Postal Address: 1535 Budapest, 114 Pf. 777
Phone: +36-40-203-776
E-mail: ugyfelszolgalat@mnb.hu
Website: http://felugyelet.mnb.hu/fogyasztoknak

Contracts between creditors and consumers are concluded on the basis of the private law. The EU banking legislation does not enter into such details.

To better protect consumers in future, the Commission proposed a Mortgage Credit Directive (COM 2011/142), which should be adopted by co-legislators by the end of 2013. Member States have 24 months to transpose the directive, which will not apply retroactively. The directive alerts consumers to risks associated to foreign currency denominated mortgage loans. The European Standardised Information Sheet provides all relevant credit-related information prior to the contract's signature, including the interest rates to be charged, plus its value in percentage, or, where applicable, an indication of a reference rate and percentage value of the creditor's spread. This should put the consumer in a position to determine which base rate applies.

([11]) Bearing in mind that many consumers (borrowers) are experiencing payment difficulties.

([12]) The Hungarian National Bank's study clearly indicates that the increase in the burdens on consumers (borrowers) has been caused not only by the — for them — disadvantageous change in exchange rates but also by the practice adopted by service-providers (banks) of changing foreign currency buying and selling rates to the detriment of consumers (Ádám Balog, Márton Nagy, MNB).

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011449/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(7 ta' Ottubru 2013)

Suġġett: Ftehim dwar il-Kummerċ Ħieles bejn l-UE u Singapor

Fl-20 ta' Settembru 2013, il-Kummissjoni ppubblikat memorandum dwar il-Ftehim dwar il-Kummerċ Ħieles bejn l-UE u Singapor (MEMO13/805), wara iktar minn sentejn ta' negozjati ma' Singapor. Skont dan il-memorandum, il-ftehim dwar il-kummerċ ħieles ser iwassal għal bosta benefiċċji ekonomiċi fl-għaxar snin li ġejjin. Skont analiżi ekonomika ppreparata mill-Unità tal-Kap Ekonomist tad-DĠ tal-Kummerċ, il-Kummissjoni qed tbassar żieda ta' madwar EUR 1.4 biljun f'esportazzjonijiet mill-UE lejn Singapor għall-perjodu msemmi, filwaqt li l-esportazzjonijiet minn Singapor lejn l-UE mistennija jiżdiedu b'EUR 3.5 biljun.

Fir-rigward ta' din iż-żieda fil-kummerċ, il-Kummissjoni hija konxja dwar liema huma dawk il-prodotti li ser jikkostitwixxu ż-żieda mbassra fil-kummerċ? X'inhi l-evalwazzjoni tal-Kummissjoni dwar l-impatti potenzjali li dawn iż-żidiet jista' jkollhom fuq industriji bbażati fl-UE?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur De Gucht f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(3 ta' Diċembru 2013)

Singapor huwa l-ikbar imsieħeb fil-kummerċ u l-investiment tal-UE fl-Assoċjazzjoni tan-Nazzjonijiet tax-Xlokk tal-Asja (ASEAN).

L-UE u Singapor inizjalaw il-Ftehim għall-Kummerċ Ħieles (FTA) fl-20 ta' Settembru 2013. Valutazzjoni ekonomika mħejjija mill-Kummissjoni tbassar li l-FTA se jwassal għal żieda ta' madwar EUR 1,4 biljun ta' esportazzjonijiet tal-UE fuq perjodu ta' għaxar snin, filwaqt li l-esportazzjoni ta' Singapor tiżdied b'EUR 3,5 biljuni ([1]). Dawn huma stimi konservattivi peress li ma kienx possibbli li jiġu kkwantifikati b'mod preċiż l-effetti ta' ċerti partijiet regolatorji tal-FTA.

Il-benefiċċji mill-FTA mhumiex limitati għall-eliminazzjoni tat-tariffi, iżda jirriżultaw ukoll minn fost l-oħrajn (i) it-tneħħija ta' ostakoli mhux tariffarji bħal standards tekniċi bla bżonn, (ii) il-liberalizzazzjoni tas-servizzi u s-swieq ta' akkwist appoġġjati minn dixxiplini avvanzati sabiex jiġu żgurati t-trasparenza u n-nondiskriminazzjoni, kif ukoll (iii) il-protezzjoni effettiva tad-drittijiet tal-proprjetà intellettwali inklużi indikazzjonijiet ġeografiċi.

L-istudju jbassar li ħafna setturi tal-ekonomija tal-UE se jibbenefikaw mill-FTA. Il-forniturі tas-servizzi tal-UE huma mistennija li jmorru l-aktar minn fuq, inkluż għas-servizzi finanzjarji fejn l-UE kisbet aċċess tajjeb għas-suq dinamiku ta' Singapor, filwaqt li l-esportaturi tas-sustanzi kimiċi minn Singapor għandhom jaraw l-akbar żieda fil-kummerċ tagħhom, segwiti minn esportaturi ta' makkinarju u l-forniturі tas-servizzi (xi whud minnhom, sussidjarji tal-kumpaniji tal-UE).

Dan l-FTA hu pass strateġiku lejn Ftehim mal-ASEAN fil-qafas reġjonali, li jibqa' l-għan aħħari għall-UE. L-UE bħalissa qed tinnegozja FTAs mal-membri tal-ASEAN il-Malażja, it-Tajlandja u l-Vjetnam.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/september/tradoc_151724.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011449/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement

On 20 September 2013, the Commission published a memo on the EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (MEMO/13/805), after more than two years of negotiations with Singapore. According to this memo, the free trade agreement will produce considerable economic benefits in the coming decade. Citing economic analysis prepared by the Chief Economist Unit of DG Trade, the Commission predicts an increase of some EUR 1.4 billion in EU exports to Singapore for the same period, with Singapore's exports to the EU set to increase by EUR 3.5 billion.

In relation to this increase in trade, is the Commission aware of the types of goods which would constitute the predicted increase in trade? What is the Commission's evaluation of the potential impacts of these increases on EU-based industries?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(3 December 2013)

Singapore is the EU's largest trade and investment partner in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The EU and Singapore initialled the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) on 20 September 2013. An economic assessment prepared by the Commission predicts that the FTA would lead to an increase of some EUR 1.4 billion of EU exports to Singapore over a ten-year period, whilst Singapore's exports would rise by EUR 3.5 billion ([1]). These are conservative estimates since it has not been possible to precisely quantify the effects of certain regulatory parts of the FTA.

The benefits from the FTA are not limited to the elimination of tariffs, but also result from *inter alia* (i) the removal of non-tariff barriers such as unnecessary technical standards, (ii) the liberalisation of services and procurement markets supported by advanced disciplines to ensure transparency and non-discrimination, as well as (iii) the effective protection of intellectual property rights including for geographical indications.

The study predicts that many sectors of the EU economy will benefit from the FTA. EU services providers are set to gain the most, including for financial services where the EU has achieved a good access to the dynamic Singaporean market, whereas Singaporean exporters of chemicals should see the largest increase in their trade, followed by exporters of machinery and services providers (some of them, subsidiaries of EU companies).

This FTA is a strategic step towards an agreement with ASEAN in the regional framework, which remains the EU's ultimate objective. The EU is currently negotiating FTAs with ASEAN members Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/september/tradoc_151724.pdf

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-011450/13
adresată Comisiei
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(7 octombrie 2013)

Subiect: Sensibilizarea populației în legătură cu cancerul din zona capului și a gâtului

Cancerul în zona capului și a gâtului este cel de-al șaselea cel mai comun tip de cancer în Europa, cu peste 150 000 de cazuri noi înregistrate în 2012 și cu o incidență în creștere. În momentul de față, în Europa nu există o bună informare asupra acestui tip de cancer sau asupra factorilor care favorizează apariția acestuia, multe cazuri fiind identificate în stadii târzii, ceea ce reduce drastic șansele de supraviețuire ale pacienților.

În acest context:

1. Poate finanța Comisia campanii publice de sensibilizare referitoare la acest tip de cancer?

2. Ce fel de acțiuni prevede Comisia pentru un parteneriat mai bun cu actorii guvernamentali și non-guvernamentali privind informarea populației cu privire la factorii de risc care pot duce la apariția cancerului la cap și gât?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(4 noiembrie 2013)

Acțiunea UE în domeniul cancerului are scopul de a contribui la reducerea implicațiilor cancerului prin abordări de prevenire și control bazate pe date concrete.

85 % din ansamblul cazurilor de cancer în zona capului și a gâtului sunt asociate consumului de tutun. Ca atare, toate acțiunile UE în domeniul controlului tutunului, inclusiv legislația UE de reglementare a produselor din tutun și a publicității acestora, campaniile de sensibilizare la nivelul întregii UE și Recomandarea Consiliului privind mediile fără fum de tutun pot contribui indirect la prevenirea cancerului în zona capului și a gâtului, prin abordarea unuia dintre principalele sale elemente determinante.

Un instrument-cheie pentru prevenirea cancerului este Codul european împotriva cancerului, o listă de recomandări într-un format ușor accesibil cetățenilor, bazată pe date științifice verificate, adoptată pentru prima dată în 2003 și urmând a fi prezentată într-o nouă ediție în 2014.

Multe dintre recomandările cuprinse în Codul european împotriva cancerului abordează factorii de risc asociați cancerului în zona capului și a gâtului: consumul de tutun, consumul frecvent și ridicat de alcool (alcoolul crește riscul dezvoltării cancerului în gură, în faringe, în laringe și în esofag) și expunerea prelungită la soare (asociată cancerului în zona buzelor). Cercetările arată, de asemenea, că o igienă orală deficitară și infecția cu papilomavirusul uman constituie factori de risc asociați cancerului în zona capului și a gâtului.

Pentru a îmbunătăți prevenirea și controlul cancerului, Comisia pune accent pe sprijinirea statelor membre în adoptarea planurilor naționale de combatere a cancerului, prin intermediul unei serii de acțiuni comune finanțate în cadrul programului UE în domeniul sănătății. Măsurile de prevenire puse în aplicare de autoritățile naționale, cu participarea organizațiilor de pacienți și a experților științifici, oferă cele mai rentabile strategii pe termen lung pentru reducerea implicațiilor acestei boli.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011450/13
to the Commission
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: Raising public awareness of head and neck cancer

Head and neck cancer is the sixth most common type of cancer in Europe and its prevalence is increasing, with more than 150 000 new cases registered in 2012. At present, however, people in Europe are not well-informed about this type of cancer or its risk factors, and many cases are not diagnosed until they have reached an advanced stage, which drastically reduces the patient's chances of survival.

1. Can the Commission finance campaigns to raise public awareness of this type of cancer?

2. What type of measures will the Commission take with a view to a better partnership withgovernmental and non-governmental actors as regards informing the public on the riskfactors that can lead to the development of head and neck cancer?

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

EU action in the field of cancer aims to help reduce the burden of cancer through evidence-based approaches for prevention and control.

85% of all cases of head and neck cancer are linked to tobacco use. As such, all EU action in the field of tobacco control, including EU legislation regulating tobacco products and their advertising, EU-wide campaigns and the Council Recommendation on Smoke free environments can indirectly help to prevent head and neck cancer by addressing one of its key determinant.

A key tool to help prevent cancer is the European Code Against Cancer, a list of recommendations in a citizen-friendly format, based on scientifically proven evidence, adopted for the first time in 2003 and for which a new edition will be presented in 2014.

Many of the recommendations in the European Code Against Cancer address risk factors linked to head and neck cancer: tobacco use, frequent and heavy consumption of alcohol (alcohol raises the risk of developing cancer in the mouth, pharynx, larynx, and esophagus), and prolonged sun exposure (linked to cancer in the lip area). Research also indicates that poor oral hygiene and an infection with human papillomavirus is a risk factor for head and neck cancer.

To improve the prevention and control of cancers, the Commission puts emphasis on supporting Member States in the adoption of National Cancer Plans, through a series of Joint Actions funded under the EU Health programme. Prevention measures implemented by national authorities, with input of patients' organisations and scientific experts, offer the most cost-effective, long-term strategy for reducing the burden of disease.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011451/13
to the Commission
Sir Robert Atkins (ECR)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: Subsidiarity

The principle of subsidiarity (Article 5(3)) has been part of the Treaties since 7 February 1992. On how many occasions since that date has a Member State taken legal action against the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union concerning a directive on the grounds that it breached the principle of subsidiarity?

On how many occasions has the Court of Justice of the European Union found in favour of the Member State?

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

A Member State has lodged an action for annulment against a directive adopted by the European Parliament and the Council invoking a breach of the principle of subsidiarity on three occasions (Cases C-376/98, Germany v Parliament and Council; C-377/98, The Netherlands v Parliament and Council; and C-176/09, Luxembourg v Parliament and Council). In another case (C-233/94, Germany v Parliament and Council), a Member State challenged a directive adopted by the Parliament and the Council on the ground that the legislature had breached its obligation to state the reasons justifying respect for the principle of subsidiarity.

One of these cases led to the annulment of the directive under review (C-376/98), but on the ground that the legal basis used was inappropriate. In that case the Court did not address the principle of subsidiarity, as the act challenged was annulled for that other reason. The other cases were dismissed by the Court.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011452/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(7. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Übermüdete Piloten — Gefahr für die Passagiere

Laut einer aktuellen Umfrage des Marktforschungsunternehmens GfK Austria im Auftrag der Austrian Cockpit Association (ACA), zeigten sich 88 % der Befragten darüber besorgt, dass ihr Pilot/ihre Pilotin schon seit 22 Stunden wach sein könnte, wenn das Flugzeug landet. 66 % äußerten sich „sehr besorgt", 22 % sind zumindest „etwas besorgt". Eine EU-Rechtsvorschrift wird dies aber demnächst trotzdem möglich machen. Piloten wehren sich dagegen, denn extrem lange Einsätze führen zu langen Wachzeiten, die ein sicheres Landen gefährden. Seit Monaten kämpfen Europas Piloten für eine Regelung, die Flugdienst- und Ruhezeiten vorsieht, welche den wissenschaftlichen Kriterien entsprechen. Leider versuchen die Fluglinien, das Maximum für sich herauszuholen — aber die Sicherheit wird dabei außer Acht gelassen.

1. Wie will die Kommission vorgehen, um Passagieren und Crews in Zukunft einen sicheren Flug und eine sichere Landung, zu gewährleisten?

2. Kritische Stimmen werden laut, dass eine ohne demokratische Kontrolle handelnde Behörde (EASA) de facto neue Rechtsvorschriften erlässt. Wie steht die Kommission zu dieser Kritik: stimmt das?

3. In Zusammenhang mit einem Rechtsakt, der einer EU-Behörde quasi per „Blankoscheck" erlaubt, die Regeln in Zukunft ohne Kontrolle durch das Europäische Parlament und den Ministerrat weiter zu lockern, gibt es den Vorwurf, dass die EU in diesem Fall zu wenig demokratisch agiert. Wie sieht die Kommission das?

4. Kritisiert wird auch die damit verbundene „Vereinheitlichung"; denn so würden Länder mit strengeren Arbeits- und Flugzeitregelungen gezwungen werden, ihren Standard auf europäisches Einheitsniveau abzusenken. Was sagt die Kommission zu dieser Kritik?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(25. November 2013)

1. Das alleinige Ziel der neuen Bestimmungen zur Ermüdung von Piloten besteht darin, den jetzt schon hohen Grad an Flugsicherheit noch weiter zu verbessern. Der Entwurf der Kommissionsverordnung enthält mehr als 30 Bestimmungen, mit denen der Schutz der Flugbesatzungen vor Ermüdung künftig verbessert werden soll. Die Europäische Agentur für Flugsicherheit (EASA) wird verpflichtet, ab Beginn der Umsetzung der neuen Bestimmungen während drei Jahren ein Aufsichts- und Forschungsprogramm zur Müdigkeit und Leistungsfähigkeit von Flugbesatzungen durchzuführen und der Kommission darüber zu berichten.

2./3. Die Kommission kann sich den vom Herrn Abgeordneten angeführten kritischen Stimmen nicht anschließen. Die EASA hat der Kommission entsprechend dem ihr vom Mitgesetzgeber in der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 216/2008 erteilten Auftrag eine Stellungnahme zur Begrenzung der Flugzeiten (FTL) übermittelt, die sich auf eine eingehende Analyse einschließlich wissenschaftlicher Erkenntnisse stützt und die in umfassender Konsultation mit Sachverständigen und Interessenträgern erarbeitet wurde. Auf dieser Grundlage, wenn auch mit einigen Änderungen zur Berücksichtigung der Standpunkte unterschiedlicher Interessenträger, hat die Kommission ihren Vorschlag für den neuen Verordnungsentwurf erstellt.

Außerdem wurde die EASA damit beauftragt, Zertifizierungsspezifikationen im Bereich der Flugdienstzeitbegrenzung herauszugeben, wie sie bereits in allen anderen Bereichen der Flugsicherheit vorliegen. Diese Zertifizierungsspezifikationen werden zurzeit mit Sachverständigen aus den Mitgliedstaaten und Interessenträgern erarbeitet.

4. Hierzu verweist die Kommission den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-010759/2013 ([1]).

Andere zweckdienliche Informationen hat die Kommission in ihren Antworten auf die schriftlichen Anfragen P-007959/2013 und 008439/2013 ([1]) erteilt.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011452/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: Fatigued pilots — danger to passengers

According to a current survey by the market research company GfK Austria on behalf of the Austrian Cockpit Association (ACA), 88% of respondents indicated concern that their pilot could have been awake for 22 hours by the time the aircraft lands. Sixty-six per cent indicated they were 'very concerned' and 22% were at least 'fairly concerned'. An EU legislative instrument is nevertheless set to make this possible in the near future. Pilots are opposed to this, as extremely long duty times will lead to long periods awake, which will put a safe landing at risk. For months, Europe's pilots have been fighting for an arrangement that provides for flight times and rest times that meet the scientific criteria. Unfortunately, the airlines are attempting to get as much out of this for themselves as they can, but in doing so safety is being disregarded.

1. What will the Commission do to ensure a safe flight and a safe landing for passengers and crew in the future?

2. Criticism has been voiced about the fact that an authority (EASA) acting with no democratic scrutiny is de facto enacting new legislation. Where does the Commission stand with regard to this criticism? Is it correct?

3. A legislative act that allows an EU authority, almost with a 'blank cheque', to relax the rules further without the scrutiny of Parliament or the Council, prompts the accusation that, in this case, the EU is not acting in a sufficiently democratic manner. What is the Commission's view of that?

4. The 'harmonisation' associated with this has also been criticised, as this would mean that countries with more stringent working and flight time rules would be forced to lower their standards to the uniform European level. What does the Commission say to this criticism?

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

1. Improving even further the already high level of aviation safety is the only objective of the new rules on pilot fatigue. The draft Commission Regulation includes more than 30 provisions aimed at increasing crew protection against fatigue in the future. It obliges EASA to launch a monitoring and research programme on aircrew fatigue and performance and to report to the Commission, to take place for the first time three years after the start of implementation of the new rules.

2 and 3. The Commission does not share the criticism referred to by the Honourable Member. In line with the mandate given by the co-legislator in Regulation (EC) No 216/2008, EASA has provided the Commission with its Opinion on flight time limitations (FTL), based on an in-depth analysis, including scientific evidence, and in full consultation with experts and stakeholders. On this basis, but having made a number of changes to take account of the views of different stakeholders, the Commission made its proposal for the new draft Regulation.

EASA has also been mandated to issue Certification Specifications in the field of FTL as is the case in all other areas of aviation safety. Certification Specifications are being prepared together with experts from Member States and stakeholders.

4. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-010759/2013 ([1]).

Other relevant information has been provided by the Commission in its answers to written questions P-007959/2013 and 008439/2013 ([1]).

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011454/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(7 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Autopistas del agua

En declaraciones a Europa Press, el ministro de Agricultura, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente del Gobierno del Reino de España, Miguel Arias Cañete, opina que «en España debería haber una red de autopistas del agua que conecten las cuencas y permitan, en momentos puntuales, trasladar los excesos que se dan en unas cuencas a embalses» a fin de «almacenar agua y dar mayor garantía de disponibilidad, de modo que nadie en España tuviera necesidad de ir mendigando o exigiendo agua». En su respuesta a la pregunta E-005461/2013, la Comisión indica que «tras el recurso presentado por la Comisión, el Tribunal condenó a España por no haber aprobado ni notificado los planes hidrológicos de cuenca a que obliga la Directiva marco del agua (DMA, 2000/60/CE)».

A la luz de lo anterior y teniendo en cuenta la Directiva marco del agua (DMA, 2000/60/CE):

1. ¿Tiene la Comisión conocimiento de dicho plan?

2. ¿Cuenta la Comisión con previsiones de que en el futuro vaya a haber excesos de agua y sabe si, efectivamente, actualmente se pierde agua?

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

La Comisión no tiene conocimiento de ningún plan que conecte las cuencas fluviales españolas a través de una red de «autopistas del agua». En caso de existir, dicho plan debería quedar reflejado en los planes hidrológicos de cuenca elaborados de conformidad con la Directiva marco del agua ([1]). Tal como se indica en la pregunta escrita, el hecho de que España no haya adoptado los planes hidrológicos de cuenca en el caso de la mayor parte de las cuencas fluviales está siendo tratado en el contexto de la aplicación de la sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea de 4 de octubre de 2012 (asunto C-403/11, Comisión contra España). Los planes que han sido adoptados y notificados hasta ahora no indican ninguna interconexión entre cuencas fluviales.

Según las previsiones de los científicos, el cambio climático contribuirá a reducir notablemente la disponibilidad de agua en la cuenca mediterránea. En este contexto, una gestión adecuada de los recursos hídricos es fundamental para garantizar que dichos recursos se utilicen con la máxima eficacia. Según la Comisión, el medio más adecuado para conseguir una gestión sostenible de los recursos hídricos es aplicar de manera adecuada las obligaciones y los principios recogidos en la Directiva marco del agua.

([1]) Directiva 2000/60/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 23 de octubre de 2000, por la que se establece un marco comunitario de actuación en el ámbito de la política de aguas (DO L 327 de 22.12.2000).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011454/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: Water motorways

In statements to *Europa Press*, Miguel Arias Cañete, Spain's Minister of Agriculture, Food and Environment, states that 'in Spain there ought to be a network of water motorways connecting water catchment areas, to make it possible, when necessary, to move the excess water in certain catchment areas to reservoirs' with a view to 'storing water and providing greater security of supply, so that nobody in Spain would have the need to go begging for or needing water'. In its answer to Question E-005461/2013, the Commission stated that 'Following the referral by the Commission, the Court condemned Spain for the lack of adoption and reporting of River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) under the Water Framework Directive (WFD, 2000/60/EC)'.

In view of the above and with regard to the Water Framework Directive (WFD, 2000/60/EC):

1. Is the Commission aware of the said plan?

2. Does the Commission have forecasts of excess amounts of water in the future, and does it know if in fact water is currently being lost?

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

The Commission is not aware of any plan to connect the Spanish river basins through 'water motorways'. Any such plan would need to be reflected in the River Basin Management Plans prepared according to the Water Framework Directive ([1]). As referred to in the written question, the failure by Spain to adopt the River Basin Management Plans for most of the Spanish river basin districts is being addressed in the framework of the implementation of the European Union Court of Justice judgment of 4 October 2012 (Case C-403/11 Commission v. Spain). The plans that have been adopted and reported so far do not reflect interconnection between river basins.

Scientists foresee that climate change will significantly decrease water availability in the Mediterranean basin. In this context sound water management is essential to ensure that water is used in the most efficient way. The Commission believes that proper implementation of the principles and obligations of the Water Framework Directive is the way to achieve such sustainable water management.

([1]) Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (OJ L 327, 22.12.2000).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011455/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(7 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Cuenca del río Ebro

La Directiva Marco del Agua (DMA, 2000/60/CE) establece un marco general para proteger las aguas superficiales y las aguas subterráneas, con el objetivo de garantizar el buen estado de todas las aguas, en principio, antes de 2015. El principal instrumento para alcanzar este objetivo son los planes hidrológicos de cuenca y los programas de medidas. De conformidad con los artículos 13 y 14 de la DMA, los ejemplares del proyecto de plan hidrológico de cuenca debían ser publicados para consulta pública antes de diciembre de 2008 y los planes debían ser aprobados definitivamente por los Estados miembros antes de diciembre de 2009. Los planes deberán ser enviados a la Comisión antes de marzo de 2010.

Según contestó la Comisión en febrero de 2009 (E-005592/2009), la fijación de un caudal ecológico mínimo en las cuencas de los ríos regulados por presas y sometidos a un uso intensivo de sus aguas se considera sumamente importante para la aplicación de la DMA. No es posible alcanzar el objetivo de la DMA —un buen estado ecológico de las aguas superficiales— si no se garantiza un caudal ecológico mínimo. El caudal mínimo ha de estar vinculado al objetivo de buen estado ecológico y, por consiguiente, deberá abordarse caso por caso, teniendo en cuenta las características físicas, hidrológicas y ecológicas de las masas de agua de que se trate.

Teniendo en cuenta la DMA y la respuesta E-005461/2013, ¿cree la Comisión que, por lo que respecta a la cuenca del río Ebro, se garantizará el buen estado de todas sus aguas antes del 2015?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de diciembre de 2013)

La falta de aprobación y notificación a la Comisión del plan hidrológico de cuenca de, *inter alia*, la demarcación hidrográfica del Ebro es una de las cuestiones tratadas en el marco de la ejecución de la sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea, de 4 de octubre de 2012 (asunto C-403/11 Comisión contra España).

Solo después de aprobado y notificado a la Comisión el plan hidrológico para la mencionada cuenca podrá la Comisión examinar el cumplimiento de las disposiciones de la Directiva marco sobre el agua ([1]) y, concretamente, la obligación de garantizar el buen estado de sus aguas.

([1]) Directiva 2000/60/CE (DO L 327 de 22.12.2000).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011455/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: The River Ebro basin

The Water Framework Directive (WFD, 2000/60/EC) lays down a general framework for protecting surface water and groundwater, with the aim of achieving good status of all waters, in principle, by 2015. The main tools for achieving this aim are the river basin management plans and the programmes of measures. Under Articles 13 and 14 of the WFD, draft copies of the river basin management plan should have been published for public consultation before December 2008 and the plans should have been finally adopted by the Member States before December 2009. The plans should have been sent to the Commission before March 2010.

According to the Commission's answer in February 2009 (E-005592/2009), the establishment of minimum ecological flows in river basins which are regulated by dams and/or are subject to an intense water use is considered very important for the implementation of the WFD. It is not possible to achieve the WFD objective of good ecological status for surface waters if a minimum ecological flow is not guaranteed. The minimum flow has to be linked with the objective of good ecological status and, therefore, has to be developed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the physical, hydrological and ecological characteristics of the affected water bodies.

In view of the WFD and answer E-005461/2013, does the Commission believe that good status of all waters in the River Ebro basin will be achieved before 2015?

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

The failure by Spain to adopt and report to the Commission the River Basin Management Plan for, *inter alia*, the Ebro river basin district is being addressed in the framework of the implementation of the European Union Court of Justice judgment of 4 October 2012 (Case C-403/11 Commission v. Spain).

Only after the adoption and reporting of the River Basin Management Plan for that basin, will the Commission be able to analyse its compliance with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive ([1]), including the obligation to achieve good status of its waters.

([1]) Directive 2000/60/EC, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011456/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(7 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Σοβαρά προβλήματα λειτουργίας του ΧΥΤΑ Μαυροράχης — μεταφορά στραγγισμάτων από τον ΧΥΤΑ

Στις 7.8.2013 η Εκτελεστική Επιτροπή του Συνδέσμου ΟΤΑ Νομού Θεσσαλονίκης, με απόφασή της (Αρ. Πρ. 3513) «προκειμένου να είναι δυνατή η απρόσκοπτη λειτουργία της Μονάδας Επεξεργασίας Λυμάτων του ΧΥΤΑ Μαυροράχης και για να υπάρχει δυνατότητα διαχείρισης της περίσσιας παραγωγής στραγγισμάτων χωρίς να υπάρχει κίνδυνος επιβάρυνσης του περιβάλλοντος, κρίνεται απαραίτητη η άμεση μεταφορά των στραγγισμάτων από τις δεξαμενές αποθήκευσης πλεοναζουσών παροχών της Μονάδας Επεξεργασίας Στραγγισμάτων του ΧΥΤΑ Μαυροράχης στην Εγκατάσταση Επεξεργασίας Λυμάτων Θεσσαλονίκης», ενέκρινε δαπάνη ύψους 206 640 ευρώ για τη μίσθωση τεσσάρων βυτιοφόρων τα οποία για τρεις μήνες θα εκτελούν 12 τουλάχιστον δρομολόγια ημερησίως για να μεταφέρουν τα στραγγίσματα.

Ο ΧΥΤΑ Μαυροράχης εγκαινιάστηκε στις 26.11.2008. Ήδη από το 2009 έχουν γίνει καταγγελίες από τους κατοίκους, τις οποίες από το 2011 έχω μεταφέρει στην Επιτροπή με ερωτήσεις μου (E-011586/2011, E-011587/2011, E-003633/2012), που αφορούν κυρίως διαρροή στραγγισμάτων σε ύδατα που φτάνουν στην λίμνη Κορώνεια. Η Επιτροπή στις απαντήσεις της κατά πάγιο τρόπο «νίπτει τας χείρας της» επικαλούμενη αναρμοδιότητα, παρά το γεγονός ότι έχει επισημανθεί η απαράδεκτη κατάσταση.

Δεδομένου ότι, μετά την ανωτέρω απόφαση (Αρ. Πρ. 3513) οι κάτοικοι της περιοχής έχουν πλέον τη βεβαιότητα ότι η μέχρι σήμερα «περίσσια παραγωγή στραγγισμάτων» κατέληγε στο περιβάλλον και δεδομένων των τεράστιων αποδεδειγμένων προβλημάτων που παρουσιάζουν πολλά έργα ΧΥΤΑ στην Ελλάδα (π.χ. Δυτική Σάμος, Καρβουνάρι, Ζάκυνθος) είτε λόγω «αστοχίας» των μελετών είτε λόγω «κατασκευαστικών λαθών», ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Ποια μέσα διαθέτει για να διερευνήσει αν ο «αρμόδιες αρχές» κράτους μέλους καλύπτουν απαράδεκτες καταστάσεις και κραυγαλέες παραβιάσεις της κοινοτικής νομοθεσίας; Προτίθεται να διερευνήσει από πότε δεν λειτουργούν τα συστήματα βιολογικού καθαρισμού στον ΧΥΤΑ Μαυροράχης και αν τα τοξικά υπολείμματα που ανεξέλεγκτα διαρρέουν στο περιβάλλον ενδεχομένως ρυπαίνουν και τη λίμνη Κορώνεια;

— Ποια άμεσα μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει σε συνεργασία με την ελληνική κυβέρνηση για να πάψει ο οικολογικός εφιάλτης που προκαλεί ο τρόπος μελέτης, κατασκευής και λειτουργίας ΧΥΤΑ/Υ στην Ελλάδα;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(20 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Με βάση τις πληροφορίες που προσκομίζει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου, η Επιτροπή θα επικοινωνήσει με τις ελληνικές αρχές προκειμένου να εξακριβωθεί κατά πόσον οι εν λόγω χώροι υγειονομικής ταφής είναι σύμμορφοι με τις απαιτήσεις της οδηγίας περί υγειονομικής ταφής των αποβλήτων ([1]).

Η Επιτροπή αντιμετωπίζει παραβάσεις και ποικίλων μορφών ανεπαρκή εφαρμογή της περί αποβλήτων νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ. Μεταξύ αυτών περιλαμβάνονται η έναρξη ερευνών και διαδικασιών επί παραβάσει κατά κρατών μελών για σοβαρές παραβάσεις, καθώς και δραστηριότητες συνδρομής για τη συμμόρφωση ([2]). Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή παραπέμπει την Ελλάδα στο Ευρωπαϊκό Δικαστήριο επί παραλείψει της εφαρμογής προγενέστερης δικαστικής απόφασης για τους παράνομους χώρους ταφής αποβλήτων ([3]).

([1]) Οδηγία 2000/35/ΕΚ, ΕΕ L 200 της 8.8.2000.
([2]) Βλ.: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/framework/support_implementation.htm
([3]) Βλ.: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-143_el.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011456/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: Serious problems in the operation of the Mavrorachi landfill site — transportation of leachate from the landfill site

On 7 August 2013, the Executive Committee of the Association of Municipalities of Thessaloniki Prefecture, under decision No 3513, stated that: 'with a view to allowing the smooth operation of the Mavrorachi landfill's effluent treatment plant and with a view to allowing management of excess leachate production without endangering the environment, it is necessary to transport the leachate directly from the overflow storage tanks at the Mavrorachi landfill's effluent treatment plant to the Thessaloniki effluent treatment facility' and approved expenditure totalling EUR 206 640 for the leasing of four tanker lorries, which will carry out at least 12 trips daily over a three-month period to transport the leachate.

The Mavrorachi landfill site was opened on 26 November 2008. Local inhabitants have been voicing complaints since 2009, and since 2011 I have been passing these on to the Commission through my questions (E-011586/2011, E-011587/2011, E-003633/2012), which mainly concern leachate leaks into waters draining into Lake Koronia. In its answers, the Commission consistently 'washes its hands of the matter' by invoking its lack of competence, despite the fact that this unacceptable situation has been brought to its attention.

Given the above decision No 3513, the inhabitants of the region are now certain that the hitherto 'excess leachate production' was ending up in the environment and, given the huge proven problems created by many landfill projects (e.g. Western Samos, Karvounari and Zakynthos) either due to a 'failure' of the studies or due to 'construction errors', will the Commission say:

— What means does it have to investigate whether the 'competent authorities' of Member States are dealing with unacceptable conditions and blatant violations of Community legislation? Does it intend to make enquiries as to when the operation of the biological cleaning systems at the Mavrorachi landfill site ceased operation and whether the toxic waste which leaks into the environment uncontrollably may be polluting Lake Koronia as well?

— What direct measures does it intend to take in cooperation with the Greek Government in order to stop the environmental nightmare that has resulted from the methods of studying, constructing and operating landfills and treatment plants in Greece?

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

In the light of the information provided by the Honourable Member, the Commission will contact the Greek authorities to verify whether the landfill in question is compliant with the requirements in the Landfill Directive ([1]).

The Commission addresses breaches and insufficient implementation of EU waste law in various ways. These include the initiation of investigations and infringement proceedings against Member States for serious offenses as well as compliance assistance activities ([2]). Earlier this year the Commission took Greece back to the European Court of Justice for failing to implement an earlier ruling on illegal landfills ([3]).

([1]) Directive 2000/35/EC, OJ L 200, 8.8.2000.
([2]) See: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/framework/support_implementation.htm
([3]) See: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-143_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011457/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE) und Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE)
(7. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Rote Ausschreibungen und Durchgaben von Interpol in Bezug auf von der EU anerkannte Flüchtlinge

Pjotr Silajew ist ein Flüchtling aus Moskau. Er entkam einer polizeilichen Fahndung im Anschluss an seine Teilnahme an einer Demonstration gegen Korruption und Unregelmäßigkeiten in Zusammenhang mit einem kontroversen Autobahnbau in der Nähe von Moskau. Die finnischen Behörden haben ihm gemäß der Flüchtlingskonvention von 1951 politisches Asyl gewährt. Aufgrund einer von Interpol erfolgten Durchgabe, die auf Betreiben der Moskauer Staatsanwaltschaft erfolgte, wurde Herr Silajew in Spanien festgenommen; daraufhin legte er gegen den russischen Auslieferungsantrag Rechtsmittel ein. Der Auslieferungsantrag wurde mit der Begründung, dass das gegen ihn gerichtete Strafverfahren politisch motiviert sei, abgelehnt. Trotz dieser für ihn positiven Entscheidung verbrachte Herr Silajew acht Tage in Haft und konnte Spanien sechs Monate lang nicht verlassen, da er sich täglich beim örtlichen Gericht melden musste ([1]).

Die Systeme von Interpol können dazu missbraucht werden, um die Festnahme und Inhaftierung von Personen in einem EU-Mitgliedstaat zu erwirken, die in einem anderen Mitgliedstaat im Einklang mit EU-Normen als Flüchtlinge anerkannt worden sind. Die Organisation für Sicherheit und Zusammenarbeit in Europa (OSZE) hat ihre Besorgnis „über den Missbrauch des Interpol-Systems der roten Ausschreibungen durch Teilnehmerstaaten, deren Rechtssysteme nicht den internationalen Normen entsprechen" zum Ausdruck gebracht ([2]) und Interpol aufgefordert, seine Kontrollmechanismen zu verbessern, um einen Missbrauch des Systems zu vermeiden ([3]).

Die Kommission wird daher um die Beantwortung der folgenden Fragen gebeten:

1. Wird die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin Interpol um Antwort bitten, was seine bestehenden Mechanismen zur Ermittlung von Versuchen betrifft, seine Systeme zu missbrauchen, um die Inhaftierung, Festnahme und Auslieferung von aus politischen Gründen verfolgten Personen zu erwirken? Wird die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin Interpol um Antwort bitten, auf welche Art und Weise festgelegt wird, ob eine Verfolgung politisch motiviert ist?

2. Wird die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin Interpol um Antwort bitten, was die Bedeutung betrifft, die Interpol folgenden Punkten beimisst: (a) die Gewährung von Asyl in einem Mitgliedstaat erfolgt anhand bestimmter Strafverfahren, die die Grundlage einer roten Ausschreibung bilden; (b) die Weigerung eines EU-Mitgliedstaats, eine Person auszuliefern, die sich auf der Grundlage einer roten Ausschreibung Strafverfahren stellen muss, mit der Begründung, dass diese Strafverfahren politisch motiviert sind?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(17. Dezember 2013)

Der Kommission sind konkrete Fälle, darunter auch einige kürzlich in einem Bericht von Fair Trials International ([4]) hervorgehobene Fälle, bekannt, bei denen eine Reihe von Interpol-Mitgliedern angeblich politisch motivierte Ersuchen um Festnahme gesuchter Personen gestellt haben.

Die Kommission, die nicht Mitglied von Interpol ist, vertritt die Auffassung, dass Interpol-Instrumente in angemessener Weise dazu genutzt werden sollten, zur Verhütung und Bekämpfung von Kriminalität und zum Schutz der Grundrechte beizutragen.

Interpol verfügt über ein System, mit dem potenziellem Missbrauch ihrer Instrumente auf der Grundlage der Interpol-Statuten, der Interpol-Vorschriften über die Kontrolle von Informationen und den Zugang zu Interpol-Akten, der Interpol-Vorschriften über die Verarbeitung der Daten sowie der Betriebsvorschriften der Interpol-Kommission zur Kontrolle von Interpol-Dateien begegnet werden kann.

([1]) Umfassende Informationen zu diesem Fall sind abrufbar unter: http://www.fairtrials.net/cases/petr-silaev/
([2]) Erklärung von Monaco und Entschließungen, die von der Parlamentarischen Versammlung der OSZE auf ihrer 21. Jahrestagung vom 5. bis 9. Juli 2012 verabschiedet wurden, Ziffer 93.
([3]) Erklärung von Istanbul und Entschließungen, die von der Parlamentarischen Versammlung der OSZE auf ihrer 22. Jahrestagung vom 29. Juni bis 3. Juli 2013 verabschiedet wurden, Ziffer 147.
([4]) Fair Trials International, „Strengthening respect for human right, strengthening INTERPOL", November 2013.

In Zusammenarbeit mit den EU-Mitgliedstaaten als Mitgliedern von Interpol wird die Kommission mit Interpol die bestehenden Verfahren für die Interpol-Ausschreibungen ansprechen, einschließlich etwaiger notwendiger Maßnahmen zur weiteren Stärkung der Mechanismen zur Vermeidung politisch begründeter Ersuchen.

Die Kommission wird das Europäische Parlament über den Stand dieser Diskussionen auf dem Laufenden halten.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011457/13
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE) en Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE)
(7 oktober 2013)

Betreft: VP/HR — „Red Notice" van Interpol en verspreiding van een aanhoudingsbevel m.b.t. door de EU erkende vluchtelingen

Petr Silaev is een vluchteling, afkomstig uit Moskou. Na zijn deelname aan een demonstratie tegen corruptie en onregelmatigheden in verband met een controversieel plan voor de aanleg van een snelweg in de buurt van Moskou die uitmondde in politiegeweld, slaagde hij erin het land te verlaten. De Finse overheid besloot, overeenkomstig het Vluchtelingenverdrag van 1951, de heer Silaev politiek asiel te verlenen. Na een Interpol-signalering op instigatie van het openbaar ministerie te Moskou, werd de heer Silaev gearresteerd in Spanje. Rusland diende een uitleveringsverzoek in, dat door de heer Silaev werd aangevochten en dat niet werd ingewilligd omdat Spanje van oordeel was dat de gerechtelijke vervolging door politieke motieven was ingegeven. Ondanks deze voor hem gunstige beslissing zat de heer Silaev acht dagen vast en kon hij zes maanden lang Spanje niet verlaten, omdat hij zich bij de plaatselijke rechtbank moest melden ([1]).

Het signaleringssysteem van Interpol kan misbruikt worden om in een lidstaat de arrestatie of detentie te bewerkstelligen van een persoon die in een andere lidstaat overeenkomstig gemeenschappelijke EU-normen als vluchteling is erkend. De Organisatie voor Veiligheid en Samenwerking in Europa (OVSE) heeft zich bezorgd getoond over het misbruik van het „Red Notice"-systeem van Interpol door bij Interpol aangesloten landen die een justitieel apparaat hebben dat niet aan de internationale normen beantwoordt ([2]), en heeft er bij Interpol op aangedrongen haar toezichtsmechanismen te verbeteren om misbruik van dit systeem te voorkomen ([3]).

Met het oog op bovenstaande:

1. Is de vicevoorzitter/hoge vertegenwoordiger van plan om inlichtingen in te winnen bij Interpol over de mechanismen die zijn ingevoerd om pogingen tot misbruik van het Europol-systeem te kunnen opsporen die bedoeld zijn om de arrestatie, detentie of uitlevering te bewerkstelligen van personen om deze om politieke redenen te kunnen vervolgen, alsmede over de maatstaven die zij hanteert om te bepalen of er sprake is van een door politieke motieven ingegeven vervolging?

2. Is de vicevoorzitter/hoge vertegenwoordiger van plan om bij Interpol te informeren welke waarde zij toekent aan: (a) asiel dat door een lidstaat verleend is op basis van de strafprocedure die ten grondslag ligt aan het laten uitgaan van een Red Notice; (b) weigering van een EU-lidstaat om een persoon uit te zetten met het oog op een strafprocedure die ten grondslag ligt aan een Red Notice, omdat die strafprocedure ingegeven is door politieke motieven?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(17 december 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van specifieke gevallen, zoals enkele die onlangs in een verslag van Fair Trials International ([4]) werden besproken, waarbij een aantal leden van Interpol vermeende politiek gemotiveerde verzoeken indiende voor de arrestatie van gezochte personen.

Hoewel zij geen lid van Interpol is, is de Commissie van mening dat de instrumenten van Interpol juist moeten worden gebruikt, teneinde criminaliteit te voorkomen en te bestrijden, alsmede de grondrechten te beschermen.

Interpol beschikt over een systeem om mogelijk misbruik van haar instrumenten aan te pakken; dit systeem steunt op de statuten van Interpol, de voorschriften van Interpol inzake de controle van informatie en de toegang tot de Interpol-dossiers, de voorschriften van Interpol inzake de verwerking van gegevens en de bedrijfsregels van de Interpol Commission for the Control of Interpol Files.

([1]) Uitgebreide informatie over deze zaak is te raadplegen op: http://www.fairtrials.net/cases/petr-silaev/.
([2]) Verklaring van Monaco en resoluties aangenomen door de Parlementaire Assemblee van de OVSE tijdens haar 21ste jaarvergadering in Monaco, van 5 t/m 7 juli 2012, punt 93.
([3]) Verklaring van Istanboel en resoluties aangenomen door de Parlementaire Assemblee van de OVSE tijdens haar 22ste jaarvergadering in Istanboel, van 29 juni t/m 3 juli 2013, punt 147.
([4]) Fair Trials International, „Strengthening respect for human right, strengthening INTERPOL", november 2013.

In samenwerking met de EU-lidstaten, die lid zijn van Interpol, zal de Commissie de bestaande procedures voor de afgifte van „notices" met Interpol bespreken, waaronder de eventuele noodzaak om de mechanismen verder te versterken en politiek gemotiveerde verzoeken te voorkomen.

De Commissie houdt het Europees Parlement op de hoogte van die besprekingen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011457/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE) and Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Interpol Red Notices and diffusions concerning EU-recognised refugees

Petr Silaev is a refugee from Moscow. He escaped a police crackdown following his participation in a demonstration against corruption and irregularities surrounding a controversial motorway development outside Moscow. The Finnish authorities decided to grant Mr Silaev political asylum in accordance with the 1951 Refugee Convention. However, because of an Interpol diffusion issued by Moscow prosecutors, Mr Silaev was arrested in Spain, where he subsequently fought an extradition request from Russia. This was rejected on the grounds that the prosecution brought against him was politically motivated. Despite this favourable decision, Mr Silaev spent eight days in detention and was unable to leave Spain for six months as he was required to report to the local court ([1]).

Interpol's systems can be misused to obtain the arrest and detention in one Member State of those who have already been recognised as refugees in another Member State in accordance with common EU standards. The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has expressed concern about the 'abuse of the Interpol Red Notice system by participating States whose judicial systems do not meet international standards' ([2]), and has called on Interpol to improve its oversight mechanisms so as to prevent misuse of the system ([3]).

In the light of this:

1. will the Vice-President/High Representative seek information from Interpol regarding the mechanisms it has in place for detecting attempts to abuse its systems in order to seek the arrest, detention and extradition of those facing politically motivated prosecutions, and about how it determines whether a prosecution is politically motivated?

2. will the Vice-President/High Representative seek information from Interpol as to the significance which Interpol attributes to: (a) the granting of asylum by an EU Member State based on the specific criminal proceedings which form the basis of a Red Notice; (b) refusal by an EU Member State to extradite a person to face the criminal proceedings which form the basis of a Red Notice, on the grounds that those proceedings are politically motivated?

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

The Commission is aware of specific cases, including some highlighted recently in a report by Fair Trials International ([4]), in which allegedly politically motivated requests were made by a number of Interpol's Members for the arrest of wanted persons.

While not being a member of Interpol, the Commission takes the view that Interpol's instruments should be used appropriately with a view to contributing to the prevention of and fight against criminality and the protection of fundamental rights.

Interpol has a system to address potential abuse of its instruments, based on the Interpol constitution, the Interpol rules on the control of information and access to Interpol files, the Interpol rules on the processing of data, as well as the operating rules of the Interpol Commission for the Control of Interpol Files.

In liaison with EU Member States, as Members of Interpol, the Commission will raise with Interpol the existing procedures for the issuance of Interpol notices, including the possible need for actions to further strengthen mechanisms to avoid politically motivated requests.

The Commission will keep the European Parliament informed of those discussions.

([1]) Full information regarding the case is available at: http://www.fairtrials.net/cases/petr-silaev/
([2]) Monaco Declaration and Resolutions adopted by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly at its 21st Annual Session in Monaco, 5-9 July 2012, point 93.
([3]) Istanbul Declaration and Resolutions adopted by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly at its 22nd Annual Session in Istanbul, 29 June — 3 July 2013, point 147.
([4]) Fair Trials International, 'Strengthening respect for human right, strengthening INTERPOL', November 2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011458/13
an die Kommission
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE) und Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE)
(7. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Rote Notizen und Durchgaben von Interpol in Bezug auf von der EU anerkannte Flüchtlinge

Pjotr Silajew ist ein Flüchtling aus Moskau. Er entkam einer polizeilichen Fahndung im Anschluss an seine Teilnahme an einer Demonstration gegen Korruption und Unregelmäßigkeiten in Zusammenhang mit einem kontroversen Autobahnbau in der Nähe von Moskau. Die finnischen Behörden haben ihm gemäß der Genfer Flüchtlingskonvention von 1951 politisches Asyl gewährt. Wegen einer von Interpol verbreiteten Durchgabe der Moskauer Staatsanwaltschaft wurde Herr Silajew jedoch in Spanien festgenommen. Er legte gegen den russischen Auslieferungsantrag Rechtsmittel ein, der daraufhin mit der Begründung abgelehnt wurde, dass das Strafverfahren gegen ihn politisch motiviert sei. In seiner Entscheidung stützte sich das spanische Gericht unter anderem auf die vorherige Entscheidung Finnlands. Trotz dieser für ihn positiven verbrachte Pjotr Silajew acht Tage in Haft und konnte Spanien sechs Monate lang nicht verlassen, da er sich täglich beim örtlichen Gericht melden musste.

Die Systeme von Interpol können dazu missbraucht werden, die Festnahme und Inhaftierung von Personen in einem EU-Mitgliedstaat zu erwirken, die in einem anderen Mitgliedstaat bereits im Einklang mit gemeinsamen EU-Normen als Flüchtlinge anerkannt worden sind.

Die Kommission wird daher um die Beantwortung der folgenden Fragen gebeten:

1. Gibt es geltende EU-Rechtsvorschriften, mit denen die Bewegungsfreiheit innerhalb der Europäischen Union von in der EU anerkannten Flüchtlingen geschützt werden kann, für die es im System von Interpol eine politisch motivierte Rote Notiz (Ersuchen um Festnahme oder vorläufige Festnahme mit dem Ziel der Auslieferung) gibt, und können diese Rechtsvorschriften verhindern, dass andere Mitgliedstaaten die betreffenden Personen ausliefern oder inhaftieren?

2. Gedenkt die Kommission, Maßnahmen in dieser Hinsicht zu ergreifen, falls sie zu dem Schluss kommt, dass es keine EU-Rechtsvorschriften zum Schutz der Bewegungsfreiheit von in der EU anerkannten Flüchtlingen mit einer politisch motivierten Roten Notiz von Interpol gibt?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(5. Dezember 2013)

Bei der Prüfung einer Roten Notiz von Interpol haben die Mitgliedstaaten laut EU-Recht den Grundsatz der Nichtzurückweisung zu beachten, wonach niemand in einen Staat abgeschoben oder ausgewiesen werden darf, in dem sein Leben oder seine Freiheit aus Gründen der Rasse oder Religion, Staatsangehörigkeit, Zugehörigkeit zu einer bestimmten sozialen Gruppe oder aufgrund seiner politischen Ansichten gefährdet wäre oder die ernsthafte Gefahr der Vollstreckung der Todesstrafe, der Folter oder einer anderen unmenschlichen oder erniedrigenden Strafe oder Behandlung besteht. Die Auslieferung eines Flüchtlings ist zwar möglich. Gleichwohl sollten die Mitgliedstaaten unter Berücksichtigung sämtlicher Umstände im Einzelfall sehr genau prüfen, ob einem Antrag auf Auslieferung in das Herkunftsland stattzugeben ist, wenn der betreffenden Person in einem anderen Mitgliedstaat Flüchtlingsstatus gewährt wurde. In dieser Hinsicht sind die Gründe für die Anerkennung der betreffenden Person als Flüchtling in der EU zu berücksichtigen.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011458/13
aan de Commissie
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE) en Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE)
(7 oktober 2013)

Betreft: „Red Notice" van Interpol en verspreiding van een aanhoudingsbevel m.b.t. door de EU erkende vluchtelingen

Petr Silaev is een vluchteling, afkomstig uit Moskou. Na zijn deelname aan een demonstratie tegen corruptie en onregelmatigheden in verband met een controversieel plan voor de aanleg van een snelweg in de buurt van Moskou die uitmondde in politiegeweld, slaagde hij erin het land te verlaten. De Finse overheid besloot, overeenkomstig het Vluchtelingenverdrag van 1951, de heer Silaev politiek asiel te verlenen. Na een Interpol-signalering op instigatie van het openbaar ministerie te Moskou, werd de heer Silaev gearresteerd in Spanje. Rusland diende een uitleveringsverzoek in, dat door de heer Silaev werd aangevochten en dat niet werd ingewilligd omdat Spanje van oordeel was dat de gerechtelijke vervolging door politieke motieven was ingegeven. De Spaanse rechtbank nam deze beslissing onder meer op basis van het Finse asielbesluit. Ondanks deze voor hem gunstige beslissing zat de heer Silaev acht dagen vast en kon hij zes maanden lang Spanje niet verlaten, omdat hij zich bij de plaatselijke rechtbank moest melden.

Het signaleringssysteem van Interpol kan misbruikt worden om in een lidstaat de arrestatie of detentie te bewerkstelligen van een persoon die in een andere lidstaat overeenkomstig gemeenschappelijke EU-normen als vluchteling is erkend.

Met het oog op bovenstaande:

1. Bestaat er EU-wetgeving ter bescherming van het vrij verkeer binnen de EU van door de EU erkende vluchtelingen tegen wie een door politieke motieven ingegeven Red Notice van Interpol is uitgegaan, en kan deze wetgeving voorkomen dat andere lidstaten de betrokken persoon uitzetten of gevangennemen?

2. Is de Commissie van plan om op dit gebied maatregelen te treffen, als zij tot de conclusie komt dat er geen wetgeving bestaat ter bescherming van het vrij verkeer van door de EU erkende vluchtelingen tegen wie een door politieke motieven ingegeven Red Notice van Interpol is uitgegaan?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(5 december 2013)

Wanneer lidstaten het antwoord op een Red Notice van Interpol onderzoeken, verplicht het EU-recht hen het principe van non-refoulement te eerbiedigen, volgens welk niemand mag worden verwijderd of uitgezet uit een land wanneer zijn leven of vrijheid wordt bedreigd om redenen van ras, religie, nationaliteit, lidmaatschap van een bepaalde sociale groep of politieke overtuiging, of wanneer er een risico bestaat onderworpen te worden aan de doodstraf, foltering of een andere onmenselijke en vernederende behandeling. Hoewel de uitzetting van een vluchteling mogelijk is, moeten de lidstaten in het licht van alle elementen van zijn dossier zeer zorgvuldig nadenken over de aanvraag om iemand die in een andere lidstaat de vluchtelingenstatus heeft verkregen, uit te leveren aan zijn land van oorsprong. In dit verband moeten de redenen waarom iemand de vluchtelingenstatus in de EU heeft verkregen, worden overwogen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011458/13
to the Commission
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE) and Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: Interpol Red Notices and diffusions concerning EU-recognised refugees

Petr Silaev is a refugee from Moscow. He escaped a police crackdown following his participation in a demonstration against corruption and irregularities surrounding a controversial motorway development outside Moscow. The authorities of Finland decided to grant Mr Silaev political asylum in accordance with the 1951 Convention. However, because of an Interpol diffusion issued by Moscow prosecutors, Mr Silaev was arrested in Spain where he subsequently fought an extradition request from Russia, which was rejected on the basis that the prosecution against him was politically-motivated. In the decision, the Spanish court relied, *inter alia*, on the previous decision of Finland. Despite the favourable decision, Mr Silaev spent eight days in detention and six months unable to leave Spain as he was required to report to the local court.

Interpol's systems can be misused to obtain the arrest and detention, in one Member State, of those who have already been recognised as refugees in another Member State in accordance with common EU standards.

In the light of this:

1. Is there current EU legislation in place that can protect the free movement across the EU of EU-recognised refugees which have a politically motivated Red Notice in the Interpol system, and can this legislation prevent other Member States from extraditing or detaining the persons in question?

2. If the Commission concludes that no rules exist to protect the free movement EU-recognised refugees with a politically-motivated Interpol Red Notice, does it intend to take any initiatives in this area?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(5 December 2013)

When Member States consider the response to a Red Notice in the Interpol system, EC law obliges them to respect the principle of non-refoulement, according to which no one may be removed or expelled to a country where his or her life or freedom would be threatened on account of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, or where there is a serious risk that he or she would be subjected to the death penalty, torture or other inhuman or degrading treatment. Whereas extradition of a refugee is possible, Member States should therefore consider very carefully a request for the extradition to his/her country of origin of a person who has been granted refugee status in another Member State, in light of all the relevant facts of the individual case. In this respect, the reasons for which a person was granted refugee status in the EU must be taken into consideration.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011460/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(7 octobre 2013)

Objet: Rapport de la Cour des comptes sur la situation du secteur forestier dans l'Union

Dans un rapport publié le 19 septembre 2013, la Cour des comptes européenne constate que la situation du secteur forestier dans l'Union n'a pas fait l'objet d'analyses spécifiques justifiant de proposer une aide financière particulière pour améliorer la valeur économique des forêts. La Cour considère que les États membres sélectionnés pour son audit — à savoir l'Espagne (Galice), l'Italie (Toscane), la Hongrie, l'Autriche et la Slovénie — ont utilisé cette aide pour soutenir des opérations qui ne correspondent pas aux objectifs du programme et qu'il serait plus approprié de financer dans le cadre d'autres dispositifs, avec des conditions d'éligibilité ainsi que des taux de financement différents, ces derniers étant généralement plus bas.

La Cour recommande à la Commission de définir et d'évaluer les besoins de l'Union concernant l'amélioration de la valeur économique des forêts, de définir clairement les éléments clés de nature à garantir que l'aide de l'Union soit ciblée de façon à pourvoir à ces besoins et à créer une valeur ajoutée européenne et d'améliorer son suivi de la mesure 122 «Amélioration de la valeur économique des forêts» afin de s'assurer que les États membres appliquent cette dernière conformément aux objectifs spécifiques établis.

1. La Commission partage-t-elle l'analyse de l'auditeur externe sur les déficiences affectant le programme de manière générale, tant au niveau de la conception que de la mise en œuvre et du suivi de la mesure 122? Les conclusions de l'audit sont-elles généralisables à l'ensemble de l'Union? Une analyse similaire sera-t-elle effectuée pour les autres États membres qui ne sont pas concernés par l'audit de la Cour des comptes?

2. Quelle suite la Commission compte-t-elle donner aux recommandations de la Cour?

3. La nouvelle stratégie forestière européenne, proposée par la Commission le lendemain de la publication de l'audit, a-t-elle anticipé les problèmes soulevés par la Cour?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(3 décembre 2013)

Concernant le rapport spécial n° 8 (2013) ([1]) rédigé par la Cour des comptes européenne (CCE), la Commission est d'avis que la conception et la mise en œuvre de la mesure «Amélioration de la valeur économique des forêts» sont allées au-delà des suggestions de la Cour.

La Commission fait observer que l'audit en question ne concernait que 5 ([2]) des 49 Programmes de développement rural (PDR) qui avaient intégré cette mesure. Il convient de noter qu'une évaluation ex post de chaque PDR sera effectuée d'ici 2016. Dans cette optique, la stratégie forestière sera évaluée dans tous les États membres ou régions qui ont inclus cette mesure dans leur programme.

La Commission s'emploie maintenant à améliorer cette mesure forestière pour la prochaine période de programmation 2014-2020. Par conséquent, les nouvelles dispositions juridiques sont plus explicites et contiennent des définitions plus précises.

La Commission fournit également aux États membres des documents d'orientation détaillés sur les mesures forestières. En outre, les résultats des opérations de suivi et d'évaluation devraient s'améliorer étant donné que les pratiques actuelles dans ce domaine ont été revues.

Dans sa section «Promouvoir nos communautés rurales et urbaines», la nouvelle stratégie forestière de l'Union européenne recommande l'orientation stratégique suivante: «La Commission et les États membres devraient évaluer les effets des mesures forestières mises en œuvre au titre de la politique de développement rural».

([1]) «Le soutien du Fonds européen agricole pour le développement rural à l'amélioration de la valeur économique des forêts».
([2]) Espagne (Galice), Italie (Toscane), Hongrie, Autriche et Slovénie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011460/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: The Court of Auditors' report on the situation of the forestry sector in the EU

In a report published on 19 September 2013, the European Court of Auditors states that the forestry sector situation in the EU was not specifically analysed so as to justify specific financial aid aimed at improving the economic value of forests. The Court found that the Member States selected for its audit — namely Spain (Galicia), Italy (Tuscany), Hungary, Austria and Slovenia — had used the measure to support operations which did not correspond to the programme's goals and which would be more appropriately financed by other measures with different eligibility requirements and aid financing rates, usually lower.

The Court recommends that the Commission define and assess the EU's needs for improving the economic value of forests, clearly define the key features that would ensure that the EU support is targeted to address those needs, and thus create EU added value, and improve its monitoring of measure 122, 'improvement of the economic value of forests', in order to ensure that the Member States implement it in line with the specific objectives set.

1. Does the Commission agree with the external auditor's analysis of the deficiencies affecting the programme in general, with regard to the design, implementation and monitoring of measure 122? Are the conclusions of the audit applicable generally to the whole of the EU? Will a similar analysis be carried out by the other Member States which were not covered by the Court of Auditors' audit?

2. How will the Commission follow up on the Court's recommendations?

3. Has the new EU forest strategy, which was proposed by the Commission the day after the publication of the audit, anticipated the problems identified by the Court?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(3 December 2013)

As regards the special Report No 8 (2013) ([1]) prepared by the European Court of Auditors (ECA), the Commission is of the opinion that the implementation and design of the measure 'Improvement of the economic value of forests' were stronger than suggested by the Court.

The Commission points out that the audit in question covered only 5 ([2]) Rural Development Programmes (RDP) out of 49 which have included this measure in the Programme. It must be noted that an *ex-post* evaluation of every RDP will be carried out by 2016. In this context the forestry measures will be evaluated in all those Member States or regions that have included it in their Programmes.

The Commission is currently working towards improving this forestry measure regarding the next Programming period 2014-2020. Consequently, more clarity and clearer definitions have been provided in the new legal provisions.

The Commission is also providing the Member States with comprehensive guidance documents on the forestry measures. Furthermore, the current schemes of monitoring and evaluation have been reviewed and should therefore provide better monitoring and evaluation results.

In the section 'Supporting our rural and urban communities', the new EU Forest Strategy contains the strategic orientation; 'The Commission and the Member States should assess and improve the effect of forestry measures under rural development policy'.

([1]) 'Support for the Improvement of the Economic Value of Forests from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development'.
([2]) Spain (Galicia), Italy (Tuscany), Hungary, Austria and Slovenia.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011461/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(7 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Progetto MOSE: indagine penale sull'impiego dei fondi e dubbi sul futuro funzionamento dell'opera

Come già accennato in chiusura dell'interrogazione n. E-009581/2013, nel corso dell'estate 2013 il Consorzio Venezia Nuova, concessionario unico dello Stato italiano incaricato dal 1983 della realizzazione del progetto MOSE, è stato coinvolto direttamente nel contesto di una clamorosa indagine per capi d'imputazione quali corruzione, concussione, turbativa d'asta e vari reati fiscali. L'indagine, che ha condotto all'applicazione della misura cautelare degli arresti domiciliari per ragioni d'età all'ottuagenario dimissionario presidente dell'ente e che coinvolge ben 32 indagati, sembrerebbe portare allo scoperto l'esistenza di una vera e propria associazione a delinquere, assurta a sistema, dedita alla distrazione di risorse destinate alla realizzazione dell'opera mediante costituzione di «fondi neri» grazie a false fatturazioni e manipolazioni dei prezzi. Tale denaro sarebbe poi stato in parte utilizzato per finalità corruttive attraverso la dazione di tangenti a esponenti bipartisan del mondo politico-istituzionale per la creazione di consenso attorno all'opera ([1]). Nel febbraio 2013, inoltre, una precedente indagine aveva condotto all'arresto per addebiti analoghi del presidente del consiglio di amministrazione di Mantovani S.p.A., la maggiore tra le imprese consorziate ([2]).

Lo scandalo prodotto dai risultati delle due indagini e dal coinvolgimento di illustri soggetti getta una luce del tutto diversa sulla reale gestione di appalti, consulenze, controlli e collaudi, nonché sulle scelte progettuali e tecnologiche che hanno condotto al rigetto delle proposte alternative in merito alla realizzazione di un'opera, della quale già da tempo viene autorevolmente messa in discussione la futura funzionalità: le costruende paratoie volte a contenere le maree potrebbero infatti risultare dinamicamente instabili e consentire all'acqua di penetrare perché soggette a fenomeni di risonanza in condizioni di mare agitato ([3]).

Tutto ciò premesso, la Commissione:

1. Non ritiene opportuno che la BEI (Banca Europea degli Investimenti) apra un'indagine sulla concreta possibilità che tra le risorse che sembrerebbero essere state distratte e destinate ad attività illecite siano compresi anche i fondi pari a quasi un miliardo di euro dalla stessa già erogati per la realizzazione dell'opera?

2. Non intende approfondire la questione del possibile futuro mancato funzionamento del MOSE, ricordando che sono ancora possibili modifiche in corso d'opera?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(17 dicembre 2013)

La Commissione non interviene in procedimenti giudiziari o indagini nazionali in corso. Spetta ai tribunali nazionali valutare le denunce di corruzione, concussione, turbativa d'asta e vari reati fiscali.

L'interrogazione dell'onorevole parlamentare si riferisce alle attività di erogazione di prestiti della BEI. Quest'ultima ha fatto sapere che, sulla base delle informazioni finora disponibili al pubblico, le indagini e le misure cautelari adottate non sembrano riguardare fatti relativi al progetto MOSE, da essa finanziato, ma piuttosto attività svolte da singoli all'interno del CVN, presumibilmente non in relazione all'opera MOSE. Nel complesso, esse non sembrano riguardare opere finanziate dalla BEI. I servizi interni della BEI preposti alle indagini hanno contattato le autorità giudiziarie e di polizia italiane per ottenere maggiori informazioni sul procedimento in corso e, in particolare, per stabilire se esso incida anche sui lavori effettuati nell'ambito del progetto finanziato dalla BEI (le paratoie contro le inondazioni, note come progetto MOSE). Su richiesta della BEI in seguito alla divulgazione della notizia, il ministero delle Infrastrutture ha confermato che l'indagine in corso non dovrebbe pregiudicare il finanziamento della BEI a favore del progetto. Quest'ultimo beneficia di contributi statali e rappresenta uno dei più importanti investimenti infrastrutturali attualmente realizzati in Italia.

Spetta alle autorità nazionali decidere in merito a eventuali modifiche del progetto.

([1]) Cfr. articolo del quotidiano locale «Il Gazzettino» del 23.7.2013: http://goo.gl/sZw3Ml.
([2]) Cfr. articolo del quotidiano locale «La Nuova» di Venezia e Mestre del 28.2.2013: http://goo.gl/53mXv4.
([3]) Secondo gli oppositori al progetto, in particolare, fu scartata senza confronto nel merito una soluzione alternativa che evitava la risonanza anche con notevole riduzione dei costi di realizzazione e di gestione e dell'impatto ambientale. Cfr. studio commissionato nel 2008 dall'allora Amministrazione del Comune di Venezia alla società francese Principia R.D.: http://goo.gl/uhhSMb.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011461/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: MOSE project — criminal investigation into the use of funds and doubts about the future performance of the work

As stated at the end of Written Question E-009581/2013, in the summer of 2013 the Consorzio Venezia Nuova (New Venice Consortium), the sole concessionaire of the Italian State with responsibility since 1983 for implementing the MOSE project, has been directly implicated in a sensational investigation into allegations of corruption, extortion, bid rigging and miscellaneous tax offences. The investigation, which resulted in a pre-trial supervision measure — house arrest on grounds of age — being applied to the octogenarian retired head of the consortium and which involves as many as 32 suspects, has seemingly uncovered a genuine large-scale criminal conspiracy to divert funds earmarked for the work through slush funds set up using fake invoices and price manipulation. It is alleged that some of the money was then used to bribe bipartisan politicians and officials to agree on matters concerning the work ([1]). Moreover, an earlier investigation carried out in February 2013 resulted in the arrest on similar charges of the managing director of Mantovani S.p.A, the largest company in the consortium ([2]).

The scandal caused by the outcomes of the two investigations and the involvement of prominent individuals sheds a completely different light on the bid management, consultancy, checks and inspections that actually took place, as well as on the design and technological decisions that led to the rejection of alternative proposals for implementing the project, the future performance of which has already long been questioned by experts: the barriers being built to hold back the tides could be dynamically unstable and could allow water to penetrate because of the resonance that occurs when the sea is rough ([3]).

1. Does the Commission not believe that the European Investment Bank (EIB) should investigate the real possibility that the funds apparently misappropriated for illegal activities include almost EUR 1 billion of funds already granted by the EIB for completion of the work?

2. Does it not intend to look more closely at the possibility that MOSE may fail in the future, while emphasising the fact that changes are still possible while the work is under way?

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

The Commission does not intervene in pending national investigations or judicial proceedings; it is for the national Courts to assess allegations of corruption, extortion, bid rigging and miscellaneous tax offences.

The Honourable Member's question relates to the EIB's lending operations. We understand from EIB that, based on information so far available to the public, the investigations and precautionary measures taken do not seem to concern facts relating to the MOSE project, financed by the EIB, but rather concern activities carried out by individuals within the CVN, allegedly not in relation to the MOSE works. In general, they do not seem to concern works that are financed by the EIB. The EIB internal investigation services have contacted the Italian judicial and police authorities to get more information on the pending proceeding, and in particular whether it affects also works carried out on the EIB finance project (the anti-flood barriers known as MOSE). Upon request from the EIB at the time of the outbreak of the news, the Ministry of Infrastructure confirmed that the ongoing investigation should not affect EIB funding to the project. The project benefits from State contributions, and is one of the most important infrastructural investments currently under implementation in Italy.

It is for the national authorities to decide on possible changes to this project.

([1]) See article in the 23 July 2013 issue of *Il Gazzettino* (local newspaper): http://goo.gl/sZw3Ml
([2]) See article in the 28 February 2013 issue of *La Nuova* (local newspaper for Venice and Mestre): http://goo.gl/53mXv4
([3]) Opponents of the project claim, in particular, that an alternative solution that prevented resonance and significantly reduced the project's implementation and management costs and environmental impact was rejected without any comparisons being made. See study by the French company Principia R.D. commissioned in 2008 by the administration of the municipality of Venice at that time: http://goo.gl/uhhSMb

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011462/13
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(7 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Strage a Lampedusa

Una tragedia dell'immigrazione senza precedenti, avvenuta il 3 ottobre scorso al largo dell'isola di Lampedusa, ha provocato centinaia di morti e di dispersi. Il naufragio è stato causato da un incendio innescato a bordo del barcone dagli stessi passeggeri che cercavano di farsi avvistare e soccorrere quando erano a poche miglia dalla costa dell'Isola dei Conigli.

Fino ad ora sono stati contati 111 morti tra cui 4 bambini e 2 donne in stato di gravidanza. Salvi in 151, ma le speranze sono davvero poche per gli oltre 200 dispersi. Secondo le testimonianze, sul barcone viaggiavano circa 500 persone.

E dall'isola è giunto l'ennesimo grido d'allarme: «Siamo in piena emergenza», afferma il responsabile del Poliambulatorio: «nella camera mortuaria non c'è più spazio per i cadaveri».

Le immagini della tragedia hanno fatto il giro del mondo e hanno provocato l'indignazione dell'opinione pubblica di tutta Europa.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. dopo questa ennesima strage, intende rivedere complessivamente le politiche europee che regolano i flussi migratori?

2. Alla luce di quanto accaduto, intende abrogare urgentemente il regolamento Dublino III (UE) n. 604/2013, che attribuisce la competenza per l'esame di una domanda di asilo o il riconoscimento dello status di rifugiato esclusivamente allo Stato membro di primo approdo?

3. Intende affermare il principio della solidarietà e della corresponsabilità tra tutti gli Stati membri, con la definizione di una strategia europea sulla migrazione che tuteli i rifugiati, in un nuovo regolamento sulla materia?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(5 dicembre 2013)

La Commissione è profondamente preoccupata dai recenti avvenimenti a largo di Lampedusa, come hanno testimoniato il Presidente Barroso e la Commissaria Malmström recandosi sull'isola il 9 ottobre 2013. In tale occasione la Commissione ha ribadito il suo pieno sostegno agli Stati membri che devono intraprendere difficili operazioni di ricerca e salvataggio e accogliere numerosi migranti, offrendo fra l'altro un importo totale di 30 milioni di EUR per rafforzare il pattugliamento e il sistema di asilo in Italia. Parte di questi fondi sarà impiegata per potenziare la presenza di Frontex nella zona. Questo aiuto si aggiungerà alle attività di sostegno dell'Unione europea già in corso specificamente destinate all'Italia, come il piano di sostegno speciale attuato dall'Ufficio europeo di sostegno per l'asilo.

In seguito alle discussioni svoltesi nell'ultimo Consiglio «Giustizia e affari interni», la Commissione ha istituito e presiede una Task Force specifica per il Mediterraneo, che riunisce tutti gli Stati membri e le agenzie competenti. A dicembre essa presenterà al Consiglio i risultati dei suoi lavori, comprese nuove azioni volte a ridurre il rischio che possano riprodursi tragedie di questo tipo.

Lungi dal costituire una causa di tali tragedie, il regolamento Dublino III, adottato dai colegislatori nel giugno di quest'anno, mira a rendere più efficiente il sistema Dublino e ad aumentare il livello di protezione per i richiedenti. Le statistiche mostrano che il 70 % di tutti i richiedenti asilo è accolto da soltanto cinque paesi: la Germania, il Belgio, la Francia, il Regno Unito e la Svezia. È chiaro, peraltro, che gli Stati membri che si trovano lungo la frontiera meridionale dell'Unione sono esposti a una maggiore pressione migratoria: è pertanto necessario sostenerli ininterrottamente, in quanto i loro sistemi di asilo e di accoglienza sono spesso sottoposti a tensioni improvvise.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011462/13
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(7 October 2013)

Subject: Tragedy off Lampedusa

On 3 October, an unprecedented immigration tragedy occurred off the island of Lampedusa, leaving hundreds of people dead or missing. The shipwreck happened after passengers started a fire on their boat a few miles off the Isola dei Conigli, in an attempt to attract attention and be rescued.

So far, 111 have been confirmed dead, including 4 children and 2 pregnant women. There are 151 survivors, but very little hope remains for over 200 missing people. According to witness accounts, there were 500 passengers on board.

Yet another alarm has been sounded on the island: the medical centre director said that this is a full-blown emergency, and that there is no more room for bodies in the mortuary.

Pictures of the tragedy have been seen all over the world, and sparked public outrage across Europe.

1. Following this latest tragedy, does the Commission intend to carry out a comprehensive review of EU migration policies?

2. In light of this incident, does it plan to urgently repeal Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 (Dublin III) which attributes responsibility for examining an asylum request or granting refugee status exclusively to the Member State through which the immigrant first entered the EU?

3. Will it confirm the principle of solidarity and shared responsibility of the Member States and set out a European strategy on migration which protects refugees in a new regulation on this issue?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(5 December 2013)

The Commission is deeply concerned by the events off the coast of Lampedusa, as demonstrated by the visit President Barroso and Commissioner Malmström paid to the island on 9 October 2013. On that occasion the Commission reiterated its support to Member States having to undertake complex Search and Rescue operations and receiving a large number of migrants, including by pledging a total of EUR 30 million for the reinforcement of patrolling and the strengthening of the asylum system in Italy. A part of these funds will be used in order to upgrade the Frontex presence in the area. This will come on top of existing support activities targeted at Italy such as the Support Plan of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO).

In line with the discussions in the last Justice and Home Affairs Council, the Commission has set up a dedicated Task Force for the Mediterranean under its presidency. This Task Force brings together all Member States and relevant agencies. It will present the results of its work in December to the Council, including new actions aimed at reducing the risk of such tragedies occurring in the future.

Far from being a cause of such tragedies, the Dublin III Regulation, which was adopted by the co-legislators in June this year, seeks to increase the efficiency of the Dublin system and enhance the level of protection for applicants. Statistics show that 70% of all asylum applicants are received by just five countries, namely Germany, Belgium, France, United Kingdom and Sweden. It is also clear that Member States on the southern border are exposed to particular migratory pressure, and that is why continued support should be provided to these countries, which often face sudden pressures on their asylum and reception systems.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-011463/13
aan de Commissie
Marije Cornelissen (Verts/ALE)
(8 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Het strafbaar stellen van daklоosheid in Hongarije

De Hongaarse regering maakt zich wederom schuldig aan een schending van de grondrechten door een amendement op de wet op misdrijven aan te nemen waarmee gemeentes „daklozenvrije zones" kunnen instellen: gebieden waar op straat leven als vergrijp wordt beschouwd. Het bouwen van tijdelijke onderkomens — wat voor velen de laatste overlevingskans is nu de winter in aantocht is, aangezien er niet genoeg officiële opvangplekken voor daklozen zijn — is nu illegaal geworden in de hele openbare ruimte.

Het Hongaarse constitutionele hof verwierp een eerdere poging om daklоosheid strafbaar te stellen als ongrondwettig. De Commissie heeft haar bezorgdheid geuit en het Parlement heeft oplossingen voorgesteld, zowel met betrekking tot daklоosheid als sociale woningbouw. Ondanks de waarschuwingen en na een wijziging van de grondwet, heeft de Hongaarse regering het amendement op de wet op misdrijven opnieuw ingediend, weliswaar in licht gewijzigde vorm, maar met bijna dezelfde inhoud: daklоosheid wordt alsnog strafbaar gesteld.

Juist in tijden van crisis, wanneer kwetsbare personen het meest om hulp verlegen zitten, schendt de Hongaarse regering de grondrechten en stigmatiseert zij daklozen die bovendien fysiek worden uitgesloten van de samenleving.

1. Welke acute maatregelen is de Commissie gezien de hierboven geschetste situatie van plan te nemen om ervoor te zorgen dat de grondrechten, met inbegrip van het recht op menselijke waardigheid, worden gehandhaafd en beschermd door de EU, in overeenstemming met de artikelen 1, 3, 4 en 21 van het Handvest van de grondrechten?

2. Wat is de Commissie van zins te ondernemen om erop toe te zien dat de Hongaarse autoriteiten navolging geven aan de landgebonden aanbevelingen over sociale uitsluiting in het kader van het Europees semester?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(13 november 2013)

De Commissie zet zich binnen de grenzen van haar bevoegdheden in voor de volledige eerbiediging van de rechten en vrijheden die in het Handvest van de grondrechten van de Europese Unie beschreven zijn. Overeenkomstig artikel 51, lid 1 van het Handvest van de grondrechten van de Europese Unie zijn de bepalingen ervan echter uitsluitend tot de lidstaten gericht wanneer zij het recht van de Unie ten uitvoer brengen. In dit verband schijnen de bepalingen van de door het geachte Parlementslid genoemde wet geen betrekking te hebben op de uitvoering van het EU-recht.

De Commissie ziet op regelmatige basis toe op de uitvoering van de landspecifieke aanbevelingen (CSR) en verwacht dat de lidstaat de maatregelen schetst die zijn genomen of zijn gepland in antwoord op die aanbevelingen van 2013 in het nationale hervormingsprogramma en dat vóór eind april 2014. Daarnaast zullen de EU-fondsen van programmeringsperiode 2013-2020, waarover al met de lidstaten wordt onderhandeld, de doelstellingen van Europa 2020 en de landspecifieke aanbevelingen prioritair zijn.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011463/13
to the Commission
Marije Cornelissen (Verts/ALE)
(8 October 2013)

Subject: Criminalisation of homelessness in Hungary

The Hungarian Government is, once again, violating fundamental rights by adopting the amendment of the Act on Misdemeanours allowing local municipalities to create 'homeless-free zones': areas where living on the street is considered to be an offence. Building of shacks — which might be the last chance for many to survive in the approaching winter given that there are not enough places for homeless people in the shelter system — is now illegal in all public areas.

The Hungarian Constitutional Court ruled a previous attempt to criminalise homelessness unconstitutional. The Commission expressed its concerns and the Parliament proposed solutions both with regard to homelessness and social housing. Despite the warnings and having amended the constitution, the Hungarian Government reintroduced the amendment of the Act on Misdemeanours in a slightly modified form, but with almost identical content — ultimately reintroducing the criminalisation of street homelessness.

At times of crisis, when the vulnerable need most help, the Hungarian Government violates fundamental rights, stigmatises homeless people and physically excludes them from society.

1. In view of the above, what immediate action is the Commission planning to take to make sure that fundamental rights, including the right to human dignity, are upheld and protected by the EU, in line with the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Articles 1, 3, 4 and 21 thereof?

2. What action does the Commission intend to take to ensure that the Hungarian authorities follow up on the country-specific recommendation related to social exclusion within the framework of the European Semester?

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

The Commission is committed, within the limits of its powers, to ensure full respect of the rights and freedoms enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. However, according to Article 51 (1) of the Charter, its provisions are addressed to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law. In this regard, the provisions of the law referred to by the Honourable Member do not appear to be related to the implementation of European Union law.

The Commission monitors the implementation of the Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs) on regular basis and is expecting the Member State to outline the measures taken and planned in response to the 2013 CSRs in the National Reform Programme which is due in April 2014. In addition, the EU funds from the 2013-2020 programming period, which is under negotiation with the Member States, will take the Europe 2020 targets and CSRs as a financing priority.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-011464/13
alla Commissione
Fabrizio Bertot (PPE)
(8 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Tragedia al largo di Lampedusa

La tragedia accaduta nelle acque al largo di Lampedusa nelle prime ore del mattino di giovedì 3 ottobre non è che l'ultima di una lunga serie di incidenti che sono costati la vita a centinaia di migranti. Da quando è scoppiata la rivoluzione in Libia, i traffici di clandestini sono aumentati in maniera considerevole e le organizzazioni criminali, la maggior parte delle quali formate da ex miliziani dell'ex dittatore Gheddafi, regnano incontrastate. Basti pensare che nelle sole due ultime settimane sono sbarcati via mare sulle coste italiane ben 5 583 migranti (3 807 uomini, 703 donne e 1 073 minori) suddivisi in 45 sbarchi, un numero considerevole di persone, tra le quali la nazionalità prevalente è quella siriana (2 075 persone), seguita dall'eritrea (1 280) e palestinese (428). La massa dei migranti, a giudizio degli investigatori, proviene dai campi profughi costituiti in Kenya, in Tripolitania o nel Sudan: ed è nei campi nomadi che i criminali reclutano passeggeri, a prezzi elevatissimi che raggiungono i 2 000 dollari, per i loro viaggi in condizioni disumane su natanti che a malapena riescono a solcare le acque.

Preso atto che la situazione è diventata ormai insostenibile e che l'Italia, con le sue sole forze, non riesce e non può gestire un flusso così imponente di clandestini; preso atto che l'Europa ha varato nel 2004 la costituzione dell'agenzia Frontex per la gestione della cooperazione internazionale alle frontiere esterne degli Stati membri dell'UE e che allo stato attuale l'agenzia può contare su 26 elicotteri, 22 aerei e 113 navi per pattugliare le coste di tutta Europa, può la Commissione riferire se:

— ritiene che non sia necessario aumentare in maniera considerevole il numero di mezzi e uomini dell'agenzia Frontex da impiegare specificatamente sulle rotte tra la Libia e le coste italiane per intercettare quanti più natanti clandestini possibile e impedire il ripetersi di nuove tragedie in quel tratto di mare;

— non crede di dover avviare trattative per la revisione degli accordi bilaterali con gli Stati non-UE che si affacciano sul Mediterraneo, in particolare quelli africani, per avviare un'attività di contrasto delle organizzazioni criminali alla fonte, a cominciare dai porti, impedendo così alle navi di migranti di prendere il largo?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(12 novembre 2013)

A breve termine Frontex, insieme agli Stati membri, potenzierà le operazioni congiunte nel Mediterraneo, aumentando le capacità di contribuire alla protezione dei migranti e di salvarne le vite. A questo scopo sarà fornito a Frontex un finanziamento aggiuntivo di 7,9 milioni di euro.

Inoltre, Eurosur diventerà operativo a partire dal 2 dicembre 2013 e la sua attuazione e il suo pieno utilizzo da parte degli Stati membri saranno attentamente sorvegliati allo scopo di realizzare una strategia globale e coordinata di sorveglianza delle frontiere. Nell'ambito di Eurosur si cercherà di migliorare l'individuazione delle piccole imbarcazioni con l'aiuto del futuro sistema Copernicus e di altri progetti di ricerca attualmente in corso come Closeye, Perseus, I2C e Seabilla.

Per quanto riguarda la cooperazione con i paesi terzi, la Commissione ritiene che l'attuazione dell'approccio globale in materia di migrazione e mobilità fornisca un quadro adeguato per lo sviluppo di iniziative in tali paesi, e intende studiare le iniziative necessarie per aumentare ulteriormente l'efficacia e l'incidenza dell'approccio globale. In futuro, le azioni continueranno a concentrarsi sui paesi di origine e/o di transito della migrazione irregolare e su quelli vicini a zone di conflitto.

Infine, la Commissione intende proporre nuove iniziative per combattere le reti di trafficanti in cooperazione con gli Stati membri, Europol e Interpol. Intanto Frontex ed Europol dovrebbero concludere un accordo operativo che consenta lo scambio di dati personali, come previsto nel regolamento Frontex riveduto, al fine di sostenere la lotta contro il favoreggiamento dell'immigrazione illegale.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011464/13
to the Commission
Fabrizio Bertot (PPE)
(8 October 2013)

Subject: Tragedy off the coast of Lampedusa

The tragedy which occurred off the coast of Lampedusa in the early hours of Thursday 3 October is only the latest in a long series of such incidents which have claimed the lives of hundreds of migrants. Since the outbreak of the revolution in Libya, human trafficking has substantially increased and criminal gangs, mostly made up of ex-soldiers who served under the Kaddafi dictatorship, are operating unhindered. In the last two weeks alone, 45 boatloads of migrants, totalling 5 583 individuals (3 807 men, 703 women and 1 073 children) have landed on Italian shores. The migrants are chiefly of Syrian (2 075), Eritrean (1 280) and Palestinian (428) origin. According to investigators, most of them come from refugee camps in Kenya, Tripolitania or Sudan, having been preyed upon by criminal gangs extorting as much as USD 2000 per voyage, only to find themselves enduring inhuman conditions of transport on highly unseaworthy craft.

The situation has now become unsustainable, with Italy unable to deal with such a massive influx of illegal migrants alone. In 2004, the Frontex agency was set up for the international monitoring of EU external borders. It currently has 26 helicopters, 22 aircraft and 113 vessels to patrol all European coasts.

In view of this:

— Does the Commission not consider a substantial increase in Frontex resources and manpower to be necessary for the monitoring of traffic between the Libyan and Italian coasts, enabling it to intercept as many clandestine vessels as possible and prevent any further tragedies occurring in these waters?

— Does it not consider that it should initiate moves to renegotiate its bilateral agreements with third countries along the Mediterranean, especially in Africa, with a view to striking at the heart of criminal organisations, commencing with the ports of departure, so as to prevent vessels carrying migrants from taking to the open sea?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(12 November 2013)

In the short term Frontex, together with Member States, will reinforce joint operations in the Mediterranean, enhancing capacities contributing to the protection and saving the lives of migrants. Additional funding of EUR 7.9 million will be provided to Frontex for that purpose.

In addition, Eurosur will become operational as of 2 December 2013 and its implementation and full use by the Member States will be closely monitored in order to achieve a comprehensive and coordinated approach to border surveillance. In the context of Eurosur, efforts to improve the detection of small boats will be pursued with the support of the future Copernicus system as well as ongoing research projects such as Closeye, Perseus, I2C and Seabilla.

Regarding cooperation with third countries, the Commission believes that the implementation of the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility provides an adequate framework for the development of action in third countries. The Commission will analyse what is needed to further enhance the GAMM's effectiveness and impact. Future action will continue to focus on countries of origin and/or of transit of irregular migration and those neighbouring conflict zones.

Finally the Commission will propose new steps to fight trafficking networks in cooperation with Member States, Europol and Interpol. At the same time, Frontex and Europol should conclude an operational agreement allowing for the exchange of personal data, as provided for in the revised Frontex Regulation, for the purpose of supporting the fight against facilitators.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011466/13
alla Commissione
Fabrizio Bertot (PPE)
(8 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Tragedia al largo di Lampedusa

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Preso atto che la situazione è diventata ormai insostenibile e che l'Italia, con le sue sole forze, non riesce e non può gestire un flusso così imponente di clandestini; preso atto che l'Europa ha varato nel 2004 la costituzione dell'agenzia Frontex per la gestione della cooperazione internazionale alle frontiere esterne degli Stati membri dell'UE e che allo stato attuale l'agenzia può contare su 26 elicotteri, 22 aerei e 113 navi per pattugliare le coste di tutta Europa, può la Commissione riferire se:

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— non crede di dover avviare trattative per la revisione degli accordi bilaterali con gli Stati non-UE che si affacciano sul Mediterraneo, in particolare quelli africani, per avviare un'attività di contrasto delle organizzazioni criminali alla fonte, a cominciare dai porti, impedendo così alle navi di migranti di prendere il largo?

Risposta data da Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(11 dicembre 2013)

La Commissione rimanda alla risposta fornita alla precedente interrogazione scritta P-011464/2013 dell'onorevole parlamentare.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011466/13
to the Commission
Fabrizio Bertot (PPE)
(8 October 2013)

Subject: Tragedy off the coast of Lampedusa

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In view of this:

— Does the Commission not consider a substantial increase in Frontex resources and manpower to be necessary for the monitoring of traffic between the Libyan and Italian coasts in particular, enabling it to intercept as many clandestine vessels as possible and prevent any further tragedies occurring in these waters?

— Does the Commission not consider it necessary to initiate moves to renegotiate bilateral agreements with third countries along the Mediterranean, especially in Africa, with a view to striking at the heart of criminal organisations, commencing with the ports of departure, so as to prevent vessels carrying migrants from taking to the open sea?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(11 December 2013)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to the answer given to his Written Question P- 011464/2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011467/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Ejecución presupuestaria en el Estado español

Tan importante como el diseño del presupuesto es su ejecución práctica. Desviaciones significativas (tanto positivas como negativas) pueden tener como causa discrecionalidades políticas fuera del control democrático y perjudicar los objetivos tanto de déficit como de crecimiento a medio plazo.

Por ejemplo, el Gobierno español incumple sistemáticamente los presupuestos relacionados con la construcción de infraestructuras en Cataluña, perjudicando la consecución de políticas europeas como, por ejemplo, el corredor mediterráneo, incluido en la Red TEN-T ([1]).

Con la aprobación del Reglamento (UE) n° 473/2013, la Comisión puede emitir recomendaciones sobre el contenido de los presupuestos estatales y los Estados están obligados a crear consejos fiscales independientes de responsabilidad fiscal.

A la luz de lo anterior, ¿podría responder la Comisión a las siguientes preguntas?

¿Tiene datos la Comisión sobre el grado de ejecución territorial de los presupuestos de 2013 en el Estado español?

¿Tendrá en cuenta la Comisión estos datos en sus recomendaciones para los presupuestos de 2014?

¿Cree la Comisión que el consejo fiscal independiente debe dar datos sectoriales y territorializados de la ejecución de los presupuestos?

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

1. La Comisión supervisa la ejecución presupuestaria de las administraciones públicas a lo largo de todo el año, incluida la evolución de las administraciones que la componen (es decir, administración central, regional, local y de la Seguridad Social). La Comisión utiliza como factores los datos de las notificaciones semestrales del procedimiento de déficit excesivo (PDE), los proyectos de planes presupuestarios de las administraciones públicas, así como otros datos de ejecución presupuestaria publicados periódicamente en el sitio web del Gobierno de España. Dicho esto, la Comisión no dispone de información sobre el grado de ejecución territorial de los presupuestos de 2013 en España.

2. La Comisión se esfuerza por tener en cuenta toda la información relevante a la hora de formular sus opiniones y recomendaciones.

3. La legislación de la UE obliga a los Estados miembros de la zona del euro a contar con instituciones fiscales independientes (IFI) que elaboran o avalan las previsiones macroeconómicas independientes que sustentan los planes presupuestarios nacionales a medio plazo y los proyectos de presupuestos. Estas IFI también tienen que vigilar el cumplimiento de las reglas presupuestarias numéricas y facilitar, en su caso, las evaluaciones públicas relativas a las normas presupuestarias nacionales, entre otras cosas en relación con la activación de los mecanismos de corrección y activación de las cláusulas de salvaguardia.

Los Estados miembros de la zona del euro pueden decidir añadir más tareas a las IFI en los ámbitos relacionados con la política presupuestaria, siempre que sean conmensuradas con sus recursos humanos y financieros y conformes a su mandato.

([1]) http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2012/05/23/catalunya/1337805831_844151.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011467/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 October 2013)

Subject: Budgetary implementation in Spain

The implementation of the budget, in practice, is as important as its design. Significant departures (both positive and negative) may result from political margins of discretion that fall outside democratic scrutiny, and these may jeopardise both deficit and growth objectives in the medium term.

For example, the Spanish Government systematically fails to implement the budgets relating to infrastructure construction in Catalonia, adversely affecting completion of European policies such as the Mediterranean corridor, part of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T). ([1])

Following the adoption of Regulation (EU) No 473/2013, the Commission may issue recommendations on the content of national budgets, and Member States have a duty to set up independent fiscal bodies with fiscal responsibility.

In view of the above, could the Commission respond to the following questions?

Does the Commission have information on the extent of territorial implementation of the 2013 budgets in Spain?

Will the Commission take this information into account in its recommendations for the 2014 budgets?

Does the Commission believe that the independent fiscal council ought to provide sector-specific and territory-specific information on the implementation of the budgets?

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

1. The Commission monitors the budgetary execution of the general government throughout the year, including the evolution of its subcomponents (i.e., central, regional, local and social security administration). The Commission factors in data from the semi-annual Excessive Deficit Procedure (EDP) notifications, from the general government's draft budgetary plans as well as from other budgetary execution data published periodically on the Spanish government's website. That said, the Commission does not have information on the extent of territorial implementation of the 2013 budgets in Spain.

2. The Commission strives to take into account all relevant information in formulating its opinions and recommendations.

3. The EU legislation requires euro area Member States to have Independent Fiscal Institutions (IFI) producing or endorsing independent macroeconomic forecasts underpinning national medium-term fiscal plans and draft budgets. Such IFI also have to monitor compliance with numerical fiscal rules and provide, where appropriate, public assessments with respect to national fiscal rules, *inter alia*, relating to the activation of the correction mechanisms and activation of escape clauses.

Euro area Member states may decide to add more tasks to IFIs in fiscal policy-related areas, provided that these are commensurate with their human and financial resources and consistent with their mandate.

([1]) http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2012/05/23/catalunya/1337805831_844151.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011468/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Gasto en defensa en el presupuesto 2014 del Estado español

El presupuesto presentado por el Gobierno español está supuestamente destinado a reducir el déficit del Estado para el año 2013 y poner las bases para la recuperación.

A pesar de ello, la investigación militar y el servicio militar de construcciones han sido incrementados en un 39,5 % y 34,5 %, respectivamente. Y aunque el presupuesto del Ministerio de Defensa se ha reducido formalmente en un 4,8 %, el año pasado se le otorgaron 1 459 millones en créditos que no habían sido tenidos en cuenta inicialmente ([1]). Del mismo modo, desde el año 2008 las dotaciones extraordinarias han sumado 9 125 millones de euros ([2]), por lo que es probable que la misma fórmula se utilice durante el año 2014.

El 21 de mayo entró en vigor el Reglamento (UE) n° 473/2013 que, entre otras cosas, obliga a los Estados a crear Consejos Fiscales Independientes y permite a la Comisión emitir recomendaciones sobre el contenido de los presupuestos estatales.

A la luz de todo lo anterior:

¿Ha recibido la Comisión cálculos del impacto fiscal de este gasto en defensa, según se requiere en el artículo 6 del citado Reglamento?

¿Cree la Comisión que el Consejo Fiscal Independiente de España debe velar por el cumplimiento de los objetivos presupuestarios marcados y por que los aumentos previstos en el gasto sean incluidos desde el inicio en los presupuestos?

¿Piensa la Comisión incluir en su informe alguna recomendación para reducir el gasto en defensa con el objetivo de disminuir los gastos no productivos y cumplir con los objetivos de déficit sin perjudicar el crecimiento?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de diciembre de 2013)

1. No.

2. La responsabilidad de garantizar que se cumplan los objetivos presupuestarios incumbe exclusivamente al Gobierno. El Consejo Fiscal Independiente (CFI) puede presentar análisis, recomendaciones o dictámenes e influir en el debate sobre la política fiscal, pero no puede garantizar por sí solo el cumplimiento de los objetivos en materia de presupuesto. El proyecto de ley prevé que las administraciones públicas puedan apartarse de las recomendaciones emitidas por el CFI en sus informes. En tales casos, el Gobierno debe motivar su decisión.

3. España ha de cumplir sus compromisos en virtud del Pacto de Estabilidad y Crecimiento, es decir, poner fin a la situación de déficit excesivo de conformidad con la Recomendación del Consejo a España de junio de 2013. La recomendación define el camino para reducir el déficit de las administraciones públicas a una cifra inferior al 3 % para 2016 e incluye objetivos anuales intermedios y los ajustes estructurales necesarios. Corresponde a las autoridades españolas decidir las medidas que se deberán adoptar para cumplir los objetivos, teniendo en cuenta al mismo tiempo las recomendaciones específicas que se formulen a España, especialmente en lo que se refiere a la calidad de las finanzas públicas.

([1]) http://www.eldiario.es/sociedad/Llegan-presupuestos_13_181061893.html
([2]) http://www.eldiario.es/economia/Ministerio_de_Defensa-presupuesto-armamento_helicoptero_Tigre-Joan_Baldovi-Equo_0_166933465.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011468/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 October 2013)

Subject: Defence expenditure in Spain's budget for 2014

The budget put forward by the Spanish Government is supposedly designed to reduce the State deficit for 2013 and to lay the foundations for recovery.

Despite this, military research and the military construction service have been increased by 39.5% and 34.5% respectively. Even though the Ministry of Defence's budget has been officially reduced by 4.8%, last year it was allocated EUR 1 459 million in loans that were not taken into account at the outset. ([1]) In the same way, since 2008 extraordinary provisions have totalled EUR 9 125 million ([2]), and it is therefore likely that the same formula will be used in 2014.

Regulation (EU) No 473/2013 entered into force on 21 May. Among other things, it obliges Member States to set up independent fiscal bodies and allows the Commission to issue recommendations on the content of national budgets.

In light of the above:

Has the Commission received calculations of the fiscal impact of this defence expenditure, in line with the requirements of Article 6 of the regulation?

Does the Commission believe that Spain's independent fiscal council ought to ensure that the budget objectives set are met and that planned increases in expenditure are included when the budgets are first drawn up?

Is the Commission planning to include in its report any recommendation to reduce spending on defence, with the aim of decreasing non-productive expenditure and meeting the deficit objectives without jeopardising growth?

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

1. No.

2. The responsibility for ensuring that budgetary targets are met rests solely with the government. *The Independent* Fiscal Institution (IFI) can provide analysis, policy recommendations or opinions and influence the fiscal policy debate, but cannot by itself ensure the fulfilment of budgetary targets. The draft law foresees that government may deviates from the recommendations issued by the IFI in its reports. In such cases, the government has to motivate its decision.

3. Spain has to fulfil its commitments under the Growth and Stability Pact, i.e. to put an end to the situation of an excessive deficit in accordance with the Council recommendation to Spain of June 2013. The recommendation sets out a path for bringing the general government deficit below 3% by 2016 with annual intermediate targets and required structural efforts. It is up to the Spanish authorities to decide what measures to take to fulfil the targets, while taking into account any country-specific recommendations addressed to Spain, notably regarding the quality of public finances.

([1]) http://www.eldiario.es/sociedad/Llegan-presupuestos_13_181061893.html
([2]) http://www.eldiario.es/economia/Ministerio_de_Defensa-presupuesto-armamento_helicoptero_Tigre-Joan_Baldovi-Equo_0_166933465.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011469/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Reducción de las transferencias

El sistema de ingresos de los Gobiernos regionales está basado en un 90 % en las transferencias que manda el Gobierno central a las autonomías, sin que los Gobiernos regionales tengan capacidad para recaudar ingresos autónomamente.

En el presupuesto de 2014 del Gobierno español está previsto reducir en un 13,6 % ([1]) las transferencias a las comunidades autónomas a pesar de que su objetivo de déficit para 2014 es del 1 %, mucho menor que el 4,8 % previsto para el Gobierno central pese a gestionar un presupuesto de tamaño equivalente ([2]). Así pues, será inevitable un nuevo aumento de los recortes en los presupuestos autonómicos, que son precisamente los que destinan el 80 % del gasto relacionado con el Estado del bienestar. Además, esta política aumenta los costes de financiación del Estado y perjudica su sostenibilidad fiscal, pues la falta de transferencias producirá un aumento del endeudamiento de las autonomías con actores privados que piden un interés sensiblemente más elevado a las regiones que al Gobierno del Estado.

Con la aprobación del Reglamento (UE) n° 473/2013, la Comisión puede emitir recomendaciones sobre el contenido de los presupuestos estatales.

A la luz de todo lo anterior,

¿Incluirá la Comisión en sus recomendaciones sobre el presupuesto de 2014 del Gobierno español una disminución en el recorte de las transferencias a las autonomías?

¿Considera la Comisión que la centrifugación del déficit practicada aumenta el nivel de deuda del Estado y no ayuda a la consecución de los objetivos marcados en el Pacto de Estabilidad y Crecimiento, así como en el *six-pack* y el *two-pack* de gobernanza económica del euro?

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.

([1]) http://www.eldiario.es/sociedad/Llegan-presupuestos_13_181061893.html
([2]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20130731/54379039781/objetivo-deficit-catalunya-1-58.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011469/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 October 2013)

Subject: Reduced transfers

Ninety per cent of the revenue system for the regional governments is based on transfers sent by central government to the autonomous communities; the regional governments do not have any ability to collect revenue independently.

The Spanish Government's budget for 2014 sets out a 13.6% ([1]) reduction in transfers to the autonomous communities, despite the fact that its deficit objective for 2014 is 1%, much less than the 4.8% planned for central government, although the budget managed is of an equivalent size ([2]). There will therefore inevitably be a further increase in cuts to the autonomous communities' budgets, and it is these budgets that provide 80% of welfare state expenditure. In addition, this policy is increasing the State's financing costs and having an adverse effect on its fiscal sustainability: the decrease in transfers will result in an increase in the autonomous communities' debts to private entities, which charge the regions significantly higher interest than they do the Spanish Government.

Now that regulation (EU) No 473/2013 has been adopted, the Commission may issue recommendations on the content of national budgets.

In light of the above:

Will the Commission include reduced cuts to transfers to the autonomous communities in its recommendations on the Spanish Government's budget for 2014?

Does the Commission believe that decentralisation of the deficit is increasing the country's debt level and not helping to achieve the objectives set in the Stability and Growth Pact, or in the six-pack or two-pack for economic governance of the euro?

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.

([1]) http://www.eldiario.es/sociedad/Llegan-presupuestos_13_181061893.html
([2]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20130731/54379039781/objetivo-deficit-catalunya-1-58.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011470/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Conexión ferroviaria de alta velocidad entre Barcelona y París

El pasado 29 de julio, el Sr. Kallas respondió a la pregunta E-007703/2013: «La Comisión reconoce que, en esta línea, debe crearse un corredor efectivo de ferrocarril y carretera tanto para viajeros como para mercancías antes de 2030, según la planificación de la UE, ya que contribuirá a la competitividad de la región y de la Unión en su conjunto. El Gobierno francés todavía no se ha pronunciado de manera oficial sobre la nueva línea Montpellier-Perpiñán ni sobre las intervenciones que deberán programarse en la línea existente».

La Cámara de Comercio de Barcelona lamenta que el tren de alta velocidad entre Barcelona y París siga sin fecha oficial ([1]). Considera que los nuevos servicios ferroviarios de altas prestaciones para viajeros ofrecerían un gran potencial para abrir nuevas oportunidades de negocio entre el sur de Francia y Cataluña, e incluso para ampliar el área de influencia del aeropuerto de Barcelona.

Habida cuenta de la gran inversión realizada en la línea de alta velocidad desde Barcelona hasta los Pirineos y de la importancia de comunicar con ferrocarril el norte y el sur de Europa, ¿ha dado la Comisión algún plazo de tiempo para que Francia se pronuncie oficialmente?

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

La red principal de la RTE-T, a la que pertenece la línea Montpellier-Perpiñán, debe estar concluida antes de 2030 y cumplir las normas establecidas en el Reglamento sobre la RTE-T.

La Comisión prepara en estos momentos el nombramiento de los coordinadores de cada uno de los corredores de la red principal, que, entre otras cosas, presidirán su correspondiente «foro del corredor». El foro, que está compuesto por todas las partes interesadas, prepara un plan de trabajo para la ejecución del corredor.

([1]) http://www.europapress.es/turismo/transportes/tren/noticia-camara-barcelona-lamenta-ave-paris-siga-fecha-oficial-20130815125044.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011470/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 October 2013)

Subject: High-speed rail connection between Barcelona and Paris

On 29 July 2013, Mr Kallas answered Question E-007703/2013 as follows: 'The Commission acknowledges that an effective rail-road corridor for both passengers and freight has to be developed before 2030 along this line, according to the EU planning, since it contributes to the competitiveness of the Region and of the Union as a whole. A formal position by the French Government is still awaited on the new line Montpellier-Perpignan and on the interventions to be scheduled on the existing line'.

The Barcelona Chamber of Commerce deplores the fact that there is still no official date for the launch of a high-speed train service between Barcelona and Paris ([1]). It believes that the new high-performance rail services for passengers would offer considerable potential for new business opportunities between southern France and Catalonia, and for an extension of Barcelona airport's area of influence.

In view of the significant investment made in the high-speed line from Barcelona to the Pyrenees and the importance of rail connections between the north and south of Europe, has the Commission given France any deadline for stating its formal position?

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

The TEN-T Core Network, to which the Montpellier-Perpignan line belongs, has to be completed by 2030, and comply with the standards stated in the TEN-T Regulation.

The Commission is currently preparing the appointment of the Coordinators for each of the Core Network Corridors, who will *inter alia* chair their respective Corridor Forum. The forum, which is composed of all stakeholders concerned, develops a work plan for the implementation of the Corridor.

([1]) http://www.europapress.es/turismo/transportes/tren/noticia-camara-barcelona-lamenta-ave-paris-siga-fecha-oficial-20130815125044.html

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011471/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(8 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εφαρμογή της ευρωπαϊκής νομοθεσίας κατά των διακρίσεων στην εργασία και την απασχόληση, το ζήτημα των οροθετικών

Η ΕΕ βασίζεται στις αρχές της ελευθερίας, της δημοκρατίας, του σεβασμού των δικαιωμάτων του ανθρώπου, των θεμελιωδών ευκαιριών καθώς και στο κράτος δικαίου. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο η έμπρακτη καταπολέμηση των διακρίσεων συνιστά μια από τις μεγαλύτερες προκλήσεις που έχει να αντιμετωπίσει η Ένωση. Δεδομένου ότι η εργασία αποτελεί, μεταξύ άλλων, κύριο συστατικό για την ουσιαστική ενσωμάτωση στην οικονομική, κοινωνική και πολιτιστική ζωή, είναι αναγκαία η θέσπιση πλήρους νομοθεσίας που να προφυλάσσει τους ευρωπαίους εργαζομένους από οποιαδήποτε διάκριση στην απασχόληση και στην εργασία, όπως επιχειρείται με την οδηγία 2000/78/ΕΚ.

Εντούτοις, κάποιες ασάφειες αναφορικά με τους ορισμούς που περιλαμβάνονται στην οδηγία, όπως π.χ. το κατά πόσο είναι ξεκάθαρο ότι η ασθένεια του AIDS συμπεριλαμβάνεται στις αναπηρίες, αλλά και οι διαφορετικές προσεγγίσεις που υιοθετήθηκαν από τα κράτη μέλη κατά τη μεταφορά της εν λόγω οδηγίας, έχουν ως συνέπεια αυξημένο όγκο προσφυγών στο Ευρωπαϊκό Δικαστήριο των Ανθρωπίνων Δικαιωμάτων για σχετικές υποθέσεις.

Προς αυτή την κατεύθυνση, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει στοιχεία αναφορικά με κρούσματα διακριτικής μεταχείρισης οροθετικών στα κράτη μέλη; Τα περιστατικά οφείλονται σε πλημμελή εφαρμογή της νομοθεσίας, έλλειψη ενημέρωσης ή/και ασάφεια στο υπάρχον νομοθετικό πλαίσιο;

2. Ποιες πρωτοβουλίες πρόκειται να αναλάβει προκειμένου να διασαφηνιστούν τα ζητήματα που έχουν ανακύψει, σύμφωνα με την αξιολόγηση εφαρμογής της οδηγίας στα κράτη μέλη;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει συγκεκριμένα στοιχεία σχετικά με διακρίσεις ασθενών που πάσχουν από HIV στα κράτη μέλη.

Σε καμία απόφαση του Δικαστηρίου της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης δεν έχει ακόμη αντιμετωπιστεί κρούσμα διακρίσεων κατά ασθενών που πάσχουν από HIV, στο πλαίσιο της οδηγίας 2000/78/ΕΚ ([1]).

Για την έκθεση σχετικά με την εφαρμογή των οδηγιών 2000/43/ΕΚ ([2]) και 2000/78/ΕΚ, η οποία θα δημοσιευθεί σύντομα, έχει προγραμματιστεί να περιλαμβάνεται παράρτημα σχετικά με τη νομολογία του Δικαστηρίου των Ευρωπαϊκών Κοινοτήτων σχετικά με τις δύο οδηγίες.

([1]) Οδηγία 2000/78/ΕΚ του Συμβουλίου, της 27ης Νοεμβρίου 2000, για τη διαμόρφωση γενικού πλαισίου για την ίση μεταχείριση στην απασχόληση και την εργασία (ΕΕ L 303 της 2.12.2000, σ. 16).

([2]) Οδηγία 2000/43/ΕΚ του Συμβουλίου, της 29ης Ιουνίου, περί εφαρμογής της αρχής της ίσης μεταχείρισης προσώπων ασχέτως φυλετικής ή εθνοτικής τους καταγωγής, ΕΕ L 180 της 19.7.2000. σσ. 22.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011471/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(8 October 2013)

Subject: HIV infection and the implementation of European legislation against discrimination in employment and occupation

The EU is founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental opportunities and the rule of law. Within this framework, combating discrimination in practical terms is one of the biggest challenges that the Union has to tackle. Given that work is one of the main components of effective integration into economic, social and cultural life, there is a need to establish comprehensive legislation protecting European employees from any discrimination in employment and occupation, as is the case under Directive 2000/78/EC.

However, specific uncertainties over the definitions included in the directive, for example as to how clear it is that AIDS is included in the list of disabilities, but also the different approaches adopted by Member States in the transposition of the directive, have resulted in an increased number of appeals to the European Court of Human Rights in related cases.

To this end, will the Commission answer the following:

1. Does it have data on the occurrence of discrimination against HIV patients in Member States? Are these incidents due to improper implementation of the legislation, lack of awareness and/or lack of clarity in the existing legislative framework?

2. What steps does it plan to take in order to clarify the resulting issues in accordance with the evaluation of the implementation of the directive in the Member States?

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

The Commission does not have specific data on the occurrence of discrimination against HIV patients in the Member States.

No judgment of the Court of Justice of the European Union has yet dealt with a situation concerning discrimination of a HIV patient in the context of Directive 2000/78/EC ([1]).

For the report on the application of Directives 2000/43/EC ([2]) and 2000/78/EC, which will be published soon, it is planned to include an annex on the case law of the Court of Justice on both directives.

([1]) Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, OJ L 303, 2.12.2000, p. 16.

([2]) Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, OJ L 180, 19.7.2000, p. 22.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011473/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 octombrie 2013)

Subiect: Ajutoare pentru fermierii care nu vor mai putea vinde laptele neconform

România a avut până în prezent trei derogări pentru procesarea laptelui crud neconform, iar ultima dintre ele va expira la 1 ianuarie 2014. În consecință, cei care nu respectă normele europene de igienă nu vor mai putea vinde laptele pe piață, ceea ce va avea un impact devastator asupra veniturilor micilor agricultori, care dețin numai câteva vaci de lapte în gospodăriile lor.

Numărul de capete de vaci de lapte a scăzut deja în România de la peste 1,3 milioane, în 2010, la mai puțin de 900 000 de capete în 2013, potrivit datelor Asociației Crescătorilor de Bovine.

În acest context, Comisia este rugată să precizeze în ce condiții ar putea România să le acorde micilor proprietari de animale anumite compensații financiare pentru pierderile suferite, fără ca acești bani să fie considerați a fi ajutoare de stat.

Răspuns dat de dl Cioloş în numele Comisiei
(28 noiembrie 2013)

Programul național de dezvoltare rurală al României (PDR) 2007-2013 le oferă sprijin fermierilor care fac investiții în vederea respectării standardelor europene. Acesta include posibilitatea de a sprijini investițiile care ar permite respectarea standardelor pentru laptele crud care beneficiază de actuala perioadă de grație. Autoritățile române au deschis, în 2012, două astfel de apeluri care vizau atingerea standardelor Uniunii. Comisia înțelege că interesul a fost scăzut. Acest tip de sprijin poate fi acordat în continuare, cu condiția ca măsura PDR în cauză să mai dispună de fonduri și ca autoritățile române să decidă să mai lanseze o cerere de propuneri.

Posibilitatea ca România să acorde sprijin pentru respectarea normelor obligatorii va continua să existe în cadrul noului regulament privind dezvoltarea rurală pentru perioada 2014-2020 — din nou, în anumite condiții și perioade de timp. Sprijinul acordat în cadrul politicii de dezvoltare rurală nu este supus controalelor privind acordarea ajutoarelor de stat.

În plus, în cadrul inițiativei „O formare mai bună pentru o hrană mai sigură”, Comisia va organiza, înainte de sfârșitul acestui an, o misiune de formare intensivă în România, care se va concentra în mod special pe standardele de sănătate privind laptele crud.

România poate avea în vedere utilizarea Regulamentului (CE) nr. 1535/2007 ([1]) privind ajutoarele de minimis în sectorul producției de produse agricole. Regulamentul respectiv le oferă statelor membre posibilitatea de a acorda ajutoare de minimis în valoare de 7 500 EUR pe întreprindere, pe durata a trei exerciții financiare și în limitele unei sume maxime pentru fiecare stat membru, fără ca acestea să fie considerate ajutoare de stat. Regulamentul respectiv expiră la 31 decembrie 2013 și un nou regulament este în prezent în curs de pregătire. Se examinează posibilitatea de a ridica plafonul pentru ajutoarele de minimis.

([1]) JO L 337, 21.12.2007.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011473/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 October 2013)

Subject: Aid for farmers who will no longer be able to sell non-compliant milk

So far, Romania has had three derogations for the processing of non-compliant raw milk. The last of these will expire on 1 January 2014. As a consequence, those who do not comply with European hygiene standards will no longer be able to market their milk. This will have a devastating impact on the income of small farmers who have only a few dairy cows in their smallholding.

The number of dairy cows in Romania has already fallen from over 1.3 million in 2010 to less than 900 000 head in 2013, according to the data of the Cattle Breeders' Association.

In this context, can the Commission state the conditions under which Romania could grant financial compensation to small animal farmers for their losses, without this money being considered as state aid?

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

The Romanian Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2007-2013 offers support to farmers for investments for meeting Union standards. This includes the possibility of support for meeting standards for raw milk benefiting from the current grace period. The Romanian authorities opened two such targeted calls for meeting Union standards in 2012, but the Commission understand its uptake was low. Such support may be still be granted, provided there are available funds left in the relevant RDP measure and that the Romanian authorities decide to open a new call for proposals.

The possibility for Romania to grant support for meeting mandatory standards will continue under the new Rural Development Regulation for the period 2014-2020, again under certain conditions and time periods. Such support granted within the framework of rural development policy would not be submitted to state aid control.

Moreover, under the Better Training for Safer Food initiative, the Commission is organising, before the end of this year, a sustained training mission to Romania, especially focused on the health standards for raw milk.

Romania may consider making use of Regulation (EC) No 1535/2007 ([1]) on *de minimis* aid in the sector of agricultural production. That regulation offers Member States the possibility to grant EUR 7 500 of *de minimis* aid per undertaking over a period of three fiscal years and within the limits of a maximum amount per Member State without it being considered state aid. That regulation expires on 31 December 2013 and a new regulation is currently being prepared and an increase of the threshold is under consideration.

([1]) OJ L 337, 21.12.2007.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011474/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 octombrie 2013)

Subiect: Încheierea acordurilor de parteneriat între statele membre și Comisia Europeană

În contextul stabilirii priorităților de investiții ale tuturor statelor membre din perspectiva cadrului financiar 2014-2020, printr-o relație contractuală bine definită, Comisia Europeană este rugată să precizeze:

Câte dintre statele membre au trimis proiecte în vederea încheierii acordurilor de parteneriat cu Comisia Europeană?

Care este stadiul negocierilor referitoare la aceste acorduri și câte dintre ele au fost deja semnate până în prezent?

Răspuns dat de dl Hahn în numele Comisiei
(13 decembrie 2013)

Acordurile de parteneriat nu pot fi înaintate în mod oficial de statele membre decât după intrarea în vigoare a Regulamentului privind dispozițiile comune, care este așteptată la sfârșitul lunii decembrie 2013.

În conformitate cu regulamentul respectiv, Comisia va dispune de cel mult trei luni pentru a formula observații cu privire la acordul de parteneriat; de îndată ce statul membru în cauză va lua în considerare în mod corespunzător aceste observații, acordul de parteneriat va fi adoptat de către Comisie.

Totuși, pentru a accelera procesul de adoptare a acordurilor de parteneriat, în iunie 2012 Comisia le-a propus tuturor statelor membre să se angajeze într-un dialog informal. În septembrie și octombrie 2012, Comisia a trimis documente de poziție care au subliniat punctele sale de vedere cu privire la necesitățile de dezvoltare și la prioritățile de finanțare pentru toate statele membre, în vederea programării celor cinci fonduri structurale și de investiții europene.

La data de 11 noiembrie 2013, Comisia primise în total 21 de proiecte de acorduri de parteneriat în cazul cărora a fost posibilă pregătirea unor observații informale. 13 seturi de observații informale referitoare la aceste proiecte de acorduri de parteneriat au fost deja trimise statelor membre în perioada iulie-octombrie.

Angajarea activă în dialogul informal le-a permis multor statele membre să realizeze progreseze semnificative, astfel încât adoptarea acordurilor de parteneriat poate fi așteptată în primăvara anului 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011474/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 October 2013)

Subject: Conclusion of partnership agreements between the Member States and the Commission

In the context of establishing the investment priorities of all Member States in the light of the 2014-2020 financial framework, through a well-defined contractual relationship, can the Commission answer the following questions?

How many of the Member States have submitted projects for the conclusion of partnership agreements with the Commission?

What is the status of the negotiations on these agreements and how many of them have already been signed so far?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(13 December 2013)

Partnership Agreements can only be officially submitted by Member States once the Common Provisions Regulation enters into force. This is currently expected by the end of December 2013.

According to the regulation, the Commission will have up to three months to make observations on the Partnership Agreement; once the Member State has adequately taken these observations into account, the Partnership Agreement will be adopted by the Commission.

Nevertheless, in order to speed up the process of adoption of the Partnership Agreements, the Commission proposed to all Member States in June 2012 to engage in an informal dialogue. In September and October 2012, the Commission sent position papers which outlined the Commission's views of the development needs and funding priorities in all Member States for the programing of the five European Structural and Investment Funds.

As of 11 November 2013, the Commission had received a total of 21 draft Partnership Agreements for which it was possible to prepare informal observations. 13 sets of informal observations on these draft Partnerhsip Agreements had already been sent to Member State during July-October.

Engaging actively in the informal dialogue has allowed many Member States to progress well, so that the adoption of the Partnership Agreements can be expected in spring 2014.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011475/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(8 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Nieuwe Turkse wetgeving: potentiële demonstranten de cel in

In Turkije is nieuwe wetgeving aangenomen die het de politie toestaat om personen die „mogelijk een demonstratie kunnen (laten) organiseren", maximaal 24 uur op te sluiten zonder tussenkomst van de rechter.

Na rechterlijk besluit kan de detentie met 24 uur worden verlengd.

1. Is de Commissie met de betreffende nieuwe Turkse wetgeving bekend ([1])? Hoe beoordeelt zij deze?

2. Hoe verhoudt de nieuwe wetgeving zich, naar oordeel van de Commissie, tot de door de Turkse regering in het „Democratization and Human Rights Package" aangekondigde maatregelen, waaronder de verruiming van het recht op demonstratie ([2])? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de nieuwe wetgeving volstrekt in strijd is met het „Democratization and Human Rights Package"? Deelt de Commissie dan ook de mening dat de door de Turkse regering in het „Democratization and Human Rights Package" aangekondigde maatregelen een wassen neus zijn? Zo neen, hoe beoordeelt de Commissie deze dubieuze ontwikkeling in Turkije dan wel?

3. Heeft de nieuwe wetgeving gevolgen voor de toetredingsonderhandelingen tussen de EU en Turkije? Zo ja, welke? Zo neen, impliceert de Commissie daarmee dat zij het voor lief neemt dat Turkije de EU met zijn valse beloften resp. vermeende hervormingen een rad voor ogen draait?

4. Wanneer stopt de Commissie met pappen en nathouden en worden de toetredingsonderhandelingen tussen de EU en Turkije — eindelijk — beëindigd?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(22 november 2013)

Volgens de informatie van de Turkse autoriteiten is er momenteel geen wetgeving die de politie toestaat om personen die mogelijk een demonstratie kunnen (laten) organiseren, maximaal 24 uur op te sluiten zonder tussenkomst van de rechter; evenmin is er een dergelijke wetgeving op komst.

([1]) http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/new-law-to-permit-turkish-police-to-detain-possible-protesters.aspx?PageID=238&NID=55790&NewsCatID=341.
([2]) http://www.akparti.org.tr/english/haberler/democratization-and-human-rights-package/52628.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011475/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(8 October 2013)

Subject: New Turkish legislation: potential demonstrators to be imprisoned

In Turkey, new legislation has been adopted which allows the police to imprison people for up to 24 hours without seeking a court order if they 'might organise, or arrange for the organisation of, a demonstration'.

Once a court order has been obtained, the detention can be extended by 24 hours.

1. Is the Commission aware of this new legislation in Turkey ([1])? What view does the Commission take of it?

2. How can the new legislation be reconciled with the measures announced by the Turkish Government in the Democratisation and Human Rights Package, including the right to demonstrate ([2])? Does the Commission agree that the new legislation is in flagrant contradiction with the Democratisation and Human Rights Package? Does the Commission therefore agree that the measures announced by the Turkish Government in the Democratisation and Human Rights Package are a sham? If not, what is the Commission's assessment of this dubious development in Turkey?

3. Will the new legislation have any impact on the accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey? If so, what? If not, does the Commission mean to imply that it is happy for Turkey to pull the wool over the eyes of the EU with its false promises and supposed reforms?

4. When will the Commission stop papering over the cracks and at long last halt the accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey?

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

According to information provided by Turkish authorities, there are currently no provisions allowing 'the police to imprison people for up to 24 hours without seeking a court order if they "might organise or arrange for the organisation of, a demonstration"'; nor are any such provisions planned.

([1]) http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/new-law-to-permit-turkish-police-to-detain-possible-protesters.aspx?PageID=238&NID=55790&NewsCatID=341

([2]) http://www.akparti.org.tr/english/haberler/democratization-and-human-rights-package/52628

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011476/13
to the Council
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(8 October 2013)

Subject: Inclusion of individual on restrictive measures list

I have been contacted by a constituent of mine on behalf of Dr Tarif Akhas, who has been included on a list of individuals and entities subject to restrictive measures in connection with his designation under Annex I to Council Decision 2012/739/CFSP on Syria.

Can the Council please explain the basis on which Dr Akhas has been included on this list?

Reply
(25 November 2013)

Mr Tarif Akhras has been designated under the EU's restrictive measures against Syria since 2 September 2011. The reasons for his designation, as stated in the most recent relevant legal act, Council Decision 2013/255/CFSP of 31 May 2013 ([1]), read: 'Prominent businessman benefiting from and supporting the regime. Founder of the Akhras Group (commodities, trading, processing and logistics) and former Chairman of the Homs Chamber of Commerce. Close business relations with President Al-Assad's family. Member of the Board of the Federation of Syrian Chambers of Commerce. Provided industrial and residential premises for improvised detention camps, as well as logistical support for the regime (buses and tank loaders).'

In accordance with standard practice, Mr Akhras has been duly notified by the Council of the reasons justifying the listing. He has also been made aware of the possibility of submitting a request to the Council, together with supporting documentation, that the decision to include him on the abovementioned list should be reconsidered. In addition, Mr Akhras can challenge his designation before the European Courts, a right Mr Akhras is in fact making use of.

([1]) OJ L 147 of 1.6.2013, p. 14.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011477/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(8. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: SEPA (Einheitlicher europäischer Euro-Zahlungsraum) weist zahlreiche Fehlbuchungen auf

Die einheitliche europäische Zahlungsmethode (SEPA) hat in den vergangenen Wochen zu zahlreichen Problemen geführt. Die Umstellung auf den SEPA-Lastschriftenverkehr sollte den Zahlungsverkehr innerhalb von Europa erleichtern. Ab dem 1. Februar 2014 wird die Umstellung für alle Pflicht. Jedoch werden laut Presseartikel Verbraucher vor zahlreichen Fehlbuchungen gewarnt. Bei der Software-Umstellung ist es zu vielfachen Doppelbuchungen von Daueraufträgen gekommen. Nun raten Verbraucherschützer, zum 1. Februar 2014 Kontobewegungen besonders aufmerksam zu beobachten.

1. Wie steht die Kommission zu diesen Problemen, und wie werden in Zukunft Probleme des SEPA-Lastschriftverkehrs gelöst?

2. Die EU-Kommission unterstützt gemeinsam mit der Europäischen Zentralbank den einheitlichen Zahlungsverkehr in Europa. Jedoch hat die Umstellung in den letzten Wochen zu mehreren Doppelbuchungen geführt. Die Verbraucher stehen den Änderungen daher sehr misstrauisch gegenüber. Wie kann man nach den anfänglichen Problemen das Vertrauen der Verbraucher zurückgewinnen? Welche Vorschläge kommen hierzu von der Kommission?

3. Mit der SEPA-Einführung verlieren alle aktuellen Überweisungen und Einzugsermächtigungen ihre Gültigkeit. Die Umstellung verlangt einen hohen Verwaltungsaufwand und verursacht zusätzliche Kosten. Kann dieser Verwaltungsaufwand vermieden werden? Gibt es dazu andere Vorschläge von der Kommission, wie dem entgegengewirkt werden kann?

4. Besonders für Klein- und Mittelbetriebe ist die Umstellung eine organisatorische Hürde. Gerade kleine Betriebe sollten dabei unterstützt werden. Eine vorhandene Software, welche die Umstellung erleichtert, wäre von Vorteil. Auch Beratungen oder Workshops sollten eingeführt werden, um auch kleinere Betriebe aufzuklären und zu unterstützen. Gibt es in diesem Fall Vorschläge von der Kommission?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(9. Dezember 2013)

1. Die SEPA-Verordnung trat am 31. März 2012 in Kraft und ließ den Marktteilnehmern für die Vorbereitung auf die Umstellung zwei Jahre Zeit. Die Kommission ist sich bewusst, dass die SEPA-Migration insbesondere betreffend Lastschriften nur langsam vorankommt und dass die Umstellung vorhandener Systeme auf SEPA technische Anpassungen erfordert. Um mögliche Probleme auf ein Minimum zu beschränken und um zu vermeiden, dass die Migration in letzter Minute stattfindet, forderte die Kommission die Mitgliedstaaten und ihre Banken auf, verstärkt Informationskampagnen durchzuführen. Auch der Rat „Wirtschaft und Finanzen" hat in seinen Schlussfolgerungen ([1]) nachdrücklich auf die Notwendigkeit hingewiesen, die Migration zu beschleunigen. Das Beispiel der Rechnungssteller, die die Umstellung bereits vollzogen haben, zeigt, dass eine Migration ohne technische Probleme möglich ist, wenn sie ernsthaft betrieben wird.

2. Die Kommission ist sich der Tatsache bewusst, dass in einigen wenigen Fällen Probleme entstehen können, wenn die Migrationsprojekte der Unternehmen Mängel aufweisen, die gegebenenfalls Doppelzählungen oder IT-Fehler verursachen. Auf ausdrückliches Ersuchen der Kommission und der EZB organisieren Banken und Mitgliedstaaten entsprechende Kommunikationskampagnen.

3. Im Zusammenhang mit den Lastschriften entsteht für einige Mitgliedstaaten ein nicht zu vermeidender Verwaltungsaufwand, weil die dort bislang üblichen Abbuchungsaufträge auf Initiative des Zahlungspflichtigen (Daueraufträge) von Abbuchungsaufträgen auf Initiative des Zahlungsempfängers (Lastschriften) geändert werden müssen, also eine Verlagerung von den Banken auf die Gläubiger vollzogen werden muss. Proaktive und klare Kommunikation ist von zentraler Bedeutung, und nach den der Kommission vorliegenden Informationen haben die Mitgliedstaaten und deren nationale Zentralbanken ihre Bemühungen und Unterstützung in dieser Hinsicht beträchtlich erhöht.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/137122.pdf

4. Auf der Website des Europäischen Zahlungsverkehrsausschusses steht ein „Migration Toolkit“ zur Verfügung. Außerdem werden alle Organisationen, die ihre Verfahren bis 1. Februar 2014 an die SEPA-Verordnung anpassen wollen, aufgefordert, die zahlreichen Ressourcen in Anspruch zu nehmen, die vom Bankensektor und anderen Dienstleistern zur Unterstützung der Marktteilnehmer bei der Umstellung angeboten werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011477/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(8 October 2013)

Subject: SEPA (Single Euro Payments Area) exhibits numerous accounting errors

The single European payment method (SEPA) has led to numerous problems in recent weeks. The switch to the SEPA direct debiting transactions should facilitate payment transactions within Europe. From 1 February 2014, the switch will be compulsory for everyone. According to articles in the press, however, consumers are being warned of numerous accounting errors. The software switch has led to double counting of many standing orders. Consumer protection organisations are now advising consumers to monitor their account movements particularly carefully up to 1 February 2014.

1. What is the Commission's position with regard to these problems, and how will problems relating to the SEPA direct debiting transactions be resolved in future?

2. Together with the European Central Bank, the Commission supports the single payments system in Europe. However, the switch has resulted in several cases of double counting in recent weeks. Consumers are therefore very sceptical about the changes. After the initial problems, how can the confidence of consumers be regained? What does the Commission propose in this regard?

3. With the introduction of SEPA, all current credit transfers and direct debit authorisations will become invalid. The switch requires a great deal of administrative work and will result in additional costs. Can this administrative work be avoided? Does the Commission have any other suggestions for ways to address this?

4. This switch presents an organisational obstacle for small and medium-sized enterprises in particular. Small businesses in particular ought to receive support during this process. Available software that facilitates the switch would be beneficial. Advisory services or workshops should also be established in order to educate and support smaller businesses. Does the Commission have any suggestions in this regard?

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

1. The SEPA Regulation entered into force on 31 March 2012, giving market participants 2 years to prepare. The Commission is aware that the take-up of SEPA migration, especially for direct debit (DD), has been slow and that migrating legacy systems to SEPA requires technical changes. To ensure that possible problems are brought down to a minimum, the Commission has urged Member States (MS) and their banks to increase communication campaigns to avoid last minute migration. Ecofin Council conclusions emphasising the need to speed up migration, were also adopted ([1]). Billers that have already migrated have proven that if taken seriously, migration is possible without causing technical problems.

2. The Commission is aware that problems may arise in a few cases where businesses encounter shortcomings in their migration project, leading to possible double counting or IT glitches. Communication campaigns are organised by banks and governments on the explicit request of the Commission and the ECB.

3. For DD administrative work for some MS where the current debtor mandate flow must be changed to a creditor mandate flow cannot be avoided because it means a move of current mandates from banks to creditors. Active and clear communication is key and according to the Commission's information, MS and their National Central Banks have significantly increased their efforts and assistance in this regard.

4. On the website of the European Payments Council, a 'Migration Tool Kit' has been made available. Organisations working towards achieving compliance with the SEPA Regulation by 1 February 2014 are also invited to take advantage of the numerous resources offered by the banking industry and other service providers to support market participants during the transition.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/137122.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011478/13
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(8 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Solicitudes de cofinanciación rechazadas

Diversas informaciones aseguran que, en 2013, la Comisión ha rechazado las últimas solicitudes de cofinanciación presentadas por los Gobiernos aragonés y/o español destinadas a estudios y actuaciones para la reapertura del ferrocarril internacional Canfranc-Pau.

Habida cuenta de ello, ¿podría responder la Comisión a las siguientes preguntas?

— ¿Qué proyectos se han presentado?

— ¿Cuáles han sido aprobados para su cofinanciación, cuáles han sido rechazados y por qué motivo?

— ¿Cuál era la cuantía de la ayuda solicitada en los proyectos aprobados y en los rechazados?

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

En las convocatorias de la RTE-T 2012 (Red Transeuropea de Transporte), el número de solicitudes recibidas fue excepcionalmente elevado, lo que obligó a la Comisión a concentrar los recursos en proyectos que ya han alcanzado un grado de madurez elevado y que tienen un gran valor añadido europeo. El proyecto mencionado por Su Señoría no figura entre los seleccionados para cofinanciación.

Los detales sobre la selección del proyecto se encuentran en el documento explicativo del resultado de la convocatoria, que puede descargarse en la dirección siguiente:
http://tentea.ec.europa.eu/download/calls2012/map_wp/map_fac_brochure_final_web_2013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011478/13
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(8 October 2013)

Subject: Rejected co-financing requests

Various information sources maintain that the Commission has rejected the latest co-financing requests submitted by the Aragonese and/or Spanish Governments in 2013 for studies and activities relating to the reopening of the Canfranc-Pau international railway line.

In light of this, could the Commission respond to the following questions?

— Which projects have been submitted?

— Which have been approved for co-financing and which have been rejected, and why?

— What was the value of the assistance requested for the projects which were approved and for those which were rejected?

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

The 2012 TEN-T (Transeuropean Transport Network) calls have been exceptionally oversubscribed, which has obliged the Commission to concentrate resources on projects that have already reached a high degree of maturity and of significant European added value. The project mentioned by the Honourable Member was not among those selected for co-financing.

The details about project selection can be found in the explanatory paper of the Call outcome which can be downloaded at: http://tentea.ec.europa.eu/download/calls2012/map_wp/map_fac_brochure_final_web_2013.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011479/13
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(8 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Ayuda humanitaria en Siria

La organización Médicos Sin Fronteras ha publicado una carta abierta sobre la situación de Siria ([1]).

En dicha carta, la ONG declara textualmente que «es imperativo que los gobiernos ruso y estadounidense trabajen con sus respectivos aliados políticos en el desarrollo de una estrategia que facilite la llegada masiva de ayuda humanitaria allí donde sea necesaria en Siria».

¿Es conocedora la Comisión de dicha carta y de la propuesta?

¿Considera la Comisión que la Unión Europea tendría que trabajar juntamente con Rusia y los Estados Unidos de América en la dirección expresada por Médicos Sin Fronteras?

¿Piensa la Comisión dar pasos para asegurar que la ayuda humanitaria llegue de forma masiva allá donde sea necesaria en Siria? ¿Qué pasos en concreto?

Respuesta de la Sra. Georgieva en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de diciembre de 2013)

La Comisión está al corriente de la carta de Médicos sin Fronteras sobre la situación en Siria.

Además, aboga a través de de todos los canales posibles por un acceso y presencia mayores de los trabajadores humanitarios sobre el terreno, en colaboración con las principales partes interesadas. El 25 de septiembre de 2013, durante la semana de la Asamblea General de la ONU, la Comisión y el Gobierno de Jordania presidieron conjuntamente una reunión centrada específicamente en la mejora del acceso a las ayudas en Siria, en la que participaron los Estados Unidos de América y Rusia, así como otras partes interesadas clave.

El Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas emitió en octubre de 2013 una DP ([2]) sobre la situación humanitaria en Siria. El Consejo de Asuntos Exteriores de la UE declaró en sus conclusiones que la DP debía aplicarse en su totalidad. El Consejo de la UE de octubre también declaró que todas las partes debían tomar todas las medidas adecuadas para facilitar el acceso seguro y sin obstáculos a la ayuda humanitaria por parte de las poblaciones necesitadas de ayuda en la totalidad del territorio de Siria, incluso a través de los frentes bélicos y las fronteras con los países vecinos. Llevar a la práctica la DP es crucial y exige la participación activa de las partes interesadas, incluidos los Estados Unidos de América y Rusia.

La UE y los Estados miembros han destinado hasta el momento dos millones de euros de ayuda humanitaria y de recuperación para las personas necesitadas de Siria y de la región (Líbano, Jordania, Turquía e Irak). La ayuda humanitaria, canalizada a través de los socios humanitarios internacionales, apoya en primer lugar las intervenciones de urgencias médicas que salvan vidas, el suministro de medicamentos esenciales, alimentos y artículos nutricionales, agua potable, saneamiento e higiene, abrigo, distribución de artículos no alimentarios de primera necesidad y protección.

([1]) https://www.msf.es/noticia/2013/siria-carta-abierta-estados-actores-implicados-en-conflicto
([2]) Declaración de la Presidencia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011479/13
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(8 October 2013)

Subject: Humanitarian aid in Syria

The organisation Doctors Without Borders has published an open letter regarding the situation in Syria ([1]).

In this letter, the NGO states that 'it is imperative that the Russian and U.S. governments work with their respective political allies to develop a strategy for facilitating a massive infusion of humanitarian assistance wherever it is needed in Syria'.

Is the Commission aware of the abovementioned letter and proposal?

Does the Commission consider that the European Union should work in conjunction with Russia and the United States of America in the manner set out by Doctors Without Borders?

Is the Commission considering taking steps to ensure that humanitarian aid on a huge scale arrives where it is needed in Syria? What steps in particular?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(6 December 2013)

The Commission is aware of the letter by Doctors Without Borders regarding the situation in Syria.

The Commission is advocating through all possible channels for increased access and a strengthended presence of humanitarian workers on the ground in coordination with key stakeholders. On the 25 September 2013, during the UN General Assembly week, the Commission, together with the Government of Jordan, co-chaired a meeting with a specific focus on the improvement of aid access in Syria, to which the United States of America and Russia as well as other key stakeholders participated in.

The United Nations Security Council issued in October 2013 a PRST ([2]) regarding the humanitarian situation in Syria. The EU Foreign Affairs Council stated in its conclusions that the PRST must be fully implemented. The EU Council in October also stated that all parties must take all appropriate measures to facilitate safe and unhindered humanitarian access to populations in need of assistance in the entirety of the Syrian territory, including across conflict lines and across borders from neighbouring countries. The operationalization of the PRST is crucial and requires active engagement from stakeholders including Russia and the United States of America.

The EU and the Member States have so far mobilised EUR 2 billion in relief and recovery aid to support people in need inside Syria as well as in the region (Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq). The humanitarian assistance, channelled through international humanitarian partners, primarily supports life-saving medical emergency responses, the provision of essential drugs, food and nutritional items, safe water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter, distribution of basic non-food items and protection.

([1]) http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/publications/letters/2013/Syria_Open_Letter_ENG.pdf
([2]) Presidential Statement.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011480/13
al Consejo
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE) y Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Carta de las Lenguas e ingreso en la EU

El Parlamento Europeo ha aprobado recientemente con una amplísima mayoría el informe «Lenguas europeas amenazadas de desaparición y diversidad lingüística».

En dicho informe se señala en el punto 5 lo siguiente: «Pide a las autoridades de la Unión que incorporen el respeto efectivo a la diversidad lingüística y especialmente la protección de las lenguas no hegemónicas europeas a la serie de condiciones que deben cumplir todos los Estados que quieran ingresar en la EU como Estados miembros.»

¿Tiene el Consejo previsto tomar en consideración la recomendación del Parlamento Europeo arriba mencionada?

¿Se ha dado a sí mismo el Consejo algún plazo para tomar en consideración la recomendación mencionada?

Respuesta
(16 de diciembre de 2013)

El Consejo tomó nota del informe al que hace referencia la pregunta de Sus Señorías. El Consejo querría recordar a este respecto que el respeto de la diversidad se consagra en el artículo 3, apartado 3, del Tratado de la Unión Europea. Por consiguiente, esta exigencia incumbiría a cualquier Estado que desee ser admitido como Estado miembro de la UE.

Por otra parte, como sus Señorías sin duda saben, con arreglo a los artículos 165 y 166 del TFUE, las cuestiones relativas a la política lingüística son básicamente competencia de los Estados miembros.

El Consejo ha demostrado de manera constante su compromiso con el fomento de la diversidad lingüística y ha adoptado varias iniciativas importantes en este ámbito. A este respecto, podrían mencionarse dos iniciativas especificas:

La Resolución del Consejo de 2008 relativa a una estrategia europea en favor del multilingüismo ([1]) estimaba que la diversidad lingüística era tanto una baza como un desafío para Europa, y destacaba la importancia de fomentar el aprendizaje de las lenguas —incluidas las lenguas europeas menos difundidas— como medio de reforzar la cohesión social y el diálogo intercultural, así como para aumentar la competitividad y las posibilidades de empleo.

Asimismo, las conclusiones del Consejo de noviembre de 2011 sobre las competencias lingüísticas como motor de la movilidad ([2]) invitaban a los Estados miembros a ofrecer un mayor número de opciones en materia de idiomas en todos los niveles de la enseñanza.

([1]) DO C 320 de 16.12.2008, p. 1.
([2]) DO C 372 de 20.12.2011, p. 27.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011480/13
to the Council
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE) and Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 October 2013)

Subject: Charter for Languages and admission to the EU

Parliament has recently approved the report 'Endangered European languages and linguistic diversity' with a huge majority.

Item 5 of this report 'Calls on the Union authorities to include effective respect for linguistic diversity, and protection for the most vulnerable European languages in particular, as a condition that must be met by all states wishing to be admitted as an EU Member State'.

Does the Council intend to take into consideration Parliament's abovementioned recommendation?

If so, has the Council set itself a deadline for doing so?

Reply
(16 December 2013)

The Council took note of the report referred to in the Honourable Members' question. The Council would recall in this context that respect for linguistic diversity is enshrined in Article 3(3) of the Treaty on European Union. This requirement would accordingly be incumbent upon any State wishing to be admitted as an EU Member State.

Furthermore, as the Honourable Members are certainly aware, pursuant to Articles 165 and 166 TFEU matters relating to language policy essentially come under Member States' competence.

The Council has consistently demonstrated its commitment to fostering linguistic diversity and has adopted several important initiatives in this area. Two specific initiatives could be mentioned in this respect:

The 2008 Council Resolution on a European strategy for multilingualism ([1]) identified linguistic diversity as both an asset and a challenge for Europe, and highlighted the importance of promoting language learning — including that of less widely used European languages — as a means of strengthening social cohesion and intercultural dialogue, as well as boosting competitiveness and employability.

Also, the Council conclusions of November 2011 on language competences to enhance mobility ([2]) encouraged the Member States to offer a broader choice of languages at all levels of education.

([1]) OJ C 320, 16.12.2008, p. 1.
([2]) OJ C 372, 20.12.2011, p. 27.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011482/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(8 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Υπολογισμός του ελλείμματος γενικής κυβέρνησης και η απαίτηση της Τρόικας για νέα δύσκολα μέτρα

Στο πλαίσιο του υπό κατάθεση προσχεδίου κρατικού προϋπολογισμού της Ελλάδας για το 2014 και, σύμφωνα με σχετικές δηλώσεις του Αναπληρωτή Υπουργού Οικονομικών που εδράζονται στα αντίστοιχα δημοσιονομικά στοιχεία της χώρας, το έλλειμμα γενικής κυβέρνησης αναμένεται να διαμορφωθεί κάτω από το 3%. Με βάση τη μεθοδολογία που ακολουθεί η Eurostat για τον υπολογισμό του ύψους του ελλείμματος, αναμένεται να συμπεριληφθούν τόσο οι επιστροφές κερδών από τις ευρωπαϊκές τράπεζες (SMP's), όσο και το μέρισμα που πρόκειται να αποδοθεί στην Τράπεζα της Ελλάδος.

Κατά αυτόν τον τρόπο το πλεόνασμα ενισχύεται με συνέπεια να μειώνονται τα απαιτούμενα ποσά για την εξυπηρέτηση του χρέους. Έπειτα από μια σειρά κοινωνικά επίπονες αποφάσεις που μεταφράστηκαν σε δυσβάσταχτες θυσίες από πλευράς του ελληνικού λαού, με ρυθμούς ύφεσης που ξεπερνούν χρόνο με το χρόνο τις μνημονιακές προβλέψεις και τους κοινωνικούς δείκτες να βρίσκονται σε δραματική κατάσταση, η Ελλάδα διαφαίνεται να επιτυγχάνει το στόχο του πρωτογενούς πλεονάσματος, καθώς και αυτόν του ελλείμματος γενικής κυβέρνησης, κάτι που στην ουσία σημαίνει ότι το εισόδημα των ελληνικών νοικοκυριών δε θα πρέπει να υποστεί εκ νέου μειώσεις.

Παρά ταύτα, η Τρόικα φαίνεται να απορρίπτει τους υπολογισμούς της Ελληνικής πλευράς, μολονότι βασίζονται στη μεθοδολογία της Eurostat, εκθέτοντας τις ελληνικές προσπάθειες και απαιτώντας νέα μέτρα περικοπών. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, και ως μέλος της Τρόικας, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Με ποιό σκεπτικό αμφισβητούνται τα εν λόγω οικονομικά στοιχεία που παρέχει η ελληνική κυβέρνηση όταν μάλιστα βασίζονται σε επίσημες και ευρωπαϊκά αποδεκτές μεθόδους υπολογισμού;

2. Πώς κρίνει το γεγονός ότι απαιτούνται από την ελληνική πλευρά νέα μέτρα όταν με βάση τα δημοσιονομικά αποτελέσματα επιτυγχάνονται οι στόχοι του Προγράμματος;

3. Είναι δυνατόν σε μια ιδιαίτερα δύσκολη, κοινωνικά και πολιτικά, συγκυρία για την Ένωση με τα ποσοστά ευρωσκεπτικισμού να αυξάνονται ραγδαία, να δίδεται η εντύπωση ότι οι ευρωπαίοι εταίροι δεν εκτιμούν δεόντως τις θυσίες του ελληνικού λαού και τις δύσκολες πολιτικές αποφάσεις της ελληνικής κυβέρνηση, απαιτώντας νέες περικοπές, χωρίς κάτι τέτοιο να είναι απαραίτητο;

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

1. Το σχέδιο προϋπολογισμού για το 2014 που υποβλήθηκε από τις αρχές βασίζεται σε υπερβολικά αισιόδοξες παραδοχές σχετικά με τις αποδόσεις των εσόδων της φορολογικής διοίκησης και την ανάκτηση της φορολογικής συμμόρφωσης και των εισφορών κοινωνικής ασφάλισης μετά από την οικονομική ανάκαμψη.

2. Ενώ η Ελλάδα έχει επιτύχει τολμηρή και φιλόδοξη δημοσιονομική εξυγίανση κατά τα πρόσφατα έτη, η προσαρμογή δεν έχει ακόμη ολοκληρωθεί. Η υλοποίηση των δημοσιονομικών στόχων το 2013 και τα επόμενα έτη, είναι ύψιστης σημασίας για τη στήριξη της αποκατάστασης της εμπιστοσύνης και για λόγους ανάπτυξης και δημιουργίας θέσεων εργασίας. Το πρωτογενές πλεόνασμα του 2013 είναι εφικτό, αλλά δεδομένης της ύπαρξης δημοσιονομικού κενού, έχει ουσιαστική σημασία να ληφθούν μέτρα για την επίτευξη του στόχου πρωτογενούς πλεονάσματος 1,5% του ΑΕΠ για το 2014, καθώς και να διασφαλιστούν περαιτέρω δημοσιονομικές βελτιώσεις το 2015 και το 2016 ώστε να επιτευχθεί μέχρι το 2016 πρωτογενές πλεόνασμα ύψους 4,5% του ΑΕΠ. Ενώ υπάρχει συμφωνία για την ανάγκη κάλυψης του δημοσιονομικού κενού το 2014, κυρίως χάρη σε στοχοθετημένες περικοπές δαπανών και μέτρα για τη βελτίωση της είσπραξης των εσόδων, τα ειδικά μέτρα για την επίτευξή τους δεν έχουν ακόμη προσδιοριστεί.

3. Η Επιτροπή έχει πλήρη επίγνωση των προσπαθειών που κατέβαλαν οι ελληνικές αρχές και οι πολίτες για να επανέλθουν τα δημόσια οικονομικά της Ελλάδας σε διατηρήσιμη τροχιά. Η Επιτροπή πιστεύει ότι η σημαντική οικονομική βοήθεια που έλαβε η Ελλάδα από την έναρξη του προγράμματος, τα μέτρα που συμφωνήθηκαν στα τέλη του 2012 και η δέσμευση να παρασχεθεί χρηματοδοτική στήριξη μέχρι η Ελλάδα να ανακτήσει πρόσβαση στις αγορές, καθώς και η λήψη ενδεχόμενων μέτρων, εφόσον χρειαστεί, για να εξασφαλιστεί ότι ο δείκτης του χρέους προς το ΑΕΠ θα φτάσει στο 124% του ΑΕΠ κατά το 2020 αντικατοπτρίζουν σαφώς την αναγνώριση από τους ευρωπαίους εταίρους των εν λόγω προσπαθειών που κατέβαλε η Ελλάδα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011482/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(8 October 2013)

Subject: Calculating the coalition government's deficit and the Troika's request for difficult new measures

In the provisional draft of the Greek national budget to be submitted for 2014, the coalition Government's deficit is expected to be kept below 3%, according to statements by the Deputy Finance Minister based on the country's relevant budgetary data. On the basis of the methodology followed by Eurostat for calculating the deficit level, the budget is expected to include not only the profit return from the European banks (under the Securities Markets Programme), but also the share that is to be given to the Bank of Greece.

Thus the surplus will increase and the sums required for servicing the debt will consequently be reduced. Following a series of socially painful decisions requiring enormous sacrifices by the Greek people, with patterns of recession exceeding the Memoranda predictions year after year and social statistics revealing a dramatic situation, Greece appears to be achieving its primary surplus target and also the coalition Government's surplus target, something which essentially means that Greek household income should not suffer further reductions.

In spite of all that and even though they are based on the Eurostat methodology, the Troika appears to be rejecting the Greek calculations, — compromising Greece's efforts and requiring new cuts. In this context, and as a member of the Troika, will the Commission say:

1. What are the grounds for doubting the above economic data provided by the Greek Government, when they are based on official calculation methods accepted at European level?

2. Why does it conclude that new measures are required on the Greek side when, based on the fiscal results, the Programme's targets are being achieved?

3. How can the European partners, in particularly difficult social and economic circumstances for the EU, and with eurosceptism sharply on the rise, give the impression, by demanding unnecessary new cuts, that they do not properly appreciate the sacrifices of the Greek people and the difficult decisions of the Greek Government?

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

1. The draft 2014 budget presented by the authorities is based on too optimistic assumptions concerning the yields of the tax administration gains and the recovery of tax compliance and Social Security Contributions following the economic recovery.

2. While Greece has achieved a bold and ambitious fiscal consolidation in recent years, the adjustment is not completed yet. Ensuring the delivery of the fiscal targets in 2013 and subsequent years is paramount to support the return of confidence and for the sake of growth and job creation. A primary surplus in 2013 is within reach, but in presence of a fiscal gap it is essential to take measures to meet the target of a primary surplus of 1.5% of GDP for 2014 and ensure further budgetary improvements in 2015 and 2016 to achieve by 2016 a primary surplus of 4.5% of GDP. While there is agreement on the need to close the fiscal gap in 2014 mostly by targeted expenditure cuts and measures to improve revenue collection, the specific measures to deliver them still remain to be identified.

3. The Commission is fully aware of the efforts made by the Greek authorities and citizens to bring Greece's public finances back to a sustainable footing. The Commission believes that the substantial financial assistance received by Greece since the start of the programme, the measures agreed in late 2012 and the commitment to provide financial assistance until Greece regains market access and to consider contingent measures, if necessary to ensure that the debt to GDP ratio reaches 124% of GDP in 2020 reflect very clearly the recognition by European partners of these efforts undertaken by Greece.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011484/13
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(8 ta' Ottubru 2013)

Suġġett: Servizzi tal-kura tat-tfal.

B'segwitu tat-tweġiba tal-Kummissjoni għall-mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-008947/13, nixtieq nistaqsi:

Għaliex kien hemm dan id-dewmien kollu biex ittieħdet azzjoni f'qasam ta' prijorità tal-UE, ladarba l-kwistjoni hija "fil-qalba tal-istrateġiji ta' tkabbir ekonomiku tal-Ewropa", li għalihom l-għanijiet ġew iffissati 11-il sena ilu?

Tista' l-Kummissjoni ssemmi l-11-il Stat Membru li ġew rakkomandati biex itejbu d-disponibilità tas-servizzi tal-kura tat-tfal, u tista' tindika r-rakkomandazzjonijiet speċifiċi għall-pajjiż?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Reding f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(6 ta' Diċembru 2013)

L-iżvilupp ta' faċilitajiet għall-indukrar tat-tfal jaqa' taħt ir-responsabbiltà tal-Istati Membri; madankollu l-Kummissjoni qed timplimenta bosta azzjonijiet f'dan il-qasam fil-qafas tal-istrateġija tagħha dwar l-ugwaljanza bejn in-nisa u l-irġiel ([1]), il-Kummissjoni partikolarment:

— timmonitorja regolarment il-progress lejn l-objettivi ta' Barċellona permezz tar-rapport annwali tagħha dwar l-ugwaljanza bejn l-irġiel u n-nisa u permezz ta' żewġ rapporti speċifiċi ([2]);

— organizzat bosta skambji tal-aħjar prattiki bejn l-Istati Membri dwar il-kwistjoni tal— indukrar tat-tfal u tal-bilanċ bejn ix-xogħol u l-ħajja privata ([3]);

— tippromwovi riċerka f'dan il-qasam pereżempju dwar servizzi ta' indukrar għal tfal tal-iskola ([4]).

Il-ftuħ tal-aċċess għas-suq tax-xogħol u għal impjiegi għat-tieni ħaddiem b'paga fil-familja, bis-saħħa ta' inċentivi fiskali adatti u l-introduzzjoni ta' servizzi ta' indukrar tat-tfal ta' kwalità u bi prezz raġonevoli, ġie identifikat bħala prijorità fl-Istħarriġ Annwali dwar it-Tkabbir ([5]) għall-aħħar semestru, fil-qafas tal-istrateġija Ewropa 2020, u ġie enfasizzat ukoll fis-SAT 2014 li ġie adottat riċentement ([6]). Il-11-il pajjiż li rċievew rakkomandazzjoni fl-2013 dwar servizzi tal-indukrar tat-tfal biex iżidu d-disponibbiltà/d-dispożizzjoni, il-kwalità u/jew l-affordabbiltà tagħhom kienu: AT, CZ, DE, EE, ES, HU, IT, MT, PL, UK u SK. L-Onorevoli Membru jista' jsib ir-rakkomandazzjonijiet dettaljati għal kull pajjiż f'dan il-link: http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-your-country/index_mt.htm.

([1]) COM(2010) 491.
([2]) COM(2008)638 u COM(2013)322.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/other-institutions/good-practices/index_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/130910_egge_out_of_school_en.pdf
([5]) COM(2012) 750.
([6]) COM(2013) 800 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011484/13
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(8 October 2013)

Subject: Childcare services

Following the Commission's answer to Written Question E-008947/13, I would like to ask:

Why has it taken so long to take action in a field of priority for the EU, given that it is 'at the heart of Europe's economic growth strategies' for which the targets had been set 11 years ago?

Can the Commission list the 11 Member States that were recommended to improve the availability of childcare services, and can it indicate the country-specific recommendations?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 December 2013)

The development of childcare facilities is a responsibility of Member States; however the Commission has been implementing several actions in this field in the framework of its strategy on equality between women and men ([1]), notably it:

— regularly monitors the progress towards the Barcelona objectives through its annual report on equality between men and women and through two specific reports ([2]);

— organised several exchanges of best practices between Member States on the issue of childcare and of reconciling work and private life ([3]);

— promotes research in this area for instance on childcare services for school age children ([4]).

Opening up access to the labour market and to employment for a second wage-earner from the household thanks to suitable tax incentives and the introduction of affordable, quality childcare services was identified as a priority in the Annual Growth Survey ([5]) for the last semester, in the framework of the Europe 2020 strategy, and was highlighted in the recently adopted 2014 AGS as well ([6]). The 11 countries that received a recommendation in 2013 on childcare services to increase their availability/provision, their quality and or affordability were: AT, CZ, DE, EE, ES, HU, IT, MT, PL, UK and SK. The Honourable Member can find the detailed recommendations for each country at the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-your-country/index_en.htm.

([1]) COM(2010) 491.
([2]) COM(2008) 638 and COM(2013) 322.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/other-institutions/good-practices/index_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/130910_egge_out_of_school_en.pdf
([5]) COM(2012) 750.
([6]) COM(2013) 800 final.